

## JACK RHINE'S LIFE STORY

(dedicated to Deacon Jack Rhine, 1946 – 2023)

1. Jack Rhine's Life Story – written by Jack in 2014  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhine.pdf>
2. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 1  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies.pdf>
3. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 2  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies2.pdf>
4. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 3a (2004-2009)  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies3a.pdf>
5. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 3b (2009-2013)  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/DeaconJack.png>



6. Jack Rhine and his wife Karen – 50th Anniversary (2021)  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/Jack50th.pdf>
7. Friendship with Jack, by classmate Paul J. Wigowsky  
<http://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineFriendship.pdf>



# Jack Rhine's Life Story

As of June 2014



I was born on January 17, 1946 at Mt. Zion Hospital in San Francisco. I was an only child until my sister, Marti, was born in November of 1948. My father was a lawyer and my mother was a lab technician. My childhood was spent in the Richmond District. My first home was in the apartment house on the south west corner of 43rd Avenue and Clement Street across from the old VA Hospital. By the time my sister was born, we were living on 27th Avenue between Cabrillo and Fulton. Most of my youth was spent at 671 8th Avenue between Balboa and Cabrillo. We arrived there before I started elementary school at Frank McCoppin. My middle name was Henry and I was named after my father so I went by Hank until I met my wife and I and gave her the choice as she thought that Hank made me sound like a country singer!



From Photographic Journal  
 Class of 1954 - 1955  
 Back row: Sylvia Anderson, Jerrye Matlock, Doris Jones, Helen Taylor, Arlene Gusterson, Ann Perry, Gladys Simpson, Clara Anderson, George Lovelace, Willie Papa Litzinger, Elaine Oestrike, Paul Smith.  
 Second row: James Pictelli, Barbara Clark, William Marysville, Walter Anderson, Sam Williamson, Faye Slaney, Bob Jones, Michael Williamson.  
 Third row: Paul Yandier, Johannes Hoffmann, Peter Alford, Dennis Gatto, David Jenkins, Paula Antikorski, Sam Paul King, Paul Sigman, Paul Tomasetti, Kluge Sam, Vance Conrad, Gloria Smith.  
 Front row: Ernest Brown, Robert Lee.

My youth was not a happy time. Not to wallow in negativity; here's a brief picture. I was not athletic or coordinated, I was bored in school because I was taught a lot at home, and took a lot of heat for being one of the few Jewish kids in a mostly Irish Catholic working class neighborhood. I was bullied regularly. I look

back and am so grateful that I have been able to come so far. Home life was not great, not because my parents didn't love me, but they were not happy with each other. There was not enough money. My dad was out long hours and my mother was unhappy and very strict.

My mother was actively involved in the PTA and was president for a few years. She knew everything that was going on at school, so if I got into trouble there, she knew and I got punished again at home. If I said that I had a lousy teacher, I was told that my job was to learn and it did not matter how lousy my teacher was. She was always home when we were and only worked when we were in school. This was the case, as I remember, until high school.

I went onto Roosevelt Jr. High and, things were pretty much the same; boredom, poor good grades, not being accepted. When I finally got fed up with being bullied and fought back, we got caught. Mr. Hansen, the Boy's Vice Principal, a very huge man, offered us the choice of a call home or the paddle. I was so conditioned not to get into trouble at school because I would be in more trouble at home, I chose the paddle. He only hit me once but I had a hard time sitting down the rest of the day. Everyone knew what happened when they saw you on the bench outside of his office. Then I felt really stupid when I realized that my parents had been trying to get me to fight back and would have rewarded me. By this time my hormones were raging and I wanted a girlfriend very badly. I had no idea how to socialize with the opposite sex and was naïve enough not to know when a girl was interested in me. Even when I knew, I didn't know how to behave and could be obnoxious and distanced her.

In the ninth grade, I was accepted into Lick Wilmerding, a private boy's school. I ended up on academic probation pretty quickly. Although I cleaned up my academic grades, I didn't get along with the electric shop teacher and he failed me. I got tossed and ended up at George Washington High School, which was a better place for me anyway. My years at Washington were pretty much a repeat of my life so far. I was still a klutz and hung around with other misfits. I did what I had to do, graduated, and went to City College but did not apply myself. I was not ready for college and dropped out. In my family it was worse to not get an education than it was to be a robber or a murderer. It did not go down well. I held a few low paying jobs. I then enlisted in the Navy because I was afraid of getting drafted into the Army or the Marines, who were also drafting at that time.

The Navy experience was not so great. I had the same problems I had growing up. Being intelligent was not a plus so I got some pretty awful jobs, mess hall, laundry and, janitorial. I was assigned to a fighter aircraft squadron. I was sidelined into the jobs described above. My only way out was to take a test to become a Third Class Petty Officer. Because I could teach myself, I took a test for Third Class Aviation Maintenance Administrativeman and basically became an "airplane personnel man" keeping maintenance records on the squadron's aircraft. It was not particularly stimulating work, but it got me a better job than those I had been doing.

