

THE WAY

***IT
WAS***

For Me

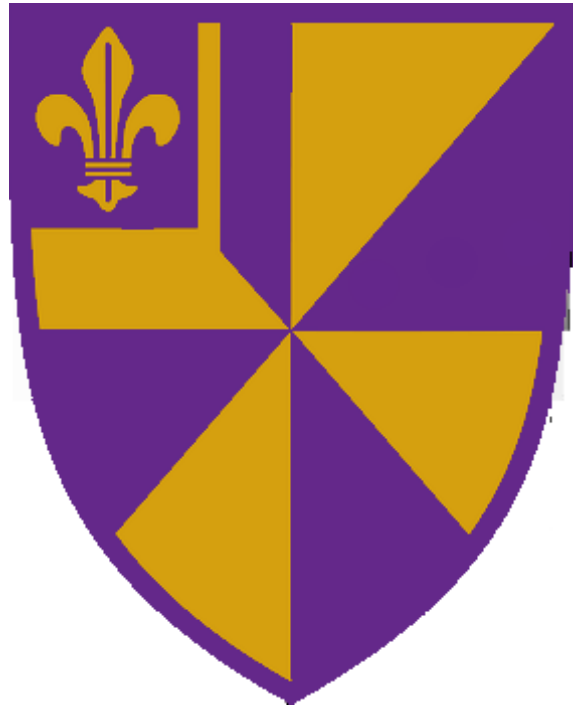
At

Albion College

1952 - 1954

By

Tom Lennox



First Printing 2020

Down loads may be found on line at

https://luminaud.com/tom_pictures

Also at that sight are pictures from the Grosse Ile High School Year Book
and fellow GI students.

Any comments or questions may be sent to **tlennox34@yahoo.com**.

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Thanks to my wife, Dorothy Zittel Lennox. For her contributions, interest,
encouragement, typing, editing assistance and patience.

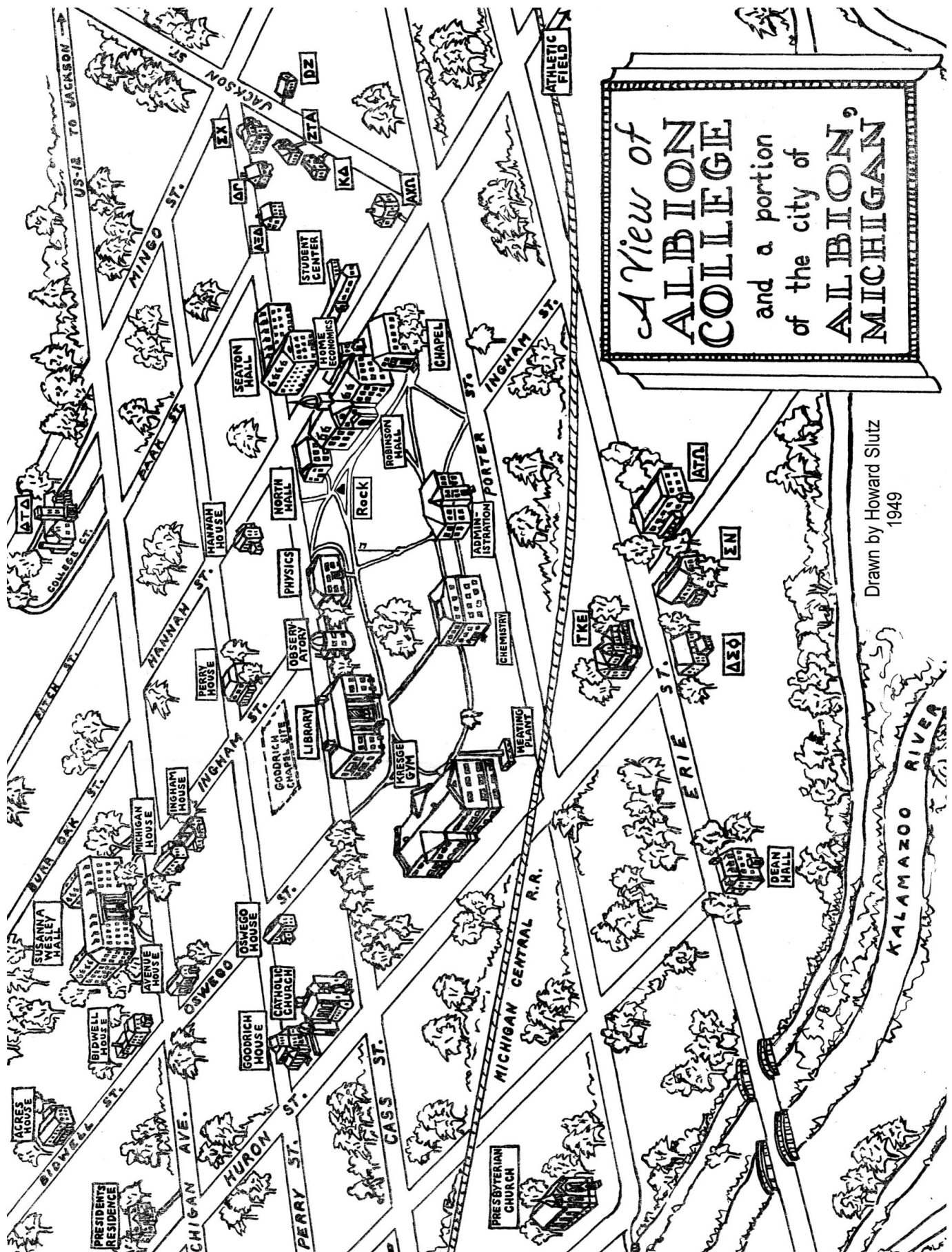
ALBION COLLEGE - MY ACADEMIC ADVENTURE

At 1:00 am in the morning there was a very loud explosion in the hall. There was a large circle of black ash on the door and on the floor and the hall was filled with smoke. This was NOT what we had planned. We were never questioned. No one ever found out "who done it."

My first book told about my life growing up on Grosse Ile, a small, unusual island town. Stories about my adventures while at school, joining the Navy Reserve and my summer jobs. This book overlaps those last days and then takes me to Albion Collage, a small 1,200 student college in central Michigan. Albion provided new adventures for me - and for the college!!! As noted in the first book, they weren't quite ready for me yet, but I still had my electronics and a few pyrotechnics, had the same roommate for two years, had a lot of fun on the stage - and eventually love bloomed!!!!

All this is the best that I remember. It was a long time ago. If I have left someone out or the dates seem a little off my 85 year old brain is starting to wear out. Comments and corrections are always welcome.

The third episode will be my two years with the US Navy and further details on my love life - wedding included!!!



ALBION 1952 to 1954

In the spring of 1952 I started looking for a college to attend. There were several not more than 100 miles away. Adrian, Albion, Hillsdale and Michigan School of Mines were all possibilities. My Dad, Thomas Smith Lennox, was General Manager of the Mobil Oil Refinery in Trenton, Michigan. Dr. Potoff, who was the director of their Chemical Laboratories had been a graduate of Albion College. I had a liking for Chemistry and he said that Albion had a very good Chemistry Department. It was a small school, about 1,200 students, supported by the Methodist Church and just about 2 hours away from home. I didn't find anyone else who had been to Albion and nobody in my class was checking it out - but I decided to try Albion anyway. The Detroit to Chicago Greyhound bus went through Albion so it was used by many of the students.

Dad and I went to look at it and it seemed OK to me. The labs were somewhat dated but better than anything I had. My grades in High School were not too good - 24th in a class of 32 - (even though my nick name in school was Einstein - I guess because I helped so many classmates with their science studies). After I submitted my grades I was told I would have to take some tests the week before college started. Then I would still be on a conditional status.

On June 14th I graduated from Grosse Ile High School. All the 32 students in our class went through the graduation ceremony. The ceremony was held in our gym and we went home afterwards. (Two of the students did not really pass and their diplomas were blank at that time. They had to go back to school for the coming fall season in order to officially graduate. The school handled it very well so that they were not singled out.) There were a few small parties. Helen Virginia Beyster had a party at her house just down the street. She had a full keg for drinks - Vernors Ginger Ale.

NAVY RESERVE

On May 5th, I signed up in the Navy Reserve. The base was just down the road from my house. It had the only indoor swimming pool on Grosse Ile. We were allowed

to come onto the base and use the pool and the movie theater. I think there were almost as many civilians on the base as military. After being sworn in that morning several of us went over to the Officers Club since we were in civilian clothes where we watched the Kentucky Derby on their BIG TV screen - probably all of 21" back then. After that I got into the car and drove straight down the road to my house - about 4 miles.



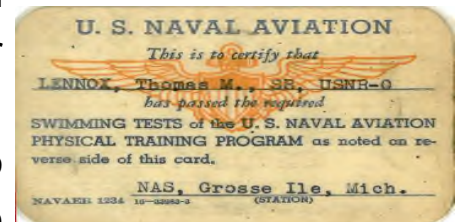
The Navy Reserve Program that I was in was set up for us to be at the base Saturday and Sunday on the third week of each month. Most of the time from 8:00 in the morning to 4:30 in the afternoon except on some Saturdays when our pilots would be night flying. The weekend was divided into 4 segments. In 2 of the segments you would be out on the line with the aircraft AD 1Q aircraft - cleaning, refueling and repairing. The 3rd segment we would be in a classroom lecture on Navy rules and regulations. The 4th segment would be in one of the shops - hands on work. It might be the prop shop, the parachute loft, the piston engine repair, jet engine or repair of airframes. We would wear our dungarees onto the base so we didn't have to have all our uniforms there at the base. There was no marching or drilling and the only time we needed our dress uniforms was when there was going to be an inspection for some major event.



