

Picking Tomatoes In a World Full of Apples

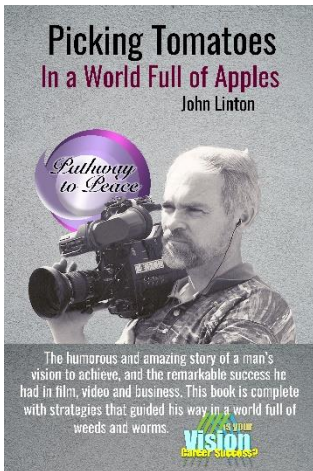
Is Your Vision
Career Success?

John Linton

Author's Note

This book is one of five books I have been developing for several years. Now complete, each book represents a very important aspect of my lifetime of experiences which I present in the program *A Pathway to Peace*.

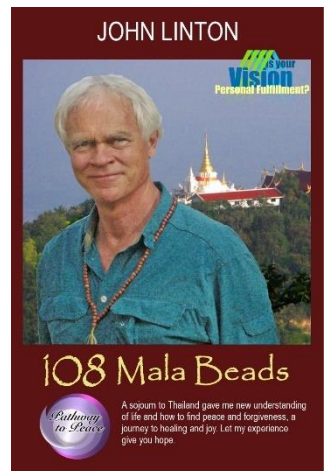
Vision is a very important concept to me, and I believe it should be at the core of every human being. What is it you want? Where do you want to be? What do you hope to accomplish? What is your vision of success?



This book, *Picking Tomatoes In a World Full of Apples*, asks the question, "What is your vision of career success?" Within are various adolescent, educational and career moves—some deliberate, some foolish, some involuntary—but all culminating in a happy life for me. This is my journey on the pathway to peace. There are many stories, some offering useful advice to anyone charting

life's path from a career perspective. There are many amazing and comical situations reflecting the good, the bad and the ugly in my life of education and work.

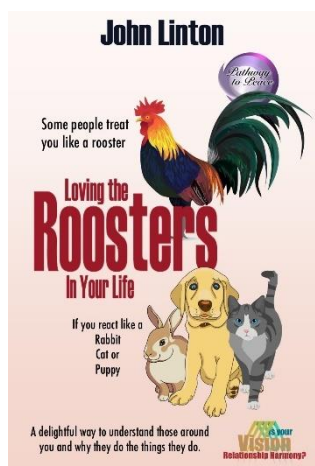
The book *108 Mala Beads* chronicles my personal spiritual journey. It asks the question, "What is your vision of personal fulfillment?" "Within the book I reflect on



the joyous experiences of relationships including family, marriage, children, grandchildren and many other associations. I delve into the importance of spirituality, religion, meditation and education with an underlying cognizance of my own unique humanity.

I come from a huge ancestry with many aunts and uncles and have a growing posterity which brings me great joy.

However, amidst this, I had many personal struggles and crises which culminated in my sojourn in Thailand 17 years ago. There I received a Japa Mala with 108 beads, each representing happy, joyous, and meaningful people and experiences throughout my life. I share many insights of personal growth with you.

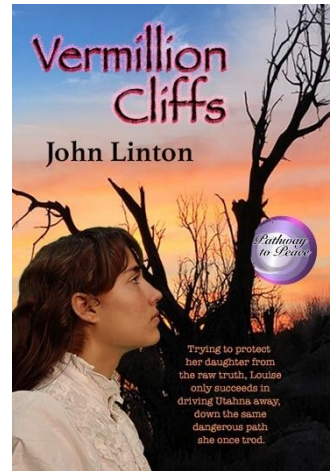


The book *Loving the Roosters In your Life* is an interesting and thoughtful explanation of why people do the things they do, often crazy and painful behaviors that make life difficult. This book asks the question, “What is your vision of relationship harmony?” It reflects on my work through many years of producing videos with some of the most highly renowned experts in psychiatry, psychology, education, family relationships and researchers in the field

of human behavior. Fascinating true stories of real people fill this book to give you understanding as to how you might better relate to other people in your life and how you can understand your own behavior as you interact with them. In the face of daily confrontations, confusion, difficulty, or opportunity, do you behave like a rooster, a rabbit, a cat or a puppy?

The book *Vermillion Cliffs* is a novel I created as I crisscrossed the continent for many years while producing videos. With fictional characters, I tell the story that reflects much of the guilt and shame I have experienced and witnessed in others close to me. The novel is set in the beautiful red-rock country of Southern Utah.

From the prologue it reads:



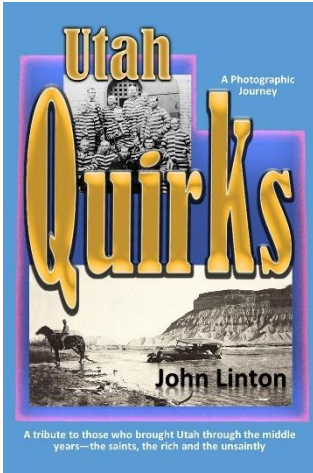
On Utah statehood day, January 4, 1896, Louise gave birth to her illegitimate daughter. In honor of the day, the baby was named Utahna—a name the girl detests.

Trying to protect her daughter from the raw truth, Louise only succeeds in driving Utahna away—to the very path she herself once walked but has always denied. Crime, tragedy, and harrowing revelations reach life-threatening proportions as mother and daughter struggle to find mutual devotion in a sea of deception.

In one of the many accolades praising this novel, one woman in the Midwest said this book could not have been written by a man. A powerful story of a mother and daughter's struggle and reconciliation. A man she thought, could never write such an insightful story.

I was the only boy in a family with four sisters. Maybe that's why I could do it.

Utah Quirks is a companion book to the novel, *Vermillion Cliffs*, telling the factual circumstances in which the fictional characters lived.



This colorful compilation is a fascinating, humorous and informative photographic journey through Utah's middle years, paying tribute to the saints, the rich and the unsaintly. The photos and stories in this book bridge the cultural divide between pioneer days and the advancing technology of the 20th century.

From a cultural perspective, polygamy laid the groundwork for much of the quirkiness of the era, set against the stunning and fractious geology of the Colorado Plateau, which fills much of the stunning panorama of present-day Utah.

The prehistoric geological epoch is itself one of the greatest quirks of all, shaping the landscape west of the Rockies. Vast as it is, this area is a small part of what Brigham Young laid claim to as the State of Deseret, an area that encompassed most of the western United States.

Introduction

Picking Tomatoes

In a World Full of Apples

Many years ago, I was introduced to research on highly creative people. They are project driven. Once their minds are set, they plow forward unabashed, ignoring other responsibilities. They abuse their bodies with loss of sleep, junk food, caffeine, or anything else to keep them going. When taking an assignment, they are slow at getting started, and they never complete the project on time. But in the end, they always create a masterpiece.

I express heartfelt appreciation to my former wife Blanch and children who put up with this driving characteristic in me for a lifetime—and for a period of years benefitted richly from this shameless and relentless drive. And to my present wife Norma, I express gratitude for embracing this creative drive that is still very much alive in me.

At age 78, I look back at the following steps in my life and career, which overall I consider a success with its rewards of financial security and satisfaction.

Childhood

School and Adolescence

Missionary Service

Fatherhood

College

Military service

Filmmaker

Businessman

High School Teacher

Video Producer

Senior Citizen

Each step has been remarkably influenced by my creative energies. Well into my career, I was better able to harness that power with the vision cycle, the topic of chapter one. I always faced great risks which were often followed by successes and sometimes disasters, the topic of chapter two. Additional chapters are devoted to various of my educational and career steps, each imbued with unbelievable, inspiring, and painful aspects.

I express appreciation to JoAnn Seghini, who brought to my attention this characteristic of being highly creative. Less a curse, she helped me realize this driving force as a blessing. She was the Director of Staff Development at Jordan School District in suburban Salt Lake City when I was a teacher, a position I filled after a horrible business failure. She believed in my ability, pulled me out of the classroom, and commissioned me to begin making professional development videos. She passed away in 2020.

This was the beginning of the second part of my production career—Video.

The first part—Film—began when I worked for KBYU-TV, fresh out of college and discharged from the Army.

I eagerly pursued the opportunity of filming Dr. James A. Jensen, a vertebrate paleontologist at Brigham Young University, who had made a remarkable discovery of dinosaur bones.

With the support of television executives, Joe White, Mark Hathaway and Bruce Christensen, I organized film crews, made travel arrangements and spent a lot of PBS and BYU money to support the creation of the movie *The Great Dinosaur Discovery*. This film garnered numerous international awards, and is far more than a film on science, but a true story of triumph and disappointment.

It launched my life-long career.

The most financially rewarding part of my livelihood was consumed by producing hundreds of videos featuring exceptional schoolteachers throughout the United States, Canada and other parts of the English-speaking world. This opportunity came as the result of my initial work for Dr. Seghini at Jordan School District.

The Video Journal of Education, which evolved into *The School Improvement Network*, was for many years a very successful enterprise created and managed by members of my family.

When I was a youngster in school, it was traditional to give a favorite teacher an apple. Thus, part two of the title. . . *In a World Full of Apples*, to honor the hundreds of teachers who opened their talents to us.

Decades earlier—when my film production business began to wane—in one last great but vane effort, I produced a feature-length film, *Knocking at Heaven's Door*. The movie was entertaining but failed to gain enough momentum for wide theatrical release.

My business failed.

At the time, I was a Mormon bishop, and with the sudden loss of income, I reached out to my priesthood leader for welfare help. Normally as a bishop, I would be approached for help, but my stake president, Marlin Fairbourn, kindly assisted me and my family.

In those days it was expected that recipients of welfare were to work in one of the many agricultural, canning or distribution enterprises of the church. Locally, they managed a large tomato farm which later became *The Shops at South Town*, a shopping mall in Sandy, Utah.

For several days I picked tomatoes to earn welfare assistance. Thus, the first part of the title: *Picking Tomatoes*. . .

Many years ago, before I was retired from *The School Improvement Network*, we had a Christmas party attended by hundreds of employees, sub-contractors, suppliers, and consultants. My family and I were honored for our start-up of the business some 20 years previous. Its buildings redefined Center Street in Midvale, Utah, and the company was considered one of the fastest growing in the state. The business received numerous national awards for its products and services to educational institutions worldwide. In addition, the company had been given many awards for its technology advances and quality of video productions.

At the party in a video presenting the start-up of the business, laughter and applause filled the huge banquet hall. I was approached afterwards by several people I had worked with through the years telling me I needed to write a book about it all. I asked my former wife Blanch, who had been my partner through all of this, if she was okay with me writing the book. She looked sternly at me with a twinkle in her eyes and said, "Just be nice."

During its heyday, our products were found in over 4,000 school districts and 35,000 schools impacting more than 800,000 educators and 70,000,000 students. It is estimated there were 5.5 million video viewings, 28,000 learning groups and 110,000 forum postings.

All of this started from nothing. There was no start-up capital except what we could eke from personal resources. We had a camera, lights, and microphones which we purchased with our retirement money from having taught school. When we left the school district, the superintendent thought we were foolish to spend that retirement money on a camera, but my highly creative drive believed otherwise.

We had a clunker of an old motorhome in which we began our travels. From there it was an enormous climb until we reached a milestone of success.

The life story I tell is of myself—a struggling but visionary filmmaker. It is filled with belief, toil, disappointments, and mistakes amidst huge leaps forward with sometimes frightening setbacks.

Ironically, some of the setbacks were actually pushbacks from people or institutions of higher authority that feared my creative approach to ideas, preferring to hold me back to safer level of sameness, to not rock the boat, to maintain the status quo.

What I share in this book is testament to the fact that the dream and vision of any American can become reality if he or she is willing to work hard enough. In our present society of entitlement mentality, I fear that many will not have the perseverance to do what they could otherwise do. But if they follow the formulas I present in this book with consistent hard work, they will eventually triumph as I have done.

When Blanch and I were officially leaving the school district in which we had worked for several years, I had an interesting conversation with one of the district administrators. He had a high position, prestige, and a good salary. He knew that we had withdrawn our retirement funds and were venturing out on our own. He said to me, "I'm envious of you."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because you have the courage to do this. I don't have that courage. How could I leave the security of working for the school district?"

"I don't know." I puzzled, as I walked away, thinking, "How could I not do what I'm doing? How could I ever feel good about myself hunkered under the security of the status quo, missing the opportunity of doing what I knew I could do?"

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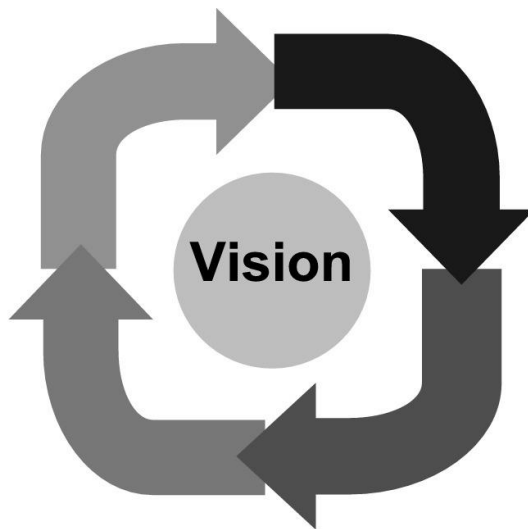


The Vision Cycle

Chapter One

A lifetime of success is a journey. Any journey, such as a career or vacation, requires a conveyance such as a job or a car for travel and progress. But successful journeys of any type also require vision, a statement of where you want to go—in your career, or on your trip.

Like wheels on a car that go round and round, I present the Vision Cycle that propels you through critical activities moving you to higher levels of success, all tied to your vision.



The circular motion represents moving you constantly forward. Without delineating your forward steps, you are likely to stagnate, making no progress at all. The individual happy to live in the status quo protected by the umbrella of security, likely has no vision and finds no value in these progressive rotations. These steps have been a guiding light for me throughout my professional and personal

years. As I look back, I see that I have subconsciously been driven by the Vision Cycle. I have literally been going round and round, generally gliding upward to my present level of satisfaction.



Vision is the hub around which the cycle continuously rotates. It drives everything you do. In any journey you have a destination. If you are going on vacation and don't have a place in mind, you may get nowhere. Likewise in life, if you don't have a vision, you may achieve very little.

For success, your destination or objective must be defined by your vision.

From the time I was a child my vision was to produce movies. Motion picture and television cameras fascinated me. This vision carried me into a passion to learn all I could about photography, graphic design, art, and other related fields.

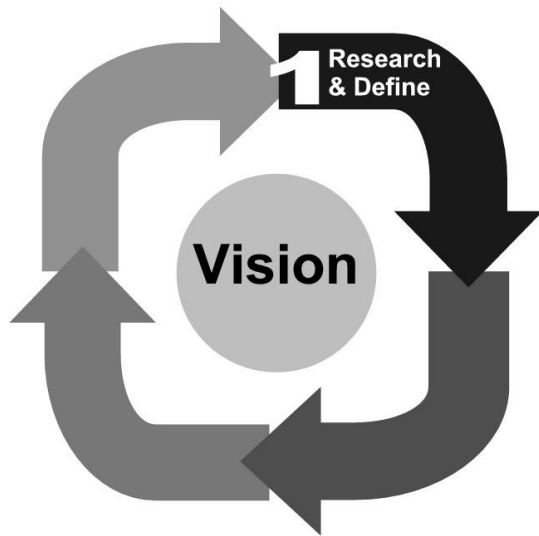
At the age of 12, I penciled on a piece of paper my goals—a literal vision statement. My mother saved it, and I never saw it until after she passed away. Among other things, I declared I was going to become a millionaire. I would do this by working hard on my paper route and collecting money from my customers.

In those days people often joked about becoming a millionaire, a feat difficult to attain in the 1950s. My dad often said, he gave up on

becoming a millionaire, because he was working on his second million.

What is your vision? Perhaps it is to make a lot of money. It might be searching for fame. Perhaps it is nobly rooted in helping other people, to teach or provide healthcare, or raise a family. Whatever your vision, it will always be there driving your emotions and actions.

Your vision may modify as you progress, but it must always be the guiding light that moves you forward. The first step outward in the Vision Cycle is to research and define your vision.



Research implies the need to have a specific goal, and then learn all you can about the attributes of that goal, then **Define** what is required to achieve it. Seek advice and go to the best sources of information available to gain insight into that goal.

When in high school our son Cory had a passion for computers. He wanted to work for Microsoft. He constantly did research, learning what Microsoft looked for in employees and what colleges they

visited to recruit. An Ivy League school became a requirement for Cory. What did it take to get into an Ivy League school? He researched and structured his high school curriculum with that end in mind. He eventually graduated from Columbia University in New York City with a Master's in Business Administration and was hired by Microsoft. He actually helped Bill Gates demonstrate some new products at significant events. He then helped make *The School Improvement Network* a big success. He continues to be a successful entrepreneur.

Cory's younger brother Curtis had a passion for film, as did I. Like his brother, he researched throughout high school and chartered himself a course in which he eventually gained a Master of Arts degree in film at the University of Southern California, one of the most prestigious film schools in the world. Helping to produce programs for our business, *The Video Journal of Education*, his vision shifted to a passion in working for equity in schools, particularly as it impacts students of color. He has since earned another advanced degree at Oxford University in London, England, and is a successful entrepreneur and nationally recognized advocate for equity and success for all students in schools.

Their oldest brother Chet had a passion for making money from the time he was a child. From a young age he was willing to work hard for cash, even shoveling manure in a horse barn. Chet became a very successful salesman in many fields, and with the onset of *The Video Journal of Education*, he passionately pursued a vision and defined a plan of immense growth for us, evolving our company into *The School Improvement Network*. He was always finding ways to increase sales and our standing in the educational realm. Since the days of the network, his vision has shifted to safety in schools and providing better tools for educators and law enforcement.

From their mother, my children inherited great skills in business, and from me a sense of vision and creativity.

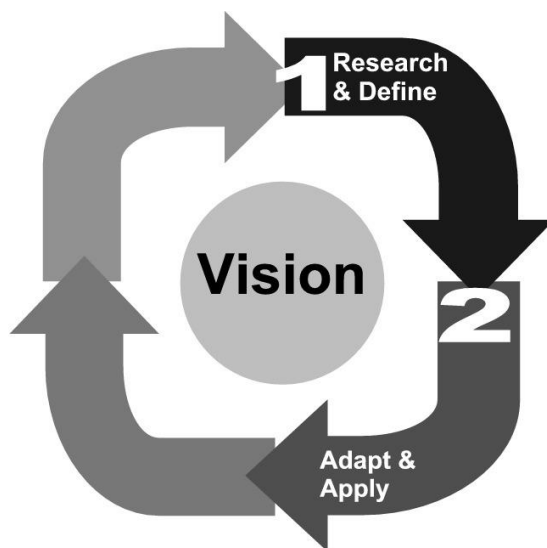
Our daughter Hollee was an excellent student and sterling scholar, always with a vision for high achievement. She showed remarkable skills in focusing on important details. She has a “detail hook.” I relied on her to proofread copy and graphics in everything we wrote or produced. No mistake got past her. Irrespective of how hard I tried to perfect something, I dreaded her final review for I knew she would find something I missed.

While in high school, Hollee’s youngest brother Trent had a passion for the Marines. Posters adorned his bedroom walls glamorizing the greatness of the United States Marine Corps. His vision was to become an officer in the ranks of “The Few and the Proud.”

Upon graduation from college, he went to Quantico, Virginia, for Marine officer training, some of the toughest military training in the world. He perfected the art of spit and polish, and the science of discipline and commitment that people admire in Marines. He became a logistics officer, serving two tours of combat duty in Iraq, achieving the rank of captain.

Honorably discharged, Trent utilized his leadership skills as a logistics officer joining the *School Improvement Network* as the Director of Client Implementation.

With research and definition, the next step in the Cycle of Achievement is to **Adapt & Apply**. Solomon said, “With all thy getting get understanding,” and I would add, “Get going!”

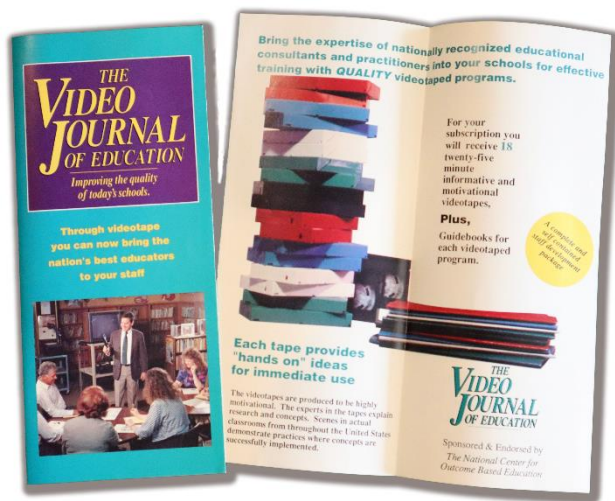


There comes a point when the research and how it defines your vision must turn to action. The research and planning will never be perfect. When you reach what might be considered an 80% level of perfection, then go for it! And never give up! Don't be slowed down by endless review. Corrections can be made as you go.

Throughout this book I will share many stories of adapt and apply that brought me to the present day. But one career story stands out as particularly significant.

When we began *The Video Journal*, we had acquired a mailing list of potential buyers. I had fussed over a mailer that I knew might work or be a complete failure. We never let the fear of failure stop us.

With research and planning, we brought the mailer to as much perfection as possible—probably a little better than 80%. With only enough money for one shot, we went with it.



Every day for the next several days, I waited anxiously at the mailbox to see if orders would come. After a few days, one order finally came from the Republic of Palau, an island nation in the western Pacific Ocean.

