

Biography of Bill & Lucy Martin

Bill Martin entered this world way back in the first half of the last century. Two younger sisters (all of us spaced about two years apart) and I were raised in rural Arkansas just south of Little Rock. We kids still get along great. My dad had a small country shop where he worked on vehicles and equipment and did welding. He also had a small machine shop and a small aluminum foundry. He did plumbing and installed and repaired well pumps. My father had a great love for machinery and passed that feeling along to me and one of my sisters. My younger sister is active with the "Arkansas Railroad Club" at LR and has an appreciation for antiques and related things. I have one nephew who has a mild interest in old machinery. So far I have gotten him involved in the restoration of a Ford model 841 tractor. He did most of the work, while I put up any money that was required. He did a complete take apart of the engine, transmission, etc. It is back together now, and it runs well but is not yet painted.

My first memory of controlling a vehicle was driving Grandpa's truck through a field, while parents and relatives cut and piled corn stalks on the back. I would stand on the seat and steer; when someone yelled STOP, I got down and pushed the clutch in; when they yelled GO, I let the clutch out, stood up on the seat, and steered. I really don't remember much about that truck, but I know that it was an IHC, and I do still have it. It is an early to mid 30s model. A wrist pin came loose and scored a cylinder. Pop took it apart and it never went any further after that. It's much too far gone to restore now.

My first putt-putt engine was from an Ottawa log saw. Dad had come across it somewhere, brought it home, and had given it to me. I remember making a head gasket from a piece of cardboard. Getting it running was a minor high point in my life. Other than the wooden base and wheels, he did not get any of the log saw parts. I still have that engine. When I went away to school (University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, fall of 1956), I poured the cylinder full of used motor oil and positioned the engine with the head up. I thought that would protect it until I needed it again. When I did check on the engine (probable twelve to fifteen years later) the oil had all leaked out, but it had done its duty.

College and my first job were rather uneventful as far as the collection of tractors and engines was concerned. I received degrees in Mechanical and Civil Engineering in the early 60s from U of A. My first job as a college graduate was working for Boeing Aircraft on the Minute Man Missile launch complex centered at Whiteman Air Force Base (Knob Noster, MO). I did construction inspection of the interfaces where Boeing furnished equipment would be installed. In the early 60s, Boeing and General Dynamics were in head to head competition to get the contract for the F111 (that was the swing wing fighter that took off with the wings sticking out and then swung them back as the speed increased). Boeing lost that contract to GD, resulting in massive layoffs at Boeing. That was the end of my Boeing career for many years. I returned to the U of A to work on a master's degree in Structural Engineering. The best part-time job I ever had was teaching an undergraduate class in Structural Dynamics. (You could almost call it a fantasy job. Up until that time I sort of had the notion that people who couldn't do a real job, ended up teaching. The teaching experience so influenced me that I did quite a bit of teaching at my next job out in the industrial world.) I met Lucy, my future wife, while there. When Lucy graduated, we were both offered jobs at McDonnell Douglas Corporation (MDC) in St Louis. We were married July 1965 in Joplin, MO.

I started work in the structural test lab (as opposed to flight test). After a week of introduction, indoctrination, etc., I was transferred to second shift to work on testing of the Gemini Agena docking program. For several years, all of my work experience was related to spacecraft testing of some sort. After almost ten years in the testing lab, I was moved to the Manufacturing Div, Mfg. Eng. Section (also called Industrial Engineering). No matter how you look at it, I did not really fit into that type of work, so I started working on a computer software system to help track completed work on aircraft. This resulted in several other people and me being transferred to the Mfg. Systems section. During this period (mid 70s), I passed the Missouri Professional Engineering (PE) test, and achieved supervisor status. In the latter part of my career, I was moved into more administrative type functions. In the mid 90s Boeing bought MDC. Boeing instigated many changes in management at MDC, including removing me from a management position. I retired in 1999 when caught up in a "get rid of the old folks" program.

Now back to the tractor and engine collecting. During the graduate school years, I acquired a Ridgeway steam engine, a large Fairbanks Morris single cylinder diesel engine, and a Locomobile steam engine. The Ridgeway and FM were the result of out bidding the scrap man. The College of Engineering was in a state of modernizing and upgrading and saw no need for "that old junk." The Locomobile steam engine was given to me by a professor who realized that I was really interested in such things. After Lucy and I had been married a couple of years, I went to an auction and bought a 1.5 hp IHC model LA engine. We had been bidding on it in one dollar increments. My limit was going to be \$20. The way the bidding fell, I said \$20 and the other man should have said \$21. He replied with a \$20.25 bid. The auctioneer was greatly aggravated. He looked at me and asked "would I give \$21?" I knew that was over my preplanned limit but I said "YES." He said "SOLD!" He did not give the other man any chance to raise the bid.

