

# ONE-PAGE STORIES

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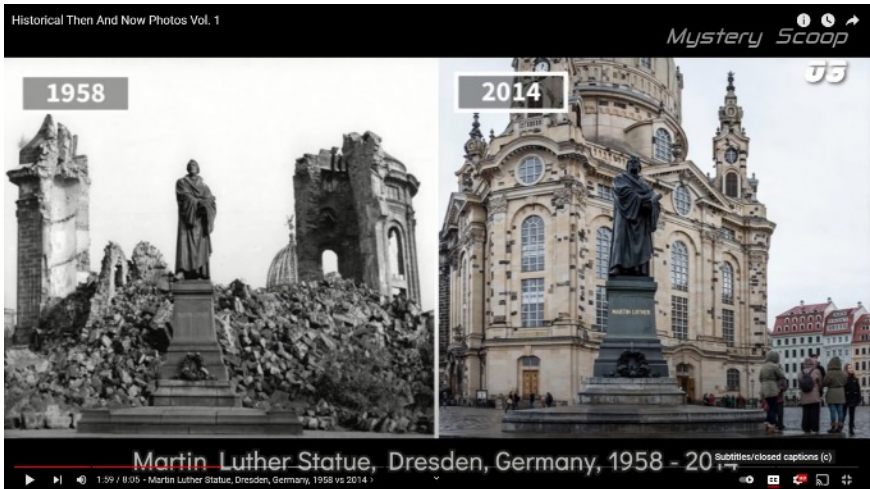
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# Our Visit to the *Frauenkirche*, Dresden

BY BILL BOYS — COLUMBUS, OHIO

**T**HE ALLIES' FIRE-BOMBING OF DRESDEN, Germany, in February, 1945, took a dreadful toll (est. 22,700 to 25,000 deaths) and was “one of the moral *causes célèbres* of the war.” (Wikipedia) It also destroyed the *Frauenkirche* – “Church of Our Beloved Lady” (an Evangelical Lutheran church, which had been Roman Catholic until the Reformation). It remained in ruins until after German reunification, and then was reconstructed, 2004-05.



We visited it in 2007 while part of a Friendship Force International homestay exchange in nearby Chemnitz. We were awed by the airy, bright, light blue and white interior, almost like visiting the clouds of heaven. When they rebuilt the church they salvaged as many of the original sandstone building blocks as they could. If you look carefully at the 2014 photo above you’ll see some random stones are much darker. Those are the ones.

At the time, I was the “intentional interim pastor” of Ascension Lutheran Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. One of the elderly members, Ursula Carter, was baptized as a child in that church. She told me how she donated money for its reconstruction. I looked up her name on the brass plaques which honor reconstruction donors, took a picture showing her name, and lit a candle for her in the bank of votive candles in the nave. When I got back to Chattanooga and told her, I was touched by how much she appreciated these small gestures. Seeing her baptismal church was a highlight of our trip.

# Shanti Desa

BY DON LUCK — COLUMBUS, OHIO

**T**HE SWEET AROMA OF JASMINE GREETED US as we stepped into the Balinese evening air. My wife and I were there at the invitation of Bagoes Gedong Oka. I had met her at an inter-religious conference in Madras (now Chennai) India. She was there as the creator of an ashram dedicated to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi that included one of religious tolerance.

I learned that she was the first Balinese female university graduate and that her liberal views had her stand trial in the nineteen sixties. At that time, in response to what was viewed as an attempted communist coup, a purge of Indonesians considered to be leftists caused the death of about a half million people. “My friends trembled for me,” she said, “but I put my trust firmly in God, and spoke without fear.” She sounded pretty much like Luther to me. It was only after her recalling that experience that I learned her religious pedigree – including the time when she lived in a Dutch Reformed parsonage as child and she first heard about Jesus. She thought he sounded a lot like Krishna.

Mrs. Oka’s religious identity was more exotic than Bali. The ashram, named Shanti Desa (Servant of Peace), had a variety of functions that might be called counter-cultural, or at least against the grain. It served as housing for visiting religious scholars. School children were taught Gandhian principles while off from their regular classes. A clinic dispensed “natural” remedies as an alternative to Western medicine. And in the ashram’s paddies, farmers were shown alternative ways to increase rice production apart from artificial fertilizers.

