

# the Ken Chronicles

are published quarterly, on or about the first of the months of  
February, May, August, and November by Ken Bausert.

As the name implies, it's all about me... my life, travels, opinion and philosophy.

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Number 63 - May, 2022 - PDF Version

Welcome to the May issue of my Chronicles – which should probably be stamped, **MADE IN FLORIDA**, since most of it was written during my winter hibernation at our condo. Unfortunately, it was one of the coldest winters we've spent in Florida since we started playing this game nine years ago. I'm sure I'll get little sympathy from those of you who suffered even colder weather in the northern half of the country though.

Thanks to everyone for sending me your latest zines (my favorite reading material) as well as your sincere and thoughtful letters. I try to print as many as I can because I think they're often just as interesting – or entertaining – as my own contributions.

I would be remiss if I didn't say something here about Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine. But what can I say about what appears to be a rogue leader's blatant disregard for another country's sovereignty, its population's lives, and international condemnation? We're reduced to being helpless bystanders as the rest of the world's nations are unable – or unwilling – to do anything more than offer sanctions against the offending barbarians and their despicable leader. Please support whatever charitable organization you feel can do the most good under the circumstances. My suggestions: Doctors Without Borders and Oxfam.

– Ken

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## The Cover Wrap:

Front: Ken in Kayak at Werner-Boyce Salt March, New Port Richie, FL, April 17, 2021

(Photo © 2021 by Joanne Velardi)

Back: Kid Fishing on Bonita Beach at sunset, April 22, 2022

(Photo © 2022 by Ken Bausert)

"Modern slaves are not in chains;  
they are in debt."

— Author Unknown



# Input & Feedback

15 Jan 2022

Hi Ken;

Received Ken Chronicles 62 yesterday, thanks for sending it along. That's a very unusual cover pic. I would never have guessed that it was a photo of a snow-capped vineyard without your explanation. Excellent piece of photography on your part. The bacov looks like a deliberate double exposure, altho you do not offer any explanation for that except the location of the house.



*(What looks like snow-covered vines are actually blue mesh screening over them, possibly to keep birds from eating the grapes – or to protect them from a too hot sun. The back cover image is a straight shot. – Ken)*



I'm afraid you are right that the COVID Plague is going to be with us for a long, long time to come. The fact that a significant part of the population refuses to be vaccinated means that the virus will have an even bigger pool of victims to continue attacking. The Omicron variant is not supposed to be as miserable or as deadly as the other forms of the crud, but I notice that

people are still dying from it, and plenty of people suffering from the variant are laying in hospital beds gasping for breath.

It's hard not to be cynical about the situation when the overwhelming majority of people getting infected are those who refused to get vaccinated. One friend suggests that stupidity kills, just not fast enuf. As he notes, it's like evolution in action, right before our eyes, as the virus strikes the stupid and the inept, people who refuse to be vaccinated for whatever ridiculous reason. As I say, it's hard not to echo this kind of cynicism, especially since that pool of unvaccinated idiots will keep the virus churning and turning out even more new mutations that might be able to cross over to everybody else, like the Omicron variant, only more deadly.

I don't know why you would be surprised that the early Huguenot settlers in North America would own slaves. Almost no religious group was free of its slave owners, even the Quakers. Slavery was wide-spread in those days, and was not necessarily based on the harsh farming plantation system most Americans have in mind when the word comes up. Benjamin Franklin owned slaves at one time, altho

he came to regard the institution as wrong. Many religious people were opposed to slavery, but just as many justified it because it was mentioned and apparently sanctioned by Biblical writings.

Being reincarnated, or given a second chance at life with all the memories and knowledge accumulated in your current life has been a subject that has fascinated people for centuries, probably since forever. Very few people want to die, and the religious belief in some kind of afterlife is a psychological prop designed to ward off the fear that when we die we cease to exist completely. Ceasing to exist completely does not necessarily seem like a bad thing to a lot of people. A friend, a guy who was a former employee when I was running my science fiction/comics/game store died last year. He had the beginning of pancreatic cancer, diabetes, heart problems, and was diagnosed with stage four liver failure. He elected to stop all treatment. He said he just wanted to go to sleep and never wake up again, and that's exactly what happened. Being in pain all the time can make death seem like a blessing.

So far as getting a second chance at life, I'm not sure human nature really changes much. Nathaniel Hawthorne famous short story "Dr. Heigegger's Experiment" makes the point very effectively. Given youth and health most people would continue right on doing the same things they had always done, with their basic attitudes and life philosophies not changed at all. I'm not even sure experience is much of a teacher. People who make blunders in their life usually find some way to excuse them, placing the fault on something else, somebody else, fate, circumstances, anything except their own decisions and actions. Criminals are especially prolific at that kind of mind set, but I think it affects almost everybody to a greater or lesser degree.