Who would have guessed?

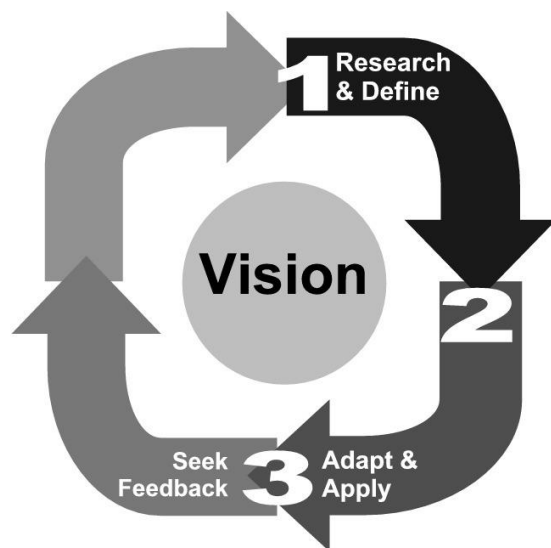
But we celebrated!

Then another order came, and another, and soon dozens of orders were coming from all over the United States!

Wow, it worked!

The next step in the Cycle of Achievement is to **Seek Feedback**.

Sometimes in our haste with a modicum of success we overlook the importance of feedback. We need to close the communication gap. We may have put the message out there but is it resonating with the public? **Seek Feedback**.



As you seek feedback, be prepared for criticism. Some feedback may come when you are not expecting it, and it may be painful, but try not to take it personally. Accept criticism as an opportunity to grow. Use that criticism and feedback to make adjustments. If things don't go well, be assured that new doors will open. Every setback brings with it the opportunity to reach another level of success. You will only grow when you adapt and change.

Seize the moment of opportunity that new information from feedback gives you and don't hesitate to change plans and move forward.

Hollie's husband Brady MacKay was a U.S. Special Agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). With their children they lived in Thailand for several years as he worked successfully with the Thai border police to interdict drug traffic flow.

Hollie tells the story of a group of women in Thailand who sold cookies on the street. They all sold the same kind of cookies, fearing they might look competitive or better than other women if they sold

anything different. None of them made much money. The Feedback was obvious, they were failing in their endeavor.

To help, Hollee taught them how to make different kinds of cookies.

In order to be more successful, the Thai women needed to change their path by offering something different.

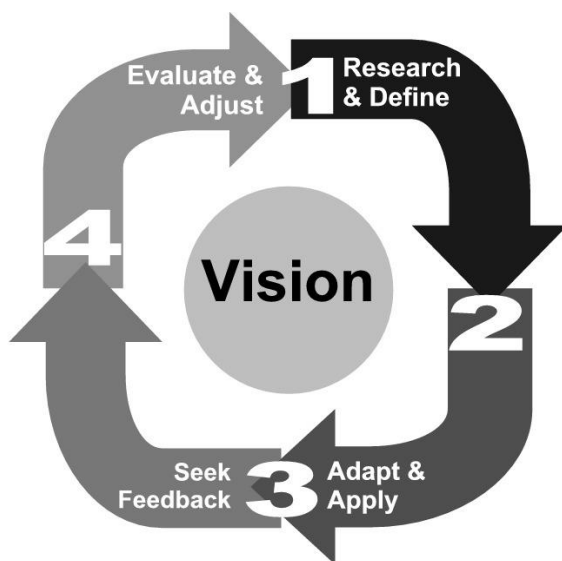


But they couldn't do it. They feared criticism from other Thai women and preferred the safety of the status quo. They continued to sell the same kind of cookies as everybody else.

To **Evaluate & Adjust** is the final step in the Cycle of Achievement. At this point, don't just evaluate, but value your good and bad experiences.

Through this process you will always be growing. You are building a mosaic of success that may not always be in focus. But strive to continuously improve in all that you pursue. As you persevere, always work to the highest level of quality that you can.

People are drawn to high quality, and you will gain the reputation of a true professional as you **Evaluate & Adjust**.



I have always sought to do the best I could and achieve at the highest level that time and resources would allow. Early in my career I had the opportunity to produce a film project but had to use an old camera and outdated short pieces of film. With that project I won a prestigious award. Other filmmakers at the time were envious and angry, for they had better equipment and more help and resources for their productions. I knew from that experience that it is not the quality of the equipment that counts, but the high quality of effort and talent that you apply with what you've got.

Persevere and continue to grow. As you do so, you will naturally begin to repeat the Cycle of Achievement, beginning again to research and define where you go next.



The Necessity of Risk

Chapter Two

Many people are frightened of the word risk. After all, who would want to jeopardize what they already have? But life requires risk. We can't live in a protective shield. Going somewhere in a car is a risk. Interacting with other people is a risk. We all face the potential for accident or illness, but we do the best we can to be safe and stay healthy.

We minimize the risks of everyday activities by being thoughtful, prepared, and cautious. But we still must take risks. People who have noteworthy achievements had to face risk. Columbus who ventured out to sea, Dwight D. Eisenhower who orchestrated D-Day, John Glenn who circled the Earth, Margaret Thatcher who stood up to the Soviet Union and Barack Obama who took down Osama bin Laden. These achievements were all laced with the risk of bad consequences.

Great achievements in music, art, literature and architecture by highly creative people had to take the risk of potential criticism, failure, loss of personal assets, or pushback and ridicule before they even got started.

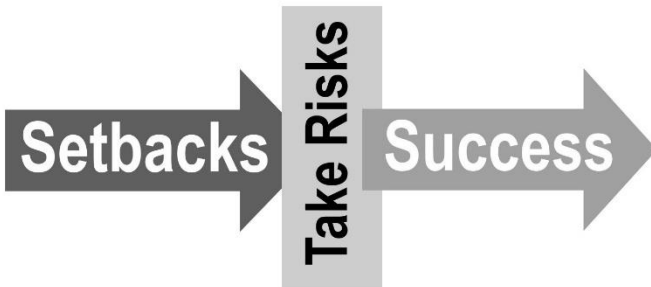
All such great accomplishments were carefully planned to mitigate potential disaster. The highly creative person is unafraid of risk, but unfortunately sometimes they are foolish and short-sighted about the risks they take. When venturing into a new project, they may not make adequate preparation or do sufficient investigation and research to alleviate the harmful effects of a bad choice. I have known too many people who on an impulse invest, change jobs, or

start a business only to see it collapse at the end and suffer great losses.

Teenagers are notorious for taking ill-advised risks. They lack the maturity to see dangers ahead as they engage in risky behaviors such as drugs, reckless driving or ultra-high adventure sports. But they do have to take sensible risks such as challenging classes that will give them job ready skills, dating that helps them develop socially, or sports in which they grow in strength and confidence.

On the other side of foolish risk takers are those people who find safety and comfort in not venturing out at all. They don't want to rock the boat, bringing potential criticism from family, friends or fellow workers. Like the district administrator who admired my courage to make the big leap into the world of business, these folks prefer to hunker down in the safety of the status quo. Worse still, some will try to stifle the creative ideas of others.

I was never satisfied doing what everybody else did. I believed I could do something better. I was a willing risk taker, but I always did a lot of research before trying something new. Irrespective, I did have setbacks and failures. No matter how good intentioned I was, and how careful my planning, some things did not work. But I never gave up. I have found that with every failure, a door appeared that I stepped through to find success. *But it didn't come without a risk!*



As a student teacher in college, I worked in the junior high school classroom of an art instructor. Students at that age are very lively. The teacher would always tell me, “You’ve got to roll with the punches,” The kids would forget rules, play or make a mess of things. A risky environment for an inexperienced teacher to succeed in. But later I became a very successful high school teacher.

I love the words of Theodore Roosevelt, “Let us rather run the risk of wearing out than rusting out.”

I prefer to call failures **Setbacks**, which could be taken as rusting out, or failing.

When our son Trent was training to become a Marine, a favorite mantra was, “Marines aren’t happy unless they’re miserable.”

Throughout my life I have had many setbacks, a lot of misery. But by taking well calculated risks, new opportunities presented themselves and success followed. As I tell many stories in this book, I will share this diagram again that you might be reminded of this very important principal surrounding the culture of risk.

Twice in my life I was destitute.

On those occasions, I was a father and did not have enough money to feed my family. I needed help and got welfare assistance. I didn’t like being dependent on others. This was a huge setback for me.

The first occasion occurred after I had been drafted into the army. This was during the wind-down of the Vietnam War, and many soldiers were returning home from Southeast Asia. Ranks and its accordant raise in pay were nonexistent. I had three children and was allowed to stand in a county welfare line and collect potted meat product and other commodities.

Interestingly, our oldest son Chet and his mother Blanch developed a strange infection under their fingernails. The doctor said it was due to a lack of fresh fruit, produce not available to us in the welfare line.

Although I was proud to serve my country, the army didn't need me. There were too many soldiers with nothing to do. I investigated the possibility of getting a hardship discharge because I could not support my family. I was told that such discharges were never granted, and if I applied it would be months before I would get that final answer of no.

I had to take the risk and try. After a lot of research and preparation, it was time to submit my hardship discharge application. To the astonishment of everyone in the army, it was approved by high command in three days. From setback, I stepped through the door of risk and found success in being able to leave the military and resume my film career.

Several years later our film production business faced bankruptcy, largely because of the recession of 1980. We were again destitute. I spent several days picking tomatoes for the privilege of receiving welfare food commodities from a central storehouse produced by hard-working Latter-day Saints.

How nice it would have been if I could have picked tomatoes for my malnourished family while in the army.

This has become a metaphor for my life, picking tomatoes. We all need tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables that come at the hands of hard work. For me, it was a temporary setback to lose my business, but setting aside my pride and picking tomatoes restored my sense of dignity and helped me gain focus. I saw a door open that I walked through to bring me to another success.



What I share with you in all the elements of a *Pathway to Peace* will provide clarity, support and give you a sense of empowerment and control over your own life, destiny and sense of fulfillment.

Many people today believe that high levels of success are elusive and probably unattainable. People find themselves in poverty which is completely demoralizing. I know, for I have been there. In such circumstances, people may feel confused, isolated, and powerless.

Anyone can rise from the ashes of failure and climb to the pinnacle of achievement. This not only applies to our careers, but to our relationships, our efforts as students in school, and our very sense of well-being as members of the human family.

I invite everyone to explore the concepts in the *Pathway to Peace* which will provide knowledge and motivation to achieve and find success and happiness. To learn more, visit "LintonMinute.com".

In our work in schools, we learned that research has proven that all children can learn. This verity is reinforced in so many of the video programs we produced. I believe that likewise, all people can succeed. I am proof of that. And the successes of my children verify

that all people have the potential to succeed, but everyone has to take huge risks to get there.

We live in a land of opportunity. Through the power of our founding documents, America has always been the land of hope and possibility. I was told as a young boy that if I wanted, I could become president of the United States. I was of no means, and did not have the connections to elevate to that position—not that I ever wanted to—but that it was indeed possible. Abraham Lincoln, Harry Truman and Ronald Reagan proved that it was possible, having grown up in poverty.

These possibilities remain in place for any type of success. I am concerned however, that a dulling creep is eroding this potential in the hearts of many. It is the entitlement mentality—which in truth—removes risk, the very essential element that is required for success.

Some assume that just because they live and breathe, the world owes them a living. Such a notion corrodes creativity and entrepreneurship. Why should anyone take a risk, they might think, if the government is willing to give them a handout?

Even in schools, many students will look for the easy teacher in the easiest subject. And if things don't go their way, they complain and will often drag their parents into the fight, reinforcing the notion that they "deserve" a better grade.

I was alarmed some years ago when I had a conversation with one of my production employees. She was in her twenties and told me that she was born into the selfish generation. Emerging from this philosophy is an attitude of "what can the company do for me," not "what can I do for the company." I think of John F. Kennedy's words,

“Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”

I know of many situations in different companies where employees become very problematic with such a selfish attitude. Employers are becoming skillful at sifting out such potential problems before they are hired.

What all of this illustrates is the fundamental unwillingness on the part of some to not take a risk. Again, I affirm that taking risks is the only way to really get ahead—taking risks of a positive nature that point to growth and success.

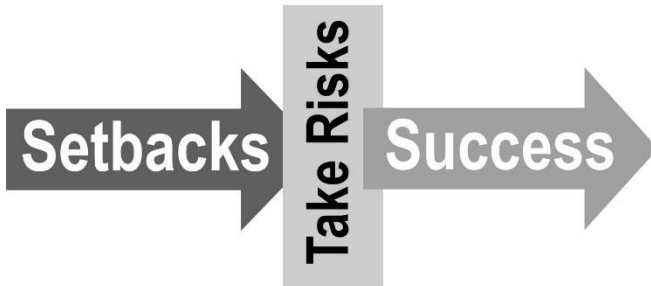
Throughout my life I gave of my talent and determination. I never expected or wanted a handout. I took many calculated risks to find success. Hard work directed toward making life better for others has brought me great joy and can do the same for you.

Yes, America is the land of opportunity, but that opportunity only comes with hard work.

People throughout the world want to come to America. After living in Thailand many years ago, my daughter Hollee moved to China with her family following her husband’s new assignment in the DEA. Brady’s office was housed in the U.S. embassy in Beijing. He observed that Chinese nationals lined up daily hoping for a chance to come to America.

One lady our daughter knew from Thailand did make it to America. Years later she said, “Living in America is hard work.” This realization notwithstanding, she would never go back to Thailand for permanent residency.

Yes, success is hard work. But blissful satisfaction comes as one of the many rewards for success.



Some **Setbacks** may not be a dramatic loss, but rather a realization that changes need to be made in one’s life or business.



Upon **Seeking Feedback**, change may be necessary. A debilitating challenge is to be willing to make a significant change that would require severing a relationship, a move, a new job, a reorganization of a company or any number of circumstances that can be disruptive and painful.

Many years ago, we produced a series of videos featuring Dr. Michael Fullan at the University of Toronto. He delineated the change process in which people go through an “implementation dip” when they embark on a significant new innovation or change.

In the early stages of the implementation, things get harder before they get better. Many people give up at this point wanting to revert to the old way, even though it had become problematic, outdate and even obsolete.

If people can survive the “dip,” after implementation, then things will eventually get better than before, and prove the change was worth the struggle.



Early in my career, I had witnessed a situation where the creator and owner of a business discredited the vision for growth, avoided the implementation dip, and finally saw his business disappear.

A children’s music company produced audio cassettes and was highly successful with home-based sales representatives. We tried mightily to get them to elevate to producing VHS videos featuring their music with live action. The ownership could not make the leap. Various employees and salespeople complained that the owner was stuck in his old ways.

I was determined to never let that happen to me. I knew that my various business ventures were certain to face new opportunities, and I did not want to hold things back fearing failure and suffering the stall of the implementation dip.

I am reminded of a small automobile repair facility that had a steady clientele and successful business—as long as cars had traditional carburetors with chokes and electrical distributors with points. As automobiles advanced with electronic ignitions and fuel injectors,

the garage didn't keep up and is now a historical memory along State Street south of Salt Lake City.

I have seen similar problems with other family-owned businesses, whereby the younger generation wanted to make changes, and the older generation resisted. This has happened in the areas of agriculture, construction, small time manufacturers, food, and other service providers.

On a grand scale, Eastman Kodak did not adapt to the digital age, and what was once a mighty empire in film is now struggling to survive in the electronic age of photography.



Irrespective of determination to grow and change, knowing there will be an implementation dip, I can testify that it is possible to **adapt** and **apply**. As I have aged, I realize that I may be set in my ways. But this difficulty notwithstanding, I have always been committed to always growing and adapting.

I have glided through many changes in photography, filmmaking, publishing, computer skills and marketing. I study and search regularly to keep up with constant change. Humans are creatures of habit, and making change is not easy, as Michael Fullan has so remarkably characterized, but change with its risks is not only necessary but worthwhile.

A Child Prodigy—Almost

Chapter Three



Typically, child prodigies are famous because of their extraordinary aptitude. I was never famous, but I did come from a good gene pool that gifted me with a lot of artistic aptitude.

My paternal grandfather was an artist. One of my maternal uncles was also an artist. My mother was gifted in writing. My father loved movies, although he never had the opportunity to make more than home movies. Many others of my

aunts and uncles were musicians and writers. A very talented bunch.

I was born with a white lock of hair in my forehead, a trait inherited from my maternal grandmother and passed on to some of my children and grandchildren.

As you reflect on your own gifts, and that of your ancestors, I am certain you will find similar characteristics that add to the quality of and uniqueness of your gene pool, not only in terms of talent but appearance.

As a child I was passionate about TV and movies. With my family I went to the great and spectacular motion pictures of the day, studying publications purchased at those road show extravaganzas. I

was most fascinated with pictures of the enormous cameras such as MGM's Camera 65, UltraPanavision 70, and Cinerama with its three cameras mounted on one platform, and three projectors used for projection in huge auditoriums. Some of my favorite movies were *The Ten Commandments*, *Ben-Hur*, *How the West Was Won* and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*.

My father took many black and white pictures with his old Eastman Kodak Autographic Brownie bellows camera that used 120 film, with a negative size of 2 ½ x 3 ½ inches. Recently I found several envelopes of negatives from his camera, which I then digitized, finding many pictures of me as a baby along with my sisters.

When I was about ten, as a gift I received a Kodak Brownie Holiday Flash camera that used 127 film which produces a negative 2¼ inches square. Family picture taking gradually transitioned from dad to me. I loved to photograph everything such as people,



mountains, horses, dogs, and snow. I was immediately praised for the artistic look of my pictures. Both of these old cameras are on display in my studio/museum.

I was inspired by the color photographs in *National Geographic Magazine* and noticed that so many scenes had people looking at the vistas, but not at the camera. I followed this style, much to the chagrin of my family, because most of my pictures from our travels were of their backs looking off into the Grand Canyon or at dinosaur

bones in Dinosaur National Monument, backs of my parents and grandpa Linton.



When I was a toddler, my father bought a Cine-Kodak Magazine 16mm movie camera. Immediately he began making 16mm films of my siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and all of our travels.

I still have those films today, 75 years later. Before my mother passed away in the year 2000, I had the films digitized and her favorite activity was to watch those family movies on VHS tapes.

To share his movies, my father bought a 16mm Bell & Howell Filmosound 179C movie projector which is on display in my studio/museum.



With the projector he proudly showed family movies which were of better quality than those who used the more common 8mm cameras and smaller projectors. The 16mm projector could play films with

optical soundtracks, so he bought a lot of newsreels and cartoons with sound—all in black and white.

Obviously, I inherited his passion for movies. To utilize that resource, I built an outdoor movie screen at the edge of the sandbox in our back yard and fashioned rows for toy cars to park in a miniature outdoor theater. I used matchsticks for the speakers. My father took me to the county library in Midvale, Utah, where we checked out movies which I showed to my friends on my outdoor movie screen.

I was equally fascinated with television production. I seldom missed *Abbot and Costello*, *I Love Lucy*, *Perry Mason* and *The Andy Williams Show*.

Magazines would publish articles about television production in the 1950s. I was obsessed with the pictures of TV cameras.

With a cardboard box I made a mock-up TV camera with holes cut in each end so I could peer through it as though I were a cameraman.

On the front I mounted toilet paper and paper towel cores to match the look of a lens turret on the front of a real camera. I painted the entire assemblage gray and put the CBS logo on the side, so it looked like an authentic TV camera in a CBS studio.



When color TV became available, my dad was the first in the neighborhood to buy one. It was very costly with a 21-inch round screen with a mask to make the image flat on the top and bottom. We were able to watch one show a night, for that was all that was broadcast in color in those early years. Everybody wanted to see our color TV, which I demonstrated with pride.

The Salt Lake affiliate KSL-TV was the first to purchase color cameras for local broadcast. The behemoths were half the size of a Volkswagen. In Utah, the 24th of July is a major holiday celebrating the arrival of the pioneers in 1847. Each year a large parade went down Main Street in Salt Lake City.

The year that KSL acquired their color cameras, the parade was rerouted past the TV station because the cameras could not be more than a few feet from the studio. Crowds were more than willing to step from their favorite corner or curb to accommodate color TV.

Numerous cables ran through windows from the street into the building. A team of engineers was required to keep the cameras working. That year I had to go to the parade—not to see the floats and bands pass by, but to get near enough to stare at the color cameras.

My vision was clear. I loved movies and television and wanted to be part of it. Beyond that obsession, I had no plans, but was subject to the vagaries of young boys, with my friend Blane and my dog Mike.



I must have had guardian angels. Once I was looking down an opening in the floor of a house under construction and lost my balance falling to the concrete below landing on my head. It's amazing I survived. That house is still occupied, just down the street from where some of my grandchildren—Cory's family—lives in Holladay, Utah.

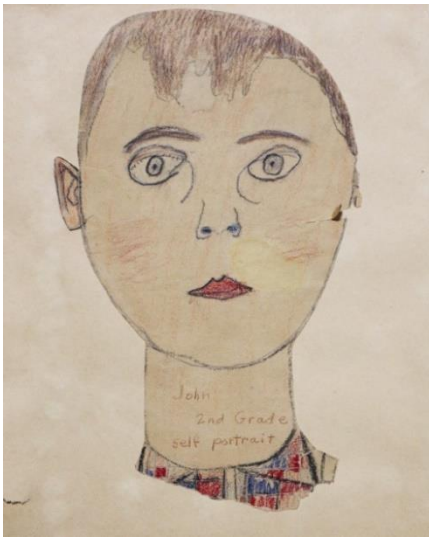
Not far from there I was inner tubing down Cottonwood Creek and was sucked under a culvert that took the fast moving stream under Highland Drive. I have a vivid image of looking up and seeing water rushing over my head. My hands had caught the metal end of the galvanized culvert. The next thing I remember is a man pulling me out of the water, for I would have surely drowned.

