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# DAWN OF THE 1970'S

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LOOKING BACK





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# DAWN OF THE 1970's

The dawn of the 1970's is as far back as I can remember. It was a time when Crackling Rose, Let It Be or Bridge Over Troubled Water dominated the air waves and gas was a mere thirty-six cents a gallon! T.V.'s were easy to operate; two knobs, UHF, VHF and an on/off button. Along with millions of other Americans, my parents would soon become obsessed with the Water Gate hearings before watching the demise of their political party. I however preferred Oscar and the Cookie Monster over Walter Cronkite and would throw a fit whenever the networks cut in on my favorite time of day.

The youngest of three boys, I soon became the king of hand me downs while learning my place in line—last. Raised on a spread of nearly two hundred acres in western Maryland, my job was to follow in the footsteps of my siblings which had been clearly placed before me, in cow manure. Dad was a captain for Eastern Airlines and operated out of Friendship Airport, some thirty-two miles southeast of our farm on the way to civilization. Later named BWI, the airfield remained his domicile for most of his nearly thirty year career. Later, he would choose Atlanta and Miami as his home base before retiring.

Mom was a Registered Nurse and worked in the ER and OR before giving birth to my eldest Brother Steven Lee on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1955. Gary Edward was delivered on July the 16<sup>th</sup>, 1961 and I joined the party on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1964 after apparently forcing my way out following a New Year's Eve cocktail party where I'd worked all evening just to break her water. I was exhausted! Soon I was on the scene and now it was time to party!

P.S. Dear Mom and Dad, sorry about the 1963 tax return.

Following his high school graduation, Steve left home after a heated quarrel with mom and dad over what could be best understood as *generational differences*. My only clear recollection of that day was the colorful Woodstock Poster which he'd proudly thumb tacked to his bedroom door was suddenly gone. Needless to say, the days previous to his falling out were *not* filled with peace, music or love. He soon joined the USAF where he would learn his career trade of Aircraft Maintenance Technician. At the time, his interest in learning to fly was no doubt equal to my dad's interest in Mick Jagger. Neither was willing to budge.

In the months following, Gary and I chose to nickname our mom, *Burner*. Something to do with a red hot stove element and her bright red house coat; we still laugh about it. The remainder of my adolescence was spent with Gary and his friends, Ricky and Jeff Harig. We enjoyed racing minibikes through cow pastures and alfalfa fields surrounded by endless corn mazes and on rainy days we built secrete forts out of hay bales in the upper loft of our barn.

On hot summer days, we'd play sharks and minnows with the Johnson brothers in our pond before enjoying the kind of PBJ that only a mom could make. Stocked with Bluegills, sunfish, bullfrogs and snapping turtles, both kids and adults would come from all over to fish and enjoy our peaceful serenity. Yes, large snappers like the ones featured on Animal Planet's "Call of the Wildman" and like all young rambunctious boy's, we knew we were *cool* because of it.

With the pond located over a mile from our farmhouse, Burner would ring the old iron bell mounted high a wooden post under a towering weeping willow tree when dinner was ready. I'd respond with a deafening loud two finger whistle as my brother and his friends plugged their ears. I love to tell others that this was how texting was done when I grew up. Despite being the youngest, I could really belt it out. This earned me points whenever Gary and his friends were debating if I should be allowed to tailgate. Of course whenever it was decided to race home, it was also decided that I would have to be last.

Once school was out, we'd waste no time before pestering our mom about letting us camp out on our property. Dad was always flying. Gary and I would tag team her until she gave in and then we'd rush to the cellar, gathering sleeping bags, backpacks and cooking utensils. In addition to our camping equipment; Gary, Ricky, Jeff and I toted rakes, brooms, saws and shovels into the woods to what we determined was the perfect spot. After settling on a prime location, we would dig a fire pit before outlining it with large rocks from a nearby stream. Lastly, my job was to sweep the dirt with a wisk broom. Why would anyone sweep dirt? . . . *I thought*. It was great being a kid!

Camping was most memorable for me as we would stay up late stoking the fire and telling ghost stories. Without any video games to compete with, talking around a camp fire late at night did wonders for my imagination. Atari's PONG would not be released for nearly two years and except for Cub Scouts or family vacation, this is what I looked forward to all year long.

During the winter months, we would sleigh ride down insanely steep hills or ice skate on our pond until we could no longer feel our fingers and toes. Then it was time for hot chocolate with marshmallows by the fire place while bragging about who went the fastest or who skated the best. Looking back, I now realize that the greatest thing we had was each other. Even though at times I hated my brothers and his friends for how they teased me, I somehow knew it was better than being *alone*; a lesson I would never forget.

We had the best mom and dad a kid could ask for. They provided for us an abundance of love, endless room to play and on rare occasions, McDonalds. But being brought up on a farm was also tough, especially as I grew older. After entering middle school, I became a proud member of our local 4-H Chapter. Never would I be allowed to sleep in past five AM. Each day began with tending

to our livestock by ensuring they had food and water before getting to my bus stop.

During the winter months, I would need to break the ice in claw foot cast iron bath tubs before filling feed troughs with 100 pound sacks of grain. Depending on the time of year, this was in addition to other daily chores such as; shoveling snow, stretching barb wire, digging fence post holes, bush hogging, bailing hay and removing tons manure out of the barn with a large scraper blade attached to our tractor.

I often think back to those days and despite how difficult they may have been, I can honestly say they did me good. Only when we drove across town to visit relatives did I realize the importance of not allowing the ball to go into the neighbor's yard. And not until I became an adult did I fully realize how fortunate I'd been to receive this type of upbringing.

By the latter part of 1980, all but 32 acres surrounding our Farmhouse was developed into Gwen Lee Estates, named after my mom and dad respectively. So cool were my parents that they named the roads within the development after our closets cousin's, the Cooper's, in addition to my brothers and me. I was given Ken Allen Court.

As time went by, the winters began to take their toll on my parents and after several vacations to Sarasota Florida, I knew it would only be a matter of time before we relocated there. Prior to moving, we made it a point to spend more time with close friends and family. This included my great aunt Lizzy who after nearly burning down her house, was placed onto a convalescent home memory unit. Usually, we would visit her one Sunday a month and on Holiday's.

Approaching one hundred, she basically couldn't see, couldn't hear, and mostly mumbled throughout the visits. The staff awarded her a stylish bowl cut, which I thought was strange, and only dressed her in what appeared to be hospital gowns. Our visits would always drag along and for me ranked up there with shopping, yard work and dental appointments. Gary and I would elicit stares from patients who appeared anxious and at times zombie like, reminding us of actors in the newly released Night of the Living Dead. It was as if they spoke to us through those stares. Each face told a story, but no one was interested in *their* movie. Their looks seem to cry out . . . help me . . . I'm all *alone*.