But the commitment to inter-religious tolerance and dialogue was dearest to her heart. The four foot seawall that fronted the sandy beach that spilled out to the sparkling waters of the sea was incised with the symbols of the world’s major religions. Bali is quite literally a majority Hindu island in an overwhelming Muslim sea. The presence of a unique form of Hinduism brought from India and a later infusion of Buddhism were both swept aside by Islam—except in Bali because the Dutch sheltered them. Indonesia has the highest Muslim population of any country in the world and, on the Indian subcontinent, it and Hinduism have clashed violently. But what delighted Mrs. Oka was the first ever Hindu-Muslim dialogue in Indonesia took place at Shanti Desa.

# My Steeplechase Jockey Professor

BY KATHLEEN J. ZWANZIGER — COLUMBUS, OHIO

“WHAT IF I DON’T LIKE HIM?” I asked my college advisor when I learned that two of the first three classes I would take in grad school would be taught by the same professor. I don’t recall his answer but since those two classes (Ancient Greece and Roman Empire) were exactly what interested me, I knew I would still take those classes in summer school. Turns out, I need not have worried. I enjoyed the classes immensely and the professor, Mr. Harris, equally. I looked forward to those classes all summer — and Byzantine Empire in the fall.

One day after class, I started feeling ill. Since Mr. Harris was one of the only people I knew in town, I asked if he would take me home. He took one look at me, and asked, “Promise you won’t throw up in my car?” I remember that answer: “I can’t promise, but I’ll certainly try not to.” I was successful.

In the fall I was assigned to be his Teaching Assistant. That involved mostly sitting in on his classes of Western Civ and grading the exams, although I was asked to teach a couple classes — on Martin Luther and the Reformation, a subject I knew quite well. Grading the exams went well, after he gave me some tips. One paper, however, was nearly illegible. It seems that was the only time a student complained about my grading to Mr. Harris. He looked at the handwriting and told the student he should be happy that I was the person who graded it.

I spent hours in the office he shared with Dr. Ward typing my thesis (since my typewriter had an odd script): “The Artist-Emperor: Nero Claudius Caesar.” I learned that Mr. Harris had been a steeplechase jockey in his younger years (and that Dr. Ward was in a band called “Chord on Blue”). I learned Mr. Harris had three children and met two of them. I loved watching their interactions — and was surprised to learn later they were his stepchildren. When Mr. Harris was pursuing his Ph.D., his doctor told him either he could continue his course of study, or he could live a little longer. He and his wife joined my parents for dinner at graduation.

I learned so much from Mr. Harris — and was thrilled that I helped him with his research on the stirrup when I found a passage in Tacitus that he didn’t know. I am so happy that he chose to live a little longer.

# Pittsburgh Pirates Baseball Memories

BY GARY BOSSLER — MASSILLON, OHIO

**S**INCE WE DIDN'T HAVE TV WHEN I WAS 13 and living in Altoona, Pennsylvania, I would be sitting next to the radio listening to the "voice of the Pirates," the colorful Rosey Rowswell. The Pirates were my favorite team even though they were usually fighting the Cincinnati Reds to stay out of last place in the National League.

In those days the announcer didn't travel with the team but would sit in the studio and recreate the game by reading a ticker tape. I used to keep score even though away games were really boring because there was no crowd noise – just the sound of a ticker tape behind Rosey's voice.

When someone hit a home run for the Pirates Rosey would say, "Get upstairs Aunt Minnie and raise the window, here it comes." Then he would make the sound of glass breaking and add, "She never made it."

Rosey had a flower box at the front of his announcer's booth. He only watered the flowers when someone from Pittsburgh hit a home run. Many times I heard him say (when one of the Pirate's heavy hitters were at bat), "Come on, Ralph. My Petunias need some water." Ralph Kiner hit 301 home runs in his eight years with the Pirates. In 1949 he hit 54 home runs, the most he ever hit in one season. He played in the All-Star Game from 1948 to 1953. Near the end of his career he was traded to the Chicago Cubs in 1953-54. He spent his last year, 1955, with the Cleveland Indians, the year I graduated high school and moved to Canton, Ohio.

