

Forks in the Road and My Travel Through Life

Chapter 13 2000 – 2002

Wrapup of Motel Life and the Sale

We planned to own the motel five years and put it up for sale. We realized that it would probably take a year or more. It was always in the back of our mind that maybe nobody would want an old mom and pop motel. What then?

Early 2000 I developed a motel for sale webpage and published it on the internet. I also placed an ad with a company that lists motels for sale.

We did not want it known locally and no realtors involved. The terms were \$495,000 with \$150,000 down. We would carry the note.

Changing the Looks of the Annex

The look of the Annex was not bad. The exterior was a brownish brick veneer with green in it.

It did not identify with being part of the motel. We decided to paint it gray to match. Our son in law Matt had a pressure washer and professional spray paint equipment. I borrowed the pressure washer and did the Annex.

The Redd's came up for Matt to spray the paint. Brian and I went ahead taping and masking. Matt came behind spraying. We were done in the afternoon and the new look was terrific. All that was left was for me to finish the trim around the doors and windows with white.

Changing the Looks of the Motel Back Building

The back building exterior was a fake log siding painted dark brown. It did not fit with our new color scheme.

The siding was durable and in good condition, Rather than having it covered with vinyl siding I decided to paint it gray. I would do it myself with a brush after I pressure washed.

I started on the back to see how it looked and liked it. I painted about 20 feet a day and it took a while.

With the building now gray the fading tan stain on the front deck that ran the length of building didn't fit. I tackled it next with the gray stain that I used on the new decks on the north building. The new look was great.

Changing the Looks of the House/Office

It was sided with the same fake log siding and dark brown paint as the back building had been. I pressure washed and painted the office/house gray in the same manner as I did on the back building.

The entire motel now had a nice cohesive appearance that was pleasing to the eye.

2001 Annex Remodel

Rooms 34 and 35 in the Annex had ever been remodeled.

I turned Don Ziegler loose in August to work his magic. The first was room 35 a one bedroom apartment. We ripped out the kitchen and a closet. That created a big room for 2 queen beds.

The bedroom was locked off. It was difficult to keep warm in cold weather or cool in hot weather.

The electrical was old and dangerous, Don brought in new 10 amp service. There was all new wiring for switches, lights, outlets, and air conditioning.

The interior walls were not sound proof. He put one inch thick cork panels on the walls. Then it was paneling with a vinyl wallpaper for the finished look. I tested the soundproofing by turning the volume very loud on the TV. I couldn't hear it in the adjoining room. The cork panels did the job.

With new carpet, beds, and furniture the room looked like a nice motel unit.

He then did room 34. It had a small living room with a bedroom on the left and a walk-in closet between.

We knocked out the closet and the bedroom wall and now had a large room for two queen beds. It was like room 35 he just finished.

He redid the electrical, put up the soundproofing cork panels, and the paneling with the vinyl wallpaper finish. With new carpet we had another modern looking room.

With this done we had four nice rooms in the Annex to rent.

Our two units for storage were numbered 32 and 33. During the summer I moved everything in 33 into 32, the first unit in the Annex.

Don remodeled 33 into a 2 queen bed unit in September. This would give us 25 rooms for 2002.

The total cost for the remodel of the three rooms in the Annex was \$14,944.

I winterized the Annex the beginning of October and shut it down for the winter.

Selling the Motel

I got my video camera out and did a walk through of the grounds and the rooms. It was about an hour long and turned out good for an amateur. I intended to give a copy to potential buyers.

Time went by and there were several people interested. A fellow in Killeen, Texas came for a visit. He was a teacher and coach in the high school that had been decimated by a tornado. He had to identify dead students and the trauma was so heavy on him that he was leaving. The motel was just what he was looking for. He went home and brought his wife out.

They were both enthused. They talked to the bankers and visited the high school to see about her teaching. They spread the word they were buying the DK Motel. They appeared to have the money for a large down payment. It looked like we had a buyer.

They returned home. He called a couple of weeks later and said his wife changed her mind. She would not move to Arco.

Meanwhile life goes on at the motel. There were other lookers. They talked a big story and had no money.