We'd snicker about the appearance of some and pretend not to notice others—while walking faster. The funky smell didn't help and dad could always be seen checking his watch with precise timing; before getting *the look* from mom. We all knew *the look*. Today I know that groovy smell was mostly urine with a little feces thrown in and nearing the end of each visit, we were ALL longing for the exit.

That April we returned to see Lizzy over our spring break before vacationing to Florida. The hour-long drive however to the Brook lawn Nursing Home in Glen Burnie would be our last. Lizzy died quietly in her sleep not long after we'd left her on that blustery Easter Sunday. She was the first person I remember viewing in a coffin and while curious, I was careful not to get *too* close.

There I stood, staring at her face, wondering about death and thinking how she only appeared to be sleeping. What about all of those back at Brook lawn . . . I thought; weren't they just waiting *their* turn to be in the casket? At least Lizzy was at peace, the others were not.

The following fall my parents made the decision to leave our farm. After attending a weekend wedding in Ft Myers, they viewed properties in the Sarasota area before deciding on where to settle. Surrounded by water on three sides and secluded by luscious tropical vegetation, they discovered their dream home. A midcentury modern rancher with a large sunken living room and oversized lap pool separated by nine foot sliding glass walls. Private and luxurious, it was truly a one of a kind home.

They would enjoy their lavish botanical paradise for nearly ten years before downsizing to a nearby villa but not before our dad began experiencing problems with his memory. He started to misplace things more often and would frequently repeat himself. We simply dismissed it as senility and even joked about how he would sometimes forget things until one day we received a call from friends in Miami who had to assist him with locating his car in the long term. His career was over.

At the time, I was enrolled in the Commercial Pilot Program at our local college with hopes of following in his footsteps. As he wandered about the Miami parking lot that day, I just happened to be attempting my first solo flight back in Sarasota. Immediately following what remains to be the most frightening feat I'd ever attempted, I received the news. Sadly in the months following, he began a devastating downhill spiral from which he'd never recover. He was eventually diagnosed with a condition not well understood at the time and rarely spoken of, even in the main stream media—a condition called *Alzheimer's Disease* or AD. The year was 1990.

Like my dad in his youth, I was determined to fly. After earning my degree in Aeronautical Science, I became an instructor and eventually logged enough hours to fly a Citation jet before becoming a commuter pilot for US Air Express. The crescendo of my flying career was spent in Seattle Washington working for Alaska Airlines.

Only six months into my employment, I underwent spinal surgery and lost my medical clearance to fly. Despite having the full support of my union, I fought

with every ounce of energy I had, but to no avail. Following my rehab I applied to dozens of airlines, cargo carriers and flight schools but no offers ever came. Then came September 11<sup>th</sup> and now there was no question . . . my wings were officially clipped.

I felt as though I'd landed on the island of misfit toys and with a family to support, I could waste no time in finding work. Finally, I found employment with the City of Seattle's Parks and Receptions Aquatic Division. A kind of job I hadn't done since graduating high school.

My career seemed to have suddenly gone from piloting a 737 to teaching swim lessons and life guarding. The transition was more than simply a career change, it was a midlife career crisis which served as a monumental lesson in the airspace of humbleness and humility.

The heavily chlorinated waters would eventually wash away any remaining pride while instilling in me the need to move on. Choosing a new career turned out to be much harder than I'd originally thought. With so many areas to choose from, I had many sleepless nights trying to decide where to invest my time and resources. I wasn't passionate about anything - other than flying - and now it was make up my mind time on the mountain. I thought I'd chosen nursing as a career but looking back, I realized that nursing—chose me.

Following the Miami Airport incident, our dad began to undergo extensive testing by a team of experts including multiple brain scans before a preliminary diagnosis was made. The initial findings contained within his report stated that he had *Alzheimer's like symptoms* and that he most likely would develop AD sometime in the future but that further assessment was needed. How disparaging we felt upon hearing this news. Is that the best they can do? Emotionally we simply weren't prepared for what we were told and the report only seemed to raise more questions. We would later learn that only an autopsy would *prove* that he in fact had Alzheimer's.

For me it was a day I'll never forget—or maybe I'm just not able to. What we wanted was a simple yes or no but instead were told neither. At the time, none of us were yet connected to the internet and were unfamiliar with this long and strange sounding word A-l-z-h-e-i-m-e-r-'s pronounced [äłts - ,hī - mərz] or [Al's - hi - merz]. Our Dad was not well and sadly no test, physician or lab result could determine exactly what was *wrong* with him. Early into his illness, we were all truly in the dark. Support groups did exist but focused more on what I felt was grief therapy rather than practical hands on advice of how to best care for our dad.

Initially, we noticed subtle changes such as occasional irritability but little did we realize how he was slowly beginning to lose his mind. Looking back, I see how we were sailing uncharted waters, and the seas were about to get

rough. At the time, we failed to understand the importance of knowing [in advance] what future changes to expect in addition to the demands we would face as caregivers. We simply had to learn by doing while helplessly watching him fade away; mentally, socially and emotionally.

As a retired nurse, our mom did have a little knowledge of the condition but never had undergone any official AD training as there may have been none at the time. She had first attended Nursing School in 1950 and by my birth she worked mostly in the emergency room of our local hospital. Any continuing education modules which she'd completed over the course of her career focused very little on the disease.

At the time, only a small number of books or articles had been published on how to effectively cope while caring for someone with AD. This in turn gave us very little insight on how to adjust to changes which would eventually start to occur. For our mom it was emotionally crippling and as a family we felt lost. We were scared and desperate for answers. I'll never forget my Dad's statement:

“Well, I guess I got old timers disease . . . whatever that is.”

From that day forward he slowly began staging, eventually becoming a mere shadow of his former self along with a marked increase in apathy and confusion. What didn't come though were answers to how he could be helped or to questions surrounding his prognoses. In the end he was relocated to a memory unit in east Sarasota where he lived out his remaining days, often not knowing where or who he was. He passed at age seventy-one, some twelve years after his initial onset of symptoms. His death certificate listed complications related to *Alzheimer's* as the cause of death. I loved him dearly and to me, he was the most amazing individual I'll ever know.

# Our Dad

## *Old Timers Disease*

**B**orn Weldon Lee Boring, he came into the world on a frigid February morning in the front parlor day room of a red brick row house in Dundalk Maryland. The year was 1928. Very little remains known about his parents George and Susan Boring other than they hailed from the farmlands in Clarksburg West Virginia sometime following the Civil War. By the time of his birth, both his parents were of senior citizen age; creating a generational divide of more than twenty years between him and his four half siblings. Tragically his mom died when he was only five from an internal hemorrhage and his father passed of respiratory failure following a brief battle with pneumonia.

From a very young boy he was always called “Lee”. At age twelve he worked his first job as a pin setter on weekends at the local bowling alley for a penny a frame. At seventeen he earned his high school equivalency diploma and joined the Merchant Marine where he worked as a mariner onboard a Troop ship repairing mooring lines and cleaning cargo holds. On his eighteenth birthday, he enlisted into the Army and attended boot camp at Ft. Jackson in Columbia South Carolina.

