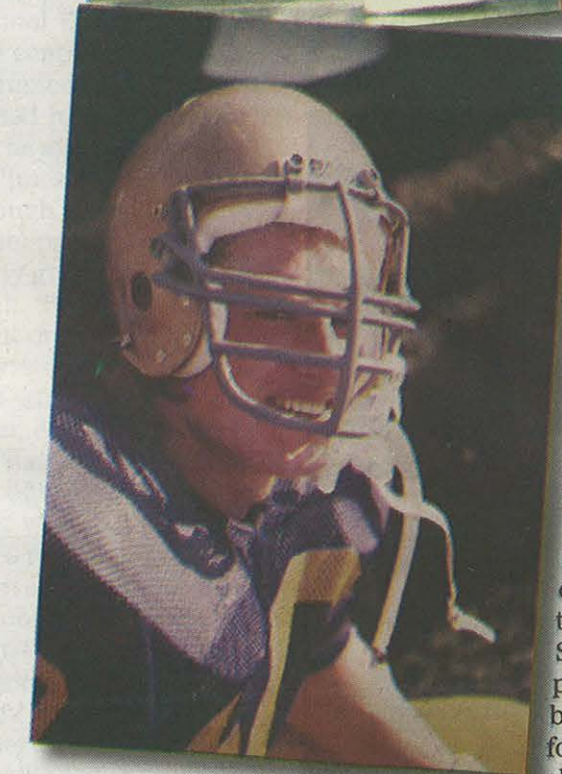
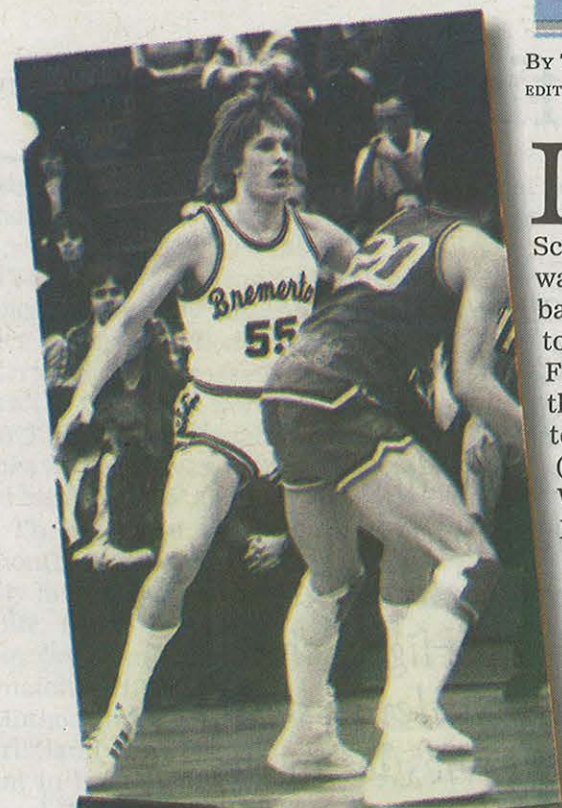


From the shadows of Bremerton sports arises a man of the world – Don Davis

PART 1

By TERRY MOSHER
EDITOR, SPORTS PAPER



6-foot-4 Davis did well in high school basketball in 1978, but went on to Montana State with a full football scholarship.

COURTESY PHOTOS

It came as a shock to some when Bremerton High School's Don Davis was awarded a football scholarship to Montana State. From the get-go at then East Bremerton High School (before East and West Bremerton HS merged back into Bremerton HS in 1978), Davis was touted as a basketball player.

In fact, the 6-foot-four Davis (he was listed at 6-5 in the basketball program) was going to be the next Rick Walker. Walker, of course, led East High to back-to-back state championships in 1973 and 1974.

But lo and behold, there it was in a March 1, 1979 column written by Bremerton Sun sportswriter Bob Warcup, that Montana State had surprised even Davis by granting him a football scholarship along with

Bremerton teammate and the more football heralded Tony Boddie.

"Until Sunday I figured I'd go to school somewhere

around here," Warcup quoted Davis in that 1979 column. "I planned on working during the summer to earn money for tuition and books ... I wouldn't have considered walking on for football."

"Recalling back to my graduating year (1979) of high school, it's not clear to me what course my life would have taken had it not been for the scholarship," says Davis now. "The decision to go to college or not was, at best, a question mark. I had a small landscaping business from which I was making pretty good money, and the benefits of an education were, at some level, vague to me."

"Suffice it to say, I am thankful the scholarship made that decision for me."

That was only the beginning of surprises surrounding Davis, the son of Stella and the late Dick Davis. The lanky Davis has led a life that most of us only dream about. Not that anybody would have known about it by just watching Davis play on Dec. 27 in the fourth-annual East-West alumni game at Les Eathorne Gym and the Ken Wills Court at Bremerton HS.