A doctor in Atlanta, Georgia would trade his house for the motel. I asked for a photo.

The house had an 8t ft high chain link fence around it. No thanks, doctor. He was highly upset.

We had at least 10 people that wanted the motel with no money down. They would do a great job. No thanks folks.

Debbie James could manage the motel the last week of October so that we could go to Puerto Vallarta.

We were back a while and Evelyn Thornton who worked for us previously and moved away called us. She was available the month of December and would come back to tend the motel if we wanted to get away. That was too good to pass up. We set up a trip to Cabo San Lucas departing December 4.

A realtor in Idaho Falls had called in early November. He had a potential buyer if we would pay a commission. LaRue knew him as he banked where she worked in Idaho Falls.

He had also bugged us in the past to list the motel. W were not fond of him. Putting that aside we told him we would give him one shot. He had to sell it for enough to cover his commission.

He drew up a contract for a sale price of \$512,000 with a commission of 3%. The expiration of the contract was December 31, 2001. We signed on November 11.

He arranged to meet his clients, Dave and Nicole Altman, who lived in Winnemucca, Nevada at the motel. It Was the day before we were to leave for Cabo San Lucas.

It was snowing like crazy when they arrived. They would not stay long as they wanted to head back to Winnemucca before the roads got too bad. We had time for

a quick walk through and sat and talked for about an hour.

The realtor just sat and listened with his head going back and forth like he was watching a tennis match.

The Altman's appeared qualified as she owned apartments in Winnemucca that she was selling. He was a drilling consultant working around the world. It turned out they knew my second cousin, Marc Hathhorn, a mining engineer in Winnemucca.

They had to get going, so we gave them summary spreadsheets of the financials, and a copy of my video.

We didn't expect anything out of the brief interaction. Hopefully, they would come back for a closer look.

We had a good week in Cabo and returned Tuesday, December 11. Mom called to tell us that Roy was in the hospital in Missoula, Montana and in serious condition after surgery. Roy Bisson and Mom married in February 1997.

The realtor called the next morning and said he would be out shortly with an offer. We were shocked and on pins and needles until he arrived. He said Dave and Nicole watched the video over and over and made the decision.

The offer was \$512,000 as listed, and \$125,000 down instead of \$150,000, and a note at 7 1/2% for 15 years rather than 8% for 20 years. They would put \$50,000 earnest money in escrow and close April 1, 2002.

It was a no brainer for us. We initialed the changes and signed.

It was a two year process, but we couldn't have found more qualified people or a better offer. We decided to not announce the sale locally until March.

With the motel sold and Evelyn available we departed the next day, December 13, for Missoula.

We arrived in the evening, picked up mom at the motel, and went to St Patrick's Hospital. We met a nurse coming out of his room and she said Roy passed away moments ago.

We attended the funeral a few days later in Salmon. We were fortunate in having

Evelyn available and utilized her through Christmas.

January 1, 2002

We had 3 months to kill before we closed. In early January we rented a large storage unit. I started emptying our storage unit in the Annex.

Jack Youngstrom owned the storage units and I told him I was remodeling the rooms in the Annex and needed a place to put it. I ended up renting three more storage units from him as the move progressed. I think Jack caught on but didn't let the cat out of the bag.

I emptied the storage room in the Annex and started packing in the house. After Idaho Falls I had experience packing and moving things to storage. I used the same technique of long term in the back of the units, progressing to short term in the front of units, and keeping a map.

The Altman's called to see if they could bring a couple of loads to Arco. It was fine with us. It meant commitment.

They unloaded and stored it in the Annex.

Nicole was interested in my spreadsheets and was computer savvy. I said that she could have what I developed. She left a laptop computer and I loaded my spreadsheets set up for the next 5 years.

I also wrote detailed procedures on the operation and maintenance of the motel. We wanted them to be successful and take care of the asset

Around the first of March we announced locally that we had sold the motel. A cohort in Rotary had been bugging me about running for Mayor in the fall. I resisted knowing we would not be in Arco. Now she understood.

We had everything out of the house with a couple of days to spare and stayed in #11 at night. The 5th wheel trailer and the truck was loaded with everything we might need for full time RV living. LaRue even had a portable sewing machine in the back seat of the truck.