A Student with Focus

Chapter Four

In elementary school, all children are given opportunities to draw, paint and sculpt. Fostering the creative nature of children, art has always been an important part of the curriculum.

Before my mother passed away, she gave me a couple of cardboard boxes filled with my artwork and early photographs. What an experience it was to sift through those items I had completely forgotten even existed.



Displayed in my studio/museum are some pieces, like a self-portrait from when I was in second grade. Notice my white lock of hair.

There were colored drawings of fighter jets and trains—and of course cameras.

I loved art and design, and when challenged with a project in school, my vision went to work.

As a highly creative youngster, I would ponder over a challenge, and if a deadline was imposed, I would barely complete the project in time.

As a young student at Olympus Junior High School in Holladay, Utah, I learned of a school flag design contest. I pondered and visualized an

appealing idea which I carefully drew on a piece of art paper. I submitted the design and thought nothing more of it.

Several weeks later my friends and I sat in the back of the auditorium during a rather boring school assembly. I didn't even hear when my name was announced as the winner of the flag design contest. They had a check for \$25 made out to Johnny Linton. More alert, my friends prodded and pushed me up to the stage. The flag I designed for Olympus Junior High flew over the school for many years.



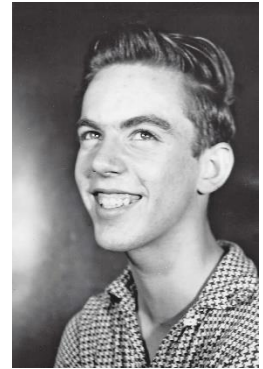
It was at Olympus Junior that I had my first photography class. With a pinhole camera I began to learn the fundamentals of the physics of light. To this day, I know how to artistically use the mechanics of shutter speed, f-stop, depth-of-field, film speed and lens photo-length. Since the onset of automatic cameras, these fundamental skills have been forgotten to shutterbugs with automatic cameras and smartphones.

As I have coached many videographers in my middle years, I was disappointed to observe that many of them had a difficult time understanding how to manipulate light physics and camera mechanics to achieve effects that would enhance their work.

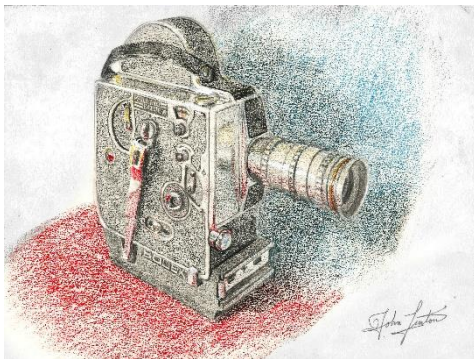
In junior high school, our photography teacher acquired a 16mm hand movie film processor. It required winding a hundred feet of film

back and forth in a black canister through different chemical processes. It took about an hour and was exhausting work.

Me and my cousin Steve Linton—my best friend and fellow photographer—removed the wet processed film from the canister and panicked at not knowing how to dry the film. It was a wet mess. Urgently, we draped the hundred feet of film around my mother's steel wire clothesline. Unfortunately, rust from the metal left streaks on the film, such that when it was projected, rust colored lines weaved back and forth through the movie. I don't know how my mother kept her clothes from collecting rust.



The experience motivated me to save money from my paper route



and buy a professional quality Paillard Bolex 16mm camera. My father was delighted with my purchase, and supplied film for use in the camera if I would make high quality family movies and document our family vacations.

I bought a light bar to use with the camera to illuminate family gatherings. I fussed a lot to make high quality images, insisting my subjects exercise patience as I worked with lights, exposure, and camera settings. Many years later, one of my cousins from Denver, Colorado, reflected on how trying it was for her dad. When we came to visit our Denver relatives, he was heard to say with submission, "Oh no, is Johnny coming with his camera?"

I was privileged to travel widely with my family in our 1963 Pontiac Bonneville throughout the canyon country of the Colorado Plateau in Southern Utah, and to the East Coast across the Rockies. On such trips I made elaborate 16mm films with my Bolex.

With great footage, I needed narration and music. I was determined to present my films with sound. I did not have the equipment or means to put a soundtrack on film, so with my reel-to-reel magnetic audio tape player, and my Gilbert Erector Set, I connected the drive wheel of the projector with a series of gears and shafts to the capstan of the tape player. Thus, the movement of the projector drove the tape player. I recorded music and narration as I watched the film, sure that the sound would be synchronized with the picture.

Wow, it worked—sort of.

What I did not realize is that the projector stops and starts 24 times a second, as all movie projectors do, allowing for each frame to be clearly seen frozen for an instant. Consequently, the tape stopped and started 24 times a second. To say that the sound was choppy, and erratic is far from an exaggeration.

Determined to see how the projector worked to get around this problem, I took it apart. Unfortunately, I chose to do it the afternoon before a family party in which we were to show 16mm family movies outdoors to a large gathering. My dad came home and upon seeing the projector in pieces all over the lawn—well, he was furious. However, he didn't say anything to me. He just went inside the house to my mother and said, "You've got to do something about that boy. He's got the projector scattered all over the lawn."

I had it back together and working fine before the party.

I brought down my father's wrath again when I bought a Vistascope/Delrama 16mm anamorphic lens to put on the movie camera.



A cheap mail order purchase, the device was to squeeze the image onto the film when utilized—the same way CinemaScope and other wide screen formats worked. After the film was back from processing and ready to project, the device was placed in front of the projector lens, expanding the image into a wide screen format.

It worked fine on the camera squeezing the image, but it was never meant to be used on the projector, resulting in a blurry, distorted, and darkened image. With this lens I shot several family movies on a trip to Denver. Anamorphic lenses used in Hollywood and theaters cost thousands of dollars. My purchase just did not cut it, for the projected image was a wide screen disaster. We had to watch the movies without the anamorphic lens, and everybody was skinny, like they were standing in front of a fun house mirror. Dad could not believe I ruined the footage that he paid for.

1 Research & Define

In this instance, I completely failed to do research and acted rashly.

These episodes notwithstanding, my father was generally very supportive of my adventures. Family films were definitely better than

average. My mother was supportive as well, although she always worried.

I have always been drawn to widescreen films. I was excited with my purchase ten years ago of Sony XDCAM video cameras that record in a 16:9 format. In my last three homes, I remodeled to have a theater with a large 16:9 format screen, with a gentle concave curve like that in the big theaters.

As a youngster, photography for me was an extension of art. At Granite High School in Salt Lake City, I took every art and photography class available. This included stage design and lettering. I was accepted to be a newspaper and yearbook photographer. My social life centered around my talent. I rarely went to a dance with a date but always had a camera. It was the same for football, basketball, and all social events. I was always on photography assignments for school publications.

By this time, I purchased a Yashika 44 twin-lens reflex camera with a 127-film format which would produce a color slide in a smaller square shape. My favorite film was Kodak Ektachrome which gave me beautiful color slides. I only had twelve exposures per roll, but the quality was sensational. I used this camera for personal and family shoots as well as school assignments. I also used



larger 120 format twin-lens reflex cameras owned by the school.

I was as creative in the dark room processing negatives and printing with an enlarger as I was in the field shooting with a camera. Developing negatives required absolute darkness. I fashioned a darkroom in the basement of our home on Murray-Holladay Road. My cousin Steve needed to develop some negatives, but we did not have a timer. So, I went upstairs in the living room directly over the darkroom. I said I would stomp on the floor when it was time to move his negatives from the developer into the fixing bath. When I stomped on the floor, I heard a cursing scream below. Unfortunately, my stomp jarred the ceiling light to come on brightly, immediately destroying his negatives.

He muttered with frustration, “I stared at the developed negative images—then they turned completely black.”

A better dark room was available to us at Granite High School. Steve and I were the senior photographers, overseeing others less experienced. We used a sink sprayer nozzle to flush water through the sink to rinse the processed negatives and prints. I devised a way to use an empty film spool to hold the sprayer open so water would continuously move up from the bottom and drain out the sink overflow. One of our sophomores put the nozzle in its place after rinsing, leaving it with the film spool still holding it open. Later, I walked Steve and turned on the faucet. He was immediately drenched.

We were asked to photograph a seminary dance at a nearby church. After it was over, student leaders were cleaning the recreation hall. I told Steve I had to go to the bathroom. He followed me down the hall, and I couldn’t find the Men’s room, so I stepped into the Ladies’ room. Startled, he jumped back and walked the other way stunned

at my daring. He passed two girls—knowing they were heading to the Ladies’ room.

“What should he do,” he thought? “Run ahead of them and tell John that girls are coming, or stop them and say a boy was in the ladies’ room?” He decided to do nothing and found a corner bursting into laughter.

Inside the ladies’ room I had finished my business and was washing my hands. The door opened and I thought it was Steve. I turned around, and the surprised shock on the girls’ faces I will never forget. I acted as if nothing was wrong, dried my hands and walked out, acknowledging them with courtesy.

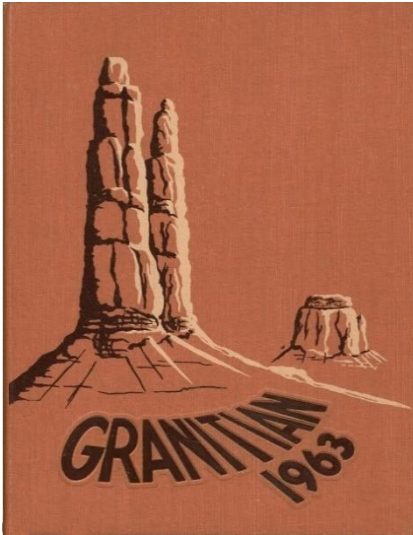
It took me a while to find Steve, and when I told him what happened, neither of us could stop laughing. We were to have been given a ride home from the dance, but instead we walked several blocks, enjoying the hilarity of the experience.

Somehow, I was often at the heart of Steve’s humor and aggravations, but to this day we have always been best friends. Whenever I call him, he can see that it’s me, and says, “Is John gone?” I will retort, “Did Steve leave?”

Both Steve and I won awards for yearbook and newspaper photography.

As a senior my design was selected for the 1963 *Granitian* yearbook cover. I had been inspired by the red rock country of Southern Utah that my family had visited on many occasions.

Great skill in working with brush and pen was required, for in those days there were no computers with design and photoshop software. My, how easy graphic artists have it today.



Photography, art and stage design were equally important to me. Ed Neslen was a revered and honored art teacher. I took every class he offered. I excelled in all my assignments. Once he told me, "If you're not famous someday, I will haunt you."

I've never been famous and never haunted.

If my participation in social events was not to take pictures, it was to make posters or help design extravaganzas.

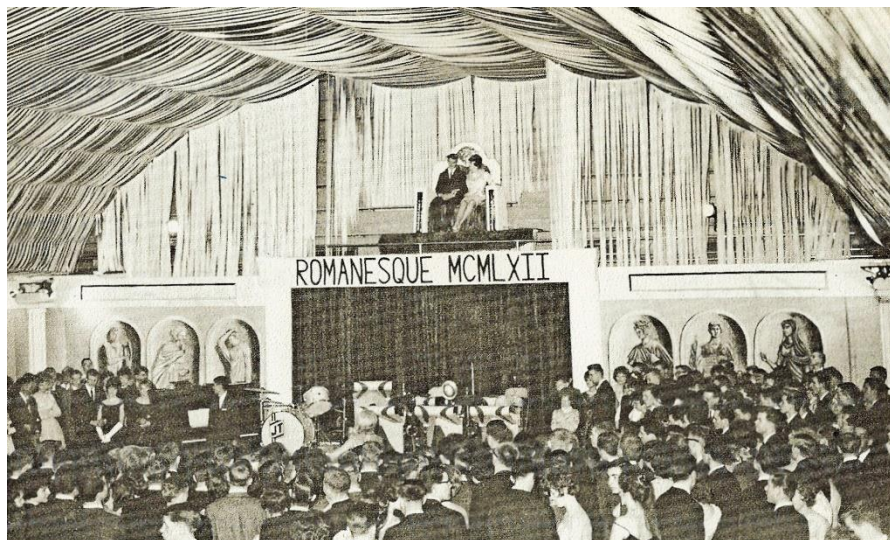
I was never invited to parties unless it was during campaigns which required spectacular posters and banners. At the parties everyone else socialized while they watched in wonder as I created masterpieces.

Evan as a father many years later I was designing posters for each of my children as they chose to run for various student body offices. I was essentially managing their campaigns, based on my experience in high school.

Each of them one the offices for which we were campaigning.

The skills I was born with and perfected in the various classes I took in junior high and high school have served me well throughout my life and career. In my advanced years I marvel at the technology that has emerged, not only in devices such as cameras and computers,

but the development of technologies such as digital photography and computer software.



As a junior in high school, I was asked to convert the Granite High gymnasium into a Roman Coliseum for the junior prom *Romanesque*.

So powerful was the impact that people came to the dance just to stare at the painted walls with Roman statues with crepe paper ceiling, none of which revealed the gymnasium behind it. The junior prom royalty were seated on thrones attached to the bleachers.

As a senior I designed the set for graduation, using a theme of arches. Interestingly, arches like those I originated in high school have been used at nearly every wedding in our family. (see picture on page 64)

Until I was a senior, serious academic classes for me were an irritant, only getting in the way of my artistic pursuits. In solid subjects I got C's and D's. I did just enough to avoid an F grade. However, in all the art and photography classes, I got A's, so my C+ average barely allowed admission to college.

As seniors in high school, if we were to continue working on the yearbook, we were expected to take English from Miss Nell Madsen. She was the yearbook advisor. Furthermore, Miss Madsen would not allow seniors to be on the yearbook staff unless they got an A in her class. I was terrified. My work as a yearbook photographer in the sophomore and junior years was allowed only because I was so talented. Now as a senior, that was in jeopardy. How was I ever going to get an A in English, especially from her?



I had to **Adapt & Apply**. Miss Madsen pushed me. The most important pursuit in senior English was writing. No more vocabulary lists and sentence diagramming. I suddenly learned that writing is another form of artistic expression. I excelled at writing and got the A grade!



The discovered gift of writing has served me well throughout my life.

Artist and creative person that I was, surviving in the social world was a constant and sometimes hurtful struggle. In today's vernacular I would be considered a nerd. Here I am pimple-faced with colored pens in a plastic pocket protector.

Like any teenager, I had an interest in girls. My favorite and somewhat steady girlfriend was Nadine. She belonged to a large

family. Once Steve and I, with a couple of friends toilet papered her house while singing loudly to the Christmas carol, *Deck the Halls*.

Deck the house with toilet paper,

Fa, la la, la la, la la, la la.

Join is in our midnight caper,

Fa, la la, la la, la la, la la.

If we're caught, we'll surely miss you,

Fa, la la, la la, la la, la la!

The family never heard us. We knocked on the door laughing and then cleaned up the mess we made.

There was an occasion when another girl showed interest in me. She had a controlling boyfriend who warned me to stay away from his girl. I ignored him and remained friendly with her.

During this time our advanced scout troop was having judo lessons. We learned and practiced the art of movement and control of inertia for self-defense.

Walking outside in-between classes one day, this boy came at me with an angry and threatening voice. I stood still staring at him. As he lunged at me, I took advantage of his forward movement. In a split second I grabbed his shirt firmly, fell on my back lifting him over me and heaving him into some bushes behind me.

What a sight. This tough guy hanging in the bushes with a stunned look on his face. Others on the sidewalk were shocked at the sudden outcome.

"Look what Johnny Linton did!" The boy never bothered me again.

A Humbled Student and Missionary

Chapter Five

It is amazing I was admitted to the University of Utah with my poor showing on my grade transcript. I had to take dumbbell math to catch up. I majored in art to begin with and completed my first year of college. From there I did not know exactly where I was going, but I did know that my ultimate vision and success would be related to art, photography, writing and film.



My life vision never changed, but temporarily had to be altered.

My paternal grandparents were born and raised in England. they were converted by missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and baptized as “Mormons.” My grandfather’s full name is John Barrett Linton, and I am proud to carry his first and last names, as well as his genes for high creativity. He was reared by a stepmother but preferred to be on his own and considered himself a roustabout. He smoked and imbibed until the missionaries straightened his ways.

At church he fell in love with his future wife who saw to it that he stayed on the straight and narrow. Together they decided to immigrate to the United States by boat and ride the train to Utah where they could surround themselves with Latter-day Saints.

On my mother's side, generations back, they were members of the same Latter-day Saint faith. It was only natural then that I was born to active members of the church and encouraged to live by its precepts and vision.

Consequently, it was assumed and engrained in me that when I became nineteen, I would present myself as willing to serve a mission.

I graduated from Granite High School in 1963 at the age of eighteen. To pursue my creative passion, I enrolled in art school at the University of Utah. After one year I would go on a mission. Following my mission, I thought I would return to the "U" with the idea of becoming an industrial designer.



Throughout my younger years I was always drawing cars with a new and forward look.

I learned that with an industrial design degree I might be able to move to Detroit, Michigan, and help design automobiles. Art classes

for me in high school were easy. In college they were tough. As I completed assignments, I would get C's and D's, and could not understand why. Looking around at the work of fellow students, I thought my work was at least as good as theirs, if not better. Each project was subject to severe criticism. It did help me to improve. As a result, I came to value criticism, and was encouraged by my professors to seek it.

At the end of the first quarter, I was very discouraged, fearing a dismal end to my classes. Then for final grades I got A's! Wow! Grading was completely subjective and not based on any curve. I then realized they were constantly pushing me to do better, frustrating me with low grades on projects. Like with Miss Madsen at Granite High, I was challenged at the University of Utah—almost threatened—to do better.



From those classes I learned that to **Seek Feedback** and criticism is essential in everything I did. Seeking comment and feedback has become a guiding force throughout my life. This practice is a great gift to me from that year of art classes at a challenging art school.

To those of you who may avoid criticism, know that you are missing an opportunity to gain experience, to evaluate and adjust. Criticism can be painful, but it is vital, nonetheless. The summer after my year of art school, it was time to refocus my vision to serve as a missionary. The **Research** was done for me. I would be called to serve two years anywhere the church needed me, even if it was in a foreign land where I might have to serve for 2½ or three years to learn a new language. I would be the first grandson on my mother's side to serve,

and as the only son, I would bring great honor to my family. This was a lot of family pressure.



Second, I had to **Adapt & Apply** my thinking to that of the sacrifice of being a missionary, leaving behind my lifestyle, friends, and ambitions for the future. No more thought of designing cars.

Third, I had to **Seek Feedback** from others who had been missionaries, to fully understand what my commitment would mean. And I had to pray fervently and sincerely to the Lord. At this juncture, I had to separate the expectations of my immediate family, friends, and church leaders, and arrive at the point where I was certain it was what I needed and wanted for my life at that time, and that I would have the blessings of God to be with me.

Fourth, I had to **Evaluate & Adjust** everything about me.

My dress would have to be professional, a suit, white shirts and tie—and even a businessman’s hat. I would no longer be goofing around with my friends. I would have to knock on doors, preach, and

persuade others to listen to the message of the restoration of Christ's church.

I completed my application, was interviewed, and received a call to the Northwestern States Mission, which included all of Oregon, Washington and the panhandle and southern portion of Idaho.

But all this notwithstanding, I could not let go entirely of my passion for filmmaking. I was restricted in how much luggage I could take, confined to two suitcases with minimum weight. This was a difficult task, but I managed to slip within my suitcase my Bolex movie camera and a few rolls of color film.

Upon my arrival to mission headquarters in Portland, Oregon, I was met by mission leaders, other young men whose service was nearing the end of two years. I was a brand-new greenie. Appalled at the discovery of my movie camera and film, they quickly gave me unrequested **Feedback**. "You'll have to send all that *gentile* stuff home."

With some reluctance, they authorized me to keep my Yashika 44 twin lens reflex, for all missionaries were allowed to have a personal camera.

Other than this setback, I was fully prepared to begin my work. My first assignment was to Everett, Washington. The city had a strange smell from the logging industry. My trainer companion said it was



the “smell of bread and butter,” meaning income to the locals from the numerous sawmills. But for us there was no bread and butter to eat.

My companion loved oatmeal, and for breakfast lunch and dinner that’s about all we had. Disgusting, but I knew it was healthy and I endured. After a few weeks he was transferred to another city, and I received a new companion.

Upon seeing only oatmeal, he threw it all to the trash. Immediately we went to the store and bought mostly junk food and a lot of ketchup. Onto everything he ate, there was poured of a lot of the spicy red, thick liquid.

This companion was more interested in finding members who would invite us to dinner than in finding investigators. Each Monday was designated as Diversion Day in which we could do our laundry and other chores, following which we could do something fun. However, no movies, and we always had to be mindful of our standing as ministers of the gospel.



My vision was to get along with my companions. We were assigned a new companionship about every three months.

Besides his obsession with ketchup, this companion had to have perfectly polished shoes. Every morning, he would get his polish, brushes, and rags. He would then make a disgusting sound coughing

up a big wad of slimy spit hurling it into a can of polish. With a stiff brush he would stir it into a gooey paste and apply it to his shoes. I tried to ignore him.

Rather than make an issue of this revolting habit, I decided to win his trust by complementing him on how fantastic his shoes looked. They were the shiniest shoes I had ever seen. I asked him to teach me how he did it. He was flattered.

During our time together, we both walked around with exceptional looking shoes. Occasionally since, I have shined my shoes exactly as he taught me.

Everett overlooked a bay on Puget Sound. One Monday we went down to the beach and found numerous baby crabs. I gathered them up to cook for breakfast.

