DOWN MEMORY LANE

at the

IOOF Children’s Home

in

Gilroy, California

Second Edition
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Editors

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The Beginning

Rules:

1. The name of the Home shall be, “The I. O. O. F. Orphan’s Home of California.”

2. The object of the Home shall be to take under its sheltering care homeless and otherwise dependent orphan and half-orphan children of the Order and provide them with a home maintenance and education during the period of their dependence.

3. The I. O. O. F. Orphan’s Home of California is established by the Rebekah Assembly under a resolution adopted in May 1896.

6. The Board of Trustees shall have full power to regulate the affairs of the Home, to make such rules for the same and elect or appoint such person as officers and assistants as shall be required.

15. The Home shall be under the direct supervision and charge of a Superintendent or Matron who shall be elected by the Board of Trustees.

16. The Superintendent or Matron shall reside at the Home.

18. Each child admitted to the Home is expected to come with at least one change of clothing.

21. When children shall became residents of the Home, they shall be regarded as belonging to the Home.

22. The object will be to teach every child to be industrious and self-reliant and to place within his or her reach some tangible means of support; and each child will be expected and required to perform his share of the work of the Home.

23. The Trustees may place a child in individual homes as such are found to admit them.

Special Rules

1. No child resident of the Home shall be allowed to use tobacco or intoxicating liquors in any form.

2. Each and every child be required to observe the Sabbath, to attend Sabbath school and to learn some form of prayer.

11. Our country’s flag shall float over our Orphans’ Home on all fair days.

12. A fire drill shall be had at least once a month.
Introduction

The legal name for the home in Gilroy was the I. O. O. F. Orphan’s Home. In using the name the children as well as those in charge always used the name I. O. O. F. Children’s Home. They never thought of themselves as orphans or institutionalized, but as part of an extended family.

One of the parents had to be a member of the IOOF or Rebekah Lodge. Each child had been raised in a conventional home and unfortunately had lost one or both of the parents. Take a look down memory lane and find that these were a great group of individuals who lived in the Home.

They had chores and took care of the animals. The boys and girls had to make their beds, dress, clean up, and be on time for meals and activities. Each Sunday they walked through town to Sunday School. Each child had pride in the Home and in one’s self. Everyone worked together. The children in the Home had a sense of security, well-being and self-worth.

This book is about memorable stories by some these who lived in the Home. In our search we found a story by Alice, when she was in the Home 1899-1902. We are grateful to her and the other ones who took the time to write of their experiences about living at the home in Gilroy.

The section on the alumni stories deals mainly with those who served in the military. Thirty-four “Home Kids” served in WW I, and sixty-two served in WWII, and nine in Korea. One was killed in action during WWI and two in WWII.

I have three stories by people who never lived in the Home. They expressed their feelings about the Home.

The Rebekah New Home Building Committee was being pressured to move the Children’s Home from Gilroy to San Jose. On April 21, 1917, in response to the Committee Mr. Will F Blake, the owner of The Gilroy Advocate published the following editorial in the newspaper. This editorial expressed the feeling of the town toward the children and the Home.

"In all large cities where Homes and Orphanages are established the people in those cities look upon the children as "institutional" children. They are not given the advantages of mingling or being equal with other children of their age, and will grow up with a feeling that they are shunned and looked down upon because they are orphans. In Gilroy this distinction has never been shown to the children of the Home. Here they have mingled freely with the best families of the town, in our schools, churches, and at our little social gatherings. All respect them and encourage the children to grow up to be self-respecting, useful men and women."
“Gilroy has always pointed with pride to the children of the Orphans’ Home. They are the equal in manners, training, and intelligence of any in the community, but we believe that a great mistake has been made in removing them to an atmosphere of snobbishness, where they will be subject to the humiliation and insults of the caste system, so common in larger cities and towns.”

Second, the State Chief Children’s Agent felt that the Home should stay in Gilroy. Part of his letter in 1920 to the Committee is as follows; "The manner in which the Gilroy public welcomes the children of the Odd Fellow’s Home has made them appear far less institutionalized than children in other orphanages. When they are absorbed into a large community that has no special interest in their presence, this very delightful social intercourse will be denied them."

The third is by the Secretary and Past President. Rebekah Assembly 1951.

“The IOOF Orphans’ Home at Gilroy is not the usual orphanage. It is more like a home than an institution. Every convenience imaginable is provided for the children. In fact, those in residence there have better surroundings and more advantages than the child of the average family. Any child who desires may have musical training, and membership in the Home Orchestra is the worthwhile goal of many of our children.”

“During the years seven hundred children lived with our large family, some of them from infancy till graduation from high school; others for shorter periods. The young people who left this Home made places of respect and responsibility for themselves in the communities to which they have gone”

Mary R. Rewcastle.

Your guides on your trip down Memory Lane at the Home in Gilroy, California, are:

Ray & Kitty Burgess
# Home Stories
1899-1964

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The Seventh Child

In a letter dated September 11, 1979, to the alumni, Alice Miller Palmgrew said, "I am writing a book about my life". Her book was entitled The Seventh Child and chapter two is devoted to her life in the Home. Alice with her sisters Florence and Ida Bell entered the Home on May 7, 1899. Alice left the Home to go into foster care on January 21, 1902. In the 1979, letter Alice states, "she (Mrs. Bates, the foster parent) never loved me and I lived with them till I was nineteen".

Ida Bell left the Home on August 21, 1905.
Florence stayed in the Home until September 23, 1909.
Another sister, Ruth entered the Home, January 12, 1905, and graduated in 1915.

Chapter Two

Mr. Raeder, the husband of the head Matron, met us at the railway station. He had driven over in the orphanage surrey. Aunt Aurelia alighted with me in hand, and when I missed a step the ever-watchful conductor waved to the engineer that a little girl had been hurt. I thought, "Am I that important?" My two sisters followed closely behind. Aunt Aurelia beckoned for them to come to the surrey and to sit in the second seat with me between. We were so happy as we could see the two bay horses and as they made their way, their manes and tails, silken and long, kept in rhythm with the 'clop-clop' of their hooves striking the hard dirt road.

It wasn't long 'til we crossed the railroad track and caught a glimpse of the orphanage, as it lay on the edge of town. It was a large gray cumbersome building on a large acreage. There was a southern-style fence in front of it, and the black-iron lacy gate rested on a cement base.

Mr. Raeder opened the gate for us and we followed along the cement path. There were border plants leading to the front steps with planter boxes on either side with beautiful flowering petunias in them. Mr. Raeder rang the doorbell. Two of the older girls responded and ushered us to the Matron's office on the left. She was tall and had dark brown eyes that sparkled and showed a pleasing personality. She rang for the girls' matron, Miss Schroeder. Miss Schroeder was a petite, little lady who ushered us to the wide-carpeted flight of stairs on the left that led us to the girls' dormitory. Aunt Aurelia and Mrs. Raeder had much to discuss. We saw a large room with many single beds, and the girls were playing with their dolls, their sewing baskets nearby. I was so happy as Miss Schroeder introduced us to them and then proceeded to show us our beds. There was a long line of clothes closets where we would hang our clothes, and the window boxes where we would keep our belongings. Soon it was noon and time for dinner.

In the orphanage the children were regimented. I was so glad I was born with an understanding heart. It was easy for me to obey and, coming from a large family, it was also an asset to have been taught to share.

Needless to say we were very hungry. Miss Schroeder ushered us downstairs to the recreation room. Here we saw the other thirty-two children. They were forming two lines—the boys in one and the girls in the other, with the taller ones down to the little ones. Mrs. Raeder held a large brass bell, the first tap upon which we marched into the dining
room, as one of the older girls played the march on the piano. We were shown our places at the table in the right age group, so I was happy my two sisters were there. At a second tap on the bell, we noisily pulled out our chairs and stood behind them as we repeated the Lord's Prayer. Then with a third tap on the bell, we sat down. There were six at each table so we could quietly enjoy any conversation.

After dinner we went to our room and to our beds to rest. I fell asleep. Aunt Aurelia ate in the private dining room with Miss Schroeder. By turns, one of the older girls waited on table, which was a learning process for them.

On awakening, I listened to their stories and learned their names. As it was near the end of the school year, they told us of something that was going to be fun soon—the annual treat of going camping to a place at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

It wasn't long 'til suppertime came, so we went down to the recreation room where some of the children played games, some read—there being a large selection of books to choose from and read. Miss Schroeder was always near to see that all was well. I knew that I would be happy there and at the same time helping our mother. There were still three children at home: Earl, Cage and Ruth with her.

Time for bed, so Miss Schroeder led the way and again we were willing to be sure. The next day was Saturday. After arising, tending to our needs and going down for breakfast, we went up to the dormitory for Miss Schroeder to tell us three what our duties would be. Mine were to clean the long row of washbasins and dust the steps and banister of the steps leading to the hallway. These done, we were free to play and to get better acquainted.

School was our next interest and it wasn't long 'til vacation-time came. I was enrolled in the second grade, and it gave me just a little time to get a little bit acquainted with the other students before the term was over. I loved school, walking to and from it in a band, and the children were a picture of good behavior, those from the orphanage.

One day soon after our arrival, we were playing out on the porch outside the dormitory and one of the older girls, Isabel Newport, asked me if I had any pins of any kind, and she requested me to lay them down. I was afraid they would fall between the cracks of the floor, but Oh No! she picked them up for her own! Thus, I had my first lesson in trickery. She was a braggart and would tell of her father owning such a large farm at Vacaville, so big a farm that it would take a man on horseback all day to ride from one end to the other. Her mother had passed away. The orphanage was a refuge for orphans of members belonging to the: Independent Order of Odd fellows.

One of the most exciting events occurred as we were waiting for the train to pass one day. We saw President McKinley in his compartment, alone, and he had the palm of his hand resting on his face as though he was in deep thought. We could hardly wait to reach school and tell our teacher, Miss Beauchamp. No doubt the car was reserved for him and his secret service men. In Arcata a statue of him stands in the middle of the Plaza.

One Saturday, we were in the recreation room and we heard my mother's voice out in the hallway. We rushed to the door and greeted her. She had come from Arcata, planning to live in nearby San Jose, as she wanted a warmer climate away from the sad memories of Arcata. It was such a joy to see her, and she remarked how we had grown and we all had a happy day.
We spent two weeks of our vacation camping, with the girls going the first week-then the boys the second week-Miss Schroeder was in attendance, at a camp planned with her guidance, in a spot at the foot of the Santa Cruz Mountains. There we played games, enjoyed sleeping in tents and eating outdoors. Two of the most enjoyable things occurring at camp were a patriotic adventure and the annual trip to Gilroy Hot Springs.

The patriotic adventure was as follows: The boys would go out from the camp area with the Star Spangled Banner, to anchor it at some high spot-then allow the girls to later retrieve it on their own venture. So the boys went out. When they came back, they told us where to look and we hurried to get our nation's flag and bring it back to camp. It was a hard way to go for we smaller children, climbing to the top of a ridge where the boys had left the flag anchored. But when we got to the top of the ridge, thirsty and hot, what did we see but a lovely farmhouse painted red with white trim, with all the farm buildings corresponding. There was a large fenced area with a white and green trimmed structure and a trough of water. We banded together and we made the decision to take the sagebrush-lined trail and walk down to ask for a drink of water for we were so very thirsty. When we arrived at the bottom, we saw a woman with a white apron coming toward us and we asked her for a cool drink. She was so gracious and went into the house. She came out with a large, white crockery pitcher and a very small glass in her hand and told us that the well had gone dry and they were trucking water in for home and cattle use. We each had a drink and thanked her so much for her kindness. We turned away to band together to start back up the trail. About one-third of the way, I gave out completely. My sisters grumbled, of course, at permitting me to walk with them and proceeded to make a basket of their hands and arms to carry me. I kept saying, "I am going to die," but they were very patient with me.

At last we reached the top again and started to go on the trail where the boys had told us to go, trying to reach the rocky pinnacle where they had anchored our flag. One of the older girls made the climb and with the aid of a small rock, released it and we were all so happy we shouted with glee. The boys had also told us of the trail that led down the mountain with a brook of wonderful water babbling along. Needless to say, when we found it we cupped our hands and had our fill of this cool, refreshing water. Then we made our way down to camp and the boys could hardly believe it when they saw our glorious flag. We were taught in grade school and Sunday school to always revere it, and of course we forgot how tired we were. We were triumphant to be holding the flag of our United States.

The other highlight of the week was our trip to the Gilroy Hot Springs, just a short way from our camp. There, it was so very hard for me to understand that I could just jump right in the water and not drown. We came right to the top of the water, over and over again. Oh! It was fun! We went in with our 'birthday suits,' as the spring area was in an enclosure all of its own.

It was back to school, then, and our daily routines. I was in the third grade that year and walking to and from school, there was always a new interest. One was observing a bird's nest on an old branch of an elm tree. One day one of the boys saw a snake in the nest. Oh! He was sure provoked, and he climbed up and got the snake by the tail and flung him round and round 'til a couple of the newly hatched birds came out of its mouth. Then, of course, boy-like he began to chase us! Did we run for home!

We went to our dormitory and changed our dresses for a coverall apron and then out to play again. But the older girls had duties, some of them folding sheets in the laundry, and others ironing them and some of the other linen. The orphanage hired two washwomen; six days a week and they used the old washboard, too! I used to feel so sorry for them.
The next day was Sunday, and we went to Sunday School and Church. We naturally walked to the Methodist Church. Then it was home again afterward. But at church we had to be especially good and we learned there to pray, to grow up and become good citizens and Christians. Afterwards, at home for our Sunday dinner, we had a good roast beef dinner. Sunday evening's supper was usually a jelly sandwich for each of us, with the cook getting some time off on Sunday, and we lined up at the back door of the kitchen to each receive one's sandwich. Then of course, we went up to the recreation room for an evening of visiting, reading and games.

One great anticipation was Christmas and talking about it coming soon. We were told that at Christmas-time the Grandmaster of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows always sent a large wooden box for the thirty-five children. So we talked about it 'til last Christmas day came. We had a huge tree at Christmas, decorated by the older children, and received our gifts from Santa Claus. Oh! We were all so happy! We sang Christmas carols and admired each other's gifts. Christmas of the year that Mr. Brundage was the Grandmaster of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of the state of California, I received a large doll as my gift out of the large wooden box.

One fine day, I was sitting on the back steps holding my beautiful big doll. It must have been Fall, as I had a cute lined cape over my shoulders. I was thinking of my mother. She was employed by a family who had rooms for the elderly; rooms with cozy chairs in their corners for them to sit in; larger rooms for couples, with an easy chair for each of the dear ones, so they could talk of times past in comfort together. I named my doll Emma, after my mother. She was so lovely.

Three of the boys came up the steps of the Porch and surrounded me, and said that I was to follow them up to the boys' dormitory. They then put me in one of their clothes closets and shut the door. I took a peeks, and a boy was holding vigil at the door. It was stuffy in there. I was so glad when the boys' matron came to the closet with overalls and shirts in hand, to hang them up in the closet. She rescued me and I heard later that the boys had all been whipped.

Every morning the bell was rung from the belfry. We got up and went to the bathroom, then to the washroom. There was a line of washbowls against the wall and we tended to our needs. Then we would dress and ready ourselves to go down to the recreation room. Breakfast was served by the older girls and I remember that the oatmeal mush tasted so good. The menu would be bacon and eggs on alternate days. As time went by, I became very fond of Miss Schroeder and Mrs. Raeder. They could not, of course, show partiality and, of course, as children we craved love and understanding.

I was assigned to perform regular duties. Mine were to wash the long line of wash basins in the cleanup room and to dust the rungs of the stairway banister leading up to the girls' dormitory. Every bit of the work around the house, assigned to the children, was finished each morning before we left for school. The boys mopped the linoleum surfaced halls. I remember the boys in their bare feet, as I look down at them from the stairs while dusting. Saturday and Sunday were no exceptions for our duties.

In the Fall of 1900, a childless couple came to the orphanage to ascertain if they could take a girl around the age of eight. Mrs. Raeder took them into the office to explain what would be expected of them in such a case. She then had me in mind. I was a happy child and the nickname I was given was 'Smiles.' She rang for the girl's matron, Miss
Schroeder, who brought me in to see Mr. and Mrs. George Bates of La Grange, California. Mrs. Bates said "I do not like her, as she reminds me too much of a girl we took out of the Good Templar's Home in Vallejo." I wasn't told of the final decision until near Christmas and I wondered why I received a nice little valise for my present from Santa Claus. Mrs. Raeder after a short while, took me to the office and told me the young couple had a good backing as they owned, in a partnership with his uncle, a thriving general merchandise store in their little town of La Grange and owned cattle ranches also. Mrs. Bates had relented and made the decision to take me, so on January 7th; I was made ready to leave the orphanage.