All one would have guessed from that late December appearance is that Davis was in good physical shape, but maybe not quite ready to again dominate on the basketball court the way he once did for East High and then Bremerton High in the 1987-88 season.

Of course, Davis is no longer a spring chicken. He is 51 and a veteran professional architect who has plied his expertise in

that field all over the globe. He has visited 42 countries. So he can be excused for not having the old spring in his step and the good hands of a certain insurance company.

Davis flew in from South Korea for the Christmas season to be with family still living in the area, including his mother and sister Debra, and to play in the East-West game. South Korea is his latest gig with a company called CH2M HILL, which according to its website is the global leader in consulting, design, design-build, operations and management.

The headquarters for CH2M HILL is in Englewood, Colorado. It has been considered for the past four years one of the world's most ethical companies, and Davis is currently back in South Korea designing an Army base for the U.S. Government under a CH2M HILL contract.

Davis has been in important positions with Bechtel Corp (including design work on the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002) and with CH2M Hill. His work has allowed him the freedom to roam with his wife of 20 years, Nagila Guimaraes, to spots on Earth – some of it by bike – that most of us will never see.

But first things first.

As a young kid growing up in east Bremerton, Davis got involved in football and basketball with the North Perry Pee Wees.

"Don was a very, very good athlete," says Boddie, who lives in Port Orchard and has a management position with Nestlé's and does a little traveling himself, mostly around

the Pacific Northwest, but occasionally to California and to St. Louis. "I remember him from back when he played for North Perry. I was with West Bremerton and I remember playing with Don in the Pee Wee Leatherneck Bulldog Bowl (at PSNS). He was one of the younger players to play in it, and so was I. They took the A String Pee Wee all-Stars and he made it back-to-back and I made it three times from 1971-73, and was MVP twice."

Davis then played both basketball and football at Bremerton, although it was in basketball where his presence was most public.

As a young teen, Davis got involved in the Les Eathorne thing. Eathorne would open the East High gym and kids would flock there to participate and be close to the growing legend of Eathorne.

He and Kurt Olson, younger brother of Kevin Olson, who was on the 1973 team that beat Timberline for East's first state championship, were friends and classmates and the two of them made sure they were at the gym on Sundays.

Davis and Olson would shoot around and occasionally they would be offered the chance to play with the "big guys", players like Walker, Cliff McKenzie and Mike Walthall. Getting that kind of chance made Davis a much better player.

And if that wasn't enough, Eathorne figured Davis had a chance to be the next Walker. Walker, of course, was a high school All-American and a college All-American at Uni-

versity of Puget Sound.

"Les would take me to the girl's gym (auxiliary gym) and drill me," Davis says. "I think he was trying to groom me to fill the shoes of Rick Walker. He'd pass me the ball and we'd do drill after drill."

Davis did not turn out to be the next Walker. Only Marvin Williams would reach that level in a Bremerton uniform. But Davis was a good high school player for the Knights.

Ted Berney was the East High and then the Bremerton High football coach and he remembers Davis as a solid football player who was probably a better basketball player.

"I think he might have been a little bit more of a basketball player than a football player, but he held his own in football," says Berney of Davis, who was a linebacker and tight end.

Berney remembers Davis as, "Just a quiet, giant kid. He cast a big shadow, but didn't make a lot of noise. He never promoted himself. He was not a boastful kind of kid. He was just a real humble person."

So it came down that Davis was content to stick around home after graduating from Bremerton, work his landscaping business, maybe go to Olympic College, maybe play a little basketball, and then see what happens.

He had no idea that Montana State would come riding in on a white horse and offer a football scholarship.

"I had no interest, no ambition, to go and be a football player," says Davis.

But once he was offered one, he quickly started hitting the

weights. He played basketball his senior year at about 235 pounds, up 40 pounds from his usual weight. The weight lifting caused his shot to fall off. After a few of his shots would clang off the rim, Eathorne would chide him: "You got to lay off those weights."

But all of a sudden football was on his mind, because now he had a chance to get a good education for free and be able to study architecture, which first attracted him at East Bremerton HS in a Frank Bratonia class.

Bratonia called it an architecture class, but really what it was mechanical engineering. No matter the name, Davis found he was good at it. So he went off with Boddie to Bozeman, Montana to play for the Bobcats and study architecture.

Boddie would go on to start at Montana State as a running back and play in the USFL and the NFL. He was one of the Denver team captains for the 1988 Super Bowl.

Davis was converted into a center at Montana State, although he gave up football after his junior year. As many student-athletes discover once they sign a letter-of-intent to play a D-1 sport at a major college, pilaying that sport becomes more of a job. Players on scholarship are often encouraged not to take a hard course of study because it interferes with the demands of a D-1 sport.

And studying architecture is not close to having basket weaving as a career option. Architecture takes serious thought, time and effort.

