

Jerre Caputo McQuinn Life Narrative

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Chapter 1 Foreword

I was motivated to write this autobiography after we read Neil Bartle's autobiography and after my husband, Don McQuinn, did such a thorough job on his. With this narrative, I am going to fill in some gaps that Don did not include: gaps which include my early childhood, my family of origin, and stories of our life together to supplement Don's narrative.

Throughout, I offer reflections, in blue box sidebars; and in a [summary chapter](#) at the end, I have tried to draw together the big themes and strands of my life.

Since I am an inveterate list maker, I include several lists in the Appendix, in order to summarize timelines and other memorable events.

The latest version of these narratives, and Don's autobiography, can be found at:
<http://www.mcquinnfamilyhistory.com>

Chapter 2 My recent ancestors

I was born in Albuquerque in 1945, on Mother's Day! As a youngster, I knew relatives on both sides of my family and heard their amazing stories, only some of which I have space to retell here. I will start with my Grandmother, Leila Bartle, and then will tell you a little bit about the Caputos.

The Bartles

After my mother and father, my grandmother was the biggest presence in my life. In many ways that I describe throughout, I am like my grandmother...I called her Granny. I called my grandfather "Grandpop", but did not know him as well because he died when I was five. I do remember that he was a sweet and generous man.



Figure 1. Four generations: Leila Lysinger Bartle, Ruth Bartle Caputo, Ida Pinckney Lysinger, Jerre Caputo, 1949

Leila Lysinger (later Bartle) was born in Cedar Rapids Iowa in 1887. Her ancestry was mostly German and Irish. Her family moved to Oklahoma to homestead when she was a young girl. They participated in the settling of the Cherokee Strip (1893), but you did not call Granny a "Sooner" because those were the people that "jumped the gun" and staked their claims early. Her family was honest and waited for the signal. Granny grew up in Ponca City, OK, and went away to normal school and became a teacher. I have the diaries she wrote during that time. My granny joined her older brother Jesse in his business running a newspaper, the [Red Rock Opinion](#), in Red Rock, Oklahoma. After Jesse died in May 1907, Granny ran the newspaper by herself, getting ads and publishing the news. She published her name as L. M. Lysinger, because she thought she would not have as much readership and as many advertisers if people knew she was a woman. In fact, throughout my life, I recall my grandmother saying she wished she had been born a man because men had more advantages.

I never had this wish because as I was growing, women were enjoying more advantages and opportunities.

As a young girl, I went to Ponca City and met Granny's mother, Ida Pinckney Lysinger and Granny's sister Hazel. I interviewed her about her life in early Oklahoma, and I recorded my impressions and poems and stories that she told me. I also have color movies my mother made of all of them in 1949. Imagine! I had the privilege of knowing a woman (Ida) who was born during the civil war (1862).



Figure 2. Bill Bartle and Leila Lysinger, my grandparents, approx 1940

My grandfather, Bill Bartle was born in Kentucky and was of German and French ancestry. He was a Spanish-American war era veteran, although he never fought in the war. He entered the study to become a Methodist minister. However he had severe asthma and was advised to go west to seek a drier climate. He went to Oklahoma and got work as a carpenter on the Santa Fe railroad crew where Granny's dad was a foreman. That is how Granny met and married Grandpop. For a while, the entire family lived in boxcars and traveled as the railroad was being built. The carpentry crew built the stations and the shops, and the women

cooked and fed them. When the railroad crew arrived in Albuquerque in 1914, Granny put down her foot, and her roots, and there they stayed. Grandpop continued as a carpenter and some of his work still stands in Albuquerque.

Table 1. The arc of technology over 100 years

In these sidebars, I will reflect on the impact and trajectory of events that shaped my life and attitude. As I reflect back on the work that my grandparents did on the railroad, I realize that railroads were the emerging technology at the end of the 19th century. In much the same way that computer technology required infrastructure before it became a commodity at the end of the 20th century, the railroads required track, shops and stations, and engineers and customer service agents. When I think of how I have been part of the information technology boom, I see now that the information technology boom is a strong echo of the transportation technology boom 100 years before.

Granny and Grandpop had three children: Ruth (my mother) and two boys (Ward and Neil). They lived on a small farm at 7521 Guadalupe Trail north of downtown Albuquerque. In 2001 I took Ward and Neil by the house and they spoke to the woman who owned it. The farm has been subdivided and a second house is on the back part of the lot, but not too much about the house had changed, as far as we could tell. Granny raised children and chickens and turkeys while Grandpop worked as a carpenter. They did not have much, but they managed to make ends just meet. They tell the story of when Grandpop's widowed sister Bertha Sandusky arrived with a large family of big strapping boys and girls. This was before social security and somehow they managed to feed all of those mouths. Bertha was a tiny woman, not even five feet tall, and it always amazed me that her sons were all over six feet and 250 lbs.

Ruth Bartle Caputo

My mother was born in 1912 in Dodge City, Kansas while my grandparents were still working for the railroad. Mother was a talented and resourceful and intelligent woman. After high school Mother went to Oklahoma City to study at beauty school. She worked as a beautician for a short while, but the depression was in full swing and work was hard to find. Then she worked as a telephone operator. She met and married (in 1936) my dad, Joe Caputo, who was a postal clerk. They had a very small wedding (and later so did I). My dad was a very good looking man, but he was 12 years older than mother, and Catholic. At first, that did not sit so well with my grandparents. Remember that my grandpop studied to be a minister and was a pretty devout Methodist.



Figure 3. Ruth Caputo, approx. 1930

In 1941, Mother was working as a telephone operator at Kirtland, which was an Army base at the time. She remembered vividly, as did everyone at the time, when Pearl Harbor was bombed. She was called urgently to work on her birthday, to operate the phones. People were confused about where Pearl Harbor even was, but they soon figured out.

Mother worked on and off as I was growing up. My granny lived next door, so she would be my after-school baby sitter. After raising me, Mother went back to work as an accounting clerk at Sandia (now Kirtland) base. She loved the work and did well at it.

My mother had two younger brothers, Ward and Neil Bartle. I knew them well, and saw them often as I was growing and after I became an adult.



Figure 4. Neil Bartle with Megan McQuinn, 1986

Neil lived in San Diego with my Aunt Margie and my cousins Jeff and Jennifer (Jennifer was adopted). We made lots of trips to California, so I knew my California cousins, and remain good friends with them today. During WW II, Neil served in Germany, Algiers, and the invasion of Italy. He moved to San Diego after the war and found work as an accountant with Solar Aircraft. Later on, Uncle Neil and Aunt Marge converted to Catholicism. Again, that did not go so well with my Granny, but she came to accommodate and respect it later. I think my dad was the sponsor for their conversion.

It seemed as if the Neil Bartle family was always having a lot of fun. Even today when I arrive in San Diego the smell of the ocean makes my heart leap in the expectation that something really fun is going to happen. There was body surfing at the beach, and boating. For a while, Uncle Neil and Aunt Margie had a trailer in Ensenada Mexico, and we would go there for fun. Later on, Neil's

best friend later moved to Camano Island WA and during one of Neil's visits to Camano, Don and I bought a property and built our vacation house on Camano Island. After that the Bartles came regularly to visit each summer.

Ward married his wife, Jerry, in 1949. I remember waiting in Tucumcari NM for them to come to the Justice of the Peace to be married. It seemed like such a long wait, and I kept looking down the road, US highway 66, waiting for their truck. Ward always loved to have fun, and was my funniest relative as a kid. Ward and Jerry lived in Texas until he retired from the Post Office, and then they moved to Santa Monica where the fun continued. At the end of his life, because Ward did not have kids of his own, he came to Washington where my husband and I could care for him. Even until the very end, he was having as much fun as he could.



Figure 5. Ward Bartle, 1986

One of the amazing stories Ward told me years later was about when he was 10 years old and his parents took him to Moriarity, NM to buy a pony, Scout. They put him on the pony, gave him sandwiches and pointed the way for him to go home (40 miles for a 10 year old boy), and they left. Ward rode all day and at night when he was getting very tired, he heard his dad coming back for him with the team and wagon and a thermos of hot chocolate. After working as a carpenter all day, his father came to fetch Ward and the pony and put Ward in the wagon with the pony tied to the back. It surprises me now that Ward and Neil both had such freedom to roam when they were boys.

Another of Ward's funny stories was when he got in trouble and granny sent him out to the woodshed so that Grandpop could whip him. Grandpop was such a kind man he could not do that, so he told Ward: "I'm gonna whip this wooden post and every time I do, I want you to yell really loud". Ward did so and it didn't take long for Granny to come out and say "I expect that's enough, Bill". Grandpop answered, "Yes, I expect so, Leila."

Ward frequently got into mischief as a kid but ended up one of the kindest, most generous and responsible men I have known. Another famous Ward story was when he and a couple of friends hitched a cannon to their truck and dragged it from Robinson Park to the steps of Albuquerque High School and pointed it at the principal's office. At that time, Albuquerque High was the only high school in the city, and a short walk about half-way in-between downtown and the University of New Mexico. By the time Neil (6 years younger) got to AHS, Ward had such a reputation that Neil was called into the principal's office and bawled out as a preemptive warning not to give the principal the same kind of trouble. The Ward stories go on and on, and everyone who met him has several of their own to tell.



Figure 6. Robinson Park Cannon and Albuquerque High School

Ward studied for a while at University of New Mexico, and then enlisted during WW II and served in the Pacific. When he returned, he worked in pipeline construction in west Texas. As he grew older, however, he wanted more stability and benefits so he applied to the Post Office. Again my dad was the influential model. After retiring from the post office, he and Jerry moved to Santa Monica CA.

The Caputos

I did not know my grandparents on my father's side. They died in New York, long before I was born. My grandfather, Antonio Caputo, came from Italy to the United States as a young man to find work. He was born Feb 29, 1864, so he got to celebrate his birthday every FOUR years. My grandmother was born in 1877 in Italy and came to the United States as a toddler. I notice now that my grandfather was almost 13 years older than my grandmother, and also that my father was 12 years older than my mother. I would think that was a pattern, except that I married a man only 10 months older than me. Both of my Italian grandparents hailed from hill villages east of Naples.

My father, Joe Caputo, was born at the end of 1899, which made his age easy to remember....it was the same as the year. My dad had 10 brothers and sisters, and they were raised in a modest house at 210 Lockwood in New Rochelle, NY. My daughter, Megan, and I went to visit the location in 2008, and the house looks pretty much as it always had, except that the neighbors are now of Guatemalan ethnicity rather than Italian.



Figure 7. Caputos' childhood home at 302 Lockwood Ave. in New Rochelle NY in 1924 & 2008

Dad was second oldest child, and was best pals with his sister Lola (born Maria) who was the oldest girl. Four of the kids died young, but the rest (seven) lived long and prospered. Only two of them had more than one child. I think that was a reaction to growing up in such a big, poor family, and also maybe because during the depression they were all struggling again. My grandfather was a worker for the city, and was able to save enough money to buy a house in New Rochelle NY.

