

Letter 277
Astoria, Oregon - Part 1
Land Of My Fathers
 2014-09-29
 (Picture, Song1, Song2, Song3, Song4)

Dear Dan,

Wednesday, 17 September 2014, 5:30AM.

This letter finds us in the Starbucks in Warrenton, Oregon, just across Young's Bay from Astoria. The Clatskanie/Astoria area is the land of my father and his father. We are here to find the final resting place for my Dad's ashes, which up till now have been sitting in a box under my desk at home since he died and went home to be with Jesus in October 2007. And I thought he just might rather be resurrected from a more scenic area than the dark, dusty space where I put my feet.

We prayed first before making the trip down for the Lord to help us find His acceptable place to put Dad's ashes in the Columbia River, which had already been decided as his final earthly place of rest many months ago by (M) and my brother (CB18) and myself.

=====

Tuesday morning, 16 September, we started out from (L1) at about 1:30AM. We checked into our motel in Astoria at around 10:40AM. By that time we had already ...

1. taken pictures of barking sea lions sitting on a rock jetty by the old Bumble Bee Cannery,
2. ascended the Astoria Column, and
3. been to the ocean at Ft. Stevens State Park at the shipwreck site of the Peter Iredale.

We didn't know it then, but it was at the State Park that the Lord later led us to where we discovered Dad's final resting place on earth.

My father's father retired from the US Navy after serving through WWII. He then worked as a Stationary Steam Engineer on a Naval base while serving in the Naval Reserve. After the Navy, both he and Grandma lived in Astoria for most of their retirement years while doing apartment management work. The apartment building where they lived and worked is now a registered historic site in Astoria.

When my Dad was a young boy, before WWII, Grandpa ran logging trains in and around Clatskanie, Oregon. I remember Dad telling me stories of how Grandpa used to let him up into the cabin of the Steam Locomotive and pull on the whistle cord and operate the brake. Les Schwab, in his autobiography, with some admiration gives favorable mention concerning the loggers and the logging camps.

One summer, I think I was eight years old, Grandpa took me camping in his truck and camper to one of the old logging camp sites. I remember seeing old rail equipment used to

move logs around. There was a large stream nearby and Grandpa was able to land a half dozen trout or so. The next morning he taught me how to wash dishes in the stream by putting sand and small stones in the bottom of the dishes with some water and swirling the water around until most of the cooked food stuff had cleaned off. This was my first exposure to “field expediency”, using creative thinking and what was available at hand to get a job done.

My Dad had been serving in the Coast Guard when I was conceived and born. He used to tell me stories of how he been stationed on board two different Lightships that were stationed in the mouth of the Columbia River. One was named The Umatilla, and the other ship was called The Relief. Another Lightship, The Columbia, is presently part of a maritime museum in Astoria.

This story then became the foundation for finding a suitable place for my Dad to rest here on earth.

Blessings...

R. C. Theophilus