So far as your day-dream of becoming some kind of musician if given youth and a second chance, maybe you would try that career, but I suspect you wouldn't because you are a reasonable, intelligent person who checks things out, at least superficially, before jumping into major life changing situations. You have to be aware that a life making music is a very difficult one. Yes, some people become rich and famous and live full rich lives making the music that they love, but a very considerable majority of people who play music do not become famous or well know, let alone rich. It takes more than skill and talent to succeed in music; it takes pure blind luck, as most musicians will be happy to tell you.

For every successful or even semi-successful musician there are thousands of players who only get a chance to play and perform on weekends, or as fill-in session players, people who exist as church musical directors, music or instrument teachers, event djs, or even buskers in order to keep their hands in the field and give themselves enuf time to actually play the music they love.

The burn-out factor with musicians is very real, because most professional musicians realize that the biz is fickle and brutal. Fame is more that just fleeting, it's mercurial. A personality or a band can hit the spotlight with a blaze of glory in the spring of the year, and be regarded as has-beens the following spring. Making a few hit records, or cutting a few albums is no guarantee of success, and endless nostalgia tours can't reclaim that golden moment of fame. Considering how uncaringly cruel the public's taste for music is I don't think anybody should be surprised that so many musicians kill themselves with drugs and alcohol. It used to be said that a successful writer was one who had a working wife to support the family. Musicians often do not have wives or steady girl friends, which I suspect contributes strongly to their burn-out and self destructive behavior.

Given a second chance, I really doubt you would become a professional musician. You might decide to write and perform music, maybe becoming a weekend player, joining or forming a band, maybe even becoming a local celebrity, but I really don't think you would risk your entire future by committing to a full time life of music.

Holy Smolee! A record/music store in NYCity was having to pay a million dollars a month in rent and was turning a profit?? I'm with you; I don't see how that is possible. And the new landlord was jacking the rent up to seven million a month? Who the hell does he think he is going to rent that space to anyway?

*(Actually, the story said the increase was "only" to five-million. I personally think that was the building owner's way of getting the music store out of their building so they could rent it to someone else – even if only for the original million-dollar rent. – Ken)*

Bulk selling your daughter's accumulation of Archie comics was certainly the right decision. Most Archie comics do not sell very well unless they are dirt cheap, and sometimes not even then. There are Archie comic fans and collectors out there, but there are so many different Archie titles that trying to make up a collection would cost big bucks unless they could be scooped up on the cheap. Luckily for them there are vast piles of Archie comics that turn up at flea markets and church rummage sales (back when we had flea markets and church rummage sales---in the golden Pre-Plague days anyway).

The instruction sheet from your new Chinese built kitchen clock was a hoot. With English being the language of international commerce for over a century now you would think the manufacturer would be able to get somebody with a better command of the language to write the sheet. I especially liked the company's generous donation of a nail you can hammer into your wall to hang the clock, a nail that "will not destroy your wall too much". Great stuff.

I hope you are enjoying life in Florida. Life is colder than hell

*(Continued on page 16)*

## People, Places & Things (that aren't there anymore)

**Alan Mathison Turing** was born in Maida Vale, London, on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1912, and graduated from King's College, Cambridge, with a degree in mathematics. He went on to become regarded as a leading logician, cryptanalyst, philosopher, theoretical biologist, and – most notably – an early computer scientist. I recently learned of him through a TV documentary on the evolution of espionage.

During World War II, the Germans used a now-famous encryption device, known as the Enigma, to exchange secret messages that

the allies were unable to decipher (a 2001 movie tells its story). It was one of the most sophisticated machines of its type ever invented and trying to unscramble its coded messages proved to be a daunting task.

By that time, Alan Turing worked for the Government Code and Cypher School, at Bletchley Park, Britain's codebreaking center. He was instrumental in devising a number of techniques for speeding the breaking of Germany's coded messages. It has been said that his

work helped shorten the war by at least two years and saved up to 14 million lives. In 1946, Alan revealed his plans for what would become the world's first stored program computer.

After the war Alan was eventually outed as a homosexual, still a crime in Great Britain at the time. As an alternative to prison, he agreed to hormone treatment with estrogen, intended to "cure" his homosexuality. He died, on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1954, from cyanide poisoning. Some speculate that he committed suicide while others believe his death to be an accident. At his side was found a half-eaten apple, the seeds of which contain amygdalin; when eaten, this chemical degrades into highly poisonous hydrogen cyanide.

There have been many theories behind Steve Jobs choosing an apple with a bite taken out of it to be the logo of Apple computer, but many believe it to be a nod to Alan Turing and his early pioneering work on computers.