The only commitment was to be at Matt and Julie's for the birth of the new baby early April, Kaiser Bill's seminar July 4-8, and the Air Force reunion in San

Antonio, Texas September 19-21.

I developed a tooth problem the last week and went to the dentist from Idaho Falls that practiced in Arco one day a week. I needed a root canal. He referred me to a dentist in Twin Falls as that is where we were headed.

April 1, 2002

The time went by slowly and we were finally at the end. We all went to the title office and closed on April Fools Day.

I took off with the 5th wheel for Twin Falls on a windy cold day. LaRue followed later in the car. We were now officially retired for good.

In retrospect the motel was good for us and good to us. Who would have thought that a little old mom and pop motel would gross over \$1million.

The following is a list of what we did to every room while we owned the motel:

ADDENDUM

Room Maintenance History

Room 11

08/1995	Renumbered from #1 for phone system
08/1995	New coffee maker
02/1996	Removed kitchen stove
04/1996	New 19" Magnavox TV
05/1996	New lockset and deadbolt
05/1996	New microwave
06/1996	New Porch
06/1996	New White Westinghouse air conditioner
05/1996	Mini fridge
12/1996	New door
03/1997	New Rinnai heater
06/1997	New bathroom floor
06/1997	Rebuilt toilet
09/1997	Painted door thunder grey
06/2001	New queen bed set

02/2002 New Moen cartridge in bathtub

Room 12

08/1995 Renumbered from #2 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
04/1996 New 19' Magnavox TV
05/1996 New microwave
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
12/1996 New door
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey
01/1998 New bathroom floor
01/1998 Rebuilt toilet
05/1999 New shelf for microwave
11/1999 New Rinnai heater
05/2001 New queen bed set
02/2001 New Moen cartridge in bathtub
05/2001 New carpet and pad

Room 14

08/1995 Renumbered from #3 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
03/1996 New 19" Magnavox TV
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
06/1996 New Porch
01/1997 New door
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
02/1998 Replaced bathroom floor
02/1998 Rebuilt toilet
02/1999 Room painted Navajo White
08/1999 Table added
09/1999 New faucet aerator
11/1999 New Rinnai heater
12/1999 Added hanging lamp
04/2000 New shower head

04/2000 New Moen cartridge in bathtub
05/2001 New queen bed set
06/2001 Queen brought from #12 (purchased 06/1997)

Room 15

08/1995 Renumbered from #4 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 Mini fridge replaced antique full size
03/1996 New 19" Magnavox TV
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
12/1996 New door
01/1997 New Rinnai heater
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
02/1998 Bathroom floor replaced
02/1998 Toilet rebuilt
11/2000 New cold shut off valve under kitchen sink
11/2000 New Moen kitchen sink cartridge
05/2001 New queen bed set
02/2002 New Moen cartridge in bathtub

Room 16

08/1995 Renumbered from #5 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
01/1997 New door
06/1997 2 new queen bed sets
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
01/1998 New bathroom floor
01/1998 Toilet rebuilt
09/1998 New Magnavox TV
07/1999 New Moen cartridge in sink
09/1999 New faucet aerator
10/1999 2 swivel chairs

10/1999 New round table
12/1999 Hanging lamp
02/2000 New bathroom lockset

Room 17

08/1995 Renumbered from #6 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
01/1997 New door
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
01/1998 New bathroom floor
03/1998 New tub drain lever
05/1999 New Moen cartridge in sink
12/1999 Hanging lamp
10/1999 New round table
10/1999 New toilet
05/2001 New carpet and pad
06/2001 New queen bed set
06/2001 2nd queen added (purchased 06/1997)
06/2001 New Phillips/Magnavox TV

Room 18

08/1995 Renumbered from #7 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee maker
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
01/1997 New door
06/1997 New queen bed set
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
01/1998 New bathroom floor
01/1998 Toilet rebuilt
05/1999 New microwave/fridge shelf
11/1999 New Rinnai heater

