

## **Autobiography of Albert Henry Scheible**

I was born July 31, 1926 at St. John's Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, while my parents lived at 1374 Webb Rd. in Lakewood, Ohio. My father, Frank Scheible, was a Lake Captain on a freighter. My mother Josephine, formerly Widman, had been a nurse in the Visiting Nurse Association, and later a regular RN at St. John Hospital. My parents were introduced to each other by my aunt, Julia Scheible, also a RN at St. John Hospital. Aunt Julia later became Sister Alberto, SND.

I spent part of at least one summer with my mother on my dad's lake freighter. The summer I turned three the biggest problem on the freighter was keeping the screen door to our cabin locked. I managed to open it and go out on the deck. My parents concern really impressed me, because I don't remember anything else about that summer.

I remember the summer I turned four. By this time we had moved downstairs in the double house my parents owned. Our address was now 1376 Webb. Probably due to another problem with me unlocking doors. This is the summer my brother Joseph was born. I remember my mother and brother being brought home from the hospital by my mother's aunt Mary. Aunt Mary became a frequent visitor because she was the only relative in Lakewood. All the rest of my mother's relatives were in Fremont, Ohio where my mother was born and raised. We spent many of our summers in Fremont because my father was away on the

Great Lakes. I remember walking with my grandfather Henry, from whom I got my middle name. I got my first name from my dad's brother Albert Scheible, who died in France of influenza, at the end of the First World War. He was in the Corp of Engineers. Back to my grandfather. We both walked with our hands behind our back. I watched them milk the cows, and I fed some of the milk calves and kittens. I liked to drink the milk right after it went through the cooler in the milkhouse. It was ice cold. When I was young my chores were limited to gathering eggs, feeding the chickens, and sometimes feeding the hogs. I might have helped my aunts in the garden a little. I know I helped my Aunt Loretta eat onion sandwiches. I watched my uncles, Urban and Sylvan, working in the fields weeding with a hoe or cultivator. They used horses for most of the fieldwork. The only tractors were used for power sources to run the grinding machines and thrashing machines. They didn't yet have electricity.

Thrashing day on the farm was a big event. Neighboring farmers came with their horses and wagons. They brought the wheat in from the fields (still on the straw) into the barnyard where it was pitched into the thrashing machine. The straw was blown into a very big pile (straw stack), and the wheat was shot into a grain wagon, or into sacks. At noon everyone ate a big dinner, some in the house, but most outdoors.

My first and only dog (Brownie) came from the farm. Someone dropped him off and my aunts took him inside because their other dog

picked on him. You don't have dogs in the house on a farm so they asked me to take him home and said he was house broken. He had floppy ears, short legs, and a big tail that curled up. All though he wasn't very big, he pulled me on roller skates very fast, on ice skates and on my sled. We kept him for about 5 years. He was too protective of our property and family. One time someone threw a cereal sample to my dad on the porch and Brownie took off after him and tore his pant leg. He didn't let go until my dad called him off. Another time he bit a neighbor friend of mine because the kid was trying to take his own toy truck off of our porch. He didn't know it was the kid's truck. We ended up sending him back to the farm where the other dog was.

My dad was home every winter because the Great Lakes froze in the winter mid December. He took me ice skating, and sledding and what ever else you do in the winter. I missed my dad in the summer but my mother brother and I drove to many Lake Erie ports to visit my dad during the summer. If he went to Buffalo he would take us to Niagara Falls. If he went to Sandusky we could visit him and then go to Fremont and the farm.

I started kindergarten when I was 5 years old at McKinley school right behind our garage. The first day I arrived late with my mother. I was told to put the toys away that I hadn't even played with. At recess outdoors I took off through the hole in our fence for home. My mother took me back and everyone acted like I never left. I got one or two

childhood diseases in kindergarten. In those days they didn't teach reading, writing or arithmetic like they do today.

I started first grade when I was six. I went to St. James School, which was on the other side of the block across the street from our house. We had Humility of Mary nuns for teachers for almost all the grades.

