

CHAPTER 6 – WASHINGTON STATE



April 1967 found us in Phoenix at the home of Roy's parents and sister. There was much to do sorting through all our belongings which had been left in their garage, and packing things in a small trailer to take to Washington State. It was our pleasure to speak in their church telling about the ministries being carried on via radio in Central America.

Coming back to the States, was a sort of culture shock in reverse. There is so much of everything in this country! The abundance of consumer goods seemed overwhelming. It took some adjusting to have so much available to us again. People had begun to install dishwashers in their homes, a luxury that I was sure I would never indulge in!

Because of our time at TGN, our main interest of possibly serving as members of a mission organization, had shifted from Wycliffe Bible Translators to the Central American Mission and the radio work in Guatemala. But we still had an application active at Wycliffe.

If we were to join Wycliffe, I would need the one summer of linguistic training required by that mission. Since we were unsure which mission we might end up joining, we decided to go ahead with the linguistic study, and we found that there was one session scheduled to be held in the University of Washington.

SEATTLE

Dad and mom had moved to Lynnwood Washington, a bit north of Seattle, so as soon as we could we traveled north visiting friends and speaking at churches as we drove toward Seattle from Arizona.



At the time, Dad was working at the Port of Seattle at Pier 91, a government pier from which supplies were shipped to Viet Nam.

Dad operated the largest floating crane north of San Francisco which, if I remember correctly, was called the YD.

He loaded many a ton of ammunition into ships for that war effort.



We stayed at the home of my parents in Lynnwood for several weeks until the summer school session at the University of Washington began. Then our little family of three moved into a room in a fraternity house at the University. I attended my first session of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), the linguistic training program associated with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Ruth attended the pre-school that SIL had for children of students in that program. Since Roy had already taken the course in 1961, he took employment at Boeing Field, in the Electronics Maintenance and Calibration department.



When the SIL summer session ended, we moved into a small basement apartment right across the street from Emmanuel Bible Church where we had begun to attend. It was also right across the street from Seattle's lovely Woodland Park Zoo. We loved taking a picnic supper across to the zoo, enjoying the lovely gardens and the animals in the evening hours.



During the year that we lived in that apartment, it became evident that we were not going to return to Guatemala. Two couples had replaced us at TGN for the radio ministry and there was another single man in training to go to the station. Consequently, we were not really needed in that radio ministry. In addition we were not members of the Central American Mission since we had gone there on such short notice as temporary helpers.

The next several years became a time of transition for us, meaning that we began to rethink our future. Although we still had a portion of an application for membership to Wycliffe in an active state with that mission, we were uncertain about following through on completing that application. We did a lot of soul searching; analyzing our two years of service in Guatemala, our training, our goals, our motivations, Ruth's probable future medical needs, as well as my own. We were trying to imagine just what our future could consist of if we were not to become members of either CAM or WBT.

It was a kind of emotional and spiritual time of turmoil for us. Were we sure missionary work was what we had been "cut out for", "called to be", "gifted by God to do?" What we began to long for was a nest, a home of our own where we could settle down, concentrate on our family and just be quiet until God would show us what life would have for us next.



In June 1968 with the help of Uncle Milton who was a realtor, we were able to buy our first home where we lived for the next four years, near Seattle's Greenlake area. That four-year period was the longest time that I had ever lived in one house.

Ruth began kindergarten at Fairview Elementary School.



Our first home, in Seattle

OUR FAMILY GROWS

Now that we were settled into our own home and a routine of work, study, church and family life; we began to think about adding another child to our family. Because I had previously had two miscarriages, we reasoned that God probably did not want us to have any more children of our own. Plus an adopted child would not inherit the medical problem that Ruth had inherited from me.

Adopting turned out to be very easy for us. There were many newborns available at the time in this country. We went to a Christian counseling agency that sometimes had unwed mothers needing to adopt out their babies. We were told to expect it to take about nine months, as if we were having our own baby.

Eight months later, a phone call came suddenly, telling us that a baby boy had been born on August 13, 1968 just two days before, whom we could have the very next day!

Roy came home from work immediately and we fell all over ourselves getting things arranged at home, setting up the nursery, buying things we did not have yet. It was a very fast preparation for an addition to our family!

The next morning, on August 16th, we drove to the hospital to receive our dear little boy right from the nursery. We named our little son Stephen Michael Smith. Ruth was the most excited and best big sister any little boy could have had!



Our adoption became final after one year.

Our little “home nest” was fuller now, feeling more cozy all the time as the months slipped away. But to some extent it still continued to be a time of emotional and spiritual turmoil about the future. Longing for more contentment spiritually, we began to search for another place to worship and found Sunset Hill Bible Church.

The pastor was teaching a series about the essence, or character of God. Some things that describe God in the Bible are:

Sovereign -- King or Ruler of all
Omnipotent -- all powerful
Omnipresent - present everywhere
Omniscient -- all knowing
Veracity -- truth
Love -- loves always
Immutability -- unchangeable
Righteous -- perfect righteousness, morally pure, sinless
Justice -- always just
Eternal Life -- lives always

This was not new teaching to us, but the in-depth series of lessons which went on for several months were what our hearts were hungry for at that time in our lives. As we focused in detail over a period of extended time on the wonderful character of our God, we discovered a deeper sense of peacefulness growing within us.

One of the members of the church was a gentleman closely associated with the Institute For Creation Research who taught a class at church about the Biblical flood. It was the first time I had heard creation taught in detail. I have always believed that God said exactly what He meant when He inspired the Word in written form, so was not ever really comfortable with the theory of evolution. But not being a person of science myself, I had to accept it. Now for the first time, I heard a man of science speak directly to that issue!

How exciting it was to find out that there actually were learned people who were studying the sciences and physical evidences and concluding that creation and the flood had happened just as God said it did in the Bible, in six literal 24 hour days. Just knowing that people were investigating it from the viewpoint of creationism, put my heart at rest. I would continue to trust that God says exactly what He means when He speaks to us in His Word. What a person believes on either side of this question is in the end a choice made in faith.