My next engine was a 3 hp Witte (the headless model with the long rocker arm on the side). I bought it over at Washburn. I saw it out in a yard and went and talked to the man who owned it. He said that he would sell it, but he told me he wanted more than I would be willing to pay. I said that he couldn't be sure of that until he told me how much he wanted. His reply was \$100. I'll admit that set me back a bit (\$100 was a lot of money back in the late 60's), but I did end up buying it. On another visit with him, he gave me a lead on a steam engine in the area (It had been used to power a canning factory), and I ended up buying it also. Several years later I traded the steam engine for another Witte.

I don't know where it came from, but my next engine was a two cylinder Maytag washing machine engine. Sometimes, when I was having trouble getting the Witte to start, I would belt the Maytag to it. By putting the belt around the flywheel on the Witte and the V-belt pulley on the Maytag, the little Maytag had enough ump to get things turning.

At some point I was at a farm auction bidding on an engine. After that engine sold, several people approached me. One wanted to sell me a truck load of engines for one money (I did not buy them, but much later realized that he had offered me a real bargain, a low price for several rare engines and some common ones), a second invited me over to his house to see his collection, and the third invited me to come to an engine show. That was the first time that I knew that there was an EDGE&TA club in my area (actually it was the first time that I knew about EDGE&TA at all). I joined EDGE&TA branch 7 in the summer of 1969. Of course I became friends with the three who had approached me at the auction. This was the beginning of a long relationship with engine and tractor collecting, the people involved, and the whole world wide fraternity of collectors.

The first tractor I ever bought was a John Deere model AR. I don't have that one any more. Two other engines are worth mentioning because of the timing in which they were acquired. My father-in-law (Clint) had heard of a 6 hp headless Witte over near Noel. Clint and I took a drive over to see it. I

was interested but the executor of the estate said that it was already on the sale bill, and I would have to buy it at the auction. The auction date had not yet been set. So I had to wait for that one. While waiting, I saw an ad which listed a 6 hp Associated coming up for auction in the St Charles area (remember I was living in the St Louis area at that time). I was planning to go and bid up to a \$100 on the Associated. Toward the end of the week Clint called and said the Witte auction was going to be this weekend (same day as the Associated, only separated by about 300 miles). I gave a friend \$100 and asked him to go and bid up to \$100 on the Associated. I headed to Jane to go to the Witte sale and bid up to \$100. I don't know how the bidding went on the Associated, but I can tell you about the Witte. The bidding started out at about \$10. It went up by \$1 increments to about 20 and then the auctioneer asked for and got \$5 increments. At about \$50 I tried to bluff the other guy out with \$10 increments. I think I lost my nerve at about \$90 and went back to \$1 increments. I know that I made the \$100 bid. There was no counter bid. Someone leaned over toward me and said in a low voice "I think you bluffed him out." When I got back to St Louis, I found out that my friend had bought the Associated for the same \$100. Those two engines were my main show engines for many years.

Although not in any order I can remember, over the next 25 years or so I acquired a lot of engines and tractors. I have always had a soft spot for the headless Wittes. I think I have 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 12 hp sizes. At about this time I had a preference for the John Deere flat radiator (not styled) tractors. I have owned JD models GP, AR, and D's. The rarest one that I have is the model AOS (model A, Orchard, Streamlined). At one time I liked big tractors and engines. Now the smaller ones seem more practical. As I get older, I realize that tractors with electric starters definitely have more appeal.

My interests in machinery are much broader than tractors and engines. I have six fire trucks as well as numerous other antique trucks. The American Truck Historical Society (ATHS) has an annual show. This show moves from the West Coast to Central Region and then East Coast Region. For almost 30 years we have been going on a vacation to wherever the annual show was being held. One time I drove a 1953 IHC fire truck to the show in Chicago. That was an interesting experience with several problems. That story will have to be told at some other time. Back in our early working years we just had two weeks vacation so we made do with that. I thought that after we retired, we would have more time for trips. We don't. Those truck show travels (along with trips to other events) have allowed us to visit forty-three of the contiguous forty-eight states. Shows have been as widely spaced as Los Angeles, Portland (OR), Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago, Cleveland, Toledo, Syracuse, Boston, Valley Forge, Baltimore, Greensboro (NC), Auburn, Indianapolis, St Louis, Kansas City, Hutchinson (KS), Phoenix, Reno, Colorado Springs, and Denver. Next year's show will be at Huntsville, AL.

Another facet of my antique truck collecting is the acquisition and showing of antique military vehicles. The Military Vehicle Preservation Association (MVPA) also has one main show each year (which moves around) and several regional shows. We have been to several of these. I have four such trucks (two WWII vintage and two Korean War vintage).

A very specialized avocation for me is Dodge Power Wagons. I have only one of these. The big PW show is at Fairfield, Iowa, in June each year. Naturally, we have been going to these for several years. The show is actually open to all Dodge trucks of any vintage, as long as they are all-wheel drive. We sometimes make it to the Mt Pleasant, IA, museum. One time we made it to the Lyle Dumont museum in Sigourney, IA.

The Historical Construction Equipment Association (HCEA) is just as the name implies. It also has annual and regional shows. We have been to several of these shows. Some of our equipment that qualifies for these shows are the Pierce road rollers, Allis Chalmers Motor Patrol, IHC trencher, and the Ford and Windham fork trucks.