I had met a girl in San Diego through a family friend. We were both too young and it did not go anywhere. When I got out of the Navy, I lived in San Diego for a while in order to be near her. When things went south, I returned north, to San Francisco, and got a job at the post office as a letter carrier. I finally came to the conclusion that I needed to go back to school if I was to amount to anything and do work I really enjoyed. I was about 24 at that time.

I went back to City College, carrying at least a full course load and working full time. Unlike before, I performed in school and got good grades. I got interested in history and met Karen in my History of Western Civilization class. It was love at first sight, at least for me. However, I was still too shy to make the first move. She approached me after the first midterms and we started talking and then dating. My life was turning around. Within a year, we were married. We went to Sitka, Alaska during spring break where my mother was working for the Native Health Service and we got engaged in that beautiful place.



We got married on August 21, 1971. I was happy with a civil marriage, but Karen, a non-practicing Catholic, wanted some sort of religious wedding. So we got married by a rabbi at Temple Beth-Israel Judea. We went on a honeymoon to Southern California and we stayed in my grandmother's apartment in Long Beach while she stayed with my mother in San Francisco.

I soon finished at CCSF and started at SF State. I majored in history and minored in geography. I got introduced to computers and my life has never been the same. After getting my BA, I quit the Post Office and worked at SFSU. I managed a computer lab. Soon I took over as campus timesharing computer manager and taught various introductory computing and statistics classes. I attended classes for a K-8 Teaching Credential and for an Adult Education Credential, and I did my student teaching. I also earned a Master's Degree in Education with a concentration in Educational Technology working in the

area of computer assisted instruction and testing.

In 1976 some friends talked us into going on a Marriage Encounter weekend. It was a wonderful boost for our relationship as we learned how to communicate more deeply. It was also a huge surprise for I was leery of doing this Catholic thing. It was a conversion experience for me and I found a place where I was comfortable and accepted. I got a totally different view of the Church than I previously held in my life and it also brought Karen back to her church. I became a full member of the Church and we got married in the Church five years to the day from our original wedding.

I learned during my student teaching that I really was not cut out to teach children. It was not because I couldn't teach, but being highly organized for six hours a day was not something that came natural to me. So, I decided to teach adults. I was good at it and really enjoyed it. I wanted to teach at the college level so I applied to the UC Berkeley School of Education for an EdD program. The advisor who agreed to take me on would only take me as a PhD candidate. He did not care if I did anything practical as long as contributed to the body of knowledge. He also wanted me at UC every day. It was kind of hard when I needed to work for a living.

In 1977, I went to work for Digital Equipment Corporation in Sunnyvale and then Santa Clara as an instructor. We bought our first house in the Capitol Expressway area of San Jose that was later taken over by "lowriders." I loved my work and the company. The doctorate did not matter to my career in a company where everyone including the president went by first names. I had finished my course work but did not see any reason to continue with getting the degree.



During the first year at Digital, we took on two sisters as foster children who were taken from their father. We became very active in our parish, involved in a number of ministries. I had the opportunity to move into a course development position in southern New Hampshire. I developed courses for the product I taught. After a year, I badly missed the student contact. Sitting in an office all day every working day was not for me. I transferred back to being an instructor in a northern suburb of Boston. Again, I loved it and thrived.

I had a great boss who got me huge merit pay raises every year. I was asked to teach classes all over the United States, Canada and Europe to both customers and employees.

During this time, the older of the sisters we were fostering had severe psychological problems and was too much for us. She needed to be in a group home with "professional parents." Her mother wanted her to live with her, so she left and we adopted her younger sister at her request. We did some emergency foster care for a few years, but stopped after one accused us of all kinds of things (not sexual abuse) and another was bringing undesirable people and likely drugs into our house.

I was actively recruited to take another job as part of a new venture at Digital doing new product planning and product introduction for commercial software products in the US Software Services organization. It broadened my previous focus on training into the area of services. It required both technical and project planning skills and a modest amount of US travel. Because of the high visibility in this job, I was again recruited to manage a group that did worldwide new product planning and serviceability engineering for Digital's premiere software product. Serviceability is building into a product features that reduce service calls. This was a corporate group and again I had the opportunity for international travel. I had anywhere from 18-24 quality people working with me and it was a good time in my life. I did this until 1993 when there was a reorganization. I ended up back in training as a product manager. In 1994 there was a lot of downsizing. We were tired of winters so I took a package to leave, and we moved to Florida. Some close friends of ours moved to East Central Florida before us. We visited a couple of times and decided we liked the area.



The Melbourne – Palm Bay area grew up with the Space Program. It is not specifically a retirement area. We really like it. Shortly after we got here our close friends took a multi-year assignment in Malaysia. It was a difficult time. I had a hard time finding work. Karen convinced me that if I shaved my beard off, I would look younger and interview better. I have had a beard since I got out of the service. Being clean shaven did not get me a job and only succeeded in making my multiple chins visible and made me look like a doofus. Needless to say, I grew the beard back and will never part with it again.