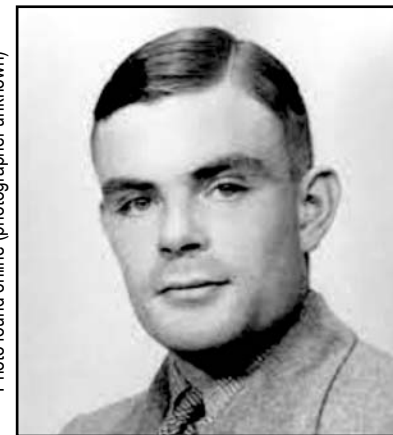


Photo found online (photographer unknown)





**The Jerome Theater** was a small, local movie house on 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 114<sup>th</sup> Street, in South Richmond Hill, Queens, NY, not far from where I grew up. 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue was originally Jerome Avenue, hence the theater's name – and, before that, it was actually called Broadway, with a trolley running along it. I remember going to the Jerome at least once with my older brother, Richie, and saw a feature film or serial having something to do with Sir Gallahad and the Knights of the Round Table.

NYC municipal records show it was built in 1932, and seated 850 people according to the 1950 edition of Film Daily Yearbook. According to posts from various people on Cinematreaures.org, it “was known to all the kids as ‘The Itch.’” Hummm... I never remember having any particular problems like that. I recall it closing sometime in the late 1950s, and I have a family photo of my brother standing near the boarded up building from the early 1960s.



1940 NYC tax photo, retouched.



Recent Google Maps online photo.

Although the movie theater is long gone, the Baba Makhan Shah Lubana Sikh (religious) Center now occupies that location. It appears that in recent years the rear of the building was altered so that it looks longer than it was in the earlier photo.

**We** used to have these old wooden folding lawn/beach chairs at our house when I was growing up during the '50s, and even into the '60s – before I got married and moved out of the house. They had wood frames, with an attached foot rest and cover/shade on top to block the sun, with a heavy denim-like material that was slung between the frame. With a little luck, you could actually open or fold them up – not like Donald, below.

My parents used to set them out in our small back yard, between the back of our house and the garage, put a radio on a small table or box, and listen to the Brooklyn Dodgers games while enjoying their favorite snacks and beverages.

After my brother bought his portable TV (referenced in numerous previous issues of tKC over the years) they would run an extension cord out to the yard and watch the games – as well as other shows, of course – on that relic.

Sadly, those chairs were long gone by the time my parents and brother had passed away and I had to empty out the house and garage before selling it, about twenty years ago. So, imagine the smile on my face as I walked through a flea market upstate New York a few years ago and found two identical examples of those old chairs. I think the colors are even the same!

This may be a “things that aren’t there anymore” story, but... could it be my parents’ chairs *really* are still around?



From “Donald’s Vacation,” found online.

## What I've Been \_\_\_\_\_ Lately:

**READING:**

I don't remember ever going to a rock concert produced by Bill Graham – in spite of the fact that he was probably the most prolific promoter of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Then again, I didn't go to a ton of shows back then. He was the man responsible for establishing the legendary **Fillmore** auditorium (in San Francisco) and the **Fillmore East** (in New York City), in addition to a half dozen other venues. He produced shows for some of the most iconic names in the world of rock, including The Grateful Dead, Otis Redding, Jimi Hendrix, and The Rolling Stones. The story of his life is captured within the pages of **Bill Graham Presents – My Life Inside Rock And Out**, originally published in 1990 by Doubleday; I read the

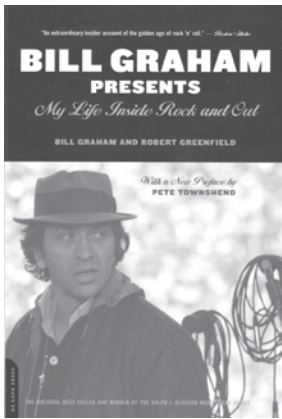
De Capo Press edition from 2004, complete with some awesome photos.

It says it's written by Bill Graham and Robert Greenfield, but in reality, it's comprised of first-hand accounts by Bill and 107 other people who were – in some way – connected with him throughout his life. Bill obviously had a hand in its creation, and Greenfield apparently was the guy who put it all together. It's a hefty 545 pages (plus credits and an index) and as comprehensive a biography as you'd ever expect to read.

From his childhood days in Germany, to escaping to America at the age of eight when the Nazis began their reign of terror on the Jews, to being adopted by an American family, and his eventual climb to prominence in the world of event production, to his untimely death in a 1991 helicopter crash, this is a riveting series of stories all woven together into one of the best books I've ever read.

I don't know where I read about ***Sixpence House – Lost In A Town Of Books***, by Paul Collins, but the thought of moving to a small town in Wales with a population of 1,500 inhabitants – and forty bookstores – certainly intrigued me. I found a used paperback copy online for a few dollars and ordered it.