Being out of radio work after being focused in that direction for a number of years, was hard for Roy. He worked at Boeing for a year then took a job at radio stations KGDN AM & FM at King’s Garden, a large Christian center. It is now known as CRISTA. Being in radio, Roy was announcing the news throughout each day, sometimes having to announce events that were horrifying.



On June 5, 1968 he was on the air when the news came across the “wires” that Robert F. Kennedy, the brother of former President John F. Kennedy, had been shot at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles during a press conference in the hotel ballroom. Mr. Kennedy died 25 hours later at the Hospital of the Good Samaritan, the same hospital where our Ruth was born.

On July 20, 1969 Roy was at the microphone to announce the exciting landing of the Apollo 11 space craft, the first manned space mission to land on the moon.



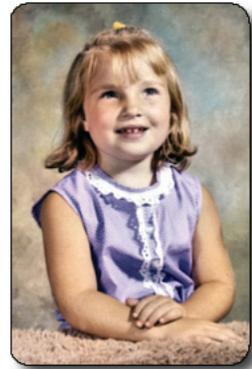
In addition to the news, most of the time KGDN AM broadcast back to back Bible programs, but the FM part used large tape decks automated to mix “middle of the road” contemporary music. This part of the ministry was centered around helping listeners come to know Christ.

Each evening a team of follow up personnel were on call for listeners who would like to be counseled concerning faith in Christ and His work on the cross for us.

Part of Roy’s ministry was the production and then airing of short 1-2 minute “fish-hooks” that contained provocative content as bait for hungry or troubled hearts to call the station for this follow up.

There was an ongoing response to this ministry because after the counseling, the callers often needed friends to support them in local churches.

These were growing years for Ruth, and her legs slowly bowed again, just as mine had. She was seen regularly in the medical clinic at Children’s Hospital in Seattle. It was at this clinic that we learned doctors in the United States had begun to delay corrective surgeries, except in cases of severe bowing of the legs, until children were older. This delay was in the hope of having to do only one surgery, rather than two or more of them.



Because I had not been in treatment since age 14, I was unaware of changes in treatment when surgery had been advised to us in Guatemala. If we had stayed in the States, it is possible Ruth would not have had surgery at the young age of two and a half. It saddens me to realize that our daughter was put through what may have been unnecessary pain.

This was the time of life when I began to really learn about what takes place in our bodies because of this medical problem and about new treatments for the rickets. Up to this time neither Ruth nor I had ever been prescribed anything other than vitamin D. Although we do not lack vitamin D, for some people as early as the 1940’s, large doses of vitamin D had been prescribed because laboratory tests showed that it gave some aid in treating the rickets present in our bones. Why the rickets occurred at all continued to be a mystery.

By the time we began going to the clinic at Children’s Hospital, medical research had shown that this problem is caused by an inability of the kidneys to function properly. It is called a “renal leak”. Due to a genetic mutation on one gene, the kidneys are unable to absorb phosphorous, which is important in bone and tooth formation and growth.

When this “leak” was discovered in medical research, our treatment was altered to include taking phosphorous along with the vitamin D. Treatment now consists of monitoring the blood and urine levels of various minerals and juggling doses in an effort to keep all at appropriate levels. Those levels can change even daily due to a variety of things, including our personal consistency in taking our medications. So we both began on a life-long schedule of taking phosphorous and Vitamin D and of clinic visits for periodic laboratory testing.

Eventually we were referred to Dr. David Baylink, who was doing research on our disease, at the Veterans Hospital in Tacoma. It was a much longer drive for us to go to Tacoma, but because Dr Baylink was using both of us in his research, we received treatment at no charge to us.

I had to purchase two forms of mineral powder in bulk from a drug supply house. The phosphorous powder was small clear crystals. The potassium was a gritty powder. These two compounds had to be weighed to divide them into small doses and the small doses stored in zipper type plastic bags. In order to use these, I mixed one bag of each powder together, added water and stored it in a jar. We drank several doses per day of this mix.

We discovered that weather was a problem of sorts in storing these drugs in plastic bags, especially the phosphorous which was rather unstable in its form. If it got too cold, such as when being stored in a cold corner of a cupboard, the phosphorous crystals would bind together into a hard lump. This wasn't too drastic, we just put in the needed amount of warmed water and the phosphorous dissolved into the form we needed for mixing it with the potassium.

The biggest problem was when we drove to Phoenix in the summer, taking several batches along in the car. If it got real warm, the phosphorous would turn to liquid and leak out of the bags! Such a waste of drugs we had a couple times.

There is now an internet website for those of us who have this medical condition. Even though I have asked about it, no one else on the website has ever mentioned having to purchase drugs in bulk and measure them out like I had to do.

POMEROY, WASHINGTON

Pier 91, a government owned pier where my Dad was working, was closed in 1971 because of government cutbacks. The Army Corp of Engineers offered Dad a job as a crane operator in the construction of dams being built on the Snake River in eastern Washington. The family moved to the small town of Pomeroy south of Spokane, close to the border of Idaho.

Dad was involved in the construction and later operation of two dams, Little Goose and Lower Granite. His work included operating cranes and other heavy equipment as well as piloting boats for work on the river itself.

After my parents moved to Pomeroy, they became acquainted with a man who worked with Dad at Little Goose dam. In discussing their children Dad discovered that this family was acquainted with Janie Bond, one of the girls who had been in Shriner's Hospital with me when we were both eight years old! Small world!



**Garfield County
Courthouse Pomeroy**

Through them, I was able to contact Janie and enjoyed several letters from her. Until in one letter, she mentioned the Little People of America and asked if I belonged to it. That was the end of my contact with her! No way was I going to let her drag me into any group of short people!

Now for a few comments about my brothers who were growing up.

Keith, who had always wanted to get into farming, met a local girl in school whose father was a wheat farmer. Keith's father-in-law taught him the art of wheat farming.

Keith has been chairman of the board of Pomeroy Grain Growers. As a member of the Washington State Association of Wheat Growers, he has lobbied numerous times at the Washington State Congress at the capitol in Olympia in regard to farming issues. In conjunction with Washington State University's agriculture program, he has participated as a member of the Varietal Release Committee which has released approved varieties of wheat developed for increasing production and resistance to insects and diseases.



