

# Billy



Billy age 6

Inherited birth defect: Hole in the Heart

1. The Dad dies young after having 2 daughters, autopsy shows hole in the heart as reason for death.
2. The Dr. tells the wife that her husband died from hole in his heart and that her first daughter's first son will be born with a hole in his heart.

The oldest daughter hears the doctor explain to her mother why her dad died. The shock of the loss of her dad and hearing the Dr. explain that her first son will die from the same fact was traumatic. According to an 1850's medical book, when a woman has a traumatic experience, her baby can be deformed based on her fears. The example was that a girl seen her cat's head squashed in a buggy door and her first child was born with a squashed head. Suggesting the fear is manifested into reality by the subconscious mind.

Grandfather Glen Harry Heath: dies from hole in heart August 1941

Grandson Billy: Born with hole in heart, May 1950

(Billy never heard this was inherited until 2024)



December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, when I asked if Billy would tell his story to his nephews, he told his story for the first - time I ever heard it.

It was a subject not spoken of while growing up. I never knew much about his operations and was in the third grade during his second operation at age 16. I never got to go to the hospitals or know why he went or what happened.

20+ years ago I heard bits and pieces that he had died in the hospital and had an upside down heart, but he never wanted to talk about it.

At age 17, he was the only child out of a 50-child experiment to walk out of the hospital and no Dr. understands how he survived or lived a normal productive life. He has out lived all the Drs. at experimented on him. He has the oldest pig valve on earth.

Luckily I used my cell phone to record him telling his story:

When I was 4 or 5 we all went to a Cleveland doctor, I think it could have been Children's in Columbus; came down lots of steps – Dad took me to see this doctor's wall of fish. The doctor laid me down and took a razor blade and cut my wrist – ankles – chest – leg- real "lightly" and taped wire on the cuts for EKG readings approx. 1955. Then we came out & dad bought us all a Chicago hot dog.

Anyway  
6 years old

Repair Hole in heart / pig valve surgery / stent 1956

During the Surgery

I was in a room with a straight table, I am standing there, people setting on both sides, I am standing here, I have no chair. In this room; all right, a hallway there and when a light went on they all stood up and everyone started leaving and some one grabbed me by the shoulder and said NO, you got more to do, you can not go.

I paid no attention to it, never thought about it. I went up to see Flippo (tv show), at that time they had hoses that look like you use on an air compressor and I had these hoses stuck here stuck here, stuck here, stuck here, they used the hoses for oxygen and Dr. walked in and he said you want to watch Flippo and he flipped the channels and said I have to be back in an hour to drain more fluid out and get

all hooked back up. I never thought anything of it. Later Flippo came to my room and gave me a ukulele and wind up toy.

At age 7, I asked my grandma Taylor, you have any idea why I was setting at this table and a light came on and everyone left and they left me and she grabbed me and said what you mean? I said this light came on and they all left and this guy said I cannot go and she started crying. She really did, you don't know anything about light what so ever and I stood there and she was crying and she said; kissed me and said your going to be one of "those"! One of those that are still here.

### Age 17

Big Hole in Heart / Surgery  
Went to OSU

All right, 17 we moved to west liberty, mom and dad decided to kill ("Ha Ha") me; they bought a house with steep stairs and the school had lots of stairs and I did not make it ½ a year, I was turning purple too much. Made an appointment at children's hospital and the guy that teaches surgery, we went over there and anyway he comes walking out and never met him before and mom is setting there and 3 doctors and he looked at me and he said you feel all right? I said yes; he said I already lost 2 kids in 2 days, he said; 1 of them is from your school, I said yes, the Kaufinbarger girl. Her hole was size of a silver dollar. Your hole is a little bigger and he said, maybe you better live the way you are.

Mom standing there ready to cry. I grabbed his hand and I said you do the best you can and I don't care how it turns out, I know you did best you can and thank God you tried and know I am going to heaven! Mom, she left the room and the colored Dr., followed her out and he looked at us and said: you sure? I am not having a good day. I said this is not living; I am happy if you do it. I shook his hand.

So anyway, went and had the surgery.

**First Surgery:** Took the heart out the first time, they put it back in.

**Second Surgery hours later:** A tube came off the heart, they opened it up and put it back on. Pretty little nurse, the Drs nurse, she would always come in and hold my hand, me being 17 years old, that was nice as she tried to keep your mind off the surgery.