Paul and his wife intended to actually move from San Francisco and take up residence in Hay-on-Wye, perusing several properties there – including the title residence –and his account of their visit was pretty interesting. And, even though I found Paul's style of writing to be kind of laid back, I did finish the book and would certainly recommend it.



I was searching online for things related to the White Castle ham-

burger chain when I came across a book called, ***Nights in White Castle***, by Steve Rushin. It's basically an autobiography and coming-of-age account of the author's life in and around Bloomington, Minnesota, with many of his escapades culminating in a late night trip to their local Slider Shoppe. I thought it sounded cool so I found a copy on eBay for \$4, including shipping, and ordered it.

Maybe because he and I are from different eras – he’s younger than me – or maybe because I didn’t like his style, but I just couldn’t get into this book. The title, itself, is a take-off on the Moody Blues song, “Nights in White Satin,” and Rushin uses a lot of other similar references throughout his story. I **get** it all; I’m just not moved enough to continue reading after only a quarter of the way through.

On a similar note, I was walking around the unique town of Duneden, during our recent winter stay in Florida. There's a good old-fashioned book store in town called, Back In The Day, which we stopped in to have a look around. I found a copy of ***Year Of The Monkey***, by Patti Smith, and felt drawn to it.

As my regular readers may be aware, I loved Patti's book, *Just Kids*, but was a bit disappointed with her *M Train*. Deciding to give this new find a chance – probably influenced by the quaintness of the shop – I bought the book.

It's from 2019 and very similar to M Train (from 2015) in structure and style, with a long dash instead of quotation marks to indicate spoken passages. The story itself was kind of strange, with Patti talking to inanimate objects – like the sign on a motel – and, even stranger, having the sign talking back. That, in itself, didn't bother me because I found it hinted at some supernatural karma going on in Patti's life. But, overall, I felt the story just moved along too slowly; I lost enough interest by the halfway point that I just stopped reading.

### WATCHING:

Ro and I had heard a lot about a 2021 film, ***Don't Look Up***, in which an apprentice astronomer discovers a comet heading straight for earth and no one believes her when she tries to warn them. Of course, everyone eventually realizes the truth and a series of absurd events take place as it get closer.

If you want to look for holes in the story you can start with the fact that, at any given

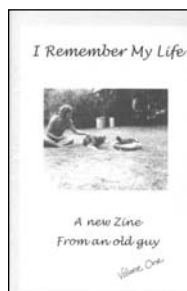


time, there are probably hundreds – if not thousands – of astronomers watching the skies, and if this were reality, there would have been dozens of confirmed sightings of this peril.

Most people who liked this movie claim it's a good satire; I found it too serious to be a spoof and too silly and convoluted if it is. I thought the performances were pretty good but there were too many plot changes and it was too long; I actually fast-forwarded through some of it after about the halfway mark. Ro gave up on it at that point while I stuck around until the ending to see what finally happened. (And, yes! I did watch the *other* ending, after the credits had rolled... probably the best part of the whole movie.)

### READING (Zines; a sample):

It's sometimes hard to buy gifts for people, isn't it? I send a "want list" to our kids from time to time, to make it easier for them to get me something for my birthday, Christmas, or Fathers' Day. Our son and daughter, however, really try hard to find gifts for us that are a complete surprise or a bit unique. My daughter, Joanne, impressed me recently with three zines she had found online that I had never heard of before.



First up was ***I Remember My Life*** (subtitled ***A New Zine From An Old Guy***), volume one, from October, 2018, by Buddy Cushman. It's a digest sized per-zine with 28 pages, and contains a diverse collection of poetry, stories, drawings, (black & white photos of) paintings, and photography. In one article, Buddy confesses that he's gotten into the music of Bikini Kill lately and idolizes Kathleen Hannah.

The whole thing is actually pretty interesting and I thought I would look into picking up a few more issues if they're still available. Buddy also does a blog: Couch Surfing at 70. Contact couch-surferboy19@gmail if you'd like to check out any of his stuff.



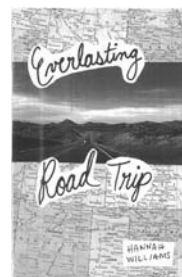
Next was ***Limited Service*** by Marian Krick, a collection of stories from her days working at a full service hotel in Reading, Pennsylvania. Marian had recently graduated from college with a degree in Resort Recreation & Hospitality Management and this gig was to complete her final internship.