**Pomeroy Washington - Wheat fields are
mainly on the tops of the rolling hills**



**Troy, Mom, Dad, Keith
& me at 1997 reunion**



**Troy, Gale, Keith
1984**

Keith's wife Shelley was raised in this house. When her parents retired from farming and moved into town, Keith and Shelley raised their family in this home.



**Mark, Adam, Becky,
Keith, Shelley**



**A combine at work
during wheat harvest.**



**Too much wheat for
the elevators! 1971**



Dad, Uncle Kenny, & Keith



**Keith has some really
big machines!**



More recently, Keith and Shelley built this modular home with a porch that allows a view over the fields for miles

Troy worked at the local grocery store during high school. After graduating he took up an apprenticeship in meat cutting and became a butcher for WareMart. He later returned to Pomeroy and purchased one of the two small grocery stores in town.



**Berglund's Food City
in Pomeroy**



In more recent years Troy has relocated and is now the owner of the only grocery store in the small town of Joseph, Oregon, two hours south of Pomeroy, Washington.



**Berglund's Family Foods
Joseph Oregon**



**Troy, Brandon
Janeen, Andrea**

Troy has been “Uncle Sam” on the 4th of July, his birthday, in both Pomeroy and Joseph.



JOSEPH, OREGON

Uncle Sam kisses Mom

Joseph where Troy lives is also a great community for Artists, especially in bronze. The town has a bronze statue on almost every corner! We visited one of the foundries and saw



some of the artist's work being transformed to cast bronze.



This transformation is also an art form in itself, and requires a team of gifted artists, each

working in harmony with the others, to see the process successfully through to a finished work that is what the original artist wanted.

The town has a population that is constantly changing for the seasons of the year and the special events planned around the holidays or celebrations. Each event causes Troy to stock his shelves with slightly different products to meet the needs of the people who come. He really works long, hard hours.

One major thing for Troy is butchering during the hunting season. He hangs the meat of deer, moose and even bear to age it, then does all the cutting and wrapping.



Troy's home in Joseph

Throughout the year he prepares lots of excellent sausage and we sure have enjoyed it.



Panoramic view looking southwest from Troy's porch

ALASKA

Three years after purchasing our home, we were faced with a balloon payment which would be payable in full in 1972. As that time drew closer, we realized we would not be able to save enough money to meet the payment on the amount of income we had at the time. We decided Roy would have to take higher paying work overseas to make money fast enough to meet the deadline on the payment. He applied to take a job in Alaska working for International Telephone and Telegraph, ITT, and took some tests, which he passed with flying colors. However, because he was self educated in electronics rather than having a college degree, he was denied the job. That was a big disappointment and Roy did not know what else he should try to do.

A couple of days later a phone call came from ITT, saying they had reconsidered Roy's application and test results and had decided that someone who could learn on his own, what Roy had learned, deserved a chance to use it. So he was hired! He flew away to Alaska in early 1971 where he earned \$4 per hour with a guaranteed 54 hour work week minimum, to work for most of the next year, while the children and I remained in our home in Seattle along with a dog and cat. \$4 an hour does not seem like much at today's wages, but at the time it was a large amount.

Roy's first stop as a new hire was in Anchorage for a week of orientation. Then for 1 month of training he was flown to a site called Sparrevohn in the mountains west of Anchorage. It was a very remote place, the closest inhabited place being tiny Lime Village, about 60 miles away.



Following that training, Roy was stationed on Umnak Island in the west part of the Aleutian Island chain (population 39 at the 2000 census). The government site there was part of White Alice system, one of many sites built by the US military as part of the Distant Early Warning system during the Cold War.

There is much information on the internet now about the various sites, including photos. Roy was at a site near Nikolski a very small town with a school (shown here) for the kids and one church, Russian Orthodox. Most of the folks who live in Nikolski are Aleut Native Americans.



I shipped cassette tapes of services at our Seattle church to Roy. When not working he spent his few hours of leisure time listening to the tapes, playing pool, riding motorcycles over the tundra on the island, having movie nights provided by management and sleeping. He also enjoyed fishing during a seasonal fish spawning run.



According to the Internet, the Cold War officially began on September 9, 1945 and continued almost 50 years until the official ending on December 26, 1991 after the fall of Communism in Russia. Since that date, the White Alice sites have been in the process of being dismantled.

Roy's accommodations were at a site just North of Nikolski

Communication with Roy was by letter and a phone call about once every week or two. Telephone communication was to be used primarily by the military, so we talked infrequently and unscheduled.

Having Roy leave us to go to Alaska quickly became a major trauma for me. As he flew away, the children and I were left standing alone on the airport concourse. Although I gathered up my courage, I began to be fearful that our lives would never be the same again. Now I was the sole person responsible to write checks to pay the bills, take care of our home and yard, look after the children, be the disciplinarian, and be there for our children night and day. At some point in the first month I began to feel overwhelmed by the loneliness.



Several weeks later I decided (in between phone calls from Roy) to go visit my family on the other side of the state where they were living in Pomeroy. I would drive over and spend a week with them! A great way to stop being lonely! Impulsively I piled the two kids into our little Volkswagen bug and began our trip across the state. Eastward we went, over the Cascade Mountains and down the other side.

As we approached the crossing point of the Columbia River in central Washington, I began to notice that the car did not seem to handle properly. Pulling into a roadside gas station, I told the attendant that I thought my radiator needed water. He gave me a strange look and said, “Lady, this car doesn’t have a radiator!” My reply was, “Oh, ok”, and off I drove down the highway.

I apparently assumed that nothing was wrong except an over active imagination on my part! It has been said that God takes care of fools, and He took care of us. We made the rest of the trip without incident except for Steve getting carsick during one twisty section of the road.

We spent a restful, refreshing week in Pomeroy with the family. Meanwhile Roy called our home several times. Unable to reach us there, he became frantic! There was no way I was able to contact him so I always had to wait for him to call me. In a fit of loneliness and sadness, I had decided to make the trip in between his calls. Consequently, he had not known that we had gone anywhere. In desperation, he finally called Pomeroy.