Anyway, she came and said; I think your going to be Ok. I was in there maybe 3 days in intensive care and low and behold an old woman came in to be my nurse on Friday night about 10 pm. Before that, Let me back up, during those 3 days

this little girl Jody, she was 6 years old and she had heart surgery and she was in another bed down and I would help her turn tv on and watch cartoons, very nice girl. Her mom was only one that ever came around, anyway and this old woman had my hands and feet tied down and I woke up. I said what are you doing?

She goes I do not want you moving, I know how you guys are, I don't want you moving. They stick a hose down your nose into your throat 4x daily and suck this black stuff out. It is terrible and I said no no, I am fine I do not want tied down---

At that point my entire heart blew out! My whole chest broke. The heart surgery came apart. Just as this happened the little nurse came in to say goodnight. If she had not come in to say good night, I would not be here. Because the old woman was just standing there; watching me die. She grabbed that old woman and shoved & through her clear across the room. I seen her flying and hit the wall.

I am going down the hallway and the colored Dr.; he was the only Dr. there, he is on top of me and I look at him and I said, what is he doing?

He had already cut everything and he says; he is wake, knock him out! Anyway they did not have anything to knock me out with, they were wheeling me down the hallway to surgery.

Then I go down stairs and at the bottom of the stairs in the elevator, I look up and I say, where we going? Then they gave me a shot and knocked me out.

Alright, then in there I was in surgery for I think Friday night for 38 hours, alright anyway; they gave me 104 units of blood, I think everyone in West Liberty was donating blood. We had only been there maybe 6 months and the whole town wanted to help, because others had already died from there. The school had a big thing, even Graham school helped.

Besides that, anyway I am in there for about 38 hours, anyway, I woke up Sunday I think and here I am at this stupid table again! All these people, I set down, Jody set down, the little girl. Jody said, Billy, what we doing here? I said I don't know, I suppose we are waiting on something and I still have no idea. She start crying and came over and set beside me and she said where is mom? I said I don't know, they will come get us and help us, low and behold, the hallway lit up and they all stood up and Jody grabbed my hand, I said this goes somewhere, I have been here before (at age 6) and she said ok and we are walking and just as we got to the door, this guy Grabs Me!

He turns me and says you have more to help, you cannot go. I said ok, come on Jody, you come with me. I seen this plain as day, an he looked at her and said you can not go, you will be back another day. He held her hand and she started bawling and I am bawling and I said No, Jody you come with me! Jody, all right, in she goes and I wake up in the operating room on a flat slab, a metal slab. Which I suppose they all are and a shield, no idea, no nothing. They said: they thought I passed away; I had no I V or anything hooked upon me.

If you had been there, it would have been a sight to see; I set right up! SCREAMING, Jody, Jody, where you at? I mean bawling. The Dr. up above and Nurse came running and she grabbed me and she goes, calm down and she screams he is alive, alive! Like a Frankenstein movie – He's Alive!

- ✓ Anyway the Dr. came down and said hook him back up. But then I said, Where Is JODY? I mean I was hysterical, I remember it plainly. I mean I was stark naked on the metal slab and I wanted Jody back. They go, who is Jody? The nurse looked at me and looked at the Dr. and said who is this Jody? He does not have a relative named Jody.

I said Jody was right there, where is Jody? A nurse walked in from another room and she goes and the Dr. asked who is this Jody? She goes Jody? She died yesterday. I did not here it right then, but I am hollering for Jody and the nurse said; what do you mean Jody? I said I was in a room and they made her go, into the hallway! And the nurse gave me a kiss right on the lips and she hugged me and said, Billy your going to be fine, you're evidently here for a purpose.

- ✓ They did not run a hose down my throat anymore or nothing. They said, well Billy, he goes I can tell you right now, I did not save you; you were gone! He said I thought I lost another one. I can tell you right now, you are here for a purpose.

Anyway, after all said and done, we get ready to go, three Drs. are there, mom came in and they said we think he is going to be ok, we hope so. The colored Dr. told mom, we have to sign papers, they took her out of there and the 2 Drs. set me on the bed and said; what we did to you, no one will ever know; I said what do you mean?

- ✓ He goes we did not get permission to do it, didn't have time; this is an experimental and we had no time and this was tried back in 1952 and a big hospital in Minnesota and he said everyone of them died, they all died. The Dr. explained your arteries connected to the heart were like jello, every time we tried to sew them up, they fell apart.