Mr. James Andrew Hammond made monthly visits to his elderly mother in Santa Cruz from La Grange, and it was prearranged that I would be sent from the orphanage to travel with Mr. James Hammond to La Grange for another chapter of my life, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Bates.

So I said ‘goodbye’ to my sisters and went off with Mr. Hammond.

The Home from 1897 to 1921

Alice (Miller) Palmgrew, 1899-1902
Home News

In 1910 to 1912 the Rebekah Orphan’s Home published a newsletter. The older boys printed the paper at the Home. The older children and matrons contributed the articles. The paper came out each month and subscriptions were one dollar per year. These are some of the stories from those newsletters.

Preparation for Santa Cruz

Mr. Norris and one of the boys went to San Jose in the surrey to get a new team of horses for the Home. They were a beautiful pair of blacks named Billy and Teddy. Mrs. Karsner and Mrs. Moreland accompanied with little Ruth Dunn, a friend of the former, carne down in the surrey on the return journey. The horses were smaller than the other ones, but they were a fine pair.

The turkeys that we started to raise are now big birds. They run over the entire grounds and eat every thing they can find regardless of the nature of the plants.

Every summer the boys make their own money by working in the surrounding orchards and ranches. The girls, also, work picking and cutting fruit in the orchards and the packinghouse.

The cherry crop was about three weeks earlier this year than last. Those that picked cherries did so after school and on Saturdays, but not during vacation. This made a big difference in the total amounts earned because there were about three weeks of cherry work last year.

The boys that have bicycles found them very useful as they worked as far as five miles away from home.

The standard wages for day labor here was one dollar and a half. The big boys made this much. The next size boys earned one dollar and a quarter a day. At piecework, the wages were from fifty cents to a dollar and fifty.

An average of about twenty-five children worked each day and together they made about thirty dollars a day. This money was used any way the children wished to use it. Most of the children worked to get money for Santa Cruz.
Every day and night the children talked about Santa Cruz.

There was no other topic for conversation that was half so pleasant and stirring. Every little enjoyable incident of the last summer's outing and was discussed over and over. It was more pleasant to talk about each time. The same camping ground has been secured. We knew well that we had a good one. One more tent will be used because of the increase in the number of children. The matron was the faithful cook as she was last year. For the cook it was not an easy life to cook Santa Cruz. Nearly fifty children came to camp for meals after having played at the beach all day. They were little more than hungry. Mr. Norris went over with the big wagon and carried a good deal of baggage. Some of the older boys accompanied him and had the camping ground ready when the rest of the people arrive a day later. The team started on August first, and the children on the third. The outing lasted for about three weeks.

Camping at Santa Cruz

On the third of August, 1910, our wagon set out for Santa Cruz at six o'clock in the morning, with our tents, bedding, cooking utensils and other necessities. Mr. Norris and four boys made up the crew. They made good time and reached Santa Cruz next morning at ten o'clock.

The fourth of August was the day set for the departure of the rest of us. Everything went well and we left Gilroy at 10:45, and reached Santa Cruz at 1:35 by bus.

There was a good deal to do at camp so some of us went there and the rest to the Casino. By night things were in good shape. The entire lot that we camped in was ours. Last year there were other campers in it. We used six large tents, and the ladies had a cottage with three small rooms and a kitchen in it. The table was made of redwood planks and was about forty feet long. A canvas awning over it improved matters and did fine service.

The change from bed to hard ground was naturally rather annoying, but we quickly became accustomed to it. Another change was enacted. At home we retire about eight or nine o'clock and rise at six sharp; in, Santa Cruz we came in very late and slept until eight or after in the morning. Breakfast was served between eight-thirty and nine, and dinner at six P.M. The meals we had were ideal. There was no end of work. Cooking for such a crowd in such small quarters, but our matron succeeded wonderfully well in supplying our ravenous appetites.

The principal amusement for us was swimming. We would get into suits at ten o'clock in the morning and swim or lay in the sand until four or five in the afternoon. There was a fine fresh water-swimming hole in the mountains, about two miles from camp. We made good use of this out of the way resort and spent pleasant days there. Several among us had a continual longing for fishing. These folks were in their glory at the wharf.
for out in a boat. The fine breezes and smooth bay of Santa Cruz afforded these boys plenty of sport. One day a small party of us went to the foothills for a day’s picnic. Here was another very fine day. In fact the whole three weeks were crowded with short pleasant days. The time flew too quickly to suit us.

Several times the children would plan to do certain things on certain days, but the days would come and go before anyone realized it, and the plans were broken. This was especially true of plans made to visit the lighthouse that opened on Tuesdays and Saturdays only.

The weather was fairly good. The sun came out about ten in the morning, as a rule, and would shine brightly all day. A breeze would spring up about that time and hold out until late in the afternoon. A heavy fog set in every night, and sometime remained the whole day. But we were far too busy to take much notice of the weather and had a grand good time whether it was cloudy or bright.

We broke camp on the 28th of August and arrived home at 1:15, Friday. Mr. Norris arrived in Santa Cruz with the wagon the day before we left and loaded things up on Friday. The same four boys who went down accompanied the wagon on the return journey.

The trip back was completed on Sunday morning.

Electric Lights

The Home property was connected to the city water. The lights ran on gas. By 1900 the on-site acetylene gas plant was failing and had to be replaced. A few years later they used city gas. The gas was used for lighting and cooking.

A furnace that was fueled by wood and coal in 1897 heated the Home. The annual supply of coal had been stored in the basement. The boys indeed looked like a grimy crew of stokers when they came from the basement while the work was in progress, and like a troupe of actors, with beautiful darkened eyebrows, when they came to the table. The wood had, also, been hauled and stored.

For about the first six years of its existence the Home was lighted by gas made in our own plant in the tank house. This gas was very poor indeed, so a few years later city gas was installed. A great improvement immediately resulted, the fixtures were improved and the light was better. Gas was used until November when the electric lights were installed. A San Jose firm did the wiring of the home. All the wires are concealed. The fixtures were put in by another firm from San Jose. In an emergency or power failure the gaslights can still be used.
Heavy Rains

School began on the third day of January 1911. During Christmas vacation we slept an hour longer than usual. The first bell rang at seven o’clock. The breakfast bell rang at seven thirty. The days were short, but pleasant. Our evening meal came at five-thirty. Of course it was dark by that time so we used our electric lights. After supper we went to the play hall and read till eight or eight thirty. Then it was bedtime.

We have been having heavy rains. In past years the heavy rain would prevent us from leaving our grounds. The slough would block us on the west and south and thus keep us from crossing the bridge to town. There is a big swamp in a field in front of the Home, that fills up and overflows when the heavy rains come. This body of water cuts off our road on the eastside. The road is impassable further on so we would be locked in any way. At times the rainwater was in the basement, causing us to put our provisions upon boxes. When these floods came the boys were kept busy with the shovels.

San Juan Picnic

The Hollister, San Juan, Gilroy, and Morgan Hill Lodges held the annual celebration of the Odd Fellows in San Juan in April 1911. The children were invited to come to San Juan on that day.

We started from the Home at eight o’clock on the cold, foggy, disagreeable morning for our twelve-mile ride in busses and surreys. The Boys’ Band took the first bus. On our way through town we played one piece, after which we huddled together for protection from the cold wind. The ride was very disagreeable.

When we reached San Juan we were taken to the new IOOF Hall. Since the parade we had not yet been organized, we walked around the town. Most of us had been to San Juan on former picnics, so we knew our way around. After a short time we were called back to the hall to line up for the parade. The Band went first, the Cantons second, the school children third, and vehicles last. After parading in town, we marched to the picnic grounds where we listened to a few speeches. The Band played after this, and then the people began to get lunch ready. Meanwhile most of the boys walked down the road to keep warm and to pass the time. But all were on time when lunch was ready.

The Rebekah Lodge of San Juan had prepared a special table for the Home children and heaped it with all sorts of good things. Three-layer cakes were numerous and delicious, while the rest of the meal was equally as fine. Mr. J. Welch of San Juan had presented a box of cookies and a box of oranges to us, so we had all we could eat besides the oranges and bananas that the San Juan ladies insisted we should take.

After an exceedingly hearty dinner we left the picnic grounds for the cement works where we spent a half-hour or so. We came back just in time to play a piece for the beginning of a game of basketball between the San Juan and the Hollister girls. The game
was exciting and interesting, but rather one sided, in favor of the San Juan girls who played a remarkable game, and won. After the game several foot races were run both for the boys and girls of all ages. Our children won a great many prizes. Some were cash prizes and others were donations for the Band. A two-mile bicycle race ended the program for the afternoon.

We then left the picnic grounds and went up town to get the busses for home. Most of the fun was to come for the Boys’ Band. When we went into the Hall to get our things, preparatory to going home, ladies passing around quantities of excellent cake met us. We still had appetite enough left to enjoy it. After this unexpected lunch we expected to start for home, as all the others had gone, but no, there was a dance in progress up stairs. We went up and joined in. The San Juan ladies kindly introduced us so there was no reason for not having a good time. It was six o’clock before we finally left after playing one piece on the bus. We left by the cheers of the people of San Juan and Hollister basketball team.

Athletics

The boys in the Home organized a pretty fair football team. The Home team had one game with a team from the High School, and was the victors.

Four of the boys are members of the High School rugby team. They played teams from Salinas and Santa Cruz. In 1912, Emile Chourre, Archie Lucke, Frank Newport, Bernard Lucke, Albert Sherman, Jake Ventuleth, and William Kemp were on the CCAL Championship Gilroy High School Rugby Team.
Birth of the Reunion

I came to the Home with an older sister, Violet, and my two younger brothers Don, and Percy in 1921.

The first home building had just been moved back to about where the Chimes Tower was in 1921 from a position pretty close to where the building is now. William Radke of Gilroy built the present building. Which was started in 1920. In the summer of 1921 they wanted to tear down the old home so we all went to Asilomar near the Seventeen-mile Drive and stayed for about three months. When we returned, we went into the new building. It was first occupied in September 1921, and was dedicated in October.

Mrs. Susie Harris was Head Matron at that time and had been for many years. The redwood tree in the center of the drive circle was planted in her memory. Mrs. Harris became ill and retired about 1922, and was replaced by Miss Ida Thorpe. Mrs. E Washington followed her in 1923.

At one time the land at the home went to the railroad on the west, and on the south it went past Miller Slough. This land was all in alfalfa. The Home at that time had five cows that provided all the milk for the Home. The largest number of children in the home was under Mrs. Smith. I don’t remember the exact number, but it got close to one hundred and twenty at one time.

It got so crowded they added a wing on the northeast corner for a nursery and the older girls on the top floor. Miss Brooks had been in charge of the nursery for many years and was still there at that time.

Mrs. Smith left in late 1925 and was replaced by an elderly couple from Redwood City by the name Crumb. The job was too much for them. Mrs. Weymann soon replaced them. She was in charge when I left in 1927.

The Home orchestra grew out of the Boy’s Band and was started in about 1922. It was under the teacher and director Mr. Albert Taix. About two years later vocal lessons were started and Mr. Jeffers, from San Jose, was the instructor. There was a time the orchestra, upon invitation, went around to the different lodges and played concerts. For several years we played for the Grand Lodge at their annual State meeting in May.

I was in the Gilroy High School class of 1927 and graduated with Helen Jones, Harold Main, Ernest Graft and John Graft. During the football season Harold, Ernest, John, and I were on the championship Gilroy High School football team.

At our table were Warren Brusie, John Graft, Ernest Graft, Harold Main, Harlan Bonham, Henry Underwood, Ed Calhoun, Les Durose and myself. I made a suggestion that we come back and have a reunion on Christmas day in 1935.

The reunion in 1940
The first reunion was held at Christmas time in 1935 with about sixty present. We had a meeting at the home and then had dinner in town at the old Armory building. At that time Lillian Arney volunteered to act as secretary, I went on as chairman.

Our next meeting was at Christmas of 1940. At that meeting, on the motion of Harold Main, we voted to meet every three years. The meeting was to be held on the Labor Day weekend so as to have a three-day weekend and help the attendance. I chaired the reunions through 1960, when I retired due to my health. Erwin Oswald was elected to the chairmanship. Lillian Arney had acted as secretary through this period. She, also, acted as treasurer. Since she lived so far away she declined future service as an officer, and Vi Masoni replaced her.

The sixth reunion was held at the Home in Gilroy on Labor Day weekend. The celebration commenced with a ‘Home Coming’ dance at the Milias Hotel at 9:00 PM on Saturday night, August 31st. The reunion dinner was served at the Home on Sunday followed by a meeting of the alumni in the home’s auditorium.

The reunion was held every three years on Labor Day weekend. It is open to all former residents of the home and their families. The last reunion was held in 1954 was attended by two hundred and fifty persons. That year people came from Colorado, Oregon, and Ohio, and from all over the state of California.

On April 29, 1966, the Home held its "Endowment Day," called Spring Festival. The idea was to raise money for the endowment fund of the Home. The "Spring Festival" consisted of assorted booths that sold all sorts of things on the front lawn. Around the circle driveway was food, coffee, and soft drinks. Back of the "guest cottage" as we knew it, were barbecue hamburgers for sale. The gym held a real magic act. The Future Farmers sold tickets on a pig and a lamb to be killed, cut and wrapped for the freezer. The tennis court had games (such as you see at carnivals and board walks - darts, etc.).

There was a movie for the children in the old nursery basement that is now the movie room. In the Home's (private dining room) they had a fortuneteller. The Alumni had a cake booth. Thanks to those who were called on and turned out to help, we gave $27.25 to the fund. The Home took in close to $1,000. In the afternoon there was live music. There was lots of parking room in the old alfalfa field (ball diamond). The plan was to have a festival every April.

Our Alumni booth for the festival in April 1963 consisted of articles from their hobbies of the alumni. Those wishing to participate (families welcome) brought their donations of crafts; others mailed their sewing, knitting, homemade jewelry, ties. We all had an enjoyable time.

In 1972 Al Kaiser was elected chairman and re-elected in 1975.

Although we have not done a lot for the Home we did contribute to the endowment fund. We contributed to a scholarship fund for high school graduates, and we repaired the sundial in the front yard.

Fred Gerholdt, Class of “27”
The reunion in 1948

Photo is taken on the front steps in 1952
Reunion in 1954

Reunion of 1960
Saturday at the Movies

In 1924 some of the children had jobs in town to earn extra money. On Saturday I would go to the city library located at Church and 3rd street to work. The job was to polish the brass doorknobs on the entrance to the library. These doors were made of heavy oak with large handles. Miss Lavin, who was in charge of the library, would give me a dime when the job was completed. The dime was enough to get into the movies, and if I had an extra dime, I could buy ice cream or candy. On some Saturdays about ten to twelve of us boys would sneak down to see the movies.

The property on the west side of the Home ran along a slough and running parallel to the slough was the railroad track. To the south was the cannery and north and east was a road. On certain Saturdays we would sneak along the fence that enclosed the pasture for the cows. The fence led to the slough, we would go down the slough, over the railroad tracks, walk across the street, and around the corner to the theater. On Saturday most of the movies were about cowboys, Tom Mix and shoot’em up type of movies. We, also, had to see the next episode of the serial film at the end of the main movie.

In the theater we always sat on the left side near the front. There was an exit door near where we sat. This door led to the outside and the street incase of fire. On some occasion, the film would stop, and an announcement would appear on the screen. It read, “all the Orphan Home children please report to the entrance of the theater.” At the same time the side doors opened, the bright sun flooded the inside of the theater, and all the children scattered like quail. We ran across the street, ran down the railroad tracks, through the slough, and across the field leading back to the Home. Sometimes we would make it and sometimes we wouldn’t. We were not able to go to the Saturday movies for two weeks if caught.

Harold Main, Class of “27″
The Letter

This is a letter from Mrs. Frazee to Ruth Planer on February 2, 1932. Effie Frazee was assistant Superintendent and girl’s matron from 1923 to 1932.

Dear Ruth,

I received your letter when I got in from San Jose just now. I had Monday off this week by trading days with Mrs. Bradley. I will see Dr. Chesbro first thing tomorrow as he was the one who did the vaccinating for smallpox and will have to make out the certificates. That is something none of us got and I wouldn’t want to see some of the children have to be vaccinated again. I do not remember if you girls had sore arms or not or if your scars are as bad as some, but if we give the dates, any common sense doctor could look at your scars and tell if it took. You don’t want to get smallpox and I hope it doesn’t get down here. We got through this school year, so far with very little sickness. Mostly colds seem to settle in the stomach. No one has been out of school for a whole week.