To show how tough it is, Dave began his studies at Montana State in a class of 330 and five years later when he graduated there were just 25 of them left. Not that they



BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE PHOTO
"They were muddy and tired Saturday but the Bobcats were happy after their 24-7 win over cross-state rival Montana. Expressing their jubilation over the win are Don Davis (60) and Tony Boddie (20)."

all dropped out, but some did and the others switched to a different course study.

"I had begun my architecture studies and it's a very rigorous curriculum. Very time demanding," Davis said of his decision to quit football and concentrate on his studies. "And you get into college

and it's a different game. I didn't have aspirations beyond college. Really, there was a 'y' in the road and I had to decide whether to get my education or to continue on playing football."

These types of decisions are made every year by hundreds if not thousands of athletes across the American landscape of college sports. There comes a time when they hit that proverbial wall and a choice has to be made.

"Because of the demands of architecture classes, they (the coaches) know coming in you are not going to make it," says Davis. "They told me, 'this is not going to work for you.' (The coach) discouraged me from even starting out – that it was too tough, too demanding to do both."

For a while it worked, but it was tough. Davis, who was an excellent student in high school, was humbled by the experience. For a road game, Davis would not get back to campus until late Sunday night, and he still had studies to do.

"I had to work all Sunday night just to catch up," says Davis. "I managed to graduate within the five-year curriculum, but the years playing football, I struggled to keep up."

It all began to drag on him, and while he didn't want to give up on his teammates, there clearly was no choice but to quit the team and move on with his life as a serious ar-

chitecture student.

"It was a tough decision to make," he said, "I was on a full-ride scholarship and it's not easy to just give it up."

Boddie says Davis, who arrived as a tight end at Montana State, turned out to be a pretty good center. He thinks Davis would have been a good starting center his senior year if he had stayed with football.

"I think he could have been something special," says Boddie, who roomed with Davis the first quarter at Montana State. "He buffed up to about 250 pounds and he had real powerful legs. He didn't have the real strong upper body like you see on the big guys, but he had real quick feet."

A picture in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle from Nov. 1, 1980 showed Davis and Boddie walking off the field after Boddie rushed for over 100 yards and caught passes for another 100 while scoring two touchdowns in a 24-7 victory over arch-rival Montana. The two had dirty uniforms and big smiles on their faces.

But eventually the strain of trying to keep up with his architecture passion while playing football was too much and after that junior year he gave up his football scholarship to concentrate on his studies. Between doing some landscaping work and taking out student loans, he didn't put a lot of financial strain on his parents that final year and managed to complete his studies and graduate in 1984.

Next week – Part II: Davis begins an architecture journey that will open up new horizons.

The remarkable odyssey of Bremerton's Don Davis

Davis leaves college and begins the journey into business around the world

PART II

By TERRY MOSHER
EDITOR, SPORTS PAPER

It's difficult to understand how a young boy growing up in Bremerton could land on some of the world's biggest stages, especially considering Don Davis' father Dick didn't especially like to travel or try new things.

Dick Davis and wife Stella did provide a stable, conservative home life, and were by all accounts top-notch parents. Dick, who died two and a half years ago, in fact, was a key member of the East High Dad's Club that was the backbone of legendary coach Les Eathorne's basketball program at the old Bremerton school on the eastside. Dick Davis and other dads packed the west side of the bleachers during basketball games, giving their strong vocal presence to the Knights.

But to say Dick and Stella's son would one day be a revered architect who would be involved in major projects around the globe would have stretched credibility. It's very possible that Davis' mother was even shocked her son was a football player. She did not want him playing football as young child because she didn't want him to get muddy.

"They never applied any pressure to play or not play," says Davis of his parents, "except I know my mother was against me playing football in pee wees - but mostly because she didn't see the fun of playing in the mud and rain."

"Little did she know at the time that was the attraction."

"That said, while trying to think of something to say as a toast at my parents' 50th wedding anniversary, it occurred to me that with exception of a few games in college, my parents had not missed a single game during my entire pee wee and high school career (not an insignificant number)."

"I am grateful for their support."

Davis not only played football, but in an amazing twist, got a scholarship to play it at a D-1 school -



In 1982, Don Davis tackles the 700 mile bike trek from London to Staufen.

Montana State. It was thought by most people that if he was to play on scholarship at a school, it would be basketball, because Davis was a star player for the East High Knights in the 1970s and then for Bremerton High School in the 1978-79 season, his senior year.

So it goes, however. The twists and turns in life sometimes go off in unusual ways, and that would be so for Davis, although the unusual over the years has turned into the usual for him.

To quickly bring things up to date, Davis is now 51 and an architect with CH2M Hill in the Transportation Business Group. He's currently in South Korea working on a big project involving the big United States' Army base there. He was here over the Christmas holiday, during which he played in the fourth annual East-West Alumni basketball game, scoring two points and grabbing nine rebounds for East as it suffered its first loss in the series, 39-31. Since then he has flown back to South Korea.