That summer I also took a 3 week mini boot camp. It was a very basic program. This allowed recruits coming in to advance in rate within the first few months of service. We had to stay on the base 24 hours a day the first 2 weeks. There were about 80 of us. We lived in the "White Barracks," the only white building on the base. It was built in 1942 for the Waves and in the Mid 40's converted to barracks for the British pilots who came over for training - and it was right next to the officers club. We would drill and do calisthenics before breakfast, then spend time in the class room learning about Navy history and protocol. The base's Olympic size



swimming pool was about 15 ft. deep and had a slide with an airplane cockpit that could be dropped into the water to train pilots on how to get out of an aircraft under water. For the swimming tests we were divided into two groups - swimmers and non-swimmers. (Sailors Gotta Swim!) You were classified as a swimmer if you could tread water for 15 minutes. I passed that test. We worked on survival swimming and also how to jump off the deck of a sinking ship that is about 40 ft. above the water. To do this we would climb up a ladder onto a catwalk attached to the roof beams. This was about 25 to 30 feet above the water. One problem was that when you looked down you saw the bottom of the pool but not the surface of the water. It looked like 50 ft. You were supposed to walk out on one of the beams and drop down into the pool with your legs crossed and your arms held tightly across your chest - and with chin down. This would protect your face if you were jumping into burning oil. If you did this right the first time you were done. If you didn't do it correctly you would have to do it over again until it was right. I have a fear of heights and for some reason, not known to me, we were not allowed to wear bathing suits. The first time I think I let out a scream so I was required to do it again. That 2nd time was OK, thank goodness. I became a "card carrying U.S. Naval Swimmer."



We had to stay on the Base for the first two weeks and there was very little recreation. There were base movies - I think it was 6 cents to get in - or you could watch the TV in the barrack's lounge. We were supposed to be studying all that "Military Stuff" that we learned in the classroom. You couldn't go near the Officers' Club if you were enlisted men in uniform. But my Dad could go to the Officers' Club, along with several local business men who were the people that were responsible for having it built. One thing that was interesting! Captain Dahl was Commander of the base and lived across the street from our barracks. His son, Pete, was in our graduating class, so a few times I went over to his house in the evening to watch TV. I never did find out what some of our superiors thought when they saw me going in and out of the Captain's house. The third week we were allowed to go off the base in the evening and go home - but return by 9:00 pm. My training got me my Airman Apprentice rating. (The base was deactivated in 1969. The airstrip was turned into a private airfield.)

The rest of the summer was cutting the grass, taking care of our family gardens, mostly weeding, and getting clothes for college, hanging out with any of the kids in the neighborhood and working on my motorized buckboard. The highlight was that I received a letter from Kenneth Jones. He was to be my roommate at Albion that year. I had sent Ken information about me. I don't remember if we exchanged photos.

OFF TO ALBION

I arrived at Albion late that August. I can't remember if Mom or Dad or both came. I had to get there early for entrance testing that fall. When I checked in there were representatives from various campus activity groups to recruit new members. Annabelle Marshbanks was the representative for the Albion College Players. She was thrilled to hear that I had done theater stage work in high school. I stage managed, did the set construction, painted the set AND did the lighting for the 10th grade play - *Arron Slick From Punkin Crick*. She immediately got me signed up to work in the theater. My primary interest was in the lighting and sound effects which they had need of that year. Annabelle was thrilled by this. Little did I know that more stage work would change the rest of my life.

All Freshmen boys would be boarded in Seaton Hall. It had 3 floors in an L shape. The short leg was attached to Baldwin Hall. There was a lounge and an office for the Director. The mail room and laundry were in the basement. Each end of the halls had a shower room and a washroom/bathroom. The main stairs were in the middle of the long hall. These more or less lined up with the front door. There was an elevator in a corner of the halls which was only used by service personal. There was also a 3 story staircase at the end of the halls that was connected to Baldwin Hall. All the rooms were set up for two people, except for the corner single rooms for the floor proctors. The only built in lighting fixtures were in the overheads of the entrance into each of the rooms right between the closets. I guess it was expected that everybody would bring their own floor lamps and desk lights.



Ken and I were assigned to the 3rd floor room 305 in the middle of the front of the building. We each had a key for the door that would also lock one of our desk drawers. I found out that Ken's full name was Tyre Kenneth Jones III. He lived in Marshall, Michigan, about 15 miles away. His father was a General Medical Practitioner. His Grandfather had also been a doctor there. Ken was on a pre-med program. I was on a chemical engineering program, so we had almost the same classes for the first two years. We got along very well. Ken was a bit more messy with clothes than I was and was an honor student in High School.

Ken brought a Hi-Fi Amplifier with a large Base Reflex Speaker Inclosure, record player and a lot of Jazz records. I brought a short wave multi-band radio, a reel to reel tape recorder, a vacuum tube volt meter, typewriter and some classical records. Eventually we both liked either kind of music. Since we were not supposed to cook anything in our rooms, the hollow speaker cabinet was a good place to hide our hot plate and pans. Our room was about 15 feet long and 12 feet wide - not much room for much stuff. Like the 90 other rooms, there was a closet on each side of the entrance door. There were beds on each side of the room. My bed was on the east wall and Ken was on the west wall. The desks and bookshelves were along the front north wall with a window in the middle. (See attached room layouts.) The bathroom and the adjacent shower room (1 room - 6 shower heads) were about 30 feet down the hall to the west on the southern wall.



THE FOOD SERVICE

Our meals were in Baldwin Hall which was attached to Seaton Hall so we didn't have to go outside. Most of the freshman boys had a meal plan for three meals a day. Breakfast was available in the Cafeteria downstairs and the other 2 meals served upstairs to us at tables in the dining room, The servers were upper classmen who were earning their board working for the food



service. We sat at round tables, 8 to a table. Salads, beverage and desserts were preset at the tables. The servers brought in our plates with the main meal. You had no choice. Everybody got the same thing. After they put our plates down, if there was a vacant spot at the table, they would pick up the salads, beverages and desserts and take them back to the kitchen and probably down to the cafeteria where it was sold primarily to upper class students and staff. The meals were not very large. Many times at night we would have meat loaf or equivalent made with a large amount of garlic. Much of that large amount of garlic sent many meals to the garbage. Saturday lunches were very often cream of mushroom soup and a small grilled cheese sandwich. Sometimes we went down afterward to the cafeteria and bought something more substantial. Some of the students were football and track team players and really needed more to eat. The supervising dietician was an elderly little lady and apparently didn't get the idea how much food a lot of college boys would need. To top it off, on St. Patrick's Day she put green dye in the milk and mashed potatoes. Unfortunately, as you might suppose, a lot of the food was tossed out and not used. Once a week, on Friday night, the freshmen girls were sent over for dinner to eat with us - those meals were usually better. I can't remember if we had to dress up that night. The dietician was replaced the next year with a young man who was very much more "with it" and had GREAT food most of the time.

Ken worked in the kitchen of Susanna Wesley Hall, the girls dorm, from 6 to 7 in the morning and that paid for his meals. One of our 8 to 9 am classes let us out 5 minutes early and we just had time to dash over to the cafeteria and got in line for breakfast just before they closed the line. Frequently, before 10 or 11 pm, I bought a chocolate milkshake and french fries from the cafeteria before it closed and took them back to our room.

AROUND CAMPUS

I wore the same type of clothes that I wore in High School - (and I still do) - blue jeans, plain or striped t-shirts, with or without flannel plaid shirts. I wore canvas shoes with rubber soles - like Keds. Also, sometimes I had a 2 or 3 day old beard. Most of the other male students tended to wear slacks, open collared shirts, with or

without sweaters. I don't remember what they had on their feet - and I didn't notice if they had beards. This may or may not have influenced my academic appearance. Gradually I realized it was NOT admired by the faculty - but I didn't change the way I dressed.

The campus was a large quadrangle with most of the buildings around the perimeter facing inward. There were several sidewalks interconnecting the buildings. (See Map.) There was no need to have a car. Almost everybody walked around the campus or into town. Also there was very little student parking.

The boys dorm was at one end of the campus, mostly freshmen. Older students could join fraternities or go to independent houses and live there. Both were managed by older ladies. The Kresge Gym was at the other end of the campus, next to the power plant. The girls dorm was in the third block north of campus. It was called Susanna Wesley Hall (or Suzy) and was for the Sophomore, Junior and Senior Girls. There were also some small houses that were used for freshmen girls' housing, also overseen by older ladies. Most of the women in charge were widows of clergymen.



The fraternity houses were off-campus residences for Sophomore to Senior upper classmen. The sororities had non-resident housing. The girls had to get back to their living quarters by 10pm curfew each night. There was no alcohol on campus and smoking was only permitted on one very small area at the edge of the campus. Winters weren't too bad, usually



less than a foot of snow at any one time - and the sidewalks were kept clean - except for ice storms.

The Freshman classes I had at Albion were English, Algebra, History, Public Speaking 101 and Spanish. The Freshmen always had early morning and Saturday classes. Mine was Algebra. Gym was 3 days a week M-W-F. Tuesday/Thursday was Chapel 10am to 11am. One day would be a religious program. The other day would be music or a guest speaker. You HAD to be there!!! There was assigned seating. They took attendance. If you missed 3 days you had to visit the Dean's office. The second year I did some of the stage work and didn't have to sit out front. I don't know if they counted me or not. Gym wasn't much better. Same as High School - you had to take it for two years. Most of the time we did exercises, Bunny Hop, basketball, volleyball - and no girls.