Following his graduation, he received orders to join the “Army of Occupation” expanse in Japan where he and his fellow comrades would have the time of their life meeting people and learning the customs of a strange and foreign land. As soldiers, they were recognized and awarded the *Honor of Entry Medal* for their work done within proximity of the fallout zone near Hiroshima. Fortunately, he and the others were not affected by any residual radiation and as his one year tour ended, he departed on the very same vessel he’d arrived on. Leaving port, he promised himself that someday he would return.

After arriving stateside, he enrolled into the Spartan School of Marine Diving in San Diageo where he qualified to work in deep sea (up to 600 feet)

commercial operations as a hard hat diver. Like many young lads, he enjoyed the adrenalin rush of facing challenges and taking risks while trying to discover his true passion. Following his three-month dive training, he headed back to Maryland to attend college through use of the GI Bill. In the late summer of nineteen forty-seven he enrolled at the University of Maryland where he would begin his degree in criminology with hopes of one day becoming a homicide detective.

As colorful leaves began littering the campus streets of College Park, he decided to take a discovery ride in a J3 Cub at Lee Airport in Edgewater MD. After his intro flight, he was hooked and deep down *knew* what he wanted to do the rest of his life—fly!

He immediately signed up for lessons and eventually logged enough hours to earn a private pilot certificate. He rapidly realized his biggest obstacle to becoming a pilot was money.

It wasn't long till he completely exhausted all his savings and any remaining financial assistance from Uncle Sam was tied up in his college tuition. Painfully, he was forced to take a break and it would be at least another six months before he would again, feel like a bird.

The following spring he and his dorm buddy's, Don Mahaney and Tuck Mariman, drove down the east coast looking for women, fellow spring breakers and anybody else interested in going to Miami—that might have gas money. Once there they rented a J-5 Cub Cruiser and flew south, landing in Havana where the authorities arrested and incarcerated them for failing to properly register with customs. The following morning they were showered, released and told never to return. A lesson on the need to communicate before landing an airplane.

Back in Miami, they slept on the beach before grabbing a Coke and fueling up for the long drive back. Heading out of Miami-Dade, a low flying plane passed overhead, catching them off guard and causing them to flinch. As the deafening roar of engines and propellers verberated through their bodies, they were forced to stare at what appeared to be a *freight train in the sky*. On its side the words; *THE GREAT SILVER FLEET*.

With stretched necks, they gawked like little boy's until it slowly disappeared into the distance. Then, silence.

“That’s what I’m gonna do someday!” Our dad belted out.

“Yea.” Don replied pointing his finger. “So long as you don’t have to land in Cuba!” And as young, carefree men, they laughed their way up the coast while taking in the sites, but with dreams that only *they* could see.

Back at school our dad became a voracious reader, taking his studies very seriously as he knew the sooner he earned his college degree, the sooner he could earn money to fly. Frequently he could be found in the library or dorm room studying for his next exam, often forgoing any extracurricular activities. Following the last night of finals, Don invited him to blind date with a gal named Juanita, who was best friends with his steady, Gwendolyn. Both were nursing students at the time and as Don put it;

“Juanita was eager to meet a good lookin’ boy.”

This would be the first time that my parents met. Over the course of the evening, Juanita seemed to be more interested in Don while Gwen appeared *way out of everyone’s league* looks wise, making him the proverbial third wheel.

Years later all four would confess they really didn’t *enjoy* the other that evening and loathed the entire date. In time Don and Gwen broke up and Juanita dropped out of nursing school to elope with an old flame she dated in high school.

The others would meet up again for group bowling one evening over Fourth of July weekend. Gwen’s height of five nine required her to wear a shoe size of around ten which was not available. Don yelled across the ally;

“Hey Gwen, . . . they don’t have a ten . . . can you wear a ten and a half . . . or a men’s ten?”

Gwen turned beet red and sheepishly nodded yes. It was at that moment that my dad realized why her and Don didn’t last.

At evenings end, our dad was asked by Don to give Gwen a ride home after it was discovered that her car wouldn’t start. Reluctantly he agreed knowing a giant hole dominated the passenger floorboard of his 1941 Mercury Eight station wagon. Opening her door, he did his best to hide the hole by repositioning a piece of tattered cardboard but not before our mom took notice. From her account the opening appeared large enough for someone to fall through, causing her to sit *closer* to our dad. This was only the start and sparks must have flown that evening because in the days and weeks following, they were constantly in contact with each other. What happened on that steamy second encounter remains a mystery and the word soon came that they were on track - to being engaged. Woo Hoo!

Our mom also hailed from the greater Baltimore area on a small farm not far from the town of Dundalk. At age sixty-two she wrote an awe inspiring short story entitled “*The Table*”. The story provides a unique account of her upbringing

during the depression era and the relationship she shared with her family. A reprint of "*The Table*" is currently undergoing formatting for future publication.

After finishing school, they married and moved into a basement apartment in Baltimore city. The year was nineteen fifty-three. Our dad found employment with the Maryland State Police Force and reenlisted as a second lieutenant in the Army Reserves. Our mom worked in both L/ D and OR as a scrub nurse where she'd trained at Lutheran hospital. During his time as a State Trooper our dad occasionally flew a Cessna 180 tail dragger owned and operated by the State of Maryland, logging nearly two hundred hours conducting traffic observation and delivering documents. This would eventually pave the way for his career as a pilot, but not for several years. He knew he needed more money if he was ever to obtain a commercial licenses and instrument rating.

To earn more money, he applied to the Department of Treasury in undercover narcotic surveillance, a job with much better pay and benefits but with deadly hazards. The DEA was not yet founded.

His background screening lasted over nine months and following the birth of my eldest brother, he was invited to attend the A.S.A - Academy for Special Agents [Later named a Federal Law Enforcement Training Center] located in Landover MD. Upon completing the rigorous five-week academy, he was transferred to work nights in several New York boroughs.

They relocated to Hicksville long Island, qualified for their first mortgage, traded in the floorless station wagon on a new VW Beetle and purchased a skunk for a pet. They finally began to feel like a family and were eager to have additional children. His new job came with risks similar to that which he had as a State Trooper but with the much-added danger of tracking organized crime. On multiple occasions, he was thrown down stairs while being shot at. His closest brush with death came late one evening in 1956 on a roof top when mobsters suspected he was an informant and threatened to throw him to his death. Dressed as a vagrant, he played dumb while being dangled over the edge of a nine-story apartment building. He was convinced he was going to die that night and arriving home in the early morning hours, he knew he'd better make a change if—he was going to live. Unable to sleep, he kept reliving the terrifying event over and over in his head before finally drifting off to sleep.

