

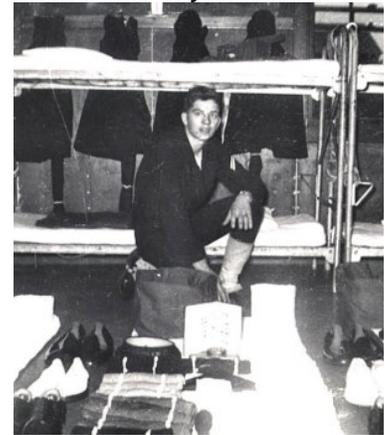


Three months after graduation in 1953, LaVerne joined the navy. Like the civilians at far right, he entered Great Lakes Naval Training Center, north of Chicago. The photo at left was taken on his first liberty home, but not before he stopped



in Chicago to get his first and only tattoo. His classmate, Rod Galbreath had also joined the navy but a few days earlier, so was in a different company. Rod went on to serve as a corpsman in Korea then a pharmacist in Adrian.

The photo at right illustrates how a boot had to arrange his belongings for inspection. The leggings were good to have on for marching/drilling. LaVerne enjoyed that very much. All clothing was rolled up tight and tied with woven-cotton strings. These strings were also used to tie clothes up to dry in the very hot drying room. Being on watch, late at night, past barracks that were not in use, was the scariest thing he had to do. LaVerne worked in a vegetable closet on main side for three months, peeling potatoes with an automatic peeling drum, after completing boot camp.



LaVerne was then transferred to places unknown. After being transport from the Great Lakes Naval Training Center to Chicago, LaVerne boarded the train at the La Salle Street Station. The train, with a last of its kind streamlined steam engine, traveled south into Indiana, then Ohio. In the evening, east of Cincinnati, the train crossed the Ohio River near Ironton. Later in the night, LaVerne's car was switched to another train, at a station much like the one pictured, right.



At day break the train was traveling very slowly through the West Virginia hills. This was LaVerne's first look at how many of the people lived back in the hills. It was very late this day when he arrived in Norfolk. After a couple days at this large base where he had his teeth checked, he was put on a bus with others who did not know where they were going. They ended up at the Harbor Defense Base in Little Creek, Virginia. This was to be home for a year.



LaVerne was assigned to mess-cooking while others were assigned to a the very dirty job of repairing torpedo nets by weaving rusty 1 inch circles into a net. He requested to stay on mess-cooking and was granted his wish. These seamen still did not know what was in store for them. They attended other schools while there. Fire fighting was one. Firing a 5 inch gun was another. LaVerne was trained to push bags of gun powder into an elevator that took the bags to the gun above. No body was smoking here. In May of 1955, this same group, which had grown, was put on a bus heading north.

Past Washington D.C. and Delaware they went. They arrived at the Philadelphia Naval Ship Yard and pulled up to this huge ship. She was the Fleet Oiler, *USS Kawishiwi AO-146*.



LaVerne's enlistment was completed by serving on this ship. He was part of the original commissioning crew. The commissioning was held on July 6, 1955 and his parents Irwin and Lois Hutchins was there along with his sister Arleen. He later wrote a book about these oilers. It is called "Navy Super Tankers". See web page: <http://navy.memorieshop.com/Story/>

Lester Rawson, class of 1954, took this photo when the school came down. He saved a truck load of bricks and has given many, many away. LaVerne has one.

You can view the schools old days on LaVerne's web site at: <http://memorieshop.com/FHS/>





Author of: **Family  
Fusing  
in Fennville**

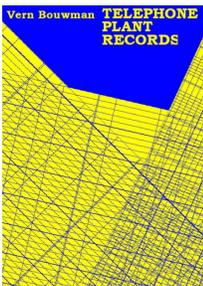
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“Family Fusing in Fennville” can be purchased from Vern by mailing a \$22.00 check to above address.

Vern’s Web Sites:

City of Fennville: <http://www.memorieshop.com/Allegan/Fennville/>  
FHS in 50’s: <http://memorieshop.com/FHS/>  
Hutchins Page: <http://hutchins.bouwman.com/>  
Sheckler Page: <http://sheckler.bouwman.com/>  
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Navy Oil Tankers: <http://navy.memorieshop.com/>

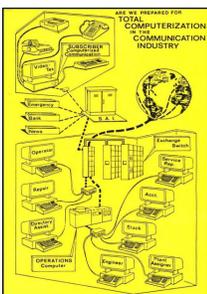
More Books by Vern



Vern’s experience with telephone companies prompted him to write this book because most small companies had poor record keeping practices.

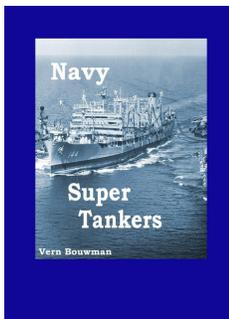
It sold 3000 copies -- world wide in 1977

See: <http://telephone.bouwman.com/Records.html>



Vern gained experience with the computer as it was being developed. He began to write programs that were an aid to his work and he could foresee how a computer would become a basic part of telephone system components. In 1982 He prepared a paper for his fellow designers.

See: <http://telephone.bouwman.com/Vision/82-vision.html>



Vern’s book on the market is:

**Navy Super Tankers**

ISBN 141203206-7

It is sold chiefly on Amazon.com

See: <http://navy.memorieshop.com/Story/>