

## Snapshots 3

David Gwynn  
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The Osan ed Center had a large parakeet cage and a pair of birds. Seeing tiny eggs in the local market, I bought a carton of them and when no-one was around I slipped an egg into the cage. The staff people were thrilled that one of the birds had laid an egg. They made a little nest within a tiny house and put the egg on the nest. Ten they put one bird on the nest. He came flying out wanting nothing to do with nest, house or egg. The bird was not fooled, he wanted nothing to do with that egg. On the day it was supposed to hatch, I put a second egg in the cage. Someone must have been watching as they knew I was responsible and congratulated me on the joke. A fishpond was planned, but sadly never was made as I'd planned to make a submarine periscope for it.

### **The Osan UFO Scare**

May 13, 2008

It was late at night and security police saw a strange reddish glow moving over the runway. It was more than they wanted to personally encounter so they watched it for a while. Finally one, braver than the rest, gunned his truck into action" I'll get it" he said to the rest who expected his sudden violent exit from earth.

Before he got around the end of the runway, the mysterious red glow went skyward, but then it went right back down"The UFO must have engine trouble."

The pickup got to the other side of the runway, his spotlight briefly shot out across the rice paddy and he turned back.

How big was it? they asked. "Is it still there? "

"Naa, its gone. It was just a tent heater being stolen. " A local wanted a heater for his house and had carried off a burning tent heater.

other things:



We made a Maryland snowman [early 1990's]

Sometimes I borrowed skis and used them on the golf course. Tried ice skates, but the grass growing through the ice on the frozen over rice paddies made skating impossible.

electrical system failed in interesting ways.



I still have this pig, it seemed an appropriate comment on this car.

The Koreans had bought an entire Opel factory and moved it to Korea. Completed engines were sent from Germany so they were good. Very good compared to the miserable work done in Korea. The engine was unstoppable. One evening I ran it at 70 mph for two miles with no water [bad Korean Radiator]. At The Suwon gate I dumped in a gallon of water-ntifreeze mix and the fog was so dense that we could not see the hood-rod and the SP closed the hood with it in place[ It bent right around in a circle].

Worn out and rusty, it was not in good shape. I worsened it by backing into the flagpole at the Kunsan Base Commanders office. That shortened the trunk 6 inches on one side. I tied its compressed trunk to a shed and drove away stretching the trunk back to length. It smashed into manhole under construction one evening because of mis-placed tin road barriers. That required the front to be stretched out tied to the shed. One very dark rainy night it attacked a big block of concrete in the road's center that cops stand on. Its tie rod bent that time. I had to drive to the Wijombu garage with one wheel sliding sideways on the sand and the other on the pavement so that it did not wear out its tires dragging them sideways.

later that year Spiros and I took it to a junkyard in Wijombu. At first I was towing it but Spiros got it started. It was visibly steaming but arrived and we split the car's \$75 scrap value.

## Time to Go

March 27, 2008

By 1993 I had everything I'd come to Korea in 1985 for. Kwang and I were married and got along very well.

I'd inherited an income in the USA and I wanted a real home...there.

There were other factors. One evening a student told me " We think the north Koreans have between 1 and 3 atomic bombs. They build and export scud rockets that can deliver them here." We heard that conditions were difficult in North Korea and that their army had massed along the border. Only Korean Maryland instructor were assigned north of Seoul that winter. State department employees were told to be packed and ready to evacuate the country on a 12hr notice.

It sounded ominous. We lived about a thousand feet from the country's command and control center bunker, the best target for the North Korean rockets. An attack and no-one was going to get anywhere as during a false alarm a few years earlier it only took 15 minutes for all roads southward to jam completely with panicked Koreans.

We left in December just before christmas.

I was a little relieved in stages when the aircraft got airborne, when we left Korean airspace, when we entered Japanese airspace and only relaxed when we landed at Yokota. That same room, nearly exactly 17 years and earlier was my last view of japan.



It had come full circle from Bob's 1977 photo.