My dad did not ever go to high school.

When I started 8th grade he told me that I had more school than he did. Dad never served in the military, although he wanted to. For WW I he was too young, and for WW II he was a bit old. Furthermore, he had rheumatic fever as a young man and that left him with a heart murmur and that probably disqualified him.

In 1926, Dad took a motorcycle trip across the United States. He had not been yearning to travel, but his brother, John, who had planned the trip broke his leg, so Dad took his place. Dad rode an Indian motorcycle from New Rochelle, NY to San Diego and then all the way up the west coast to Seattle and back to New York following what is now I-90. He took fabulous photos which he annotated and which we published on the web at <http://www.mcquinnfamilyhistory.com> .

Dad went to work for the US Post Office in New Rochelle, largely because of the security of the work. My grandmother, Maria, died in 1925 when she was only 48 after bearing 11 kids. My grandfather remarried, and the kids did not like the new wife, so two of the oldest, Dad and his sister Lola, moved to Albuquerque with the two youngest, Tony and Maddie, to set up a new home and so that Tony and Maddie could continue high school. The motorcycle trip has showed Dad that he liked the scenery and the climate out west.



Figure 8. Joe Caputo on his Indian motorcycle,

Maddie and Lola eventually moved to Denver, and Tony married an Albuquerque girl (Aunt Evelyn) and moved to California. We made a lot of trips to Denver and California, and even a couple to New York to visit aunts and uncles and cousins. Even though the family was spread around, I felt very connected to all of them. Recently, my cousin told me that I was Aunt Maddie's favorite niece, and I was proud of that until I realized I was the ONLY niece she knew.

Table 2. Reflections on being an only child

I was an only child and so I came to cherish the interactions with my all of my uncles, aunts and cousins on both my mother and my father's side of the family. My cousins ranged from 14 years older than me to 10 years younger. I saw most frequently those nearest in age to me (California) and I developed special closeness to them. As an adult, and especially after my folks died, I realized that the only people who remembered any of my childhood along with me were a few of my closest cousins. I suppose that concept is obvious to people with siblings, but it was a new feeling for me.

Chapter 3 Early years and school

The toddler years

I was born in Albuquerque in 1945. It was a difficult birth for my mother....she nearly died. My parents were married nine years before I was born, and so my parents were older. Mother was 33 and Dad was 45, and as a kid I thought my dad might die because he was so old. (That turned out not to be true.) My grandmother was always nearby when I was a girl. When I was born, she cared for me until my mother was well enough to come home. She was the only babysitter I ever had, and she watched me after school when my mother went to work.

When I was born, my folks lived at 3021 N. Broadway in Albuquerque NM. The street has been since renamed to Commercial and the house is still there. I lived there until I was four years old, and I have a vivid memory going all the way back to before I was two years old. I remember standing in my crib and being told to go to sleep. I remember the house had a huge back yard with fruit trees, and I remember eating maraschino cherries that my mother had canned. I remember standing outside and being told that my second birthday was coming. I did not know at that time what a birthday was. I remember playing in front in the sprinkler, and that my best friend lived only a block away. A few of these memories are undoubtedly augmented by the home movies my mother made.

In 1949, my parents sold the house on Broadway so that they could save to buy a new house and also to move out of the flood plain. When my parents sold the house on Broadway, they moved to a garage apartment that my grandfather Bartle built at 426 San Clemente NW. My grandfather and grandmother lived in the apartment while he built a bigger house on the same lot. Later Granny had the house moved next door to the house my parents bought.

Grandpop built both houses even though he was paralyzed on his left side. He had been paralyzed in a carpentry accident when he was doing some construction in Mescalero, NM in 1938. The accident prompted my granny to sell their (previous) house and move to Santa Monica CA where there was a home for disabled veterans (Sawtelle Veterans Hospital and Home). Granny and Grandpop stayed in California for a couple of years until his asthma became too much of a problem, and then they moved back to Albuquerque.

Elementary School

My first day of school was at La Luz Elementary. We did not yet have kindergarten in Albuquerque. My mother walked with me to school in the morning to show me the route. It was one mile north on 4th St, which even then was a pretty busy road. And then across two streets (4th and Griegos) and another block to the school. At lunch I walked home and then back again for the afternoon. It was about ½ mile each way, which was a lot of walking. It was also a busy street for a six-year old to walk on. I can't believe my mother thought it was a good idea at the time for me to walk alone!

In 1954 my parents got a good deal on a house at 519 San Andres NW. I got a new school, and new friends, and an even longer walk (¾ mile each way) four times a day. I walked it again in 2014, and it is not nearly as far as I remember then. This is the house I grew up in from 1954, age nine through college, until I moved to California in 1967. After my parents bought the house on San Andres, my grandmother, Leila, had the house my grandfather built moved to the lot next door at 523 San Andres NW. In retrospect, I realize it was an audacious act, and somewhat intrusive on my parents.



Figure 9. 523 San Andres (left) is the house my grandfather built. 519 (right) where I grew up.

Since my mother loved accounting, she calculated, by hand, all of the monthly payments, both principal and interest, and then used that information to accelerate payments to pay off the loan early. My dad did a lot of improvements on the house, and had a big bonus room added to the back. When my dad fenced in our property with cinder blocks, he added a gate to the back yard so granny could come and go from back-door to back-door. Last time I was there, in 2014, the gate was gone.

The entire time I was growing up, we had only one car, which my dad kept in the garage for my mother to use for errands. It was a straight shot by bus on 4th St from my parents' house to downtown, so Dad took the bus to work at the Post Office which at that time was at 4th and Gold. He would walk a few blocks to the bus stop so that he did not have to pay for an extra bus zone. At lunch time, he would eat quickly and then he would walk around downtown. We would make his lunch to take to work, always a sandwich and maybe fruit or carrot. We wrapped the sandwich in wax paper (no plastic wrap yet), and he would carefully fold the wax paper and bring it home to use the next day. My dad was nothing if not thrifty. That was a trait of everyone who went through the depression, and also how they got on so well on his rather small salary.

My new best friend lived two doors away and we'd play in my yard or hers, making mud pies, playing fantasy, or just talking. My dad built a wonderfully tall swing in our back yard and we could go very high. We rode our bicycles around the neighborhood. Dad had a chicken pen in the back yard, and we had fresh eggs and chickens. My dad would butcher the chickens and my grandmother would dress and cook them, because my mother did not much like chicken. I can still recall the smell of the scalding chickens as Granny was cleaning them. I helped a little bit.

My favorite hobby as a kid was reading. My best friend was also an avid reader, and she and I would trade books. She could read an entire Nancy Drew book in one night, and I could never quite keep up with her. I was one of those kids that read while I vacuumed, read while I ate, and read under the covers with a flashlight. My mother always knew that when I was too quiet I was reading rather than doing my chores.

When I was in sixth grade I had my first male teacher, Mr. Bartholdi, who was also the first to really encourage my interest in science and let me do all kinds of science posters and reports. About this time, I developed an interest in astronomy. When I was about 12, my dad's friend brought me a Spitz Junior Planetarium. Sometimes at night I would ask a friend over and project the stars on the wall of my bedroom. I would explain the constellations and whirl the globe around so that they could see how the sky changed throughout the seasons. Likely I was boring them to tears! And when I was not playing with my toy, I kept the blinds up in my room so that I could look out at the north sky and see the same constellations.



Figure 10. My favorite toy: a planetarium

Middle and High School

From elementary school, I went on to Taft Junior High and Valley High where I had more teachers who encouraged math and science projects. When I was in 9th grade, my algebra teacher, Mr. Slocum, suggested a math science fair project. I won the school and district competitions and went on to state with my project "graphic calculus". It demonstrated a method for calculating the areas under an irregular line by making projections to a side elevation. One of the judges asked me how it might be used in engineering, so I wrote to my Uncle Neil at Solar Aircraft who asked an engineer there. I received a long and detailed paper, which I never completely understood. It was very generous of them both, and I wish I had better expressed my appreciation. It helped me set up my college major in math and the career that followed. I took a third place that year at state science fair, and moved my interest in math and science to a higher gear. When I got to high school, one of my most influential teachers was Willie Sanchez who taught us pre-calculus.

Because New Mexico was a destination for cutting edge science, I went on field trips to amazing scientific labs. A couple of times I visited Los Alamos. There I saw a gigantic computer that occupied a room the size of a conference room. I was invited to submit my birthday which was punched onto a card; several minutes later a printout came back with the fact that I was born on a Sunday. This was my first encounter with a computer and I thought it was amazing. I also had a chance to look into a nuclear reactor and saw a blue glow through the cooling water. That was maybe not the safest thing but it was impressive. At the time I thought that all kids got such amazing science field trips, but as I was raising my own daughters I realized that was not the case. It was an exciting time (nuclear fission, man-made satellites and space travel) and it all fueled my interest in math and science and technology.

I also was interested in rocks. I would collect rocks and categorize them. My aunt Lola married a traveling salesman, and she would bring me collections of rocks from Colorado and Montana. When it was time to choose a name for Camp Fire, my mother helped me devise a name that meant "Girl Who Loves Rocks." (Camp Fire Girls at the time was only for girls, kind of like Girl Scouts.)

Unrelated to science, my mother got me interested in the hobby of leather carving. Tandy Leather in Albuquerque had a big collection of leather kits for purses, billfolds, and belts, and I got rather good at carving and decorating leather goods. Recently, I got out my tools and decorated a knife sheath for my daughter Robin.

My other craft that I became proficient at was knitting. I yearned for nice sweaters and discovered that I could make my own. I do not knit so much now, because my fingers are usually busy on the computer. But I have made afghans for all my kids, and for Maxine’s baby.



Figure 11. I was yearbook editor

A big influence in high school was my yearbook sponsor. Frank Gilmer was the journalism teacher, and I learned a ton about layout and publication managing big projects, and staff leadership. In my senior year I was appointed yearbook editor, and we spent many long hours curating photos, writing text and captions, and preparing to get the book published. The yearbook staff for the 1963 yearbook included a gifted artist, Bob Drury, who went on to work for Disney (cover shown). Because I was hanging around with superbly talented artists, I also studied art in high school and college. By the time I graduated from UNM, I had earned a major in math and minors in Art and Spanish.

Table 3. Math, writing and art shaped my career

As I look back at my education and practice in math, art, journalism, science, and project management, I realize that it all helped me repeatedly throughout my career as I was asked to write, to prepare proposals and white papers, to make executive presentations, and to support them all with analyses. I first noticed this when I was working on proposals at Boeing. I’d like to go back and express my deep gratitude to those folks who coached me, but they have all died. So my only option is to pay it forward.