Davis was inspired to get into architecture by an old teacher at East High - Frank Bratonia (his son Mark would land a scholarship to USC, where he was a tailback). He had, he discovered, a knack for sketching and drawing and was, he says, pretty de-

cent in math, and over time it opened up his creative side.

There are several sides to being an architect and the two biggest are the technical, or engineering side, and the creative side, where one can use imagination to construct something.

The story begins with Davis going to Montana State, where he played football through his junior year. He arrived in Bozeman with Bremerton teammate Tony Boddie, and the two would become roommates their first quarter at the school.

Davis would quit football after that junior season to concentrate on his studies. When he graduated in 1984, he returned home to Bremerton and lived with his parents for a couple weeks until he got a job in Gig Harbor as an architectural designer/draftsman for Peninsula Architects.

This would be the entry into a career that would soar and would not only test his imagination but also increase his curiosity about the world.

In the two years he worked for Peninsula Architects, Davis helped design a large church, fire station, customized homes and commercial buildings, among other projects. He then moved to a firm in Tacoma for another year - he helped design the Pierce County Law Courts building. During this time, a romantic relationship found him moving to California where he became a consultant to more than 10 architecture and design firms in the greater Los Angeles area.

Part of his six years in La-La Land he spent designing an addition to the historic William Andrews Clark Memorial Library and an Armani showroom on the famous Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. He became the lead architectural designer on a 50-hectare waterfront theme park planned for Hiroshima, Japan. This was for Entertainment Design Interna-

tional, a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Corp.

That led to Davis moving over to the world-wide Bechtel Corp. This move would be the beginning of his world travels. Davis worked for Bechtel from 1992 to 2008, and his first project for them would be as senior architect for the 200-acre MGM Studio Tours expansion to the Euro Disney Theme Park located in Paris, France. All his work would be done at Walt Disney Imagineering in L.A.

The MGM Studio Tours project was an exciting time for Davis because he would be involved in the actual construction, once the design phase was completed. That meant he would be in Paris.

Didn't happen.

"I spent a year and half on the project and had it all come together, in the back of my mind, I would have wound up in Paris," says Davis. "(But) the client decided to put the project on hold."

"So," Davis laughs about himself, "what were you doing for the past year and half?"

After that year and half, and within two weeks, 90 percent of the staff working on the project was let go. He had been planning a trip to Europe to visit Spain, Norway and Germany, so he just sped that up.

He was in the LA Airport ready to board a flight to New York, bound for Europe, when he got a call from Bechtel. He was told there was a job opening in New York City and was asked if he was interested.

"I managed to say yes," says Davis, "and took a stopover in New York and interviewed for the position - field architect for the renovation of Penn Station. I was offered the position and took it, telling them I would report back in six weeks."



Now a successful, globe-trotting architect, Davis takes in the sights at Machu Picchu, in Peru.

Davis took his European trip, doing some of it by bike, and began work on the three-year Penn Station project in June of 1993.

The journey to Europe and biking began an affair with adventure that persists to this day. Although Davis at first said the adventure of travel and experience of living abroad was not part of his overall strategic plan, he finally admits that was not entirely correct.

"I did actively seek opportunities to work abroad and/or on interesting projects."

"This 'wanderlust' actually started earlier when I was in college. With demands of summer training for the next (football) season behind me, during the summer between my sophomore and junior year I lived and worked in Fairfax, Va."

"A classmate of mine who was from Fairfax told me of a drafting job with a swimming pool company and my aunt and uncle had a house in Fairfax where I could live. I took the westbound bus to work, but recall on occasion I would opt instead to take the eastbound bus into D.C. and tour the museums for the day."

"I (also) ran five to ten miles a day and lost 20 excess football pounds."

The next summer, Davis went to Staufen, Germany to attend the Goethe (Language) Institute so he could make up some humanities credits to keep on track with the curriculum.

"I had to ask my parents for money which, to this day, I feel some guilt, because there were probably ways to have earned the same credits at Olympic College for much less, if truth be told, and knowing this money didn't come easy to my parents," Davis says.

"It was perhaps this guilt that brought me to purchase the cheapest airline ticket to Europe, which was from Edmonton, Alberta to London, and to cover the rest

of the 700 miles (in seven days) to Staufen by bicycle."

It's amusing now that Davis really didn't know the distance from London to Staufen. He just looked at a map and thought, "Europe is small, it shouldn't be far." It turns out the trip was 700 miles by bike. The ride left him so sore he didn't touch the bike for another two months - until it was time to make the return trip to London.

But he had had his first real adventure, and now wanted more.

