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Just out of the oven

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Fifty ways to leave your senses

I know it was a brick yard, because one day I got into an argument with the neighbor kid and he broke a common red brick over my head. The next thing I knew, I woke up with my head under water running from the faucet. I probably didn't go to the hospital then. That seems to be characteristic of my family. Years later, as a teenager, I nearly severed the end of my right thumb. It was a stupid accident—I leaned over a table saw to turn it off and my thumb hit the blade. I pushed the dangling end back on and walked from the barn to the house to wrap my thumb in gauze. I left quite a trail of blood. There was no pain at the time, but a few minutes after I had my thumb wrapped, I nearly passed out from blood loss, shock, and pain. Even though my thumb did turn black while it was healing, I don't remember even going to the doctor. It wasn't that we never went. A couple of years earlier I was making my own fishing lure and was drilling a hole for a fishing line in a spoon to which I had already attached a three prong fish hook. You guessed it – as the drill bit began to come out the other side of the spoon it grabbed the spoon and spun it around, sinking the fish hook into the third finger of my right hand. Dr. Lantman gave me a little novocaine to kill the pain and grabbed some pliers. He fished the hook out in the same way that you try to get your hook back out of the fish while trying not to damage him too much. That might have been my first experience with stitches.

Food, flowers, and foolishness



Michael's High School graduation,
1968

I suppose I've been in trouble or caused trouble to some degree throughout most of my life. Back on Meyers Court, I remember stealing the neighbor's toy truck (a garbage truck, I think) and hiding it. I remember getting caught, but don't remember the details. Mom probably wasn't happy. Especially since I used to bring her bouquets of poison oak from the nearby construction site; it didn't occur to me that other people might have a nasty reaction to it. I think I'll just omit the little story of me and the "peanuts". It was all untrue anyway. One of my favorite foods at this time was "bread and milk". A very basic recipe: rip a slice of bread into bite size chunks and place in bowl; sprinkle sugar over the bread and pour milk over all. Being the precocious youth that I was, I invented my first sandwich there on Meyers Court: jam and mustard. I think I only had the one. At the time it seemed so easy to me; to make a sandwich you just took stuff from the box with cold stuff in it and spread it on bread. My other experiments were a little more risky. Like the time that I tried to push the metal watch band into the power socket.