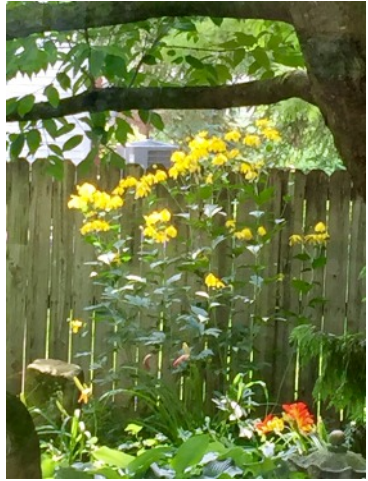
I could give you the lineup any time you wanted it. The outfield consisted of Ralph Kiner in left, Wally Westlake in center and Gus Bell in right. The infield was Frankie Gustine at 3rd, Stan Rojek at shortstop, Danny Murtaugh at 2nd and Johnny Hopp at 1st. The catcher would be Clyde McCullough and the pitchers I remember 70 years later were Mel Queen, Bob Friend, and Vern Law. Reliever Hugh Casey was called "Fireman Casey" because he always came in to put out the fires when the opponents were getting the best of us.

Recently, listening to the Cleveland Guardians announcer, I realized every infielder but the first-baseman had to have an interpreter when interviewed. Announcing changes with the times!

# They Didn't Read the Book

BY NANCY A. HEBER — COLUMBUS, OHIO

**I**T'S SUPPOSED TO GROW TO BE 3-4 FEET TALL according to the plastic plant label inside the pot. "Perfect," I thought. "It will be the right size for the back area of my perennial flower bed." As one can see, the Rudbeckia in the picture is much taller than my six foot fence! Hmm .... It's obviously healthy and happy there. It obviously did not pay any attention to the directions on the label in the pot! After checking in my perennial plants book, it, too, stated 3-4 feet as the expected height. Yet, here it is. Over six feet tall. Beautiful in its spot, bringing joy to those who view it.



Snow on the ground in late May?  
A picture of a hummingbird at a feeder



with snow in the background? Doesn't the hummingbird realize it's not the appropriate time to have migrated north? Or, perhaps, Mother Nature didn't read the book about when the last spring snowfall should occur. Yet, the hummingbird seems to be perfectly happy at the feeder getting the nourishment it needs.

Life seems to be full of expectations that may be counter to what usually happens. This, I have found to be true of my Hospice experience. Six months is the usual time expected to complete one's ending journey with the challenges my body faces. Obviously my body hasn't read the book about when the end of my journey will occur. Yet, here I am enjoying life as it is presented to me each day, even though I am confined to being home: time with family and friends; reading; watching a TV program or sports event I thought I likely wouldn't be around to see; enjoying the beauty Mother Nature presents daily; time to meditate and pray. What a blessing. I am so happy my body chose not to read the book!

# A World Outside My Window

BY NANCY A. HEBER — COLUMBUS, OHIO

**B**EING IN HOSPICE CURRENTLY, I find I must amuse myself in other ways than reading or watching TV. Observing Mother Nature is just the answer! And I have the perfect way to do it! Many years ago, when I was designing the room that was to be the main bedroom in our home, I told the architect that I wanted an area with floor to ceiling windows. Needless to say, he looked at me askance. In a bedroom? Floor to ceiling windows?? Yep! My husband was a post-polio individual whom I thought at some point, might be confined to the bedroom. I wanted to make sure if that happened, he would be able to look outside and see the yard and garden, plus the creatures therein. Being able to be a part of the world is important! Well, the floor to ceiling windows were installed, but one thing we hadn't counted on ... my husband died suddenly, so all that planning ahead was for naught or so I thought. Not really, however. In my situation now, I find those windows a Godsend! A blessing, indeed, as I while away the day's hours, Nature provides all the amusement I need.



A deer coming up to the window; a young opossum waiting for its mother; a small skunk with its striking black and white fur (with no worry for its infamous odor since it didn't feel threatened); many kinds of birds visiting the birdbath; and, of course, many different kinds of plants and flowers all combine to make each day a new experience. Mother Nature doesn't disappoint.



# Mother Nature Provides

BY NANCY A. HEBER — COLUMBUS, OHIO

“THE SKY IS FALLING! I must go and tell the king!” said Chicken Little to his friend, Henny Penny. Chicken Little was in the garden and had felt a pea drop on top of his head, but, obviously, didn’t realize it was just a pea. This is the beginning of a story from my favorite childhood storybook. At my age of 85, it seems that memories of my earlier years pop into my head more frequently.

Looking out of my bedroom window, I laughed to myself as I watched a young bluejay feel a drip of water on top of his head. It blinked, shuddered and shook itself, then proceeded to jump to the edge of the birdbath. It seemed to be thinking, “What just happened?” I immediately recalled the “Chicken Little” story.