Because of my poor written English from High School and admissions testing I was instructed to take a remedial reading course - somewhat useless since I could read quite well. I just couldn't write things well. The first day of class the instructor drew several characters on the chalkboard and asked the students to fill in the parts of the characters that were missing. Then she asked the class what the characters were. Everybody else in the class mentioned that they were letters of some kind in the alphabet. Apparently what she was trying to show was that you didn't need to see the entire letter to know what the letter was. I had entirely different images. I can't remember exactly what they were but they were different from what everybody else had. This was the first time that I realized that I saw things differently from what other people saw - and I still do. Looking back, this may have been a symptom of Dyslexia.

THERE WERE ALSO FUN THINGS

Someone in the Chem Lab made up some nitrogen triiodide. This is a white powder made from ammonium hydroxide and iodine, $\text{NH}_4\text{OH} + \text{I} + \text{water}$ and the fine white residue filtered out and dried. The slightest tickle with a feather will set it off with a sharp bang. It can be squirted into a door lock when wet. In time it will dry out. When someone pushes their key into the lock it goes off like a small fire cracker. Great at 1 a.m. in the morning. Also, if it is sprinkled on the floor it will crack and pop

if someone walks on it - I did make some myself. The Chem Lab didn't have any good materials available to make flash powder or stink bombs.

The Kalamazoo River ran along the south side of the campus - it was only a few feet deep and about 50 to 60 ft. wide. The river was used for inter-class tug of wars. Losers got WET!!! It was a nice calm river, good for canoeing. The trouble was that the Girls Athletic Association had control of the canoes. Difficult to get one if you weren't a girl.



Ken and I had a couple of good friends - one was Bob DiCarlo - down the hall on the 2nd floor. We connected wires out the window to their room to give them a connection to our telephone. Bob's father worked for Western Electric in New Jersey so we could get lots of wire. Bob and his roommate loved to agitate us. Bob was short but strong and his roommate was built like a football player. We usually did not lock our door. They would dash in, grab the foots of our beds and tip them up against the wall so that we were upside down. Other times they would come in and jump on our beds that we had just made up, making them a mess. We needed to stop this, but we didn't want to lock our door all the time.

The next time I went home for my Navy training, I brought back an electric fence charger from home. Summer was over and it was not needed for the garden. We hooked up one lead to a sheet of aluminum foil on the bottom half of the bed and the other output wire to another sheet of foil on the top end of the bed about 6 inches apart and placed the bedspread over them. To test it we placed a florescent light tube across the top of the bed and turned on the switch on the power supply next to my desk. It lit up beautifully (about 7 thousand volts - but just for a fraction of a second). It didn't take long before DeCarlo and his roommate came in and jumped on my bed. I waited a few seconds and then flipped the switch. They came off the bed a lot faster than they had dropped onto it. As it was, neither of them liked electricity at all. No more messed up beds after that.

Bob also liked to come into our room and get into any of the snacks he could find in our closets. Ken took a blood-drawing syringe - he had a good tool kit too - and sucked the syrup out of my last liquid filled cherry candy. We then filled it back with motor oil, sealed up the hole with a hot match and put it back as the last one in the box. The next time Bob came in he saw the last cherry there and popped it into his mouth and bit down. His jaw dropped and he ran down the hall to the bathroom to spit it all out. Our candy was safe from then on.

Another time, Bob came into our room and was out of toothpaste. I had tossed my recently purchased tooth paste into the waste basket because it was a brand I found I didn't like and told him he could buy it for a reduced price. Unfortunately, I just don't remember whether I really gave it to him eventually. I realize now that I was being pretty rotten - sorry about that!.

THEN, OF COURSE, THERE WERE CLASSES

My Freshmen Speech Class met three days a week. I really didn't have much of a problem with it. Even though I couldn't spell, I could talk a lot, but my grade was only fair. The problem was that Professor Aggertt wanted a set of notes for everything before you were going to speak about it. He probably had difficulty reading my writing and once I got going I didn't stay with the notes. Not to his liking!

I didn't do well in English - it required a lot of hand writing (NO COMPUTERS THEN). I couldn't remember the parts of speech or the sentence structure and the poor penmanship and spelling also brought my grade down. This was the same problem I had in High School English.

The Professor I had for History ENJOYED History and liked long dissertations - several pages on simple happenings. He did NOT like my short answers to his test questions and down graded me accordingly. Also, you got a much better grade if you were a girl and sat in the front row with a short skirt - and I didn't look good in skirts - - you know - all those hairy legs.

The Chemistry class was interesting and the lecture part was Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 to 10:00 am. It was basic inorganic chemistry. Professor Monk, who taught the class, liked to use a lot of multiple choice questions. Unfortunately the way they were worded on tests often seemed they could be interpreted so that more than one answer was correct. In the next class, when we reviewed the test, there would be several students - usually the honor students - who seemed to get some questions wrong and questioned the teacher who responded "Well you knew what I really meant!!" Dr. Carnell was the instructor for the Chemistry Lab that met Tues. and Thurs. from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. He had been in industrial chemistry before being a teacher. He knew a LOT about chemistry and was very good. This was great old hands-on chemistry. Lots of beakers, bottles of acid and Bunson Burners, not just computers the way they are now. We never did blow anything up. The Lab was 4 hours long. We needed that much time to conduct the experiments. We worked in teams of two or three students. The plan was to set up the equipment, collect all the data and put all the equipment away. After the Lab was over much time was spent back in our room on the Lab reports, but at least Ken and I could work on it together since we were in the same class. Again my penmanship and spelling didn't help when I had to write my report.



The Physics Class should have been my **Big Deal**. I like to play with science materials. They were my kind of toys. I was very good with setting up the experiments. Most of the problems were just a little more advanced than what I had in High School. Ken was also working with me and was very good at taking notes. When we got back to our room we had good data to work from. We each wrote up our own reports but shared all the information and calculations. The problem was that the Physics Professor, Mr. Pettersen, liked our lab reports on experiments to be written with reasonable penmanship and correct spelling and he took off heavily for misspelled words.

Albion had a 3 point system for grading. An A - three points, a B - two points, a C - one point, a D- 0- zero and F was a minus one. For the honors list you had to have a 2.5 to 3 point average. This meant that if you failed a course you had to retake it and get a C just to break even - or a B to get any point credit at all. At the time Case Western Reserve in Cleveland and a few other schools had the same system and dropped it after a few years. It was very difficult for some of the students who were having various troubles. Albion College wanted to have it's students be "The Best of the Best". The Academic Dean had two lists of students in his office. One with the names of honors or near honors students. And one for sub-level students. Ken was on one and I was on the other. The school thought this point system was the answer but eventually decided it was not the thing to do and went to a 4 point system.

ALBION CITY

The Railroad ran along between the campus and the river, past the Gym and into town. The whole Gymnasium would shake and rumble when the train passed. The train station was right next to U.S.12, just a few blocks NW of the campus. Many of the students used the Detroit to Chicago train or the Detroit to Chicago bus on U.S. Rt. 12 to get to and from Albion. The bus would stop right in front of Susanna Wesley Hall and was cheaper. The boys had to walk two more blocks further south and one block east down Ingram and on to Cass to get to Seaten Hall. (See Map). There were a couple of hotels and very few motels around Albion then. I-94 had not yet been built. US.12 was still the main road across lower Michigan. The town was mainly supported by the Malleable Iron Mills and a glass company. There were a lot of workers in the mills who had come up from the south. These were heavy manual labor jobs working with molten iron and molten glass. (Several years after I left, the mills had all closed. Few new industries moved in which left a lot of unemployed and low income families in the town. They lived mostly in the area that was called "the other side of the tracks." A few years after that, they found there was OIL under "the other side of the tracks." This was sometimes very helpful to those who actually owned that part of the land.)

OUT OF TOWN

A couple of times, Ken and I rode bikes to his house in Marshall. about 15 miles on old West Michigan Ave.(State Route 199) which followed the railroad tracks. It

made for a pretty good ride seeing that I hadn't ridden a bike in quite a while. Ken had me borrow his sister's bike. It didn't take me too long to get used to riding it. I can't remember the logistics of getting it back and fourth. His family lived in a large, 2½ story house right in town. Many times his father, the Doctor, used the front parlor for an emergency room for farmers and deer hunters who actually got shot or shot themselves. It was really too large a house for their family of 4. I think his mother wanted to build some stores on the property. A moving crew came in and cut the house in half to make two houses and moved them to a lot about a mile away. Before it was moved, his mother put two small vases on the windowsills and they never fell over during the move.

That first winter, Albion had a fair amount of snow fall. Ken and I both had brought our heavy boots, furry coats and heavy fur caps. It seems that Bob DeCarlo liked to trap muskrats when he was home in New Jersey. When he came back from Christmas vacation he brought his trapping gear with him and set up a muskrat line along the Kalamazoo River. On weekend mornings he sometimes got us to go out with him at 6:00am and tromp through the snow to check his trap line. Unfortunately he never did catch anything.

NIGHT TIME

There was a movie theater - the BOHM - downtown. I think that the tickets were 50 cents and there was popcorn and candy. They would show one feature a night. Most of the time the shows were scheduled so that they would be over soon enough for the girls to get back to dorms or student housing on time. They had to be in by 10:00pm. If they were late there was much explaining to be done. If a girl was out late or overnight, a letter was sent to her parents notifying them of the situation.

At night it was very quiet on the campus. Because of the girls curfew all organizations, theater. band, choir rehearsals, sorority meetings, and such had to be over before 10:pm. Any pubs or bars were in town, several blocks from campus - and not encouraged. Once the girls were in their houses, the boys dorm settled down and many of the lights were beginning to go out by 11:00pm.

