

Ten things about the author

1: I grew up around the West, but my favorite years were in a small town in northern Washington where we had a toy factory making wooden toy my father invented. Today it would not be allowed – child labor. My brother and I also cut many cords of wood with a two-man (teen) crosscut saw, more commonly known as a “misery whip” and shoveled tons of snow off a driveway that was much too long and much too wide. The fishing was good and the salmon runs were still impressive. One New Year’s night our school, just across the river, burned down. The colors were spectacular when the chemistry lab went up. It was so cold the fire hoses froze and the volunteer fireman had to stand around and watch it burn. The ashen pages of textbooks fluttered down on the snow around our house.

2: I went from a town of 364 people to a high school with 2,000 students in Sacramento. It was overwhelming at first, but some fantastic teachers made it worthwhile. Track and field became my escape and pole-vaulting was my passion even though I was never very good at it. With good fortune and hard work I won a scholarship from AeroJet General that allowed me to attend UCSD.

3: When I came to UC San Diego in 1966 I had every intention of being an oceanographer. Watching Sea Hunt and Jacques Cousteau had prepared me well. Fortunately, as a sophomore my major in earth science was cancelled, and I was placed under the supervision of Dr. Paul Saltman. He allowed the five students who had been stranded to take classes at Scripps instead. These proved much more engaging than undergraduate classes and helped my grade point average crawl upwards after too many days surfing. Scripps also got me out to sea where I discovered I got seasick and stayed seasick. I should have known, since I get air sick and car sick, but it hadn’t occurred to me. Duh! I switched my career plans to stay on land.

4: My first professional job was studying San Diego’s coastal lagoons for the County Environmental Development Agency, back before “environment” became a term Republicans would not allow to be spoken. Had the agency continued San Diego would be a much more prosperous community with more high paying Green tech jobs and considerably less traffic congestion.

5: This work led me up to UC Davis where I tried to develop a PhD on ecological community design, but the ecologists couldn’t see the connection between development and environment. Today it would be easier and might even be considered a “hot” topic. I was lucky, and with only a consolation prize master’s degree went to work for one of my fellow students at the innovative design firm, Living Systems, doing solar research and ecological community design.

6: This eventually led me to a home in the Village Homes Solar Subdivision in Davis. This 220 unit development was in part, made possible by my work on stormwater management, street width and energy conservation, so it was rewarding to experience the benefits firsthand. My solar home was the first steel tank water wall, and with a homebuilt solar water heater cut energy use almost 90% below the city average.

7: One of my friends talked me into a job at the California Energy Commission where I worked on research, education and developing the state passive solar tax credits. I found my un-bureaucratic tendencies were overwhelming and left after two years to start the Passive Solar Institute. It was meaningful work but exhausting



and after a few years I ‘retired’ — to spend a year teaching, writing and skiing at Lake Tahoe. Then I was on to Berkeley, Riverside and finally San Diego again, first at SDSU then AIU.

8: I have always enjoyed hiking, canoeing and camping. I have seen many bears, including grizzlies, but have only been treed by a moose. They get very touchy when their antlers are itchy. Fortunately at the time I was young and spry and able to climb a fir tree. Today I would have to negotiate with the moose, “You lookin’ good moose...”

9: Teaching at the university level was a special experience and many students have remained friends for life. The reward of seeing students “get it” was tremendous, but the bureaucratic follies, mind-numbing faculty meetings, long long hours and modest pay were a challenge. I calculated one year that accounting for inflation I made more money per hour painting houses as a college student in 1969.

10: I have a book habit -- reading and writing. I used to read several books a week, now it is several books a month. I also have quite a few underway and will need to live a long time to finish writing them all. I have considered entering a twelve step program for authors, “Hi, my name is Dave and I have a problem.” But for now I am just trying to cut back. See, I can do it, really. Well maybe not, I may need the writer’s patch...

The author of 20 books and 300 articles and reports David Bainbridge’s recent books include:

2022. Game Changer: World War 2, Radar, the Atomic Bomb and the Life of Kenneth Tompkins Bainbridge. Amazon.

2021. Volume 2: Tenacity; The Heroes, Survivors, Scoundrels and Psychopaths of the Fur War. Amazon.

2020. Volume 1: Fur War - the Political, Economic, Cultural and Ecological Impacts of the Western Fur Trade 1765-1840. Amazon. Resources for teachers <https://furwar.com>. Amazon.

2015. Gardening with Less Water. Storey Press. (*award winner*).

2011. Passive Solar Architecture. Chelsea Green. (*award winner*).

2009. Passive Solar Architecture Pocket Reference. Routledge.

2007. A Guide for Desert and Dryland Restoration. Island Press.

1994. The Straw Bale House. Chelsea Green.

He was the American Solar Energy Society’s Passive Solar Pioneer in 2004. He has published 3 books of poetry. He has designed and built homes and instruments, remodeled homes, deconstructed buildings, and taught a wide range of workshops and courses. In 2010 he retired as Associate Professor of Management at Alliant International University—he remains busy writing books.

BA Earth Sciences UC San Diego
MS Ecology UC Davis

special training

Timber Falling

Stream Monitoring

Agricultural data base management

Field archeology - certified California Timber Harvest Plan reviewer

Alpine ecology

Agroecology