I knew what had happened. There is a dripper installed above the birdbath which continually drips to provide fresh water to the birdbath. As the water in the birdbath ripples from the drip, drip, drip, the movement of the water attracts all kinds of backyard birds. After a moment, the bluejay seemed to gather up sufficient courage and stepped into the birdbath again. Success, this time! It was able to take a bath, as well as get a drink.

A hawk stopped by the small birdbath one

day, and, again I chuckled. It seemed to be thinking, “Either I am too big for this birdbath, or it is too small for me!” If you would just look around my yard a little bit, I mused, you will find one just the right size. After a few minutes, the hawk discovered a stone antique farm animal water trough close by. Just the right size. Seeing a large bird take a bath was awesome, amazing and truly worth it!





# My Friend Artie

BY JACK OLIVER — LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

I MET ARTHUR GOLDMACHER IN 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE as we sat next to each other in homeroom. He was an easy guy to like and we hit it off from the start. Junior High School 80 was a new school for both of us although it was a neighborhood school. Although we had fun in school, he lived a little too far from my home for us to get together after school until I got my bicycle. I'd pedal over to his street and we'd hang out with a bunch of his friends. Times were good as it was 1951 and the Giants were coming up fast in the National League and we were both fans of that team.

It was the end of the baseball season. The Giants came from way behind to tie for the pennant with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Since Artie lived in a ground level apartment it made it very convenient to listen to the game. I sat on my bicycle holding on to the wall of Artie's apartment building listening to the final game. We were all rooting for the Giants in the bottom of the ninth and "our" team was behind. Then Bobby Thompson hits his most famous home run, stealing the pennant out of the clutches of our arch enemy, the Dodgers. We hooted and hollered along with the fans at the game. The neighbors must have thought we were crazy.

Life moved on. We lost touch. I graduated, served in the military, moved to the Washington area and married. Some years later I was enjoying a rare dinner out with my neighbors and wife at a fine D.C. restaurant when who walks in but my friend Artie! We were both taken by surprise but introductions followed, and catching up with our lives.

About fifteen years ago I got a call from another classmate, Kurt, who found me on the Internet. Some years later, he and his wife visited and we had a great time. He told me what some of the other students were up to and said he was in touch with Artie. I called him to touch base as it had been about forty years and it was good.

About three years ago when visiting my sister in Florida, Artie and I were able to see each other again. Shortly after our get-together Kurt informed me that Artie had passed away. Only a few months passed when I realized that my emails to Kurt were not being answered and a call to his wife confirmed my worst fear. Now I'm only in touch with one classmate, living in Maine. And so it goes.

# Here and There

BY KORELOY WILDREKINDE~MCWHIRTER — SOUTH TOE RIVER, NORTH CAROLINA

LATER, AFTER SHE WAS FULLY awake, as the confusing dream of full-wakefulness slowly waned from her outlook, Morag flexed her sleep-stiffened fingers and reached for the coffee grinder. She turned the crank and watched the coffee-grains fall into their pointed heap below the hopper as she tugged at the fading wisps of the dream. Only a lingering impression pulled back, as though there was a very small, not very interested, fish at the other end of it, testing the intentions of the fisher-woman. Was she above, in her own out-of-water estate, only to take the air? Was she, literally, fishing for her breakfast? Was she, figuratively, fishing to take hold of a submerged, out-of-her element, notion she could no longer go on without?

Morag, a fisher-woman of some experience, gently plucked at the last, tentative strand of the dream. It pulled back with such force that she nearly toppled over, coffee-grinder and all, right there on the kitchen floor. As its remaining strand became more substantial, she observed the dream's re-formation while she brewed and sipped her evocative weekend coffee.

In returning to account for itself, the "tell" of the dream became a book. This book had a title Morag could not read. It was clear, by the food-stains on the cover, that this was a book of recipes, and that it was one that the dreamer knew well; for it had come to her from her grandmother. With the dreamer's illegible name, on the first page, the inscription read, "a grandmother's lasting gift, in remembrance of our companionable cooking when you were but a girl."