They tasted awful. Then we later learned from a member that crabs of that size are only intestine inside, lacking the delicate meat of an adult crab.

For transportation, each pair of missionaries had a small car.

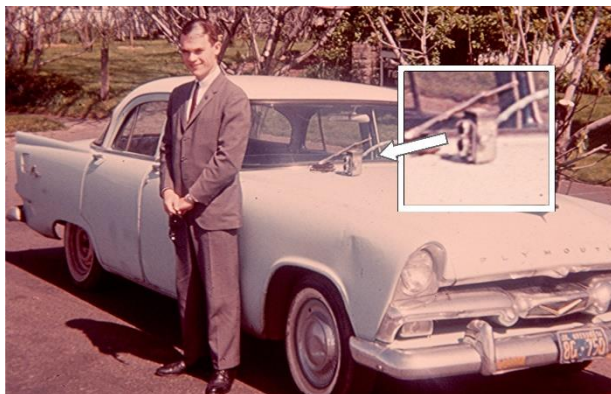
We had a 1963 Rambler American provided by George Romney, president of American Motors. The problem was our car leaked oil. At a gas station we would jokingly ask the attendant, "Fill the oil and check the gas."

My problem-solving mind went to work, and I decided to put thicker oil—the thickest oil available—into the crankcase. For about two days the engine purred, then suddenly froze from the thick oil, and we rolled to a stop. We were towed to a mechanic, and he was astonished to see the Rambler had over 250,000 miles on the odometer. He declared it totaled and not worth fixing.

A family gave us a much older 1956 Plymouth.

Notice my camera on the hood.

The seats were not bolted to the floorboard, so that



every time we slowed down, we pitched forward into the dashboard and steering wheel. My “ketchup” companion was driving one day, and to avoid the lurch forward he ran a stop sign hitting another car. The damage to both cars was minimal, but my companion’s head bump to the steering wheel was serious. He saw a doctor and had to see the same doctor repeatedly for treatment.

Like so many people I have known throughout my life, he used his “continuing pain” as an excuse to avoid work. At his request, he remained in that area for the rest of his mission so he could continuously see the same doctor.

From Everett I was transferred to Spokane, in western Washington, where I had an “undedicated” missionary for a companion. He decided that we should take a vacation over the weekend to Seattle. I was the junior and he was a District Leader, so I was in no position to challenge his decision. We were caught traveling out of our area and referred to the mission president for discipline. My companion was busted as a leader, and I was considered innocent and elevated to his position.

From that day forward, I was always a District Leader, being responsible for two or three other sets of missionaries. From there I

went to inner-city Portland, then inner-city Boise, then Springfield Oregon near the Pacific Coast. As a district leader, I soon discovered that whenever I was transferred to a new district, the mission president would send lady missionaries to work under me. I was patient and understanding of ladies and could relate well to their needs and dispositions.

I guess I have always been a lady's man.

It often rains in the Pacific Northwest, sometimes days at a time. On one such occasion, it was reported to me that two elders (young men missionaries) were spending the day looking at magazines in a store to stay out of the rain.

I challenged them to have faith that while serving they would not get wet. I backed up my challenge by saying I would immediately start fasting so that the rains would stop during the day and return at night so they could do their work.

Almost immediately the rain stopped, and began pouring again that night at about 9pm, when missionaries were to return to their apartments. By morning, the rain stopped and returned again that night. My companion and the two elders were stunned to observe this miracle.

After two days I learned that the elders were back in the store loitering. I effectively shook the dust off my feet, as a testimony against them that they were mocking the Lord and his blessings. Almost immediately the rains returned with a vengeance and lasted for several days.

In the book *108 Mala Beads* I tell many of the remarkable spiritual experiences I had as a missionary and later fulfillment of other church responsibilities.

In Boise, Idaho, I moved into an old missionary pad that was filthy.

While in the tub, I looked at the ceiling and saw the names of missionaries from years previous who had written with their fingers in the grime. It was like carvings one might see on a tree in the forest, but on the ceiling above the bathtub? Unbelievable.

We needed to move and found a really nice place that was clean and affordable.

After a few days we were told by some members that we were actually living in the “red light” district of Boise, and probably should move again. Not a good place to be for two young men of about 20 years in age, not to mention the bad optics it would cast upon the church and its mission in spreading the Gospel. We moved as quickly as we could to find a more suitable place.

I had been told from childhood that the Lord protects his missionaries. After being sent back to Spokane again, this time with an elevated position to Zone Leader, I found some frozen hamburger in the refrigerator of our apartment.

I decided to fry it up for dinner.

The smell was awful as I cooked, and the meat tasted strange, but we ate it anyway.

We later learned we could have become severely ill from eating spoiled meat. But we survived without getting sick, and the heavy dosing of ketchup I learned from my earlier companion covered all sins.

Husband, Father, and Graduate

Chapter Six



Evaluation of my life experiences thus far caused me to **Adjust** my vision. As a missionary I had developed a love of teaching the gospel. For a career, I thought of teaching religious seminary to high school students.

My **Research** informed me that to do so I would need a Teacher's Certificate. For this and other reasons, after my mission, I transferred my credits from the University of Utah to Brigham Young University.

I majored in Journalism in the School of Communications, which would enable me to receive a Teacher's Certificate. I minored in Art, and for a Journalism degree, I was required to have a second minor, so I chose the science of Geology. Thus, I had to **Adapt & Apply**.

The added benefit to me is that I have always loved to follow the news—journalism. Growing up at the base of the Wasatch Mountains and traveling throughout the west gave me a love of geology, and of course art was a natural for me.

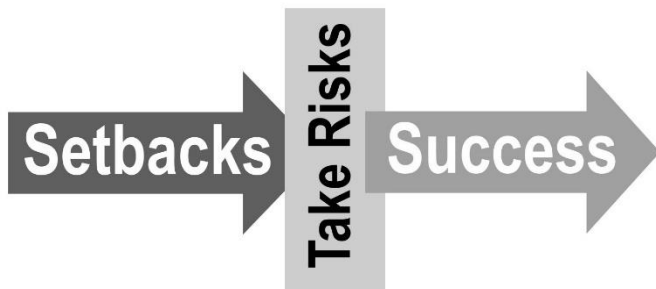
My first job at BYU was that of assistant to religion professor, Ivan J. Barrett, who also had been my mission president. He was an expert on the life of Joseph Smith and wrote a lengthy book about the founder of our faith. Professor Barrett was an inspiring lecturer, but a book writer he was not. My job was to work with his muddled and disjointed manuscript and make it into a readable narrative ready to publish. Barrett was amazed and thrilled at how I made his writing look so good.

In one of my communications classes I learned a great reinforcing lesson regarding feedback from Heber J. Woolsey, a guest professor coming from the field of communications. His philosophy was, “Go to the best minds in the business.” This would apply to any pursuit.

If one is to become a teacher, find the best teachers to learn from. If one is to make films, go to the best filmmakers that can be found. Such feedback naturally leads one to evaluate and adjust. I have followed this advice throughout my life, seeking the best minds in the business.

But lest the reader thinks I have always been successful, please know that despite getting good advice, the risks associated with any of my ventures sometimes thwarted the level of expectations.

My life has been a continuing struggle between the good, the bad and the ugly. But overall, it has been mostly good, and sometimes astonishingly wonderful.



I lived in John Hall, one of the buildings in the Helaman Halls complex for single students. How appropriate, “John’s Hall.” The name may have fit, but most of the football players lived in John Hall. They were a hefty rowdy bunch.

My roommate was a former missionary companion, Elder Stevenson. He was a very tall, blond fellow, and a good friend. In those days, if one became engaged to marry, they were ceremoniously thrown into a channel of the Provo River, a slow moving but deep stream. Stevenson became engaged, and good naturedly, he allowed a group of us—including football players—to swing him into the river from a bridge one evening.

Amidst laughter and hilarity, we watched, but after a few moments he did not come to the surface.

Several of us jumped into the river to rescue him. Fortunately, he was quickly found but unconscious and not breathing.

As a boy scout ten years earlier, I earned the Life Saving Merit Badge, during which I learned the technique of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. As others were holding my friend, I pushed my way in, spread his jaw and with my mouth placed over his, I began to force



deep breaths into his lungs. After several efforts, he finally came to, spitting water into my face. Everybody cheered.

He hadn't told us he didn't know how to swim. I was deeply humbled and grateful that I saved his life.

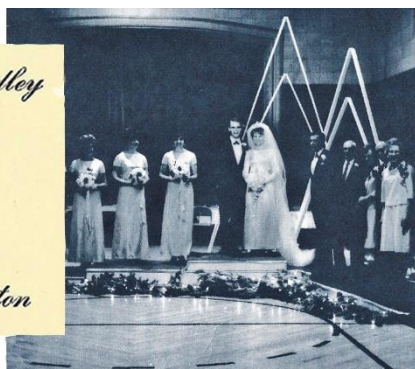
The bigger guys around me were grateful also for my adeptness and insistence that I perform the life-saving technique.

Beginning my studies at BYU, I was anxious to get married and start a family. I dated many girls, but nothing seemed right. I became a teacher at the Missionary Training Center near Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

One of my fellow trainers, a former lady missionary, told me of a wonderful girl, a lifetime friend of hers from Beaver, Utah.

Only, problem—she thought—the young woman was divorced and had a three-year-old boy, Chet. That was not a problem for me. I had always loved children, and this might provide me with an instant family.

*Mr. and Mrs. Wallace D. Gurdley
announce the marriage of their daughter
Blanch Ann
and
Mr. John Linton
son of
Mr. and Mrs. J. LeRoy Linton*



I married Blanch Ann Yardley from Beaver, Utah. The courting and engagement occurred between semesters, so I didn't get thrown into the Provo River.

From a family of ranchers and teachers, Blanch understood the value of hard work, and has been an instrumental and driving force in properly raising Chet and four additional children, Hollee, Cory, Curtis, and Trent. She herself was an elementary teacher and transferred from Clark County Schools in Las Vegas to teach in a school near Brigham Young University. Blanch was fully supportive of my career and academic ambitions.

We lived in married student housing. From our upper story apartment, we could look down into "The Quad" where a playground entertained many children of young married students. I took movies of Chet riding his tricycle around the playground. I was able to adopt him, giving him my surname. To this day, I remain his proud father.

At BYU I asserted myself and got a job in the photo studio where I enhanced my skills in lighting. Portraiture for me is a natural, as I understand all the subtleties of camera, light, and emotion.

Later at BYU I got a job at the campus television station, KBYU-TV. Interestingly, they didn't want me to work with studio cameras and lighting but rather with film projects for which they had grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. After I graduated, I remained at KBYU full time. I was an oddity, for BYU had a fully functioning movie studio, but I was producing movies for the TV station.

In my numerous classes through the college years, I learned many skills that have benefited me throughout life. Because I was majoring in journalism, I received assignments from the campus newspaper,

The Daily Universe. Continuous deadlines had to be met, and we sometimes called it “The Daily Uni-farce.”

One of my assignments was to interview a widely acclaimed professor and author whose office was housed in one of the older buildings on campus. Hugh Nibley was considered a Mormon folk legend. His writings were extensive on Latter-day Saint theology, history, and geography of the Book of Mormon.

This was an exciting assignment for me. To interview such a famous author! His office was more like a narrow hall, with books, manuscripts, files, and paraphernalia piled from floor to ceiling filling every available space. I tried not to be intimidated, but his matter-of-fact tone and annoyance at my intrusion did not help. What I wrote was printed in the *Daily Universe*.

One of my assignments in journalism was to have something published in a newspaper other than the *Universe*.

I spent many hours driving between Provo and Beaver in Southern Utah with my young family. I always got a kick out of the local newspaper, *The Beaver Press*, which allotted much of its space to local gossip.

Every time we went to Beaver, the following piece would be published in the *Press*:

John and Blanch Linton
and their children will be
visiting with Wallace and
Melba Yardley during
this weekend.

Uncle Roy, brother to my children’s grandfather, was an old-timer full of stories. He told of an old gold mining enterprise north of

Beaver in the mountains, the ghost town of *Fortuna*. His wife is the little girl in the picture on the next page.

What a name for a gold mining town, *Fortuna*. We drove to the site, a long climb on very rough, unimproved roads. In various mining shafts we saw a lot of quartz crystal which supposedly indicated that gold was nearby. Uncle Roy showed me run-down ramshackle buildings typical of old mining ghost towns. He spoke of old-timers who worked in the mines. I took pictures and wrote a lengthy article.

Sadly, *Fortuna* never created the fortune hoped for.

The editor of *The Beaver Press* was thrilled to have an authentic feature story that opened a forgotten chapter in Beaver County history. The entire front page was devoted to my story including some of my photographs.

Suddenly I was a local celebrity to be featured with a banner headline with my name. I have a copy of that newspaper displayed in my studio/museum.

I found it delightful that the local connection was always made in the publication of this treasured newspaper.

Interestingly, I received college credit for this publication, for in one class I would only get a passing grade if I had one of my articles published in a real magazine or newspaper.

This and many other stories of curiosity are featured in the book I compiled, *Utah Quirks*. Utah has always been a land of oddities, and this book chronicles some of what happened during the middle years of Utah, surrounding the onset of the 20th century, before and after the 1900's.



Fortuna . . .

By John Linton

Overlooking the "booming" town of Fortuna is Cora Lindsay and her children Mildred, Norma, Marion and Jim. Little Mildred is now Mrs. Roy Yardley of Beaver

I have no hesitation in predicting that the Beaver gold fields are in for a striking mining revival this spring that will restore the proportions of a genuine mining boom that will

There were some citizens that were enthused about the gold-rush, however.

Alex Boyter, who lives in Beaver, relates that a local Beaver youth named Stan Puffer

emerged back in 1914-15. Tents were pitched on the hillsides. People were scurrying about staking their claims. Others clad in dirty work clothes were carrying their shovels and picks

and her two sisters and brother lived in a small tent-house combination. Mrs. Yardley recollects: "All workers had these little tent-houses. One night they had a dance in the boarding house and I followed my parents to

price of gold has been held at \$35.00 an ounce by the government. Because mining gold is so expensive, a profit is difficult to make.

Mr. Lansing believes that the government would allow it

The caption below the picture in the article reads:

Overlooking the "booming" town of Fortuna is Cora Lindsay and her children Mildred, Norma, Marion and Jim. Little Mildred is now Mrs. Roy Yardley of Beaver.

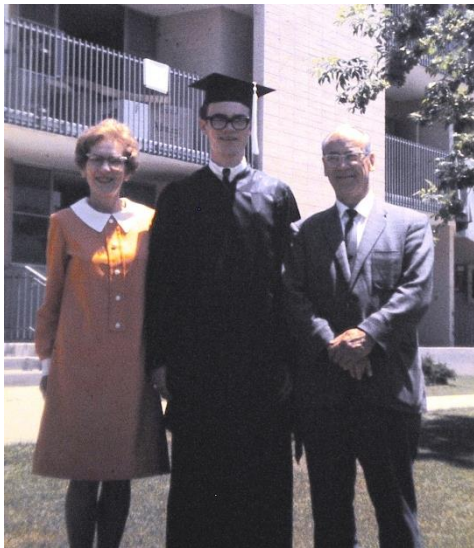
I had another class at BYU entitled *Writing Headlines*. For a writer, this is a powerful discipline. One is forced to give an inviting and

informative message in very few words to be printed in very little space.

As I look today at many newsfeeds on my smart phone, I am appalled at how awful and incomplete the headlines often appear.

Learning the fundamental art of effective messaging is essential in any communication, and has benefited me in the hundreds of pamphlets, books, and scripts I have written throughout my life.

My mother dutifully saved so many of the assignments, newspaper articles, headlines, and photographs from those early years of my life as a student and family man.



Her efforts without my knowledge have been a real gift, for much of what she saved is now on display in my studio/museum.

She also provided the resources for me to receive my Bachelor of Arts degree at Brigham Young University May 29, 1969. I will always

honor both of my parents who supported me in so many ways for as long as they lived.

Helping me was particularly important for my mother Sarah, for she grew up in a culture in which the boys were given every advantage for education, and the girls were expected to become mothers and housewives. As a young woman, she helped provide funds for her older brother to attend college.

She always wanted to graduate with a higher degree, but never had the opportunity until she was 40 years old. My father insisted she enroll at the University of Utah. She was thrilled, but also frightened that she might have to compete for good grades with all the younger students.

Mother did very well, graduating after four years with honors. She then taught school for several years.

Soldier

Chapter Seven



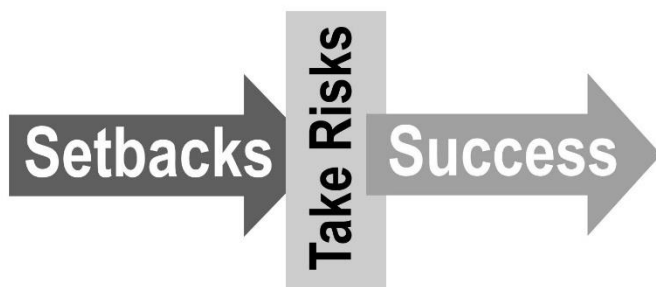
A great setback occurred after I graduated from Brigham Young University.

The war in Vietnam raged on during those years, and I was oblivious to the conflict on the other side of the world. Years earlier before my mission, I registered with the Selective Service as all young men were required by law.

While a missionary, I had a minister's deferment and could not be drafted. While in college, I had a student deferment and could not be drafted. Fatherhood was another possible deferment, but young men were only allowed two deferments. Consequently, after graduation, I was drafted, inducted into the armed services of the United States.

I was surprised and spooked, but I also had a lot of patriotic fervor and accepted the challenge without complaint. My family was not so easily placated—but none of us had a choice—I was forced to join the army.

Paradoxically, only a few months later the Selective Service instituted a lottery system to select draftees. My number was 179 which meant I probably would not have been drafted. But it was too late. I then belonged to Uncle Sam. Heartbreaking as that may seem, in truth a new door was eventually opened, creating for me entirely new opportunities.



Anytime a person makes a career move after a **Setback**, there are **Risks** involved as one looks toward ultimate **Success**. I had no choice but to accept induction, but I did find a way to improve my lot. Because I had an accredited bachelor's degree, I applied for Officer Candidate School in Combat Engineering, which I would enter after completing basic training. Becoming an officer would develop leadership skills, better pay and a sense of achievement beyond that of a draftee, and a combat engineer had more appeal than an infantryman.

But basic training—oh my, I was a grunt!

Before arriving at Fort Ord near Monterey, California, I had to be processed at the Salt Lake Induction Center. Draftees had to undergo physical examinations conducted in groups of 25 young men using an assembly line approach.

Stripped naked, we had to bend over backwards while an army technician examined our backsides with a flashlight. Then we had to

turn around and one at a time receive the painful hernia test with strong fingers pushed up behind our scrotum. Lots of screaming and groaning in my group of 25.

Then we had to pee into a small paper cup for our urine test. Our names had been printed on small pieces of paper and placed on a tray. Then going down the line, each cup of warm liquid was placed next to a name. When finished, I about croaked when the technician stumbled, mixing up all the names and cups of pee. He did his best to arrange them back in order. I never really learned the results of my test, for it could well have been yellow liquid from another inductee's bladder.

We were fingerprinted and had to undergo a criminal background check. They didn't have a record of when I once stole a candy bar at a movie theater.

The final leg of our trip to Fort Ord was on a military bus. We had been told we would arrive at the reception center. I thought wow, maybe they would have hot chocolate and donuts for us after a long trip by air and ground.

The bus pulled to a stop, and in climbed a mean looking grisly drill sergeant with his "Smoky the Bear" hat. He looked down the bus full of recruits and shouted, "I HATE Trainees!"

Then he looked down at one young man shouting at the top of his lungs, "Are you a TRAINEE?" The boy trembled, "yeeess..."

"Then I HATE you!"

After being assigned into platoons and companies, we had to run, eat awful food, run again—all the while being screamed at with vile curses.

No rest.

But then, it was time for our vaccinations. It didn't matter if we had been vaccinated earlier in life. They had a powerful gun that injected several vaccines at once. No needles, just liquid under intense pressure that penetrated the deltoid muscle. An enormous ouch.

Amazingly, we were given the balance of the day to rest, because they knew we would be sick. Then the next day it was back to the daily routine of running, training, screaming, eating, and running again.

During three months of basic training, we covered all of Fort Ord, often running close to the ocean. But we were warned not to step on the ice plant which was everywhere extending to the beaches.

When in high school I was aware of service clubs, such as FTA—Future Farmers of America, FBLA—Future Business Leaders of America, and FTA—Future Teachers of America. Everywhere at Fort Ord, I saw words and letters crudely carved into wood such as trees, outhouses and mess tables. (We were not allowed to sit while we ate, we had to stand at mess tables.)

Everywhere I saw the letters “FTA” scratched into the wood or burned in with cigarette butts. (Almost everybody smoked and coughed on breaks.) Surely, I thought, amongst this mangy collection of soldiers in making, there were not that many “Future Teachers of America.” Then I learned that FTA meant, “F—k the Army.”

After three months I was sent to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, for Advanced Individual Training as a combat engineer, a prerequisite to Officer Candidate School. The environment was much nicer than Basic Training. I was allowed to go to church on Sundays and became

fast friends fast friends with many Latter-day Saints stationed at Ft. Leonard Wood.



Ironically, at the end of another three months, I could not go to OCS, Officer Candidate School, because there were no openings. I became a holdover. Consequently, I was allowed to become a chaplain's assistant with a

permanent assignment at Ft. Leonard Wood in the post hospital chapel. I was allowed to bring my family from Utah to Missouri to be with me.