For some students excitement would be painting "The Rock" on the north side of campus in front of North Hall. It would be impossible to count the times it's been painted. It was usually painted at night - supposedly when no one was looking. The idea was not to be seen doing it - but it didn't ever seem that any faculty or staff members were annoyed about it.



A couple of times a year there was a Bust Out. The girls could stay out for an extra two hours. I think that the student center food service stayed open too. It should have been called a BREAK Out, not a Bust Out. No panty raids. No beer parties!!!

ALBION COLLEGE PLAYERS

Albion had a fairly active theater program which included students with a theater major, students who were taking theater arts for backstage work and students who were just happy to be involved in a part in a play now and then. It was called Albion College Players and was a member of Theta Alpha Phi which was a national theater fraternity. They were apparently in need of someone that year who could do technical work. The theater would produce 4 regular plays a year plus theater majors had to present One Acts as part of their degree program.

The theater stage was located in the chapel building which had a main floor in front of the stage and a balcony on both sides and the back of the building as well as



a very large pipe organ, which was part of the music department, as were most the things in that building. This led to some difficulties as to who would use the stage, the theater or the music department. The organ console could be turned towards the wall so it would not block the stage. The scene shop, where all the props and sets were stored, was in the basement of Robinson hall, the building next door. To get sets and furniture from the scene shop and to the stage, you had to get them up out

of the scene shop, out onto the lawn between the buildings, up a two story metal fire escape and into the side door of the stage. Not so good. The stairs where the

audience came into the theater directly were up winding staircases on both sides of the auditorium and could not be used much for handling sets and props.

The Theater Department was under the control of the English Department which meant that any theater credits that I acquired there were English credits - and that helped me a lot. The stage lighting panel was rather old. It consisted of vertical copper bus bars in front of which were horizontal bus bars connected to the stage outlets. The bars were connected together by copper pegs that had plastic handles on them. There were two panels, about 8 inches apart. Between the two panels was the switch for the work lights over the stage. If you came up on the stage when it was dark you had to very carefully reach between the two panels and turn on the work lights. If you missed the switch by a little bit your fingers would touch one of the 220V bus bars and get quite a jolt. I think I only got bit twice!

Apparently because the stage required more than the usual amount of electric power, a large main power line was run into the theater. Since this was more than enough for the stage lighting other things were fed from this same supply. Under the stage lighting panel there was a heavy duty circuit breaker. It was never touched and no one seemed to know what it was for. Well - I found out that it fed the outdoor lights in the quadrangle. I always thought it would be fun to turn it off some night and see what would happen - but I didn't do it, doggone.

While rehearsing one of the winter productions I dashed out into the house area to view the stage, then dashed up to the stage to reset the lighting. My foot missed the 1st step and hit the floor hard. I continued up onto the stage and made the adjustments on the lights. My foot didn't feel too bad then - but when I got back to my room it really began to swell up and hurt. Ken went into his special supply of pills - probably codine - that made things feel much better. We may have wrapped it some that night. Next morning I went to the infirmary. They wrapped it up correctly and gave me a crutch. We had had one of the usual southern Michigan ice storms a few days before and the streets and walks still were slippery in many places. NO WAY was going to try to walk on icy sidewalks with one foot and one crutch. Four of the guys - I don't remember who - made a seat with their arms and delivered me to

several of my classes. I had to call into the Navy base and explain the medical reason I was going the miss that month's weekend drill. (The Navy program that I signed into in May of '52 required that I be at the squadron at Grosse Ile the third weekend of each month but would allow for medical problems if you called in. This got me off the hook so I didn't have to go in and make it up on another weekend.).

Dr. Brock, the Professor in the Theater Department, was very good in technical theater as well as acting. Everything had to be rehearsed over and over again. The actors were required to have their props or a substitute in their hands from the very beginning of rehearsals so it would feel natural when they performed. Sometimes there were technical rehearsals for the stage crew in order to have them really know what they were doing when changing scenes. Once a year Dr. Brock would take a selected group to New York City so they could see Broadway plays.

THE LOCKED ROOM CAPER

It seems that there were sometimes unusual happenings around Ken's and my part of the dorm. One time Dick Humphrey, a good friend of Ken's from Marshall and an Honor Student, was having some problems with the guys in the room next to his. He did a lot of heavy studying for a test and these guys would deliberately disturb him by making noise against the walls or turning up their radio. The dorm walls were not very sound proof. After his tests, which he passed, he came down to our room. He was still very mad at the guys. He asked Ken and me if there was some way he could get even with them. Ken and I kept our eyes and ears open. Shortly after that we heard that both of the guys were planning to go home for the weekend. That coming Friday afternoon, one of them was taking a shower before they left and Ken went into the shower room with a towel on his shoulder, slipped their room key out from underneath the guy's towel and came back to our room where upon I had taken one of our keys and with my soldering gun filled in all the notches on the key until it was smooth. Then I held the two keys together and with a small file cut out the solder on my key so that it looked like their key. Ken then took their key and quietly slipped it back on the shelf in the shower. That Saturday after his "neighbors" left for the

weekend Ken and I gave our duplicated key to Dick Humphrey and his roommate, John Lignell. That night, late enough so no one would probably be likely to hear them or see them, they then used the key to unlock the door and go into the next room. They lifted both mattresses up from the metal bedframes and removed all the support springs - must have been dozens and dozens. Then they put the mattresses back on the metal bedframes so they were just supported by the edges. They put the springs in the waste baskets, in the drawers, in the closets, all around the room any place where they couldn't be seen and then left the room and locked the door and gave us back our key. I then cleaned all the solder off of our key. EVIDENCE GONE!!! They came back late Sunday night, unlocked their door and dropped onto their beds, where upon the mattresses fell down onto the floor with them on top. They then spent a CONSIDERABLE amount of time finding and replacing the springs. Since they had both of their own keys with them all the time when they were gone they nor any body else was ever able to figure out how this could have been done.

WANR

A lot of my extra time was spent at the college radio station - WANR - on the third floor of Robinson Hall, a very old building on campus, in a room that I THINK had only one window looking out. I did a lot of work fixing and rewiring some of the audio equipment. The radio station was comprised of two studio rooms - quite small - with a control room beside them. It was used to train speech majors who had to write radio scripts and produce some of their own programs. It was also an outlet to play recordings of Albion choir concerts. The University of Michigan licenced the station to replay their programs since it was difficult to pick up other stations inside the dorms. The transmitters were what are called carrier current transmitters. The program is not sent out over the air like an AM or FM radio station, but is sent through the electrical wires in the buildings where the transmitters were located - one in Seaton Hill dormitory and the other in Susanna Wesley Hall. It



was very easy for small radios to pick up the programs inside the buildings but the signals would go only a few feet out of the building. There were no other transmitters on campus. The reason for doing this was the radio station was under the control of the English Department. The English Department produced a weekly newspaper, The Albion Pleiad, that was distributed around campus and town, with ads for local merchants. They did not want the radio station to get any further than the two buildings. NO COMPETITION!!!

To get the programs from the radio station to the transmitter into Seaton Hall, there was a phone line under the street into the Seaton Hall basement. To get the program into to Susanna Wesley Hall it went on a telephone line through a utilities tunnel from the power plant and under the streets into Susanna Wesley Hall's basement. This tunnel was big enough to walk through. It was used for the steam heating pipes, also for electrical cables and some of the communications systems on campus. Several of us thought it might be a good way to sneak into the basement of Suzy but we never did try it. Since the radio station had the tape recorders and microphones some groups that wanted to record a show or lecture during chapel and have it played on the radio station later would contact WANR to do the recording. The Albion College Choir produced records that could be purchased at the college book store. The master recordings that were made to give to the record manufactures were done at the radio station. Sometimes duplicates would be made. (I somehow seem to have acquired some of the copies which were used for us to make CDs for our 50th class reunion.)

MORE FUN

One weekend I took Bob DiCarlo home to Gross Ile with me. The house had hot water heat built into the floor of each room, which was nice because when you got out of bed and stepped on the floor it was all warm. So as not to interfere with the heat flow from floor, there was no wall to wall carpeting. The floors were covered with asphalt tile. Mother had large white cotton throw rugs in various rooms. When anyone came in, they would take their shoes off and walk around in their socks so the white rugs wouldn't get dirty. Bob talked about this for quite a while after we got back from Albion. No tricks on him this time.

Sometime that spring Ken went home for the weekend. That Saturday night, when Ken and his family were having dinner, his younger sister was making plans about college. Ken had apparently mentioned various things about me to her. His sister spoke up and said she wished she could be my roommate next year at Albion. Ken told me about it when he got back to Albion. He said there was a dead silence for a short time and then she realized what she had said and quickly responded that it would be fun with all that equipment that I had up in the room. In the end, it turned out to be quite funny.

The Plays and the Crews I worked on that school year:

Goodbye, Mr. Fancy - Oct. 1952 - Lighting

Ghosts - Dec. 1952 - Lighting

Androcles & the Lion - March 1953 - Lighting

YMCA Talent Show - April 1953 - Lighting

3 One Acts - May -1953 - Lighting

Experiment in Dance - May 1953 - Lighting



At the end of the year I found out that I was given an A in Advanced English 401 for the time spent in the radio station, which helped compensate for the D in English 101, which helped keep me in school for another year. It also led to some confusion among the administration that I would get such a poor grade in English 101 and a top grade in English 401.

I wrapped up the year and I had failed Algebra and Spanish. I would have to repeat Algebra 1 next year and have to take a different course to replace Spanish. But I hadn't been kicked out yet!!!! My Mom came to get me and I put all my stuff in the car and headed home.