"I opted to see the country by hitch-hiking, which was an acceptable mode of transport at that time in Europe," Davis said. "Classes were from Monday to Friday and Friday afternoon I would set off with my backpack and venture to a new city - often times not the city I had planned either. If I could get a ride 500 kms (kilometers) into a city I had not been to, I would take the ride."

"I am eternally grateful to my parents for this amazing summer."

Next week - Part III: The remarkable career and adventures of Davis continues.

The remarkable odyssey of Bremerton's Don Davis

Davis goes from Penn Station project to just missing war in Georgia

PART 3 of 4

By TERRY MOSHER
EDITOR, SPORTS PAPER

The adventures of Don Davis, the former East Bremerton/Bremerton High School and Montana State football player, continued on, once he returned from a six-week vacation to Europe. He had taken a second job with Bechtel Corp., this time as field architect for the renovation of Penn Station in New York City.

"It was a great experience," Davis said. "It was the second time I lived in New York. I interned in New York City between my fourth and fifth year at Montana State."

This time, his stay was more than a summer. He lived there for three years while working on the project.

Then in June of 1996, he was off for his biggest adventure yet, as lead architect for the expansion and renovation of the Dubai International Airport in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The project came in at over \$1 billion in cost, which included the design and construction of a new 28-gate concourse, expansion of Terminal 1 and adding a Terminal 2, among other things.

"I found it very interesting," says Davis. "It was my first foray internationally. It was a different place in 1996 compared to what it is now, 17 years later."

When he was offered the job, Davis said he had to look on a map to find out where Dubai was. He had little clue. And back then the culture was definitely Arabic, which can be a shock to the system

for Westerners.

But like everything else in life, things have changed in Dubai since he first set foot there. The biggest change is from pure Arabic to a commercial desert setting.

"People have referred to it as Las Vegas on Steroids," says Davis, laughing. "Any bird brain could get traction there."

According to International Business News, Dubai's three man-made Palm Islands are the world's eighth wonder. It took 12 million pounds of rock and 53 million pounds of sand from the ocean bottom to construct the islands, which are palm shaped.

The story is that Sheik Mohammad bin Rashid al Maktoum wanted them built to offset future lost of revenue from dwindling oil reserves by increasing revenue from tourism. Hence, the shift from authentic Arab culture to Western style modernism.

Davis, of course, had nothing to do with the building of the Palm Islands.

"Dubai is probably the most liberal Arabic country in the Gulf Region," says Davis. "They want to be open to tourism, unlike Saudi Arabia, which is more restrictive. You can actually drink alcohol there (in Dubai). The women don't have to cover their heads with scarves. There are still restrictions, but in comparison to Saudi, living is easier there. There are not any real hardships."

Three years later - Davis seems to operate in three-

year cycles - he was off to Salt Lake City to help that city prepare for the 2002 Winter Olympics. He managed the architects and engineers of record and was construction manager and associated consultant with subcontracts through design and construction of the \$30 million Utah Olympic Oval that included a speed skating oval, a running track and two ice hockey rinks.

It's not hard to forget that in the recent presidential election, Mitt Romney used his successful overseeing of those Games, from construction to finish, as proof he was the better candidate to run this country from the White House.

And Davis had no problem with that.

"I was actually in a few meetings with him and shared some elevator rides," says Davis. "He was very charismatic. I must say he was very dynamic leader - no doubt. He really brought a lot of energy to the group and pulled together thousands of people. He really managed to stimulate and excite people."

"It did not surprise me, or any of us, that he went on to be governor (of Massachusetts) and had high aspirations."

So Davis voted for him, right?

Wrong. "I did not," Davis said. "He just worked for the wrong (political) party."

After Salt Lake, Davis headed to Lima, Peru, and became the lead architect on the Jorge

Chavez International Airport renovation and expansion. The project began when the airport was moved from state control to privatization through a consortium.

By now, Davis was beginning to feel the jolt of going to one culture after another. In the beginning it takes a lot of adjustment to being in a new place with new faces and new language and different ways of doing things. It may sound fun, and it is, but it is also challenging.

"There is a disruption of your whole domestic life," says Davis, who once parked his car at his folks' place in east Bremerton and 10 years later came back to finally take charge of it only to find it had literally fallen apart. "There is a new language, a different client, different co-workers. You seldom wind up on a new project with the same people."

And it's not the easiest to work on different projects because each project is so different, and there are different sub-contractors to be dealt with.

In Peru, he was responsible for the final design and construction drawings for all the facilities involved in the project. It was a \$110 million project, and five years after completion in 2004 the airport handled 8.7 million people and was honored as the best South American airport by Skytrax, the leading airline



Davis was the senior architect for the Central Reference Laboratory in Georgia, funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Threat Reduction Agency. It is used for "diagnostic and pathogen characterization."

rating company.