With that assignment in the hospital chapel, I only had about two hours of work a day. Because my private's pay was so skimpy, the hospital chaplain allowed me to take days off to substitute in a local high school, putting to use the Teacher's Certificate I had acquired at BYU. I also had time to write but produced nothing of significance.

While working at the hospital chapel, I had to prepare the wine and wafers for Mass every day at noon for the Catholic Chaplain. I found this rather strange, because I was a High Priest in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, having served in a bishopric at BYU before I was drafted. I suppose I'm the only Mormon High Priest who prepared Catholic Mass.

As a Latter-day Saint, I was asked to serve as the Executive Secretary to the local branch president. In this official ecclesiastical capacity, I had much interaction with everyone in the Chaplain Corps at Ft.

Leonard Wood. All faiths shared the post chapel, a large structure which was reserved for LDS folks at a specific time every Sunday.

Once the Master Sergeant of the Chief of Chaplains asked me if we had some unusual ceremony in our services utilizing Cheerios. Every Sunday he found Cheerios scattered on a certain pew and the floor underneath. I had to explain that some parents kept their children quiet in church by feeding them snacks like Cheerios.

Eventually I received a hardship discharge from the Army, something I was told could not happen. However, truly a miracle for my family occurred, a dramatic story that I tell in the book *108 Mala Beads*. Many other amazing spiritual experiences occurred during my months in the army, also revealed in that book.



At this time, suddenly and miraculously, my vision of a filmmaker was about to come back to life.

By policy, the military would never grant a hardship discharge if the applicant did not have a job to step into. Part of my application to the army was a letter from the station managers at KBYU-TV, Joe White, and Mark Hathaway, who enthusiastically promised me a job upon my return. They were upset at my loss when I was drafted in the first place.

Filmmaker

Chapter Eight

Exciting as it was to be released from the army, my enthusiasm was jarred by some disasters on the trip from Missouri to Beaver, Utah before returning to Provo.

First of all, I couldn't understand why my wife Blanch was so sullen. We were very busy renting and loading a trailer, and barely on the highway when she asked, "Do you know what today is?" Of course I said, I received an honorable discharge which I worked so hard to secure and we we're on our way home.

"It's my birthday," she said matter-of-factly.

I was horrified and saddened that I overlooked such an important event, irrespective of everything else that was happening.

Pulling a huge U-Haul trailer, loaded beyond capacity for our used 1965 Buick Station Wagon, we passed through Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Going down a steep hill just outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico, the trailer began to sway back and forth. Applying the brake only made it worse, violently shaking all of us in the car. Suddenly the trailer broke off the hitch and tumbled down an embankment. Our personal belongings were scattered everywhere.

We were blessed not to be injured.

Fortunately, insurance covered the damage to the trailer, but not our stuff, some of which was stolen. Later, we were outfitted with another trailer and on our way, with a commitment to drive more

slowly and cautiously. I discovered later that my electric trains were stolen, toys from my childhood that my children enjoyed.

Up through western Colorado in the evening, a horrible scratching noise broke the silence. The station wagon rumbled and jerked to a stop. Stepping out, I discovered that the rear driver's side wheel lug bolts had sheared off, leaving the wheel to wobble uncontrollably.

We were a long way from any town, stranded, with a car full of tired and frightened children.

After a few minutes a pick-up truck pulled up behind us. The driver assessed the situation and invited us—insisted that we stay at his home that night several miles away. His wife fed us and accommodated us for sleep. He promised that he would get some buddies in the morning to fix the wheel.

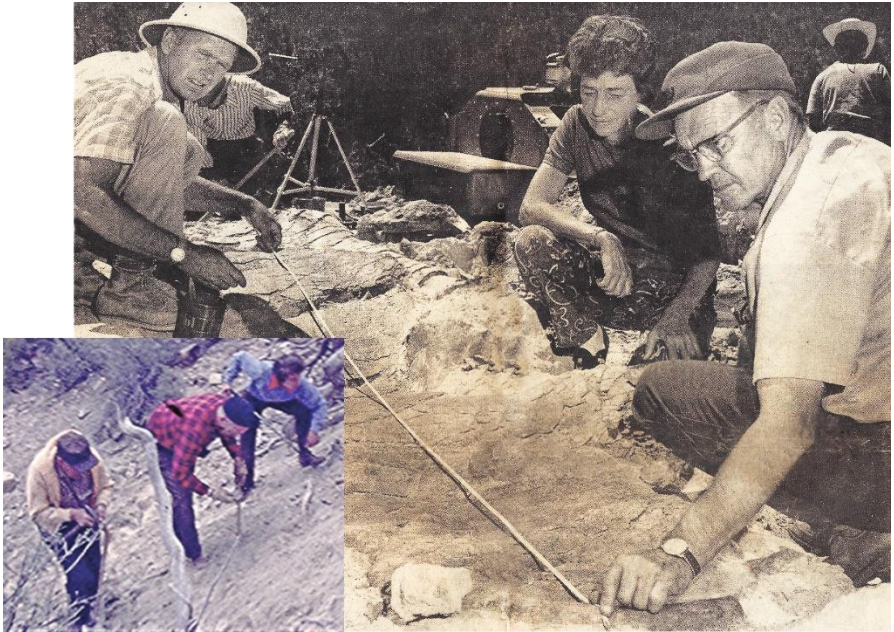
I have learned throughout my life that many people in our various societies are compassionate and willing to help others in need—even complete strangers.

Sure enough, by noon the next day, the car was fixed, and we were on our way. So grateful were we to this man, his family and friends. I wish I had recorded their names.

Without further incident, I was able to refocus my vision to that of making movies.

Back at KBYU-TV, I learned that BYU Vertebrate Paleontologist, Dr. James A. Jensen, with the help of rockhounds Eddie and Vivian Jones of Delta, Colorado, had discovered a remarkable location filled with dinosaur bones. Jensen (in the pith helmet) had received a grant to open a quarry west of Delta on the Uncompahgre Plateau with the promise of discovering new dinosaur bones from the Jurassic era.

Here, a few months later, they are measuring a 10-foot scapula or shoulder blade of a giant sauropod, by far the largest of any ever discovered.



Prior to opening the quarry, KBYU-TV received a grant to document the find.

Like most youngsters I was fascinated with dinosaurs. As a teenager, a trip with my family to Dinosaur National Monument (see picture on page 35) only increased my interest, which was greatly energized at the prospect of documenting this new discovery on film.

I campaigned hard to KBYU management and Dr. Jensen to let me use the grant money to document the dinosaur dig. Before the army, I had demonstrated my ability to work magic with a movie camera and editing bench, so they gave the project to me.

I could not write a script, for we did not know what would happen, but after a lot of research and interviewing, I created a production

plan and outline. I did this with the help of my cousin Steve Linton, who is a highly creative visionary, and my comical sidekick through my younger years in so many film and photo projects.

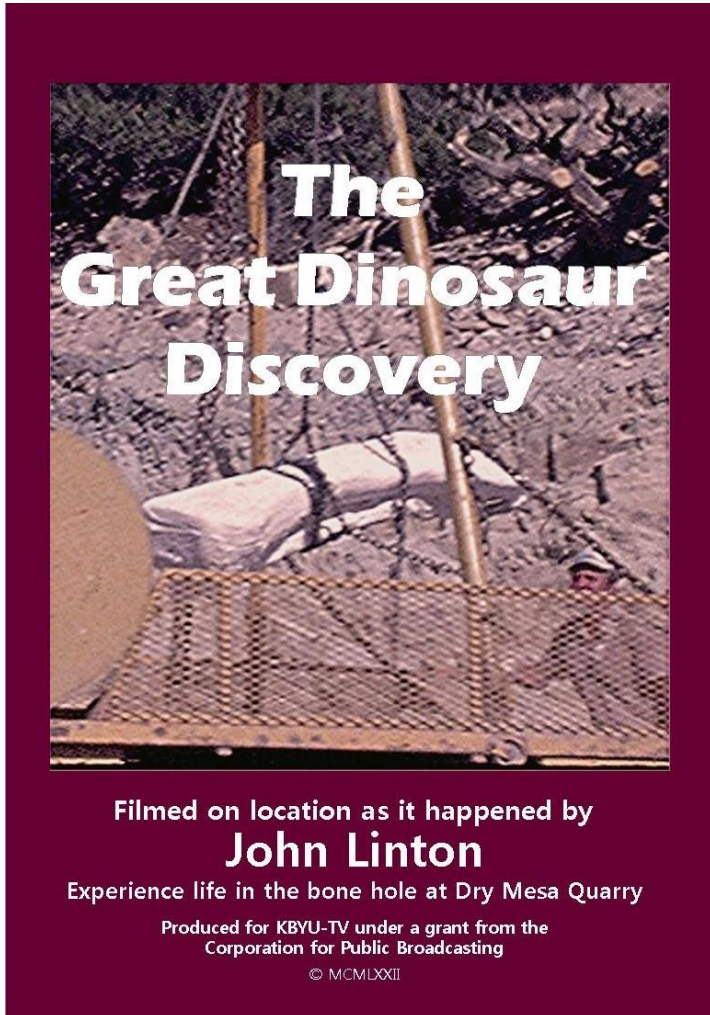
For this film I needed to work the steps of the Vision Cycle, and **Research** into Dr. Jensen and what he had found thus far. His prognostications defined the scope of the project. To **Adapt & Apply** I had to secure a production crew, transportation for multiple trips to the remote and high reaches of the Uncomphagre and find resources of film and other supplies.



Many people made the dirty and long journey to the Bone Hole to assist in production such as Grant Williams, Wally Barrus, Dennis Patterson, Ted Van Horn, Stephen Aubery, Merrill Jensen, Sy Felt and others whose names I cannot remember.

A very talented editor, Pete Czerny, pieced together the dozens of film clips, some dramatic recreations and mostly documentary style clips of events and discoveries as they happened. Dennis Lisonbee and Steven Amundsen wrote and recorded an original musical score.

Seeking Feedback from daily footage caused evaluation of the ongoing project, with necessary adjustments in development of the outline and eventual script. The cycle was continuously used, demanding constant updates in our planning, preparation, modification of the script and ongoing camera work.

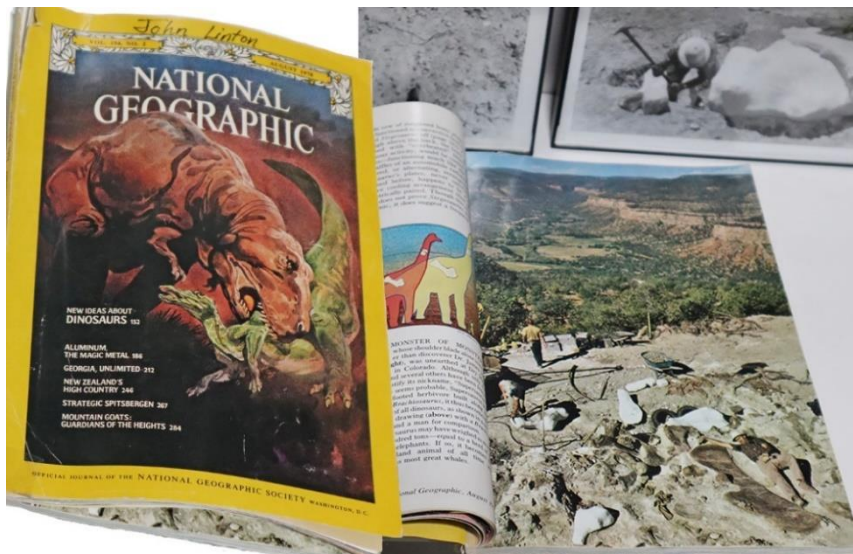


What resulted in *The Great Dinosaur Discovery* was a remarkable docudrama that revealed the heart of the scientist and his rockhound friends, Eddie and Vivian Jones.

The film was broadcast numerous times on PBS and won many awards including *The Golden Eagle* from The *Council on International Nontheatrical Events* in Washington, D.C. I was flown to the nation's capital to receive this award, standing next to our Utah Senator, Jake Garn.

The movie also received the notation “One of the best films, 1975-1976” from The *Learning Awards*, an organization that recognizes media of great learning value to be used in classrooms. There were additional awards and recognitions, including from New Zealand and Australia.

I took many still photographs of the quarry and its workers and was approached by *National Geographic Magazine* about submitting some of my pictures for publication in an article they were writing on dinosaurs. In the August, 1978, issue of the magazine on page 177 is



my photo, filling the entire page. For that submission I was paid \$100.00.

The “Supersaurus” skeleton discovered in Colorado is now on display at the *Mountain America Museum of Ancient Life* in Lehi, Utah. Many of the accompanying photographs with the display are pictures I took so many years ago.

For me personally, the best reward came from BYU. From the “Division of Instructional Services,” I received the *Production Award of the Year—1971*, for the movie, *The Great Dinosaur Discovery*.

Within the “Division of Instructional Services” were the different media functions within the university including KBYU-TV and the BYU Motion Picture Studio. One must understand that some employees at the movie studio harbored an attitude that nothing good could come from “TV”.

A general feeling pervaded that when it came to production, they were the best as they were the film production experts. Yet me, an employee of KBYU-TV, produced a film that won the Production Award in 1971 over anything they produced. From that moment on, I was an irritant to some of the folks at the Motion Picture Studio.

The next year I produced another short film for KBYU called *Barbershoppers*. This featured a barbershop quartet singing while



climbing all over a steam locomotive, then driving it down the track pulling cars full of dozens of other singers.

For that film I won the *Production Award of the year—1972*. Again, the motion picture studio productions were overlooked, and their management was embarrassed.



This was the last year the division gave the production award. Only two years the award was given, and I won them both.

Because of the notoriety I gained from the quality of *The Great Dinosaur Discovery*, I was given a leave of absence from KBYU to produce a special multi-media presentation for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and given the full resources and personnel of the Motion Picture Studio.

This film and stage presentation was about a new youth program to be implemented world-wide in the church. It was first shown to a filled Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Then the entire

presentation was modified into a movie and film prints were made and sent to church units all over the world.

To set the stage for the movie *This Is My Work*, I was able to gather a large group of teenagers for an opening sequence where standing together they were visiting. The camera was to zoom in on the main characters, a girl and then a boy, both leaders in their respective organizations.

The cinematographer from the studio under my direction was unhappy when the wind kicked up. He was on a platform with the camera, wanting to call off the shoot because of an impending storm.

I thought of the Savior when he caused the storm on the sea to be still. This film was very important to the church, and so silently in my heart, by the power of the priesthood, I commanded the storm to cease. Within moments the wind settled to a gentle breeze, making the scene beautiful with the long hair of the girls blowing gently in the breeze.



As soon as we had our shots we dismantled, and then the storm kicked up ferociously. Everyone raced to their cars, safe and happy with the experience.

Adding to the uniqueness of the film, the young man who was a youth leader had very long hair. At that time boys were encouraged

to have short hair, and one of the apostles objected to the look of the boy. So, in the revised script, as the boy grew spiritually, he had his hair cut.

However, the actor was not going to have his hair cut for the movie. So, we used gaffer tape to pull his hair to the side, and he was shot in profile for every scene thereafter.



I tell of more unexpected miracles and remarkable spiritual experiences related to my career in the book *108 Mala Beads*, a narrative revealing my personal spiritual life journey.

Not long thereafter, I was moved from KBYU-TV as a permanent employee to the Motion Picture Studio to produce filmstrips. This kept me away from producing motion pictures, at least for a while.

What happened next at BYU is an unbelievably pathetic display of system-wide mismanagement. This is a case study of potential disaster that might result when research and feedback are overlooked and ignored. It's hard to believe this happened at an institution of higher learning.

The director of the division decided to disband all divisional organizations such as the TV station, the movie studio, the portrait studio, sound support and other media services. Out of these were

created different pools: A photographer's pool, a sound technician's pool, a writer's pool and so on. Assuming from this that cinematographers would work happily beside TV cameraman, or that news writers would successfully write movie scripts was short sighted and ridiculous.

I was put in the director's pool and given a delightful assignment to produce and direct the BYU Centennial film in 1975, *Harvest of a Century*. This was a look back at the 100-year history from the founding of Brigham Young Academy. However, I was assigned a writer from the writer's pool that knew nothing about writing movie scripts.

Movies are visual in nature, and words are in large measure a description of the visuals. She was a good researcher, and produced a lengthy document that would have made a wonderful dissertation but was entirely unworkable as a movie script. I had to simplify and revise it, and her reaction to my much-needed changes were so venomous that one would think I had taken her baby and sliced it into pieces.

While recording the narration which I had written, she came into the studio in a rage, waving her script shouting, "I want it to be known that I have had nothing to do with what is happening here. I do not want my name associated with this travesty!" Fine. I took her name off the credits.

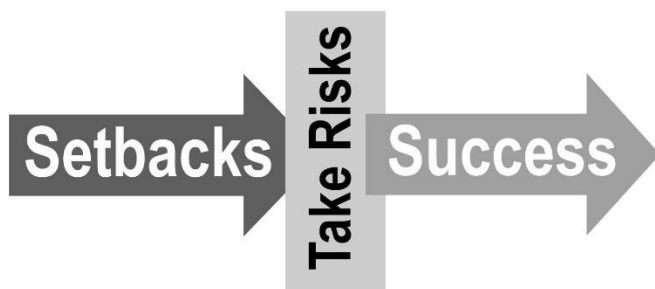
When completed, the movie was used on campus in various centennial celebrations and was highly acclaimed for its historical and entertainment value.

The new divisional organization was so bloated and inefficient that the cost overruns forced the board of trustees to make significant

cost saving cuts. This occurred through downsizing. I was in the first wave of people that were laid off and was told that they were letting go of people who they thought, “. . .had the best chance of making it in the outside world.”

It was a warped sense of compassion that only harmed their floundering organization. To this day, it is mind numbing to think that an organization that was serious about efficiency and productivity would let go of their most talented people. But it happened.

And what happened next really upset the folks within the division. I stepped through the door of opportunity and established myself as an independent film producer. Within days I was approached by the LDS Church Exhibit’s Division to produce a film for the Temple Visitor Center in Washington D.C.



This project was supposed to have been produced by the Motion Picture Studio, but when the exhibit’s producers learned I was freed from BYU, they came to me to make the film. (I really believe they wanted me to produce the film, but were denied access to me while under the employ of the university.)

My former bosses humbly agreed to let me hire personnel and services from the studio to produce the project for the church—under my sole artistic and management direction, of course.

Businessman/Producer/Director

Chapter Nine

The exhibits project certainly got us started in our new entity called *Linton Productions*. One of the first things I did was hire a graphic artist in Provo, to design the LINTON logo. He charged me \$50 for this timeless image that has been used for nearly 50 years.



So meaningful is this logo that it will likely be the carving on my tombstone in another 25 years. Recently, while suggesting this desire, my son Curtis offered to pay for it.

In quick succession we produced several films for different Temple Visitor's Centers. In each one was a sequence demonstrating the cycle of life. I filmed several people of various ages walking in a series of dissolves, from my toddler son Curtis to my paternal grandfather, Edward E. Drury, who happened to be the father of the president of the Washington D.C. Temple, Edward E. Drury, Jr.

I learned years later that at the Temple, my uncle the president, was told to go over to the Visitor's Center to see the movie he was in. He denied that he was ever in a movie, but after repeated persuasions, he walked over to the Visitor's Center. Upon seeing the film, he gasped, "That's not me, that's my dad!"

Uncle Ed realized again that I could never stop taking family pictures, his nemesis family photographer years earlier in Denver, Colorado.

Another fun project was to visualize a great commentary made by a famous radio voice of the time, Paul Harvey. In his piece, *What Makes Mormons Run*, he marveled at the viability and health of Mormons, particularly those who were athletes. I acquired a lot of footage of skilled Latter-day Saint athletes and edited various scenes into a fast-paced montage that was used widely by the church.



I thrived on **Feedback** from my successful films insofar as making effective and powerful productions. . .



. . .but I failed to **Research & Define** how a business of this type should be managed.

A partner joined me in Linton Productions, Steve Aubery. He was a very talented cinematographer and sound man. He was in the second wave of layoffs from BYU. We worked hard on many small projects. But unfortunately, we made the typical mistakes neophyte entrepreneurs make when they start a business. I take responsibility for these shortcomings:

I did not go to the best minds in the business.

I hired too many people.

I did not budget.

I did not enforce a hard work ethic.

I was talked into getting a fancy office suite.

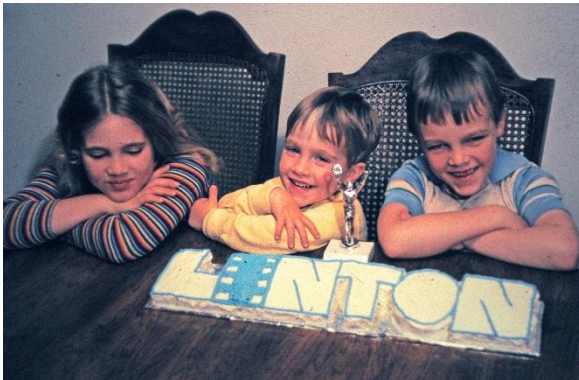
I authorized the purchase of new equipment and office furniture that we could have survived without.

I was too nice as a manager, not enforcing punctuality and absentee standards.

Sadly, I should have heeded a popular phrase during The Great Depression: "Fix it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without."

Irrespective of these shortcomings, we prospered, and brought in a great helper, Paul Smith. He was a young man who worked very hard learning the skills of cinematography and editing. He was punctual, smart and a real asset.

We made numerous short films for the church, the state of Utah, and TV commercials.



We won an award, so Hollee, Curtis and Cory celebrated with a cake that Blanch made.