The morning we left to drive back home, we got only a few miles down the highway before the car died. A kind lady in a farmhouse by the side of the road let me use her telephone to call Dad. He towed our little car back to his house, where we stayed for three more days while repairs were made to our car.

I do not remember now what the car needed. But I realized then how truly our heavenly Father had taken care of us. He had gotten us safely to Pomeroy rather than allow us to break down far from Dad’s help. In spite of an impulsive, possibly rash decision to travel across the state, I learned a lesson from the experience, that Volkswagen bugs do not have radiators!

There were many more things yet to learn while Roy was away. One of which was how to pay bills! Paying bills was a painful time for me every month. While growing up, I had not ever gotten an allowance or had money of my own to learn to handle. My only experience with money had been while in college for one year. During that time, the small paycheck I received from my first job, had gone into a savings account. I had withdrawn cash in the form of money orders to pay my few bills, so never wrote checks or learned to balance a checkbook.

After we married, I wanted Roy to take care of our finances. Every time he had tried to teach me to do it, I became confused and angrily began to cry, forcing him to complete the task. Now with him so far away I had no “out”! I had to try to do it. As the year wore on, I got the bills paid, but the confusion in the checkbook register got worse and worse. There was quite a mess for Roy to straighten out when he finally came home from Alaska!

A note of trivia here, while Roy was in Nikolski, the United States Department of Energy did a test underground of a nuclear bomb November 6, 1971 on Amchitka Island, an uninhabited island far toward the western end of the Aleutian chain of islands. It was the largest underground nuclear test ever done in U. S. history up to that time.

There had previously been two other bombs tested in the same manner on that island, but leading up to the third test, there was a lot of discussion in the news about it, with opinions flying around about terrible earthquakes and tsunamis being generated, which might cause disasters all around. I was nervous thinking about the possibility Roy might be killed because Umnak Island is not so far from Amchitka Island.

When the explosion occurred far beneath the ground, the blast was 400 times the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan at the end of WWII. It generated an earthquake of 7.0 on the Richter scale, but there were no tsunamis and no damages. PHEW!

TOGETHER AGAIN

Roy stayed in Alaska almost a year, which was long enough to enable us to meet our commitment to the balloon payment on our home. We were able to celebrate Christmas as a complete family, and what a wonderful celebration we had! It was wonderful to be all together again!

There was a period of adjustment to this change in our home life. I had to get used to letting Roy be head of the house again. Roy had to get used to the constant noise of the children as they played and the normal commotion of family life.

The new year of 1972 began with Roy job hunting again. He was able to hire on quickly at John Fluke Company, an electronics manufacturing firm, located then in Mount Lake Terrace, a suburb north of Seattle.



He also tried his hand at faceting gem stones, getting training and a special machine. We took a trip into Montana to try mining for sapphires and found several small ones. It was a time of experimentation, to see what might work for a home business. We tried decoupage of photos, and Roy even considered a TV repair business.



At John Fluke Co Roy was in the repair and calibration of test equipment for a short while and then moved into the testing and calibration of dc and ac sources. He enjoyed it and learned much at Fluke.

With Roy returned from Alaska, and our home and work routines back in place as a united family, we began to long for another child. We tried to contact the same Christian counseling agency that had helped us adopt Steve, but discovered it was no longer in business. The next step was to approach the Washington State Children's Home Society. The first step in the state process was to attend a group meeting for prospective parents. At that meeting we were told that if any couple had children already, or could have their own children, that they should leave the meeting. The agency was a year and a half behind in supplying newborns to couples whom they had already approved to receive them!

This circumstance was due to the passing of laws allowing abortion. The availability of newborns had dropped off almost completely. If we would like to adopt a handicapped child, then we could stay for the meeting. We left the meeting with a lot to think about. We already had children and yes, we could have our own. Taking a child with a handicap would be an unknown. If we had a child of our own that inherited my bone condition, then at least we would know what we were dealing with medically. So we decided to try to have a child of our own.

An appointment with my doctor was made at the University, and I spoke to him about the possibility of having another child. He did not think there would be a problem other than the possible need for a C-section and the chance of passing the XLH along to any child. He asked me if I would agree to appear before a group of student doctors so they could see the effects of XLH on my bone structure. I agreed to that and found myself in the front of a small auditorium full of doctors. The effects of XLH on my bone structure and height were pointed out to the audience.

Explaining my disease to everyone, my doctor said that since there is a 50-50 chance with every pregnancy that the child will inherit XLH, any child I conceived might or might not have the condition. He said that male children usually are more affected by the bone deformities of XLH than female children. With the use of an amniocentesis test the sex of the child could be discovered and all male babies could be aborted, thus avoiding the more severe complications that a male child would have IF he were to inherit the XLH. The test would not show if the child had inherited the condition, only what sex the child was. (Thus by aborting all male children, I could be aborting one that did not have the XLH!).

I was asked if I would like to take advantage of amniocentesis if I did become pregnant. Without hesitation, I declined the use of any such test or options it would afford me to abort a boy baby. Instead, I said that I believed God is in control and could send an egg that was unaffected by the XLH if He chose to do so. If He chose to send one that was affected, we would deal with that just as we were already doing for both Ruth and I. After a brief silence, I was excused from the meeting without further comment from anyone.



In a very short time we were pregnant again. I had no problems during the pregnancy, felt good and had lots of energy.

Dad and Mom Smith came every year for a visit. Grandma taught Ruth how to crochet and Dad helped with lots of small projects. We were able to improve the yard and add a swing set for the children!



Grandma Smith taught Ruth to crochet

AH, SWEET COUNTRY LIFE

Moving around as often as we did during my childhood, gave me an urge to be on the go now and then. As we inched up on four years of living in the same home, the longest I had ever lived in one house, a very strong urge came upon me that it was time to move again! Add to this a desire on Roy's part to start a small worm farming business on the side, while keeping his job at John Fluke Company.