I guess some one has told you that Nellie, Beatrice, Charles and Albert graduated this Friday night from the 8th grade. Beatrice came out with average of 93+ the highest in the class. But she is not to enter high school until next September. She is going to stay with Miss McCoy in order to be near a specialist for treatments for her goiter. It has grown quite a lot and everyone who knows, says it is the cause of her being so thin. They either make folks too fat or too thin. None of the teachers here thought she should stay in school to finish Jr. High. She goes to San Jose Fridays on the bus and had her treatments and came back Sunday.

I saw the movie “Charlie’s Aunt” today and it was a scream. Fox California was packed and the people were in an uproar all through the picture. If you want to laugh, see it. Our dishwashers get to see Tom Sawyer this week here at the Strand. Wish they could all go.

Guess you heard Mr. Painton has left town to take charge of a new Las Angles School. Band and orchestra members gave a farewell party for him and presented him with a $7 baton.

It is bedtime so I will say good night and quit. Best regards to you all. Glad to hear of your good school progress.

Your friend
Effie C Frazee

PS. We still have your big box of things in the dance hall.
I Did It

The only fight I was ever in, while growing up, was when I was fifteen or sixteen. My opponent was Marvin Wilson, same age and a classmate. I have no idea what the fight was about, but I do remember that Marvin ended up with a bloody nose.

The following summer vacation in 1934, I went away to visit relatives. During that summer, Miss Williams decided to allow the senior boys to draw straws for two bedrooms, each having two beds. The two winners were allowed to pick their own room-mate. Marvin Wilson drew one of the lucky straws. Surprise, surprise, I wasn’t even there and Marvin picked me as his roommate.

Senior year was good with good classes and enjoyed being in operettas and school plays. Marvin and I got along fine as roommates. We did get into trouble on time though. It was a hot night and we were doing our homework. One of us said, “Man some cool canned peaches sure would taste good”. With that thought in mind, we snuck downstairs, through the dark empty kitchen and down the stairs to the basement where the padlocked pantry was located. Our plan was to file the end off the hasp pin and remove it, retrieve the peaches, replace the pin and take our treasure back to our bedroom. The steel pin proved to be more difficult than we had anticipated in that tiny confined space, so we finally had to give up.

The next day when we came home from school to have lunch, there was an envelope on my dresser. Inside was the “hasp” with a note from Miss Williams which read “George and Marvin, you can use this hasp to practice your filing and if you feel like you would like a can of peaches, just come and ask me. Signed, Ida Belle Williams”.

Having mentioned peaches in her note, she must have heard us whispering in that dark basement during our filing.

Miss Williams never spoke to either of us personally, regarding the episode, but I blushed every time I saw her for the next two weeks.

George Scriven, Class of “35”
I Didn’t Do It

One day while we were home for lunch, my friend Grace approached me and said, “Come on upstairs, I want to show you something”. After joining her in our bedroom, she pulled out a cigarette and said one of the kids at school gave it to her. Well, we figured that we would have time to give that cigarette a try before returning back to school.

The first thing we did was to go into the bathroom and cut the cigarette in half with a pair of scissors. Grace had the matches and after lighting one, she held it up to light my half of the cigarette that I had placed in my mouth in eager anticipation. We huffed and puffed and coughed while I was bemoaning a few singed eyelashes. Now here’s where we made our big mistake. We put the butts into the toilet and forgot to flush, since we were in a hurry to get back to school.

After putting conscience away, I went back to my classroom and started to working diligently on my assignment. About the middle of the afternoon, the teacher told me that I was wanted at the Home. Dreading what was coming, I slowly made my way down the stairs. As I emerged from the building, I ran into Grace. We slowly walked home and when we went through the door, there stood Miss Williams. She promptly ushered us to the bathroom where we had committed the awful deed.

“Did you girls smoke a cigarette in here?” she asked. We both shook our heads from side to side, saying “no”. “Then why are there cigarette butts in the toilet”? She queried. I offered the information that there might have been a plumber here. Her answer was if there had been a plumber she would have known about it.

Finally, Grace admitted that we had tried to smoke a cigarette. In disgrace, we were sent back to school to finish of the day.

I can’t remember exactly what punishment we had, but we must have stayed home from several movies.

Sadly, neither Grace nor Miss Williams are with us today, but I’ll bet they are both up there having a good laugh.

Marie (Smith) Scriven, Class of “36”
Memories in the 30’s

Dinner Time

While in the Home as "little girls", we enjoyed playing in our playhouses that were located in the basement. The “houses” were composed of moveable shelving which was placed so that we each had an equal amount of space. We each had our own house which was decorated with toys, pictures etc.

One of our fun activities was to have a restaurant where we would sneak little bits of food from the dinner table and bring it to our playhouse. We would mix up delicious bites (ugh) and put it in little doll dishes. Whoever sat down to have a dinner at the restaurant had to have enough straight pins to pay for the fare. Our money exchange consisted of straight pins, so whoever was rich in pins could enjoy a meal. I remember that the mashed up bits of food didn't taste so good, in fact it was mostly terrible, but one had to eat it in order to get their pins worth. It was more fun to be the owner of the restaurant and make those “tasty dishes.”

We would, also, have "sales" where we would sell toys or whatever else we had. Some of those things cost quite a few pins. Sometimes I would sell something, and then wish I still had it. Anything to get those pins! What a time that was when we didn't worry about a check balance or credit cards. Of course there was no credit allowed with the pin transactions.

Faces

Another "little girl" thing was when we would get in a fight. If we were caught fighting, we would have to sit on the stairs across from each other. Well, just sitting there got quite boring after awhile. So we would eventually forget our anger and start to talk. Can't remember who it was, but this one time we started to make faces, and we tried to outdo each other. That is where I learned to make some great faces that I can startle my friends. I can raise one eyebrow while keeping the other one straight, and, also, I can raise one corner of my mouth up while the other side takes a dip way down. I used to amuse my children with this when they were little. Learning to make faces on the stairs in the Home was something I never forgot. What an accomplishment!

Sneaky

There was a trick we used to pull that always gave us plenty of giggles. I was in the intermediate girl’s dormitory at this time. A couple of the girls, and of course me, the instigator, would wait after we were in bed, until we were sure most of the other kids were asleep. Then we would quietly sneak up the hall, past Miss Frazee’s door, who was the matron. Going by her door was really scary because she could have opened it at any time. Up the hall we would go so very quietly until we reached the door of the boy’s dormitory.
There we would peek in the door at them, and giggle quietly all the way back down to hall. When we reached the door to the closet that contained the box of graham crackers that were passed out every day after school, we helped ourselves. We would then make our way back to our beds where we consumed the crackers. Well, amazingly we never got caught.

One day I received a letter from my Dad telling me that he had remarried and would be down to take me home with him the following week-end. The marriage lasted a year and I was back in the Home again. I was glad to be back and that night when I went to bed in the same dormitory, it seemed like I had never been gone. I was slowly drifting off to sleep when a little white night gowned person standing beside my bed startled me. She whispered, “Marie, we haven't snuck up the hall to look at the boys since you left. Can we go now? I was out of my bed in two seconds, and we took off on our adventure to peek at the boys.

Lost Candy

While in High School, we lived on the "Big Girls" side that consisted of rooms with three or four beds. There were two rooms on each side of the hallway with a bathroom between. Miss Maroney, our matron, was a very nice lady who had a room down at the end of the hall, near the stairs.

My Dad came to visit me one time and gave me some money, before he left. The next school day I said to one of my friends. "I have some money so lets play sick. When the matrons go to lunch, we can walk down town and buy some candy. Well, that was fine with her so we both invented illnesses and told Miss Maroney how badly we felt. So we lay in our beds fully dressed, until around twelve o’clock when the matrons went to lunch.

Away we went, walking down the path, across the railroad tracks and soon came a left turn taking us to the downtown where there was a candy store. With eager anticipation we entered the store and bought enough candy to last us several days. With our treasure in bags, we entered the Home and went to our room. We were about to indulge when we heard footsteps coming up the hall. We quietly threw the candy into the bathtub. After quickly getting back into our beds, Miss Maroney appeared at the door with a big smile on her face. She said, "The nursery babies will love that candy. Bring it to me please." Feeling very guilty and disappointed, we retrieved the bags from the bathtub and handed them to her. She smiled and said “Thank you," as she walked away with our candy.

Years later, I corresponded with Miss Maroney when she was in Sr. Housing in San Jose. In one letter she wrote, "You were a little devil Marie, but I always liked you."
Halloween

We were always so happy when Halloween came around. It meant that we could get into the big box in the storeroom that held all of the Halloween Costumes. We would pull all of the costumes out of the box and finally make our choices. In the evening we would parade through the main street in downtown Gilroy with our costumes on. The one with the best costume would be awarded first prize.

My most outstanding memory of Halloween was when I was in High School. We had a Halloween party and each of us was allowed to invite one friend. A "Town Kids" were what we called them since we were the "Home Kids." The party took place in the recreation room, which was in the basement. I met my friend when he arrived at the Home. We went downstairs and as we approached the recreation room, we noticed that several of the Homeboys were standing in front of the door. There was a vacant chair there, and they told us that we had to sit in it before we could go into the party. So my friend innocently sat down on the chair, and they told me to sit on his lap. About that time I was beginning to get suspicious that some prank was about to take place, but too late. Suddenly I flew up in the air with a scream. We both got a shock! To this day I don't know how they had the chair rigged or how they got away with it. That just wasn't a bit funny!

Sunday School

On Mother’s Day we would go to the front desk to get a carnation to wear on our shoulder for Sunday School. If we had a Mother, we would wear a red one and those of us without Mothers would wear a white one. I didn’t have a Mother, so I always wore a white one.

We would all be dressed in our "Sunday Best": with the flowers placed just right. Then we would walk to the Presbyterian Church to go to Sunday School. I well remember some of the songs we sang which were “The Old Rugged Cross”, and "Oh Come to the Church in the Wildwood.”

I remember having to recite a poem that was given to me to learn for Mother's day. It was something about "How Long Has My Mother Been Gone." I noticed that some of the ladies had their hankies out and were wiping their eyes. I thought to myself, "Gee, I didn't mean to make anyone cry."

When I was in High School, I was sent up to the Primary Department to play the organ for little ones when they sang. I really had to work at those pedals to get the sound out. After the singing, I was asked to teach a little class of boys. That was quite a chore! I would tell them something about the lesson, and then tell them a cowboy story. What a great teacher I was! It was only for a short time as I soon graduated from High School. I hope they found a better teacher for the little boys.
Tonsils

When in the “little girls” dormitory, several of us were selected to have our tonsils out. I wasn't very happy about that, and dreaded the day it would happen. When that day came we all were asked to get in our beds and someone would come and get us, one at a time. I decided to put it off as long as I could, so I would make believe that I was sound asleep whenever someone came to get us. Sadly, my turn came after everyone else had gone. Up the hall I went to the room that was called the "sick room.” Shaking like a leaf, I was put on a table in a room adjacent to the "sick room.” That is all I remember until I was in a bed. One of the “Home Boys” whose name was Teddy, assisted the doctor who was Dr Chesbro. He healed our hurts many times. Teddy did become a doctor and had his own clinic in Los Angeles. A number of “Home Kids” who lived in the area had him as their family doctor.

We were all very uncomfortable for a few days. There was a nice sun porch off the "sick room” and we enjoyed going out there where we could look down on the grounds and enjoy the sun. My Dad came to see me and brought ice cream for all of us and that helped the sore throat quite a bit.

Marie (Smith) Scriven, Class of “36”
Short Stories

Camp

Happy were the summers when we could go to camp Totokono in the Santa Cruz Mountains. We'd all pile in the bus dressed in our camping clothes of jeans and a shirt. In those days, we had to wear dresses to school so we really enjoyed wearing jeans. On the way we would sing songs like "Old Mc Donald Had a Farm," and keep our eyes open for trucks with hay bales so we could holler "bale of hay, bale of hay, give me a wish and go away." then we would each make our wish being careful not to tell, because if we did, it wouldn't come true.

Upon arrival we would be assigned to tents that held about three or four of us. We would then proceed to gather rocks and decorate around the front of the tent and mark our territory. Our days were filled with hiking and swimming. That was where I learned to swim because I wanted to be a "ducker," not the "duky."

It was much fun around the campfire roasting marshmallows. Some of the girls liked theirs really charred, but I liked mine just about half-way done.

One time a few of us went hiking and after awhile, we came to an old deserted building. It was very small and had some windows in it. We stood there for a while staring at it wondering if anyone ever came near it. We finally concluded that it was so shabby and deserted, no one would know if we threw a few rocks at the windows. So we went to it, gathering rocks and throwing them at the windows. It was lot of fun until all of a sudden; out of the blue there appeared a man pointing a shotgun at us. He kept it pointed while saying, "You'd better take off and run fast because if you don't, I'll shoot--now get going." Well, we took off running as fast as we could and didn't stop until we had reached camp. I was so frightened; I took off like a racehorse with my heart doing double beats. Then we worried for fear that he would find the camp and tell on us. We never heard anything about it and promised each other that we would never tell anybody.

Beth Crail and I always ended up getting poison oak about half-way through the trip and would be taken home to see Dr. Chesbro who would give us shots in the "sit down area." Anyway we still had our great memories of camp and looked forward to going again the following summer.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving was always a big day for us because we could go across the street to the high school football field where the game would be held with the alumni playing against our Home team. We would sit in the bleachers together and make lots of noise cheering for our Home team. One time my boyfriend Gene was running down the field with the ball heading toward the goal, and I got so excited, I jumped up in the air with such exuberance, I fell through the opening between the bleachers to the ground below, skinning my legs. Naomi turned to say something to me, and I had vanished. She was quite perplexed until she heard me hollering from the ground below. I hobbed home in anticipation of the great Thanksgiving dinner we always had, and was a happy finale to the excitement of the day.
**Christmas**

A few weeks before Christmas, we would write on a piece of paper, our first and second wish for a gift. These notes were then sent to one of the Lodges that provided the gifts. When Christmas Eve arrived, the bell would be rung to signal us to the music room where we would receive our gifts. It was very exciting to see the beautifully decorated Christmas tree surrounded by many gifts. Some of the children who had many relatives would have two or three stacks of presents. I used to envy them because I had two, one from the lodge and one from my Dad. As a little girl, this always made me quite envious. However, my triumph came when in my last year of high school, my Dad sent me a fur jacket. Oh, I put that on and paraded all over the place like a queen. All of the Christmases were very festive, with a delicious dinner on Christmas day, but that was my very best Christmas.

**The Radio**

When we were little, we spent our time either in the playhouses in basement or the little girl's parlor if we weren't outside. There was many enjoyable books to read in little girl's parlor such as *Little Women, Little Men* and *The Five Peppers,* to name a few. Many enjoyable hours were spent there, but another type of enjoyment became available when I my Dad donated a console radio. It was placed in the intermediate girls parlor.

Because my Dad had donated the radio, I was the only one allowed to turn it on or off. Of course that made me feel like quite the queen. We used to all sit on the floor around the radio in the afternoon and listen to a program called "Al Pearce and His Gang." We would have a good time laughing at all of the funny jokes.

One day after the show was over, I put on some music, and we all started dancing around the room. I started doing the hula and I really went to it throwing my hips this way and that. Suddenly I noticed that the girls were staring at the glass door that was the entrance to the room. I looked at the door and there stood Mr. Christine, dangling his keys. He opened the door and pointed his finger at me saying, "Upstairs sister, upstairs." He always called us "sister," So I walked past him, out the door and started upstairs. After that, I was careful when and where I did the hula.

**Westerns**

Saturday was the big day when we walked up to the comer and made our way to the Strand Theater where we saw cowboys flying around the plains on their horses with guns waving throughout, to capture the enemy. Since these were silent pictures, the loud crescendo of the organ accompanied the action with great gusto. We would sometimes read the printing that was at the bottom of the picture to those of us who hadn't learned to read fluently yet. We saw a whole bevy of cowboys such as Hoot Gibson, Tim Mc Coy, and Buck Jones, to name a few.
We were all privileged to see the very first "talking picture." It was with Al Jolson. We all sat in wait not knowing what to expect. When it started, we were amazed to hear the sounds coming from the screen. Well, it was really something to be able to say, "I saw the first "talking picture."

Rodeo

Each year we went to the Salinas Rodeo. We would board the bus, and amidst our chatter, we would finally arrive and scramble on to the bleachers to await the show that consisted of the bucking broncos, rope twirling and all of the events put on by the cowboys.