As you might imagine, there are a lot of stories about her unlikable boss, problem guests who you can never satisfy, couples who use the hotel for a few hours of sex (and prostitutes who use it for many more), creepy people, and all the things that regularly break or go wrong in the course of your work-

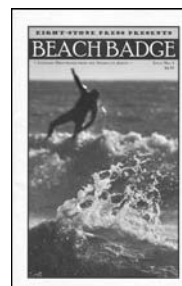
ing day. This zine reminded me of Billy McCall's ***Last Night At The Casino*** series of zines, where all the best stories from your job make for great reading by other folks.

This was a fun read, originally written back in 2014, but obviously reprinted in order for my daughter to find it while shopping for Christmas, 2021. Contact information: MarianKrick@gmail.com.

***Everlasting Road Trip*** is by Hannah Williams, from 2018. And who doesn't like a good road trip zine? This one is 24 pages, digest-sized, and nicely done in classic cut & paste style, with cool backgrounds, and assorted drawings, clip art, and photos.



Hannah confesses that she never had a particular wanderlust herself, but since her husband had to travel a lot for his job, she figured she'd accompany him and see some of the USA. Their travels take them to Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming and Nevada. She's usually in a car while visiting the many locations but sometimes on a bus. The zine is mostly a condensed account of her travels, not a continuous day-to-day journal, but contains some interesting observations and experiences. A "to be continued" appeared on the last page so I imagine there were other issues produced. Hannah has an Etsy shop, HRW Zines. It came with a mini zine, ***Sometimes People Don't Suck***, #2, which was short but very sweet.



William Patrick Tandy is getting ready to release a new zine that's all about the Jersey Shore called, ***Beach Badge***. Inside are stories from nearly a dozen contributors, all devoted to that theme. I was recently treated to an advance reader copy (for proofreading) with the finished product to soon follow. There's nostalgia, adventure, history, and romance awaiting you, along with some of Patrick's own photos.

Nemetz writes about getting into trouble with his friends at Kid's World, an amusement park that opened in Long Branch, in 1985; David C. Hackney gives us a history lesson relating to shark attacks; and I (*wait... I'm in this too? Oh, yeah!*) I recall great times at Wildwood and Cape May, where we brought our kids to enjoy the beach and boardwalk for many years. Of course, there's lots more.

It's 60 digest-sized pages with a \$4.95 price tag. Contact Patrick at wpt@eightstonepress.com to reserve your own copy.

(More of my zine reviews can be found in each issue of *Xerography Debt*; contact the editor, Davida Gypsy Breier, at [davida@leekinginc.com](mailto:davida@leekinginc.com)).





## CREW Bird Rookery Swamp

In the third week of March we drove three hours south from our Florida condo to see Ro's cousin in Bonita Springs. Also from New York, Betsy was sharing the cost of renting a 2-bed, 2-bath condo, from January through March, with one of her former teacher workmates. They had invited Ro and me to visit for a few days.

The area is between Naples and Fort Myers and boasts some of the most beautiful beaches on the Florida gulf coast. Also nearby was the CREW Bird Rookery Swamp which we explored briefly on one hot and humid day so I might get some good photos. Below are the boardwalk, a hawk, a great egret, and some kind of grass hopper.



K E N

## Technology Department

I recently received a text message from Spectrum – my cable provider at our Florida condo – telling me they noticed a problem with our system and would I please call a number to arrange for a service technician to come over to fix it. The only issue was that... *we had no problem!* Our TV, internet and Wi Fi were all working fine.

First thing I did was to make sure the message was really from Spectrum (it was) and that the number I was to call was actually their number (it was). Of course, when I called I got their automated help line which asked, "What can we help you with today? Press 1 to pay your bill, 2 to report a problem, 3 to change or add a service, etc."

So I pressed 2 to report a problem which then resulted in their asking, "Are you having an issue with your TV, internet, or Wi Fi?" My initial response was, "Hey, you told me there's a problem. I don't see that I *have* a problem." And, of course, the automated system didn't like my snarky comment so it just repeated all the options. I finally said, "problem with TV" and they eventually connected me to a person.



After explaining the whole situation to a human, they arranged to have a service tech come out on a Sunday morning, between 10 and 11 AM. Really? Overtime being paid for someone to fix my system which isn't even broken? *Whatever!*

Sure enough, the cable guy showed up at 10 AM and proceeded to test my system with one of his meters. "Wow!" he says, "you've only got a minus 17 reading." To which I asked the obvious question: "What is it *supposed* to be?"

"At least an 8," he replies. "Many people have a scrambled picture at any reading below a 7." Obviously, we are not *many people*, because our TV picture was perfect.

Well, after over an hour of disconnecting cables, testing with his meters, crawling around our attic (our condo is on the upper floor), and digging up the grass behind our building, the guy found the problem which I didn't know we had: a gash in the underground cable, apparently suffered during one of our landscaping company's visits who-knows-when. Or, perhaps one of the former tenants in our building dug into the ground with a spade to plant something once upon a time.