EXXON MOBILE

The next week I started my paid summer job working at the Chemical Testing Lab at the Mobil Oil Company (now Exxon Mobil). This was located in Trenton

across the Detroit River about 20 minutes away. Dad was General Manager of the refinery and Dr. Potoff, was the manager of the Chemical Testing Lab, and had gone to Albion so it looked as if it should be a pretty good place to work.

There were two sections of the lab - one was the Routine Lab which checked the gasoline quality that was produced in the plant. A fairly simple process - just boil the gasoline and measure the quantity of ingredients that distilled off. The other lab was the Technical Lab. The work for that lab was to test the quality of several of the Mobil Oil refinery products and competitors products. Some of the tests were how much gum was in the gasoline, how long the gasoline could be stored before it soured, at what temperatures would the gasoline or the jet fuel thicken and how much carbon would be in the oil. When there was a gas war in Detroit samples would come in from many gas stations and we needed to test to find out if some of the gas stations were diluting their gasoline or if they were adding gasoline that was old and not good. Things would be very busy for several days.

My first real day on the job, Dad came into the lab and told Dr. Potoff and the rest of the staff that he never wanted to see me sitting down. His office was on one side of the lab building and the cafeteria was on the other side. Since Dad got there a half hour early - 7:30am - and left a half an hour later in the evening - 5:00 pm - I was there by myself some of the time - so I was given the job of getting the hot water ready for the coffee before the 5 chemists came in. I took a one liter florence flask, filled it with cold water, placed it on a ring stand over a Bunson Burner, turned on the gas and lit the burner - so by the time the staff got there - a little bit early - there was a nice pot of boiling water for their coffee. And I don't even like coffee!!!

I helped out by assisting the chemists in their jobs as needed. The test to determine the anti-knock quality of the gasoline was done by this lab in the basement. The test requires a large bucket of crushed ice which I would regularly get from the cafeteria's crushed ice machine. This was usually done in the morning when the cooks were starting to prepare lunch and I was usually given a free snack. I had been there often before I worked there, so EVERYONE in the plant knew me.

Another job was that one of the ingredients used in the gasoline is a very strongly scented material. This is BUTYL MERCAPTAN. It is the same chemical that is put into the natural gas lines so you can smell it if there is a leak. Someone - me - every few days had to go out of the lab and into the back of one of the warehouses, go into the refrigerator and open up a pint bottle. This is very strong smelling - like skunk oil!!! I got the job of doing this. Three drops of the material were put into a one gallon can full of N-Heptane. I then took it back to the lab where it was used in very small quantities. I tended to smell like a skunk for a couple of hours.

Another “nice job” I got was to measure the amount of oil in the waste water that was leaving the plant. Once a day we would receive a 5 gallon jug (like the ones you see on water coolers) taken from the waste water pipe. Usually there would be 3 or 4 to test at a time. All I needed was about a pint of the material so I would shake the bottle up and pour out one pint - BUT some of the oil would stick to the inside of the glass bottle and I had to get an equal portion of that oil residue on the bottle to put back into the one pint sample of the waste water. Then I would pour out the rest of the water, then pour a cup full of ether into the 5 gallon jug, swirl it all around to absorb the oil, pour it out into a beaker and take out the small quantity I had to add to the water sample, then dump the rest of the ether and oil into a safety waste container. By this time the whole room was filled with ether fumes. (It had been used when my tonsils were taken out years before and thinking of it still gives me the shudders). After doing this, I didn’t eat any lunch. I soon learned to do this after lunch - a much better arrangement since the food was very good in the cafeteria and very low cost.

Once I got acquainted with the various test procedures I took over the job of each of the chemists when they went on vacation. It wasn’t hard work and I found it interesting. It was also air conditioned in the summer.

BEMIDJI

Near the end of July my Navy Reserve Unit had its two week training session. This was done at another air station, not ours at Grosse Ile. That summer the chosen airfield was in Bemidji in Northern Minnesota. Our squadron pilots flew up in the 20

AD 1Q Sky Raiders. The rest of us were loaded up in a DC4 cargo plane. It had metal bench seats along each side of the aircraft and our parachutes were in a rack over each seat - NOT First Class seating. The windows had round holes in them about 3 inches in diameter with a cover piece of plastic that could be moved to open or close the hole. This worked to let the smoke out from the ones who were smoking and the fresh air in. We didn't fly over water. We went around Lake Michigan and over Chicago. We could see the Chicago Railroad Yards. There must have been miles of track in the transfer yards - and then over the green farms of Wisconsin and into Minnesota.

We arrived at the airfield which was about 5 miles out of town in farm country. It was a private airfield - owned by Shorty Hall. There were 3 or 4 barracks, each one could hold about 20 sailors. There was a restaurant where we got our main meals, paid for by the Navy but we had to pay for any extras. There were a couple of service shops that were set up for repairs. We had to park our aircraft outside along the runway. Not only did Shorty Hall sell all the gas for the airplanes, he also owned the restaurant where we ate and the bus that would take us the 5 miles into town when we were off duty. He had been doing this with the Navy for several years.

Bemidji, Minnesota, is the home of Paul Bunyon and Babe, his blue ox. In town there is a "life size" statue of Paul about 25 feet tall and Babe about half that size. For those not familiar with the territory, Paul was the Greatest Lumberjack of the Northeast. I rode the bus into town a couple of times. It was a tourist town for the summer - several restaurants and souvenir shops. Not anything I was much interested in. I should have taken lots of photos of the town and the pine forest around there. It was one of those places you could smell the pines and the air was very clean.



These were the ColdWar days with Russia. People were worried that Russian bombers would sneak across Canada. The United States and Canada had set up radar stations in Alaska and Canada to keep an eye on Russian aircraft. Our object was to sneak under the early warning radar - THE DEWLINE - which was covering that part of Canada. I think that we were careful enough to get undetected a few times. Sometimes intercept planes were sent out of the Duluth airbase to catch us. There wasn't much for the ground crew to do when the planes had taken off except for cleaning and engine and airframe maintenance on the planes that weren't flying that day.

Bemidji is very near International Falls, Minnesota, which is the national weather forecasters pick as the coldest city in the country. Since it was near the end of July we were told to bring our heavy coats with us. We were expecting nice hot days in the 70s and 80s and we got them, but at night it got very cold and we were glad we had the heavy coats. It got so cold at night that you could not see the fire flies light up because they had their wool underwear on. At night a couple of us would be assigned to doing a security watch around our aircraft and to prevent the pilots from using the CO2 fire extinguishers to cool off their beer. We figured the moose and coyotes were not going to steal any of our aircraft.



A local farmer leased the land around the runways to grow hay. Before we got up there he had cut, dried and bailed the hay. After we were there a few days he sent his 3 teenage daughters out to pick up the bales. They had a tractor towing a hay wagon - and there were about 30 sailors standing around watching. First there were a few whistles as they started to load the hay but it stopped very quickly and nobody got too close. The youngest girl was driving the tractor, the middle girl stood on the hay wagon and the third girl was on the ground with a hay hook in her hand. She hooked the a bail of hay and flung it to her sister on the wagon, who stacked them up as they went along. These were full sized bales!!!

With all the pine forests this area had its share of ticks, mosquitos and cold nights - but it was very beautiful country. However, after the two weeks we were pretty much happy to go home - where I returned to my job at the oil refinery and I also worked in my lab - half of Dad's gardening shed.

ALBION, 1953 to 1954

That fall it was back to Albion. I changed my major from Chemistry to Physics. After working in the lab that summer and doing the jobs of the chemists who had masters degrees I didn't see much future in that field. The classes for that year were English Literature, Physics, Speech 304, Botany -- plus Gym - AND a repeat of Algebra.

That year I was assigned a basement room near the dining hall - there were rooms on the pathway between the two buildings. It was a larger room with 3 beds, I had two roommates this time. Both were pre-ministerial students. We had no common interests or classes. They went to bed about 9 o'clock at night. No place for any of my radios or other electronic equipment. Ken had been moved to the northwest corner of Seaton Hall on the 3rd floor. Just down the hall about 6 rooms from where we had been the year before. His roommate, now a Sophomore too, wanted to room at one of the fraternities. After two weeks he was accepted and moved out and I was allowed to move back in with Ken. We had both brought a little more equipment - or toys - along with us. Ken had his stereo amplifier, base reflex speaker, record player, lots more records and some more tools. I brought in my new short wave radio, 82 MHZ transceiver, small audio control panel, oscilloscope, electronic volt meter, large 10 inch communications speaker, line taping telephone, intercom telephone hand set, a reel to reel tape recorder - AND a typewriter! There were NO COMPUTERS then!

This was a larger room with windows on the north and west sides. The pay telephones were across the hall from our door. The proctor for the floor was right next to us. Most of the rooms were for Freshmen so we tried to keep them under control

and quiet. The proctor couldn't tell that our Hi-Fi was too loud since he was right next door and too close to tell how loud it would be down the hall. AND he liked our kind



of music. This year he and Ken both worked for the food service again at Susanna Wesley Hall to pay for their board.

Seeing that the pay telephones were close to us all we had to do was run two small wires from the phone line connection under the phones, around the hall moldings, under the door molding and into our room. This way we had our own private phone. We also were able to connect into an old communications cable in the wall. That went into most of the rooms and we were able to set up a buzzer system to contact some of our friends when they had an outside phone call coming in.