Worm farming? Supposedly a bit of money could be made in supplying worms to bait shops. We decided to look around at homes for rent with acreage, see if the country life suited us. Try it out for a while.

We began to take long drives in the country, looking at properties that were for rent as well as for sale. We made an offer to purchase one 10-acre place near Arlington, about an hour north of Seattle, but another family made an offer first and purchased the property.



Our rental home in Edmonds

Instead of buying a place, we decided on renting five acres north of Seattle in Edmonds. We would try out country life first, then buy a place if we liked that life style.

Our rental house was equipped with a dish washer in the kitchen! I wasn't too pleased about this at first, but it didn't take me long to give in to its "charms", thus deserting my earlier scorn of such a "luxury"! In fact my readjustment to the life style and conveniences of this country has taken place sufficiently that I have become a typical consumer.

As I said before, we had decided to try to have another child, thus our second son Tait Nathaniel Smith was born.

Delivery was very quick much to the surprise of the doctor who broke the water and then went to a dinner party near the hospital. He fully expected me to need a C-section, saying that he would return after eating dinner, take some x-rays, and do whatever was needed to move the delivery along.

He was gone only a very short time when I had a strong sensation to push. The nurse checked me, grabbed the bed and began running down the hall to the delivery room dragging the bed with her.

Roy had not planned to see the delivery, but with all the excitement of the moment, someone yelled at him to get a gown on. Thus he ended up being there to squeeze my hand during the delivery.

Tait was born within minutes. Although he was called, the doctor was unable to get back to the hospital fast enough to be there for the excitement. So much for needing a C-Section!

In order to find out if Tait had inherited the XLH, blood was drawn for testing. The results came back negative, showing that Tait was free of the XLH! I was so relieved that for two days I cried every time I picked up our sweet baby!



**Tait Nathaniel Smith
born October 20, 1973**

Until that time I had thought that it did not bother me to have this disease. That whatever God had for me in life I was all right with. I discovered at this time that the possibility of passing it on to another of my children was bothering me more than I had known! Having it myself was one thing, passing it on to my children was quite another thing!

Meanwhile, after getting settled into our rental house, Roy set about starting our worm farm. He purchased one bin complete with soil and worms, then built several other bins.

Overhead he built roofs to keep off the rain and ran electricity to each roof. Lights were installed in each roof which would be kept turned on at all times. Worms come out in the dark, so to keep them in their “beds” there had to be light on at all times. The next step was to heat the beds. Roy built a waterbed kind of heating element that would lay in the bottom of a bin. If it was a success, he would build one for each of the bins.



First worm bed, complete with bedding soil & worms

The heating element was a rectangle of 2x4's with a zig-zag design of 2x4's inside the frame, like a maze. Roy nailed sheet metal to the 2x4's, sandwiching this maze in between the two pieces of sheet metal with a hose attachment on each end. The next step was to attach a hose and fill the maze with water. If it held, we had a simple heating system that would run from a water heater, through the maze, out the other end and back to be reheated in the water heater. If that worked, all of the maze-heaters could be connected together and the water cycled through all of them.

When the construction of the first maze was complete, the moment of truth had arrived. Now to run a test, Roy connected the hose to the one finished heater, turned on the water and we sat back to wait for the water to travel through the maze and out the fixture on the other end. As the minutes passed, a bit of water began to leak out around the nail holes in the sheet metal. Hmmm, we hadn't expected that.

Slowly the sheet metal began to bulge up, lifting the frame off of the ground. Suddenly water began shooting out of every nail hole like sprinklers! You should have seen the look on Roy's face! Well at a time like that, you either laugh or you cry. We laughed!

Back to square one. Roy was driving our little VW bug back and forth to work every day. One day he stopped at K-Mart and bought up a bunch of garden hoses that were on sale. He came home with the VW bug so full of hoses he could barely see out the windows. He hooked all those hoses up end to end, then to the water heater and made a zig-zag maze of it in the bottom of all the worm beds. A much easier solution to the heating problem. Now the warm water flowing through the hoses kept the dirt in the bins at a comfy temperature for worms.

The bins were filled with soil and we began filling trash cans with rabbit manure. You see, worms eat stuff like that. A can full of manure and then some water, could sit a few days and turn into a nice “gravy”. Worms love it! Of course, you have to stir it now and then. Every couple days this food was scooped out with a saucepan and drizzled over the dirt in the worm bins.

Since we did not hear any complaints about the “menu”, I am sure we had the happiest worms in that part of town. Every night when we went to bed, we made sure the lights were turned on over the worm bins, so our worms stayed down in the dirt, snug and warm in their cozy beds.



Stirring manure “gravy”

After some time had passed, we felt it was time to harvest some worms for market. As we began gently digging through the dirt in the bins that morning, we found almost no worms at all! Where were the worms? Panic set in! What could have happened? Then we realized the overhead lights were... not on! Roy hadn't turned them off, had I? No, I hadn't either.

OH NO, we discovered that the power to the lights had gone off overnight! With no lights on, our livestock had stampeded! Hundreds, yes, thousands had galloped off in the darkness without making a sound! Who could have imagined it? \$\$\$ on the run!

So much for worms.

Moving right along in this tale, we were to learn by experience over the passage of time that Stephen had a very high pain tolerance. This meant that by the time he got around to letting us know he did not feel well, he was really quite sick.

Stephen's medical issues began the week he was scheduled to begin Kindergarten. He came down with a flu-like illness one week before the start of the school year. He developed very severe bloody diarrhea and was hospitalized for most of the next week.

I do not remember that we were ever told a name for what the problem was. However, because Seattle has an international airport, we were questioned about possible exposure to cholera from people who had been to other countries, such as the Orient. But we did not know anyone who had traveled outside the country.

I believe now that this illness was a preliminary episode of problems he was to develop some years later.

