

Reminiscent

Viewpoints and feedback from our readers.

Mr. Gilbert's Legacy

William L. Gilbert, mentioned in "I'm Curious About This Antique..." (Aug/Sept), was known for more than just his clock company in Winsted, Connecticut.

He also built a high school there, got water coming to Winsted and established the William L. Gilbert Home for children in 1889. The children ran the home, much like at Boys Town. Like his father before him, my husband, Edward "Breezy" Adams Sr., lived there as a boy, from 1936 until 1945, when the home was torn down. Breezy took this photo (above) of the home in 1940.

The children were told very little about Mr. Gilbert. If anyone can give me information about him and his wife, I would very much appreciate it being mailed to us at P.O. Box 5216, Grants Pass OR 97527.

—Sue Adams, Grants Pass, Oregon

Squeeze These Peas!

"Just Don't Use the Wringer" (Aug/ Sept), about washing potatoes in a wringer washer, brought to mind what my dad did with a new Sears, Roebuck washer in the early 1940s.

Dad decided that the little hand-cranked pea huller Mom had purchased a year or so before was too slow. He had a better idea, taking a bucket of peas into the laundry room. Opening the wringer rollers a bit, he fed in the first couple of pods, which hulled reasonably well as peas fell into the tub.

Full of confidence, Dad grabbed a handful of pods and started

feeding them into the wringer one at a time as fast as he could. About 20 percent of the pods popped open correctly. The other 80 percent either went right on through the wringer, leaving a slimy green sludge, or the peas came out like they were shot out of a cannon, flying every which way.

Dad couldn't figure out how to slow down the rollers and gave up in disgust. He returned the remainder of the peas to the kitchen and left to go do some important farm work he decided needed to be done right away.

—Ivan Pfalser, Caney, Kansas

Ruby Nelson of Mahtomedi, Minnesota informs us that her mother had Ruby run pea pods through the wringers as well. Her mother's trick was to put the pods in a flour sack and boil them, then move them to water for cooling before sending them to the wringers. Ruby relates that the peas popped into a dishpan nicely and "greatly speeded the tedious job of shelling peas."

Solo Flight at Age 4

Your photos of a pedal car in the shape of an airplane ("I've Kept It All These Years," Aug/Sept) reminded me of when I got a much less streamlined one for Christmas in 1930, when I was 4.

My brother, Louis, almost 6 years older than I was, decided with his friends that my new airplane needed to fly. They hauled the plane up onto our garage roof.

With a great push, they started me rolling. I "flew" down the slope of the roof and off into the air, only to crash, nose down, into a heap of manure.

I came up crying with gusto, loudly enough for Mother to race out of the house. After I had the pleasure of seeing Louis get a spanking, I pedaled my airplane up and down the sidewalk with a clickety-clack and some clumps. It had flown, but it no longer worked as well as it

did Christmas Day. —Ralph T. Palmer, Fort Worth, Texas

Milk Shake-Up

Reading about ballpoint pens in the Aug/Sept issue (“Time Capsule: 1945”) brought back memories of the 1930s, when I spilled ink on the dining room tablecloth.

My mother put sour milk on it and laid it on the lawn. I think the sun was supposed to help take the stain out, but we never knew for sure. One of our cats not only lapped up the sour milk but also ate the tablecloth. My mom was not too happy with me!

—Betty Schlough, Menomonie, Wisconsin

Jet-Setting with Lash

Someone brought to my attention that you had features on both Lash LaRue (“When Movies Were Magic”) and a Muntz Jet (“Name That Car!”) in your July anniversary issue.

While on a tour of the South, Lash was to stay with a neighbor of ours in Jacksonville, Florida. Lash and his assistant drove up in a white Muntz Jet and walked to the front door, surrounded by eager autograph seekers.

I was 10 years old, and being the car guy in the crowd, I was down scoping out the Muntz—the first one I had seen in the flesh, or the metal, as the case may be.

Lash saw me and sauntered back. Looking me in the eye, he asked, “Do you know what kind of car this is, boy?” Proudly, I answered, “Yes, sir. It’s a Muntz Road Jet.”

Lash then said, “Get in, boy. We’re going for a ride.” It’s a ride I’ll never forget.

—Bill Warner, Jacksonville, Florida

Fifties Family Valued

I really enjoyed reading Clancy Strock’s column “TV Gave Us a

New Kind of Neighborhood” (Oct/Nov). He rightly notes that there were too many TV families to include all of them in the column. But how can we forget the Nelsons, the real-life family we watched grow up on The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet? They gave us the ideal of what American character should be.

—Kevin Ward, Woodhaven, New York

In Good Company

I want to give you my thanks for publishing my story “Savoring Every Flavor” in the Aug/Sept issue (“Stirring Up Memories”).

I also receive Reminisce EXTRA. Next to the Bible, your magazines are the best things I read. Please don’t ever stop publishing.

—Doris Smithm, Woodruff, South Carolina

Faces from the Past

The picture of the 1938 Fort Dearborn School football team (“Pictures from the Past,” Oct/Nov) brought back happy memories of my grammar school days at Fort Dearborn.

Harry Wilke, one of the boys pictured, was 3 years older than I was, but I remember him to be a real fun guy. It would be great to hear from him. I can be reached by mail at 1085 Highlands Cir., Los Altos, CA 94024, or by E-mail at jimjoe1968@aol.com.

—Genevieve Havel Denz, Los Altos, California

Lorraine Voves of LaGrange, Illinois was also surprised to see her husband, Bill, in the picture. Lorraine and Bill wonder if any of the other “boys” saw it and would love to get E-mail from them at wvoves@sbc global.net.

Electronic Reminiscing

Thank you, thank you, thank you for the super premiere Reminisce E-mail Newsletter. I thoroughly enjoyed every word. Now, I can’t wait until the next edition appears in my E-mail.

—Eileen Crisp, Lincoln, California

We're glad that you enjoyed it, Eileen. By now, you've received that second issue. Other folks can make sure that they don't miss out by going on-line at www.reminisce.com and clicking on the "FREE Newsletter" link.

"Family" Memoirs

I'm on the younger side of your subscription list at 19 years old but thoroughly enjoy your magazine. In fact, I have six younger siblings and I think every one of them has snatched Reminisce from my room at one time or another.

Reading Reminisce is like having dozens and dozens of grandparents from a grab bag of ages, nationalities and backgrounds. I've always enjoyed history, and what better way to hear of it than from those who were there to experience it.

I pray that someday I will have as many nuggets of wisdom and memory to share with my children as these people—my special adoptive grandparents.

—Katie Bommel, California, Missouri

Motoring About

Printed in the Aug/Sept issue ("Toys & Games") was the item "Driving Putt-Nik," about a small car that was powered by a Maytag washing-machine engine.

This brought me back to my high school days, in 1929, when my friend Jim Miller and I built "Sput & Spurt" (above). That's Jim on the vehicle, which didn't have brakes. To stop it, we had to "kill the spark" or use foot power.

Jim and I did many things together. We lived a building apart and strung light-gauge wire from his house to mine and used radio earphones to make a telephone. We had a bell system and a light when we wanted to call, using our electric-train transformers for power.

We lost track of one another as adults, but 2 years ago, on my 90th birthday (Jim was 5 days older), he called me from Sarasota, Florida to congratulate me, and we eventually got together.

—Jay D. Strauss, St. Louis, Missouri