One project took us to remote islands and shorelines of

the Great Salt Lake to document the features and conditions of this inland sea.

Produced for the state of Utah, we were provided transportation by the Utah Air National Guard in which we flew in a helicopter with our crew and equipment. Attempting to touch down on one remote

island, the pilot said he couldn't safely do it, and for us to jump out with our gear. It was about a five-foot jump from the swaying aircraft.

"How will we get home?" I shouted above the wind.

"I'll come back and get you in a couple of hours," the pilot promised. In this situation, I had to have faith.

we reached some of the shore locations in our production van. Following tire tracks up the eastern shoreline, we came upon a young man walking naked in the sand. He greeted us kindly, "The nudist camp is just ahead." We turned around. Not enough faith this time. Then our LINTON van got stuck in the sand.



Another fun project took me to McCall Idaho where they manufactured the efficient *Knight Gard* wood burning stove. I flew to Boise, then transferred to a small plane taking me north to McCall in the mountains where wood burning stoves were needed and wood was plentiful.

It was a rough ride to McCall, and out the window I only saw clouds as we bumped along. When the pilot announced we were making our final approach to the airport, the clouds cleared enough that I could see pine trees on both sides of the airplane, not looking down but

straight across at eye level. We were descending into a canyon, and I could almost see the pinecones on either side.

After a few months we accepted a third partner, a very talented music composer and singer, Kent Linton. He was not related to me, but undoubtedly was attracted to our business because of the Linton logo, and that we were housed on the 15th floor of the Beneficial Life Tower in downtown Salt Lake City.

Kent brought us more work, including a delightful film for the Utah State Department of Agriculture which promoted the restoration of rangeland in rural Utah. Kent wrote the script and original music for the film, *Within Range*.

Times got tough and scary. We came to a point where we decided to take a big risk. We wanted to make a feature film.

Kent wrote a feature length script *After All the Songs* and composed an original song to go with it. It was a delightful story about a young blind girl and the song was worthy of the story.

Naturally, we needed funding and Hollywood backing to produce the movie. We hired a young man from New York City, Paul McGuire, who understood the ways of the world of entertainment. He went to work making for us different contacts in Hollywood.

I flew to meet with an upstart group in Hollywood who were converting an old warehouse to a studio. I went in my business suit, white shirt and tie, to meet a friendly but wildly dressed group of people. Immediately they wanted a publicity picture of this producer/director from Utah. In came a photographer and suddenly two gorgeous but scantily clad girls grabbed my arms on either side, clinging and smiling with me in my business suit. I survived the

awkwardness but found that the group was all show and no substance without any real ability to support a major production.

I learned quickly that when the word went out that I wanted to make a theatrical movie, I was suddenly bombarded with a lot of wannabes and people who made promises that never materialized. They were a “flash in the pan.”

However, a very promising contact emerged, a music producer from New York City who also helped produce the movie *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*. He had looked over our script, *After All the Songs*, listened to the music and invited me to meet him at his hotel suite in Hollywood.

With great promise, I introduced myself at the reception desk and was immediately escorted to a upper floor suite in the hotel. Answering the door was the producer in his bathrobe. He invited me in and after talking for a few minutes, he wanted to show me the “theater” in his bedroom.

In the late 1970s, home theaters were in their burgeoning stages. Against one wall was an enormous convex silver screen, and over his bed a projector. He laid on the bed and invited me to lie next to him to get the best view of the picture.

Creepy could hardly describe the experience. I got on the bed, and realized what it would take to have him produce our movie. I had to excuse myself.

I believe to this day that if I had played this man’s games, titillating his experience with me, I might have seen my career path take a very bold and progressive turn into the Hollywood scene. However, I loved my family too much and moral compass to be compromised for financial and celebrity gain.

Sadly, Kent left us, and Steve Aubery and I decided to try funding another idea. I went to work studying tax laws and how we could entice people to invest in a movie tax shelter. Our publicity man, Paul McGuire, began recruiting salespeople.

Paul was a hard worker, but as a native of Manhattan, he didn't always understand the west. We sent him on a recruiting trip to Vernal in northeastern Utah, forcing him to drive along a lonely highway. When he returned, he expressed gratitude that his car didn't break down, for he feared if he had to step out of the car into the desert he would be bitten by a rattlesnake.

I have often mused that people in the west don't understand the big cities in the East. Some people are terrified that if they walk the streets of New York City they will get mugged. One of my older sisters lived in New Jersey for a few months, but never visited the big city because of that very fear.



I developed a feature length movie script based on my father's experience in operating a nursing home for the elderly. We titled it *Knocking at Heaven's Door*.

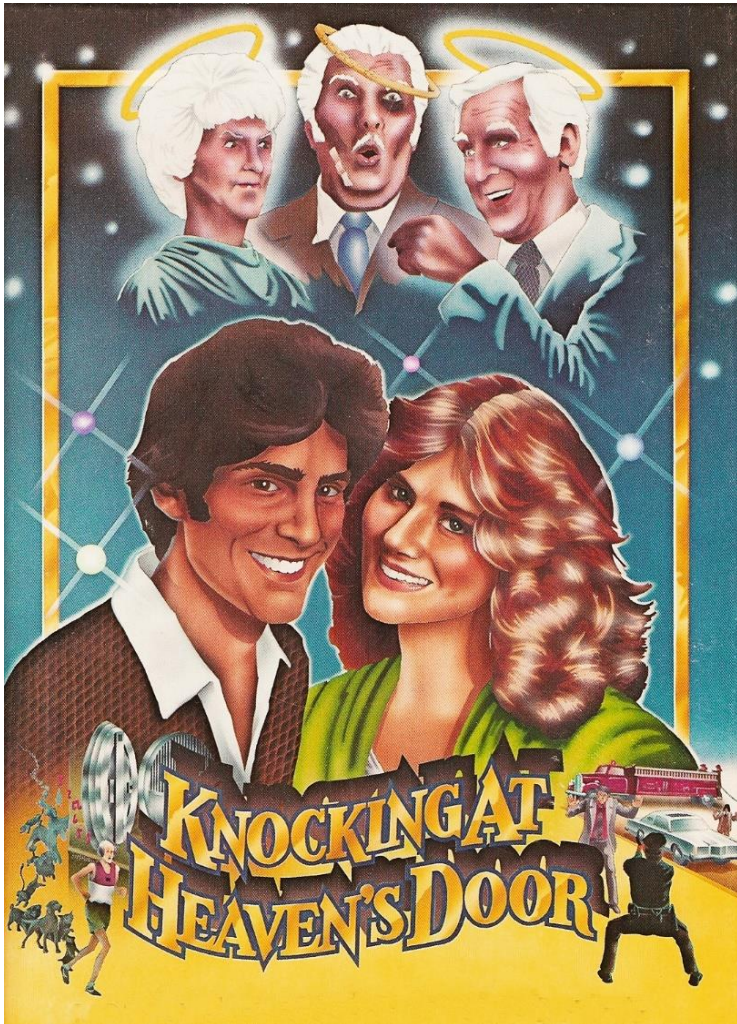
I got plenty of **Feedback** regarding the huge risks of making a low-budget feature film...



...but did not **Adapt & Apply**. We raced toward the precipice with our blinders on. We never raised enough money to make it a legitimate

Hollywood feature but kept plowing ahead, nonetheless. We got publicity for our project in the Hollywood magazine *Variety*.

The film *Knocking at Heaven's Door* is a comedy, and big-name comedians that loved the script wanted to be in it, including Don Knotts, Phil Silvers and Joe E. Ross of *Car 54 Where Are You?* fame. Unfortunately, we could not meet the compensation demands of their agents. Instead, against better advice, we went with unknown actors, who although very talented, did not have screen recognition.



We completed the film and saw it released in theaters, only to be dumped after a few days of play. People liked the movie, but not enough to give it enduring theatrical legs.

This occurred just as VHS videotape markets were burgeoning, and fortunately for us, we were discovered by Ken Israel at *Excel Video* in New York City. He had the movie transferred to video and began distribution in several markets.

Oddly, the greatest success for video sales of *Knocking at Heaven's Door* was in Europe, where people seemed to have a greater appreciation for the humor of the elderly suffering dementia. The income from VHS was minimal and failing to come close to making a profit.

As disappointing as the theatrical release was, and the failure economically, it paled in comparison to the devastating public ridicule I received for the film. The premier local movie critic in Salt Lake City, Chris Hicks, was merciless in his condemnation of the film. Justified criticism is one thing, and it was deserving of that, but personal attacks against me were beyond cruel and vicious.

I will never forget having to help one of my sons deliver newspapers in my neighborhood, seeing on every issue the attacks of me as a filmmaker, calling my film, "The worst movie of the year."

A few years later, my daughter Hollee took a class from Chris Hicks at the University of Utah. Without revealing she was my daughter, she asked him if he felt justified in brutal personal attacks he made on local producers of movies. He knew what she was referring to and changed the subject.

The demise of *Knocking at Heaven's Door* occurred during the recession of 1980 when so many of our short film customers had

disappeared. We had to shut down. It has always been fashionable to criticize successful people, assuming they take money from the masses. Those critics probably never had a business and consequently never had to suffer the anguish and difficulty of losing one.

Every successful entrepreneur I know has lost a business at least once in his or her career. I did this time.

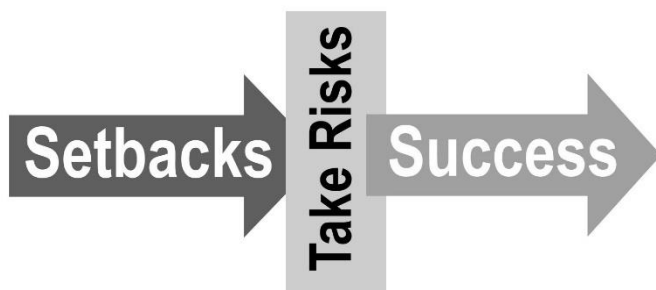
When one loses a business, it is more than the loss of income. It is letting go of employees and causing suffering for their unpaid salaries. It is not being able to pay off creditors when there is no cash flow. Credit worthiness disappears. What comes next is the Internal Revenue Service and their auditors.

Upon reflection, this was the most painful time of my career, a pain that extended into my sense of self-worth. But I survived.

It was shortly after this that I started picking tomatoes, not knowing that a world full of “school apples” awaited us a few years later.

High School Teacher

Chapter Ten



Humbled and hungry, I took the **Risk** to approach people I knew who had responsible positions in Jordan School District, a very large suburban district south of Salt Lake City. I was placed in the substitute teacher's pool, and soon had a lengthy assignment substituting for a science teacher who was recuperating from surgery.

I was noticed with approval by the science chair who wanted to hire me full time for the next year. I was to teach 9th grade basic science at Alta High School in Sandy, Utah. Evidently my second minor of geology in college barely qualified me for this assignment.



My **Setbacks** were so overwhelming from the loss of my business and film career that I did not view this opportunity as much of a **Success**. I had to force myself to have a good attitude about my circumstances.

I will never forget my first paycheck. It was about \$900. I stared at the check and thought, “I don’t have to pay this back,” as I had borrowed so much money to prop up our failing business. I further thought, “I don’t have to look at this as an investment from someone who may worry that I will not make their investment pay off.”

The money was mine. I earned it, and psychologically it meant a great deal.

This was my first year as a full-time teacher. My wife Blanch accepted an assignment in an elementary school as a teacher. She had taught several years previously, and so her paycheck was bigger than mine, but I didn’t care.

Before the first day of school as a science teacher, I was approached by the science chair and told that the department had voted to do their own thing. They wanted the creative freedom to teach how and what they wanted provided it was within broad curricular guidelines. This was at a time when there were minimal curriculum and teaching standards, and no standardized state tests. The science chair said, “There are three different sets of textbooks. Pick which one you want and good luck.”

I was pretty much left to feel that I was not to bother other teachers, and they wouldn’t bother me. As a new teacher, I could not have felt more isolated than if I was in a one-room schoolhouse out on the prairie.

Learning to teach full-time, with the same students day in and day out, is like learning to ride a bicycle. You wobble, you fall, and you’re scared. Unfortunately, I didn’t have someone to steady me as I learned—notwithstanding the college classes, student teaching and substituting that preceded it.

At Alta High, the administrative mandate was that teachers were to keep control. I was told by a vice-principal, “When the kids are in your room, your job is to keep control. Between class changes, it is our job to keep control.” Nothing was said about the quality of learning.

Definitely, my greatest frustration was keeping control. The kids were noisy, and often out of control. In desperation, I did something that at the time I felt guilty about. During my planning period on occasion, I roamed the halls of the school and eavesdropped on other teachers. I found that some of them also had students noisy and out of control. This made me feel better. Without realizing it, I learned the importance of collegiality, teachers regularly communicating and commiserating with each other.

Years later the concept of collegiality was central to many of the videos we produced in the *Video Journal of Education*. My teaching assignment at Alta High School was valuable preparation for the programs we would produce years later, positively impacting thousands of schools.

Worse than often being out of control, the youngsters were sometimes brutal in their observations of me. Children at this age of burgeoning puberty are very curious about the personal lives of their teachers. They learned that I had recently been a movie producer and director. “How come,” they would sometimes ask, “Why aren’t you still making movies? Why are you a teacher?”

These were painful but unintentional digs that pierced my heart. It is said that clowns are sad people. Clowns are funny, and perhaps their ability to make people laugh hides the pain they feel inside.

Consequently, I made the youngsters laugh a lot. Besides having inherited creative skills, I was able to apply the Linton sense of humor. I was certainly not a boring teacher.



I was considered a very funny teacher. Students affectionately called me “weird,” which at that time meant fun and funny—a clown.

I love this drawing made of me, anonymously by one of my clever students.

I always took advantage of analogies I observed in their

lives to the workings of physics and chemistry. Lab experiments and explanations could easily be tied to the outcomes of everyday adolescent experiences. In covalent bonds, electrons circle the nuclei of multiple atoms. Similarly, youngsters expel energy with the looks, smiles and touches they experience when near each other, especially when close to others of the opposite gender.

Students of that age bud with amorous thoughts. Once while teaching a unit on electricity, I did a lab demonstration that could probably have gotten me in trouble but was delightful to my students.

The lab would demonstrate that electricity must flow through a circuit, and if the circuit is broken the electricity will not flow. Out of the lab closet I pulled a small generator. When cranking it, the generator produced a current that could be felt but was not harmful.

I called it the kissing experiment. I asked for a boy and girl to volunteer to each hold one wire between their fingers. As I would crank the generator, they were then to kiss which would close the circuit. The students were stunned, and nobody volunteered. But finally, one shy girl who was stunningly beautiful quietly moved forward. Quickly, an enamored boy jumped up to hold the other wire.

I cranked. The boy and girl who really didn't know each other, just stared at each other, hesitant to get too close. Soon the kids were chanting, "Go, go, go, kiss, kiss, kiss!" Their faces slowly drew closer together. My arm got tired as their faces hesitated to meet in the middle. Finally, they each pursed their lips, and just as an anticipated kiss was almost felt—JOLT! The circuit was instantly closed through their bodies. They leapt back from each other, and the rest of the students cheered and clapped.

Everybody then wanted to do the kissing experiment. For the next several days students from all over the school I didn't even know came into my classroom and wanted to do the kissing experiment.

Another layer of paradox dominated my life at this time. I was an LDS bishop which is the equivalent of a lay minister. One does not volunteer for this job within the Mormon faith but is expected to do so when asked. What my students saw in me was someone they liked, for I resonated with their level of humor and passion—yet did not match the stereotype of bishops they knew in their lives, individuals to be wary of, if not feared.

So, there I was, a new teacher falling off the bicycle, a comic, a washed-out filmmaker and a spiritual leader that didn't seem like a spiritual leader.

But I was a spiritual leader. On occasion students wanted to talk privately with me, getting advice on personal problems. Throughout my life I have had neighbors and relatives approach me with their problems. Often, they then become the givers of advice and goodwill to others.

I remember a nephew who was a dedicated alcoholic and lived amongst the homeless in Pioneer Park in Salt Lake City. One winter his sister found him and gave him a coat. When she looked for him a few days later, he didn't have his coat.

"Where's your coat Kevin," she asked.

"I gave it to Tom over there, he needed it more than me."



At my core I was still a filmmaker, never losing that vision. Anticipating the summer break from school, I wrote a full-length movie script, *Perilous Journey*.

My life was a perilous journey. What a perfect title for another feature length movie.

I contacted my friend Ken Israel in New York City who distributed the VHS video *Knocking at Heaven's Door*. He was excited about the concept and provided seed money to begin production of a new movie in the summer after school.

Filmmaker to Video Producer

Chapter Eleven

Perilous Journey is the story of one group of Mormon handcart pioneers who in 1856 trekked across the plains to Utah pulling all their earthly possessions in handcarts, many perishing along the trail.

Many people came together offering help to recreate this remarkable epoch. My wife Blanch did make-up, my son Cory did the clap stick, and my son Curtis acted the part of Arthur, a young boy who got lost in the wilderness.

I had an old professional Auricon camera built in the 1950s. It was outfitted to operate with a crystal-controlled motor to stay synchronized with the sound recorded on a separate machine.



Unfortunately, the batteries were no good, so I devised a method of powering the camera with a car battery, running the electricity through a transformer to produce the exact level of current needed.

Everywhere we went through the mountains into snow, wading through rivers and trekking onto dusty plains we lugged this huge camera, its heavy car battery and even heavier transformer. The camera is now on display in my studio/museum.

The system worked perfectly; at least I thought it did.

4 Evaluate & Adjust

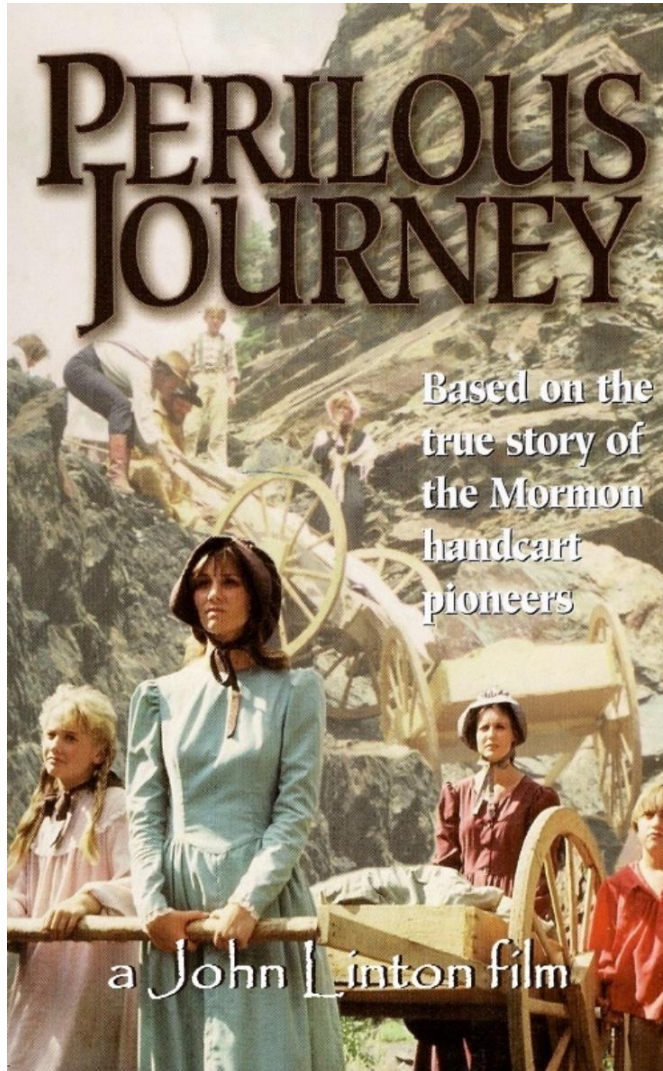
After production, when I began editing, I discovered that the picture ran behind the sound by about 3%. In a panic, I had to **Evaluate** and find a way to **Adjust**.

From our failing business I had been able to keep a flatbed editing machine. I devised a system of pulleys attached to the editor to slow the magnetic soundtrack and rerecord it in sync with the film.



Production people who saw what I did were at once struck with what an idiot I had been for allowing this mistake in the first place, and what a genius I was for designing a way to fix it.

The film was not produced for theatrical release, but to be sold and rented on VHS videotape. The project was reasonably successful in producing cash flow, but never enough to pay off a handful of investors. Fortunately, their attitude was stoic resolve, knowing they had sacrificed for a worthwhile project.



I had learned from my experience with *Knocking at Heaven's Door* that when you put yourself out there, expect criticism to come your

way. Such happened again with *Perilous Journey*, only this time it came from an unexpected source. My film was blackballed by the LDS church, because according to one pioneer historian of influence, the film had historical inaccuracies.