University

After high school, I attended University of New Mexico. Even though I was interested in University of Arizona and UCLA, UNM was the only practical choice. I lived at home all four years, and the tuition was cheap by today’s standards. I think my entire four years tuition was around \$1200.

UNM was always a presence in my life since we passed by it on our errands around Albuquerque. I was really amazed and proud of myself when I arrived there as a student. When I began, my interests were math and art and journalism. When I left, I had added Spanish and literature and computers to my interests.

The entire time that I was taking my journey through all the topics that interested me, my mother kept me focused on majoring in math. Her mantra was always: “Yes, you can do that as a hobby after you get a good job using your math.” I was not an especially good math student; I graduated university with a high C average.



Figure 12. Jerre remote-accessing the GE 635 time-sharing computer, 1965

However, computers were starting to be available in universities and I had an opportunity to take a computer course offered by the college of Electrical Engineering. We had an IBM 7044 at UNM where I could punch cards, put them in a cubby hole, and come back the next day to collect the results. Then I got to try out remotely a time shared GE 635 computer based in Phoenix. I was hooked on computer programming, but there was no such degree yet, so I continued in math.

With my math and computer coursework I was able to get a position as a co-op student at Kirtland AFB as a Math Aide. More on that a little later in this narrative.

In the middle of my last year at University, my parents divorced. I think it was my dad's mid-life crisis. He moved east to marry an old friend of his (Irene), a woman several years older than my mother. My father's divorce caused hard feelings amongst the family on his side as well as on my mother's side. The split was so bitter that I did not feel comfortable inviting Dad to my wedding, and we were married nine years before my husband met my father. I had remained on good terms with Dad, but an opportunity was a long time coming for the two most important men in my life to meet.

Table 4. Don McQuinn's good will in sharing his hospitality

It is a tribute to the extreme good will and good grace of my husband, Don McQuinn, that many years later he welcomed my dad into our home as a member of our family for a couple of years. It was a gift that I never expected that my daughters would get to know my father well. It was a second gift that they got to know my uncles, Ward and Neil, since my mother died when my daughters were very young. Of course, Dad and Ward were amongst many people that Don welcomed into our home.

Travel

Before I move on to the working years, I'll make a detour here to talk about travel. All throughout my life, travel has been a recurring theme. I traveled early with my parents, and later with my husband, and recently with our kids. Here are some of the more memorable destinations.

- **California:** When I was two years old (in 1947), my grandparents and my mother took me on my first trip to San Diego. I have some vestigial memories of that trip. From that time on, we made lots of trips to California to visit my Bartle cousins and also my Caputo cousins.
 - **San Diego.** Uncle Neil (Bartle) and Aunt Margie lived in San Diego with their two children: Jeff and Jennifer. I was in San Diego for my 6th birthday (1952). Aunt Margie

baked me a yellow angel food cake with candles. It's the first time I think I had candles on my cake. On that trip, Jeff was a baby and when it was time for his nap, I got into his playpen with him and read *The Three Little Pigs*, a Golden Book, to him. Over the years we made many more trips to California.

- **Oxnard.** Uncle Tony (Caputo) and Aunt Evelyn lived in Oxnard the first time I went to visit. When I first met Uncle Tony, I was so surprised that he looked so much like my dad. Tony was a little shorter and his face was a little rounder, but otherwise they (Tony and Joe) could have been twins. Tony and Evelyn had three boys: George, Anthony (Tony), and Robert (Bob). Growing up I most often saw Robert who was four years younger. Later, when I moved to California, I became good friends with them all.
- **Denver:** In Denver my dad had two sisters: Maddie and Lola. Maddie was married to Jerry Green who sometimes flew (piloted) a small plane to Albuquerque. I think my first trip to Denver was in 1949, when Gerry arranged for my dad to buy a new car. Mother and I went by train from Albuquerque to Denver. We had a sleeper car, but mother said I talked all night long. In Denver, we stayed with my Aunt Lola who was a sales woman for the May Company department store. She lived in a second story apartment. It was the first time I had been in an apartment building. My parents were sensitive to the people downstairs, and so they continually tried to get me to be quiet and stop jumping around. Aunt Maddie and Uncle Jerry had one son, David, who was a few years older than I. We made several trips to Denver over the years. At one point, Aunt Maddie had a house on a lake in Wheatridge, a suburb west of Denver. I had a lot of fun that summer playing in the lake and rowing their dinghy. Now I have become good friends with David's daughter, Dana Lee, and her daughter Carlee. In 2015, Dana and Carlee and several of their friends visited for several days in the middle of traveling for Carlee's vaulting competitions. (gymnastics on horseback)
- **New York:** My first trip to New York was when I was four (1949). There I met my dad's sister Tess and her husband Jim Carino and my cousin, James Carino Jr. Also I met my dad's brother John, his wife Emma, and their son Jack. Both of those cousins were much older than I. At Aunt Tess's house in New Rochelle, I saw TV for the first time; a roller-derby was on. Everyone was very excited about it and I couldn't understand why. Nobody had told me that it was new technology; all I could figure out was that different homes had different machines.
- **Oklahoma:** I visited my great-grandmother (we called her Nonie) twice in Ponca City. The first time I was four years old and remember playing with my third cousins, Steve and Jane Benefield. The second time I was about ten (1955) and had a several long talks with Nonie. She was born in 1862, and she told me about her life as a settler in Oklahoma. She recited a lot of cute poems for me, and I made notes of them all. Nonie was blind (from cataracts). At that time it was not yet understood that plastic lenses could be used to restore vision. Years later, my cousin Steve Benefield joined the Navy and was stationed with his wife (Kathy) and kids (Denise and Lee) in Washington D.C., where we became good friends. After Steve died, Kathy remarried Charlie Hicks who has become a good friend. They live in Florida and have had us as their guests on many occasions.
- **Europe and beyond:** after I married Don and I continued to travel. A longer list of trips we have made is in the appendix. Our destinations have included England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Denmark, Peru, Egypt, Italy, and Spain.

Table 5. Travel as a theme in my life

In talking with my husband, I can see that we had very different experiences with travel. For me it was nothing too amazing, as I had repeatedly visited relatives all over the country, and taken in many sites along the way. For Don, travel was an eye-opening experience as he met for the first time people from places other than Texas. I always knew that my dad had moved a long way from New York to Albuquerque, and that I had relatives all over. I grew up thinking that travel was just something you did. When our kids were born we took them far and wide from their earliest days. In fact, for a cultural fair project in 8th grade, our daughter, Megan, chose travel as a cultural theme of her family life. Since then, Megan has been to England, Singapore, Tokyo, China, and all over Europe. Our youngest daughter, Robin, worked far afield as a geologist first in Alaska and Canada and then in the middle of the Australian desert, looking for gold. She has also traveled to Ecuador, Galapagos, St. Petersburg, parts of Europe, Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, and Borneo. Once again, as empty nesters, Don and I are enjoying long car trips and cruises.

Chapter 4 Starting work

Albuquerque

My first job was in Albuquerque working at Browning Business School during the summer before university. My mother wanted me to be able to work as a secretary if necessary and she thought those skills would be good to have even if I completed a 4-year degree. So I studied machine shorthand, using the same machines and techniques that court reporters used. The owner, Mrs. Browning, let me pay for the tuition by working in her office at the business school. I improved my skills at typing, machine shorthand, and transcription....all without the help of computers. The typing has served me well in my career with computers, and the shorthand keying is stuck in my fingers' motor memory even yet, although I could not transcribe the results if my life depended on it.

The next job I got was as a math aide in a co-op arrangement working in the Air Force Weapons Lab (AFWL) at Kirtland Air Force Base. I worked half time and took classes full time from my second year of college onward. As a math aide, I was responsible for punching and submitting card decks to run programs on the brand new, state-of-the-art CDC 6600 computer. I would submit the decks through a cubby hole, and then collect the printout the next day, and plot the results by hand. Later I got to program the automatic plotter (a CalComp at KAFB) and I parlayed that into my first real computer programming job in California. AFWL was a scientific lab and packed with eligible, intelligent service guys, both enlisted and officers. Almost all of them had 4-year scientific degrees, and the main difference between them was that some chose to do officer training. Don McQuinn was one of the enlisted men. I had a crush on him from early-on, but he thought we were passing acquaintances. After I graduated in 1967 from UNM with my B. S. in Math, I was hired by the lab as a civil servant. I worked there for about four months and then found an opportunity to move to Los Angeles.

Table 6. Thoughts on Albuquerque and elsewhere

When I was living there, I thought Albuquerque was a big city, but after I left I found it was modest in size. When I left there were 200K people, and since it has grown to a little more than 500K. Also when I was young, I was pretty sure that things I saw had always been that way and would always stay. Since my mother grew up in Albuquerque and pointed out the landmarks of her youth, that reinforced by view. After leaving Albuquerque, and after moving from all of the other places I have lived since then, I know that landmarks (buildings, trees, streets) are always changing and you can notice the change only if you go away for a few years.

I also came to see that New Mexico was a very special place in which to live. This gradually came to me as relatives came from the east and marveled over what I saw every day. East of Albuquerque are the Sandia Mountains, which look so close you think you can touch them. West of Albuquerque, route 66 (now I-40) climbs up onto the lava plain and continues west to Arizona. Standing uptown you can look west and see the earth until it curves away...can see Mt Taylor 60 miles away. And along with that there is the wonderful cultural history and food of the Spanish, the Mexicans, and the Native Americans. The "specialness" of Albuquerque, and the good times that we had there, prompted us to buy a home in Santa Fe in 2014. More on that later.

Landing in Los Angeles

My chance to leave Albuquerque came when I answered an ad for a position at Benson-Lehner, a plotter company in Van Nuys California. I made my first airplane flight, landed at LAX, went to the company for an interview, and was put on a plane back home, all on the same day. I got the job at the then whopping salary of \$12,500 per year. My mother had every right to be panicked over my moving so far away, but she handled it with relative calm. I was her only daughter, and since her recent divorce, I was the only member of her household. It helped that I had aunts and uncles and cousins in California. I had a lot of fun in California. I saw the sights and visited my relatives and in between I worked and kept my own apartment for the first time.

By this time I was infatuated with a guy I left behind in Albuquerque, Paul McQuesten. Paul was smart and charismatic, with lots of attitude. I met Paul when I worked for the Air Force and he was a systems engineer on the CDC 6600 stationed at Kirtland. After I moved to Los Angeles, I became engaged to Paul and we conducted a long-distance romance for about a year. The phone calls and airplane trips were expensive! I admired Paul's expertise, so I set out to develop my own expertise on the Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) PDP-8 which drove the Benson-Lehner plotters. It was a computer just my size, in the same way that my little Volkswagen bug was just my size.

Moving to Washington, D.C.

In 1968, Paul was transferred to Washington D.C., and so I arranged to take a job working directly for DEC as a Software Specialist attached to the D.C. sales and service field office. I went to Maynard MA for four months of training on the PDP-8, PDP-12, and PDP-15. I later returned to train on the PDP-11.