Our mom seemed to know *something* was wrong but chose to refrain from asking too many questions due to the secrecy of his job. This would continue for a number of months before it would begin to take its toll on their marriage. Things had to change. Finally one evening over dinner he decided to divulge his terrifying near death experience to our mom. She was shell shocked and realized it would only be a matter of time before he would either be seriously injured or killed. Something had to be done and she knew what he wanted more

than anything—to fly!

Although a career as a pilot also came with inherent risks, it was certainly safer than what he faced as a narcotic agent not to mention the terrible strain it placed on their marriage. So together, they planned; to save enough money for him to log hours while applying to the airlines. Our mom could work one extra shift a week with the help of a neighbor who could sit with Steve and our dad studied in his off time for a promotion in the Army reserves. After earning the rank of first lieutenant, he earned an increase in pay of nearly twenty dollars per month along with a bonus of four hundred dollars due to an early reenlistment commitment. Although this was a good start, they still figured it would be nearly two years before he would have the hours needed to interview with any of the carriers.

Equally daunting was having to compete with pilots who flew in World War II and/or the Korean Conflict, placing him at a tremendous disadvantage. His only hope was to log as much time as possible on cross country solo flights, fly with the State Police, and most importantly attend the ground school classes needed to become an instructor.

Over the following year they saved enough money for our dad to earn his flight instructor certificate and log nearly eight hundred hours flying with new students. Flying the 180-tail dragger netted him nearly two hundred hours and he even gave Don his first solo!

Then on a cool April morning in 1957, an airplane refueler, Hank, shared with him about a conversation he overheard the previous day outside the chief pilot's office. Two former military pilots came through who were looking for instructor jobs.

They mentioned about Eastern Airlines was hiring and they were just *waiting their turn* to be called. They also mentioned that pilots working with other carriers such as Piedmont, were required to resign their position before Eastern would even grant an interview.

“Yea, Eastern’s tough to get on with . . . and that’s where were going.”

Cocky and over confident they even boasted about knowing the address of the interviews. Hank reached into his overalls, pulled out a crumpled-up piece of paper and handed it to our dad.

Inside was scribbled;

*eastern airlines*

*south side hanger 6*

*36<sup>th</sup> st airport*

*miami, FLA*

Looking over the bridge of his glasses, he whispered “If anybody deserves an interview kid, it’s you.”

“Hank . . . if I ever get hired, you’ll be the first to know . . . thanks!”

“No problem . . . good luck kid.”

Racing home, he couldn’t wait to tell our mom. They both agreed that going to Florida was crazy but he had to get out of the treasury. If he *did* go, it would mean digging into their savings in addition to asking for time off. A double whammy when it came to their monthly budget. Also, he lacked flying hours not to mention he wasn’t even invited to an interview. Still, he had to find a way in. He also knew that if he was found interviewing for any position outside the Treasury, he might risk losing his job. He had to plan and play this move very carefully. Arriving at Eastern’s hanger unannounced was a risky decision and might destroy any future possibilities of employment with them. After mulling it over the weekend, he decided to take the chance—and go.

The following Friday they all piled into their new Beetle and headed for Miami. The next morning he arrived at south side hanger six dressed in his best attire. He met a mechanic who pointed to a two-story building across the way, the new location of Eastern’s administrative offices. Once there he was told by the receptionist that he must have an interview to speak with anyone about employment. He asked if he could leave his contact information and reluctantly, she agreed. Leaving, he felt some shame for trying to invite himself in, but realized he needed to be assertive if he was to ever get an interview.

Exiting, he found himself having to wait as several gentlemen entered the building. Politely, he acknowledged each one while holding the door for them. His eyes grew wide when he noticed the last was in uniform—a captain. He knew he *must* introduce himself, this was his chance! Nervously, he extended his arm.

“Nice to meet you sir . . . names Lee Boring.” Suddenly they all stopped, turned and gave him the once over.

“Frank Kern . . . nice to meet you . . . you work here?”

“No sir, but I want to . . . I work for the United States Treasury in New York. I’m also a flight instructor with nearly a thousand hours and wanted to apply.”

Sensing our dad was a wannabe airline pilot beggar, the rest in the group

slowly began to move on, with looks of . . . boy he's got some nerve! Little did our dad realize that he was speaking with Eastern's chief pilot, Captain Frank Kern!

"Well . . . you . . . we . . . we have interviews on Tuesdays and Thursday's from eight till four. Come back tomorrow and well see if we can talk . . . okay?"

"Yes sir . . . thank you sir . . . I'll be here at eight." And with a firm hand shake our dad left with plenty of adrenalin pumping through his veins and with a feeling that he might have a chance at landing a job; a lesson on when *not* to keep your mouth shut.

The next morning he met with a gentleman named Joe Gimmel who reviewed his log books, medical and pilot certificates. Also he asked a series of technical questions about VFR charts, instrument approach procedures and regulations. Later that afternoon he was taken upstairs to the executive offices where he would be reintroduced to Frank. Once there it as explained that Eastern preferred pilots with only military flying time but would consider non-military applicants so if they at least knew someone at Eastern.

Without an inside reference, all he could offer was his experience as an instructor and that he was military, just not a military pilot.

Joe and Frank asked a few questions about his responsibilities as an undercover agent and seemed interested in his background as a federal law enforcement officer. Not knowing a soul at the airline, he knew they wouldn't consider him and the remainder of the interview was spent with longer periods of awkward silence while discussing his background as a State Trooper. He sensed this was only to appease him and no way were they about to consider a flight instructor with nine hundred hours of single engine time for the position of an airline pilot. By now his feet were noticeably cold.

As the interview drew to a close, he confidently shook their hands and thanked them for their time. Turning to exit, he was asked to sit for a moment while they left the room. A little later they returned.

"Mr. Boring . . . will you be available to come back next week?" Joe asked, with a searching look.

Not knowing how he would get the time off or afford the return, he shot back anyway . . . "Yes sir . . . yes sir . . . whenever you need me."

"Good, because your ground school will begin on Monday in this building on the second floor . . . congratulations!"

He couldn't believe it! He'd been asked to join the Great Silver Fleet! After thanking them, he grabbed his bag and raced to the hotel with thoughts of how he would tell our mom and everyone else, especially Hank! With elation, our mom broke down with tears of joy and they celebrated by eating out at a Cuban cuisine instead of the same PBJ sandwiches they had packed. On the drive back he pointed out the place where he, Don and Tuck encountered the low flying Eastern DC-7 some ten years earlier. An important lesson on the need to never give up on your dreams.

The following week he attended the new higher ground school before flight training on a Martin 404. After his check ride, he was assigned to fly as copilot throughout the northeast in what was known as the "*Back Forty*"; a term used to describe many destinations which Eastern acquired from the recently defunct Colonial Airlines. Cities such as Plattsburg, Lake Placid and Syracuse all made up the back forty and very few were equipped with air traffic control towers.

The following year however he would learn that the only thing harder than landing his new job was keeping it. On November 24, 1958, the Eastern Pilots elected to strike and with his family to support, he could waste no time in finding work. Without any flight instructor positions available, he had to take whatever was open.