After the completion of the airport, Davis took a couple months off to travel in Brazil, which is where his wife is from. One has to remember that even in the middle of projects, Davis often finds himself wandering off to explore the area he is in. It's not like he's hunkered down all the time, so he is able to get out and bike or drive and experience first hand the different peoples in different and far away lands.

It's that sort of curiosity that drives his imagination in designing different projects, but it also drives him to move out from his core base, to experience how different people live,



Davis was construction manager of the Utah Olympic Oval, built for Salt Lake City's 2002 Winter Olympics. He occasionally rubbed shoulders with Mitt Romney, then CEO of the Games' organizing committee.

isting 103-mile heavy rail Washington metrorail system beyond the Washington Dulles International Airport to eastern Virginia.

Davis was there for 18 months and then moved on to his last project for Bechtel. This one took him to Tbilisi, Georgia, and came about as a result of the Cold War. The United States is involved in a program it calls Biological Threat Reduction that is funded to lower the threat of germ warfare. The former Soviet Union used several of its conquered states to conduct biological tests in the pursuit of pathogens such as anthrax.

This particular project Davis was involved in was funded by the European Union and by the U.S. Department of Defense Threat Reduction Agency. Davis was the senior architect on what was called a Central Reference Laboratory, used for diagnostic and pathogen characterization for both human and veterinary diseases.

Davis said the project also included renovation and construction of several epidemiological laboratories in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

"The lab was built so they could solve the problems of creating a safe repository for potential dangerous pathogens," Davis said.

Apparently the former Soviet Union had established these labs out in the country-

side in Georgia to test various pathogens and with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 these facilities became unsecured.

"So the first part of the (project) was to secure this facility in Tbilisi," says Davis.

There have been stories that the facility is not as benevolent as the U.S. Government lets on, that it is being used as part of a germ warfare program.

"Interesting and not surprising, and whether this is true or not, the facility brings a level of bio-security and sophistication that is unmatched in the region and certainly never before seen in Georgia," Davis said in response. "Some have faulted it for being 'way over-designed' for its purpose, which is understood to be a secure facility for safe handling of 'potentially dangerous pathogens.'"

"Looking at the facility from the pasture of one of the farms which surround it, it is like a space shuttle landed and a highly secure fence was constructed around its perimeter."

"To see what this facility replaces is also quite a contrast. I visited many facilities in the countryside, which, prior to this project, had the 'bad stuff' simply stored in refrigerators in unsecured offices in clinics."

Davis was lucky. Just after he left Georgia, a week later Russia invaded and a war broke out. Davis said he had, "no clue this was going to happen," although the Rus-

sians were moving troops and heavy war weapons up to the border and a war of words was flowing back and forth between the two countries.

His wife was not so lucky. She was still there when the conflict started, having arranged to fly out two days later to Abu Dhabi, where Davis would start a new job. But even that became stalled when the airport was shut down on the day she was scheduled to depart.

"She received a phone call in the middle of the night from the U.S. Embassy that a group of U.S. citizens were driving to the Armenian border the next morning and that she could join the convoy," Davis said. "(The) only requirement was that she had to meet at the embassy the next morning and drive her own car. Only catch was, we didn't have a car."

"The company I worked for had an alternate exit strategy to drive to Azerbaijan the following day. Nagila didn't have the nerve or patience to wait. She found an Armenian taxi driver to drive her to the border. (Taxi driver needed to be Armenian to be able to cross the border.) She was too late to leave with the US convoy but she asked the taxi driver to 'put the pedal to the metal' and was able to catch up with them when she reached the border - which was good fortune."

"The processing time at the border was more than eight hours but the U.S. convoy was given priority. I think it still took something like four

hours. The Armenian taxi driver drove her to Yerevan where she stayed for a few nights before being able to catch a flight to Abu Dhabi."

"The hero in the story is really the taxi driver who offered to sleep in his car outside the hotel to ensure Nagila departed safely. She thanked him but said that would not be necessary and gave him a nice tip."

And where was Davis when all this was happening? He was safely back home in Bremerton, and on the day his wife arrived at the border with the taxi driver was actually fishing at Ocean Shores.

That job in Georgia would be the last Davis had with Bechtel. He would change over to CH2M Hill and that would not alter his lifestyle. The boy from Bremerton would now be on a course that would take him to spots back in the Middle East and to Brazil and would include once again working with the U.S. Government.

Davis claims there never was a strategic plan on his part to take only those positions that would get him to places he wanted to go. Instead, he looked at his moves as best for his skill sets.

Later, however, Davis would say there was some planning on his part. But no matter what the plan, Davis has enjoyed a nomadic life that has proved to be satisfying in his career and equally satisfying in his personal life.

Not bad for a Bremerton-born boy.