1969 was a big year. We landed a man on the moon in July; at that same moment I was in the Long Bar in Tijuana Mexico enjoying too much beer after a bullfight and watching the landing live on TV. The picture was pretty fuzzy, but then so was I. A month later, I drove with my mother from California to Massachusetts at the same time as Woodstock (August 15, 1969). While I was training in Maynard, I came to the realization that Paul was not the right guy for me, so I broke it off. Meanwhile, I knew that Don McQuinn had finished his military service and was also in Washington D.C., so I thought I could look him up.

I arrived Washington, D.C. in January 1970 to begin work as a Software Specialist for DEC. There were only two Software Specialists in the role and we did customer help desk support, computer software installation, software troubleshooting, and sales support for prospective customers. The job involved frequent travel from North Carolina to Massachusetts, and was a lot of fun for a single 25 year-old girl.

Chapter 5 Marriage

Don McQuinn and I married on August 15, 1970. It was a small wedding with only eight of us: Don, me, our two mothers, and a companion for each of the four of us...plus the minister at the Methodist church on the University of Maryland Campus. We took a weekend trip to Williamsburg VA, and then a longer, two-week honeymoon in England. It was our first extended trip in another country and we were very



Figure 13. Don and Jerre McQuinn, 1970

young (25 & 26) and naïve. We got along well and saw some amazing sights for our first time (Westminster Cathedral, Stonehenge, Ireland, Edinburgh castle) and discovered that we were even more compatible than we hoped. In retrospect, I think we can credit our mothers for our compatibility; I came to understand that those two women (Laphine McQuinn and Ruth Caputo) would have been very good friends if they had somehow met even without us. They had a lot of common life experience, values, work ethic, and sense of fun. Both of them were extremely wonderful, intelligent, generous, and deeply loving women. It made our life much easier that we could have them both in our home at the same time and there was still harmony.

Washington, D.C.

Before kids, Don and I both worked full time, partied plenty, and traveled abroad to amazing places. The appendix includes a list of our big trips. In the years between 1970 and 1981 we went to England three times, Germany twice, Iceland, Egypt, Virgin Islands, Peru, Hawaii and Alaska. We also each traveled frequently on business.

I worked for DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation) in the Washington DC field office for nine years: 1970-1978. Although I did a little bit of programming, assembly language and FORTRAN, I operated more as a business support person who could understand the business needs and recommend technical solutions. One of my best assignments was teaching customers about DEC software. I taught what we called a DOS graduate school. I presented detailed information on how the Disk Operating System for the PDP-11 worked.

During this time we had a very active social life. We bought a cute little brick rambler on Seabrook Road in Lanham MD, and it had a lot of room for parking and parties. Most of our DEC friends were in the field service organization. That meant that they were the guys (later also gals) that went out to customer sites to repair computers. They were the largest organization in the field office and they also seemed to be having the most fun. Many of the crew were Vietnam veterans, or had served on Guam or Kwajalein maintaining the radar stations. They all had great stories.

We formed a regular group of people that would meet after work at our favorite tavern (the Lanham Inn) which was just a mile from our house. A couple of times we had enough to drink that we were given rides home in other people's cars, and had to walk down the next day to retrieve our own cars. Frequently would bring home other people who should not be driving to "sleep it off" on our couch. Sometimes, on a long weekend, a party would go on for a couple of days...with people going home to take showers or do errands and then coming back later on to continue the party.

The field service team organized an annual canoe trip on the Shenandoah River and my husband was invited. Over the years he invited enough of his good friends at CSC that they had to organize their own separate canoe trip. Don Berman was one of those CSC friends along with Gene Cyprych and Bob Cecil.

Because we were a short drive from Annapolis, on the Chesapeake, many of the guys had sail boats. We became good friends with Dan Davis who always seemed glad to have us as his crew. As captains went, Dan was an easy going commander of a 19-foot sloop that he named the Mandala. Mandala #1 did not even have a head (toilet). Its successor, Mandala #2 had both a head and a small galley. We made many trips across the Chesapeake with Dan to tie up and eat crabs and drink beer at the various small ports on the eastern shore of Maryland. Frequently Dan would bring his boy, Lincoln, who was four years old when we first met him. Sometimes Dan's wife, Mary, and later her daughter Krissie, would join us or would drive to the place we were staying to meet us. Dan led a colorful life, and died too young (just 60), but we are still friends with Mary and Lincoln and Krissie. We hold them close in our hearts.

Another good friend was Don Churn who was a bachelor when we first met. We collected a lot of bachelor (male) friends along the way, and some single female friends as well. Don Churn had a VW camper and we made lots and lots of backpacking trips in the Shenandoah Mountains of western Virginia. Even after Don Churn left to manage a remote field service operation in southwest Virginia, we made weekend trips to meet up and go backpacking. Because my husband was Don McQuinn I had to call all the other Dons by their last names: Berman and Churn, or Mr. Churn.

One of our biggest annual projects was to host an annual beer tasting contest. We collected up to 100 different beers at a time, poured them into numbered cups, and impaneled "objective tasters" from amongst the party guests. We gave prizes for the best-tasting and the worst-tasting beers, as well as for the beer that had traveled the farthest to get to our party. We collected 12 years of statistics (oh, the math again) and a whole bunch of great stories. Our biggest finding was that people like beer for reasons other than the taste. On so many occasions people were simply amazed to discover after they voted that they had given their favorite beer a low score.

Table 7. A second formative period in my life

My memories from this part in my life are still vivid. Later on time went by quickly. We were so busy raising a family and taking care of our parents that I forget some of the details. In retrospect, I think this second period in my life, after childhood, was formative. New life experience firsts came fast and burned deeply into my outlook and formed my operating model of what it meant to be an adult.

Late in 1978, I was ready to make a career change and I contacted Don McQuinn's manager at CSC Corporation. During an informational interview, I learned that he was changing companies to work for Systems and Applied Sciences who was negotiating a services contract with Boeing in Seattle. Both Don and I interviewed in Seattle, and also in the San Francisco Bay area, and as a result we received offers in both the Bay area and the Seattle area. So in order to decide we did what geeks always do: we built a spreadsheet! This was before spreadsheets were computerized; really it was just a grid of weighted criteria and scores. There were several criteria including salary, career opportunity, cost of living, proximity to family, geographic beauty. We ran the scores and the Bay area came out on top. That was the wrong answer! So we changed the weights on geographic beauty and Seattle won. That was when we learned we could use our brains to tell us what our hearts had wanted all along.

Seattle

We arrived in Seattle in January 1979. The journey itself was a story. We found a friend who wanted to rent our new house in Maryland, including furniture. We turned the key over to our friend and new tenant, Gene Cyprych, and we jumped in the car and headed west. We did not even have to empty out the refrigerator. We spent three weeks at the end of 1978 making our way west and visiting friends and relatives in Virginia, Tennessee, Texas, New Mexico and Colorado. We spent Christmas with family in Colorado and arrived in Seattle in the dead of winter. In Seattle we found a house to rent with another fellow from Maryland (Mark Joseph). It was the best possible time of year to arrive, because the days got continually longer from the moment we arrived. Seattle is both far north and also very far west in its time zone, so the days are short and the sun rises late. Daylight in winter goes from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, and then it only is dim because of the heavy clouds. In summer it's the opposite; it's light from 4:30 am to nearly 10 pm.

Boeing

We started work at Boeing and began looking for a place to buy. Don and I were both assigned to different parts of the Anti-Satellite (ASAT) project. He describes in his narrative what the project was about. In short, we were to knock a satellite out of the sky by simply putting a small object in its way. No bombs were involved. Don worked on the mission control part of the project. I worked on the ground equipment software requirements and test. Again, I avoided the coding.

The ASAT project was the most interesting assignment of my entire career. Instead of being involved just with computers and the customers who wanted to buy them, I got to work with a bunch of smart engineers who were designing leading-edge avionics. There were mechanical and propulsion and navigation and guidance and support problems to be solved; and Boeing was in partnership with Hughes, Vought, McDonnell-Douglas and Singer-Kearfott to develop and integrate the parts. The project hung a two-stage missile on an F-15 airplane that flew to a point in space and released the missile which then sent its payload to maneuver into the path of the on-coming satellite. The ground equipment included a Flightline System Test Set (FSTS) that attached to the missile interface unit and read out signals so that the flight line crew could be sure all was ready to go. I went to the launch site at Edwards AFB in California. That was the most fun of all, because I got to stand on the tarmac and tell the project owners that the missile was ready for takeoff (or not). I watched the photography planes take off, and the test pilot take off...it was all very exciting.

Chapter 6 Raising kids

We were married a long time before having kids. My mother was 33 years old, and was married 9 years when I was born, but we stretched it even further. I was 36 and 11 years married before our first baby came along. In my family generations are very far apart; it's hard to fit three generations into a century, whereas in other families there might be five generations in a century. By the time Megan was born, we were old enough to be her grandparents. That gave us a bit of a different perspective on child rearing, I think. We were a bit calmer, a lot wiser, and better off financially than earlier.

Megan

Megan was born Nov 24, 1981. She missed my dad's birthday by five days, and on her ninth birthday in 1991, he gave her a birthday card remarking that together their ages (9 and 91) added up to 100, and he wished her such longevity. (I do too!!) Megan began part-time daycare, and I went back to work part-time. When Megan was six months old, we took her on an ambitious flying trip of the United States to see friends and relatives. Eastern Airlines had a special: all you can fly in two weeks for a fixed price. We packed up darling little Megan who almost always would produce a big grin when we poked her in the tummy, packed a bunch of disposable diapers, grabbed a stack of airplane tickets about an inch high, and took off. We flew to Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Texas, New Mexico and Colorado...all by connecting in Atlanta. By 1981, my father's second wife had died, and he had become a very proud grandpa for the first time.



Figure 14. Jerre, Don, Robin, Megan McQuinn, 1984

Megan began school at Des Moines Elementary, and after a couple of years we decided to move into the Marvista school district because we knew it was a terrific school community and also because we had moved Don's mom and Aunt Lena into our home. A year later we added my dad to the household for a couple of years...for a total of three seniors, two kids, and two wage earners. At Marvista, we joined enthusiastically into the school volunteer effort. I became active in PTA and together Don and I expanded a fledgling advanced math program.

I have never much enjoyed belonging to clubs. PTA was different, and PTA at Marvista was the best "club" I ever joined. We had a very active cohort of parents who were all involved with rearing our kids. They were so active that sometimes we had to wait our turn to volunteer! In the summer, we noticed all of the same parents volunteering at the pool, as timers, selling snacks, and of course working the computers. The most active PTA leader was Rita Creighton. Rita was a genius at making the right connection with the right person to the right task and the right cause. She always knew just who to ask for each project, and so I was recruited for newsletter editor, treasurer, registrar, and any other task that wanted computer or analytical skills. Rita went on to become president of Washington State PTA, and a good personal friend. She invited our family to her home on Christmas Eve for many years, and then we would have New Year's Eve at our house. Our kids were friends with the Creighton kids, Jeff and Courtney, and we were friends with her husband, Stu Creighton who was the mayor of our little city, Normandy Park. Once on a vacation, I bragged that we were such upstanding citizens that the mayor picked us up and took us to the airport.