Speaking of appearances, one of my elementary school classmates remembered me as the kid who always had untied shoe laces and a shirt half tucked in. Living in Florida agrees with me and solved that problem. My normal attire is sandals, shorts and a polo shirt that can be worn not tucked in without breaching any dress etiquette.

Karen took a public relations job working at a salary that was about what she made when she took her first job out of college. She ended up with a great career at Florida Institute of Technology and retired at the beginning of this year. We found a parish that was progressive and loving. That became a large part of our lives. We got very involved and completed a three year pastoral ministry program. After that, I felt called to the permanent diaconate and after several more years of formation. I was ordained a permanent deacon in 2002.

In the meantime, since I was not able to find a suitable job in engineering management or quality, I decided to build a small computer business. I taught computer courses part time, first for a local computer store and then for the community college. I did OK in the computer business until it got much cheaper to buy a computer from Dell or HP than I could buy the parts to build one. I had a few commercial customers that were good. However, in 2003 when I had half of my left kidney and all of my right removed due to renal cell carcinoma, probably as a result of being exposed to Agent Orange during the Viet Nam war. I had huge fatigue problems and couldn't be there when my customers needed me. I fought for disability and finally got it after a long battle. I continue to support a few of my non-commercial customers but did it because I like the people, not because I like the work. And I am letting those customers taper off.



I am active in my ministry, teaching and preaching. I am passionate about social justice and a lot of my ministry is related to helping people. My preaching centers around love and serving others. I am the spiritual advisor for our local St. Vincent de Paul Society that helps people in need. I just retired as a chaplain to seafarers at our diocesan seafarer center at Port

Canaveral. I am present to help those in need. My current project involves Human Trafficking and I am on the boards of a couple of national religious organizations.

My piece of kidney that has been working for ten and a half years has started to fail. I have begun the process of getting a transplant. I am much too active to spend four hours, three days a week, having dialysis and it would curtail my traveling. So, hopefully, I will keep myself off of dialysis, until I get a new kidney, by adhering to a strict diet and exercise. Diet is a challenge for someone who is a foodaholic! It is hard to exercise when I feel queasy, but I try to do something. I like to cook and I like to eat out, particularly ethnic food. My favorites are sushi, Thai food, Indian food, Mexican food and Middle Eastern food.



When you put love of food and love of travel together, it can be disastrous for a diet! We try to take a major trip each year as well as some smaller trips. This year, since the kidney doctor said to travel now, that is what we are doing. We will have had two international trips; Central America and the Iberian Peninsula, and five US trips by the end of 2014. If I can never travel again, I will still be blessed with all of the places that I have been able to go to; many places where most people won't ever get to.

As for other interests besides travel, I am a voracious reader. I am interested in old movie theaters



and theater pipe organs. During the 50<sup>th</sup> GWHS Class Reunion in San Francisco, I was invited to see the California Theater in San Jose and to hear the pipe organs there, one in the lobby and one in the auditorium. I am currently involved in a much larger project than I imagined converting my analog electronic organ into a virtual pipe organ, which is basically playing the organ from sample sets that are installed in a computer that have been recorded from a real pipe organ. So, my instrument plays three different theater organs and two church organs depending on which sample set I have loaded into the computer. Because I am not a carpenter, only a third of the stops are physically on the console. The



touch screen on the left provides access to the all of the stops and features on the organ. I am not much of an organist, but I play for my own therapy. I enjoy computers when they are not too much like work and I continue to build and tinker with my own.

My story does not end here. I hope to keep writing it with my life for a long time to come. I am grateful for the gift of Karen, my daughter Ronnie who is a beautiful person --- inside and out -- and my three grandchildren, Sarah entering her senior year at Southern New Hampshire University, Connor just graduated from high school and is looking at a two year certificate in mechanics and welding and Jacob who is entering the eighth grade. I have been truly blessed with the life I have, with all of its ups and downs, and the people who have become part of my life. I hope that when the end of my story comes, that its major theme will be that I have loved and helped to make life better for others.



**Rest In Peace,  
Deacon Jack  
Rhine**

With great sadness, we announce that Deacon Jack passed away this morning, July 24. Please pray for him, his wife Karen, their daughter, Veronica Hamilton, and our community as we mourn the loss of our beloved brother.

Funeral arrangements are forthcoming.

<https://ourladyofgracechurch.com/2023/07/sad-notification-that-deacon-jack-rhine-passed-away-today-july-24/>





1. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 1  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies.pdf>
2. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 2  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies2.pdf>
3. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 3a (2004-2009)  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies3a.pdf>
4. Deacon Jack Rhine's Homilies – Part 3b (2009-2013)  
<https://wigowsky.com/GW63/JackRhineHomilies3b.pdf>