I said, really! He goes with what was left, we could only hook you up “**Backwards**”. He said what was on your left, is now on your right and what was on your right, is now on your left. But he also said: **we installed man - made an artery that runs from your heart, to your back.** I go, OK and I go---and **he says we ran a new artery to your spine.** The other Dr. spoke up and said, now Billy; no matter what, they won’t believe you and they will think you are crazy. I cannot put this in your medical record because we had no permission and **you may fall apart and be dead before you can leave this hospital.**

He said, we hooked you up in your back **at the same place you get a saddle block.** Alright, I had no idea at that time what a saddle block was. They said: if anyone was to stick a needle in; where a saddle block goes in the future and they would kill you instantly!

So I tell all Drs. that I can never ever have a saddle block procedure. He said there can never be a record of this; we can only put so much on your record. He said no one would believe it anyway.

Work? The Drs. told me to never do nothing! The surgeon told me; If I was you; to do what you want, just stop when you’re tired and enjoy what life you have. **He said, Billy, if you walk out of this Hospital it will be a miracle.**

So after working construction for years, doing leach beds, etc. I go see this Dr. Varian, (Bellefontaine) I wanted to get insurance. Well it was in my medical record that I was never expected to live to age 21. Then later a Dr. wrote than I could never live to age 40. So no one would insure me. So Dr. Varian read this and he said, why would some Dr. write such a thing? So Dr. Varian found a phone number for the surgeon Dr. Sirak and called him.

I am setting there and he puts it on speaker: he says I am looking for Dr. Sirak and he said, your speaking to him, I am retired and no longer practicing. I was 40 at this time and back then I was 17 years old when he operated on me.

He was in his 40’s or 50’s when he operated on me. He said, how can I help you? Dr. Varian said I have 1 of your patients in my office here. We cannot figure out why you put in his record why you did not believe he could live to age 21? Dr. Varian explained there is nothing in his record to explain this. Dr. Sirak said ok, what is his name? Dr. Varian said, Billy.

**Billy is still alive?** Dr. Varian looked at me in surprise! Dr. Sirak repeats, he is still alive? Dr. Valerian said Billy is getting ready to leave, he is putting in a leech bed today. Dr. Valerian says he shovels gravel and been doing that for over 10 years now. Dr. Sirak (crying) said: Billy, are you there? I said: Yes Sir!

(Dr. Sirack) I swear I never dreamed; **you're the only one we ever did that to because we really did not think it could work; there is not another person we know of that had this done; that lived.** I said well, I thank you, you must have done a really good job. I really do what every I feel like; I play full court basketball and go coon hunting and he (dr.) said wait a minute; your still coon hunting? I said Yes, he said that must have been what helped. He said you need to go to OSU and tell them what was done to you and he said, I still cannot put it in the record what I did. You tell them what happened and they will not believe you are still alive. Well, that is when I went over to OSU and they put me in an auditorium and did all the test for free, let everyone play with me and went through all their stuff.

(age 33)

### **Kidney Stone surgery 1983**

So any way- they went and did that. I was in the hospital for about 3 days and believe it or not, what they gave me to knock me out- I would blow up like a balloon. I mean I could not eat anything; my hands and body would swell up tight and could not squeeze anything. You know how they relived that? They stuck a hose up my butt and let the air out. This is no lie, a nurse; an army nurse was the only one that could figure it out. The Dr. said I can't figure this out, I have never seen this in my life and I said I don't care; they did that 6x in 3 days to let the air out of me.

One time I was walking down the hallway in my hospital gown, nurse was walking with me and all of a sudden my legs and hands swelled up like balloons; my face was tight as a drum. Nurse said, Not again; they went and got the hose and in with the hose and we all laughed and this old man down the hall said: what are you doing to him! You can't believe how bad you hurt when you blow up that tight. Your fingers are the size of your thumb.

(age 48)

### **Bladder Cancer**

Anyway- years later 1998 testing my urine and Dr. Varian said you have a tiny amount of blood in your urine, not much, but a little. Got to have it looked at, this Dr. over here and they go up in there and say, you sure got them; tumors about like that (hand showing 3-4 tumors); we will have to go in there and take them out.

Anyway, I finally went home. The next day I went to go to the bathroom and I just started pouring out blood, I said what the heck and I could not stop it. Then I said bring me a bucket and they got me a bucket. Bucket was a 3-gallon bucket; the blood was deeper than my thumb is long. The ambulance was coming; I set on bed and Prayed to God: You have sent me back how many times to help people, so if I am done, I am ready to come home and this Angel or God came, I mean it could have been Jesus. Anyway, He just walks up sticks His hand out and just touches me and says: you have more to do and more to help! I was alone as the others were outside waiting on the ambulance. I am looking at Him and turned pale as pale. The blood stopped instantly when He touched me.