The advanced math program was a huge success for us, for our girls, and for the school. We organized and developed our teaching skills, and pretty soon the program expanded like a balloon. Working with another dad, Tom Tosch, and always a teacher sponsor, we coached fifth graders in math and took them to a statewide completion, the Washington State Math Olympiad. We met with about 12 kids for one

hour before school. The next year, more parents came forth to ask for their kids to get into the program, and our response was that we could take more kids if we had more parent volunteers. The other parents had noticed that kids who finished our program were taking advanced classes in middle school. We split the program in half, with Don and Tom each taking a new volunteer coach, and expanded to include a dozen new fifth graders and a dozen second-year sixth graders. The program expanded at Marvista and after a couple of years we had nearly 40 kids in two grades. Then the program went viral and parents in other schools were asking for assistance. We started copying our notes, we set up weekly meetings with parent volunteers in six schools. Eventually, as the Internet matured, we published our notes to the web at <http://home.avvanta.com/~math/>

Our next step got us involved with Math Olympiad competitions at the state level. As Megan passed through the upper elementary and middle school grades we were hauling her and her friends around the state of Washington to compete. Before we finally retired from math coaching, we were site coordinators of the Tacoma Math Olympiad competition. Don and I partnered with a math teacher to secure the location, write the tests, order lunches, organize the teams, and hold the orientation and award ceremonies. It was quite a production; in our biggest year we had 200 teams (800 kids) and their parents convened at Tacoma for a Saturday morning of math competition. At the same time, our materials were used at five sites around the state of Washington.

Table 8. Advocating for Math education

In retrospect, I can see that with the Advanced Math Program we were effectively homeschooling our daughters in math, at the school house. We snuck in math in the form of a contest. I don't know that they fully understood that we were providing so much math enrichment. As a result, I believe we launched both girls into scientific and analytical careers. Particularly with Megan, I am not certain that she would have been mathematical-technological without this effort. I congratulate myself that this was a means for me to pay forward the gift of math and science that had been given to me in school.

Megan went on to study International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework in high school. Both girls joined the swim team and earned athletic letters in addition to their academic work. When it came time for Megan to choose a university, we got out our old spreadsheet evaluation technique (now using a computer) and she determined the criteria to evaluate U Washington, U Arizona, and Arizona State U. Megan chose Arizona State and headed off to Tempe in 2000.

I am convinced that a college student is not well prepared to choose her course of study. Megan had a lot of fun her freshman year exploring various subjects. During her sophomore year she really got into gear and did well in all of her courses. I rewarded her by taking her on a business trip I made to Singapore and Tokyo. Late that year, we all three (Megan, Don and I) laid out several courses of study and she chose to Major in economics and minor in philosophy. Of course that also meant effectively a minor in math as well. By the time her senior year came, she decided to spend a year abroad at the London School of Economics (LSE). That year really broadened Megan's horizon. She commuted daily by bus and on foot around one of Europe's biggest cities, and then after her year studying she traveled all over Europe with a girlfriend that she made at LSE. Megan's friend spoke English, French, and Italian and made it easy for them to find their way around Rome, Prague, Amsterdam, and Paris. The girls especially loved Prague because it was cute and quaint and also because they found an active night life.

After Megan completed her degree (B. S. Econ from ASU) she moved to Santa Monica and lived with Uncle Ward while she looked for work. She spent a couple of years at a Target Distribution Center east of LA, a couple of years as a pricing analyst at Petco in San Diego, a couple of years at CVS pharmacy in

Rhode Island, and is now in Cincinnati since 2012, working as a price analyst and a merchandising consultant for Kroger. She is the only person I know to have translated her economics degree into a career.

Robin

Robin was born March 10, 1984. For a couple of years we hired a live-in nanny, Nancy Sanborn, and then eventually Don's mom and Aunt Lena arrived to help take care of the kids at home while I worked part-time. In 1989, we moved into a large, brand-new house in the Marvista school district. Robin began kindergarten at the new school.

Robin was always the youngest person in a household of up to seven people, and so she was on the tail-end of them all letting her know what she should do. Perhaps it is partly because of that position that Robin developed a great deal of independence and very firm ideas of her own about what she would do. As an example, when Robin was only eight years old, in the summer before third grade, she decided that she would make a quilt. It was quite a project, and a challenge for me to help her complete it without it being too fancy. I guided her and she did most of the work. She used scraps of material left over from outfits that her granny had made her. We laid out the squares to get the symmetry pattern she wanted. The seams were all straight lines, done on a machine, mostly by her with a little help from me. Finally she put the batting in and the backing on, again by machine and she had completed a colorful quilt large enough for a twin bed. She still uses the quilt as her main coverlet whenever she stays on Camano Island.



Figure 15. Robin made a quilt when she was 8 years old

Robin was always a hard worker. Our new house had a summer swim club and Robin joined the swim team when she was six years old. After a couple of years she decided she wanted to join winter swim club as well. Robin worked so hard for so long as a swimming athlete that at one point I thought she might become a state level competitor. By the time I mentioned the opportunity, she told me that instead of working that hard on swimming, she wanted to devote the biggest effort to completing a full International Baccalaureate diploma. That meant that she had to do advanced study and test in six subjects.

Of course Robin competed in Math Olympiad along with all of the family and all of her friends. As a result of the Advanced Math program we coached, most of the kids advanced one year in math, and some of them advanced two (taking Algebra as 7th graders). In eighth grade Robin began to study



Figure 16. Robin in Megan in 2009, with crab dinner at Camano Island house

Spanish. When she was 15, she traveled with her Spanish teacher and several other students to Spain to see the country, study the language and include a one-week home stay with a family in Valencia. See seemed worried to go, and sorry when it was done. Robin has gone on as an adult to study French in Quebec, Spanish in Ecuador, Russian in St. Petersburg, and Portuguese on the web.

When it came time for University, Robin applied at U Washington, U California Davis, Cornell, and McGill in Montreal. She chose McGill, partly because a good friend was headed there. After a year at McGill, she decided instead she wanted to study geology at U British Columbia, so she came out west again. Also, the very cold winters may have had some influence on her decision. At UBC, she earned a combined degree in geology and computer science, which launched into an opening niche as a technical field geologist. Her career in gold exploration

took her to Alaska, Canada, the southwest United States and Australia. At this writing, she is semi-retired and exploring other interests in the U.S.

Table 9. Networking for your career

Robin found all of her jobs through people she knew. Her first job, at the kayak shop, found her because she bought a kayak from the store. She found her way into all of her geology exploration jobs as a result of Roundup, a geology conference that she (still) regularly attends in Vancouver, BC. While even Robin admits she is somewhat of a recluse, I am amazed at how well she networks a field of interest to her. And that got me to the realization that absolutely every one of my jobs, after the first one, has come to me because of a personal connection I had made in an earlier position. Networking is vital!

Maxine

Maxine came into our life in 1997. She was within a month of graduating high school, and had already been accepted at University of Puget Sound (UPS) in Tacoma. Maxine had spent a life time bouncing from home to home. To say that her family of birth is dysfunctional would be massively understating the matter. More than anyone I have ever known, Maxine is a self-made woman, with a little help from us and a few of her other friends. I met a couple of Maxine's biological relatives a couple of times, but the bonds were loose. The short version is that Maxine's biological mother was only 17 when Maxine was born, could not provide for her, and left altogether when Maxine was about 10, leaving a handful of half-siblings. Maxine landed at the same high school as my daughters, and I met her through a PTA friend. Maxine was very tenacious about clinging to her school community and was focused on academic success in general and debate in particular.



*Figure 17. Maxine Cram Martin
McReynolds, 2012*

Maxine spent most of her summers and holidays in our home, working at a job each summer, and most of her winters working as a resident assistant on the UPS campus. Nowadays we explain our relationship by saying that Maxine started acting like our daughter and we started acting like her parents. It worked well for us all.

Maxine earned a degree in International Political Economy and did a semester abroad in Freiburg Germany where she made some good friends. After graduating UPS, she was accepted into grad school at U Colorado Boulder. She initially pursued a PhD in Economics, but in the end discovered that law was better suited to her abilities. Maxine earned her J.D. (law degree) in 2007, and I was touched when it occurred to me that the McQuinns were the only people in the world who had attended all of Maxine's graduations: from high school, university and grad school.

Table 10. Practicing parenthood

It is not a stretch to say that Maxine helped us to become better (calmer) parents for Megan and Robin by showing us the challenges and choices we would make as they made their ways through teenage crises and higher education opportunities. Furthermore she has been effective as an intermediary, at facilitating communication amongst us all, and by toning the parent message down (or up) as appropriate. It is in some part thanks to Maxine that we are good adult friends with all our girls.

Chapter 7 A working mom

The entire time that I was raising kids, I also managed to keep nudging my career along, although at a somewhat slower rate than if I had worked full time all along. Also I had the help of Don's mom and especially his Aunt Lena who lived with us until her death in 2013.

Mesa Software, Inc.

In 1985, I decided that rather than contracting with Boeing through a third party I would form my own consulting company (Mesa Software). I partnered with another Boeing contractor and good friend, Lindsay Wright. We had met Lindsay in Maryland and recruited her for the Boeing contract. Lindsay and I formed a small corporation and started to write proposals. We contracted some work at Boeing and also at Spacelabs. The best customer of Mesa, however, was George Sarvey, who was development manager for a computer automation company. George is a friend that I had made while working at DEC in Maryland. George has always been really good at keeping in touch with me, and so over the course of 4-5 years, I worked for George doing software test and writing proposals. I enjoyed some great travel as well, to New York City and weekly to Camarillo California for several months. I even made a trip to the Netherlands to help with the automation of a distribution center.

At Boeing, I worked on a couple of Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) projects, also known as “Star Wars.” One was to propose a satellite shield to detect any missile launch anywhere and anytime. I learned that I liked to work on proposals and that I liked to write and illustrate and do layout. (Recall to my earlier sidebar on yearbook management.) On a government contract proposals turn into a real art form as every clause in the Request for Proposal must be addressed, and word/page count is limited. They are always big, well-managed projects with impossible deadlines and long hours. I discovered that I liked working 50 to 70 hours a week for a month or two, and then taking a long break.

In 1994, while I was recovering from a knee injury and surgery, I was asked to work on a proposal to Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California. That is where Richard Feynman and Carl Sagan did their research. I did not know how I was going to get to work on one leg and a crutch, but I said yes, anyway. In the course of working the proposal, I got to travel to JPL in Pasadena and walk the hallowed halls of some of the great scientists. That was a lot of fun as well.