One year while we were sitting in the bleachers the word got around that Buck Jones was sitting up in the back of us. We were all very excited about seeing him in person, so we started going one by one to get a peek. When it came my turn, I was almost near the top where I could see him when I heard him say very loudly, "The little brats!" Well we were hurt and angry at the same time vowing never to like Buck Jones again.

The best part of the day was the great lunch the Lodge Ladies would bring. There were so many goodies to eat, we would arrive back home happy with full tummies.

Graduation

It was getting close the Senior Prom and graduation from High School. I wrote my Dad a letter asking him to come down to see me because I needed a new dress for the Senior Prom. He always picked out my clothes and sent them to me but this was different. I wanted to select my own dress for the Prom. The day came when he arrived, and we went "down town" to find the perfect dress. Almost trying his patience, I tried on one dress after another, until I finally spotted one that looked elegant to me. It was bright red satin with long trails hanging down the back. I tried it on and it fit perfectly, so I arrived back at the Home with my precious dress. With pride, I got all dressed up for the Prom and went to the special event wearing my shiny red dress. Now that I look back, I remember some of the teachers giving me a "funny look." Sometime later, I looked at that dress and wondered why my Dad let me buy such an atrocious looking dress. When in college at San Jose State, I gave it to the costume department for the San Jose Players to use for "bad girl parts."

The evening of graduation from Gilroy Hi, I stood in the front row with the class, all decked out in my cap and gown. I was feeling very emotional and sad. I really didn't want it all to end because I had been having such a good time being in plays and singing in the choir. I really didn't know where I would live or what I would be doing. Going out into the big world seemed a little overwhelming at the time, I made it o.k. Here I am many and many years later telling all about it. I'm grateful that I had been brought up in such a fine place as the IOOF Children’s Home.

Marie (Smith) Scriven, Class of "36"
He Caught Me

I awoke on the morning of the twenty-eighth of August 1933, full of eager anticipation. At long last it was my sixteenth birthday, the one I had long waited for, so that I could be classified as one of the “big girls”.

After getting dressed, I sailed down the stairs to the hall where I sang, “Sweet Sixteen and Never Been Kissed,” with much gusto while dancing around. Suddenly from out of nowhere came George Scriven running toward me with a gleam in his eye. I turned heel and ran down the hallway with him close behind. Almost to the stairs, he caught me and planted a kiss on my innocent lips. I turned and ran up the stairs, giggling all the way to my room where I told the girls what George had done. They thought that was very funny and we all had a good laugh.

One day there was a program in the gymnasium at the High School. The bleachers were full of boys and girls from the different classes. In the middle of the entertainment, George appeared to sing a solo. While his beautiful voice was ringing out our song, he spotted me sitting demurely in about the fourth row up. He went through that whole melody with out taking his eyes off me. My schoolmates were looking at me while I sank further and further down into my seat. Can’t remember the name of that song, but the ending was “and we’ll have a little Dutch family,” which caused much tittering. I swore that I would never forgive him for causing me all of that embarrassment.

George and I both eventually graduated and left the Home, each going our own ways. We both married and raised families.

Guess what? Some sixty years after that kiss, George finally caught me, for good. We just celebrated our seventh wedding anniversary.

He sings to me every morning as I come up the stairs, “Here she comes, Miss America,” and I don’t mind a bit. In fact, I really love it.

Marie (Smith) Scriven, Class of “36”
Love and Friendship

A theme that was repeated over and over was "Home kids stick together and help each other." The Home was like a large family where each member tried to look out for the welfare of all. The children had a sense of security, well being, and self worth. All the children had one thing in common. They had lost one or more of their parents. In later years this pride showed in the gathering of the children now with their own children at the Home Reunions.

“I remember my first day at the Home. I was thirteen when my mother and aunt took me to the Home in Gilroy. Miss Williams wanted to talk to my relatives so she found a few kids and introduced me to the girls. We went down the hall way and starting playing and having fun. Then I realized that my mother had not come to get me. As I went to the main entrance I saw my mother and aunt driving out of the driveway. I ran down the stairs waving my arms, yelling and screaming, and then started to cry as the car went out of sight. The other kids must have followed me as they came to meet me and comfort me. We all went back inside and started playing again. Looking back on this experience being in the Home was the best thing that could have happened to me.” Barbara

Each child in the Home was assigned a job to do. These might include cleaning and sweeping the rooms in the building or caring for the livestock. The older boys cared for the animals. On Saturdays, heavy cleaning was done. The boys did the yard work, cutting lawns, trimming hedges, or raking leaves. Those who cared for the animals cleaned the chicken house, the barn, and the pigpen.

The house chores rotated from person to person on a monthly basis. The assignments of caring for the animals remained in the hands of one person for a longer time. The girls were assigned the chores related to inside of the home, such as sweeping, dusting, and dishwashing. Older girls helped to care for the younger children in the nursery. This promoted a closer sense of family among the kids. Everyone contributed to the welfare of the Home and had a feeling of belonging to a family. When some one was sick or playing sports, another would take his/her place doing the job.

Another example, which received little notice, happened in 1931 on a trip to the Santa Cruz Beach. The Home had taken the children to the beach for the day. Anne had entered the water and soon found her self being pulled out to sea by the undertow. Lois recalled seeing a head and beautiful brown eyes bobbing up and down in the water. She realized that something was wrong so she went in the water. Lois was able to reach Anne, and she brought her back to the beach. Both were exhausted and sat on the beach watching the waves. None of the matrons were aware of what had happened until some time later.

In September of 1940 the Home made its annual trip to Santa Cruz for a day at the beach. One of the people was Vivian Basinger who had just come to the Home a month before. Playing in the surf was great fun. A wave caught her and moved her out into the deep water. Kenneth Sanford, a Boy Scout with life saving training, heard her call, swam out, and brought her back to the beach. This was no more than a brother helping his sister.
We had a piece of play yard equipment called the ocean wave (photo below). The ocean wave was located in the nursery play yard and was there for twenty-five years. Everyone, young and old played on it and never had an accident. This was because the older children would help the new or younger ones telling them how to use the equipment without getting hurt. It would have been easy to lose a finger or break bones, if not used properly. The younger children were usually overseen in their play by their older siblings.

A pole in the center supported the ocean wave. The bottom ring or seat moved in and out, and at the same time it went around in a circle. A person sat on the wood outer ring with legs between the wood and an inner steel ring. The inner ring took all of the shock when it hit the steel support pole. You always held on to the support rods or the chain connecting these rods, but never, ever the inside steel ring.

When the older boys were around is when the inner ring would hit the pole with a loud bang and everything would vibrate. It was great fun. Years later in 1949 the nursery was closed and this equipment was removed because it was never used.

Ray & Kitty Burgess
Letters of Appreciation

These are a group of letters that were sent to the Board at the Home and to all Odd Fellows and Rebekah who supported the children in the Home. These were published in the Rebekah Assembly Journal.

What I Think of the Home

To be candid, it is a "swell" place for a kid to grow up. I have had good training and have never wanted for the necessary things. I am glad I could go through high school, which the Home has made possible for me.

The Home has let me choose my vocation and go to town to work for experience while I learn the trade of welding. This will mean a lot to me when the time comes, in a short while, to go out and get a job.

It will be a good feeling to have the Home and my boss for reference when I go to apply for work.

This year I joined the Odd Fellows in Gilroy. I feel that I owe the Home something, so I wanted to be a member of that Lodge. I like the Order very much and the fellows in the Gilroy Lodge. My roommate joined too and we are having a good time.

I worked up through the Scout Troop in the Home, to become an Eagle Scout, and now I help the Scoutmaster in the training of scouting. It is a good place to build a foundation. Much of the credit should go to Miss Williams, our Superintendent. She helps us out of trouble and sticks with us through thick and thin, as well as giving some good advice.

As I graduate I want to thank the Home Trustees, and everybody, for everything the Home has done for me, and, for any bad record I might have, if any, I hope they will forget it.

Clarence Dishmon, Class of 1939

Looking Back

I received my first impressions of the Home through a Past Assembly President in conversation with my mother before we were admitted. She told us there were lots of children with whom we could play, and for some reason I thought there would be many little foreign children. However, we thought it would be a grand idea to be a member of such a large family.

We always had necessary medical care. In fact, I think I had more than my share of medical attention, because the second month I was there I had my tonsils out. How I did kick about that!

The first five years passed rapidly. During those years we played downstairs in the basement and out of doors the year round. As we grew older many other pleasures came our way-trips to San Francisco, Yosemite and one glorious week at Santa Cruz. We had many other excursions too numerous to mention.
Our recreation during the summer was generally a swim at Uvas Dam and a picnic. Once a week, if we were good, we went to the movies. Of course, we had our dull moments when we managed to get into a great deal of mischief.

In the spring neighboring Lodges came to see us and after being entertained by our orchestra the Lodge members joined us in games out on the lawn. Of course, they always brought us good things to eat.

One day we always looked forward to be Sonoma County Day, the Sunday before Christmas. Each child expresses a desire for a gift and if possible his wish is granted.

Each child had a Lodge that tool: an interest in him and sent gifts and clothing on special occasions. Before graduation we were supplied with a new outfit and a suitcase. Cash donations were received from various Lodges, so that each graduate would have something to start out on.

One dreaded event was spring cleaning, which seemed to come about four times a year. However, the compliments we received on the looks of the Home took some of the sting out of the hard work because we were very proud of our Home.

Often one would hear a visitor say that we didn't appreciate the Home. It is hard for a child to express appreciation for the kind of care we received because he has no conception of the work and thought which makes it possible. Speaking from a personal standpoint, I love the Home and look back with love and affection to those who were in charge. They were ever ready to help us with our many problems.

I am now a Rebekah and I hope that in the years to come I may be able to help keep the Home a "living part" of our Order.

It is encouraging to know that out of twenty-seven that have graduated during the last six years, ten are seeking higher education and working their way through college and business school. Three have graduated from the Don Lux Beauty Academy and are all employed. Two of our girls are married.

Again we have seven who will graduate from our Home in June. They are Mary June Cameron, Sylvia Wuyacich, Helen Clutter, Florence Woolley, Andrew Anerson, Kenneth Taylor and Clarence Dishmon. Clarence Dishmon and Kenneth Taylor joined the Gilroy I. O. O. F. Lodge last year. There are twenty-seven high school boys and girls, and twenty-four attending the grammar school.

Our children participate in the programs and activities of the Presbyterian Church and Christian Endeavor in a very commendable way. Dorothy Keller is the assistant teacher in the Beginners' Department.

During the summer vacation the girls enjoy sewing, fancy work and cooking, at which time they receive special instruction.

Bill Sutton worked all summer and on Saturdays as a clerk in Cimino's Shoe Store.

Andrew Anderson has ushered regularly at the Strand Theater. These two boys are saving their money to go on to school. Clarence Dishmon has had a very practical training as an apprentice at Mr. Jack Rodgers Welding Shop for the past two years and is fitted to continue in that line of work.

Anne Woolley, Class of 1938
San Diego, March 22, 1942

Dear Miss Williams:

I do not know how to say what is in my heart, but I will always remember you wherever I go and think of the fine women I am fighting for. I wish that more of the young people in the Home knew the heartbreaks and the sacrifices that are dealt to you in your type of work.

I had a lovely trip and rode with a group of boys of fine spirit. We Americans are not cowards and we will be standing long after the Japs have fallen.

The Navy is made up of the finest looking group of boys that I have ever seen. Every new recruit is called "Mac" in the Navy. Twenty times a day you are asked, "Where are you from, Mac?" The boys don't care where you are from and have a good time in what you tell them.

The Navy requires many things that I have learned in my Scout work and I hope that our Scout troop is a big success this time.

I will write again soon and let you know how I am getting along. Keep your chin up and have a big smile.

Love,
Erwin Oswald, Class of 1940

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Dear Friends:

A little thank-you letter seems awfully inadequate to express my feeling of gratitude for all the things you have done for me.

I'm deeply grateful for all the many things you've so graciously given me, my home, education, music, eye and teeth care, and best of doctoring one could want. But these material things come second on my list. I don't think I could possibly thank you for the special interest you have shown in each of us, and for your guidance and help and friendship. I doubt if we'll ever find truer friends than we have found in our Home, and I do appreciate it very much.

Though I'm going to leave, I think a part of me will always remain at "Home." I'll never forget all our good times, and even some of the, bad ones (when we were terribly naughty, and fully deserved our scolding). It's all been fun and I'll always remember you all as my special friends.

Thanks again for everything.

Sincerely,
La Verne Simpson, Class of 1942

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A letter received recently by one of the older boys in the Home, we would also like to present in part:

You will soon be leaving the Home, won't you? When you get out, I hope you will remember all that they taught you there. Don't let anyone kid you. It is one hell of a nice place, and you don't really appreciate it and all it has done for you, until you take leave of it. It won't hit you all at once, but after about a month, well, your vacation is up, and you kind of think back and finally realize, its training has done you a lot of good, and you'll never forget it as long as you live.

Private Pat Sutton, Class of 1942

San Jose, Calif.,
Nov. 10, 1943.
Pvt. William L. Wardrup

Dear Bill:
Holiday greetings from the Board of Trustees.
We want you to know wherever you are at this holiday season; we are thinking of you and wishing you well. We are truly proud of "Our Boys" who are doing their part to bring permanent freedom to the world, and we know that whatever sacrifice you may be called upon to make will not be made in vain. When the war is over and the world is once more at peace we will be proud and happy to welcome you home again.
Our thoughts and prayers are for you all, and may God bless and keep you safe.
Though you will not have a real Home Christmas this year, may the day be as happy for you as circumstances will permit. With sincere good wishes for your safety always, we are

Sincerely,
Board of Trustees, I.O.O.F. Children's Home
Marguerite Fletcher, President.

Dec. 16, 1943.
Dear Mrs. Fletcher:
Thanks for the letter, and best holiday greetings to you.
I had many, many happy Christmases with the kids at your Foundation. When I get home again I know that I will more than make up for those that I miss.
I am getting along fine, and may this letter reach you, well and happy.

Sincerely,
Bill
Another letter from one of our graduates of this year, who has now joined the Navy, shows the appreciation these children have for the opportunities given them in our Home.

Members of the Board:

Since I have lived in the home from 1935 to the present year I wish to express my gratitude for all you have done for me.

The knowledge I've acquired while in the Home couldn't have been gotten any place else.

The money that was spent on my teeth, clothes, food, etc., is something I can't repay, but I can do my best in the Navy, so whatever I do will be an example of what the Home has taught me.

In closing I wish to say that if all the children who come into the Home learn as much as I did they will have no trouble making something out of themselves. Thanks a lot for the lovely gift.

Sincerely,

Homer Keller, Class of 1944
The Boy Scouts

The first Boy Scout troop at the Home was organized in November 1922. Troop 2 started with eighteen boys and soon grew to thirty-six. They were under a troop committee from Garden City Lodge, San Jose, and the Gilroy Lodge. James Muckle was Scoutmaster, and Ted Weldon, assistant. The troop was given uniforms and equipment by the Pasadena Lodge.

In February, the Scout Council re-chartered the troop with twenty-two boys. The efficiency of Troop 2 was one of the best on the West Coast. All the Scouts reached the rank of second class. At a District contest of seven Scout troops, the Home Troop 2 earned five firsts and two seconds to win the competition.

The Boy Scouts from the Home went to Hollister for a contest with seven other troops. The Home Troop won first honors.

Mr. Barney Goodwin was scoutmaster in 1931. He had asthma and couldn't camp out in the woods, but would take the boys to the beach. The scouts did not have sleeping bags or mats. They soon found that the sand could pack like cement. Most of the boys sat around the fire all night and did not sleep.

Bill McCandless became the next Scoutmaster of Troop 2. He introduced the boys to many innovative activities in camping and the outdoors. The boys made tents of unbleached sheets and water proofed them with hot turpentine and paraffin. They made backpack frames and fire-by-friction boards of buckeye wood. Bill recruited Rodney Eschenberg to take the scouts on bird watching trips at the beach.

The scouts were called on to do community "good turns." Hiking shorts were the standard uniform. At Easter Sunrise Service it was cold, and the scouts helped in the parking of the cars on Mt. Madonna. Everyone froze that morning. Another time they were called on to park cars at the Gymkhana. In other activities the Home scouts played eleven basketball games and won eight.

The highlight of the year was the two weeks spent at camp. The District Boy Scouts camp was held at Swanton in Santa Cruz County. Scouts came from all over Santa Clara Valley.

Harry Woolley spent most of his time killing rattlesnakes. He had chalked up about sixteen snakes when he heard that the wholesale eradication was upsetting the camp naturalist. Harry was seen running down the road with his latest trophy, looking for a place to hide out.