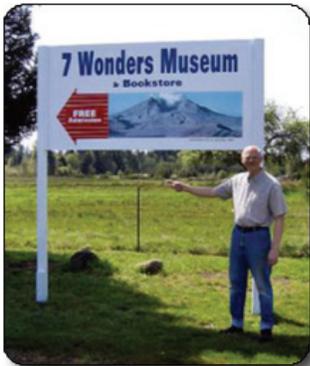


A major blessing at this time, was worshipping in Lynnwood Bible Church, a small church that was very close to our Edmonds home.

Our pastor and his wife were Lloyd and Doris Anderson. Our kids were close in age to theirs and really enjoyed playing together.

Lloyd and Doris have remained dear friends. Doris, who is a writer herself, has been a great encouragement to me in writing this story.

Continuing their ministry, Lloyd and Doris are the founders, stewards and staff of the Mt. St. Helens Creation Information Center and 7 Wonders Museum of Mount St Helens. This great place to visit and learn is located at 4749 Spirit Lake Highway, Silverlake, WA 98645.



The center is just off Interstate 5, on highway 504 going toward the volcano.

Friends helping them have put together a terrific web site at this url address, 7wonders.nwcreation.net.

Generally open Monday through Saturday, 9am to 7pm, and Sundays, 12-6pm, you can drop by when visiting Mt. St. Helens or schedule a group tour or guided hike within the Monument. Call 360-274-5737 to schedule a group tour, hike, or presentation for your organization.



Lloyd also travels with his slide show. It is best to call before coming because occasionally they take a day off.

They also have a small bookstore of creation related materials for all ages from many sources, that includes gift items, CDs, and DVDs, as well as great books and pictures.

We love to visit with them as often as we can when we travel to Washington.

Mt St Helens sure looks different today after its major eruption Sunday at 8:32 AM May 18th 1980.



BACK TO THE LAND

After two years in Edmonds, we received a phone call from a realtor who told us the property in Arlington on which we had made an offer two years before, was becoming available again. The family that had purchased it had defaulted on payments and was being evicted. The man of the family had disappeared. Some thought he had gone away to take up fishing in Alaska, which he had talked about doing. The property was to be put back on the market and if we were still interested we could make an offer.



Our little house on Jim Creek Road, Arlington, WA

So it was that we purchased 10-acres of property with a small house on Jim Creek Road, about 10 miles outside of Arlington, WA on the side of Ebey Mountain.

The house was in poor shape when we took possession because of damage the other family had done, mostly on the inside. We had quite a bit of clean up and repair to do to make it comfy.

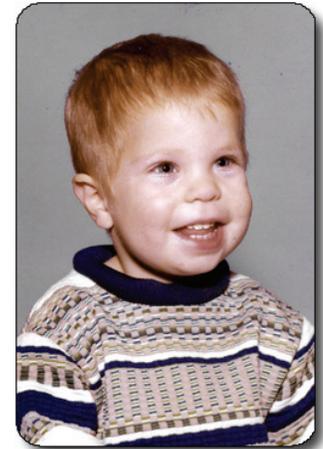
There was a small brown barn and a chicken shed on the lower half of the property along the highway. It was all in pasture except for the end where the house sat.

The upper half was hillside covered in thick trees and brush up the side of Ebey Mountain. A steep climb upward got you to a National Forest.

When Tait was about a year old, we became pregnant again. No questions were asked of us this time about if we wanted an amniocentesis test! My pregnancy was going very well but since we had just moved to this country location with no telephone installed as yet, the delivery of our fourth child was induced. Tait's birth had happened so fast, my doctor did not want me to be far away from the hospital when the labor would start. This birth was also a normal delivery, no C-Sections for me!

Since Tait had not inherited the XLH, doctors assured me it was very probable that Vernon would indeed inherit it. The odds were against another child being free of it. When Vernon was born blood tests were done but the results again were negative! Vernon had not inherited the XLH either!! We just chuckled; God can do what He wants, no matter what the "odds"!

I would like to quote just two verses of the seven in a song that touched my heart so profoundly in regard to being a mother. With each of my four children, holding the small new life in my arms has been a glorious experience, so full of wonder I could almost imagine catching a glimpse of the face of God.



Vernon Matthew Smith

MARY DID YOU KNOW? , by Mark Lowry

**Mary did you know, that your baby boy
Would one day walk on water?
Mary did you know, that your baby boy
Would save our sons and daughters?**

**Did you know, that your baby boy
Has walked where angels trod
And when you kiss your little baby,
You've kissed the face of God?**

**Oh, Mary did you know?
Mary did you know?**



It was summer when we first moved to Arlington. Roy dug a wide shallow hole in the yard. The bottom and sides were covered with old carpet to keep the mud down and the hole then filled with water. It made a great “pool” that all the neighbor kids came to play in.

Our property was ten miles outside of the small town of Arlington.

Kindergarten, and 5th grade on up through high school were all bused into town to school.

Being in second grade, Steve attended Trafton School, a wonderful old building with only four classrooms.



Trafton school

The children from the rural area where we lived attended grades 1-4 here. It is a square building and has a bell tower on the top.

The school grounds had a small woods and creek running through it, a great place for recess! Each year in the Fall, the school had a fund raiser by holding a harvest festival with ears of corn, fresh off the stalk, donated by a neighboring farmer and roasted in a barbeque grill.

It was during the time we lived in Arlington that we went through a kind of “back to the earth” lifestyle. I made all our breads, pies, and cooked almost totally from scratch. On the mountainside we picked wild huckleberries. In our yard we picked blackberries and whatever we could salvage from our little garden that the slugs didn’t get to first! Ruth’s first employment was picking strawberries for the summer. Since that time, she has never liked strawberry jam. She says the kids would enhance the weight of their berry flats by putting slugs in under the berries! The slugs were probably quite happy to be embedded in something they loved to eat!

Fall is hunting season during which time we would often hear gunshots echoing off the mountains from someplace in the woods. One lovely fall morning I was sitting on the front porch when I heard a man’s voice yelling from the mountain, something about a dead man. Again and again, he called out for someone to call the police, he had found a body, he yelled. The police came, hiked up the mountain and sure enough, there was a badly decomposed body. It appeared that someone had shot himself with a rifle. The body was removed for identification. Later we heard that it was the man who had owned our property before us. He had committed suicide, not gone to Alaska to fish.