A neighbor offered him a labor position shoveling coal at steel mill plant for \$1.05/hr. Luckily, he was able to carpool for the hour-long commute where he would fill furnaces with coal for the forging and production of industrial steel products. I'm honored to know that our dad was never too proud to perform whatever type of work necessary to provide for his family.

Fortunately, the strike was relatively short lived and on December 31<sup>st</sup>, an agreement was reached between labor and management, making for what our dad said was "the best New Year's ever". Slowly, the blisters on his hands would heal, but the pain in his heart remained for his fellow workers.

That day he fully realized the importance of attending school and entering the workforce with a college degree.

By the fall of 1959 he earned his fourth stripe, (captain) and began flying larger aircraft like the Lockheed Electra and Super Constellation. Nine months later our mom gave birth to Gary and now she'd landed her dream job of *full time mom*. Before Gary's second birthday, Eastern received a number of new planes and our dad learned to fly his first turbojet aircraft; the McDonnell Douglas DC-8 and later the DC-9. Now his career really began to *take off* and he decided to relocate to Friendship Airport (Currently BWI) in Maryland where he could hold better seniority. Their move back found them in the town of

Simpsonville near Ellicott City where they could be closer to friends and family. This included our Aunt Alice on our mom's side and their mom, Grandma Lucy. Great Aunt Lizzy was also close along with other cousins and of course dad's closest buddy, Don Mahaney.

Over the next few years, our parents decided where my brothers and I should be raised. Just prior to my enrollment into kindergarten, we moved to the town of Glenelg in rural Howard County; a place of skinny two-lane roads lined with wildflowers, endless rolling hills surrounded by white board fences and smells of fresh cut grass.

Initially, we moved into a large century old farm house with an enormous storm cellar and musty dirt floor basement. As young boys, we hardly took notice of what was under our feet and went crazy running throughout the house and yelling before our mom finally chased us outside. Outdoors was even better. Surrounded by apple orchards, cow pastures and dense forest, we explored the entire property looking for ways to get into trouble. By 1973 our dad had a custom home built at the top of a hill not far from the old farm house. This is where I remember most of my upbringing with Gary and his friends.

Our dad had many overnights and as a young lad, I remember he'd be gone for what seemed forever. When he did return I'd run down the stairs, jump into his arms, and hug him like crazy. He always had a small gift or present for each of us like handmade toys which he bargained for in one of Mexico's City's strip malls or a gold pair of plastic Eastern pilot wings which he proudly pinned to my pj's. As the youngest, I made it a point to show him exactly how much he was missed by refusing to leave his side—until getting the look from mom.

He also continued his career in the Army Reserves and eventually attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel after graduating from the Command and General Staff College and completing the Army Airborne jump School. Once a month and two weeks out of the year he participated in special warfare training drills with other reservist who were transitioning from active duty status. Between flying for Eastern and his *weekend warrior* commitment to his Special Forces unit, he carried a busy schedule. Looking back, I see what an inspiring role model he was for all of us but also wish I'd had more time with him.

The remainder of his flying career took him in him to dozens of destinations throughout north, central and South America. It was during the early 1970's that he flew to what I believe were two of his favorite destinations, Mexico City and Acapulco. Departing Mexico City's Benito Juarez' airport, he occasionally chose to fly over a large volcano; Popocatepetl, some thirty-nine miles southeast of the airport where he would orbit the mountain while acting as tour guide over the aircrafts PA system.

Gently steep rolling the Boeing 727, he allowed his passengers a rare

glimpse into the dormant crater of what today is considered Mexico's most active volcano. Longtime friend and fellow colleague Captain Neil Holland once told me that he was also guilty of sightseeing over Niagara Falls and Mt. Rainer in Tacoma Washington. Some travelers were so impressed, they wrote the cooperate offices applauding the pilots for their generosity in providing what they felt was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Soon after, the airlines president, former astronaut Frank Borman, distributed a memo informing all pilots to maintain strict adherence to all departure/arrival procedures and that **under no circumstances were pilots ever to circle over any landmarks!** This would mark the end of an era in which our dad and other pilots were banned from exercising a type of *discretionary freedom* designed solely for the purpose of passenger enjoyment. By the time deregulation came around it wasn't only the meals that were taken away, it was everything that made air travel pleasurable and fun. By the early eighties, things really began to change within the airline industry—and sadly not for the better. Some say that deregulation moved the airport to the bus terminal and provided only two ways to travel—first class and third world. And, matched luggage since deregulation consist of three shopping bags from the same Walmart. Deregulating the industry may have made flying more economical for the masses but it also excised everything sacred from air travel.

Around this time, I remember riding in the cockpit for a flight from Miami FL to Bolivia South America and back. Never would this be allowed today. We landed at La Paze's El Alto International Airport, one of the highest in the world with an elevation of 13,325 feet above sea level. We enjoyed a one-night layover and departed the following day at around noon. Before we pushed from the gate, our dad allowed me to copy down the weather and read back our ATC clearance we were given by ground control.

Taxing out, I pretended to be one of the crew members as they ran checklist and reviewed the emergency procedures for an aborted takeoff or engine failure on climb out. Something they called a *go /no go* decision. Mesmerized by the cacophony of switches, fuses, buttons, lights, levers, dials and gauges, my heart pounded as we accelerated to take off speed and lifted off the runway. I found myself waiting for that emergency, but it never came. I remember hearing my dad ask the first officer to please bring the gear up as he banked the airplane for a climbing turn towards Miami. This is how I remember my dad.

To me, it remains the most awesome take your kid to work day possible. I took lots of pictures and shared them with my school mates who asked a million questions and wanted to meet our dad. The following spring he visited my school for career week where he made a huge impression. He loved people of

all ages but especially young adults and children. He took extra time to answer questions but also to fellowship with the youth which surrounded him. I know he felt good about encouraging them to stay in school, to work hard and to never give up on their dreams. On that day, I was proudest kid at school. Looking back, I think he wanted to reach those who were most impressionable and undecided about their future. He wanted them to know that if he could do it, they could to. He wanted to give to others what he never had, someone to look up to, who was supportive and who believed in him.

By the time we relocated to Florida, I was a sophomore in high school and like other teenaged boys was working hard to drive my parent's nuts by experimenting with recreational drugs and ignoring my curfew. Gary remained responsible; attended the local college during the day and working as a grounds keeper at Selby Botanical Gardens on the weekends. Steve lived in Wichita where he worked as supervisor of maintenance for Air Midwest; a large commuter airline with an extensive route structure throughout the central and southern states. He usually would visit on holidays and whenever he could get away using his pass travel privileges. Sometime in the early eighties took a job at Tampa Air Center and relocated to Saint Petersburg. We loved that he was now closer and could visit whenever he could get away for the hour or so long drive.