The IOOF Home Boy Scouts from troop 31 held a basketball game with the Boy Scout Team from troop 32. The Home team members were Clifford Smith at center, George Scriven and Richard Peters forwards, and Charles Sheldon and Clarence Dishmon
Charles Sheldon made some long shots that quickly added to the score. The Home team won 29 to 12. The advantage of the Home Troop was that they lived, ate, played, and worked together over the years that gave them a unity in all competitive activities. This would be like a professional team.

In June the Home Boy Scouts entered a scouting contest with the Legion Boy Scouts. The Home Scouts were victorious in the contest. The boys in the competition were Max Wilson who took 1st; he tied eight knots blind folded. Bruce Sheldon and Clarence Dishmon tied for 1st in first aid; George Scriven won the fire by friction. As a troop, they took 1st in first aid at an accident and a first in signaling.

The Home Boy Scout troop 31 went to a Camporee in San Jose composed of all troops in the county. Troop 31 was under the leadership of Scoutmaster Bill McCandless, and the only scout troop in Gilroy. In order to receive a Class “A” rating the troop needed eight hundred points. The Silver Fox Patrol with Bruce Sheldon as patrol leader received one thousand twenty-six points. The main feature that earned the high marks was the fact they made most of their equipment instead of buying it. Joe Warmoth, Clarence Dishmon, Raymond Dishmon, Erwin Oswald, and Dick Scriven were members of the Silver Fox Patrol.

Joe Warmoth was the only one to make Eagle Scout in 1935. The scoutmaster was unable to go to the St. Claire Hotel in San Jose the night of the awards’ dinner. He gave Bruce Sheldon the tickets so the two could go together. Miss Williams gave the boys bus tickets, and they were to return on the last bus at 10:00 PM.

The ceremony, dinner, and speeches dragged on, and Joe watching the clock, became nervous. He reminded Bruce it was time to go, and he had received his badge. They were too embarrassed to get up and leave.

They were seated with a young couple that had noticed their discomfort. The boys told them they were going to miss the last bus back to Gilroy. They assured the boys that everything would be all right.

After the meeting the man phoned Miss Williams and made arrangements for the boys to stay over night with them. Bruce and Joe returned the next morning to Gilroy. A few weeks later Miss Williams allowed the boys to drive the Ford truck to San Jose and visit the family, to thank them for their kindness.

Troop 31 was organized again in May with eighteen boys. Clarence Dishmon was appointed Junior Assistant Scoutmaster; Kenneth Taylor was elected as Senior Patrol Leader, Albert Kaiser Quartermaster, and Kenneth Sanford Color Bearer. In June the individual patrols were organized with Erwin Oswald patrol leader of the Flaming Arrow Patrol. Albert Kaiser was patrol leader of the Flying Eagle Patrol. Bill Sutton was the patrol leader of the Bear Patrol, and Kenneth Sanford was the assistant leader.
During the summer, Troop 31 boys went for two weeks to Swanton Camp in Santa Cruz County. Those who went from the Home were Clarence Dishmon, Erwin Oswald, Bill Sutton, Albert Kaiser, Pat Sutton, Bill Wardrup, Kenneth Sanford, and Willard Simpson.

On Friday, February 3rd, the scouts from Troops 31 went on a snow trip to Long Barn. Twenty-two boys made the trip; sixteen were from the Home. The Home boys were under the leadership of Pete Blaettler and used the Home bus for transportation. Dr. Crane took six from town in his station wagon. At Long Barn they met with seventy-five other scouts from Santa Clara County. The boys played in the snow, skied, and went tobogganing.

On one of the camp outs in the fall of 1939 the troop went to the Santa Cruz Boy Scout Camp near Swanton. Being one of the senior boys, Erwin Oswald was our leader on this camp out. The purpose was to earn merit badges for one’s self and as a group receive the most badges over all. An easy one was to cook your dinner on the open fire. Wood was needed to start the fire so some of the boys went to look for wood. One of the boys came back with a large hand full of small twigs that was ideal for starting the fire. With the fire started, and everyone looking on, two of the boys started their cooking. There was some smoke coming from the fire, but the cooking went on. The next day two other boys tried their hand at cooking. Again the wood was gathered, and again the boy with the small twigs brought his share. During the cooking that night one boy asked the other, “Where did you find all those find twigs for starting the fire”? The boy replied, “I found them raped around a tree and they were dry so I pulled them off. Some others boys went over to the tree and yelled, “poison oak”. This was the first time I, as well as others, had ever had poison oak. It was a sad group of scouts who arrived back at the Home after the camp out.

Bruce Sheldon, Class of “36”
My Home Experiences

Here are some of my hangovers from the “HOME” life. Maybe someone else might still do them.

1. Make the bed the first thing in the morning.

2. Turn off the lights when you leave a room.

3. Change your clothes when you return home from a special occasion like school, Sunday School, church or coming back from shopping.

4. I hated to go anywhere alone.

5. Had supper every night at 5:30 even when my kids were growing up and were still at home.

At times we tried to catch Mrs. Bradley smoking by knocking on her door when the smell wafted through the hallways.

I do remember Miss Brooks and her making rice pudding when we were in the nursery. I think of her whenever I see a recipe for rice pudding. She made the very best.

Charlene (Clutter) Beyn, Class of “43”
The Boys’ Dormitory

There were two doors leading to the dormitories where usually eight boys slept. Inside the first door lead to a hallway and to the dressing room, toilets, and washbasins. The second door went into the bedroom. The boys were between eleven and fourteen years old in the dormitory.

One night after the matron had made her rounds to make sure everyone was in bed; she turned out the light and went back to her room. Some one hit another boy with a pillow and about the same time another boy turned on the lights. From that point on it became a full-blown pillow fight with all participating in the activity.

George was still at the door listening for the matron. After a while he heard the outer door open and gave the alarm. Billy had to have the last swing of the pillow just as the lights went out. Everyone jumped in bed and pretended to be asleep when the matron came to check the noise.

As the lights came on I opened one eye. It was snowing in our bedroom. Then the snow turned to feathers. Everyone was surprised. Billy’s pillow had ripped open during the last swing just as the lights went out.

An hour later the room was cleaned up, and we went back to bed. I am not sure what happened, but usually you could not go to the movies on Saturday afternoon. This presented a problem, the matron would, also, have to stay home with the eight boys. I do remember the pillow fight never happened again.

Ray Burgess, class of “44”
The Bike Ride

One Saturday, Malcom, Lawrence, Kenneth S, Raymond, Kenneth H, Charles, and Willard took bicycles to the top of Mt. Madonna. Mt. Madonna rises about a thousand feet above the valley floor and was a distance of thirteen miles from Gilroy. There was a building where you could eat, located on top. When the State removed all the slot machines, the people installed game machines. If your score was high enough, you received extra games, or you could take the game credits and get cash back. The boys would be able to make fifty cents to a dollar, which usually went for sodas. Months later these machines were illegal. The ride down the hill was more exciting and easier than the climb to the top.

Weeks later another trip was planned back to the top of Mt. Madonna. They were always hoping for a ride to the top, but this did not happen. After reaching the top, Kenneth was having problems with his bicycle chain slipping off. This day they reached the top about noon and decided to go down the Watsonville side of the mountain through Chittenden Pass and back to Gilroy. Half way down Kenneth was still having trouble with the chain and decided to remove it. Now there was no way to stop the bike so he used his shoes to rub on the front tire to slow down. All the others were concerned; some went in front and some in back of him to look for on coming cars.

He did make it to the bottom without any serious problems. At the bottom of the hill the group turned south onto Carlton Road and on to Chittenden Pass. As they entered Watsonville, they realized that maybe they should have gone back to Gilroy instead of Watsonville because the distance was greater than anyone had realized, but now there was no turning back. From Chittenden Pass the group turned north on Highway 101 toward Gilroy. They arrived back at the Home just in time for supper.

Ray & Kitty Burgess
High School Sports

This story actually started in the 8th grade in 1940. Our class had a number of kids who loved to play sports. Two of our town students at the time were older than the rest of us. During lunch the two boys one boy was from Oklahoma and the other from Arkansas would always argue over who was a better person an “Okie” or an “Arkie”. It was always in fun and I don’t think they ever settled the question, but they were best of friends.

1940-41 school year was our freshmen year and it was a normal year for the school and sports. We had football and traveled to other schools for competition. Even after December 7th we still had a normal spring track meets out of the area. Starting with the 41-42 year and the lack of transportation, inter school sports were out. In their place was inter class sports events. The school set up competition, a schedule, and a point system to have a class winner at the end of the school year. The sports to be considered were football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, track, and baseball. At the end of the year the class with the most points won the plaque for that year.

At the start of the year I had been elected Sophomore Class Athletic Manager. We had to start getting our teams organized, practice, and check the schedules. The sophomores main concern was the older and bigger senior boys. They had been the main group on the varsity teams the year before. One of the seniors of that year later became my brother-in-law. Lawrence one of he “Home Kids” was on the senior team for football, track, and baseball. I was lucky in being able to find people to play in the sports. On the sophomore class football team we had two extra players on the bench to start the game. With two players there was not a lot of substitution and one hoped that no one would be hurt.

As spring approached we were heading into the baseball season that was the last sport of the year. Baseball would be the deciding factor of the winner of the sports plaque for the year 1942. Yes, it came down to the seniors and sophomores who were tied going into the final baseball game of the year. The sophomores were intimidated by the older and bigger senior team. As we approached the baseball diamond that day it looked like we were seeing the New York Yankees take the field.

I, also, had a problem getting a full team to play. During my search I came across my two classmates, “Okie” and “Arkie”. They were eager to play baseball for the Sophomore Class. The first part of the game the seniors were ahead. By the middle of the game we were only down by two runs.

Then my two friends “Okie” and “Arkie” started hitting the ball and driving in runs. It was still the old competition of who was better, an “Okie” or an Arkie. The competition was even evident in the baseball game. I can hit the ball farther than you can, no you can’t. Together they won the ball game for the Sophomore Class. The Sophomore Class, also, won the sports plaque for the year of 1942. In September the two boys did not return for their junior year. They had enlisted for military service.
To finish the school year we had elections of officers for the Junior Class. The nominations went as normal president, vice president, and then came the Boy’s Athletic Manager. Three nominations were made when my friend George, a “Town Kid”, and class president got up and made a short talk, “We had a winning sports year last year. Why change managers?” I was reelected to the position for the junior year. George, years later became a math teacher. We both ended up teaching at Watsonville High School.

The junior year was uneventful as we won the plaque for the second year. Yes, I was reelected as athletic manager for the third year. The senior year started with football and our biggest competition was the junior team. I felt that if we won the football event we would be able to win enough remaining sports to win the plaque in 1944.

On our senior team were Elmer Badgley, Charley Woolley and myself, who were “Home Kids. By this time you had a good idea of what the other classes had as players on their teams.

A few minutes before half time Horce said his shoulder was hurting, and he was going to take himself out of the game for a while. We were lucky that we had one substitute. After half time Horce said his shoulder was still hurting. Later after the game his parents took him to the doctor and found he had a broken collarbone.

As we approached the end of the game we were ahead by a couple of points. The outcome was still in the balance. With two minutes to go we were still on the ropes and did not have control of the game. The Juniors’ next play was a pass that I started to cover and chased the receiver down the field. Then from out of nowhere came Charley and made the last minute tackle to prevent a touchdown. The senior class was able to hold them and won the game that day. In December Charley joined the Navy and after the war came back to get his high school diploma. The Senior Class won the sports plaque for the third year in a row.

Ray Burgess, Class of “44”
The Farm

The farm at the Home was started in 1897. To encourage the Rebekahs to build the Home in Gilroy local groups offered horses and cows. The horse and buggy were the main means of transportation in 1897. The cows would give milk for the children and kitchen needs. Besides the cows and horses there were two pigs donated by a local farmer and one hundred chickens for eggs and eating. Behind the barn was a vegetable garden that produced food all summer.

By 1920 the horse had been replaced by the car and bus for transportation. There were always cows. The cows required older boys at the Home to care for them and milk them twice a day. The milking was done before breakfast and after dinner in the evening. In the late thirties two brothers Malcom and Albert had the responsibility of milking and caring for the cows. If one of them could not make it because of doctor’s appointment, school activities, or vacation then Lawrence filled in. The person filling in was very important as he had the experience to replace another person upon graduation from high school. In this case Malcom and Albert both left the Home in June of 1940. Lawrence took over the chore of milking. Elmer and Ray helped with the dairy functions at the home. In 1942, Lawrence graduated. Elmer and Ray took over the dairy work. Then Harry who had been taking care of the pigeons helped with the milking. Elmer and Ray graduated in June 1944, and Harry was in charge of the cows.

To supply milk for the Home there were three to four cows. They gave about ten gallons of milk per day. If the cow was to have a calf, then you stopped milking a month before the birth and waited a month after the birth before keeping the milk. Near the end of the last month the calf was taught to drink from a bucket.
Most of the time the cows would be at the barn door at milking time. Open the door and each went to her stall, as it was full of fresh hay or sometimes barley. In the winter the cows, at times, would get into the mud and have to be cleaned before milking. There was water inside the barn. After milking we cleaned the floor and hosed it out. The Home had a dog that came around at milking time for his free squirt of milk. Some times a cat would show up for his drink.

Elmer and Ray were two of the trumpet players in the orchestra, which held practices on Monday evening each week. Mr. Taix had been the music teacher and director of the Home Orchestra, starting in 1922. Being very strict, he was what made the orchestra achieve high standards in its performances. We would take our time on Monday in order to have only half the practice time. As we walked up to the kitchen we could hear the orchestra playing. They were good even without us. Playing in the orchestra, you do not hear the full value of the music, only your small part of the total arrangement. Another advantage to milking the cows was that because you had to get up earlier than the other boys we had a room to our selves. In this way we did not disturb the others.

The Home had a field of alfalfa, which was cut in the springtime, irrigated in the summer and cut again in the fall. The hay was stored in the barn. Mr. Goodrich, the yardman, would bring his tractor, cut and rake the alfalfa. The boys would load it on a truck, and it was transported to the barn for storage. When the alfalfa was in the barn we never played or jumped in it because it would knock off the leaves that are the main food value. Some years they needed to purchase hay if the supply was low. When the bailed hay was in the barn the kids would stake the bails to build tunnels where they could crawl through them and have fun.
The barn was located where the cannery warehouse is now. The alfalfa field went from where the new buildings are today, to the chimes tower, and then to the slough by the railroad tracks. This land was about half of the total property. The cows were always being tested for TB. Several years ago someone remarked that we were drinking raw milk. We never had any trouble or problems in the first fifty-nine years. By 1952 the State of California passed a law that all milk had to be pasteurized. After reviewing the situation the Board found that it was cheaper to buy the milk from a commercial dairy than to install the pasteurizing equipment. At this period of time the population of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Children Home was down. Glenn, who graduated in 1953 said, “He was happy since he no longer had to milk the cows and did not have to get up early in the morning.”

The farm included chickens and pigs. The boys raised rabbits and pigeons to earn extra money.

The Board sold five acres to the cannery next door. This was the end of the farm. It was such a radical change. The Home was, also, going through changes in order to better serve the children living there. To increase the population in the Home, the rules were changed to include children outside the Order and some wards of the court.

Ray Burgess getting the calf to drink from a bucket.

We had three large pens for the chickens. At times there were up to seventy-five birds. The chickens had to be fed and watered every day. The eggs were collected each morning and evening. To hold and preserve the extra eggs they were placed in crocks of
water glass for the winter months. To thin the chicken population some of the chickens were killed and prepared for the kitchen.

Most of the time we had two to three pigs in a pen behind the barn and chicken coops. Part of their diet was the left over food from the table and kitchen. Two older boys were in charge of the pigs and would empty the garbage can twice a day. As the pigs grew bigger they would be butchered for the home’s kitchen. A butcher from town would butcher all the pigs. Then we would get more young pigs from the Home in Saratoga.

Ray Burgess, Class of “44”
The Orchestra

Music was always an important function at the IOOF Rebekah Children Home. The Boys’ Band was the first from 1910 to 1920. After the new Home was built the band was open to all the children, and it became the orchestra that was in operation from 1921-1944. Mr. Taix was the only teacher and director of the Home Orchestra. He was, also, a teacher and director of music in the San Jose School District. Mr. Taix was strict and everyone had to do his or her best. He gave the children the opportunity to perform as a solo, duet, and even had a trumpet quartet. Concerts were given on Sunday afternoon for the lodges that visited the Home. If Mr. Taix was not present when the orchestra played, then one of the Home Senior Children conducted the orchestra on Sunday afternoons. The Children were in two groups. One was for the beginning musical student that only practiced and had music lessons. When they were better performers they moved up to the orchestra. This was necessary because of the loss of children due to high school graduation or leaving the Home. We did have other teacher specialists. Mr. Jefferies taught vocal; Mr. & Mrs. Bannister and Miss Chabot taught piano.