Room 19

08/1995 Renumbered from #8 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
02/1996 Kitchen stove removed
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Porch
06/1996 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
12/1996 New 19" Magnavox TV
01/1997 New door
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
01/1998 New bathroom floor
01/1998 Rebuilt toilet
12/1999 New round table
12/1999 2 sled chairs
12/1999 Hanging lamp
12/2000 New Moen cartridge kitchen sink
06/2001 New queen bed set
02/2002 New control knob on bathtub faucet

Room 20

08/1995 Renumbered from #9 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1996 TV from #31
03/1996 Carpet from #28
04/1997 New sink
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
06/1998 New Sharp air conditioner
05/1999 Painted shower
02/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background
05/2001 Queen from #14
06/2001 New toilet valves

Room 21

08/1995 Renumbered from #10 for phone system

08/1995 New coffee pot
03/1996 Rebuilt toilet
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
08/1996 TV from #30
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
04/1998 Painted shower
06/1998 New Sharp air conditioner
02/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background

Room 22

08/1995 Renumbered from #11 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
10/1995 Rebuilt toilet
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
08/1996 TV from another room
04/1997 New sink
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
06/1998 New Sharp air conditioner
03/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background
03/2000 Painted shower

Room 23

08/1995 Renumbered from #12 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
03/1996 TV from another room
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
06/1998 New Sharp air conditioner
04/1999 Painted shower
02/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background
05/2001 Queen bed from back room of #28

Room 24

08/1995 Renumbered from #14 for phone system

08/1995 New coffee pot
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
04/1997 TV from another room
04/1997 New sink
06/1998 New Sharp air conditioner
04/1999 Painted shower
02/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background
03/2002 New aerator in sink faucet
03/2002 New toilet valve and toilet tank gasket

Room 25

08/1995 Renumbered from #15 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
04/1997 TV from #26
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1997 New toilet
09/1997 Door painted thunder grey
09/1997 New front window
03/1998 New thermostat
04/1998 Painted shower
04/1999 Replaced bathroom floor
02/2000 Wall lamps and wallpaper background

Room 26

08/1995 Renumbered from #16 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
02/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
05/1996 New queen bed set in front room
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
12/1996 New door
01/1997 Headboard added
04/1997 Back storage room converted to bedroom
05/1997 New carpet in back bedroom
06/1997 New bathroom locksets
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey

11/1997 New hot control valve in shower
11/1997 New gaskets in cold control valve in shower
09/1998 New 19" Magnavox TV
03/1999 New Rinnai heater
01/2000 Round table added
01/2000 Hanging lamp added
01/2000 Sled chairs added
02/2000 Toilet rebuilt - new water shut off valve
03/2001 New shower head
06/2001 Moved queen to back bedroom (purchased in 06/1997)
06/2001 New queen bed set in front bedroom

Room 27

08/1995 Renumbered from #17 for phone system
07/1995 New mini Fridge
08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1995 Replaced Moen faucet cartridge
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
02/1996 Credenza added
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
12/1996 New door
01/1997 Headboard added
06/1997 2nd queen in back bedroom from #15
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey

Room 28

08/1995 Renumbered from #18 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1995 New mini fridge
08/1995 New microwave
02/1996 Stove and sink removed
02/1996 New carpet and pad front and back
02/1996 Credenza added
02/1996 Painted except for back bedroom
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
05/1996 New queen bed set in front room
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
12/1996 New door

01/1997 Headboard added
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey
11/1997 New gaskets in shower hot and cold valves
11/1997 New Moen cartridge in bathroom sink
03/1998 New vinyl floor in bathroom
03/1998 Toilet rebuilt
03/1999 New Rinnai heater
05/1999 New Magnavox TV
12/1999 New smoke alarm
12/1999 Hanging lamp added
12/1999 Round table added
08/2001 New carpet and pad - except back bedroom
06/2001 Queen from #15 (purchased 06/1996) put in back bedroom
12/1999 Sled chairs added

Room 29

08/1995 Renumbered from #19 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1995 New mini fridge
02/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
12/1996 New door
05/1996 New queen bed set
07/1996 Rebuilt toilet
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey
01/1997 Painted except bathroom
01/1997 Headboard added
06/1997 2nd queen in back bedroom from #18
01/2000 Hanging lamp added
01/2000 Round table added
03/2000 New Rinnai heater
07/2000 New shower head
07/2000 New shower hot water valve
07/2001 New aerator for bathroom sink