We took off our closet doors and made long desk tops on each side of the room. We covered them with soft fiber board so as not to damage them since our small regular desks were already filled with equipment. We stacked our beds up on top of each other. We decided to acquire a parachute and hang it around the beds to block the light so one person could be sleeping while the other one was up with the lights on. I picked up a surplus green military parachute that had been used for one of the plays. A lot of them had been stuffed in a box in the scene shop. On Saturday we put it into the hall deep sink with hot water and bleach since



we didn't like the green color. After a while most of the camouflage color had come out. You could still see some of the pattern. Next we dumped in a box of bright red Rit dye and let it soak in the hot water. After some time we rinsed it out. The red dye did not take well on the nylon and we had a pink parachute - but it did work to keep some of the light from the person who was trying to sleep in the lower bunk. We got a wooden batten strip about a quarter inch thick, an inch and a half wide and fifteen feet long and bowed it across the ceiling. The ends then stuck into the picture molding around the room and we hung a 200 watt lamp into the center of the room and wired it to an outlet on the wall. On the wall by the door we hung a 3 ft. by 3 ft. chalk board which allowed us to work out math and physics problems. We had some other work lights hung from the walls to shine down to light up our desks.

Sometime later that fall I was into the television repair store in town. This was where you got radio parts since there were no Radio Shack stores. The clerk asked me if I went to the college and I told him I did. He mentioned that there were some really interesting kids there - that one of the rooms in the boys dorm had its own overhead light, pink parachute around the beds and large desks made from their closet doors - and lots of radio equipment. His final comment was, "You ought to see it." I told him, "I have - that's MY ROOM." Apparently one of the campus maintenance people who had a pass key had been showing the room to his friends when Ken and I were out for the weekend. We really didn't know when he had started doing this and if he continued doing so - we never saw that anything had been disturbed.

Don Henderson, who lived at home just off the campus, worked with me at the radio station and with light and sound in the theater. One weekend the girls swimming team was having a show and the instructor asked us to set up the lights and sound using recorded music. The acoustics in the swimming pool were awful but the colored spotlights we used worked great. We set the equipment up during their last rehearsal before the show. Several of the girls were a bit unhappy about having Don and me see them in their black baggy rehearsal tank suits. The show itself had much better costumes.



The same as last year I had separate lecture and lab classes. The three one hour lectures were in the morning and there were two afternoon labs, 1:00 to 5:00. The Physics Lab usually used up the full 4 hour lab time 2 days a week, but the good thing was Ken was taking it also, so we could combine notes. He printed them with a fine tip pen. My Botany Lab was 2 days a week for about 3 hours.

Botany was interesting, but I still had a problem with writing and spelling. Dr. Stowell, the Botany Professor realized I liked plants (I still do a lot with plants). A lot of the work was diagraming plant parts and naming and identifying them. I was having difficulty spelling all the technical names and I also had difficulty memorizing these names for tests (I still have more plants than I can remember the names for). I finally was beginning to realize that I really had some memory problems. (Very little was known about Dyslexia back then.) I was doing better in retaking Algebra but I was still having difficulty comprehending the process. It was abstract, not like the Geometry where you could see what was happening. I just wasn't able to cram for a test by memorizing the problems!!!!

This year's Public Speaking class was different. I had taken Public Speaking 101 from Mr. Aggertt Freshman year. This year, because I needed more English credits, I took another speech course. Dr. Garland was the head of the Speech Dept. He was teaching Advanced Public Speaking. There were only about 7 students in his class. 3 were seniors, 3 juniors and me. The class was designed for upper classmen - but there I was. Most of the time we were to give 5 minute speeches, there were no notes required and most of the speeches lasted about 15 minutes. Therefore there were only two speeches in a class period, allowing for time to critique. Easy for me. All I had to do was talk. Usually about 15 minutes before the hour, Dr. Garland would say, "We will reconvene over coffee at Baldwin Hall's cafeteria." For the final exam, we had one half hour to explain and show how we were studying for one of our other final exams. I think I used Botany. Dr. Garland had a pet project. It was called "The Second Million Club." Anyone who wanted to join had to agree to give the college 10% of their second million dollar income. Very interesting, but few people signed up.

One of the Physics classes that was offered was designed for non-science students, it was very basic. Good for Sociology Majors, Ministers, Non-engineering students, etc. Dr. Glathart was the professor and as it was done in the same lab area as the other Physics classes I happened to observe an interesting student. SHE apparently was doing props in the theater as a part of the Theater Arts class. I tried to find out where she was staying since she was not listed in the dorm directories. When she was leaving the campus I started to watch her from my room. She started walking up Hannah St. but the trees blocked my view of the sidewalk. I later found out that she was staying at the Steck's residence, just a couple of blocks away, along with another transfer, Vivian Johnson from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Mrs. Steck was the cashier at the student cafeteria - and I eventually found that Mr. Steck had been in an auto accident and could no longer work. I found out that the person I was watching was Dorothy Zittel, a second year transfer from Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. Her major was Sociology. For a while the only time we saw each other was at rehearsal times on stage or passing back and forth to and from the Physics Lab. We didn't have any common classes - but it seemed nice to see her when we were passing each other.

SOPHOMORE FOLLIES

There was a tradition at Albion College that the Sophomore Class put on some sort of entertainment program in February. This was done independently from any of the college staff except for one Advisor - Miss Clara Dixon, an Assistant Professor of Biology. Our class of '56 decided it wanted a presentation that was a little more cohesive with a pretty good story line. We encouraged as many classmates as possible to participate. Fortunately our class had some very good musicians, singers, dancers, writers of dialogue, lyrics and music AND very good stage technicians. Over 75 of us volunteered. The production was able to use the stage in the chapel since this time was between any regular theater presentations between the end of January and the beginning of the rehearsals for the upcoming official March play.

The story was about an off-Broadway Summer Stock company. They were trying to put on a musical song and dance show. There were many good songs of various types. We had the luck to have Coby Martin in our class. He could almost

instantly play something in any key that someone wanted. He took charge of the Follies music. His rendition of Harlem Nocturne was great!!!! There were things like



Stranger in Paradise, Blue Moon, I Wanna Be Loved By You, I'll Know When My Love Comes Along, Wonder Why and many, many more sung by various actors. One of our classmates, John McHale, wrote two songs and sang them himself - 'Wonder Why' and "What You Need Is A Song".

The class decided to use a farm setting with 3 acts, a hay wagon and a script with various difficulties. The actors' parts had multiple ups and downs - disagreements, comic situations, romances, all kinds of things. But in the end, all triumphed - and finished with as many as possible getting into the hay wagon and singing "They're Laying' Eggs Now, Just Like They Use'ter."

I was operating the lights and attempting to make a recording of the program at the same time. The English Dept. controlled the equipment of the radio station and would not allow me to use the station's tape recorder, so I used mine and hung a mic. down part way over the stage with a rope. I had to manipulate the lighting controls AND monitor the tape recorder. I did two things at once!!!! Some of the early parts did not get recorded. But the lighting was definitely good if I do say so myself.

The band was in front of the stage. The people who did the backstage work were also asked to come out for a curtain call. Dorothy Zittel had done the props, but her name was accidentally left out of the program. We were standing next to each other in the wings (probably on purpose). She didn't go out for the first curtain call so I got behind her and when the curtain opened again I gave her a "slight" nudge. It was apparently a little BIGGER nudge than I thought which knocked her to the stage floor. I quickly pull her up but I didn't think I made many points with her that night.

THE BIG BANG

Ken's friend, Dick Humphrey, had another problem. Dick was in a room about 8 or 9 rooms down the hall from us. He had some problems last year with noisy neighbors and we had helped him out. (Remember the LOCKED DOOR CAPER?) This year he had been studying for a major exam and the present neighbors - Freshmen - would continually disturb him by having a party in their room with a bunch of friends. The more Dick asked them to be quiet the more noise they made. After he had taken the Exam he contacted Ken and me to see if there was anything we could help him do to get even. We worked on the problem. We took a 3/8th inch diameter cardboard tube about a foot long with one end plugged. A hole was put into the tube just above the plugged end and the head of a match put into the hole with the paper stem outward. Then FF black powder was poured in to about 1 inch deep. Then a couple of teaspoons of talcum powder was put in above the black powder, covered by a teaspoon of black pepper. There was no cap on the top of the tube. We told Dick to wait until about 1:00 am in the morning and then push the open end of the tube into the space under his neighbors' door, light the paper end of the match and get back into his room. SOUNDS SIMPLE! Well, it seems that while waiting until 1:00 o'clock he had been nervously tapping the plug end of the tube on his desk with the open end up. This had packed down the black powder a lot more than we planned. At 1:00 am he did as he was instructed - which resulted in a VERY large explosion in the hall. Their room was covered with paper bits from the tube, talcum powder and black pepper. There was a large circle of black ash on the door and floor with a reasonable amount of smoke in the hall. This was NOT what we had planned. It was supposed only to shoot a jet of the ingredients into the room. Very quickly there were a large number of students in the hall - maybe from the second floor too. We didn't dare come out of our room. We were both laughing so hard that tears were coming down our faces. Later that night we went outside the building and buried our supplies and evidence. Ken and Dick were still honor students. We were never questioned and no one ever found out who was responsible.



LOVE OF MY LIFE

I have always grown up with girls. There were several girls that were friends of mine in High School. We went to school dances or rode our bikes around the town. We were just friends. At Albion there were a lot of other things to do - homework, radio station, theater and my Navy Reserve time. I really didn't think too much about any college girls. There were probably enough nice girls but I didn't really notice. I found out later that some of the girls were interested in me. But Dorothy DID attract my interest. She was fun to be with and we worked together in the theater and talked together. I didn't go to cast parties after the shows - I just stayed around the stage to start striking some of my stuff so that the stage would soon be ready for the next scheduled activity. Most of the shows we did included food and drink of some kind. That was one of the things Dorothy was responsible for - so sometimes I got left-overs from the show itself - and the night of the show closing she would go to the party and then she brought some of the food back to me. It was friendly and we enjoyed talking.