In 1910 the Rainbow Rebekah Lodge No. 97, of Stockton, had fulfilled its promise to the boys. Through their work and effort they gave a carnival that netted them a good sum of money. This enabled them to purchase and presented to the boys a beautiful set of brass instruments, together with leather cases. It was the pride and ambition of the lodge to have a “Boys’ Band” formed in the Home and to provide the instruments. They were anxious to find an instructor. At present we can only look at the instruments. When they came Mama Harris allowed us to unwrap and examine them. In one second there was noise enough in the house to do justice to our feelings. On two occasions we had used the drums for marching into the dining room.

The Boys’ Brass Band was formed at the Home in 1911. In the Fourth of July celebration in Gilroy, the Band led the second division of the parade. Jules Chourre, Leonard Newport and Jay Rice played cornet in the high school orchestra.
In 1912 the Boys’ Band played at the laying of the cornerstone of the Senior Home in Saratoga. The Boys’ Band traveled to Stockton by train for a concert. The Rainbow Lodge had purchased the instruments for the band. The band stayed for three days. The band and matrons stayed in the homes of the Rebekahs while in Stockton.

A year later in 1913 Gilroy decided to have a city band. Four of the Home children joined.

The Boys’ Band played for the Grand Lodge in San Francisco in 1915. The children stayed for three days. Part of the stay was a parade where forty-five children rode on a float. The Boys’ Band was in their new uniforms and played in the parade.

The new Children’s Home in Gilroy had just been completed in 1922 and one of the large rooms on the main floor became the music room. The Boys’ Band gave way to a full orchestra with everyone becoming involved. As noted above Mr. Taix became the instructor and conductor of the Home Orchestra. On September 24, the orchestra played at the flagpole dedication at the Children’s Home.

On October 21, the Home Orchestra traveled to the W. O. W. Hall in Los Gatos for a musical benefit that raised eighty-five dollars. As part of the music program was the concert solo performances given by Marie Belock on piano, Alice Bieler and Earl Vandenburg on the violin. By December 23, the Sonoma Lodge came to visit the Home and bring presents for the children. They brought a tree, presents, and a turkey dinner. In the afternoon the orchestra gave a concert for the lodge members. During Christmas vacation, on December 28, the thirty-six-piece orchestra traveled to Sacramento to give a musical concert before 5,000 people.
On Friday, March 30, 1923, the forty-piece Home Orchestra left Gilroy to travel to Fresno for a musical concert. The District Rebekahs sponsored the trip to Fresno. On the way the special train stopped in Tracy. After lunch they gave a short concert for the people in Tracy.

Arriving in Fresno that afternoon they went to the Palace Hotel where they were to sleep. Saturday the children were given a tour of Fresno. The musical concert was given that evening in the Fresno Auditorium, and the price of tickets was fifty cents. The money raised went to buy new robes for the Riverdale Rebekah Lodge. The robes had been destroyed when fire destroyed the lodge hall.

The concert was given at 8:00 P. M. in front of an audience of two thousand. The newspaper said that from all indications this would be one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the Civic Auditorium. The Fresno Bee “This is one of the best junior orchestras (12 – 17 year olds) in the State of California”. Following the performance the children returned to Gilroy. The next day was Easter and a large number of the orchestra members sang in the church choir.

On May 9, the forty piece Children’s Home Orchestra boarded the Southern Pacific train to travel to San Francisco. The children were quartered at the Whitecomb Hotel. In the evening they gave a musical concert in the Golden Gate Orpheum Theater. The next morning they played for the Grand Lodge.

To raise money the Home put on a play at the Strand Theater in Gilroy. The Home orchestra was under the direction of Mr. Taix and Ernest Graf. Ernest after graduation from Gilroy High studied music and became a music teacher in the Bakersfield High School. The Home Orchestra played at the Gilroy grammar school graduation. In 1924 the orchestra gave concerts in San Francisco, Sacramento, and other cities. In August the orchestra played at the Gilroy Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Choir joined the orchestra.

The Grand Lodge held its annual meeting on May 16, 1925, in San Francisco. The forty-three children from the Home traveled to San Francisco by bus. They stayed in the Hotel Whitecomb convention head quarters. The next day the orchestra played at the Scottish Rite Temple.

On September 24, 1926, the Home Orchestra traveled to Palo Alto for a concert to raise money for the music education of the children.

On May 7, 1927, forty children in the Home Orchestra traveled to San Jose for a two-hour radio program. The two-hour musical program was at the KQW Radio Station. Mr. Taix was the director of the orchestra, and Mr. Jeffries was in charge of the singing. The total program consisted of twenty musical numbers.

The music program was doing well in 1928. The children gave a program at the Methodist Church, the Fraternal Aid Union District Convention in Gilroy, and for lodges that visited the Home on Sunday.
...Concert...

By-

I. O. O. F. Children's Home Orchestra

McKINLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
REDWOOD CITY

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 25, 1930.

8:30 o'clock

---PROGRAM---

March—“The Glee Club”               Zamnecnik
(Orchestra)

Saxophone Solo—“Laverne”              Henton
(Ruth Planer)

Cornet Duet—“Mexicali Rose”            Tenney
(Merlin Sheldon and James Bronson)

Solo—Mrs. Lida Ruth Treichel

Overture—“Fortina”                   Zamnecnik
(Orchestra)

Piano Solo—“Wing Foo”               Burleigh
(Frances Jongson)

Trombone Solo—“Galety Polka”         Hartley
(James Crail)

Saxophone Duet—“Saxofriends”         Smith
(Lois Cameron and Ruth Planer)

Remarks—Mrs. Ella C. Sherman, Trustee Children's Home

March Song—“March Along”             Zamnecnik
(Orchestra)
Clarinet Solo—“Spring Song” Mendelssohn
(Eugene McBurney)
Selection—“Woodland Echoes” Zamnencik
(Orchestra)
Song—Mrs. Winifred Fisher
Piano Duet—“The Moon Rocket” Rolfe
(Lois Cameron and Beatrice Hurwitz)
Cornet Solo—“Polka Marigold” Vander Cook
(James Bronson)
Flute Solo—“La Donna Mobile” Rigoletto
(Nellie Crail)
Finale—“The old Clock” Zamnencik
(Orchestra)

THE CHILDREN'S HOME ORCHESTRA
INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

PIANO---Laura Sheldon.
VIOLINS---Anita Reynolds, (concert master); Margaret Fansett,
Lucille Crail, Joe Needham, Naomi Norman, Phyllis Pack, Marie Smith.
TRUMPETS---Percy Gerholdt, Merlin, James Bronson.
TROMBONE---James Crail.
HORN---Charles Sheldon.
FLUTE---Nellie Crail.
CLARINET---Beatrice Hurwitz, Eugene McBurney.
SAXOPHONES---Lois Cameron, Ruth Planer, Jack Westervelt,
Woodrow Wall, Beth Crail.
BASS---Elvid Durose.
XYLOPHONE---Esther Simmons, Margaret Rhorer
DRUMS---Norman Gerholdt.
SOLO ACCOMPANIST---Ruth Bradley.
INSTRUCTOR---Albert L Taix.
The IOOF Home Orchestra traveled to Palo Alto where they gave a musical performance at the Masonic Temple. The lodge sold tickets and they had a full house when the concert was held on Friday, April 20, 1928. The proceeds from the program were used to purchase four dozen Vienna chairs for the orchestra.

In 1929, the orchestra went to Palo Alto for a music concert. It was the third year in a row. On Memorial Day, the orchestra led the American Legion parade down Main Street to the cemetery. In September, the orchestra assisted in a pageant at the Home in Saratoga.

The orchestra played for the San Jose Rebekahs on two different occasions. On April 4, 1930, they gave a concert in Campbell, and returned on the 25th to Redwood City. See the program in Redwood City on the next page. In May, the orchestra returned to San Jose to play for the Stella and Josephine Rebekah Lodges. They gave several performances in Gilroy. On some of these occasions, Elvid DuRose directed the orchestra.

In 1932, on Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas the lodges that came enjoyed a music concert in the afternoon. At the Easter performance in the absence of Mr. Taix, Joe Needham was the conductor of the orchestra.

On May 26, 1933, the IOOF Home Orchestra traveled to San Jose to the radio station KQW. The orchestra was composed of thirty children and was under the direction of Mr. Taix. They gave a half hour performance.

By 1935 there were seven “Home Kids” in the Gilroy High School State Championship class “A” Band.

Home Orchestra scheduled a concert in the IOOF Hall in Stockton in 1936.

Through 1938 the orchestra continued to entertain groups of visitors on Sunday under the direction of Mr. Taix.

One of our members, Kenneth Taylor went to Los Angeles as a member of the Gilroy High School Band. He took first place in the National Solo Drum contest.

Due to WW II and lack of transportation the last major musical concert was on May 31, 1940. The orchestra traveled by bus to Vallejo to give a concert for the State Rebakah Assembly. The children stayed over night in the homes of the Rebakahs. My aunt and uncle lived in Vallejo and were members of the order. When the concert was over my brother and I went with them to their house for the night. After breakfast we all returned to the hall for our trip home to Gilroy.
At the beginning of the concert that night, Mr. Taix gave an introduction and then assumed that everyone would quiet down when the orchestra started playing. Part way into the first selection he tapped on his music stand and everyone stopped playing. We thought that we had made a mistake and he wanted to start over. Not so, he turned to the audience and announced that when they were quiet the orchestra would continue. Shortly afterwards we gave our concert to the State Rebakah Assembly.

Home Orchestra in Vallejo, May 1940

By June 1944 only two children in the above photo were still in the home.

September 1944 those children who were interested in orchestral work were encouraged to join a school group. There were so few advanced music children it was impossible to have any musical program in the Home. It was decided to discontinue the Home orchestra. Mr. And Mrs. Bannester continued with the piano lessons.

Just after the centennial in 1997, I was at the Home where there were a number of guests and employs viewing pictures. At the above picture someone remarked, “What is so good about a children’s orchestra.” Without thinking I said, “We were good.” The orchestra was good or near perfect because of Mr. Taix who was a music teacher and director of music in San Jose School District. He had been the only teacher and director of the Home Orchestra starting 1922. With Mr. Taix there was no second best. He pushed us beyond what we though was satisfactory to being near perfect. It was work.

Ray & Kitty Burgess, Class of “43 & 44”
At the Home in December

During the year most of the older children had jobs to earn extra money. The girls worked during the summer cutting apricots and picking prunes. The boys, also, worked in the apricots and prunes. Others had jobs at the local businesses in Gilroy.

About two weeks before Christmas we would put on our good clothes and board the Home bus. We were off to San Jose, thirty miles away, for a day of Christmas shopping. The children could buy a present for a parent, or brothers and sisters, or friends.

In the 30’s and 40’s all the main shopping area and stores were on First Street in the heart of San Jose. As we approached the down town area it was a sight to see, all the Christmas decorations and lights. One last minute instruction we were given was to be sure everyone returned to the bus at three o’clock for the trip home. As we left the bus we got together with some of our friends, and then we were off. So many things to see and places to go in a few short hours.

We went to many stores such as Penny’s, Woolworth, and Harts. Harts Department Store was one of the big stores and had so many lovely toys and clothes. We spent a good part of our time riding the escalators and looking at all the Christmas things and decorations. At times there were so many good things it was hard to decide which gift to get for a person.

By two o’clock we were getting tired. Now, looking in the stores did not seem that exciting, but one last thing to buy. During the day we had seen some one pound boxes of chocolates and another box was chocolates with a cherry centers. This would be our gift to our selves. On the way back to Gilroy there was not a lot of talking because we were tired and had as our mouths full of delicious candy.

Most lodges made a special effort to remember the Home Children during the holiday season. Near the first of December, the Sonoma County Lodges would announce that they would like all the children to make a wish list. The children could select gifts from the Montgomery Ward catalog with a stated limit for each child to spend. The list was to be three items that each child would like. If number one could not be found, then they would try for number two and then three. In this way each child received a gift of his choice.

The weekend before Christmas the lodges from Sonoma County traveled to Gilroy on their annual visit. This procedure started back in 1922. When the lodge members arrived, they made a grand entrance at the Home. In the lead car Santa Claus was riding on the hood, followed by all of the other cars. They went on the driveway past the main entrance to the Home and around the circle then back to the starting point.
Others would travel to the back of the Home near the kitchen and unload the food for lunch. As we were eating a turkey dinner, which the members had prepared ahead of time, other lodge members were setting up a twelve-foot Christmas tree was on the front lawn. After dinner when the children went outside, they saw the many presents and stockings filled with oranges, nuts, and candy on the tree.

Days before Christmas the music room was cleared of all of the orchestra chairs, and music stands. Then a tree was brought into the room, and the older children helped decorate it with all the beautiful ornaments and lights. The tree was highlighted by floor spotlights and a few ceiling lights. On Christmas Eve all the children would gather at the Christmas tree and then the presents were brought in.

Most of the children had a lodge that sponsored them. These lodges would send presents for that child. Other presents came from the living parent and were held in a locked room off the main hallway until Christmas.

A number of Christmas songs were sung. Then jingle bells would ring out and Santa would appear. Everyone would try and guess who was Santa this year. At one time it was one of the senior girls. Another time it was a Board member, or maybe one of the workers. Miss Williams helped Santa pass out the presents. There were oranges and bags of candy for each child to enjoy.

Christmas carols were a wonderful part of our celebrating Christmas. Our Home choir would sing Christmas carols for the visiting lodge members. At other times the orchestra played and the choir would be on the program. During the holiday and most of the year the Home choir sang in the high school and church choirs. Music was a big part of our lives.

Christmas day the Stockton lodges had their annual visit with a grand feast of turkey with all the trimmings. They, also, brought presents for all the children. WW II made travel impossible for the lodges to come to Gilroy. The Stockton lodges suspended their Christmas visit, but instead sent the food and presents for all the children during the war years.

Ray & Kitty Burgess
Dorothy Remembers...

I went to the Odd Fellow and Rebekah Orphanage when I was six years old in 1931 following my father’s death. Two of my older brothers, Raymond and Clarence, and my younger sister Helen went with me. My two oldest siblings, Ernest and Mildred, were too old to go because they were twelve and fourteen. They were able to stay with Mama.

Helen and I slept in cribs, because that was the rule for children six and under. The beds were difficult to make, cause you had to make it while you were in it.

Just like at home there were chores to do. My least favorite chore was washing the staircase inside. We had to get those corners clean too. Raymond had a chore he really enjoyed. It was taking care of the animals on our little farm there. He was good at collecting eggs.

After dinner we had a very unusual chore. We had a way of choosing who would get to eat all the leftovers, even the butter! Once you were chosen it was your job to clean that dish up. It wasn’t too bad if you liked it, but if you got something you didn’t like, it wasn’t too fun. Another thing I remember about mealtimes is that we had to eat all of our food first and then our milk. My older siblings said we ate better than they did. I know this is true, because I have no recollection of there being a depression.

We had lots of fun at the Home. We played down in the basement and were allowed to leave games out if bedtime came before the game was over. This was especially important when playing Monopoly. Some games could last 2-3 days. We had a great time playing poker. We used “Neco Wafers” for our poker chips, and when the game was over, we got to eat our winning.

Another thing we girls enjoyed was making our own paper dolls. We would cut pictures of people out of the J.C. Penney catalogue, glue them on cardboard, and then we had lots of paper dolls. One of the girls could draw really well, and she made the clothes.

The other kids and I also enjoyed kite flying. We would get our kites up really high, so high we didn’t want to bring them down, so we would tie them to a fence and leave them flying over night. They would still be up the next day.

My brother Clarence was very stealthy and quiet. He liked to go up on the balcony with water balloons and wait quietly. Then when someone came along he would throw one down on him or her. By the time they looked up, he was gone. To my knowledge he never got caught.
I was fortunate to take both piano and violin at the Home. One time Marietta Dodge and I played a duet of the “Minute Waltz” for a concert. I was really nervous. So nervous I decided to get it over with as fast as possible. Marietta kept up, but she wasn’t very pleased with me and wondered why I was playing so fast. As soon as we got done playing I went down and sat with the audience and started clapping. Our violin teacher had access to a Stradivarius violin and I was allowed to hold it. It was beautiful. Once the other violin students and myself were taken to a Yehudi Menuhin concert. He was great.