Anyway, the guy replaced the entire cable from their outside distribution box to my building, rechecked the meter readings, and all was well in our Spectrum world again.

Not that I ever thought it wasn't.

K E N



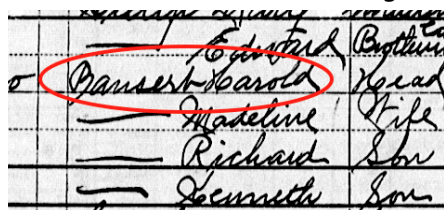
## Don't Count Yer Chickens

As I mentioned in tKC #62, the 1950 US Census was released to the public on April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Although it might not interest most people, those of us who've been involved in our genealogy research welcomed it after the 72-year waiting period required by law ended.

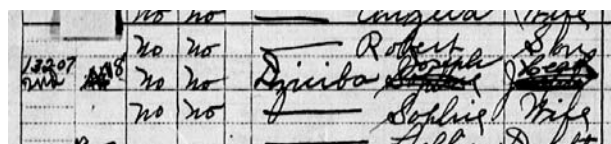
Census reports can not only tell you where a lot of your ancestors or relatives lived but also their ages, occupations, where they were born, when they immigrated to the US, as well as details about their spouses and children, among other things. Often, you'll find other relatives living in the same house as the one you originally set out to find.

The 1950 census was conducted live, by people walking house-to-house, and currently only available online through NARA (National Archives and Records Administration). Their search engine does not appear to be very good since I put in my surname, Bausert, and it only showed one result (my uncle Al and his family in Brooklyn) even though there were a dozen more that should have shown up. You can also search for people if you know where they lived (their enumeration district).

One of the problems with census reports is that a computer program has to decipher names from someone's handwriting and often gets it wrong. Bausert is often listed as Bansert, for example, since the "u" can look like an "n" to the search engine. In addition, the person doing the



1950 census for my old neighborhood had weird handwriting (can you believe that's an "H" on my father's name of Harold, to the left?) and made a lot of mistakes, crossing things out and rewriting



ing above them, compounding the problem.

Eventually, the census

will also be searchable through Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org whose search engines have traditionally been better at reading handwriting. For now, I've been having fun going through the records from my old neighborhood and finding the names of schoolmates or kids I grew up with – many of whom I know have passed on by now.

One thing distinctly different on the 1950 census from earlier ones: more people "not at home" for the census taker's first visit, because more women were out working instead of "keeping house," as previous censuses reported.



## Living with Covid

Ro and I have been very careful for the past two and a half years, wearing masks as soon as Covid-19 became a worldwide issue, also getting vaccinated early on as well as a booster shot. And, up until recently, we've avoided large crowds and close socializing with friends. After hearing horror stories of people who contracted the virus and either died or gotten very sick, we knew we had done the right things.

But, we're all getting very tired of playing this game by now and have recently been letting our guard down. We had planned on getting the second booster shot when we returned to New York from Florida but, in the meanwhile, stopped wearing our masks when shopping in stores. We also started taking part in large indoor gatherings, like Trivia Night at the local Elks Lodge. Citing "cabin fever," people have also begun doing more leisure travel and two couples/friends of ours recently returned from several days in Las Vegas, and we were with them immediately following their return. So I guess it should be no surprise that I contracted Covid-19 myself at the beginning of April.

Did I get it from shopping without a mask on? Or was it that night at the Elks lodge playing trivia? Did I get it from our friends who had just returned from Vegas? Or did I give it to them (because they took the test after hearing I tested positive and they *also* tested positive)?

I started feeling like a cold coming on, or my allergies kicking in, in the last few days of March. On Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, we were out to dinner with three other couples and I just felt kind of blah. That night, I had chills, a runny nose, and scratchy throat, so I took Tylenol and Benedryll. The next day, we were supposed to go out on a dinner/sunset cruise with twenty other friends but I just didn't feel up to it and cancelled.

Tuesday afternoon, I was supposed to preside over a Board of Directors meeting of our home owners association. That morning, Ro suggested I take a home test for Covid-19 so I did; it showed positive! I immediately called the rest of our Board and cancelled the meeting – not wanting to spread the virus any further. Ro and I then went over to a local CVS and we each took their Covid test; a local church offered free testing as well so we took that test too. The next day, we got those results back: I tested positive on both; Ro tested negative on both.

Luckily, I did not have a serious illness from the virus; I think my getting vaccinated and boosted was probably to thank for that. For the next few days, I kept my distance from Ro and slept in the spare bedroom to keep from infecting her.

*Epilogue – Ro tested positive for Covid a few days after me but had a lot more discomfort from her symptoms than I did.*



(Continued from page 4)

up here. The daytime temp stood at 1 degree when I got up this morning, and right now, at noon, has risen to a warm and toasty 6 degrees. Thank goodness I don't have any brass monkeys for porch decorations.