I started my first newspaper route with two customers. They were my parents and the bar around the corner. After a year or so of that I got a big route. It was the Cleveland News 7<sup>th</sup> race final, with one to three customers on each of twenty nearby streets. I wore out a pair of roller skates on that route. I also got a Catholic Universe Bulletin route, which also was spread out. My next route was an earlier Home Edition route, which was all on one street. While I was at St. James I volunteered for my first non-paying job, which was Junior Crossing Guard. I had the corner near home, except one cold (-10 degrees) day when the Auxiliary Policeman didn't show up at the traffic light on Detroit Ave. I took over alone and without the traffic light. I also joined the Boy Scouts at St. James, and became a First Class Scout in troop 237 before the troop broke up. I had a few friends, some of which I see 60 years later. Dr. Ed O'Brien, Bob Kerver and occasionally others.

I also got in trouble while playing in our back yard with the gate closed, and wouldn't let anyone in. I was playing with Shirley Peterman the girl upstairs when a neighborhood kid poked a stick through the

fence at me, and I retaliated by pushing a board I was playing with back at him. He got a bump on his forehead and two black eyes. His parents took me to Juvenile Court a month or two later after my dad went back on the lakes. My mother didn't know what to do. We didn't know any lawyers, so she called the office of my dad's company and they supplied us with a marine lawyer. The judge threw the case out. The kid, Larry Collins, was a year ahead of me at St. James and the teacher's pet. When I came back to school in the fall, the teacher asked who it was that hit Larry Collins. I'm sure she knew but wanted to embarrass me. She also was the only lay teacher.

I got physically hurt a few times too. I fell off our front porch and needed a few stitches in my eyebrow. I think I hit a rose bush. In the fourth grade I got concussion when I ran head into Dick Voss playing last guy up. I also cut my upper lip, which still shows. Another time, Ed O'Brien and I made a Soap Box Derby racing car. We went down the hill into Rocky River Reservation by the Detroit Bridge. I was standing on the back and Ed was steering. It flipped over and we got skinned up on the black top road. It sure went fast before the accident. My dad took us home and my mother cleaned our scratches with her favorite antiseptic, ST37. Ed remembers ST37 to this day.

Going back a little I was baptized in St. James school hall. I made my First Communion in the new church basement where my mother and I went to daily mass.

I was confirmed in the new upstairs church. I was a server and had to learn our prayers in Latin in those days. I tried out for the choir, but was told to come back when I didn't have a cold. I didn't have a cold then, so I guess that was their way of letting me save face. The only days I missed were in the seventh grade when I had Mumps.

After I graduated from grade school I quit my afternoon paper route and spent the summer working on the farm. I lived at my grandparent's house, where we said the rosary together in the evening just like I did at home. I worked most of the summer for my Uncle Clem. He and Aunt Helen only had young girls at the time so he needed help. Aunt Helen feed me a big meal at noon, and my other aunts, Elizabeth and Loretta, feed me a big meal in the evening. I reached my full height and weighted 185 pounds. Except for that summer I was 163 pounds for the next nine years. I went thrashing once in place of my Uncle Clem. The farmer I was working with didn't know I was inexperienced until we lost part of the load I was stacking. I always remember that mishap whenever we pass that farm on the turnpike where I went thrashing. Just before the summer was over I got a bad case of poison ivy. I had to take a test to enter Cathedral Latin High School, and I could hardly hold a pencil because of the poison ivy on my hands. I did pass the test and went to Latin. I earned my high school tuition money by delivering the morning Plain Dealer. I lived in Lakewood at about W178 and took the streetcar to E107 Street. I never

missed a day of high school nor was I ever late. I could always take an express bus on the east side if I need to make up time. In addition to getting an award for perfect attendance I received the award for being the top student in mathematics for the four years. Other than that I was an ordinary student. I used the long trip (to school) to study, especially math. I was an officer in the school's roller skating club for two years.

In my senior year I got involved in politics. The Cleveland Transit System wanted to restrict the fifty-cent weekly school passes to school hours. If you stayed after school for activities you couldn't use the school pass. Several of us in my civics class started a movement to extend the hours. We contacted Cleveland councilmen, all the suburban mayors and the newspapers. The editor of the Cleveland Press lived on my morning paper route. I got him (Louis B. Selzer) to help too. The Transit System keep the shorter hours but gave us ten punches on the pass for after school hours. Half the time the conductors didn't punch the passes so we never ran out. I also started a petition to prohibit parking on one side of our street at home. I won that one too. In my senior year one of my paper customers hired me to work for his real estate company. So I dropped my paper route. I drove a little truck around, putting up signs, and cleaning out vacant houses and the real estate office.