Contracts at Mesa went well so long as people were calling us and asking for work. At our largest, we had five regular employees. However, we discovered that we liked to produce the work, but not so much to sell our services. Gradually business ground to a halt, we laid off our permanent staff, and dissolved the corporation in 2009. By that time I was already working full time at Microsoft.

Microsoft

In 1999, both of our daughters were in high school, and I decided to go back to work full-time. Don’s aunt Lena was living with us and helping run the household and watch over the girls, and college was looming so I thought I would supplement the college budget. In February, I found a contract position as a technical writer on what was to become the class library for the C# programming language. A couple of months into my contract, I decided to contact a long-time friend, Dan Fowler, who I met at Boeing and who had moved on to DEC (at my suggestion) and then to Microsoft. Dan and I met for lunch and had a wonderful time catching up on our families, and then at the very end of lunch he asked “do you want to come work as a full time employee at Microsoft? I thought: “Oh, crumb, this was an interview!!” I jumped at the chance and hired into Microsoft in July 1999. I got to work in IT (Information Technology) at Microsoft, in the area of sales and operations that sells Volume Licensing. Licensing is the most lucrative business for Microsoft, and over the next 15 years I got to work on all aspects of the systems and business rules that operate volume licensing. The work was very rewarding, both economically and intellectually. I got to sharpen my business analysis skills and develop my leadership skills. I was not developing systems, but interfacing with business users to document system requirements, develop presentations, develop documentation, and performing system test. I rose to the position of Senior Principal Business Architect (Business Analyst) during my tenure at Microsoft.

I discovered that I wanted to be an Individual Contributor rather than a people manager, and Microsoft was large enough, and progressive enough, that I had a long career path. Some of my proudest accomplishments at Microsoft were (from my resume):

- Conceiving and leading development of flexible, business-rules-based systems.
- Publishing journal papers and making presentations at Business Rules conferences.
- Publishing executive level white papers on pricing, and rules-based systems.
- External Defensive Publication (in lieu of patent) that protects Microsoft’s right to use an innovative product relationship model.
- Achieving status of Certified Business Analyst Professional.
- Consulting on an international standard for IT Asset Management (ISO-19770-3).

In 2014, I retired as a full-time Microsoft employee, and converted to part-time consulting doing basically the same work. I retain an abiding interest in rules-based systems, configurable through structured data, and in IT Asset Management.

Table 11. Motherhood and career

I was pretty proud of myself at figuring out how to work part-time while raising my daughters and in semi-retirement. I thought that I had cracked some kind of really tough problem until I remembered that my grandmother had done the same thing when I was growing up. She retired as a seamstress at a leather coat factory, but then the factory owners pressed her back into service. They sent a big sewing machine to her house. On Mondays they would deliver flat leather pieces and on Fridays they would pick up finished sleeves, fronts, or whatever. I realized that I had a 21st century piece-work equivalent when I bought my own home computer and performed analyses, wrote papers, and participated in meetings...part-time and remote!

Chapter 8 Empty nest

Geography

Issaquah

Our youngest daughter, Robin, headed to university in 2002. That winter Don retired and we decided to sell the big house and move to a smaller place closer to Microsoft on the east side of Lake Washington. Don and I made a list and when Robin came home for the summer, she cracked the whip while Don did 124 repairs to the big house. We found a condominium in the cute village of Issaquah WA with a short walk to pubs, restaurants, theaters, stores, and an easy commute to Microsoft. We moved in October 2003 and immediately were treated to the annual Salmon Festival which is an end-of-summer party for the whole town, with a salmon spawning theme.

Megan went off to London, and we shortly followed with our friends Peter and Mary Mueller to take in the sights of London. Robin went to UBC in Vancouver and started her sophomore year. During that summer, Maxine married Geoff Vasil. Geoff was earning a PhD in physics at U Colorado while Maxine pursued her law degree. Alas the marriage was not to last. In 2008 they they divorced, and Maxine went on to pursue her career as an attorney at Patton-Boggs (now Squire-Patton-Boggs) in their Denver office.

Even after we moved away from Normandy Park we maintained friends in the area. It is a ritual that we meet them for dinner and drinks most Fridays. We have a group of regulars George and Marilyn Elliott, our former neighbors Dave Hill and Bob Olsen, and Mary Mueller (widowed in 2005) who usually invites her friends Pat Merrell, Cece Johnson, and Mike McGrady. Several others join occasionally: Jim Grumbach, John Ferguson, Randall Evans, and Steve and Janet Sisson.

Florida

In 2005, we got the bright idea to build a home in Florida. Our cousins, Kathy and Charlie Hicks were there, and we liked to visit, and we thought that it would be a good investment for baby boomers wanting to retire to the sun. We contracted for a new house on the ninth hole of a 27-hole golf course in North Port. Kathy and Charlie helped and checked on the place as it was built and afterwards. We knew we could not spend too much time there, as Aunt Lena was growing too old to travel and too old

to be left alone at home for a couple of weeks, even though she still enjoyed good health. Alas we did not plan for a recession in 2008, and so when we sold it in 2012 we did not make money (we lost). Our rationale for selling was that Don was doing much better with our stock portfolio than with our real estate portfolio, and we were not able to both of us get there often nor for long.

Camano

In 2007, we undertook what turned out to be a massive remodel of the Camano Island vacation home. We had built the house in 1987, and in 20 years it needed some repair. It all started with a little bit of dry rot in the front of the house. That kicked off a bunch of improvements we had been wanting to make for a long time. We spent about 18 months in 2007 and 2008 working hard to upgrade the house and by the time we were done we had:

- Replaced the siding, windows (vinyl) and roof (metal)
- Removed two walls downstairs and added one wall upstairs
- Added central gas heat
- Put in 12-foot glass doors on the sea side, and glass on the seaside deck
- Installed Bamboo flooring and granite countertop and new cabinet facing
- Created a highly-functional paved, outdoor kitchen with a gorgeous arbor with kiwi vines and gas barbeque and crab cooker.

With all of the work we probably added 100 square feet of usable space and another 350 feet outside, all on the same footprint. The place was always fun, and now twice as much. It is much better organized for crab catching and cooking. We can do all the cooking in our outdoor kitchen, and enjoy a glass of wine with our friends. Once or twice every season we have our friends Lance and Julie Pitt and their kids Sarah and Connor. Other frequent visitors are Curtis and Jennifer Hopkins, Kathy and Charlie Hicks, Michael and Angie Beare, and our happy hour friends.

In summer of 2013, Megan married Bret Watson at the beach house. It was a small wedding with 17 people, and the place accommodated the party well. Sadly, it appears that Megan and Bret are not as compatible as we hoped, and are headed for divorce in 2015.

Santa Fe

In 2011 Maxine married again to T. J. McReynolds and had a son (Joseph Xabi) in 2012. T. J. is a Native American member of the San Ildefonso pueblo north of Santa Fe NN, and works as Tribal Administrator. We always knew that we liked Albuquerque and I have yearned to live in Santa Fe, so when the McReynolds family decided to move to New Mexico, Don and I bought a house in Santa Fe. Maxine and TJ live there and watch over the house. It is basically the same plan that we had for Florida, except our people would be IN the house, rather than nearby, and could keep an eye out for needed maintenance. The house is just two (easy walking) miles from old Santa Fe plaza. As an added bonus, we discovered our neighbor on the same street is George R. R. Martin, author of Game of Thrones. We get there a few times a year.

Cruising

As I got closer to my own retirement, we discovered that we like to take cruises. So far we have taken three, all on Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL). Once you take your first cruise, the line offers you incentives to become a repeat customer. Cruising is an easy way to see a lot of new places in a hurry, because the boat drives you to the next port and you can leave your luggage on-board while you take a shore excursion. Additionally, we like the fact that NCL does not require fancy dress-up dinners, unless you

choose, which we do not. And we have found terrific bargains thorough our Costco membership. So far we have taken three cruises with more planned for the future.

- 2013 – Eastern Mediterranean. We spent a couple of days in Rome, and then boarded the Norwegian Jade which called at Athens, Izmir Turkey, Istanbul, and Naples-Pompeii.
- 2014 – Transatlantic. Nine days from Miami to Madeira, and then two more to Barcelona aboard the Norwegian Epic.
- 2015 – Western Mediterranean. Three days each in Florence and Rome accompanied by our cousins, Jennifer and Curtis Hopkins. Then onto the Norwegian Jade for Livorno-Pisa, Monaco, Barcelona, Valencia, Sardinia, Sicily, and Naples-Amalfi coast.

Lena Elliott

Don's aunt Lena joined our household in 1989. She was a huge help in raising kids and also in keeping house. We paid her a small stipend and she did some much appreciated chores:

- Dropping Robin off at Kindergarten and picking her up
- Doing her own laundry and laundry for the kids
- Cleaning the public areas in the house: kitchen, family room, dining room
- Mowing the lawn at the big house for several years
- Giving us haircuts. Lena had her own beauty shop in Texas.

As Lena got older, and the kids left for their own lives, Lena's chores got fewer, but to the very end she was a great help and great company in our home.

Lena was very independent, intelligent, impatient, naïve, shy, and very sentimental. She drove her own car (slightly too fast) around Issaquah to run her errands, and if she thought of something that any of us wanted she went to get it *the same day*. Lena was a huge sports fan, and she shared an interest in football and NASCAR with Don, his brother Ron, and our sister-in-law Rose. When a game or race was underway, Lena and Rose spoke by phone several times. Also, when we wanted to take a longer vacation, Rose would come to Seattle as a terrific companion for Lena.

In 2002, Lena needed a new hip. Coincidentally my Uncle Ward needed a new knee. I had Ward come to Seattle for the surgery and the doctor performed both surgeries on the same day! Then we had them both recuperating at our home for the next six weeks. I learned that hips are much simpler than knees and that recovery goes quicker with hips.

While Lena was still in the hospital recovering from surgery, they took her to the pool for some physical therapy in the water. To her surprise, Lena really enjoyed that. Where she grew up in west Texas, she had never learned to swim....in fact she was very afraid of the water. So when we moved to Issaquah and Lena developed some arthritis, I suggested she take a senior water class at our local swimming pool, a half mile away. The next thing I knew, I was taking Lena to the swim store to buy a speedo suit and water socks. Lena did water exercise three times a week for 10 years, and made some very good friends in her class. She got her picture in the local newspaper, *twice*. I was surprised how proud she was of her 15 minutes of fame....both times. It was wonderful for us that she was able to keep her strength through exercise and also develop a network of friends rather than relying solely on the family.