Bob Jennings (*Fadeaway* zine)

29 Whiting Rd., Oxford, MA 01540-2035



ground in 1872. (It's the only one of his original plantings that still survives).

Fred Argoff (*Brooklyn!* & *Watch The Closing Doors* zines)

1170 Ocean Pkwy, Penthouse L, Brooklyn, NY 11230-4060

1/21/22

Ken, the younger (at class reunions),

Did you participate in a moment of silence by a dashboard light for the passing of a musician? Or did you have to sleep on it?

(Ah, yes! I had a glass of wine and watched music videos of Meatloaf in concert to pay tribute to a larger-than-life performer. – Ken)

As to your class reunion observation, it's difficult for me to

Jan., 2022

Ken,

Last time I sent a letter of comment about something that isn't there any more. This time, something that is — and it's been here for a long time! This gnarly old tree (seen in summer and winter, with and without its green-ery), is the Camperdown Elm. It is to be seen in Prospect Park, and it was one of Frederick Law Olmsted's original plantings. It is, in fact, the very first such tree to be propagated in the United States. Olmsted put it in the

comment since my letters to my class reunion committee and antics have successfully gotten me banned from attending the yearly events.

(Hummm... why does that not surprise me? –Ken)

Is the Nostalgic Museum open to the public? If so, what are the hours of operation and price of admission? I'm trying to decide where to travel when or if I go on my farewell tour (hey, musicians do farewell tours, why can't zine publishers?)

(The museum is open by appointment only and you are welcome to take a tour free of charge. Just let me know when you're planning on visiting and I'll put your name on the preferred guests list. –Ken)

As to your 'second chance' I suspect as enterprising as you are you've already squeezed in a rich additional life or three in this go-round. I have no doubts if the fourth go-round takes place, you'd be equally successful. Go for it.

The two-story portrait on the house (back cover) at first glance made me think of a young Bernadette Peters.

(Yes, I can see the resemblance. –Ken)

Thanks for *Chronicles* #62, I enjoyed it as usual,

DB Pedlar (*Ponder Pond* zine)

25727 Cherry Hill Rd., Cambridge Springs, PA 16403

1-23-2022

Dear Ken,

Thank you for your latest. You always cover the most interesting topics to me.

I picked up a DVD called *Dreams For Sale*, about Coney Island – have you seen? Unfortunately, it was a library copy and would not play but I thought of you; came out recently, I think.

(I looked into that DVD and found it on Amazon, called, "*Coney Island: Dreams For Sale*," with used and new copies available for anywhere from \$8 to 16. It was released in 2015, and from its description, it sounds very much like a documentary I watched on the local PBS channel in our New York area around that timeframe, so I'm wondering if it's the same documentary I've seen. –Ken)

Anyway, I dropped into KS for a couple weeks to help my stepson look for a job in the area; I've been on the west coast since Oct. Now I can continue reading Ken *Chronicles* on the way back to sunny and very Covid-y California. We'll take our pop-up trailer through So.Cal, NM, AZ, down to the beaches of TX & then back to KS in late April. Hope you're enjoying Fla this year.

Your friend,

Christopher Robin, (*Squeaky Nuisance* zine)

PO Box 2475, Hutchinson, KS 67504

P.S. Aaron Cometbus has a new issue, "*Post Mortum*," it's great!



1/25/2022

Hi, Ken,

Thank you for keeping me on your mailing list to trade. I guess it's been a while (or longer than usual) since I published anything because I had three issues of your zine in my "to read" pile rather than the usual two. I mention the most recent issue in the enclosed copy of *Alternative Incite* #5. This issue also includes your letter, along with a response from me.

Well, that's it for the time being. I hope you're enjoying Florida. My in-laws are down there right now.

Be well, stay safe, & keep typing!

Joe 3 (*Alternative Incite* Zine)

PO Box 3067, Laurel, MD 20709

January 25, 2022

Hi Ken,

I really enjoyed The Ken Chronicles #61, especially your piece "Twisted Technology." I have the same problem myself! I, however, had no idea it had a name. "Benign Essential Tremor," eh?

I have been having an intensifying tremor when typing, and often get double or triple (or more) characters when only one is called for. And, while I suspected I wasn't the only one in the world who has this, it's nice to know I'm in good company.