World War II was on while I was in high school. I tried to join the Navy college program and the Navy pilot program. I got part way into

the programs when they were cancelled because the war seemed to be winding down. I did enlist in the Army Air Force program. Because the war was nearing the end I wasn't called up until I was 18 ½. That gave me a chance to get a half semester of college in at Case School of Applied Science (later named Case Institute of Technology, now Case Western Reserve).

I spent my Army career in the states, Biloxi Mississippi, and Yuma Arizona. While I was in Yuma I got to Hollywood several times on 3-day passes. Yuma got as hot as 120 degrees. The nice thing about it was you could always swim in the pool. My "on the line" flight training was replaced by running a laundry warehouse. I ended up supervising 3 people and getting corporal stripes. Besides shipping the Air Force laundry to Phoenix we had laundry from Italian and German prisoners of war.

I was discharged early after the war was over because I had enlisted and wasn't trained for what I enlisted for. The day I was discharged I was back at college. College had started a week before, but my pre-army ½ semester covered that ok. I liked college and graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Electrical Engineering with honors. While I was in college I helped start a young peoples club at St. James. I was an officer in that club too, treasurer, then president. Volunteered again. I managed to get through college with out any serious commitment to the opposite sex. While I was in college I was in the Newman Club (a club

for Catholics at a non-catholic college). It was at the Newman club that I met Paul Clark, our son Bill's father-in-law. He also went to Latin when I did, but we never met there. During my summers while I was in College I worked at a cardboard box factory, Westinghouse Electric, and AT&T Long Lines Department. It was that last job that helped me get my permanent job at Ohio Bell. Right after college I started as an Installer at Ohio Bell before going into the engineering department. There was a recession when I started, so I took out more phones than I put in. At that time all new college hires started in craft jobs before they went into management. I expected to go through the craft jobs for about 2 years, but a layoff changed that. They couldn't keep us in craft jobs when they were laying off one- or two-year people. I turned down a job in Commercial before I knew about the layoff. Boy was I lucky. The next offer was in the Engineering Department, which I wanted all along, and took it. I was an installer for only a month thanks to the layoff. I worked through the chairs in the engineering department with one or two years in each group.

When I was in the engineering department about one year I met the most beautiful girl in the same building I was in, but in the Traffic Department. She was very intelligent. She knew the way to a man's heart was through his stomach. At lunch in the company cafeteria she gave me half of her tuna fish sandwich. I also met her at St. Christopher's young peoples club, when our St. James' young peoples

club visited hers. I danced with her there. Our first real date was April, 1, 1950. We acted like we didn't know each other at work. But some people were suspicious. We became engaged July 1, 1950. We kept it a secret until Dorothy had her engagement ring. We did tell a few people at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks at Clague Park, in Westlake. Things moved fast after that until we got married March 31, 1951. When I think of all the other girls I went on a date with, I was lucky to marry Dorothy.

We drove to Florida on our two-week honeymoon. We went down the east coast of Florida and came back the west coast. We stayed in Winchester Virginia, Jessep Georgia, and Vero Beach Florida, in their honeymoon cottage. We also stayed at North Miami Beach in a motel with nothing north or south of us for almost ½ a mile. We went to the dog races in Hollywood Florida, where Dorothy won betting on the dogs. We drove to the west coast via the Tamiamia Trail expecting to get breakfast on the way. There wasn't much of anything on the 250 miles from Miami to Tampa, except alligators. The only gas station was one that had a glass container at the top. The container was marked off in gallons. And as the gasoline ran into our tank we could see how much gasoline we took. I think we ate there too. There was no bridge across Tampa Bay in those days, so we had to wait for the ferry. We went to St. Petersburg to stay with our best man, Chuck Jacoby's parents. Chuck's sister had died recently and was kind of a practical joker, so Chuck's mother tried to supply the jokes. She short-sheeted us

and hid an alarm clock, which went off soon after we went to bed. They showed us around the area, Webb City, and an orange grove where we bought some oranges to bring home. The orange grower gave Dorothy an orange bigger than most grapefruits.