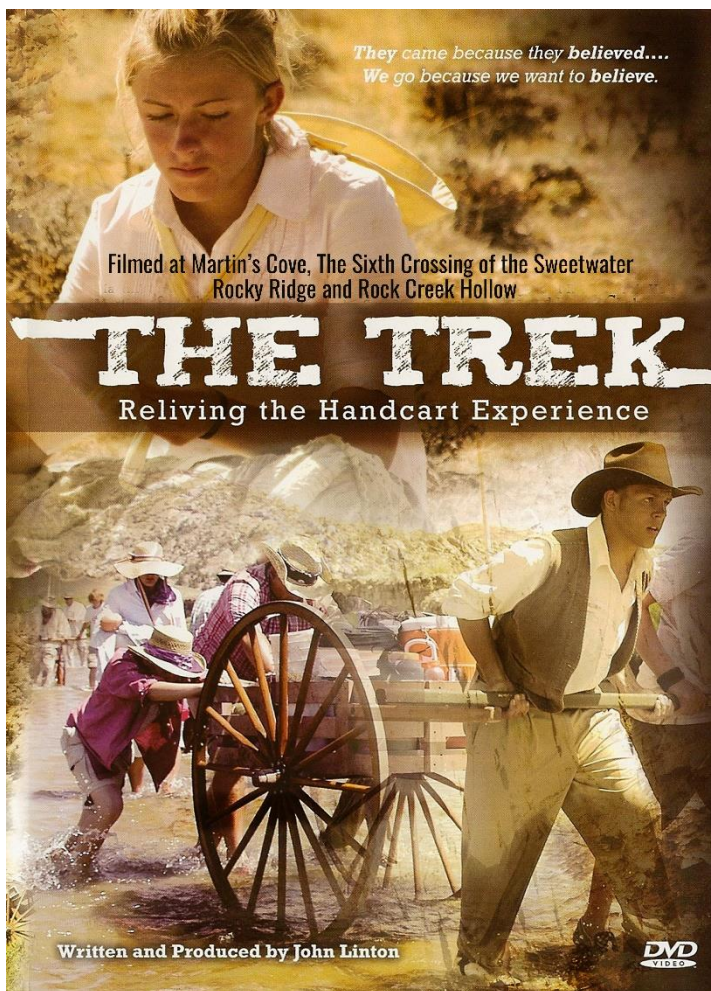
What movie does not have inaccuracies that attempt to recreate an epoch? How can one tell a story in 90 minutes that in reality covered several months without taking dramatic license? And why was it a problem that the show wasn't entirely filmed where the pioneers actually traversed? I will never know.

Perilous Journey was later marketed on DVD, and many scenes were inserted in later video recreations of the pioneer trek to great dramatic effect.

In 2006 I was asked to document with professional video equipment several hundred youth on a trek recreating the original experience. I inserted many powerful scenes from the movie *Perilous Journey* to give the docudrama real emotional impact.

The ecclesiastical leader who oversaw the video production in 2006 was stunned to realize that authentic clips added to his modern-day trek were from my movie made 24 years earlier in 1982. He was the expert on the pioneer experience that was so critical of *Perilous Journey*. This "approved" video on DVD is entitled *The Trek*.

After completing production of *Perilous Journey* in the summer of 1982 it was back to teaching in the fall. I was a good teacher. If constant requests from parents and students to enroll in my classes were any indication, then it was so.



Much to my surprise, after five years of teaching, I was called into the offices of the district administration. They knew of my background in film production and asked if I would be willing to leave the classroom and produce staff development videos. The district had received a state grant to introduce Outcome-based Education to teachers. It was felt that video would be an efficient way to do so.

I was still on the payroll as a teacher but was allowed to be paid overtime because of the time commitment this would require.

Blanch was allowed to work for extra income beyond her teacher's salary to assist me.

This was a huge validation for me personally. My talent and experience were recognized, appreciated, and converted to real family supporting income.

One of the great benefits to me was that I now had an affirming boss in Dr. JoAnn Seghini who was the director of curriculum and staff development. I shall forever praise her name.

She shared with me the research on highly creative people who are project driven. Once their minds are set, they plow forward dedicating all their energies to the project, often forgetting about budgets and schedules.

Highly creatives abuse their bodies with loss of sleep, junk food, caffeine, or anything else to keep them going. When taking on an assignment, they are slow at getting started, and they never complete the project on time. But in the end, they always create a masterpiece.

JoAnn gave me challenging projects and was very patient. She covered for me as I manifested the characteristics of the highly creative. She was empowering and expected amazing things and was not disappointed. She encouraged me to stay healthy as I might abuse my body to stay on task, as someone like me might be prone to do.

As a devout Catholic, she lit candles for us when we had to travel, knowing we might drive through the night to reach important destinations for production.

Around the district administration I became this amazing talent that was making them look good. Everyone wanted me to produce a video for their department.

Unfortunately, this created jealousy in one employee who already had a district position running a video lab. He felt threatened by me, although I gave him every assurance that I had no intention of taking his job. In fact, I utilized him all I could in the productions.



A lot had changed in a few short years from live film production to live video production. I had to retool. It was necessary to do a lot of **Research** on video production and **Define** how I would proceed.

It was necessary to **Adapt & Apply** my creative skills to new technologies. I knew that the fundamentals of camera, light and sound remained the same, even though the format and technology were very different.

I found John Crossman who is a master editor of videotape. He is a highly creative person like me, and until recently, has edited every

program I produced since those days at Jordan School District. He has won many awards for his editing, including Emmy awards from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

For the programs on Outcome-based Education, we sought the best minds in the business who happened to be in Johnson City, New York. John Champlin, Al Mamary and Larry Rowe became ardent supporters of our video producing talent. They spoke of our videos as having heart, a quality missing in educational videos up to that time.

For these programs, we videotaped in many classrooms throughout Jordan School District, as well as several other districts in rural Utah.

Amid this, Jordan District asked me to produce a program on classroom management. The best mind was William Glasser who wrote several books on control theory. Glasser was a student of W. Edwards Demming who was an advocate of seeking high quality in industry which greatly impacted Japanese and American manufacturing companies.

I was flattered that Glasser thought my videos to be of a Demming level of quality and said that I was his producer. We later featured Glasser in several of our *Video Journal* programs.

As employees of the district, we were limited in what we could produce beyond educational programs. A commercial world out from under the protective umbrella of the district was beckoning. We decided to leave the school district.

With Blanch as a business partner and manager, and with video as a format instead of film, I was sure we could succeed in a big way in the real world of business.

Because we had been using the district professional video camera purchased for my use, it became necessary to acquire our own camera as we left the district's employ. JoAnn knew that the camera would not be used within the district after our departure and supported the idea of us buying it. However, as a public entity, it was necessary for the district to publish publicly the availability of the camera. Surely, I thought, nobody would want it.

The highest bid came from a woman who worked in the Utah State Office of Education, with a cash offer much higher than ours. Inquiry strongly suggested that her belief was that if she acquired "my" camera, she would prevent me from producing any more quality programs that had brought me so much notoriety. Furthermore, she believed that with "my" camera, she could then produce programs of the same quality.

Many times, I have marveled that people think the quality of a camera, or a recorder, or a computer would somehow devolve to them the talent they so desperately wanted but lacked. Often people have shown me their latest camera purchase with all its new electronic gimmicks and capabilities. In the end, their photos looked no better than before their purchase.

Many of the films and videos I produced were with used cameras, lights, and microphones; equipment cast off by someone else. For a time, I used a PVC sprinkler pipe attached to a microphone cradle so I could reach across the classroom to pick up sound.

The woman at the state office got "my" camera, and honestly, I have no idea what she did with it. We were able to purchase another very suitable camera with our retirement funds.

When the assistant superintendent learned that we were drawing out our retirement money to buy a camera, he thought we were crazy and counseled us to the contrary. That camera and its accessories cost \$20,000 in 1988 and has paid for itself hundreds of times over.

The camera is on display in my studio/museum and is featured on the cover of this book.

If talent is the key to my success, I must express my sincere gratitude for the blessings of heaven and of my ancestry that gave me the talent I have. Some have postulated that I could have made a success in Hollywood producing theatrical movies with substantial budgets. My passions and childhood experiences parallel the likes of a Steven Spielberg or George Lucas.

However, I lived in Utah, and as a father of five children, my devotion was to them. My commitment to this ideal had been previously cemented with the producer I met in his hotel room in Hollywood.

Even though Blanch would have supported a move to California, I remained firm in my belief that the best thing for my five children was to remain in one home, in one community, close to life-long friends and family, thus creating a secure environment for their growth. I had to move when I was 13, and the experience was traumatic. I did not want to do this to my children, especially moving to the rat race of Hollywood and the unpredictability of the fight to the top, dog-eat-dog culture of the commercial motion picture industry.

This many years later, how grateful I am that my children are each independent and highly successful with their own families and career pursuits.

The Video Journal of Education

Chapter Twelve

Remaining in Utah and resurrecting Linton Productions, we began again producing short promotional and instructional programs for business, TV commercials, and any project that would generate income. But this time it was with video, not celluloid film.

From a conservative perspective we were foolish. We had few prospects for clients, with no cash to underwrite our enterprise.



Blanch did the **Research** and **Definition** of our business plan. I **Adapted** and **Applied** with what resources we had.

Gradually we began to acquire video projects. We sought **Feedback** of what we did, **Evaluated** and **Adjusted** our work, and continued through the *Vision Cycle*.

We produced a video demonstrating a new insulation technology, *Insul-Basket*—hanging baskets of insulation from ceilings of large buildings. Perhaps this could have been a companion piece to the film we made a few years earlier of the *Knight Gard* wood burning stoves that were made in McCall, Idaho.

Perhaps a better use of the *Knight Gard* stoves would be in the houses showcased in a video we completed for *Ivory Homes*, a piece promoting the quality of the hundreds of single-resident houses they were building.

Blanch was very good at finding business and helped win the bid to produce a dramatic piece for the Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City entitled *Hello Mr. Dewey*.

Mr. Dewey was a teddy bear, duplicates of which were given to children entering the hospital. The video helped parents and their very sick children adjust to the trauma of long stays at the hospital. The video was extremely well received and used for a long time at that institution.

We produced a video promoting positive thinking for a local entrepreneur. He secured interviews for us with some highly successful people, including Art Linkletter of television fame in the 1950s and 60s.

We interviewed a self-made wealthy promoter, speaker and author. He made the strange observation that successful people at his level have one driving, unsatisfied need: To have more accumulated money in the millions than other highly successful people.

One of our first big projects came with an unexpected phone call from Doug Naylor who was an associate of William Glasser. Naylor taught workshops to teachers on Control Theory and wanted us to

make a series of videos of his workshops. These programs later became some of the first albums in our *Video Journal of Education* series.

San Pedro is near Long Beach in California. We made many trips there in our rickety old Southwind motorhome to produce programs for Naylor. We logged more than 100,000 miles on that beast, traveling to California, the east coast and the Midwest many times.



On one trip to San Pedro, the motorhome engine caught fire in a remote portion of southern Utah. Blanch jumped out of the coach. I raced to the back and grabbed the camera and other gear throwing it to her as she stacked it several feet from the burning engine compartment, fearing the entire motor home would ignite in flames. It would have burned to cinders had not some truckers stopped and put out the blaze before it spread.

For several months the Southwind was in a Dodge dealer repair shop in Southern Utah being rebuilt, for it had a Dodge drive train. The motorhome worked fine for another several thousand miles. I made sure we had a good fire extinguisher with us from that day forward.

On one of our trips somewhere in the east, I cannot remember where, we got caught in torrential rain that lasted all night. Predictably, the roof leaked. What a night, awakening to water dripping on our faces. A cooking pan caught the rain. Then there was another leak and another pan had to be found. Before the night was over, we were sleeping in contorted positions in between several pots and pans collecting rainwater.

Our youngest son Trent was in middle school, and we chose to take him with us on many of those production trips. Once in Pennsylvania for the Control Theory program, we were in a school where the folks were boasting at the beauty of the Appalachian Mountains nearby. Trent, in his honest adolescent way said, “We live where there are *real* mountains,” attesting to the fact that he grew up at the base of the rugged Wasatch Range.

After having been in many schools with a lot of diversity, Trent once commented that he didn’t like our schools at home because there was no diversity.

While visiting so many schools, I noticed an interesting phenomenon in children’s art. Elementary schools typically display artwork in the halls. Lower elementary children in the western United States will often draw their home, family and trees with pointed mountain peaks in the background. Within the inner-city schools of the east, the lower elementary artwork has similar characteristics, but the background is always of tall buildings and big bridges, not mountains.

We approached ASCD, the *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*, about making videos for them. They had a reputation for producing the finest educational videos to demonstrate teaching skills. We offered our services as quality producers. Although they were impressed with our programs, they

felt it was not possible to work with us because we were in Utah, our willingness to travel notwithstanding. Many years later, when our *Video Journal* programs were penetrating and dominating the market, ASCD mournfully admitted that we had altered and nearly destroyed their video production business because educators preferred the quality of our programs.

During this time, I had a deep-seated yearning and belief that in education we had an opportunity that superseded anything we had done before. I posited to Blanch that we could produce a monthly publication of videos, a journal of sorts, a kind of “video Journal.”

I had long been a fan of *National Geographic Magazine* and thought it might be a good idea to sell subscriptions to schools of professional development videos. The series could be called, *The Video Journal of Education*.

Blanch was uncertain at first but warmed to the idea because of her commitment to quality teaching. Our experience in producing the programs on Outcome-based Education and Control Theory for Doug Naylor gave us the experience we needed.

We approached the originators of Outcome-based Education in Johnson City, New York. Dr. John Champlin liked the idea of the *Video Journal* series. He invited us to Phoenix, Arizona, where they were having an OBE conference. Others in his group would visit with us about the possibility. They saw tremendous benefit in producing monthly programs which would support their teachings. Throughout the United States, there were school districts that participated in their training and would be potential customers for the new video series.

Coming home from Phoenix in our rattletrap motorhome, we had secured a working relationship with the Outcomes Group that would provide \$20,000 in seed money, a commitment to provide topics with presenters, and their mailing list.

I mused many times from that occasion that Dr. Champlin asserted we would never be able to produce more than 25 programs. There were not enough topics of value to educators beyond that. This number would suggest that the project would die down after about three or four years. That was in 1991. Through the next two decades we produced hundreds of video journal programs.

Never was the importance of the Vision Cycle more significant than when producing the *Video Journal*. We had to move continuously



through the steps of the cycle with every program. The most important **Research** came with developing our first mailer. As an elementary teacher, Blanch knew the appeal vivid colors had to elementary teachers. Fortunately, producers of the shells that contained videotapes began producing them in bright colors. I

acquired empty shells in red, yellow, purple, blue, green and orange, stacking them in a display to look like they contained our video programs. With the photograph of that display, I put together the brochure featured on page 19 in the chapter *The Vision Cycle*.

The brochure promised delivery dates beginning in about two months—and we hadn't yet produced a video. It was a big risk. From anticipated sales, we were counting on the money we needed to travel and videotape in the schools that we would feature. This did not represent an ideal business plan, but our hearts were not faint, and we had the support of nationally recognized educational leaders.

The sales poured in, and we immediately planned a month-long trip so that we could capture all the scenes needed for the first few programs.

We had recently acquired a new motorhome, having traded in the clunker. The old motorhome had an odometer that would not go past 99,999—and in fact when it reached that mark, it flipped back to zero. By the time we traded in the coach the odometer displayed about 25,000 miles. The motorhome found its way to an auction block. A potential buyer rummaged through the glove box and found our name. He called to inquire, "Does this motorhome really have only 25,000 miles?"

In our new motorhome we added 100,000 miles to the odometer in less than two years. Some of our lengthy road trips are noteworthy. We had been working in Johnson City, New York, and received word that we had acquired permission to tape in a school in Simi Valley, California, the following Monday. It was Friday, and we took off. It is the only time we essentially drove coast to coast. The distance was about 2700 miles, and at an average speed of 60 miles an hour it would take 45 hours. The only way we did it was to drive through the

night, trading drivers. Fortunately, it is possible to sleep and eat in a motorhome while cruising the interstate.

Another horrific trip required us to be in Jefferson City, Missouri, Monday morning. We didn't start the 20-hour trip from Utah until Sunday because it was essential to finish a script writing deadline. We arrived at the school two hours before the buses started unloading students, allowing for a good nap before we began production.

In the early days of *The Video Journal of Education*, it was only me and Blanch as the production team. I did all the camera work. Often, I handheld the heavy camera enabling me to get good angles on the students. It was completely exhausting. On many occasions my back ached to the point that I didn't know if I could go on, but I had to. I



was putting to the test the notion that highly creative people abuse their bodies.

The 20-Year Slog

Chapter Thirteen

Finally, we began to fly.

Soon we had others helping us, beginning with Jerry Jacobs who I taught the skill of video production, and who was with us throughout the first 11 years of the slog. Our son Chet had shown a continuous interest in the potential of *The Video Journal of Education*. In our first month-long production trip, we realized how badly we needed his expertise in selling.

So busy were we that we needed help with bookkeeping. Chet's wife Joan had training and background in bookkeeping and was a tremendous asset in managing our personal and business affairs. Joan worked closely with us for several years, but she became acutely aware that working on business so closely with her spouse and in-laws was creating harmful stress. With the wise advice of her bishop, she made the difficult decision to withdraw from the company.

Our programs and promotional materials needed proofing. Our daughter Hollee with her background in journalism was an excellent proofreader. No spelling, grammatical or structural error got past her.

The guiding philosophy was to maintain accuracy such as the quality of *National Geographic Magazine*. I had learned that *National Geographic* had once stopped the printing presses to correct one spelling error. Many years later, I discovered a misspelled word in that cherished magazine. I wrote a letter to the editor pointing out the mistake, but never got a reply.

A proofreader must be diligent, and never assume that a computer spell checker will catch all errors. Proofing had to occur numerous times, because with editing and revisions, new errors were sure to creep in.

In one of the early years, we completed an advertising brochure for our products. I remember that the bright color of orange dominated the piece, making it very inviting. Somewhere in the text was a reference to “...Public Education.” Looking at the proof from the printer, Hollee fortunately caught the following error before it went to press. The reference was to “...Pubic Education.”

Our younger boys were still in school, and helped when they could. For a time, their bedrooms became a makeshift warehouse, with stacks of product filling available space around their beds.

Later, after receiving his bachelor’s degree from BYU, Cory worked for us as a salesperson with Chet. He married another salesperson, Lisa Ward. Soon they moved to New York City where he received his advanced degree at Columbia University.

While still in school, Curtis was a shipping clerk and proved proficient at packaging tapes making them ready for the post office—all of this in our home. Later, Curtis helped with camera, and often traveled with us during production.

With the production of so many tapes, we needed help cataloging them. My sister Jeannie Workman agreed to become our first logger and remained a faithful employee for many years.

Our sons eventually became critical key players in the growth of our business, *The Video Journal of Education*. The boys desperately wanted us to grow, moving from just video production to more enhanced internet delivery and training. This required capital.

I had learned many years before that banks are somewhat willing to support business during good times, and back away during tough times. And they are certainly not willing to lend money for new ventures unless they have secure assets. The fact that we had been in business for a few years with a widening customer base was insufficient to satisfy conservative bankers who want all the benefit and none of the risk. We did not have deep pockets, nor did we know anybody that was willing to risk capital on our vision for expansion.

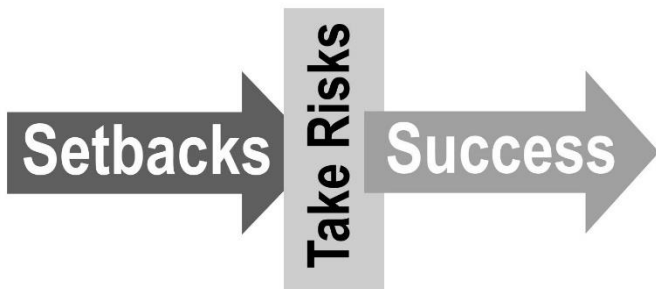
In a meeting around our dining room table I sat with Blanch, Chet, Cory, and Curtis as we all pledged our homes as collateral to borrow as much money as possible. The boys had the blessing of their wives. We were all going to sink or prosper together.

I have to say that to anyone who may have been envious of our success or prosperity, or who felt that we were taking advantage of those less fortunate, or that we were not paying our employees what they were worth—is simply not willing to acknowledge the risk we took at that time.

In our entitlement society there is a supposition that the rich take from the poor and that someone should be there to provide for their needs. This is not the American way. The American way is to take leaps forward as we did, knowing that failure is a possibility along with success. This must be followed by unending hard work. And in failure, no one will be there to give a bailout.

Our risk was mitigated with the unique talents we each had in production, business management and computer technology. The capital gave us the expansion we needed, and within a few months the loans were paid, and the homes were released as collateral.

The risk paid off leading us to greater success.



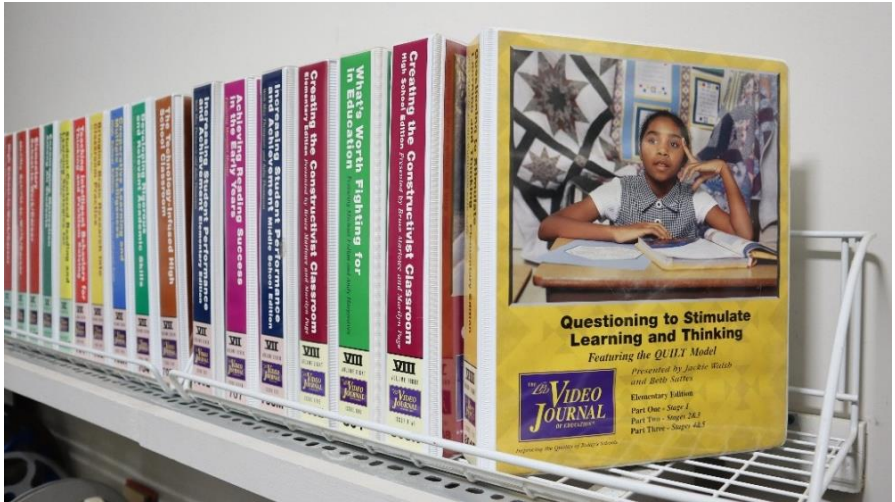
Rising above just sales, Chet became the Chief Executive Officer and drove the need to create *The School Improvement Network*, with the video journals remaining as its primary product. Our work continued unabated in traveling and producing videos.