After a time in Florida, our dad's work schedule at Eastern became a sort of *semi-retirement* timetable. With over twenty six years at the helm, his seniority had soared allowing him to fly as little as one or two times a month; thus providing him with much free time to work around the house, travel with our mom, entertain friends or just simply veg. He and our mom enjoyed romantic sunset strolls on Siesta Key Beach and on weekends would climb aboard his motorcycle for long lazy rides down Longboat key.

Once a week or so the three of us would frequent his favorite hangout, *Trevino's Restaurante*; a hole in the wall place which served his favorite dish of authentic Mexican food. So authentic that kitchen staff would often be called upon take orders from non - Spanish speaking patrons and usually in very broken English. This was no doubt the selling point for our dad as he loved to practice his Spanish and fraternize with anyone of Latino decent. Of course, it wasn't long before he developed a close friendship by the owners and staff.

They loved him for his friendliness and willingness to translate for our table and even other patrons when things got busy. On one visit [after a few dos equis beers] he offered to wash dishes. He claimed he needed to practice his Spanish with those who could easily point out his deficiencies. He washed what he could before the workers finally chased him from the kitchen. They owners absolutely adored him and would often spend a good portion of time at our table

laughing and conversing over our meal. Any leftovers *he* brought home were always “safe” from consumption as no one dare touch them for fear of burning a hole in their tongue.

By Christmas of 1988 Steve relocated from St. Petersburg to Phoenix Arizona to work as a jet mechanic for Scottsdale Aviation Center. Just prior to his move our dad had undergone the Miami airport incident and was undergoing initial testing to determine a diagnosis. Although suffering from MCI (mild cognitive impairment) he was still aware of Steve’s love for aviation and the chance to work on large commercial jets was well worth the move. Also the love of spicy food is a genetic trait which my brothers and I no doubt inherited and living in the southwest guarantees all the fiery food one can handle.

Also around this time, Gary moved just north to the town of Clearwater following a real estate investment and would visit on weekends and occasionally during the week. I remained at home following high school and worked as a lifeguard and gymnastics coach after enrolling into the same local college. Before the curtain would come down on their golden years, our mom scheduled what would be our final family vacation and the following summer, we each would learn firsthand the impact of our dad’s illness while vacationing through the Alaskan wilderness.

## Our Dad Part Two

### *Forgotten Memories*

I n the spring of 1990, our mom began planning what would be our last family getaway. After weeks of research she was torn between a train ride through Copper Canyon or a cruise through the inland waterway from Vancouver BC to Alaska with an overnight in Denali Park. After much deliberation, it was finally decided - by our dad - to see the Great Final Frontier. So that August all five of us met up in Seattle where we toured the city’s iconic

space needle, Pacific Science Center and famous Pikes Place Market.

The following day we were taken by Ferry to Vancouver BC where we viewed the amazing Quarry Flower Gardens of Queen Elizabeth Park. From there we boarded the MS Noordam and headed north through Johnstone Straight where we took in the spectacular views of the Inside Passage. For the next five days, we pulled into several day ports including Ketchikan, Skagway and Glacier Bay before arriving at Seward, where we concluded the sailing portion and first half of our two-week excursion. Our mom was a terrific planner and coordinated all times and locations found within the itinerary. By now our dad's dependence on our mom was noticeably apparent and despite our efforts to assist him, he seemed to constantly cling to her. At the time, we were just beginning to see his real need for assistance and although we may have *known* it, we chose never to *discuss* it. Denial.

From Seward, we were chartered by Greyhound to Anchorage where we boarded a dome car train that snaked through the Alaskan wilderness. Enroute we were treated to more spectacular views including Denali (former Mt. McKinley) which is estimated to be visible only a few days out of the year. Eventually we arrived at our grand destination, The Denali National Park Hotel. . . a train placed on blocks somewhere outside of the city of Fairbanks. The food was good and the people very welcoming and we felt as though we'd been taken back to the days of goldmining and gunslingers. We liked the rustic feel, especially our dad, of the boxcar lobby and the gas lantern lit hallways. Without too far to go, he easily navigated his way back around to the lobby without help. I know at times I felt awkward and did my best to *gloss over* his conative decline. Oddly we even joked about his illness but refrained from simply discussing it. Perhaps for me it was just too uncomfortable, too exposed or probably just too hard.

We enjoyed our trip back in time, but were also eager to see the Anchorage Westmark Hotel with its clean bed linens, fresh seafood and high-rise views; all of which was shown in the brochure. Our mom informed us that we would have to wait on the return trip which took us back through Anchorage. So that evening we enjoyed the pool table and beer on tap as our parents slow danced to "Crazy" by Patsy Klein on the juke box. How odd to look outside at 2AM and see daylight. It was a *night* I'll never forget.

The following morning brought fog, cold overcast skies with freezing rain and for my brothers and me—a kick in the head. With about twenty in our group, we boarded a damp chilly school bus which bumped us to a windy location within the park where we enjoyed stale doughnuts with coffee and hot chocolate. This was obviously in stark contrast to the cruise portion of our escapade but our dad hardly took notice. Despite the cold, windy, wet conditions

we simply made the best of it while carefully holding our cameras, ready for those grizzly bears. Much to our chagrin, the only wildlife we encountered was on the return ride back to our caboose on bricks. Barely visible was a moose camouflaged deep within the overgrowth alongside the road and, a juvenile fox who paused just long enough for us to snap his picture as he relieved himself on our rear tire. Most were still frantically searching for the moose at the front of the bus as the fluffy tailed fox left his business card. Dad and I simply smiled straight down at him as I snapped his mug. Dad was elated and talked about it for hours.

That evening we arrived in Anchorage where we were treated to a tour of downtown and the surrounding area before arriving at our hotel. One thing I found interesting was how frozen food sales are sometimes held during the winter months. Tractor trailer drivers simply open their aft doors, install a ramp and invite in shoppers. No worries during those dark winter *days* as the temperature never rises above zero degrees C. That evening we enjoyed those delicious King Crab legs and fresh bed linens. It was as close to being back home in our beds as we would get. All things considered though, our holiday seemed to end too quickly . . . much too quickly. We all took fond memories from this special time together but little did we realize exactly *how* special. Looking back, I now see how our last vacation was more than just a *memory* for me. It was a time I'll treasure forever.

Back in Sarasota I registered for my fall classes and continued my flying lessons with hopes of obtaining my private pilot certificate by years end. Also, I resumed my work schedule as part time water walking instructor and lifeguard at the local pool. Within a week I would meet my soul mate. The beautiful and friendly redhead I fell in love with at the far end of the pool would see me through some of my most difficult days. She showed unconditional love for our dad, even though he never called her by name—except once. Although she also knew very little about the disease itself, she fully understood his limitations and embraced him with open arms and infinite patience.

Always eager to help, she often brought him to my evening water exercise class which helped him to get out and socialize in addition to providing our mom with a much-needed break.

