



Orlo (Sonny) Hopkins: I graduated from Whitmer High School in 1958. I was born in August 1940.

After High School I joined the Ohio National Guard in the summer of 1957. I was called to active duty in the fall of 1958 and sent to Fort Knox Kentucky to fulfill the active duty portion of my eight year enlistment. I went through twelve weeks of basic infantry training, followed by twelve weeks of Radio school, where I was taught to send and receive Morse code. Not much demand these days.

In the summer of 1959, I worked for S. A. Storer & Sons masonry contractor unloading brick trucks at the new Whitmer High School; then later in August they had me working at the University of Toledo on the

new Engineering building. Remembering Mr. Pritts, and all those drafting classes and math classes I had taken at Whitmer, I decided to look for a job in Drafting, and was hired by Surface Combustion on Dorr St, in September of 1959. I attended Scott High School evening classes and brushed up on my Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry. During my third and fourth years at Surface I attended evening classes at the UT's school of Engineering. I left Surface in 1966 and went to work for Owens Illinois Forest Products Engineering. After three years at OI, Surface contacted me asking if I would be interested in a position with their Steel Mill Engineering. This was a step up for me so I gladly rejoined my old friends at Surface.

I married Nancy Stewart in 1961 (the mother of my children). We divorced in 1970. My wife Elizabeth and I live next to Stony Creek in a remodeled School House. Her parent's farm is on the other side of the creek. Elizabeth and her mother and father attended school where we now live. After my divorce, I left Surface and worked with my brother Chuck framing houses for about 3 years. Finally realizing that design and layout drafting was where I really belonged, I took a project with Atmosphere Furnace Company. I started my own Drafting and Design business in 1979, providing services to Furnace companies in the Detroit and Toledo areas.

My customers regularly hired my Draftsman, and I had to hire and train new men to replace them. As I was to loose my last two men in late 1996, and following the death of my father in Clearwater, FL, I decided to close my business and retire. In summary, starting in 1959, I worked 16 years for Industrial Furnace Cos. and Engineering Consultants, 3 years in Carpentry, and managed my own business for 17 years.

We have three children from my first wife; their names are Julie, Jeff and Jennifer. They all graduated from Whitmer. Julie lives in Columbus Ohio and works for the Ohio Department of Highways. She graduated from the University of Toledo with a BS in Mineralogy. Julie has two children. Jeff lives in Howell MI and works for Atmosphere Furnace Co. in Wixom, MI. He graduated from the Lawrence Institute of Technology with a BS in Mechanical Engineering. Jeff has three children. Jennifer lives in Galena OH. Her husband just sold their Commodity Logistics business (warehouses and trucking companies) and he is looking at an advertising agency as their next venture. Jennifer graduated from the University of Toledo with a BS in accounting. Jennifer and James have two sons.

My interest are flying, boating, bowling, golfing, gardening and camping in Michigan's UP. In 1981, I bought an Ultralight Aircraft kit. Built it and flew it for a total of 113 hours over 4 years. In 1986, we bought a 180 H.P. Piper Archer four place airplane. We had the plane for five and half years and flew all over MI and OH and once to Philadelphia, PA and once to FL. My brother Chuck and I have always been a little nuts about flying. Chuck has had a Pilots license since he was 22 years old. I got my license in 1986 at 46 years old. In 1989, I bowled a perfect 300 game at Nortel Lanes in Monroe, MI. I got a ring and a 300 trophy for it. Liz and I now have a 28 ft Marinette Cruiser and are member of the River View Yacht Club and enjoy the life of cruising on Lake Erie. Thought we would see some old "Whitmerites" there, but not so far. Two years ago my Daughter Jennifer and he husband James, chartered a Lear 35 Jet our of Willow Run Airport to pick Liz and I at Custer Airport, and then land again in Columbus to pick the three of them up to fly us to Orlando, FL for a four day stay at the Grand Floridian Hotel at Disney World, where the renewed their vows. What a trip, Jennifer and James sure know how to make Grandpa happy.

My Favorite Memory of Whitmer High: Football games, Mrs. Bertram, Mr. Pritts, Mr. Stacey. Also: Ice Skating at Sleepy Hollow, White Hut, and working at Twin Oaks.

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