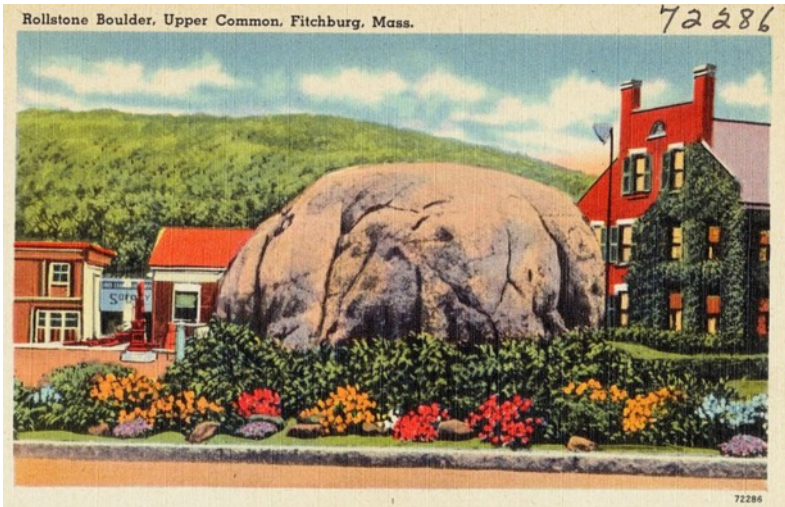
The dreamer seemed to be searching for a particular recipe. It began with "b". It sounded something like "besesche." She knew in which part of the book it was to be found. She could not find it.

Standing in her kitchen, in a patch of early morning sunlight, Morag saw, beyond the dreamer's intently bowed head, a small, dark library, made of old apple-boxes. The recipe book tumbled into a waiting space in an apple-box shelf, among other books as worn and well cared for. She noticed that all the books in this library were printed in languages that she neither read nor spoke. The recipe book was printed in Yiddish. Morag wondered if the dreamer understood all these languages.

# Rollstone Boulder, the Heart of Town

BY ANDREW JANTZ — ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**T**HIS BOULDER IS A LANDMARK IN MY HOME TOWN of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. It is located on the Upper Common in the town center. The boulder is from the hilly region of central New Hampshire, and was picked up and deposited in Fitchburg in the last Ice Age, around 20,000 years ago.



When I was a kid I was told that Indians in the 1600s pushed the boulder down from a nearby hill, trying to scare off the white settlers. I was also told that a fat dude in a flying sleigh lands on all the Fitchburg roofs, goes down the chimneys, and deposits presents. Turns out those are both complete myths! It was so disappointing to learn the truth. I'll assume that most of you know that Santa Claus is a just a myth (I'm sorry if this the first time you've heard that). While the boulder did originate in New Hampshire, and was indeed deposited on a hill above the town, it was not rolled down to the Upper Common by Indians in the 1600s.

For centuries after the town was settled, the boulder was a local landmark atop the hill, a popular place to picnic and climb on. But in the early 1900s it began cracking. A steel band was wrapped around it to keep it together. Finally, and fortunately, it was decided to split the boulder along the cracks and bring the pieces down to the town where it was re-assembled on the Common in 1929, where it rests today as a beloved stone-faced symbol of the town.



## Write for ONE-PAGE STORIES?

You don't have to be a member of NAPA to contribute, but members are surely invited.

**HOW MANY WORDS?** 350 to 400 – less if you have a photo or graphic to go with your story.)

**WHAT KIND OF CONTENT?** Original prose – fiction or non-fiction. Personal narratives and memoirs would be especially welcome, but other genres would be considered as well, as long as they are original pieces. (No poetry.)



**CAN I GET SOME EXTRA COPIES FOR MYSELF?** Certainly. Just let me know how many you would like.

**WILL I GET FEEDBACK?** I'll be happy to share with you any feedback I might get from others about your story.

**NOTE TO READERS** – Please send me comments on any of the stories so I can pass them on to the writers. We all like that.

**WHERE DO I SEND A SUBMISSION?** To Bill Boys either by email at [williamboys@att.net](mailto:williamboys@att.net) (preferred, to save retyping) or by postal mail to 184 Reinhard Ave., Columbus OH 43206-2635.

## Just Start by Writing About Anything

Few of us in amateur journalism are professional writers, even those of us who've been doing it for years. It's a hobby that we love. (Remember that "amateur" comes from Latin *amo, amas, amat* "I love, you love, he, she, it loves.") We're not always polished and effective. Maybe some potential writers even feel they're such beginners that they're paralyzed to start writing.

I remind you of this wonderful, short YouTube video: "Writing Skills: How To Begin Writing," by Maggie Hammond, Videojug channel, YouTube. (2 min., 2 sec.) [She is the author of *Creative Writing for Dummies*.]

Can you spend two minutes? Maybe find a lovable hobby?

Back issues at: [www.AmteurPress.org/the-monthly-bundles](http://www.AmteurPress.org/the-monthly-bundles)