Several years later when *The School Improvement Network* opened its new office in Midvale, Utah, JoAnn Seghini was there for the ribbon cutting. As the mayor of Midvale, she spoke to the crowd deservedly taking some credit for the creation of this business for what she had done for me so many years before in pulling me out of the classroom and launching the production of educational videos.

At the time, I reflected on my years as a schoolteacher, and the need I felt to work with other teachers. That need for collegiality became an important theme in our *Video Journal* programs, the notion that teachers share and work together—this we observed as a vital culture in the successful schools we featured.

I learned another important lesson when we visited highly successful classrooms. The great teachers in those classrooms also had noisy students. The big difference in their classrooms was that the noise was learning noise, not playful and mischievous noise like I experienced in my classrooms many years before.

We produced hundreds of video albums on numerous topics, all packaged in vinyl jackets containing videos and workbooks. The albums were colorful and inviting.



I was always careful to enhance the look of individuals being interviewed. I created thousands of living video portraits.

My most challenging interview was of a noteworthy presenter in New Zealand who had no front teeth. I will never forget Blanch asking me to light the scene so we could not see that she had no front teeth. Her faith in my photographic skills exceeded reality in that situation.

While in New Zealand I had a most touching experience. Outside of a school, young boys were playing rugby. They heard that their school was being visited by Americans. One of the boys came to me and shyly asked, "Are you from America?"

I nodded yes, that I was from America, then with hesitation he queried, "Have you been to Disneyland?"

"Yes, I've been to Disneyland."

“Wow”, he said. His reaction was longingly cute and envious. This was a heartfelt moment.

1 Research & Define

Research fell to Blanch. She attended educational conferences, prepared and analyzed surveys, and visited constantly with educators to stay abreast of their needs. She worked to always give our product wider and more universal appeal.

Cash flow was often tight, and from month to month we sometimes wondered if we would make it.

We were committed to always paying our bills, for if we did, we believed that if a difficult month came, our vendors would be patient. Rarely did we have to ask for that patience, and our vendors knew that we would always come through. We were highly valued in the community for our work ethic and dependability, all credit due to members of my family who took their roles seriously.

Austerity was another important guiding factor for us. We avoided buying anything we did not need. Nothing is more crippling than debt, and nothing is more comforting than a cash reserve.

3 Seek Feedback

We always sought **Feedback**, but sometimes received unsolicited criticism. The comments never related to the quality of the programs, and not necessarily the content, but the setting. It was said that we did not feature students or teachers of color.

Blanch tried relentlessly to get us into schools with minority populations, but generally the educators in those schools did not want to be videotaped. It was frustrating that they were bothered that we did not feature people that looked like them but were unwilling to help us solve the problem.

Since those early days, we were able to work in a lot of schools filled with diversity, among them many inner-city schools that I really loved to visit. I am convinced that the quality and authenticity of our programs opened doors and created confidence for those educators who were otherwise hesitant to allow us into their building.

After several years, some educators criticized that our programs were too old. Unfortunately, it is to be expected that hair styles, fashion and eyeglasses would change in appearance over the years. Ironically, some of the oldest programs remained the most popular because of their content value.

After the first two or three years, we realized we needed more help. Many people have worked with us in the years that followed, individuals dedicated to the success of *The Video Journal of Education*. I will forever be appreciative for the hard work of Jerry Jacobs, Brian Barney, Scott Peterson, Matt Piper, Marriane Hess, Lanny Sorenson, Bart Crabbe and Tom Laughlin who traveled with us for production. Supporting production at home were Tracie Neeley, Steve Olsen, Lorrie Eckerdt, Kirstie Bowers, Janna Neddo, Becky Workman, Becky Kemp and Shara MacKay. Others came and went for short periods of time.

Unfortunately, we hired some people who did not like to work and were deceptive in their initial interview with us. Some had medical conditions they did not disclose. I had to fire two videographers who

complained endlessly about the travel required and found excuses to avoid going. This cost us money in wasted airplane reservations.



1 Research & Define

I am not a good businessman, and if I would have done more **Research**, we might have avoided a serious problem a few years after we started the *Video Journal*.

With the Outcomes Group in New York, I had negotiated an agreement that gave us 50/50 ownership of *The Video Journal of Education*. Equal ownership is never a good idea, for with an inevitable disagreement, a stalemate will stall progress.

My advice is to never enter a 50/50 relationship. There must be tie breaker power. At the time it seemed the nice thing to do, a 50/50 agreement, to avoid conflict in the early discussions. Unfortunately, it created horrendous conflict later.

Our deal was a good deal in that it got *The Video Journal of Education* started. We would have never been able to begin without the Outcomes Group.

Regrettably, the Outcomes Group saw an opportunity to make good money on the backs of our hard work. Within three years the relationship became increasingly unworkable. After a lot of legal battles and attorney fees, we finally extricated ourselves from the relationship—but at a very high cost for the purchase of their ownership.

Amazingly, free from the clutches of the Outcomes Group, we soared!

Since we began producing the *Video Journal of Education*, toward the end of the 20-year slog, we estimate we have been in over 3000 classrooms in all but two states, the Dakotas. We have taped in classrooms in most of the Canadian provinces as well as in New Zealand, Costa Rica, Singapore and Thailand. Classrooms in every major city in the United States have been featured, as well as classrooms in every type of urban, suburban and rural setting.

I feel like Johnny Cash when he sang, “I’ve been everywhere, man!”

Many comical incidents occurred during production, some of them terrifying at the time.

Except for the first few years, we always had two cameras in every classroom. We used Betacam tapes in plastic cartridges that were inserted into the cameras. The tapes would last for 30 minutes. We timed it so that at least one camera was always rolling.

Once in a science class, there was a large fish tank near the front. The camera next to it was focused on the students. When Blanch changed the tape, she took the recorded tape and set it on top of the aquarium. Without realizing it, the aquarium did not have a glass top. From the other side of the room, I watched in horror as the tape slowly sank to the bottom amongst the fish.

Frantically I retrieved the tape and raced into the hallway. Our host came with me to help. I always carried tools with me, and immediately disassembled the cartridge. The host held one end of the reel of tape, and I walked down the hallway about thirty feet until the tape was completely unwound. We swayed the tape creating a breeze until it was dry. Carefully, I rewound the tape and replaced it in the cartridge. When I got home, I told our editor John Crossman what had happened. I knew it would be a mistake to try and edit with

that tape. "Please make a copy of this tape," I said, "and you've got one chance to get it right."

The copy of the tape worked fine.

On another occasion, John Crossman had to make a copy of a tape, with probably only one chance of getting it right. During production, a pressure arm had come loose in a camera, forcing the tape to wind too tightly around the recording drum. On playback in the camera it was a mess. With a playback machine in the editing bay, John Crossman and I carefully removed the same pressure arm, forcing a playback reversal of what had happened in the camera. Amazingly it worked quite well, and we were able to salvage the scenes.

For several years we used a Steadicam which is a camera mounting device that the camera operator wears, allowing for very fluid movements with the camera. When not in use, the camera and its heavy mounting gear were hung on a heavy-duty stand. In a science lab while making preparations, the camera slipped off its stand and crashed to the floor. It made a horrible noise startling everyone.

I was flushed with horror. Fortunately, as the camera slid down the vertical stand lens first, it was slowed as it reached the leg first which changed the trajectory 45 degrees from straight down. The lens had a rubber hood attached to the front which absorbed the shock when it hit the floor. Amazingly, the camera worked after that incident.

There is something to be said about the rugged quality that can be expected in professional equipment, the high cost notwithstanding.

For several years I visited the *National Association of Broadcasters* convention in Las Vegas to see the newest production equipment on the market. Several purchases enhanced our work and productivity.



In this picture with the Steadicam, Jerry Jacobs is behind me shooting sound.

We learned to be wary of checked baggage, particularly on small commuter planes where normal sized carryon bags are not allowed. On a trip from Dallas to Midland, Texas, we had our first experience on such an aircraft. Our camera and its bag were taken from us and put in the cargo hold. When we retrieved it, the back end of the camera was bent from a severe hit from another bag. The tape loading door would not open. From my tool bag I pulled out channellock pliers and with gutsy confidence I bent the door back into shape. It worked fine.

Before taking off, we noticed on another aircraft at the terminal that some bags were falling off the conveyer belt several feet to the tarmac. We shuddered to think what might happen to our bags. After landing, in addition to discovering the camera mishap, we found that a bag full of recorded tapes had broken open. Careful inventory

revealed that one tape was missing. It must have popped out of the bag when dropped, and probably run over by a plane. Fortunately, we always shot everything with two cameras.

A tight schedule racing from school to school often presented difficult challenges. This was before GPS devices were available. Blanch always had a map spread out in the front seat, shouting directions to me as we traveled.

When Curtis drove, he insisted on having the map stretched in front of him draped over the steering wheel. It scared me to death.

Severe thunderstorms can hit the Dallas area with vengeance. In a downpour unlike any I had ever seen, we searched to find the next school for production. Finally arriving, we backed up the sidewalk as near to the portico as we could get. We were drenched as we moved equipment into the school, dumping it in the foyer. Students watched in puzzlement. Soon an administrator came forward, asking if he could help us. He looked at our pile of gear as we stood there all wet. We were in the wrong school.

We loaded up the gear again and finally found the right school. The rain hadn't stopped, and we had to repeat the process of backing up the sidewalk to the portico of the correct school.

The stresses of travel, production, writing, and travel again went on for 15 years non-stop. On and off airplanes, carrying heavy equipment, renting cars, finding motels and restaurants.

When at home I was reviewing production tapes and writing edit scripts so John Crossman could assemble the videos. Then I had to review the edited videos, correct mistakes and travel again. I remember reaching summer, thinking I could take a break, but was pressured to keep going so we wouldn't get behind again.

Into the 21st century we had more help with writing and production, but it was not the end of the slog. We made a transition from production.

The demand arose to provide on-site training at school systems all over the country on how to use our videos. Blanch and I continued traveling, but this time carrying training materials and videos. At numerous locations, she would speak, and I would run the projector presenting various video clips.

People liked to have the producers and creators of the Video Journal do the training. Twice as many training opportunities could be met if Blanch and I traveled separately to different locations. At first, we wondered if we could do the training alone, but we did so very successfully.

The business name was officially changed from *The Video Journal of Education* to the *School Improvement Network*.



We continued training. Alone, I went to over 70 locations from Alaska to Florida and Hawaii to New York. I also trained in the two states we missed in production, North and South Dakota.

During those years of the slog, I logged over two million miles on Delta Airlines. I was always allowed to fly first class with as much luggage as I needed. I was given lifetime Silver Medallion status which has benefitted me in my limited travel since.

I still have a good collection of frequent flyer miles that will carry me on future trips with Delta.

To recognize the 20-year slog, a party was held in our honor in 2010. This cake recognizes those who were there at the start, Chet and his wife Joan, Blanch and me.



End of the Ride—Not Quite

Chapter Fourteen

After two decades, the production of *The Video Journal of Education* and training for the *School Improvement Network* for us came to an end. During the 20-year slog, I often said, “I feel like I’m on a roller coaster that goes round and round, up and down, and I can’t ever get off.” But finally, I was able to get off, satisfied that we had accomplished something great, and that my talents were beneficially utilized.

In another sense, as I look at my entire career, I felt like I was pushing a large boulder up a mountain. Sometimes the boulder would slip sideways, and I would scramble to get the rock back on course. Now, I suddenly had reached the summit with the boulder, and it is now starting to roll down the other side of the mountain. But, instead of pushing up, I have to keep the boulder from rolling out of control, guiding it down to a safe and secure place toward the final chapters of my life.

With the continuing growth of *The School Improvement Network*, and its premier products of hundreds of video journals, new investors wanted the business to reach a higher level. It needed to rise above the Ma and Pa business. Blanch and I were essentially retired, and we were bought out for a rewarding sum.

In retrospect, business is what kept us united as a couple. Sadly, the loss of being needed and other factors eventually led Ma and Pa to separation and eventual divorce.

With all this experience, I learned there is a significant difference between the guiding forces that should imbue family relationships and those that should govern business relationships.

Families are all about support, compassion, forgiveness, patience and long suffering, surrounded constantly with unconditional love.

To contrast, business relationships always require deadlines, accountability and hard choices that may violate the sensitivities of love and kindness. When times get tough in business, the ability to discipline, dismiss and reorganize are essential. This could destroy a family relationship. It did mine.

In our family, these requisites have from time to time risen to the surface creating difficult family stress, not only between me and Blanch, but eventually between our sons.

Throughout my career the stresses of business realities did harm my spirit, and sadly, especially toward the end of the 20-year slog, irreparably harmed my endearing relationship with the mother of my children.

We received counseling and were given a personal inventory that sought alignment of our values. Ten categories were presented. Successful couples needed to align closely on at least seven. We fell far short of that.

Interestingly, the genes that Blanch brought to the mix have a powerful history of business acumen. Not so with me. An artist by nature is a very sensitive person, and frankly finds it nearly impossible to work under the difficult and restrictive power of budgets and deadlines.

Criticism to force an artist into such a narrow space will destroy his or her spirit. Our children each have a unique mix of these genes, and the conflicts and stresses that were certainly inevitable manifested themselves in different ways.

Mixing the cultures of business and family is dangerous and sure to create problems. One would never mix water with oil, yet in a car engine, both are required, but are kept separate within the motor.

Irrespective of these challenges, I found great joy in the training sessions I conducted. Internet technology was used to watch any of hundreds of videos I videotaped and scripted. It was with a tremendous sense of satisfaction that as I walked around the room, I saw that nearly everyone was watching a different video. They were almost always watching my programs. I was thrilled to see that educators were using strategies and language that they learned from our videos and training.

So, I could say, we've had an influence on improving the quality of education from coast to coast and top to bottom.

I was glad to know our programs were effective. I learned that when we were selling video and DVD albums many years earlier, Jordan School District, where we had worked years before, bought every program we produced, sight unseen.

On one occasion I went into the Jordan District professional library and found our collection of tape albums filling an entire wall. I asked the librarian if the tapes were ever checked out, and she assured me they were. Often, I asked teachers who taught in the district if they had ever seen any video programs, and they hadn't recalled seeing any. Oh well.

Some years later *The School Improvement Network* was sold.

With changing technologies and shifting priorities in education, sales were declining, and the business was not growing as hoped. Even though studies had proved that the products increased learning, many school districts were not willing to change what they had done for decades. They remained in the safety of the status quo.

Each member of my family had to go separate ways, leaving the old business behind. Difficult changes were forced upon us, and we each had to face challenges in our own way, suffering through the implementation dip Dr. Michael Fullan had talked about, where things get worse before they get better.

As wonderful as the glory days of *The School Improvement Network* were, they were followed by pain, anger and misunderstanding. I have seen my family fly apart at the seams.

It has been several years now since the business was sold. Feelings are softening, and each member of my family has worked through their own implementation dip. Each one of them is finding success in new ventures and improved empathy and understanding of each other.

I have often commented on the remarkable skill that Blanch brought to our business ventures and family, and particularly in the production of our educational videos. She has always been an effective and committed educator.

Since then, she has served as a missionary in Hawaii and has been involved in many service projects and teaching opportunities where she continues to bless the lives of others.

But as for me, I am far from retired, lonely or heart broken.

My creative spirit will never die and will accompany me to the grave after many more years.

I wanted to be married again, but knew I had to have a companion compatible with my values and ambitions. It took many struggles to find my new wife, someone who loved me for who I am, all the highly creative craziness notwithstanding.

I just celebrated my eighth wedding anniversary with Norma Huerta, a delightful hard-working mother of five who was raised in Mexico. So now I claim ten children, and a growing number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

With Norma's support, I began creating a monumental project of which this book is a part, *A Pathway to Peace*.



Consisting of live training, books and videos, it calls upon the many years of experience I had in writing, research, production and interaction with wonderful and influential people.



Epilogue and Reflection



In this work I have shared many crazy, happy, challenging and sad situations, always driven by my vision. I hope that my ideas and experiences will help you with your career, business, hobby, family, or vision of recreation.

Looking in the rearview mirror at *The Video Journal of Education* and the *School Improvement Network*, I must share some thoughts.

Many years ago, when our business was flourishing from its headquarters in Midvale, Utah, one of the neighbors nearby acquired the contract to perform custodial services for us. At a community gathering to which I was giving an address, my children were in attendance. I mentioned some of them and their family experiences. Afterward a neighbor, Pablo, came to me astounded that I was the father of the Linton men who owned this incredible business in his neighborhood. Suddenly I became a hero to this hardworking immigrant from Uruguay.

On another occasion I was assisting in the videotaping of a conference in Louisville, Kentucky. A woman approached me who performed lobbying work for us in Washington, D.C. "So, you're another one of the Linton boys?"

"Wow, am I flattered!" I said. "I'm really their father."

On still another occasion, I was training in the use of our programs in a school district in Georgia. Someone came up to me and asked, “Are you Curtis Linton’s older brother?” Again, I was flabbergasted. I didn’t know if it was a compliment to me that I looked young, or a concern that Curtis looked old. This educator went on to rave about the fine presentation Curtis had given to a large group of educators in Georgia regarding equity.

On other occasions I have had people comment on my children and former wife and what terrific people they are. Their notoriety exceeds my own, a phenomenon that any father would be humbled to experience.

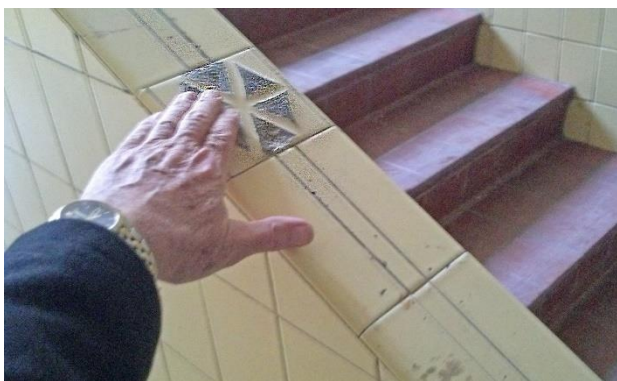
I am so proud of my family, my boys, my daughter and my former wife. I refuse to call Blanch my “ex” because that has such a negative connotation. I love and respect her for who she is, what she has done for me, and I find no fault with her. I may have often felt like I was in her shadow, and in the shadow of my children, but that’s okay, because I shine in my own highly creative way.

All this reminds me of the first weeks I taught 9th grade science at Alta High School. At that time in 1980, Chet was a student body officer and the heart throb of every girl at Alta. Numerous times when people connected the name “Linton” they would say, “Is Chet Linton your son?” My oldest boy brought me instant fame. Some girls had the audacity to ask, “Will you line me up with your son Chet?”

Writing this short book has been fun and gut wrenching. It’s not easy to look back and expose all the warts and pimples that have accumulated throughout my life, reliving the joys and the sadness. The experience of writing this work has brought to the surface a lot of memories related to my career that has been filled with stops and starts, but on the whole, joy and satisfaction in a job well done.

One such recollection is of my years at Granite High School in Salt Lake City where I graduated in the class of 1963.

Unlike most high schools, Granite consisted of several buildings occupying a large campus. The year before I graduated, the “L” building was remodeled. Yellow tiles lined the walls to about 4 feet from the floor. Within the stair wells, banisters were replaced by a solid wall that sloped with the stairs. The stair walls were covered with the same yellow tiles, but along the top were small, pointed tiles that prevented students from sliding down the banister. Hundreds of times when I went up and down the stairs as a student, I dragged my hands along those pointed tiles like thousands of other students did.



I hadn't been in the building for 40 years when with my crew we went to Granite High in the “L” building to do production. The yellow tiles were still there, but now

showed the signs of years with cracks and stains.

On the stairwell banisters the pointed tiles were completely worn away. Molecule by molecule, the hard tiles were stripped away by countless young hands passing over them as they ascended or descended the stairs. Molecule by molecule, year by year, we all build—but at the same time wear away.

A few years ago, I went to the locations of the various places where we had established businesses that wore away. A certain painful nostalgia permeated my heart.

At about that time I was asked to return to the Brigham Young University Motion Picture Studio to be interviewed. On camera I recounted my years of experience there. Wandering around, the building and large sound stage looked the same, but somehow felt different. The big movie cameras were gone, replaced by small high-definition video cameras.

Fifteen years ago, I took all my old movie films to San Francisco to have them digitized so they can be watched with today's TVs and devices. The celluloid and emulsion are old, brittle and faded. I utilized the best technology I could afford to restore them.

The Great Dinosaur Discovery, Knocking at Heaven's Door, Perilous Journey and other shorter films and videos are available for viewing from my website, LintonMinute.com.

Looking at those old movies brings a flood of memories. I find it now cathartic and healing to talk about the difficulty of producing those movies and the many other films and videos I have made.

A couple of years after we began traveling the country to produce the *Video Journal*, I visited an administrator at Jordan District that I knew. With hesitation, he asked, "You're visiting schools all over the country now. How do our schools compare?"

It was a challenging question indeed. We were visiting the best schools in North America. I thought for a moment, and then said, "All schools have some great teachers. In the great schools, all the teachers work together."

I left it to him to decide which were the great schools in Jordan district.

Likewise, all segments of society have great people. Those businesses, families and neighborhoods that have people who live together in harmony and acceptance are the great positive building blocks of the world.

I challenge you to have vision, be collegial, and live with acceptance and love as you thrive in your work, with your loved ones and others in your association.



As a final note, I have recounted events and circumstances in this book to the best of my ability and memory. If others disagree, I apologize and invite them to visit my website, LintonMinute.com. There they can share their version of events and additional stories they may have.

If you have a story you would like to share, go to my website, LintonMinute.com.



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