She went out with some of the boys at TKE fraternity and a few others. They had chaperoned house parties. She occasionally went to movies. One time I found she went with a TKE to the big dinner when they won that year's top award for intermural football. The winning fraternity was treated to a dinner at Schuler's, a very nice steak restaurant in Marshall. She told me when she saw the very red, rare prime rib, she wondered if she could eat it. She had never eaten meat like that. But it was near the beginning of the season and she was new. She decided she had to do it - and was much surprised to find that she liked it that way. Well - maybe not QUITE that red!!! I knew a lot of the guys she went out with and they were nice.

There was a movie I wanted to see and so one night, instead of asking Ken, I asked Dorothy to go to the movies. We'd never had a real date before. We walked into town to the BOHM theater. We bought a box of popcorn to munch on - and never did open the box! It was an extra long movie and we walked quickly back to her residence across from Suzy, which took a little longer time. When I got back to my room I found a large notice on the chalkboard that said, "**LENNOX HAD A DATE.**"

Someone had seen us at the movie. This was a MAJOR event. There were several of the guys in the room waiting for me. The word spread rapidly!!

After that we went to more movies, didn't bother to buy popcorn anymore, went walking outside of buildings where parties were being held and just listened to the music, walked around the park and got grilled cheese sandwiches and chocolate milkshakes at the drugstore down town. One night we got together after theater rehearsal, went into the scene shop and got a pail of stage paint - don't remember the color - and when no one was around we covered "The Rock" with the paint. We were pleased that it was there next morning and that we didn't get caught. (It was probably a way for the staff to keep the students thinking that they had accomplished something sneaky. Actually it probably a way to keep them happy with something that wasn't really dangerous.)



One evening, we were walking back from town. It had been raining and we stopped under a tree and I kissed her. **AND THAT WAS IT!!!!!! I've been kissing her ever since.**

This year's stage productions:

Years Ago - Oct. 1953 - Lighting Crew Chief

Othello - Dec. 1953 - Lighting

Pied Piper of Hamelin - January 1954 - Lighting

Peter and the Wolf - January 1954 - Lighting

Sophomore Follies - February 1954 - Lighting

Liliom - March 1954 - Lighting

3 One Acts - May 1954 - Lighting Crew Chief



TIME TO GO HOME

The 2nd semester was very close to the end.

Dorothy and I spent as much time together as we could but soon we both had finals to study for. Ken and I had to start packing up a lot of the "stuff" that we had in our room. The last weekend in school was Navy duty so I took the bus home. I was at the

base Saturday and Sunday. Since my last test was Monday afternoon, my Mom brought me back to school and that morning I loaded her car with all my things. Shortly before it was time for my test, I told Mom I had something I wanted to show her. I went onto the campus and got Dorothy and brought her down to introduce her to my Mother. As we were walking to the car, she asked me what my Mother said when I told her about us and I said - cough, wheeze, choke - "I told her that I have something I wanted to show her." Dorothy was obviously very surprised and looked as if she was somewhat annoyed, but when my Mom saw her, she greeted Dorothy in a very friendly, unsurprised manor and had her come into the car and sit down. Mom and Dorothy talked all the time I was taking my test!

(Notes from Dorothy: The day I met Tom's Mom it was almost summer and quite warm. It was a time when girls were wearing blouses with full circle cotton skirts that were getting droopy. I was quite annoyed, to say the least, that Tom had not told his mother about me before I met her. It was the first time I had really been mad at him. I was quite worried about what she would think of me, especially when I first saw her and how well she was dressed - but she made me welcome and comfortable right from the beginning. It was a big relief and I soon decided I liked her very much and would not give Tom too much of a problem about it - but it is an experience that I never have forgotten.)

Mom and I drove home. Dorothy had a couple of more tests that week. Then I went back to Albion to pick her up and take her to Grosse Ile and the places around where I lived. I didn't realize that when she saw my parents' bedroom with Stewart Tartan drapes and bedspread she was very impressed. Eventually I found out that she - in spite of her British and German genes - had seen a big display of Stewart Tartan clothing when she was quite young and had loved it ever since - and that she was beginning to think more seriously that we were right for each other long term. On June the 11th, Dad and I took her to the Train Station and onto the East going train to Buffalo.

After she left, It was time for me to get back to work at the refinery lab. I was doing the same thing as I had done the year before. Not much of change. I didn't seem to be seeing any school classmates. It was 5:30pm when I got home from work. Then we had dinner. I had some time to work in my lab in the shed outside the house.

At some point in mid summer I got a letter from the Dean's office of Albion College stating that since my grades were not up to Albion's standards I was should find another college that might fit my requirements better.

In the middle of the summer, I took some time off from the lab and went to see Dorothy In Buffalo. I slept at her grandmother's house next door. She seemed very happy to have me. I think the first day I was there, Dorothy's parents were someplace in the house, but left us in the living room alone for awhile. I was wearing my high school black onyx ring. She was sitting on the couch and I kneeled down and asked her if she would go steady. The answer was "YES!" and I gave her my ring.

(Note from Dorothy: I thought Tom would ask me and I was going to say NO since I knew he wouldn't be at Albion anymore. But as soon as he asked me I said "Yes" without any hesitation. Next day we went with my parents to Niagara Falls and other places near where Lake Erie changed to the Niagara River and there were a great many things to see a few miles up in both the United States and Canada. Back then there was very little need to do anything crossing the border except a minute or two to give the customs our quick info and drive away. The Falls were beautiful and we got tickets to the Maid of the Mist, where we put on rain coats and then went right in front of the falls and into the spray they put out. This was Tom's first visit with my parents and they were certainly looking him over. They had lived down the street from each other since they were 12 and 11 and they wanted to be sure that we would be a good match. I very much thought and hoped that they approved of him.)

QUANSET POINT

I had to attend another two week Navy program. That year we went to Quonset Point Air Station in Rhode Island. I think we flew out on DC-3s - or maybe R4-Ds. Our pilots flew in the next day on the AD-1Qs. It was a large Naval Base with both aircraft and ship handling facilities.



The runway was right along side of the bay. We spent most of our free time around the barracks. There were several hangers for aircraft repairs. One day when things were fairly quiet several of us went down to the beach by the bay. There were several of the local sailors from the prop shop digging clams on the beach at low tide. They said they were going to have a clam bake. A couple of us decided to join in and helped clean the clams - we had to use a wire brush. They took the clams into one of the repair shops, put them into a large can (had been used to ship spark plugs) and someone went to the chow hall and talked the cooks out of a pound of butter. Butter, corn, salt and pepper and water were put into the can along with the clams. The can was set up on some bricks allowing the flame from an acetylene welding torch to heat it from underneath. It made a pretty good clam cooker. Some of the other workers in the shop left. The smell of the clams cooking was too much for them. I would have thought the locals would have been used to the smell, but only a few of us got to enjoy the clams. This was my first Clam Bake and I LIKED it..

This was the middle of summer. We were on a nice beach on the east coast and expected some good beach time. But the weather was colder and wetter than we had hoped for, so we spent more time in the barracks and service shops than usual. That cut back on our flying time. The Quonset Point base was fairly strict on the "uniform of the day," which meant that when you were out of your work area you would have to be wearing your white uniform - not the dungarees - except for chow hall, so few of us wanted to bother to change into our white uniforms just to go to the Navy Exchange or any of the other recreational facilities. It was only two weeks. We survived and got back to Grosse Ile. (The Quonset Point Naval Base was deactivated in 1974.)

SUMMER'S END

At the end of July, for Dorothy's birthday with my Mom helping, I sent her a large bouquet of flowers - and a package in the mail with a very nice Steiff baby lion since she was a Leo and loved that connection. I eventually found out that she had cried in happiness about both gifts. She had very few dates in high school and was thrilled to be surprised with those presents. (We still have baby lion Lenny on a dresser in our bedroom. He is 65 now - two years older than our marriage.)



The rest of the summer was spent back at the refinery lab. At that time a local draft board covered the area south of Detroit and was low on volunteers and having difficulties meeting their quota. The grapevine was saying that they were drafting people like me who weren't in college. I requested to be drafted. When I received the draft notice, I took it to my Navy Reserve Personal Officer. He made up orders for me to be activated into the regular Navy one day earlier than the Army draft notice.



Grosse Ile Naval Air Station was used by the Naval Reserve units. There were a lot of active regular Navy Personnel that maintained the base. They worked 5 days a week, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, and mostly lived at home. They were the cooks, control tower operators, the instructors for the various schools and the main people operating the repair shops. This could be a good deal. I think they were called Station Keepers. I was told I would be sent to Philadelphia Naval Receiving Station in November for assignment to my next duty station.

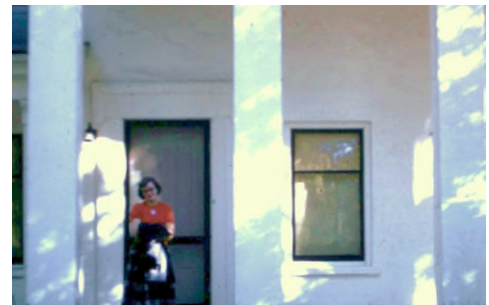
A BUSY FALL FOR BOTH OF US

When it was time for Dorothy to go back to Albion for her Junior year, she took the train to Detroit and got off to be picked up by me and my Dad for the weekend. This gave me the opportunity to show her around more of Grosse Ile and my old "stomping grounds." The school I went to was still there and there was a chance to see some of the old "well-to-do" houses along the river front. (Some of those houses had been part of the underground railway that got runaway slaves into Canada.

There is now a museum about the Underground Railway across the river in Amherstburg, Canada.) And we went to Round Island - a private island - about a quarter square mile of land off the southern tip of Grosse Ile - where Dad and his friends had built a hunting camp with a cabin where they occasionally hunted but mostly played cards. I took Dorothy around and showed her where, as a kid, I often went with my Dad on Saturdays where he let me play around in the trees and swamps.