The exciting world adventure for Don Davis continues on in South Korea

By TERRY MOSHER
Editor, Sports Paper

PART 4 of 4



Sri Lanka tea plantation

Don Davis' early maturation was as an athlete, probably a good enough basketball player for Hall of Fame coach Les Eaton to earn a college scholarship to a small school. But he suddenly gained a football scholarship to Montana State.

That was a remarkable reversal indeed for the six-foot-four Bremerton native, who started out as a tight end for the Montana State Bobcats and wound up as a center in his three-year career at the Bozeman school.

Davis' real passion, though, was to be an architect and when it came to make a tough decision on whether to continue playing football or spending more time with his studies, the choice was clearly obvious to him.

Davis became an architect and, since leaving school with his degree, has been able to achieve a quality professional reputation while traveling the globe on various projects, some of them on the grand scale.

After a close brush by his wife (Nagila Guimaraes) with a war in Georgia in 2008 with invad-

ing Russian Forces, Davis was preparing to take on a grand design challenge in search of the perfect city.

It was in August of 2008 that Davis left his 16-year career with the Bechtel Corporation and moved over to CH2M Hill. The first project for his new firm was as design manager for Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

"It was an interesting project," says Davis, who currently is in South Korea working on a job for the U.S. Government that is being funded by the South Korea government.

"The Abu Dhabi government wanted the most sustainable city in the world.

Davis' role was only part of a project that is not expected to be fully completed until 2025 at an estimated cost of \$20 billion. The idea is for the planned city of Masdar City to be completely green — the city will run entirely on solar energy and other renewable ener-

gy sources, with zero carbon and zero waste ecology, and no cars will be allowed in it.

It is intended that Masdar City be the center for the world's clean tech companies. The planned population of the city is about 50,000, with an additional 40,000 commuters.

As the design manager, Davis and his management team worked on three major components of the city — Masdar Institute of Science and Technology (laboratory facilities, residential units, multi-use sports hall and auditorium), an external car park facility for 16,000 cars, and the design for residential, commercial office, car park, mosque and a personal rapid transit transportation network.

"It was going like gangbusters in 2008 when the (world) financial crisis hit and the price of oil per barrel plunged to new lows," says Davis.

When the project stalled in 2010, Davis left for Bangalore, India as design manager for the \$200 mil-

lion renovation and expansion of the Bangalore International Airport. He was there for a year and half and then filled in for seven months as the senior architect for a semi-conductor fabrication facility and office complex back in Abu Dhabi.

Then came an opportunity to go back to Brazil, where his wife is from. He was project architect for three months on the privatization of the Viracopos-Campinas International Airport in Rio de Janeiro. Viracopos-Campinas became one of the first airports in Brazil to be privatized through public auction.

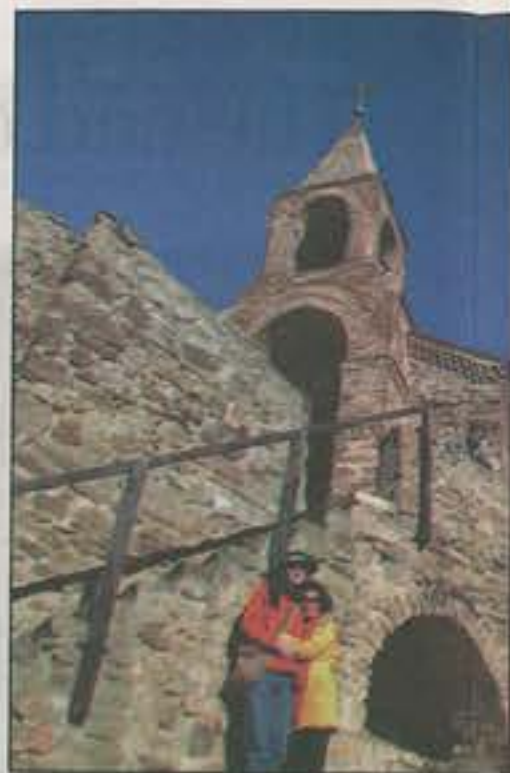
Then he spent five more months in Brazil working as project architect on a green-field shipyard that would construct drill ships for the oil and gas industry.

They say curiosity killed the cat. But in this case, the "Cat" has not been killed. Davis chooses to accept jobs that not only sound interesting and match his skill sets — especially on the design side — but jobs that will put him in different

cultures and places most of us will never see.

"The timing of when the next project comes influences where you eventually wind up," says Davis. "There certainly has been an exception where I have been flexible and was willing to relocate. Definitely not everybody is willing to turn on a dime and relocate. Once you learn the ropes and become more comfortable with the relocation aspect, it becomes pretty exciting."

After his last project in Brazil, Davis came home and was slated to be the project manager for the renovation of the North Terminal at Sea-Tac Air-



Davit Gareja monastery, Georgia

port in a joint venture with HOK. He worked on the design for several months, but their bid was not successful.