When it rained the other girls and I liked to collect rainwater. Then for the final rinse after we washed our hair, we used the rainwater. It made our hair so soft and shiny.

A number of the kids at the home, including myself, were not orphans. We didn’t like the name Orphan’s Home. The children as well as our Superintendent Miss Ida Bell Williams used the name Odd Fellow and Rebekah Children’s Home.

In 1942 I graduated from High School. This was great because graduating meant leaving the Home to live with Mama. It was also bad because my younger sister Helen had two more years to go. We were able to work it out so Helen came home with me and attended school in Hanford.

Dorothy (Dishmon) Allison, Class of “42”
Three Violinists

Music was an important part for the children in the Home with practice, orchestra and recitals. Charlene, Norma, and Kitty were in the eighth grade when they decided they wanted to take lessons on the violin. To make sure this was not a whim, Miss Williams called them into the office to discuss the situation about practice ever day and being part of the orchestra. Every Monday private music lessons were held after school. After supper the orchestra practiced in the evening and performances were given on Sunday for the visiting lodge. She told us once we started; we were to continue in the music program. The three of us decided yes this was for us. All three continued in the music program until graduation in 1943.

After the start of the violin lessons Norma and I, also, started piano lessons with Mrs. Bannis ter. It was convenient because there were three pianos in the Big Girl’s parlor in individual rooms. Norma and I would play duets on the grand piano in the music room for the visiting lodges on Sunday. I played the piano for Kenneth Sanford when he sang solo numbers as part of the music program. At their eighth grade graduation Norma and Kitty gave a piano duet.

Another part of the music was the choir. Most of the girls in the orchestra were, also, in the Home Choir and some times became part of the church choir on Sunday morning.
Remembering the 40’s

In 1940, my brother, my sister, and I were living with grandma. Being the oldest at eleven years, I remember one night grandma said she wanted to talk with me. She said, “she was getting to old to care for the whole family”. You can stay with me and each of the two aunts would take one of the other children. The other choice was that the younger two children could go to the Home in Gilroy, and you will stay here with me. I want you to sleep on it and we will decide what to do in the morning. As I went to sleep that night I was still thinking of our situation. In the morning I awoke and had the solution. At breakfast I said, “Grandma, the family should stay together and not be separated. We will all go to the Home in Gilroy”. I was eleven years old when we arrived at the Home in September in 1940, and I graduated from Gilroy High School in 1946.

I think Ida Belle Williams worked so many years of her life at the Home and did the best she could to make the Home a home and not an institution. I don’t remember a day I didn’t want to be there.

Many of the lodges have yearly dates of visitations with us. The Santa Rosa Lodge out did themselves, and I looked forward to their day near Christmas. The Santa Cruz Lodge in the summer paid for our rides at the beach and boardwalk, gave us lunch. We swam in the ocean. Of all those times I went swimming just once. Ken Sanford kept me from drowning on that trip. I swam when we went to Uvas Dam outside of Gilroy. Other times we went different places in the Home bus.

I’m very proud to have been a graduate from the Home in Gilroy.

Vivian (Basinger) Christ, Class of “46”

Like many others children from the Home, I joined the Rebekahs to help in the support of the Home. I have been the Noble Grand twice here in Clear Lake. Next year will be my third time as Noble Grand. I have been on a committee in the State Assembly since I started going to the Assembly.
Memories From 1948-1958

The Forties

The little girls side, upstairs, consisted of dressing rooms, bathroom, and a dormitory, the dressing rooms were in a row with four on each side. Each contained a mirrored vanity, built in drawers and little closets. At one end of the dressing room area was a row of sinks. To the left of the sinks was the bathtub and to the right the bathroom. On the little girl’s side, we usually took baths on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, two to a tub. We were allowed to soak for a while. Then we were told to suds up like a snowman.

The dormitory was a beautiful room with hardwood floors and windows all around. Each of us had a twin bed, nightstand, and little bedside rug. In the middle of the room were two large oval, braided rugs with a rocking chair. Mrs. Hartsook and Mrs. Woolsey would read the Bobsey Twins to us each night. We usually came indoors for the evening around 6:30 PM. If it was bath night, we bathed and were in bed by 7:00 PM. When it was time for lights out, usually 7:30 PM, we were tucked in bed and the lights were turned out.

The summers were always filled with exciting things to do, the Salinas Rodeo, the Ringling Brothers Three-Ring Circus, a Santa Cruz Boardwalk pass for the day, Bolado Park, in Hollister, Ca. We rode the “home’s bus” to the Shipstads Ice Skating Show in San Francisco. Summers always included a day at Alum Rock Park in San Jose, California. The swimming pool was inside and had a water slide that everyone liked to go down and hit the water below.

Christmas was a happy time. There would be a visiting Santa Claus to hand out the gifts. The library, room, attached to the assembly room, had a huge Christmas tree. There were gifts stacked high all around the tree. These gifts were personal gifts from family members. Many were from all of the lodges that sponsored the children in the home. We were never allowed to go home during the Holidays as Miss. Williams and Mrs. Prime, after her, wanted all of us to spend them together as a family. This was a good idea.

We had many special Sundays when we were visited by one of the Lodges. They would always bring gifts and plan fun games on the front lawn. They would always have dinner with us or serve us. Then we would line up to take turns taking them on a tour of the home. At the end of the tour each one of them would slip a dollar into our hands, like no one knew they were doing it. Many times the children that were taking musical or dance lessons would give a concert for the visiting lodges. The visiting lodges would play for us. One gentleman in particular would always come and play the “saw.” He would play the saw with a bow, and it was so fun to see and hear him do this.
The Fifties

Becoming a teenager allowed us access to the Big Girl’s Parlor, just down the hall from the sewing room on the first floor. The Parlor had a couch and easy chairs as well as a grand piano. There were three practice rooms with upright pianos for practice and for our piano lessons. It was a big deal to finally have access to this room. The Children’s Home was one of the first to get a TV. It was located in the Assembly Room, and everyone watched TV together in the evenings.

The High School Girl’s side was wonderful, only two to a room, with a shared bath between two rooms. During the 50’s the rooms were painted, wallpapered, and the bathrooms were updated with showers. The Gilroy High School Girls had access to the screened in porch, upstairs, with a laundry sink, and clothes washer. There were clothes lines strung across the porch to hang out their clothes. When you entered High School, you could gain access to sitting at the Superintendent’s table at meals. This was an earned honor that was treasured.

The home would purchase our winter school clothes at the Ladies Toggery. We would purchase full-fashioned sweaters with matching socks, and pleated wool skirts. Mrs. Prime wanted us to learn to sew our summer dresses. There were many summer evenings that we would be busy in the sewing room making a dress or skirt to wear the next day at school.

The sewing room was one of our favorite gathering places. It was large, located downstairs on the girl’s side, on the left, just before the staircase leading upstairs. It had a shampoo sink for hair treatments and perms. There were several sewing machines and ironing boards, with low cabinets at the back of the room to hold sewing materials. Mrs. Hartsook and Mrs. Woolsey encouraged us to sew and taught all the girls how to lay out a pattern, follow the directions, and techniques to finish the project. In the center of the room were long tables with chairs on each side. We used these tables over the years for many uses. When very young, they were great for playing cards, coloring and cutting out paper doll clothes, working jigsaw puzzles, doing homework.

We played football on the front lawn, rode our bicycles round the grounds. A bell woke us up at 6:30 a.m. or 7 a.m. The first bell was for us to wake up, shower, and dress for school. The second bell was a 10-minute warning, and the third bell was a final one that expected us to be at our table and ready to eat. Miss. Williams or Mrs. Prime would then ring the little table bell, and we would all sit. Sounds formal, however it was extremely relaxed and fun. Meals were very structured and good. Mrs. Smith, our cook for years, made great chocolate cake on Sundays. The usual breakfast was cereal, milk, and fruit. At other times we had pancakes, French toast, or eggs. When it was someone’s birthday there would always be a cake for them at dinner, and everyone would sing, “Happy Birthday.”
The “Home Kids”, as we were known, were very popular in high school. The boys were sports stars, and the girls were active in sports and some were cheerleaders. Many of our friends were curious about the home, and sometimes they would be invited to have dinner with us. Some wished that they lived there. Many of these people are still our friends, and we meet at high school reunions. The kids in the home were well mannered, and good students.

We were some of the best-dressed kids in our school. However, that was only due to our home made summer frocks, even though we tried to copy the “Lance” dresses. We had beautiful formal dresses, some that we used for attending the Theta Ro girls club. We attended all of the school-sponsored dances, held in the high school gymnasium across the street from the home. We were allowed to attend away football games, traveling with the school kids in the school bus. We lived a very normal life, without the trials and tribulations of stress and worry.

My last day at the Home was Graduation Day, June 1958.

Willien (Allen) Henry, Class of “58”
Miss Williams

I couldn't sleep so I thought about Miss Williams. She was a very GRAND LADY. I didn't always know that, but she was a big influence in my life.

I was a Freshman, and Viola Bassinger was a Sophomore. We were the only two girls in high school, so they put us together in the Sophomore room. Boy was I lucky.

It was a Freshman, or Jr. Ball, and Miss Williams gave me permission to go. She took me to San Jose to buy me a formal for this big event. (My first & only formal)

Of course I wanted one of those frilly gowns with all the netting and stuff, but she got me a pink and blue taffeta with little puffed sleeves. I was still happy with that. I do remember the name of the guy that was taking me, Tom Cappeli. Big night, and that poor guy was either desperate for a date, or very brave to walk down that path and go into the front door, and meet Miss Williams. You know of course we rarely went in the front door, and up those steps to get there. She said I had to be home by 10:00 PM, but after a little begging she said OK I would have to be home by 10:30 PM. Some of the others were going to a drive-in for milkshakes, root beer floats, etc. I so very much wanted to go too, but I went home on time. I went to my room and talked to Viola, and told her I was going to sneak out. I could sneak out the side back door, and in her wisdom said, "OK how are you going to sneak back in?" After she imparted her wisdom, I agreed, went to sleep instead.

Ruth (Sherlock) Harris
Gilroy Hall of Fame
Gilroy, California
Ida Belle Williams
is hereby awarded membership into the Gilroy Hall of Fame.

This honor is presented in recognition and appreciation for outstanding community contribution, on a sustained basis, in the area(s) of:

Professional · Public Service

Presented by the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce and Gilroy Library and Culture Commission on this 30th day of September, 1999

The community of Gilroy says, “Thank You.”

[Signatures]

Mayor, City of Gilroy

Chairman of the Board
Gilroy Chamber of Commerce
The Mid 1960’s

My sisters Candy, Katy, Kim and I entered the Home on February 22, 1964. This was to be a new life for us as we had just lost our mother.

My memories of the girls’ dorms are quite similar to the story about "The Forties" on page 55. The dressing rooms were the same and the same sinks (where I had to brush my teeth with bar soap one time because I had been overheard uttering my first curse word ("damn") while outside playing). The same arrangement of beds was in the dorm, although I don’t recall hardwood floors. Seemed more like tile to me.

In 1964 when I was seven, I was in the dorm to the right at the top of the stairs to the second floor. In 1966 when I was nine I was in the dorm to the left of the stairs. Boy, if you were in the dorm to the "left", you were a "big deal". I can't remember a lot of the children’s names, sorry to say. I do remember "Veronica" two years or so older than me; I remember Rene Zimmerman, who was a home kid too, but was older. She took us out for short drives sometimes. Rene had entered the home a month prior to our coming.

There was a music room where I was taught to play the piano. I recall there were three pianos. I don't remember the piano teacher’s name, though. It seemed to me that the music room was on the main floor, to the right of the stairs (if you're coming down from upstairs on the girls side). We were able to perform any number of songs we wanted to, during the Christmas program in the big room down on the first floor.

We use to roller skate out on the concrete in the back of the Home. It was where the old swing set and monkey bars used to be. One of the boys (Lynn Heuer) would sometimes hang his head out of the second floor boy’s dorm and sing the old Beatles song "I Want You Hold Your Hand" to me. A couple of other boys had, at one point, learned how to turn their eyelids inside out. They were delighted in my screams as they chased me around the same play area, until, I was able to make it to the door on the girl’s side and escape inside.

In 1965 we went to Sunday School every Sunday to the church of our choice. We went to school on a bus that would pick us from one of the side streets. There were also two horses contained in a small corral situated right close to that same street. One was a large white horse, the other was a pony with one messed up eyeball. Most mornings I recall giving my orange or apple out of my lunch bag to the horses on my way to the school bus. My next memories of school were of the one where I walked to school cutting across the lawn out back. I remember carrying a plastic see through umbrella with me when it was rainy season.
I had joined the girl scouts, and I remember the club having its meetings out under one of the big trees in the grassy area. I never had a problem in selling my allotment of girl scouts cookies because I would just sell them to all of the adults at the home.

I recall my sister Katy coming down with arthritis at the dinner table. She was just sitting there eating one night, when all of a sudden she got a really strange look on her face and got up from the table and ran upstairs. Nobody knew what was going on. I guess a doctor went up to see her shortly after that happened and said that she had "arthritis", which sounded really strange at her age. I recall the day after that, I was allowed to go see her in the older girls dorm, and she could not move anything or any part of her body. She had to be carried in, to go to the bathroom, and the rest of the time she was either lying in her bed in the older girls dorm, or was in a wheelchair. About a month or so after the arthritis began, it just as oddly, disappeared.

I don't remember the little girl’s bathtub being in the dressing area, but I remember it being down the hall having a tile floor, on the right side. There was a barber chair in the bathroom area. When we were finished bathing, up in that chair we would go to have our hair cut or trimmed and also to have those "sponge" type of curlers put in, which we would sleep on.

We would pack our cloths, grab a sleeping bag and off to summer camp for a week. It was an Odd Fellow-Rebekah Youth Camp. The cost per child was $2.50 for travel, plus the regular camp fee. Most of the lodges would sponsor the children. At other times our house parents, Joe and Mary Ramsey would take us to their home near Gilroy to go swimming, and play with their Basset Hound and puppies. It was great fun.

There was a "playroom" on the second floor about mid-way down on the left hand side. There was a T.V., although I don't recall watching much of it, there were lots of board games, and best of all a pet white rat, which we all loved to play with.

Kippi (Fry) Morton.

Epilogue

The Alumni is fortunate to have a wrap around to our stories and experiences while living in the Home. In 1897 the first child, Jack Kemp, was admitted to the Home. In the museum is a photo of Jack. Today we have come full circle with four sisters Kippi, Candy, Katy, and Kim Fry who entered the Home on February 22, 1964. In 1964 there were nineteen girls and thirty-six boys living in the Odd Fellow and Rebekah Children's Home whose parents had been lodge members. The records show that the Fry family was the last to be admitted to the Home, as we know it. Starting in 1966, due to the privacy laws, none of the children are listed in the Home records or in the Rebekah Assembly Minutes.

Thus, it was the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new phase of caring for other children in need.
**Home in the 1970's**

From the beginning when a child was placed in the Home, one of the parents had to be a Rebekah or Odd Fellow. In the 1960’s the rules were changed to include any relative being a member. The records in the 60’s and 70’s show that most of the children entering the Home were sponsored by their grandmother.

During the 70’s there were two Directors at the Home. Mr. Bob Jones started in 1966 and left in 1973. Then Don Limburg replaced Bob Jones arriving in 1973 and retired in January 1998.

In 1966, when Robert F. Jones came to the Home, there was a question of the children being able to do the house work. At this time paid staff members did the house work and cleaning. His plan was to let some of the staff members go in order to save money. The children did have to make their beds in the morning, but no chores to do. The House Parents were given additional funds to pay for odd jobs when the children wanted to work. To make extra money the children could do some of the chores, like, cleaning hallways, stairs, raking leaves, cutting lawns, working in the kitchen, etc. Mr. Jones in his report to the Rebekah Assembly said, “We hope to teach the children the value of honest work and the value of money.”

The children were still sleeping in the dormitories. They had House Parents who took care of them. House parent replaced or was a term used for the former matron. Most were long hair “Hippy” type people. One had a guitar, would play music and sing songs. Another taught yoga and meditation to the boys.

In addition each child received three dollars a week for an allowance. High school children received an extra sixteen dollars a month for entertainment and concerts. The home would provide transportation usually to San Jose for the concerts.

They went to the public elementary schools and Gilroy High School. As was tradition at the Home a number of the children were active in school activities and sports.

At Christmas time the children all went home for two weeks. The Home at this time was like a ghost town. Dick was taken to the San Jose Airport, given a ticket to his father’s home in San Diego. He would stay there for two weeks. At the end of vacation he would fly back to San Jose. Someone from the Home would be at the airport to pick up the children and take them back to Gilroy.