Two years later we were married and by then, he had lost a lot of ground, both cognitively and with his motor skills. More frequently he would say or do things which were unexpected and/or inappropriate but often very humorous. I remember around that time we attended a large men's ministry breakfast at our church.

Despite being told repeatedly by our mom that it was a *men's breakfast*, the first thing out of his mouth after arriving home was;

“I'm amazed at how few women were there!”

Frequently we would laugh at statements or responses he'd make, but somewhere inside we all knew it was the illness talking, and not him. Deep down I know our mom was devastated and the laughter we shared helped to hide our emotional torment. It soon became apparent that a part of our dad was now gone and what future changes awaited us were unknown. We were all given a healthy dose of humility as we witnessed him steadily regress to what eventually would be a childlike state. At times, we felt quite discouraged and tried our best to silently cope.

Having to process this emotionally was grueling, and over time the internal grieving we underwent began to take its toll on us. My loving spouse remained the rock in all of this by providing an unshakable foundation of love and support for all of us, especially our dad. To this day she remains the most loving and giving person I've ever known. No matter how awkward or difficult it felt at times, the love of my life was always there to support and encourage us in our grief. Initially for me, the emotional changes served as a wakeup call as to how precious our time here really is and over the years has helped me to never take for granted my mental faculties.

In the months following, our Dad had good days and bad days but always appeared at best to be in a funk or trying to remember where he'd laid his wallet or keys. If we asked him a question which exceeded his cognitive abilities, he'd respond in ways which seemed to skirt around the answer. Also his responses were often quite witty and seemed to leave us speechless. Little did we know at the time that he was also a master of disguise and would go to great lengths in an effort to conceal his illness. I remember once he was asked if he could recall his birth date. Much to our surprise he did remember the day and month, but sadly, not the year. When asked for the year he confidently answered; “Every year.”

Responses like this I've found to be common among those suffering from AD and as with our dad were obvious attempts to cover up his shortfalls. Early on, they were not as frequent and seemed to almost give the appearance that everything was fine. Dolefully though, none of us were acutely aware of just how soon he would begin to show signs of a much more severe type of memory impairment.

Eventually he withdrew more and seemed content with only napping and watching TV. Attempts to encourage him to participate in things like conversation around the dinner table or after dinner walks with us were met with increasing apathy. A type of apathy which seemed to be slowly consuming him

and which none of us could easily overcome. As a family we grew increasingly discouraged and at times even felt defeated by his disease.

The constant repeating, reminding and redirecting began to wear on us and we found ourselves getting short with him more often. [And with each other] If one thing was clear it was that our dad needed us now more than ever. Everything in our household would eventually act to revolve around him. We now had what was essentially a *special needs* dad and it was up to us to make the most of what quality time he had left.

Speech difficulties are common for many with Alzheimer's and typically worsen with the progression of the disease. By the mid nineteen ninety's our dad began to struggle with his ability to participate in even simple conversation. He would hesitate with his responses and often ask us to repeat what was said. Initially, we just thought it was his hearing [or at least we were hoping] but soon we understood that he most likely wasn't able to process what was said to him. To a stranger it might have even gone unnoticed, but to those of us who knew and loved him, it was obvious. His speech was often clear but sadly he just couldn't seem to retrieve and pronounce the words from his brain.

At times, this limitation must have caused him a great deal of emotional distress including feelings of loneliness and isolation. Our dad was always known to engage others. We knew him as an outgoing and fun-loving individual who enjoyed being in the company of friends and family. Growing up, I never remember him to have given up on anything.

He was a fighter. I know at some point he must have fought with everything he'd had to keep his disease from getting the best of him. Perhaps he felt that so long as no one noticed his limitations, then he could have somehow beaten it. Tragically though, there would come a day when he could no longer conceal his illness. At some point he must have felt defeated and realized that it would only be a matter of time before he'd be forced to succumb to its debilitating effects. I only wish we could have supported him in a way that he was willing to accept and in a way which communicated to him how much I loved him.

To us, his indifference towards both his surroundings and others was evidence that he'd finally surrendered to his illness. His inability to communicate at times was incredibly frustrating for him but more importantly, it precluded him from expressing his feelings. This was heart breaking for all of us and there seemed to be no way to reach him. He was slowly on his way out and there was nothing we could do. Even worse was how fast changes in his personality were beginning to occur. Looking back now, I understand why he became so angry at times. He was gradually being robbed of his ability to recall even simple things like a neighbor's name or his favorite vacation spot.

Over time, he'd internalized his frustration to the point where he lost his ability to

contain or control his anger. Occasionally he would experience an angry outburst, and then only moments later forgot that he'd acted out. This was perhaps the most trying time for my mom and for all of us.

In the following months he began to repeat himself so much that we could easily predict his words and actions. Still he fought hard against his illness. He began writing himself reminder notes only to struggle with trying to read what he'd wrote only moments before. He then wrestled with locating his note pad until one day, he'd forgotten about even keeping a notepad or maybe he no longer cared . . . I don't know. The disease was overtaking him quickly and, at the time there was no known way to stop or even slow its progression.

It was around this time that he was forced to surrender his driver's license and I had my first real lesson on how to effectively redirect someone with this disease. I'll never forget that Sunday night sitting at their kitchen table. Susan was working and I was there trying to support my mom who was an emotional mess. She had no idea how to tell my dad that he should no longer be driving. He had several near fender benders earlier in the week and she knew the issue of driving had to be addressed. She didn't want to hide his license for fear that he might become angry or worst violent and insist that she start looking for it. I personally don't feel he would have missed it but I wanted to respect my Mom's wishes.

Suddenly I had an idea. I looked at my Dad and asked if I could see his license. Reluctantly, he took out his billfold, removed his license and handed to me. I wasn't sure if he could still read very well and decided to take a chance. I kindly informed him that his license was expired. I then offered to chauffeur him to our local DMV the following day so he could take the renewal test. He stared at me for a moment as I handed him back his license. He then closely examined it and simply responded "Okay." I had a hunch and I was right . . . he could no longer read! His license wasn't due to expire for nearly two years. I struggled at first with not being truthful with him but this was a safety issue and I wasn't about to take any chances.

From that day forward if he brought up the issue of driving we lovingly reminded him that testing was required for the renewal of his license. Interestingly, he never pressed to go and get a renewal—only to drive. It was perhaps the last real form of independence for him and yielding to it meant a kind of *total* defeat. Despite showing signs of severe memory impairment or SMI, I feel he somehow knew of his inability to pass the test. And despite constant redirection and attempts to change the subject, he would not stop asking about when he could drive! As a family, we underwent a lesson on how to exercise limitless patience.

Eventually we obtained a written test booklet from our local DMV and

whenever he inquired about the renewal, we simply got out the book and helped him to study.