Ambulance people had the bucket of blood and having a fit because I would not go with them. I said No, I am done, I am Healed! They said you should still go to the hospital; I said no, I am Healed! I did allow their treatments for 1 year (1998) after the surgery. Their treatment was this huge bag and you have to hold it in for ½ hour before going to the bathroom. I had to do that every other month for 6x total.

Question? Was 1998 the last time you seen an Angel? 1983 Kidney Stone surgery, when Grandma Taylor died Yes, but let me explain it another way: No Angel. Then I went coon hunting and this old fellow at work; his boy wanted to go coon hunting and the dad came and said my boy really wants to go coon hunting and see what its like. I said sure. So I go pick him up and we go hunting and we get a couple and then we go to this 1 creek over by Botkins. I have hunted there forever, nice creek and big open corn field.

I am walking, it is raining and water standing here and there. I am walking and all of a sudden I am gone, in a hole full of water over my head, I mean I disappear. My hat floated above me. I had waders on that filled with water, hunting coat with coons in it, hunting light and pistol.

I reached up and could not reach out of the water, the sides was just pure mud. This boy reached down and he was strong and he found my hand and he grabbed me up out of that hole and through me on the ground. It scared him so bad, he cried like a baby. He said I am never going coon hunting again, I have never been so scared.

I took my waders off because they were clear full of mud and took off my coat with 2 wet coon. If he had not been there, I would have been dead and buried.

I normally hunt alone, so is that the work of Angels?



Anyway Coon Hunting:

Pim town road, got out at the bridge to coon hunt, house down there, anyway, BANG shotgun, pellets coming all over me. I jumped in the river; that river is shallow, but I found the deepest spot, and the dog jumped in but he got on the other side. I could not move. Here I was with waders and all the hunting stuff. BANG again and I look up and see a guy standing on the porch up there with a light on it and I took my pistol with a scope on it and I shot the light out. He shot one more time and then went back in the house.

You could hear fighting in the house, so I got into my car, throw the dog in, drove to west liberty deputy sheriff and told him there is a guy out there and I will show you and the sheriff says I know the guy and sheriff asked if I had permission to hunt and I said yes. I said I hunt that whole area and I said I shot his porch light out—sheriff said you shot at him? I said no, I shot his porch light so I could get away.

They went to the house and came back shook my hand **and said you just saved his girlfriend's life.** They said he was so drunk and had her almost beaten to death. I said really? Sherriff said if the guy had not shot at me, the woman would be dead. I said wow and **anyway what are the odds of that? So I helped her.**



Dr. Howard D. Sirak 1922-2015

**Howard Sirak** (1922-2015) was a pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon at Ohio State who performed the first open-heart surgery in Columbus in the early 1950s. In 1957, he led an Ohio State team that developed a heart pump.

Sirak attended medical school at Ohio State before being drafted into the U.S. Marines as a trauma surgeon during the Korean War. Additionally, Dr. Sirak was a member of the university's Board of Trustees from 1971-1980 and served as its chairman for his last two years.

When he returned from the war, Sirak became a pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon. John Sirak said his father is known for having performed the first open-heart surgery in Columbus in the early 1950s.

**John Sirak** said he still runs into former patients who credit **his father** with saving their lives by correcting congenital heart defects through surgery.

## Additional stories

When we lived by Kiser lake, the old brick had a wall missing- no bathroom or heat. Dad had me crawl under the floor because I was the smallest.

Fireplace caught on fire one night; it had a wood floor under it. Old Man McCafferty pounded a well 2 months to get water. Mom caught the kitchen on fire one day. Joel age 7 caught face on fire from tiny branch that fell off a rake that he moved ashes around with and then placed rake handle on his shoulder and it fell on his face and burned both eyes closed. Dad cut both eyes open with a butter knife and then kept butter on his face—then I got a **whipping** for not watching him.

ERIS- House had roof missing and windows, no bathroom or running water- Mike and I 4/5 years old- went down the road getting empty pop bottles to buy candy – the guy at the store called mom and I got a **whipping**.

Mike had a loose tooth so Margie and I tie a string around it and put him in bathroom we made, tied the string to the door and slammed the door; it didn't work, but Mike cried and I got a **whipping!**

Uncle Charley came and made kitchen cabinets for the house. Uncle Howard, Charley and Dad put a roof on house. Joel was always sick with croup all winter when baby.