(Yes, that was driving me crazy. Turns out the cheapest Logitech keyboard, K-120, selling for around \$10-12 has turned out to be the most comfortable for me to type on and I get almost no multiple letters due to my condition. The only thing is, I had to switch the Command & Option keys ((simple to do in "Preferences")) because I'm using a PC keyboard on a Mac, and the volume keys don't work ((not a problem because I have my Bluetooth Mac keyboard on top of my desk so I can use it for that purpose when necessary.)) –Ken)

All the best,

Catherine Groves (*Christian\*New Age Quarterly* Zine)

PO Box 276, Clifton, NJ 07015-0276

Sabado, 29 de Enero, 2022

Hey, Ken!

Thanks for your latest issue (#62). A great, eclectic mix of stories and articles as always. Would've loved to have seen the inside of the Colony record store. In our crusty little Spanish town we have one record store. Well, it's actually a bar, but a few years back, the owner put a few crates of old records at the end of the bar & it was such a hit that he expanded. Now half the place is filled with crates of records he gets from a distributor in Madrid. He started a website & now the LPs and CDs account for half of his income. It's a pleasure to dig through-

crates with a beer in your hand.

Hope you're having a nice mild winter down there in Florida.

Take care, all the best,

Kris, Calvo Sotelo, 13B, 4B, Plasencia, 10600, Caceres, Spain

(Kris also sent along some cool old ads for record players from 1953. – Ken)

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Only RCA VICTOR makes the "Victrola" attachment.

APRIL, 1953

Feb. 21, 2022

Hi Ken,

I just finished reading #62 and I thought I better send a comment now before time passes me again. Speaking of time, the section entitled "second chance" did give me pause. Especially since in a matter of days I'll be 50... 22 days to be exact. I, like you, also have one or two things I wish I had done – and would have become an anthropologist if I could do it all over again. But now that I'm almost 50 my only wish is that I had met Mark sooner. Since he is 13 years older than me I know time is not on our side but I am grateful for his motto which has been "we have now". The one thing my mom said that sticks with me is that getting old is weird because she felt so young even if her body didn't feel the same way. Now that I'm here, me and the 16 year old me couldn't agree with her more.

As you know we (Mark and I) just got back from Portland, and while we were there I visited a friend of mine I've known since my Jr High and High School days. Sarah and her partner had not met Mark and I told them how he did Radio and Zines. I naively said, "do you know what zines are?" They dramatically gasped (for effect I'm sure) and said "Of course we do, were punk!!". I was half embarrassed and definitely impressed that Mark was a

part of this subculture. I share this story especially in light of your comments about Cometbus and it being a part of the punk culture scene. I really had no idea that zines had so many facets.

We ended up at Powell Books and while we were there we saw a book entitled Zinesters Guide to Portland. It was published by microcosm publishing and here is their website <https://microcosmpublishing.com/>. We actually rushed out of the book store to find the microcosm publishing store in Portland. It was closed to the public but they *did* let Mark buy a copy of Xerography Debt. There you were, Ken, in black and white! When we met up with my friends again I was delighted to mention you and Mark and they were very impressed as am I.

I hope Florida is treating you well.

All the best,

Nancy Strickert, PO Box 1171, Rialto CA 92377

2/18/22

Hey, Ken!

Thanks for sending the newest issue of the Ken Chronicles. And thank you for the nice review of ***Awesome Things***.

Thanks to you and Ayun I look forward to watching "Next Stop, Greenwich Village." I put a hold on it through my library, so when it's ready for pick-up I'll get an alert. There better be beatniks & bongos in it or I'll be pissed. (kidding)

*(Hah! I laughed out loud at that one! – Ken)*

How are the bait stations going? \$1,050 is a lot of scratch. Hope those termites take a hike.

*(Only time will tell; I'll keep you informed. In retrospect, and after watching the guy install the bait stations, I probably could have done the job myself for maybe half the price. But, it would have been a lot more work for me since I don't have the correct power tool to dig the hole for the bait stations. – Ken)*

Thanks for coming to Zine Club! It's been fun seeing you there.

All the best,

Liz Mason, PO Box 477553, Chicago, IL 60647

Hey, Ken!

Thanks for the latest tKC and the note reminding me to renew! Your zine is amazing and I'm glad to receive it every quarter.

I'm hoping to start doing another issue in the not too distant future. I should have more time because I'M RETIRING! When, and not if, I do another issue it will be the first I've done where 95% of the resources didn't come from the copy/fax room at work. My pirate printing days are over!

Enjoy the Florida weather and take care,

Rich Sweet, 908 6th Ave., Stevens Point WI, 54481

*(I also heard from A.J. Michel and Billy McCall. –Ken)*



## Ken's Facts Of Life

"One woman in Bangladesh unexpectedly gave birth to twins in March 2019, less than a month after having another newborn.

The highly unusual circumstance came about

because the woman has two uteruses

and both were able to successfully

carry the three healthy children to term."

– [bestlifeonline.com/weird-amazing-facts](https://bestlifeonline.com/weird-amazing-facts)