

Uncle Albert Erickson's journal from May 24, 1971, fifty-two years ago today:

"Monday. Cloudy with light rain. 56 F. SE wind. A thunder shower this afternoon about 4 o'clock. Einar's sheep shed collapsed in a strong wind. Trapped a ewe and 2 of her four lambs. Eldon dug them out and I guess they are OK. Einar is in Traverse for eye operation."

I remember that day well. But, I was not keeping a journal at the time, and I did not recall the exact date. But, Albert kept track of significant events, and this was exactly that in the history of this place on Coe Creek.

I had driven my mother and father to Traverse City, where he was going to have an eye operation. My mother probably stayed with Aunt Constance while Dad was in the hospital. I came back as far as Cadillac and stopped at the Volkswagen place on the south end of town to have oil changed and perhaps, other work done. I was sitting in the glassed in waiting/showroom watching a very ominous, angry-looking black cloud in the southwest. I remember thinking that it probably was a nasty thunderstorm that would just about pass over the home farm.

When the storm had gone by, and the red Volkswagen 1966 beetle was ready, I headed home. When I came up the lane, I saw that the sheep shed had blown down. And as I got closer, I saw two little lambs wandering about, baaing for their mother. I looked around the collapsed building, and noted that the very peaked roof was partly intact, forming a kind of open space under it.

I called my brother, Eldon, who had just gotten home from his work as a lineman for Consumers Power Company. We began to root around in the wreckage, and we heard a ewe answering those two lambs. We pulled boards and rubble aside, and under the roof, in a protected spot, were the other two lambs and their mother, all uninjured.

I wasn't at home when the sheep shed was rebuilt that summer and fall. I was in Sweden, helping to milk cows and feed calves on Runo's home farm. When we came to Coe Creek the next spring, that new sheep shed stood sturdy and straight. And, thanks to Uncle Albert, we can pinpoint its beginnings very precisely. And, along with it, come the memories of the wandering lambs, the red VW, the storm cloud, and the trip that preceded the storm. I still am glad I was not at home when the sheep shed blew

down.