

## My Marriage to Joanne

I first met Joanne Ruth Swendsen at Purdue University while I was mathematics graduate student. The year was 1961 and I was twenty years old. She had just graduated from Valparaiso University in mathematics and joined the Purdue program. I was attracted to her as she was quite attractive and very intelligent. That Summer, we began to date, going to restaurants, attending concerts and visiting friends together. Finally in early August, I proposed marriage. Her friends tried to dissuade her, saying that this was just a "Summer romance." After we talked it over, she accepted, and we both drove to Pekin, Illinois, where I met her parents and brother. We telephoned my parents and told them what had happened. After talking with both families, a date of September 8, 1961 was set. The ceremony was to take place at the Lutheran Church in Lafayette. Both our families and our many friends at Purdue were invited to attend.

And then something interesting happened. There was over a month before the September ceremony, we decided to secretly elope and get married immediately! We would still have the public marriage in September. I thought it would be unwise to get married two times in the same state, so in addition to the Indiana license application, we also applied in Illinois. This meant two blood tests, but that was no problem. We carefully inquired about the two ceremonies and learned there was no legal problem with being married to the same person two times.

So, on August 8, we drove to Danville, Illinois where we were married by the county coroner! Then, we traveled back to Lafayette where we had rented an apartment and moved all of our belongings into our new place. It was a relief to be married ahead of time. As planned, we kept this marriage secret. No one, including our families and best friends were told. We then begin to plan for the Indiana wedding. It was interesting to be married and yet planning a marriage ceremony! Joanne chose a wedding dress, we sent out invitations and made all the necessary arrangements.

The day before the big ceremony, family and friends from out of town arrived in Lafayette. We were very excited even though we were already married. There was a rehearsal and dinner. Then, the next day, accompanied by the music from the Bach 6<sup>th</sup> Brandenburg Concerto, we were married for a second time! After the ceremony, Joanne tossed her flower bouquet high into the air, Just as our friend Celia was about to catch it, her sister Katie lunged in front of her and grabbed the bouquet! After all the excitement, Joanne and I took a short trip to Shades State Park for a few days and then returned for the beginning of classes as Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Trimble.

The story of our marriage ends here, but our marriage itself continued for 51 years. That is the subject of many of the memoirs in this collection.