

MY FIRST 90 YEARS



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By Hap Murphy (An autobiography)

Reviewed by Bob Weldin

Henry "Hap" Murphy was a story teller with a remarkable memory for names and details. Except for a few years in the Army during WWII, and a short time at Lake Roosevelt, Hap spent his active life on and around the lakes and rivers of Northern Idaho. He was born in Coeur d' Alene (CDA) and spent his early youth on the banks of the Pend Oreille River at Dover; at that time a bustling sawmill town. His father worked for the Dover Lumber Company and was in charge of the tug boats that towed the logs to the mill. Hap occasionally went with his father on two or three day trip up Pend Oreille Lake for a tow of logs for the mill. He tells several stories of his mischievous boyhood in and around Dover.

Hap became a tugboat captain and spent most his adult life on or near Lake CDA living a full and rich life around family and friends. He worked hard and sometime played hard. He tells stories of Harrison and St. Maries when they were bustling, rowdy towns with bar fights and brothels. He tells stories about making and selling home brew and moonshine during Prohibition. He tells of the 1933 flood and how tough it was for some people during the great depression.

He learned to cook on the tug boats or while batching in his boat house, tied up at the CDA beach. Army cooks were famous for being sloppy and bad. Hap was so good at KP duty that he rose to chief cook and was the pride of his unit. He later opened the Boat Drive Inn Cafe in CDA for more than a decade.

My First 90 Years is a good read, and of special interest to those who grew up in the CDA area. Or maybe you just want to remember the men who piloted the tugs and walked the tow lines, to get the logs down the river and across the lake to the sawmills.