Lena had a long life (94 years) and a short death. She developed pneumonia and passed away in about six weeks. Lena died November 28, 2013 (Thanksgiving night) with both of our daughters at home, which provided great comfort to Don and me both. We buried her cremains in Bridgeport cemetery,

and Robin offered one of the most touching eulogies at the ceremony. She did a great job of summing up the impact Lena had in our home. Here is what Robin said:

“Lena has graced our lives since I was four years old. She was a sense of order in a rapidly changing chaotic world. She would keep us far tidier and more civilized than we had a right to be. I would set a cup down, and she would have swooped it into the dishwasher before I could even pretend it wasn’t my cup. She made nearly all my clothes, and would cut my hair the same way for most of my childhood. She would cook me a perfect cornbread EVERY time I came home. It will forever be my standard against which all corn breads are measured.

To this day, she inhabits part of my brain, a conscience of sorts. She weighs in on my cleanliness, on my habits, on my manners, on my language and especially my safety. (And I never managed to meet expectations). Anyone would be more civilized for knowing her.

In the 25 years that I had known her, I had left and returned on uncountable “adventures”. Every time I left, I would tell her about the impossibly remote and foreign places I was heading. Yukon, Arizona, Alaska, Australia, Russia, Ecuador. She would ask me why I had to go. I would ask her if she’d like to come, and mention how much we could use her help with the heavy lifting. We would go on this way, until I actually had to go. Then she would become suddenly, deadly serious, and give me this strained look and say, “you be careful, now!” as she grasped my hand, as if to say, “It’s far more than yourself that you risk”.

Just a few days before she died, I came home from the latest escapade, and went to see her. She hadn’t changed a hair, but she was as frail a person as I had ever known. She couldn’t talk, or walk much at all, but her eyes lit up when she saw me. She grabbed my arm in a white knuckled death grip, and I gripped back. I felt like, for once, she was the one leaving, and I was standing behind asking why she had to go. I wanted desperately to do her heavy lifting for her.

But of course, she’s not gone. My conscience will always take the form of Lena in my mind. She is immortal.”

Chapter 9 Summarizing the themes

I think there are a few gigantic themes that shaped my life and that provided me the fabulous opportunity that I have enjoyed. Some might call it luck, and they all provided good fortune for me.

Technology advances

In the 20th century the most amazing technological advances have been made. They include great discoveries in medicine (antibiotics, artificial body part replacement, advanced surgical techniques), in travel (airplanes, ubiquitous automobiles), and in ubiquitous computing (hardware, software, mobile devices, new applications every year). While I cannot point to a single advance that changed the course of my life, I can definitely say that I rode a computing technology wave that started about the time I was born. At the end of WW II, a computer was a woman who ran a calculator in a scientific lab. Merely 20 years later, general purpose mainframe computers were to be found in big labs and big corporations and time sharing (cloud computing of that era) was being introduced.

New Mexico was a center of study for nuclear science and some of the most powerful computers and the most cutting edge scientific labs were there. By the time I was 25, mini-computers were gaining market share, and it was conceivable for the first time that an individual could afford a computer. Of course the software and the storage had not yet made that feasible.

In 1970, I had access to an Anderson-Jacobsen portable terminal on wheels (35 lbs.) that I could take on trips and use to dial remotely into a time-sharing system via a telephone modem. Thirty years later, it was possible to put the entire computer in a briefcase, and in 2010 I could put it in my pocket!

At the same time I was benefitting from galloping advances in technology, I was also building a passion to support STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education to engage more youth and women in technical fields.

New opportunities for women

In the same way that I rode a technical wave, I also benefitted from a social wave that empowered women. A big part of that was the benefit of birth control. For the first time in history a woman had control over when or if she would have babies. Attitudes of men were changing (or being changed) and husbands were more ready to support working wives and take a greater part in family duties (housekeeping, child rearing, cooking, etc.). My grandmother had some of these opportunities, sometimes she forced them, but for me it was completely my choice.

Mobility

My family has always been on the move. My father's parents were born in Italy. My mother's parents came west by wagon and by train. My dad traveled west by motorcycle and again by car. When my people got to Albuquerque, they did not stay forever. From Albuquerque, I moved west (Los Angeles), then east (Washington D.C.) and then west again (Seattle). On top of that we traveled for business, and we traveled for interest. We were the first in a generation to go to Europe. The mobility theme continues with our daughters:

- Megan lived in Phoenix, London, Los Angeles, San Diego, Providence RI, and Cincinnati...and traveled in Rome, Prague, Amsterdam, Paris, Singapore, Tokyo, China, and Scotland.

- Robin lived in Montreal, Vancouver BC, Fairbanks AK, and Perth Australia...and traveled to England, France, St. Petersburg Russia, Ecuador, Galapagos, Borneo, Philippines, Vietnam, and Myanmar so far.

Parallels to my grandmother

My grandmother was Leila Lysinger Bartle. I started this narrative with her story, and in my life I followed in many of her footsteps. She lived in a different time, with fewer opportunities and fewer resources, but she did what she had to do and raised an accomplished family. Granny said that she wished she could have been born a man, because she thought men had better chances and more freedom. I never felt that way. That was mostly because she and my mother urged me to pursue my interests, and it also because the women's movement was gaining momentum in the early 1970s.

Granny did not consider herself technical or mathematical; that was my grandfather's reputation. However she operated machines and figured out complicated problems and modeled the pioneering attitude that she developed on the Oklahoma prairie. She was an independent thinker rather than dogmatic about what women were supposed to do. Early on I got from her a sense of irreverence about standard established practice if it did not make sense. I watched while she used safety pins to fasten sheets to the bed and glued figurines to her display shelf because it made dusting easier. I learned to think outside of the box....if thinking inside the box did not achieve the desired objective. I learned from Granny and my mother to turn a problem on its head if it could not be solved right-side-up.

The future

The future has not yet arrived. I anticipate a long life, since my relatives lived into their mid-90s. I am eager for the next adventure. My hopes include some more travel to places I have always wanted to see: The Panama Canal, the Baltic capitals, Tierra del Fuego, and back to parts of Europe I want to explore more. Our health is good and we are at the point we have enough time and money.

And of course, we are eager to see what the future holds for our girls. They have earned degrees and work in promising careers. They are independent (sometimes to a fault) and capable and smart and energetic. I cannot wait to see where they go next.

Chapter 10 The lists

Here are the lists that have been important to me. As time goes on, I will try to fill in more detail to some of them.

Brief family tree

I am separately working on a comprehensive family tree for the Caputo-Bartle side and the McQuinn-Elliot line. I am using ancestry.com for research and preparation. The following is an abbreviated family tree including our kids and our great-grandparents. Birth dates are included.

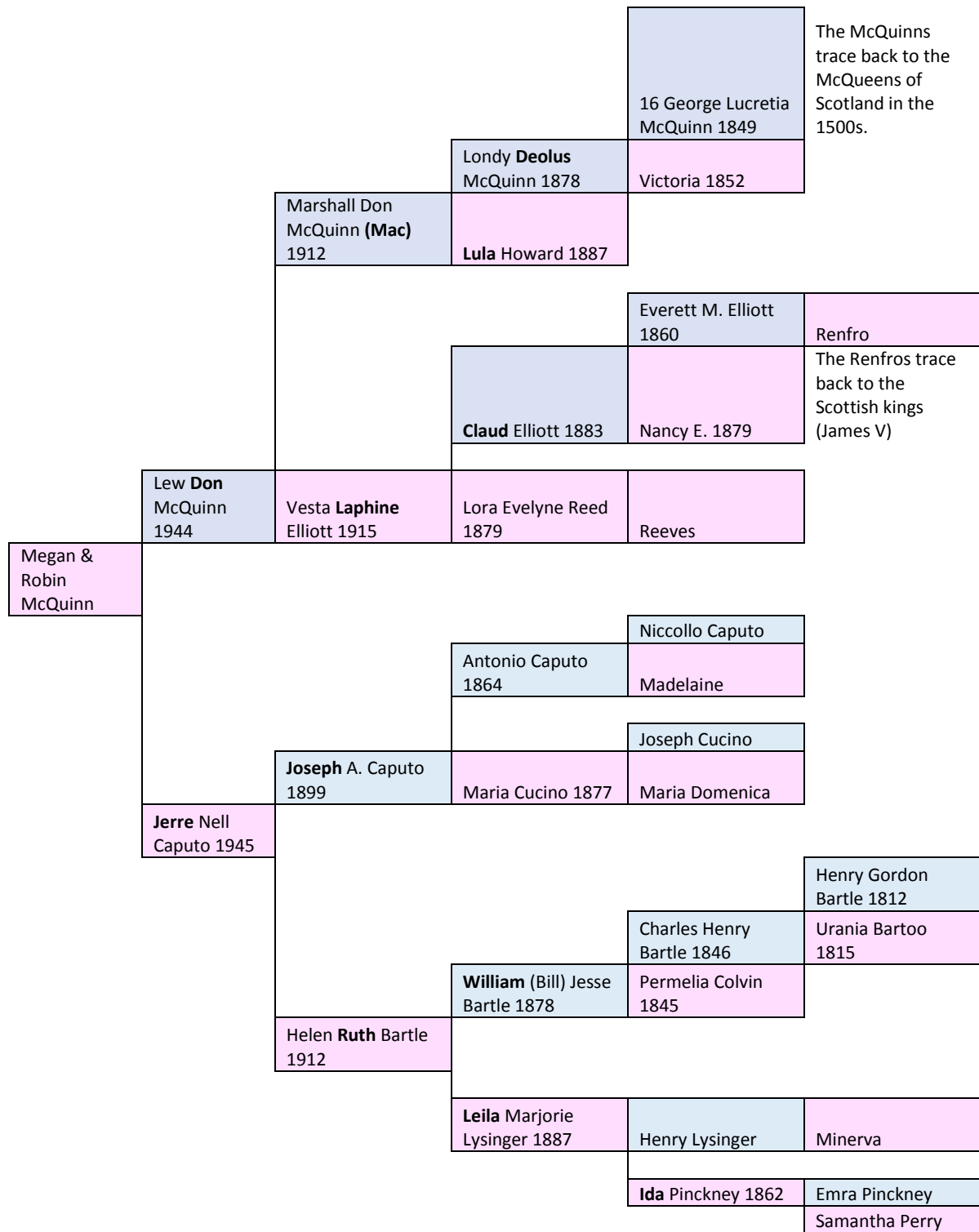


Figure 18. Abbreviated family tree

Family health

For most of their lives my ancestors enjoyed amazing health. Here are the potentially genetic issues.

Joe Caputo always took excellent care of his health. He had rheumatic fever as a young man, and had a triple heart valve replacement in his late 80s. Like almost everyone who is older, he had cataract replacement surgery (late 80s), but then after that he suffered with macular degeneration. He died at age 94, in Florida, of cardio-pulmonary failure. Joe had a brother and a sister that also suffered from macular degeneration, and so my cousins and I are on watch for that. Dad developed allergies to elms after he had been in Albuquerque 25 years or so.