Room 30

08/1995 Renumbered from #20 for phone system

08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1995 New mini fridge
02/1996 Credenza added
02/1996 Painted front rooms
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
05/1996 New queen bed set in front bedroom
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
07/1996 New 19" Sharp TV
12/1996 New door
01/1997 New vinyl bathroom floor
01/1997 Rebuilt toilet
01/1997 Headboard added
06/1997 Added 2nd double bed to back bedroom
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey
06/2000 New Rinnai furnace
03/2001 New gasket in shower hot water valve
02/2002 New drain in bathroom sink

Room 31

08/1995 Renumbered from #21 for phone system
08/1995 New coffee pot
08/1995 New mini fridge
11/1995 Rebuilt toilet
02/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 New lockset and deadbolt
05/1996 New queen bed set in front bedroom
06/1996 New Amana air conditioner
12/1996 New door
01/1997 Headboard added
06/1997 Added 2nd double bed in back bedroom
09/1997 Painted door thunder grey
11/1997 New Moen cartridge in sink faucet
08/1998 New 19" Magnavox TV
12/1998 Round table added
12/1999 Hanging lamp added
10/2000 New shower head
03/2001 New gasket in shower hot water valve

The Annex

Room 32 Utilized as a storage room

08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray

08/2001 New front window

Room 33 Utilized as a storage room then remodeled for rental in 09/2001

08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray

08/2001 New front window

09/2001 Remodeled main room

09/2001 New carpet and pad

09/2001 New water heater

Room 34

05/1996 Queen set (age unknown) from motel side

05/1996 Mini fridge, microwave, and coffee pot added

05/1996 Credenza added

05/1996 Round table added

06/1999 New Sharp air conditioner

08/2001 Remodeled main room

08/2001 New water heater

08/2001 New carpet and pad

08/2001 2nd queen bed set (age unknown) added from motel side

08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray

08/2001 New front window

Room 35

05/1996 Queen bed set (age unknown) from motel side

05/1996 Credenza added

05/1996 Round table added

05/1996 Mini fridge, microwave, and coffee pot added

05/1996 New coffee pot

05/1998 New water heater

06/1999 New Sharp air conditioner

07/2001 Remodeled main room
07/2001 New carpet and pad
07/2001 2nd queen bed set (age unknown) added from motel side
08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray
08/2001 New front window

Room 36

05/1996 2 queen bed sets (age unknown) added from motel side
05/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 Round table added
05/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 Mini fridge, microwave, and coffee pot added
05/1996 Painted main room
05/1996 New carpet and pad
06/1997 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
07/1997 New water heater
08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray
08/2001 New front window

Room 37

03/1996 New toilet
05/1996 2 queen bed sets (age unknown) added from motel side
05/1996 Credenza added
05/1996 Round table added
05/1996 Mini fridge, microwave, and coffee pot added
05/1996 Painted main room
05/1996 New carpet and pad
05/1997 New water heater
06/1997 New White Westinghouse air conditioner
08/2001 New door and painted thunder gray
08/2001 New front window

(The Altman's were excellent and continued to upgrade the motel. Nicole was a workhorse. She mostly ran the motel by herself. Dave was often away on projects overseas.)

To our surprise they cashed us out four years later. We were not entirely happy as the interest every month was a nice amount. However, no more worries of getting the motel back.

They ended up selling after six years to a party that we know. They buy small motels with little or no cash, pay low wages to unmotivated managers, and put nothing back into the motel.

They owned the 10 unit Arco Motel while we were there and we saw how they operate. They even made a ridiculous offer to us that we laughed at.

We stayed at the DK Motel in 2019 and it was a sad experience. The exterior looked ok, but the room was in bad condition. There was no switch plate covering the switches by the door. The telephone was disconnected and in a drawer.

Nobody in their right mind would stay more than one night. Repeat business was a big part in our success. It is what got us through the slow winter months.)

End chapter 13