Sometimes we would spend nearly an hour going over the same question. Over time, the topic of driving seemed to surface less frequently and finally we found some relief. Eventually he stopped asking all together and as grateful as we were, it was also painful because we knew the disease was gaining more ground. Sadly in the coming years, he was unable to recall anything short term and eventually lost his ability to speak full sentences. Together though, we worked to support our mom as she slowly suffered while losing the only love of her life. He, like all who are forced to succumb to the ravages of this horrible debilitating brain disorder, was eventually reduced to a mere shell of a person.

Approaching the later stages, he was relocated to a memory unit where we would visit several times a week. There would often be those awkward quiet moments when none of us would know what to say. Only a deafening silence filled the room and I would often find myself fighting the tears. I thank God for my wife as she remained my support through it all. On occasion when my brothers did visit, I could tell they were likely fighting the tears also, I don't know for sure but I wanted to know. I was too embarrassed to ask. Instead, I would hug them each close and cry when they couldn't see me. At the time I simply wasn't sure what to say or do, so I resorted to body language.

Looking back, what I feel we most importantly failed to realize was how one day he might not recognize us and how emotionally shattering it would feel. I cannot begin to describe how disparaging we felt that day. It was all too soon and suddenly I felt I'd lost my chance to say goodbye to him. I'll never forget that day and the unmistakable pain I felt in my chest. It was my heart, it was breaking. No matter how hard I tried not to cry, I was unable to stop my tears. His illness forced me to openly *show* my emotions. For all those years I admired my dad for so many things but never realized that I would learn from him such an important lesson on the importance of allowing myself to open up. As the former Airline Captain and lieutenant Colonel, he led a unique life of success and prosperity and is what I *thought* I would mostly remember him for. But in the end, I realized how he helped me to learn more about myself. He spoke to me through his illness and taught me the importance of *letting go* and that it's *okay* to show my emotions.

Sadly his illness was noticeably harder on my mom than the rest of us. She did her best to cope emotionally while watching him gradually slip away and deep inside I know for years she battled with being in denial. In the last stages of his illness, his mental and physical deterioration reached a point where he was unable to walk, unable to speak, unable to swallow and finally, he failed to breathe. This is what I witnessed my father and family suffer through.

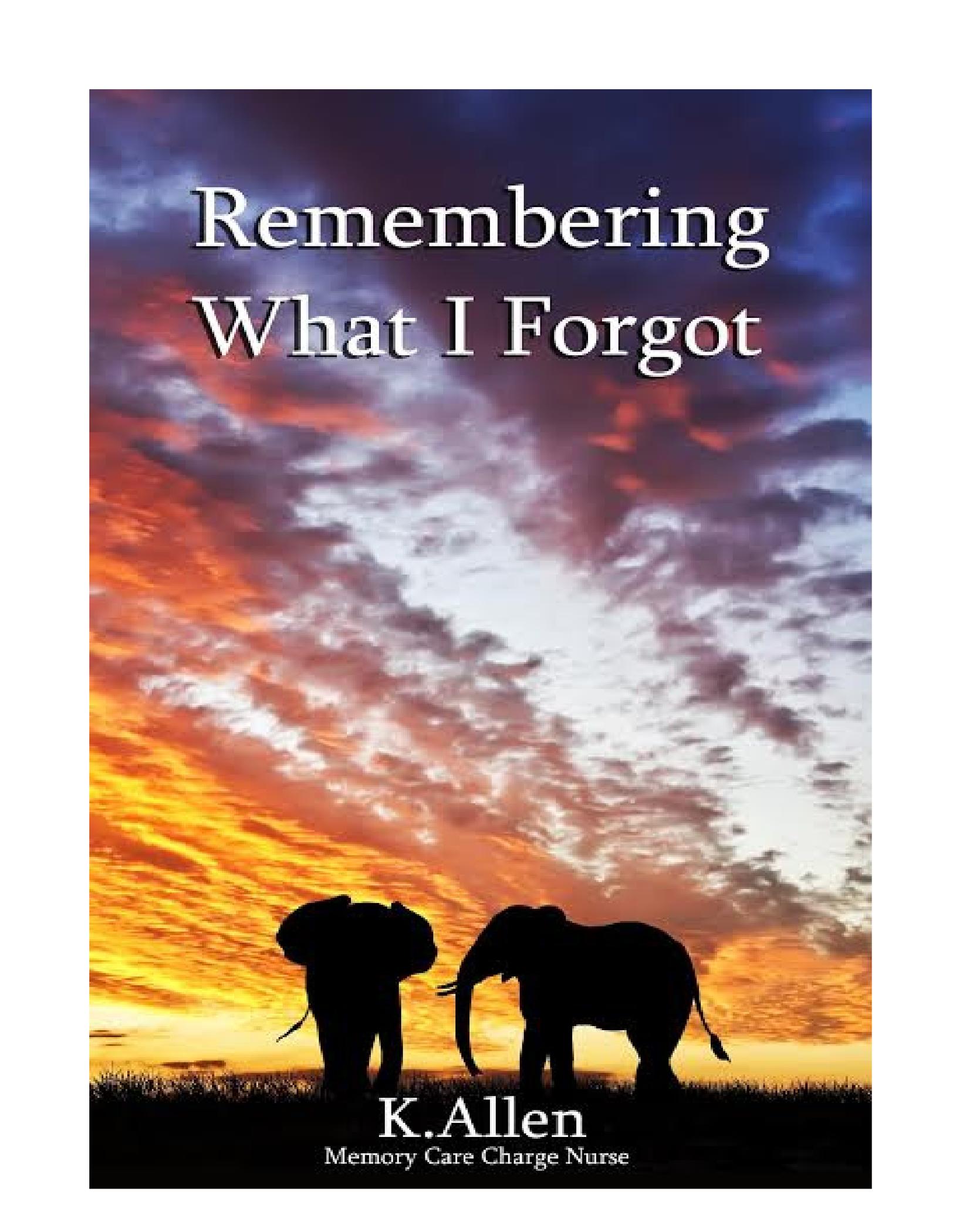
Although understood to be a neurodegenerative disorder, the disease seemed to destroy both his brain and body, one cell at a time.

Our mom passed of cancer seven years later, but sadly lived with his demise for those remaining years. The stress no doubt brought her to an early grave.

She too endured with all she had. I loved them each dearly and I will miss them more than words can describe. If you still have your parents, I pray you can love them openly and tell them today how much they mean to you.

Growing up, I received an overwhelming amount of love and affection from my parents but especially from my Dad. It took me nearly half a century but I now know the sole purpose of my being loved and comforted is so that I may love and comfort others. Aside from all my duties and responsibilities as a Memory Unit Supervisor, this is truly what being a nurse is all about.

The importance of caring for others, especially our elders, cannot be overstated. To help emphasize this need, I have written a story entitled **Remembering What I Forgot**. It is my hope that this story will help raise awareness to about Alzheimer's and recognize all those now in the twilight years of their life.



# Remembering What I Forgot

**K.Allen**  
Memory Care Charge Nurse