On our way home we left Virginia in our shirtsleeves and arrived home in light snow. Easter was very early that year, and we were married the Saturday after Easter, accounting for the snow. You were not allowed to be married in Lent. We had already furnished our apartment at 1636 Pleasantdale, an area in old Brooklyn, an area in the southern part of Cleveland, so we moved right in. Dorothy and I both worked in the same building downtown, so we drove together. Dorothy quit work in November of 1952. I missed going to work together and having lunch together at the Nanking Restaurant. I was rewarded with dinner on the table when I got home.

In the spring of 1953 we found a builder, Roger Clingman, who would build us a house anywhere on the west side. He found us a lot in Bay Village for about \$1700. He built our house for \$16,600 including the cost of the lot. We got a 5% mortgage. We used all of our money for the down payment so we had nothing left for drapes and other things. So Dorothy went to work for the county treasurer for a few months. After thinking about adopting a baby, our first baby was born. I guess the Lord figured we needed to fill up the new house. We named him

Mark, thinking it was not a common name. And one least subject to nicknames. After he was born we ran into Marks everywhere we turned.

Bill was born 20 months later on October 11, 1955. By this time we gave up the idea of adoption and wondered why we ever thought of it. We enjoyed our Bay Village house for the three years we lived there. There were a few young children there and we lived close to Rocky River and Lakewood where our parents lived. When we talked to Clingman about finishing our second floor, he suggested we sell and build a bigger house. We picked a lot in North Olmsted about a mile from the house we moved into 6 years later.

Before we started building, I had an opportunity to transfer to AT&T in New York City. During the time we lived in Bay Village, Sam Sheppard's wife was murdered in Bay Village. So when we told people where we came from they asked us if Sam killed his wife, as if we knew something that wasn't in the papers.

I started working in New York City November 1, 1956. After looking for a house to buy for a month I decided we couldn't buy until we sold our house in Bay Village. I found a nice house in Scotch Plains, New Jersey to rent. We moved the family there December 1, 1956 after dark. I had to go out of town the next day, of all places, Cleveland, Ohio. Mark had a temperature so Dorothy had to find a doctor in a strange town where she didn't know any one. It's a wonder she didn't divorce me then.

In February 1957, I was hit by a snowplow that totaled our 1956 station wagon, gave me a stiff neck and probably was the cause of Dorothy's miscarriage. We referred to the rented house on Mary Ellen Lane as Hubbard's house, the owners. It was only a year old and someone took care of the yard. We didn't have to do anything except enjoy the place. While we lived there we found a new development in Berkeley Heights, about 4 miles away. We were able to pick out our lot and "customize" the interior. It was a front to back split-level. We got it for \$25,990 with a 5 ½ % mortgage. The 40 houses on the street, Holly Glen Lane North, and Holly Glen Lane South, were new so all our neighbors had the same problems. Most of the people had young children like we did.

While I was in New York we began the introduction, with the help of Bell Labs, of data being sent over the telephone switched network (regular telephone lines). We called this service "Dataphone service". We used "digital data sets" later called MODEMS (for Modulator/De modulator). I was also responsible for Facsimile, and handwriting on the switched network. I designed one of the data sets myself. I had to travel all over the country, even Canada. The engineers in my department were consulting engineers for the Bell System. Dorothy got to travel with me a couple of times. I enjoyed the work, it was all new and interesting.

I volunteered again, this time as chairman for the church building fund drive. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the men of the parish and Dorothy's patience it was a success. Of course the pastor had a lot of good ideas too.

Our first daughter, Karen was born while we lived in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, on March 11, 1959. What an experience for Dorothy. She delivered her in the hospital without a doctor or any anesthetic. Bill and Jean Reinhart, who lived in Boston at the time, were Karen's godparents. Dorothy's mother came to take care of the 5 of us. The nurse the doctor sent to be with Dorothy in the labor room was to call him in time for him to get to the hospital in time to deliver the baby. She must not of had much experience or she was dumb. She stood there talking to me and smoking a cigarette. When Dorothy said she was about to deliver the nurse said it was too early. When Dorothy said the baby was coming she didn't believe her, until Karen cried. What a beautiful baby.

John Robert was born on January 28, 1961. Notice we stopped trying to pick uncommon names. Robert Alan was born December 28, 1961. Just before we were supposed to go back to Ohio, and Ohio Bell. When we tried to sell the house people were more interested in the baby than the house. We moved back to Ohio March 1, 1962. We bought a year old house at 5171 Douglas Drive, in North Olmsted. Dorothy had plane tickets to come out to see it before we bought it, but

the children all got sick so she told me to go ahead and buy it. We bought it for \$33,500 with a 5 ¾ % mortgage.