Monday Dorothy had to get to Albion and I took her in Mother's 1954 Black, White and Pink Ford Fairline which was specially painted by Ford for an auto show. ONE OF A KIND!!! Then I returned to Grosse Ile so that Dorothy could get things going with her new job.

For her Junior Year she earned her room and board being a Student House Mother along with Carolyn Maron, a Senior whose husband was away in the Army. The incoming Freshmen needed places to live and there were no more older ladies available. Dorothy and Carolyn had 6 freshmen girls - 3 pairs in 3 bedrooms - and one bathroom on the 2nd floor of a converted house. Dorothy and Carolyn had a bedroom, kitchenette, studying area and bathroom facilities on the 1st floor. A Sorority used the other part of the 1st floor



(Notes from Dorothy: The first - probably most comic - happening was just as the girls were arriving. Something went wrong with the girls' toilet. It wouldn't flush and the water looked brown and awful. I went upstairs to help and found that none of them had any idea about that part of Michigan. There was iron deposit in the water that was the cause of the color - and something had come loose in the back part of the water tank. I took off the cover, reached down into the water to grab the chain that was fastened to the float valve, then hooked it back into the flush lever. The girls

were watching and most of them were horrified that I would reach down into an awful place like that. I finally was able to get it into their heads that there was nothing in there that was going to be a problem. I had re-hooked the chain onto the flush lever. It wouldn't hurt them!!! And it did work fine from then on. It wasn't long before they were getting adapted to college life and were working on a home coming float. See below.

I borrowed Mom's car occasionally and headed for Albion. It didn't take long for a lot of the other students to spot the car and yell at Dorothy that I was coming. At Albion my first two years I never went to a football game. This time, since Dorothy played clarinet with the Marching Band and had to perform for football half-time she had to stay in the bleachers for the whole game - and I stayed with her. Wouldn't have gone anywhere else! (And at least I could see the track team come in.)

Don was going with Dorothy's best friend, Lynn Lewis. The girls got together and planned a dinner for Don and me at Don's house. Don and I stayed out of the kitchen but talked to the girls as they prepared dinner. Suddenly there was an odor of burned peas. The water had run dry. Dorothy and Lynn each thought the other one had been responsible. Fortunately all the rest of the meal came out fine - but Dorothy and Lynn sure remember it!

Homecoming was on October 9th. Two of Dorothy's girls in 1st picture. Dorothy in 6 and Lyn in 7 and Don in 4.



I was able to get to see Dorothy several times before I had to leave to get my Duty Station assignment and I usually stayed at Don Henderson's overnight. This gave Dorothy and me some weekends together. She didn't have any Saturday classes or big tests to study for. It was fall and one of the prettiest times of the year in that part of Michigan. I had Mom's car so we were able to drive around a lot of the area and see the changes in the fall colors.

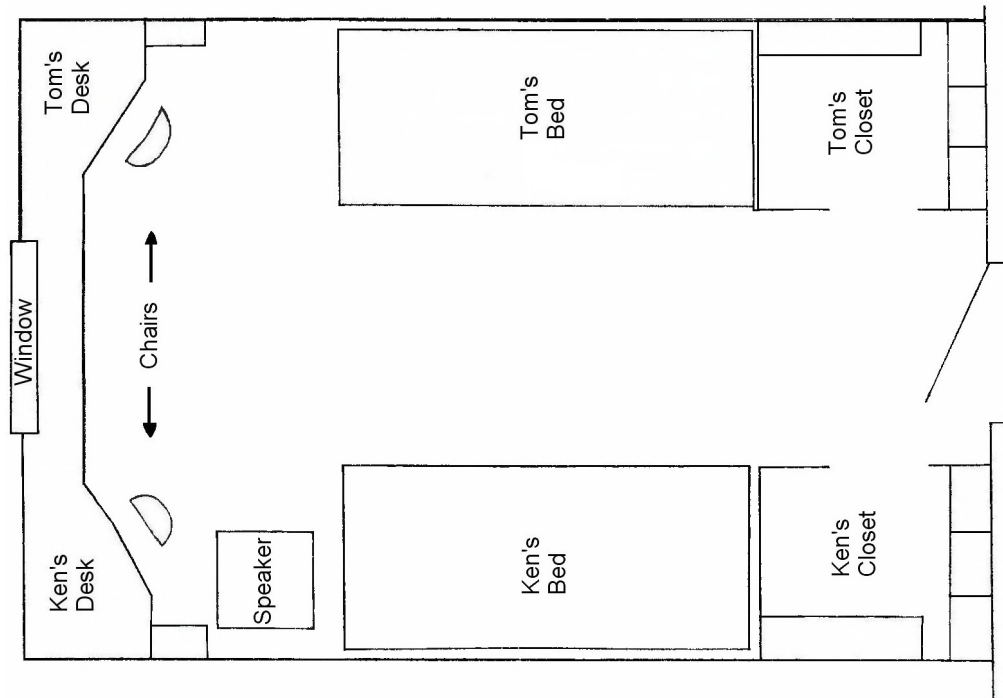
There was a chance I would be assigned to the Grosse Ile Navy Base or the Chicago Air Station. These were close and I had an Airman E3 rating. If not, maybe a sunny place like Florida. But I wouldn't know until I got to Philadelphia!!!!

Anyway, Dorothy would be finishing at Albion for the next two years and I was sure hoping to be somewhere fairly close to there - and able to see her pretty often.

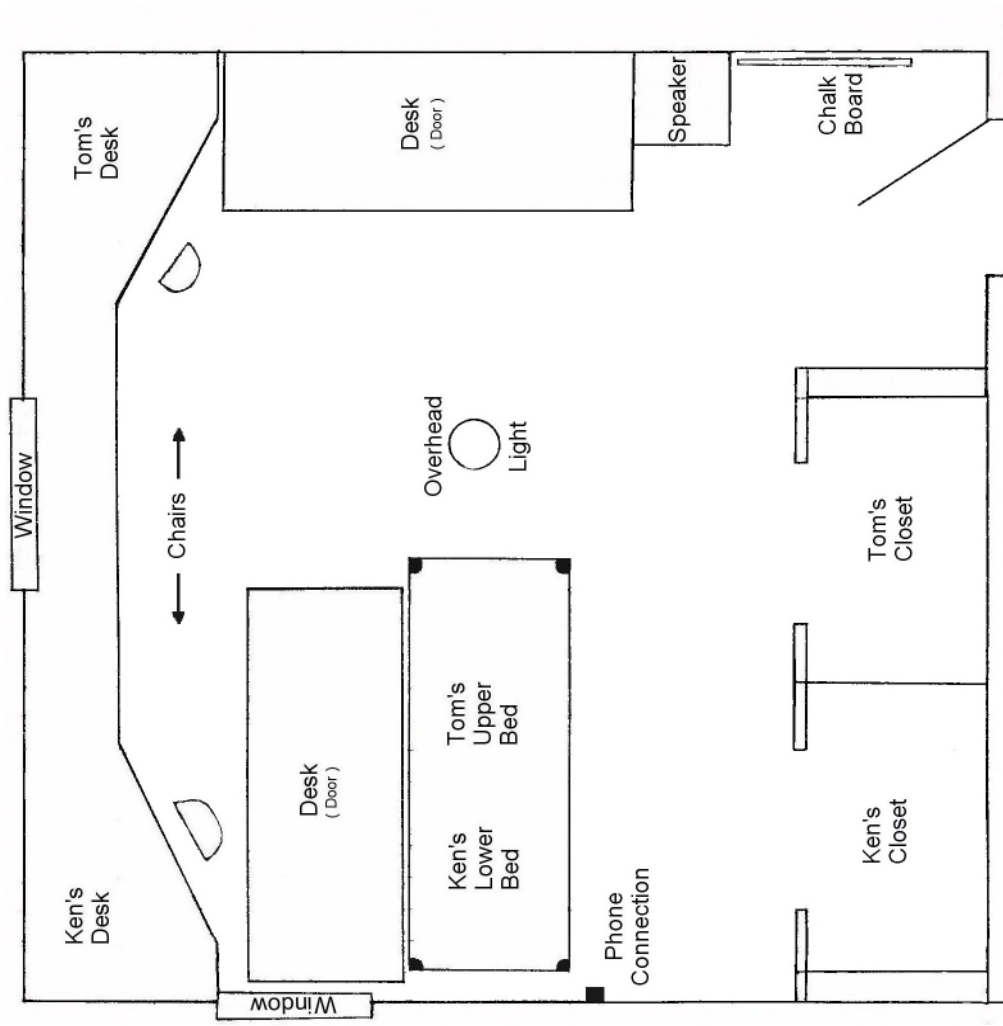
I had to report to the Philadelphia on October 26th. I picked up Dorothy from Albion and Mom drove us to the Train Station in Detroit. None of us were very happy - we were all quite nervous about the upcoming adventure. As the time for boarding got near, my Mom was nice enough to give me her goodbyes and then she stepped back and let me have some extra time with Dorothy.

Then I was on the train and on my way to Philadelphia and the Navy - HOPING I'd be back soon to a place near Michigan - and Dorothy!!!!





1952 - 1953
Dorm Room



1953 - 1954
Dorm Room

Io Triumphe! Io Triumphe!
Haben swaben rebecca le animor
Whoop te Whoop te sheller devere
Deboom de-ral de-l de-pa
Hooneka heraka whack a whack
A-hob dob balde bora bolde bara
Con slomade hob dob Rah!
Al-bi-on Rah!