Steve was a child that had so much energy he could not sit still very long. He joined a soccer team in third grade. The parents car pooled getting the boys to and from practices. Steve and his friend Darrin were under orders to call us if for any reason they missed their ride after practice.

Then one evening it happened that they missed the ride. Instead of calling us, they decided it was a nice enough evening to walk home. Being afraid of strangers who might be driving by, they jumped down into the deep ditch beside the road each time a car approached. When they did not return, we began to worry about them so set out in our car to find them. Of course, we never saw them because they were in the ditch! Boy, were they in trouble when they finally arrived home after walking the 10 miles!

There were huge old cedar stumps on the hillside of our property, and all over the area around us, which were left from the days when the cedar trees were cut by hand with two or more men at a time on a long saw. The logs were then rolled down the hillsides on wooden skids and dragged by horses to a nearby mill.



These two photos of postcards found at usgarchives.org show the size of these trees.



There were five shake mills in the neighborhood, where they made shingles from wood cut off the stumps that were left all over the area.

Since we had a small wood stove in our house for heat, Roy would go to one mill periodically to get the cedar trimmings for us to burn. Steve's job was to bring in the wood. What a lovely smell!

People had tried to burn those stumps in attempts to remove them from the ground. A fire was started at the base of the stump and as it burned it went deep into the center, but even this did not make it practical to remove some of the bigger stumps.

Ruth and Steve would often play in the woods on the hillside where they found one old stump having a burned out center area large enough for them to stand up in. They spent many a happy hour in there scrapping away at the charred wood with paint scrappers, cleaning it up for an imaginary fort or house. They came home covered in black soot from head to toe. It was a wonderful play place!

Our house was very small, having only two bedrooms but we planned to enlarge it as time went by. In the meantime, we had to rewire the whole house, and put a wall down the center of one bedroom, turning it into two tiny rooms. Ruth had one side of the wall for her room, which she painted a hot pink. Steve had the other side, which he wanted royal blue. There was a bunk bed in that room so Steve shared his room with Tait. Vernon slept in a crib in the hallway.

The yard around the house was sloped downward to the big ditch that ran alongside the highway in front of our property. In an effort to make a more level yard, we put a sign out by the road asking for free fill dirt and were rewarded with many dump truck loads.

There were piles of dirt here and there dumped all over the front part of our property. We had to purchase a small bulldozer, a front loader tractor, and a few regular tractors to level it all.



Ruth & Tait playing in a dirt pile

These piles were great places for children to play!

Steve loved playing in the dirt with his trucks and Ruth was usually right there with him doing girl things with the mud.

One day as she was digging, she began to scream for Steve. He was delighted to find that she had uncovered a huge toad hibernating in the dirt pile! It was just sitting there looking at them, probably very groggy after being awakened so rudely!



We had a front loader, tractors & a small bulldozer to move & level donated dirt in front



During middle school Ruth experienced Osteochondritis Dissecans, another bone problem, in one knee. It is a spot of bone pulling loose or softening at the point where a tendon attaches to the bone. The tension of the tendon creates severe pain at that spot on the bone.

She had to take weight off the leg by using crutches for about two months. She knew she was ready to get rid of the crutches one day when she and Steve were catching tadpoles in the ditch beside the highway and she was able to do that without pain in her leg.



Tara was the best watch dog!



In this rural area we burned our trash, which became fun when we roasted hot dogs and marshmallows at the fire.

Dad and Mom Berglund came for a visit and Roy put Dad to work using a rototiller to start our garden. We have that Troy Bilt rototiller today and after replacing worn parts, it still works great 34 years later!



For a while we owned a 37 foot cabin cruiser! Because the owner was desperate to have someone take it off his hands, he sold it to us for \$300! It had been a Coast Guard shore patrol craft in the waters of Puget Sound during WWII. That fact was exciting, but the shape it was in was not exciting. At low tide the boat sat on land in a pool of mud. Roy was able to get it moved and up on supports so he could work on it. The work began and so did the expense. It was fun working on it together as a family, spending the whole day there. The kids loved playing in the cabin, taking naps on the bunks and eating in the galley, but there was so much work to be done and it was costing more money all the time. Eventually it was in good enough shape to use, so we put it to the test and motored our way out onto Puget Sound for a few hours. We made it back, but discovered we had hardly any rudder due to electrolysis damage.



The White Spray, 37 foot cabin cruiser

The most valuable part of the whole deal was that a gill net and a salmon fishing license had come with the boat when we bought it. Those two items alone were worth about \$5000! The fishing license could be used by Roy only twice a year during the salmon season, and then only if a Native American was on board at the time. (Native Americans could fish all they wanted to during the season.)

Since there was still lots of work needed on the boat, we felt we could not go on pouring money into it, so we sold it to a fisherman, along with the gill net and the license for \$3000. Quite a profit! So ended our dreams of a luxurious cabin cruiser and motoring gently around to picnic on sandy beaches.

The man who bought the White Spray from us got it into shape for fishing but then sunk it on the first trip out on Puget Sound when he ran into a dead head. A dead head is a log which is so water-logged that it is bobbing at a crazy angle in the water. He had to pay big bucks to have it raised and repaired again.

Western Washington State has no venomous snakes, but does have a plethora of garter snakes. They are small mostly black with a green stripe running the length of their bodies. Our pasture was full of these little snakes. Often they were seen on the roads, having been run over by cars. Our dog loved to catch them in the pasture, throwing them around like a toy until they were dead, no longer any fun to play with.

Tara was a lovely Sheltie/Shepherd mix, very gentle. She had belonged to our neighbor, but when they moved into town to a rented house they could not take her along, so we inherited her.

Tara was wonderful with the children! She stayed with them constantly. If either of the smaller children wandered too far down the driveway toward the highway, she would stand between the child and the road barking at the child, refusing to let him pass any closer to danger.

The school bus stopped at every driveway where children lived in the home. Tara would wait for the bus with Ruth and Steve each morning. At the correct time each afternoon, she would go down the driveway to wait for their return.