The Mid-West Tool Collectors Association is a non-profit international organization whose

purpose is the study, preservation and understanding of the early tools, implements and devices used by our ancestors in their homes, shops, on the farms and on the seas. Naturally Lucy and I are members. They have an annual swap meet/show in Rogers, AR every February.

Although I don't know of any organization that covers my next particular type of collecting, there must be others out there with similar interests. I have a great love for belt-driven shop tools. Without going into details, I will admit to having several old machine shop tools. I used to have a fantasy of setting up a machine shop driven by line shafts. I realize that I will never complete this goal.

So far I have been elaborating about the collecting of treasurers (or junk). Now I will expound on club memberships and involvements. I have already related how I joined EDGE&TA Branch 7 in 1969. Over the next few years, I got heavily involved in the running of the organization. I don't recall which year, but one time in the early days, we were the host chapter for a national meeting. As I recall, at that time our dues were \$3.50 per year, and we were sending \$3.00 to EDGE&TA. The officers and the steering committee felt that we were getting very little back from EDGE&TA. So in 1974 we formed the "ILL-MO Tractor and Engine Club" and dropped our affiliation with EDGE&TA. I don't know the dates, but Lucy served as secretary and I was the treasurer for seven years. I don't know where they are today, but in those days we had about eighty active members. An interesting footnote: after we left St Louis, the ILL-MO group rejoined EDGE&TA as Branch 172.

We were also active in the Bond County Machinery Association. In the early days, I put a lot of work into making it a successful club. They held their annual show at Greenville, IL. Lucy and I served similar secretary and treasurer positions there for a year.

In 1982 we joined ATHS and went to our first annual truck show at Indianapolis. At that time there was not a local chapter in our area. In 1984 the annual show was scheduled to be in St Louis. The national organization was looking for local help/support. I pushed for the ILL-MO group to become that sponsor. I failed on that one. But a local chapter called Gateway was formed and several of the tractor and engine people joined it. Lucy and I were officers in the Gateway chapter for a few years.

When I left MDC in 1999, we came down to Jane, which was Lucy's old home town. Bob Gibbs (whom I have known for a lot of years) approached me and asked if I would help form a local chapter of EDGE&TA. I agreed, and then he asked if I would be an officer. I explained that I was burned out on being an officer but would be glad to help get the chapter going. So I ended up being on the Board of Directors for a while and have been writing the Branch 123 newsletter ever since. At about the same time, Lucy and I became associate members of Tired Iron of the Ozarks, Branch 37.

There is something that I would like to make very clear. Lucy (my first wife) was by my side supporting me all the way in the great game of life. She absorbed knowledge about the collections at the same time I did. She is fluent on many subjects and could hold her own in many types of social situations. Whatever it may seem that I have accomplished in my life has actually been a team effort.

**This is not meant to be a complete list, but here are some
of the tractors that Lucy and I presently have:**

Farm Type Tractors:

New Holland model 3930 (my modern working tractor)

Ford 8N; (2) model 800, one with 3 speed Sherman transmission and the other with a

2 speed Sherman transmission.

John Deere model AOS, (2) model GP, model AR styled
 Allis Chalmers model G, model B (inherited from Lucy's dad), model E (not running)
 IHC model Cub Lowboy, model Cub (not running)
 Avery model V
 Shaw model N8
 Gibson several, including models A, D, super D
 Hart Parr a 2 cylinder model that I have never got running.

Industrial or Construction Tractors / Equipment:

Ford model 600 with Sherman fork lift
 IHC model Super A-I, model 140-I, model 300 Utility with a Davis trencher and loader
 Allis Chalmers model WC with Motor Patrol conversion (road grader)
 Toro mid 60's model with dump bed (golf course/park/estate tractor)
 Worthington model Chief (not running)
 Windham fork lift with Ford 800 industrial motor
 Schramm model 125 air compressor tractor
 Cletrac model K20 crawler
 Pierce (2) road rollers
 LeRoi several air compressor tractors (not running)
 Worthington air compressor with Hercules diesel engine (not running)
 Ford 8N type industrial engine connected to generator

Some of the collectable or antique related organizations to which we belong:

EDGE&TA	Early Day Gas Engine & Tractor Association	www.edgeta.org
ATHS	American Truck Historical Society	www.aths.org
MVPA	Military Vehicle Preservation Association	www.mvpa.org
HCEA	Historical Construction Equipment Association	www.hcea.net
MWTCA	Mid-West Tool Collectors Association	www.mwtca.org

Some of the community activities Lucy and I are involved with:

Board Chairman of White Rock Fire Department (WRFD)
 Helped form the Branch 123 chapter of EDGE&TA in Southwest MO.

Publish newsletter for said club. I am the contact between the national org and our local club.

Active in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Lucy is the McDonald County coordinator for this program.

Trustee for Jane Cemetery

Trustee for Public Water Supply District #1 (PWSD #1)

Was the lead spokesman for PWSD in helping to bring a sewer system into the Jane community area.

Trustee for Village of Jane (Vice Chairman of the board)



Bill on left and Ed Malcom on right.