Ruth Caputo had a stroke in which left her paralyzed for about three months until her death in Seattle in 1985 at age 72. Prior to that she had cancer of the throat and lungs (she was a heavy smoker for more than 40 years.) She twice (1970, 1984) had an arterial graft in her leg because of atherosclerosis, and she had a hysterectomy in 1956.

Leila Bartle enjoyed excellent health into her late 80s. She had a hysterectomy in 1975 because of cervical cancer, and in 1979 had both legs amputated because of gangrene caused by atherosclerosis. That was one of the hardest decisions on which I had to advise, and in retrospect, I think I would have advised against it because it left her shocked and angry for the rest of her life. She died in 1980 at 93 years of age.

William Bartle died in 1950 at age 72. I was only six, so did not know too much about his health, other than that he had a stroke caused by an accident. He may have had COPD as well. He suffered from allergies in Kentucky and in California. New Mexico was the best place for him.

Jerre McQuinn, at this writing just turned 70. I have had excellent health all my life. I have allergies to pollens and house dust. I had my tonsils removed when I was four (it was all the rage in 1949). I had my first daughter via Caesarian section, and then my second naturally. I had reconstructive surgery on my left knee after an accident with the boat trailer in 1994. I also have a tendency toward high cholesterol which I keep under control with diet. My blood pressure has always been unusually low until recently, and now I control my blood pressure by limiting salt. I have been fairly consistent throughout my life with exercise: running, swimming, and walking.

Medical advances: It is also important to recognize that many of the diseases and maladies which afflicted my folks have been seriously changed by advances in medicine. For instance, between two bouts of cancer that my mother fought, the radiation treatment had advanced from a massive area bombing to more targeted, and less painful, shooting. If my knee accident had happened 20 years earlier, I might have lost my leg.

Houses

Herein, I set out a list of the various houses I have lived in or owned. Recently, we had a couple of places that we bought as second or third homes, so while we have greatly enjoyed them, I cannot honestly say that we lived in them.

My parents' houses

- 3021 N Broadway, Albuquerque NM. This is the house I was brought home to when I was born. The street has been since renamed to Commercial. The house is still there. I lived there until I was four years old. My parents sold the house to save to buy a new house and to move out of the flood plain. I remember just a couple of things about the house. I remember a huge back yard with fruit trees, and I remember eating maraschino cherries that my mother had canned, and I remember standing outside and being told that my second birthday was coming. I did not know at that time what a birthday was. I remember playing in front in the sprinkler, and that my best friend lived only a block away. Some of these memories are undoubtedly augmented by the home movies my mother made.
- 426 San Clemente NW, Albuquerque. The house that remains on this property is the garage apartment that my grandfather Bartle built to accompany the bigger house he built on the same lot. I think he and my grandmother lived in the apartment while he built the house, which he accomplished after he was paralyzed on his left side. After my grandfather died, and after my parents bought the house on San Andres, my grandmother, Leila, had the house moved next door to 523 San Andres.
- 519 San Andres NW, Albuquerque. This is the house I grew up in from 1954, age nine through college, until I moved to California in 1967. I remember that my mother calculated all the monthly payments, both principal and interest, by hand, and then used that information to accelerate payments to pay off the loan early. My dad did a lot of improvements on the house, and had a big bonus room added to the back. When my dad fenced in our property with cinder blocks, he added a gate to the back yard so granny could come and go from back-door to back-door. Last time I was there, in 2014, the gate was gone.

The places we rented or owned

We like to buy houses. After renting three apartments, Don and I bought our first house in suburban Maryland. Here's a list of all the houses we have owned, or currently, in 2015, own (highlighted in green).

Address	Notes
Dickens St. Sherman Oaks CA	First apartment I rented.
Lindley Ave, Reseda CA	Second apartment. A little bigger with more view...of the freeway.
Karen Elaine Dr. New Carrollton MD	First apartment that Don and I rented together in suburban Maryland.
6112 Seabrook Rd, Seabrook MD	The first house we owned. Bought in 1972 for \$28.5K with interest rate 7.75%. Sold in 1978 for \$41.5K
10215 Bald Hill Rd, Mitchellville MD	Bought in 1978. Lived there about three months and then moved to Seattle. Rented the house to Gene Cyprych and later to Mark Stauffer. Bought for ~\$65K. Sold in 1987 for \$117K
21030 7 th Ave S, Des Moines WA	Bought in 1979 from the builder, Dave Clark. Bought for \$154K. Sold in 1989 for \$175K. The first sale fell through, and we had to put this house on the market a second time, and then it sold quickly.

Address	Notes
33 Utsalady Rd, Camano Island WA	Built in 1987. Purpose to be a vacation home for us, our growing family, and for the Bartles and Hopkins (cousins). Price of lot \$60K, Price of house \$60K. Cost of improvements made in 2007: approx. \$120K.
19439 4 th PI SW, Normandy Park WA	Bought in 1989, primarily to get our kids into a better school (Marvista) and to accommodate Don's mom and aunt Lena who had come to live with us. Bought for \$315K. Sold in 2003 for \$649K
120 Newport Rd NW, #15 Issaquah WA	Bought in 2003 with proceeds of sale of Normandy Park house. Bought for \$328.8K
3873 Wild Orchid Ct, North Port FL	Bought (built) in 2005 as an investment, and to be near our cousins, Kathy and Charlie Hicks. Bought for \$262K. Sold in 2012 for \$184K.
109 San Salvador, Santa Fe NM	Bought in 2014 for \$326K. The purposes were two: provide a place for Maxine and TJ McReynolds to live and to have a vacation home in a town that we love.

Cars

Here is a list of cars I drove regularly. I learned to drive on my dad's 1949 Plymouth stick shift. The first car I owned was the 1966 VW bug that my folks gave to me. Of the 22 cars we owned, we gave away 12, and sold only 5. Of all these, the ones we loved best were the VW bugs, the Toyotas and the Hondas....and of course Don loved his BMW and Porsche convertibles.

Mfr Model Approx Year	Acquired	Disposed of
1949 Plymouth Club Coupe	Joe Caputo's car	Traded in on Mercury Comet
1963 Mercury Comet	Joe & Ruth Caputo's	Traded in by parents
1966 VW bug	Gift from parents	Stolen 1970
1968 VW bug	Don's first new car	Totaled, given to Dan Davis for engine
1971 VW fastback	New in Maryland	Sold. Replaced by company cars.
1972 Ford Gran Torino	DEC company car	Replaced by Dodge Dart.
1977 Dodge Dart	DEC company car	Replaced by Ford Granada
1978 Ford Granada	DEC company car	Returned upon leaving DEC
1973 Datsun 240Z	Used from Frank Arsenault	Sold in Maryland
1978 Datsun 200 SX	New in Maryland	Sold in Seattle
1972 Plymouth Fury III	Dick's tow yard auction	Given to Dan Fowler
1967 VW bug	Used from Connie Click	Given to Dan Fowler
1978 Chevy Van C10	Murphy's auction	Given to Jim Grace's friend
1982 Toyota Tercel	Used from Hertz	Given to Jim Grace, then Chris Ketchum
1982 Datsun 510	Inherit from Ruth Caputo	Traded for Astro Van?
1986 Chevy Astro Van	New in Renton	Given to Maxine
1985 Buick Century	Bought from Don's mom	Given to charity
1970 Chevy Nova (Granny's)	Gift from my mom	Given to Jeff Bartle
1972 Chevy Chevelle (Lena's)	Gift from Aunt Lena	Given to Mike Dolan
1994 Chevy Windstar	New in Burien	Sold
1997 Honda Civic	New in Bellevue	Given to Megan
1997 BMW Z3	Murphy's auction	Traded in on Porsche Boxster

Mfr Model Approx Year	Acquired	Disposed of
2001 Toyota RAV/4	New in Burien	Given to Hopkins
1992 Honda Accord	Gift from Marge Bartle	Given to Hopkins
2001 Chevy Cavalier	Inherit from Aunt Lena	Sold in San Diego
2009 Honda Fit	New in Kirkland	Jerre still driving
2012 Toyota Tacoma Truck	New in Maryland	Robin's exclusive use
2012 Porsche Boxster	Used in Bellingham	Don still driving

Big trips

I've been traveling since I was a young child. I did not imagine that the list was so long...and it does not include some of the minor car trips that we made within our state or the adjacent ones.

- 1947 San Diego with my grandparents and my mother
- 1948 Denver (by train)
- 1949 New York
- 1951 San Diego
- 1950's Denver; San Diego, Oxnard, San Francisco, Vallejo California
- 1957 Ponca City, OK to visit my great grandmother
- 1963 New York
- 1965 By Greyhound bus to California with my cousin Robert Caputo
- 1968 Car trip Los Angeles to Seattle with my mother
- 1969 Car trip relocation from Los Angeles to Massachusetts with my mother
- 1970 Car trip to Florida with Paulette
- 1971 Orlando FL with Don to opening of Disney World
- 1971 Hawaii, with Don's entire family
- 1973 Virgin Islands with Randy and Sherry Brooks
- 1973 Germany, Iceland
- 1976 Colorado with Ron and Rose
- 1976 England to see Randy and Sherry Brooks
- 1977 Peru: Lima, Machu Picchu, Amazon River
- 1978 Egypt
- 1979 Car trip relocation from Washington, D.C. to Seattle with Don
- 1980 Germany and Denmark with Don Berman
- 1981 Alaska with my mother and Don's
- 1982 Eastern Airlines with Megan
- 1982 Car trip to relocate my mother to Seattle
- 1986 Car trip Colorado Springs to El Paso, Megan's sixth birthday with Shaffers
- 1991 Christmas in Florida with my dad
- 1992 Car trip with kids: Seattle to Colorado, and then Grand Canyon, Nevada, and home
- 1993 Car trip with kids: Seattle to Colorado, and then Yellowstone, Banff, Jasper and home
- 1995 England with the kids
- 1996 Car trip Bridgeport TX to San Antonio, and Sweeny TX with Ron and Rose
- 2002 Singapore and Tokyo with Megan
- 2002 Germany with Pete and Mary Mueller
- 2003 England with Pete and Mary Mueller
- 2004 Hawaii with George & Marilyn Elliott and Pete & Mary Mueller

2005 Florida. Bought a house in North Port
2007 New Mexico as a field hand for Robin
2008 New York with Megan
2010 Washington D.C. with Megan and Robin
2011 Sydney, Perth, Uluru, and Great Barrier Reef in Australia, New Zealand
2012 Berlin on business trip
2013 Eastern Mediterranean cruise: Rome, Naples, Greece, Istanbul
2014 Transatlantic cruise. Miami to Barcelona
2014 Santa Fe to buy a house. Then to corn dance and again for Thanksgiving.
2014 Car tour of Cincinnati, Mississippi, Louisiana, New Mexico, California
2015 Western Mediterranean: Florence, Rome, Barcelona, Valencia, Sardinia, Sicily