Mark and Bill started the first and second grades at St. Richard's School, the day after we moved. They didn't even get time of for the move. We thought school was important even from the beginning.

Mark joined the Cub Scouts soon after we moved. The Cubmaster, Joe Corrigan, announced at every monthly meeting that he was leaving Cub Scouts for the Boy Scouts, and they needed someone to be Cubmaster. Mark asked me why I didn't take the job. I told him I didn't know anything about being a Cubmaster, he said I did a lot of things I didn't know anything about. I volunteered again. I was given a list of 9 names who volunteered to work on committees. I put them all to work. Thanks to the Holy Spirit and the committees I had a good Cub pack for 4 years.

After that I moved to the Boy Scouts with my boys. I was Assistant Scoutmaster for 8 years. We had a good Scoutmaster, Bill Sindalar, and quite a good committee that came with me from cubs. We went camping every summer for a week, and a lot of weekends. Mark became a life scout and almost an Eagle, but went away to college before he could finish his Eagle requirements. Bill made Eagle just as he entered college. Jack and Rob stayed in Boy Scouts a couple of years, but played basketball. They couldn't stay in scouts and play

basketball both on the same weekend. Both things helped them learn to work as a team. So I let them drop scouts.

My parents died in 1966 and 1967. They lived in Fremont for 10 years in a nice brick ranch. During their last years of life they needed help. First my Dad, and then my Mom. My aunts, Loretta and Elizabeth helped mom take care of Dad. After Dad died they took care of Mom. I don't know what we could have done without those Angels. Dorothy and I used to drive to Fremont almost every week after Dad died, rain or shine, and it seemed to rain or storm almost every weekend.

I enjoyed working at Ohio Bell until I got a boss that had had my job a few years earlier. When he had my job, I had a comparable job in another department. I proved his district was causing my department problems because his district was delaying orders. He always said, he didn't hold a grudge he just got even. Even though I had better results on my job than he did when he had my job, he managed to get me demoted. I ended up at second level, a level I skipped when I got a double promotion when I went to New York. I made a promise to the Lord and myself, that I would not take out my misfortune on the Lord or my family. After a while I was able to get enthusiastic about my job again. I managed to work another 10 years before I retired May 31, 1986. I had good bosses after my demotion, and they let me work pretty much on my own. I was a project engineer for divestiture (of the Bell companies from AT&T), and met the deadline in spite of a shortage of

time and personnel. I spent my last 1 ½ years working on our computer program called TIRKS.

I got a little ahead of our family history, and didn't mention the birth of our last 2 girls. Mary was born September 29, 1966, and Julie was born August 24, 1969. All our children have good jobs and most, if not all, are making more money than I did when I retired.

The first year of retirement I did nothing to speak of. Then I started to volunteer. Two jobs at St. Richards, and three at St. John West Shore Hospital. My doctor at the time pushed me to loose weight, so I went on a starvation diet. It worked, I almost starved myself to death. Between loosing weight and the volunteer jobs, I became depressed and ended up in the hospital for ten days. After a couple of days in the hospital eating 3 meals a day I felt fine. I and some of my family learned a lesson. I stayed at 170 pounds for a couple of weeks, but the doctor told Dorothy to feed me. Well I got up to 225 or more. I've been up and down since, until the year 2002 when I got ALS (also called Lou Gehrig's disease), and dropped to 170 pounds. It made me weak but not depressed. I dropped the hospital jobs but went back to the church jobs. After a few years on the parish council I cut back to just being a Eucharistic Minister like Dorothy. I continued that until I got ALS. I did volunteer for a third job with the St. Vincent de Paul society. The hardest work there was feeding 500 people every two months at St.

Patrick's Bridge. We spent from one until six preparing food and dishing it out. Someone else cleaned the pots and pans.

All seven of our children graduated from college and we have 14 grandchildren as of this writing (year 2003). Besides using my computer and baby-sitting, I have to take my food through a PET (a tube into my stomach) 4 times a day and medicine twice a day. Because of my ALS we had to cancel our yearly month in Florida, so our whole family went on a cruise the 4 days before Christmas in 2002.