At the brick house I had a pig and I fed it pellets to get big faster than Dad's corn feed. Mom raised chickens and we had to chop their heads off. No one wanted to

do it, so I chopped the heads off and the others had to pluck them. I raised rabbits and sold them to McColms Dads Restaurant and made good money. I got a bike for birthday, Mike put it together, we took off down the big hill; my handle bars came off ½ way down; I went rolling down the road bloody everywhere—Mike said I didn't do it!

Neighbors Vaughn, Kirby & Danny would fix my handle bars and help me down the road to go to the lake (Kiser). We would go over to our neighbors "Backs" some times and get into BB gun fights in their barn with their sisters and brothers. We were not allowed to shoot each other in the face (Ha Ha).

### **More Stories:**

Went to hospital Bellefontaine for Echo Cardio Gram, new Dr. took pictures and found 2 Dots and went nuts- called helicopter from OSU and came and told me I am going now. I looked at her and said I am fine! She had them try to stop me at the door; I said, just a minute and I called my nurse at OSU and said would you tell these nuts they have no idea what they are doing; she said did they not know what you have had done to you- she called and cancelled the helicopter and called the head of Bellefontaine Hospital and told them; you need to stop worrying about Mr. Berry; you have a problem or see something, CALL us First; He is an experimental doing good. The Dr. in Bellefontaine got sent to Pennsylvania; they came to me and said she is gone, sorry. That's when I got Dr. Varian.

### **NOW, many years later:**

I went to Lima to get a Echo Cardio Gram; the girl looked at me; said: Oh my have you ever seen this before! She called in 4 different Drs. to look at this, she said I don't know what to do with this; we will call in a Dr. from Cleveland to look at it. I said it is all good. I got up and went home. Next morning I went to work. The sheriffs department called my wife and said we got a call from Lima Hospital saying Bill Berry could die any minute and we need to take him to the Doctor. They pulled me over at Duff's stone quarry, came to my door and said I need to get to the Hospital. I started laughing at him and said I am fine! They said no, we have to take you. I said call Dr. Chuck Wallace; I said Chuck, this is Bill Berry, West Liberty. He said how you doing? I explained and he told the Sherriff to leave Him alone, that he knows what he is doing.

So next day I had to go see a COP famous Heart Doctor from Cleveland. He checked me out again, said I need to go to the hospital in Cleveland. I told him what they did; he said no doctor would do that. He sent for records, went back to see him; he said there's nothing there about this, can't read it, all blurry, wanted

me to go to Cleveland so they could see what they have done. **I said no I am in God's Hands Now**, so I am done and feeling good. That's when I signed up for S.S. and they turned it down. I told this doctor and he said I should have been on S.S. for life!

I told him that's why there all dead, they never did nothing; he filled out papers and S.S. called and gave me it now. He said if ever you need anything call him. He was old but wanted to help; said he never seen anything like it.



When cutting out the heart, they basically almost take the left arm off the body. The slice up the back and spilt the entire rib cage down the middle. When splitting the entire rib cage you loose the ability to sight a gun, you have to use a scope. This scar goes around and up the back and straight down the middle of the sternum. Removing the heart and back then basically icing the body down. Then consider they patch the heart, they do experimental bypass surgery and install the heart. Less than 12 hours later, the nurse blows his heart; its clogged with blood clots and the surgeon has to slice it out fast. Due to the experimental bypass surgery and cutting all the stitches out fast, etc.- the heart will not fit up, the arteries turn jelly like and you end up on a metal slab with your heart loose and you determined to be dead. 50 of 50 experimental child heart surgeries dead; but the last 1, the most destroyed 1, sets up on the metal slab.

Not only can medical not understand the return of life, they can not explain how their last experiment walked out the hospital and they put in their records that no way could such a case live to age 21 or ever work. What amazes them 50+ years later is how the pig valve they installed at age 6 and left in at age 17; they have no clue how that pig valve appears as healthy as the day it was installed—making it a world record pig valve. The oldest pig on the planet. The average heart pig valves are lucky to last 10 years, 20 years max.

The mysterious artery installed from the heart to the spine! There had to be a “reason”; they admit they tried it on others and they all died. Why an artery to the spine? What could their reason have been back in the 1960’s? Surely the surgeon’s son knows, because he today has the same type job his dad had.