Tait, Steve, Ruth, Vern plus Tara who adopted us

Along with Tara, we also acquired a cow named Ellie that the neighbors owned. As a two year old, Tait called all cows "Ellie Moo". We kept Ellie and her almost grown calf, in the pasture and small barn that had two stalls. Ruth and Steve did the milking each day.

One winter evening they could not get her to go into the stall to be milked so called upon Roy for help. He tried to get her in the stall but to no avail. Finally, in desperation he twisted her tail. She took off running around the barn, dragging Roy behind her, sliding in the snow as if he were skiing. Ruth still laughs about that one. From Ellie's milk I experimented with making cheese and cottage cheese. From that I learned what Little Miss Muffet was enjoying when she ate "curds and whey". I also learned that it was a process not worth repeating, I'd rather buy such things at the store.

It was Ruth's job each day to feed the rabbits that lived in a hutch behind the house. There was a small, old, broken refrigerator back there with large bags of rabbit food in it. A few times as she was scooping out the feed, Ruth would put her hand on a slug. How she hated that! Then we would hear her screaming! Getting slug slime off your hand is a major problem because it sticks worse than glue, refusing to be washed off. How they got into those bags was a mystery. Roy tried plugging up all holes in the fridge but those slugs got in sometimes anyway.

If the reader is not familiar with the slugs in that part of Washington, let me tell you about them. They thrive in the damp, rainy climate. They are long, as long as 8 inches or more! Fat, as fat around as a big cigar. And slimy! They left long trails of silver goo on sidewalks and porches. They were everywhere in the grasses of the pasture and yard. We would encounter them in the garden, around the trunks of bushes, in the compost pile, under rocks, in nooks and crannies of all kinds, wandering here and there, often up the sides of the foundation of the house.



Steve loved to sprinkle salt on the slugs and watch them bubble until they were nothing but a slime spot. All sorts of slug bait is sold in stores so you can try to rid yourself of these pests. But one of the least expensive and most effective baits we found was a pie pan full of beer. They did seem to love that beer!



Toby takes time out to chew his cud

Another animal that we had was Toby, a large breed of goat called a Toggenberg. We needed him only to control the wild blackberries that grew all over the property behind the house, trying to take over the whole yard. Toby was staked out next to a section of briar patch by a long metal stake that was screwed into the ground and a long chain that allowed him quite a lot of range for working on the patch of briars.

Toby ate the entire briar patch including the stickers and the fat thick canes under the vines, and the berries of course. When he had it eaten down to ground level, he would begin to baa and baa until we moved his stake to a new patch.

One summer day as we moved him, he got loose and took off running toward the house. In he went through the open door, and up onto the couch! We had quite a job catching him and getting him staked again. Ruth has a vivid memory of being butted into a briar patch once when she bent over to screw his stake into the ground!

There is a saying that a goat will eat anything including cans. That isn't really true, but it comes from the fact that they eat the labels off cans. I don't know if it is the paper that they love or the glue holding it to the can. Once Toby gnawed the date tabs off the license of our car! Toby enjoyed standing on top of the car if we left it parked too close to him. If you want adventure in your life, get a goat.

We were getting honey from a local beekeeper and after a time, Roy became fascinated with the bees. He purchased one hive that he put out on the pasture. The kids would lay on the ground a distance from the hive to watch the bees fly in and out. They did not bother anyone as long as they were not bothered. Roy learned to harvest the honey, which we strained to get the dead bees out. Then we kept it in large glass gallon jars. Wonderful stuff!

One day, as Ruth stood on the porch, she began screaming (seems like she was always screaming, doesn't it?) that a bee had gone up her nose. She didn't know how to get it out. I came running but didn't know what to do either. So I told her to blow her nose real hard. Sure enough the bee came out with such force it landed on the porch at her feet! (Remember that if you ever get a bee up your nose.) Ruth did not get stung. Maybe the "fit" inside her nose was so tight that the bee was unable to sting her.

In summer Ruth and Steve loved to go swimming at Jim Creek, across the road, through a neighbor's pasture, down the hill and through the woods. Sounds like a long ways, but because of the narrow valley I was able to hear them yelling and laughing and Tara barking all the way up to the house.

Several times, Roy and Steve went fishing for salmon in a rented or sometimes chartered boat. They really liked going out into the Ocean from Neah Bay, a small town near the north west tip of Washington state. They caught some really nice fish and came back with some whopper tales about ones that got away



Washington State on the western side of the Cascade Mountains gets an average annual precipitation of 38 inches. We used well water for everything on our property. The well was a spring only 3 feet deep but had a constant overflow because there was such an abundance of water.



During the many long rainy periods, the mountain behind our house “wept” water downward, causing the yard around the house to become soft and mushy, like a wet sponge. The addition and spreading of dirt mentioned above to build up the level of the front of our property really helped improve this situation.

Since Arlington is quite far north of Seattle, Roy had about a 45-minute drive to work at John Fluke Company. The long drive was worth the time. We loved the country life and the elbow room for our children to play.

From our little front porch we could see Three Fingers Peaks.

At the end of the Jim Creek Road we lived on was the Jim Creek Naval Station. The Navy has transmitters there to communicate with our submarines around the world. The signal is focused toward the west through the narrow valley and passed right over us on its way to the ocean.



Three Fingers Peaks, a view that is close to the perspective we had from our front door

It was in January 1976 that Roy was sent on a lengthy business trip to Munich, Germany and to Holland.

He traveled with a large case of slides and teaching materials. He taught maintenance and calibration of the test equipment being used in the calibration labs of a military base near Munich. He also became acquainted with the Holland offices and manufacturing of John Fluke Co products there.

Another time he was sent on a trip to eastern Canada, Boston, and Washington DC. It was on this trip his case of teaching materials was routed to Mexico and did not catch up to him until the trip was almost complete! He managed to improvise, teaching the class without his visual lesson materials.

Sorry to say, we lived only two years in Arlington. Not long enough for either Vernon or Tait to have any memories from there. Over the years since, both Roy and I have wondered at times if perhaps we should have stayed there.