Then up came another chance to travel abroad — to South Korea. The architect challenge there started when it became necessary to relocate 30,000 U.S. troops from the U.S. Yongsan Garrison in Seoul. The South Korea government has purchased back from the United States the land the garrison sits on. In return the South Korea government is paying for the design and building of an expanded base at Army Garrison Humphreys in Pyeongtaek south of Seoul.

This is where Davis comes in. According to the CH2M Hill Website, the project, "includes development of 2,500 acres, placement of more than 18 million cubic yards of fill, demolition of more than 200 facilities, construction of 600 structures and associated infrastructure, and extensive devel-

opment of utilities and roads."

"The U.S. military base Yongsan has been in Seoul for the last 50 years and the South Korean government has wanted to reclaim the land," Davis said. "They offered to relocate the base to Pyeongtaek to Camp Humphreys. There are a number of rice paddies surrounding Camp Humphreys and we have expanded the camp into them."

These travels around the globe could take a toll on a relationship, but Davis says his wife of 20 years has been good about it, although he also adds she reminds him almost every day that, "that not every woman on the block is as flexible. She is a great lady. When we were working in Salt Lake City (1999-2002), she was working with the Sundance Film Festival (in Park City, Utah)."

Davis has been reluctant to talk about himself up to this point. He does not see that what he has accomplished is important enough



Peru, 2003

early architect career for fear of being stereotyped.

It is often true that athletes who become stars often become spoiled and feel entitled to life and its rewards. So Davis tended to tread carefully when asked about his background.

"We (have) spoken a little about the sometimes corrupting affects of sports achievement on players," Davis said. "In my case, for years after college, I actually buried the fact that I had played sports, particularly football, to avoid association of being a 'dumb jock.'"

"I remained incognito for many years until I worked for an architect who himself played professional soccer in South America and who found that I had played football in college. He said he regarded athletes in the workplace to have superior discipline and teamwork capability.

"From that point on, I began to share this fact more freely — but few actually believed I played center position with my current body frame and weight!"

While talking about his experi-



Creek bed in Jomson, Nepal

ences, Davis remembered that between his fourth and fifth years at Montana State when he did a six-month internship in New York City with a small architectural firm that he actually was in dire economic straits.

"(Call it poor planning or naivety, but I recall landing at JFK Airport without money in my pocket for a hotel or having a place to stay," Davis said. "I paid \$8 for a bus ride into Manhattan and went direct to the NYU (New York University) student center to look for advertisements for a room to rent. I found a room for \$200 a month on the lower east side the same day.

"I was lucky."

Maybe it wasn't luck, but Davis is extremely happy to have found his wife. Some married couples would be split over the amount of travel that Davis does in pursuit of a job that fits his skill sets and lends itself to traveling to places in the world where adventure is just around the corner.

"Perhaps relevant to this story may be my wife's similar sense for seeking out new and different experiences," Davis says. "She was raised on a farm in Brazil and as a child at a young age developed a curiosity of, as she would say, what was 'behind (or beyond) the mountains' in her immediate view when she was growing up.

"After she completed her degree in economics from the Catholic University in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, she worked for a few years on a government program for rural farmers. Funding for the program was being cut and she started to look for other options.

"She knew a professor who was teaching at UCLA with whom she could stay, but she needed money for a plane ticket. Her father was

opposed to her going, but her mother gathered seed money to buy the ticket.

"When she left for LA in 1987, her father wished her well, but said he was sure she would be back within six months. While she maintains close relationship with her parents and has visited them regularly, she only returned 24 years later, to 'live' in Brazil when we lived in Rio from June 2011 to June 2012.

"Guess you could say we share a kindred spirit or wanderlust."

That wanderlust has made it hard to settle down in one spot, although Davis owns a home in Salt Lake City

and another rental home in east Bremerton. He says maybe in five years he will seriously think about slowing down and settling in somewhere. Davis would like it to be in Kitsap County, but his wife thinks Brazil would be good, and he can't disagree.

"Brazil is a pretty good place to be in," says Davis, who can see the two of them moving between Kitsap County and Brazil. "Brazil has an amazing variety of ecosystems and landscape, a great coast line, beautiful beaches. It has 8,000 miles of coastline, the Amazon Region, tropical islands, mountain range that comes right down to the ocean.

"It kind of has the best of both



Roman ruins at Leptis Magna

worlds — beautiful natural tropical terrain that fronts on to the beach."

So it goes for the once young boy with blonde hair that played all the youth sports in Bremerton and whose thoughts back then were of expanding his landscape business and maybe forgoing college.

A mechanical engineering class taught by the late Frank Bratonia at East Bremerton High School and a surprise football scholarship changed all of that for that young man. Now much of the world is his domain to explore at his leisure.

Nothing is too far away or too exotic for Don Davis to not fully examine and to set foot on.