Dick O’Neal gave the information for the above story of the home in the 70’s. He was listed as a freshman in the Gilroy High School (Yearbook in 1975) and stayed in the Home through his junior year. He then went to live with his father and finished high school in San Diego.

Dick O’Neal
The Rebekah Assembly Journal stated that thirty-four I. O. O. F Orphan Home Children served in World War I. In our research we were able to identify fifteen of the people. Russ Richardson was killed in France and the rest are listed below.

Chourre, Emile, Dowell, Clinton,
Dowell, Lee, Drew, Harry,
Koster, John, Lucke, Archie,
Lucke, Bernard, Newport, Thomas Lee,
Rice, Cecil, Rice, Chester,
Richardson, Don, Sherman, Alfred A,
Ventuleth, Fred, Ventuleth, Jacob,

During World War II the families in the country displayed a flag to show the members that were in the service. Our flag hung in the main entrance to the Home for all people to see as they came to visit. The photo is of a corner in the museum for those that served. A blue star is one who was serving and a gold star was for one who died in the service of his country. The two gold stars on the flag are for Clarence Dishmon (page 90) and Jack Wiegand (page 91).
The alumni and the Board worked together to form a museum to help maintain the memories and history of the Home. The museum is located in the “Boy’s Living Room” which, also, serves as the Board Room.

This photo is of the music corner, music that was one of the main activities in the Home, story on page 48.

We have been collecting stories, photos, and other documents to illustrate the life and times of those who lived in the Home.
ALUMNI

STORIES
Yes, I Did It

I remember back in 1943 while I was living at the IOOF Children's Home in Gilroy when I heard aircraft approaching from the East and I looked up just in time to see two P-39 "Aircobras" flying very low directly over me. As they passed overhead at a very fast airspeed I thought how wonderful it would be for me to possibly accomplish that same feat at a later date, as I was certainly impressed.

Well, eight years later I was awarded that opportunity. By that time I was an experienced U. S. Navy fighter pilot with over eighty combat missions over-Korea daring the-Korean-Police" action. My squadron commander gave me permission to fly my F4U "Corsair" aircraft from San Diego to Moffett Field near San Jose and San Francisco. As my flight would take me directly over Gilroy I decided to have a little fun. As I approached Gilroy at ten thousand feet I pushed over and flew right down the Main Street very low and at a very fast airspeed of around 400 miles per hour. What I didn't realize was this old World War Two navy fighter was very noisy at low altitudes and very high airspeeds. I later found out the Japanese people nicknamed the F4U "The Whistling Death".

After landing at Moffett Field and visiting old high school friends in Gilroy one of my buddies told me his sister was so frightened at the noise I had created she hid under her kitchen table to escape what she thought was an attack by jet aircraft. She threatened to report this incident to the proper authorities. After assuring her it was I who did it, she calmed down and we all agreed to keep our little secret to ourselves. It has been a secret to this day. I really don't know if the noise I created had any affect on the other residents of Gilroy and I wasn't about to find out, but to tell you the truth, I DID IT!

Robert Horton, left the Home “43”
True Friends

I graduated from Gilroy High School in 1943, and when I left the Home, I went to live with my aunt and uncle. Aunt Marie and Uncle Joe lived in Salinas. In the summer I had two jobs that made me realize I needed to go on to college. I liked staying with my relatives, but very quiet after living with so many active, noisy persons over the years.

I decided to go to San Jose and attend San Jose State College. Miss Williams arranged for me to stay at the YWCA, a four story building two blocks from the college in San Jose. There were two people to a room, communal bathroom on each floor, with meals if you wanted. It was convenient for people living in town or students attending college. I stayed one quarter when my Aunt Adaline said she had a woman friend who was looking for a companion and lived on 10th Street. This was my first mistake and an unfortunate choice.

Ray came from Gilroy to see me several times. We met Anne Woolley at a party. She had graduated and left the Home in 1938 had gone to live and work in San Jose. She said, “If you ever need help, just call me.” So I did. I moved in with her where she was renting a room behind San Jose State.

During World War II Anne was dating Vernon, who was in the Navy. His family lived in San Jose. She married Vernon, and they lived in an apartment on 3rd street, near Julian Street. I was asked to move in with them and continued attending San Jose State. Vernon would be away for months at a time. Anne and I became very good friends. Anne and Vernon encouraged me in every way to finish my education and helped me at the time. I graduated from San Jose State in June 1947.

A footnote: Anne and Vernon became life long friends and our children always called them aunt and uncle. Our daughter was named Anne. They adopted two children and we were their aunt and uncle, too.

Kitty (Caillau) Burgess, Class of “43”
Through the Eyes of a Child

When compiling this book, my father started collecting “Home stories of memories” and asked me, his daughter, to write a story from a prospective of a child of two “Home Kids”. My mom and dad met each other in this place called the Home. For years I heard the term the Home. But, what did it mean to me? Everyone had a home. What made this one special? Little did I realize how much impact the Home had on my life. I was part of a family much greater than my own, and a part of the history of Gilroy.

When my parents lived at the Home, they had their own siblings, but they were, also, part of a very large group of “brothers and sisters”. These children grew up together with a sense of family pride and closeness. They depended on each other for company and long lasting friendships. The older children became mentors, guardians and protectors of the younger, newest members of the Home family.
A sense of pride was established through play and work. The children had chores that taught them responsibility. From my mom, I learned the traditional girl responsibilities such as cooking, sewing, and crocheting. I, also, have inherited her great love for teaching and nurturing children. This influenced me to be a stay-at-home mom and raise my own family. My dad’s chores consisted of yard work and taking care of the farm animals. To this day I love to garden and to take care of my family pets. My parents passed a sense of responsibility to one’s self and to others, to my brothers and me.

Some of my earliest memories about the Home were at the Home reunions. As a child, I looked forward to this event. This place was more than brick and concrete. It was a place of joy and excitement. As my parents took us on a tour of their home, they would explain that this was the dinning room, the music room, the boy’s side, the girl’s side, the nursery, and best of all was the large basement where on rainy days the children could play various games as well as roller skate. What a magical place! On one occasion we were allowed to bring our skates and use the basement to skate. It was at times like this that I became part of the “children of the Home”. This place had a warm homey feeling. It was safe and secure. It wasn’t just an orphanage, but a place where a family much larger than just my own grew up together.

My mother and her three brothers grew up in the Home. My father and his brother, also, grew up here. I was named after my mother’s “Home sister” my Aunt Anne (Woolley) Winn. Most of the friendships established in the Home bonded not by blood, but by a sense of belonging to each other in a very special way. Still to this day my mom and dad have correspondence with many of their siblings. I grew up with an appreciation for extended family bonds.

Since the Home had so many children to care for, a sort of regimentation had to be adhered to. Even now when I visit my parents, I can count on breakfast at 8:00 AM, lunch at 12 noon, and supper at 5:30 PM. It has always been said that we could set our watches at these hours and keep perfect time!

Another major part of the Home was the music program. My father played the trumpet, and my mother played the violin and piano in the Home Orchestra. My brother and I were encouraged to play a musical instrument if we wanted. I played the saxophone, and my brother played the trumpet in our school band. It was through my parent’s appreciation of music that music, especially band music, has been such an influential part of my life.

As I have grown up and had children and grandchildren of my own, I still take them by the place called the Home. This is the place your grandparents and great grandparents grew up and then I pass on the wonderful family stories about this place called “HOME”.

Anne (Burgess) Filkins
The First Part of World War II

Knowing that I was going to be drafted into the military, Ken Smith and I enlisted into the Navy Reserves. I was working for an insurance company and going to Golden Gate College at night. I didn't have to do anything but the Navy gave me a petty officer rating of Storekeeper Third Class. I thought that was better than being drafted into the Army and only getting paid $21.00 a month. In the Navy I would receive $60.00 a month. In June 1941, I finished two years at the college and received-notice-to-report to the Navy on "Goat Island" in the San Francisco Bay. Within a week I was sent to the USS Tennessee battleship. I was a poor sailor. I didn't know anything about the Navy. I had to learn what was port, starboard, decks, fantails, etc.

On board the ship I was assigned to the Payroll Office where the payroll records of the crew were kept. I had a cot and a locker. I brought a radio aboard but almost burnt it up as the electric outlets were for the direct current instead of alternating current. We had to run a wire to the next office to get the right amount of current. When the war started all the fans, electric shavers, radios, etc. had to go.

Within a week the USS Tennessee was on it's way to Long Beach for some training. We then went to Hawaii. It was beautiful. In October 1941 we had gunnery practice, where the ship fired at a target towed by a small ship. The Tennessee earned an "E", for excellence, for which we were allowed to paint it on the turret.

December 7th six battleships were moored on the southeast corner of Ford Island. The area was known as Battleship Row. The ships at the time are listed below.

On December 7th I was looking out the porthole when the "General Quarters" sounded and I saw the USS West Virginia jump up a foot when it was hit by torpedoes. I immediately ran to my station. The rest of the day we were kept in the turret and didn't know what was going on above.
The Captain’s first thought was to get up steam so we could get out of the dock area and make a harder target. By the time the engine room was ready the West Virginia had sunk and pinned the Tennessee so it could not move. The Oklahoma and the West Virginia had taken the torpedoes. The Oklahoma had rolled over and West Virginia was sinking and loosing oil.

During the battle two bombs hit the USS Tennessee. They hit the number two and three turrets. The other danger was from the oil fire created by the West Virginia. Any explosion would send burning oil on to the stern of the Tennessee so fire was always a danger.

Eventually we were allowed above and we saw the damages. Thank heavens for the USS West Virginia, which was sunk because all the torpedoes hit them instead of our ship. That night we had to go to "General Quarters" as it was reported that planes were heard. They were from the carriers. Some of the trigger-happy ships opened fire and shot down some of our own planes before they were told to stop firing. In the harbor our ship was ahead of the USS Arizona and inward of the USS West Virginia. We were mad at the USS West Virginia because they blocked the cool air from coming into the portholes.

On December 16th we were able to get away from the damaged ships. We sailed to Puget Sound, Washington to be fitted with new guns and a double hull. In November 1943 I was transferred to a new destroyer, the USS Franks. This ship spent the rest of the war mainly in the South Pacific. I was discharged in October 1945.

Joe Warmoth, Class of “37”

Epilog

The USS Oklahoma was hit by five torpedoes and capsized to port and sank. It was righted in September of 1943 and moved to a dry dock. It was sold for scrap December 5, 1946. The hull sunk while undertow back to California on May 17, 1947.

The USS Nevada tried to maneuver and head for the open sea. Two torpedoes hit the ship. The Captain decided to beach her instead of blocking the channel. It was floated in February 1942.

The USS Arizona was hit by a bomb that exploded the ship’s magazine. The ship sunk and burned for two days. It became a national shrine on May 30, 1962.

The USS Maryland was able to leave and sailed to Puget Sound Navy Yards in Washington and arrived on December 30, 1941. After repairs it was back in service by February 26, 1942.

The USS West Virginia was hit with seven torpedoes. It was later patched and refloated in May 17, 1942. It was sent to Puget Sound during the summer for major repairs. The West Virginia returned to duty July 1944.

The USS Tennessee had minor repairs at Pearl and departed on December 20 arriving in Puget Sound on December 29. It was back in service on February 25, 1942.

The USS Vestal was a repair ship working on the USS Arizona. Two bombs hit it as it was trying to move away from the Arizona. She started sinking and was beached. The Vestal was back on active duty in August 1942.
I had been ashore last night, gone to the Waikiki Theater, and saw "A Yank In The RAF". None too unnaturally, I remembered quite well the scene of the "Battle of Dunkirk". I had been ashore with White, Storekeeper First Class, with whom I worked. We arrived back aboard ship about 9:30 or 10:00. I remarked to him that I was glad to get back early because I was scheduled to make a trip around the Island in the morning. It was something that I have wanted to do ever since I arrived here September the 19th-1941. Six of us aboard ship were to leave at 9:30 in the morning for the trip.

I awoke about 7:15 the morning (Dec. 7) and looked up #4 hold toward topside and saw the sun was co-operating whole-heartedly by making it a grand day. About 7:30 I went up for chow. On my way out of the mess hall I met John Schwager, Pharmacist Mate Third Class, with whom I had become quite friendly, since we came over together on the U.S.B. Kanawaha. John and I decided to go to topside and talk a while. I had plenty of time before leaving for my trip, as it was about 7:55. Liberty did not start until 9:00 AM. We reached topside a few minutes before 8:00 and were discussing the points of interest that I might see during the day.

At exactly 8:00 it started. The first thing I saw was seven dive-bombers diving over the airport at Ford Island. I don't know whether I was unobserviing or not, but at this time I didn't notice any insignia on the planes. I believed that they were our planes just "practicing". What held my attention more than anything was the fact that you could see three bombs drop from the time they were released from the plane until they hurled clouds of dust and dirt into the air.

After all these planes had made their dive, the next thing I saw was in the same direction only much nearer. This time it was a plane coming up from behind a warehouse, which stands, between our ship and the other side of our dock. The plane swooped upward just before it reached the warehouse and let go with a bomb just as it did so. I could see the mast of the ship that was tied up on the other side of our dock, above the warehouse, and it shook heavily as the bomb was released. As the plane completed its dive, it banked broadside to our ship, then flew off. Not more than a few hundred yards away the insignia of the "rising sun" was clearly visible. Even at this point it was terrifically hard to believe what was all so real. Things really started happening after that. All hell broke loose.

Within six minutes from the time the first bomb was dropped, guns were firing from every part of the harbor. The destroyer Cummings laying along side us and was one of the first to begin throwing lead. Anti-aircraft guns, machine guns, heavy guns, and cannons all started firing as one. The Cummings was greatly lauded by our crew as being the one that saved our ship. We didn't have one gun on topside when the fighting began. The Cummings was also believed to be the first to down a Jap plane. The last thing I saw before going below was an attack by two Jap torpedo planes attacking the U.S.S. Oklahoma. The explosion was terrific, and I needed no further urging to get below.

As I said before, the first attack was about 8:00 AM and lasted ten terrorizing minutes. For an hour and a half, they came every fifteen minutes. Bombing and torpedoing lasted for ten minutes and then leaving for five minutes. During this time I could not see one of our planes in the air. The first place the Japs hit was the airports.

About 8:20 a fellow came aboard our ship. He had been aboard a ship that was torpedoed. The men took to life rafts. The men, he said, had no more gotten the life rafts
in the water than, "those yellow slant eyes were raking us with machine gun fire from their planes". "I reached out from the raft to pull aboard a shipmate when they first came at us. After their attack, all I got was an arm. At this point he said, "I jumped overboard and swam toward your ship." He was picked up here covered with oil (oil covered most of the water around here,) and wearing only a pair of sox.

At exactly 9:10 AM we were hit. A bomb dropped just beyond our fan-tail, striking mooring lines, and tore holes in our stern like it were a paper bag. Seven men were injured aboard our ship, one seriously. One of the injured men was Dick Wiggam, a fellow with whom I worked. At the time we were hit I was in #4 hold, where I work. Our ship was hit in the after section of #5 hold.

Shortly following the explosion I went up on deck and saw Johnson, a machinist-mate, who was seriously hurt, being carried up the ladder to sick-bay. Shortly afterwards a bomb fell just off our bow, went through one of our whale boats tied up there, but didn't explode. Next I went forward toward sick-bay, looking for Wiggam, whom I had just heard about. The carpenter's shop had been turned into a sick-bay, as it was roomier and another deck below topside. When I reached there, I found McIver and Campbell, another storekeeper, standing over Wiggam fanning him. I went over to McIver and learned that Wiggam had received a compound fracture of the right arm from shrapnel and, also, shrapnel wounds in his chest. He was in great pain, but wasn't seriously injured. I relieved McIver for a while by fanning Wiggarn and after some time he spoke to me. He asked me to get his locker keys out of his pocket, and after things quieted down to pack his clothes for him so they could be sent to the hospital. I got his keys and told him I would. He told me, also, that he had just stepped out of the Supply Office (aft-topside) when the bomb struck, and he was hit by shrapnel. McIver and I took turns standing over Wiggam and would both admit we had never been more scared in our lives.

We weren't alone though. You could read fear in every face you saw. Not a man I talked to would deny it either. Not until afternoon did the firing cease. At this time the grounded men were removed and five of the seven cots were soaked with blood after the patients were removed. It was after this that I ventured onto topside again for the first time since early morning.

The battleship Oklahoma that I had seen attacked was upside down and had pinned in the battleship Maryland. The battleship Arizona was sunk and afire. The battleship West Virginia sunk pinning the battleship Tennessee. Clouds of black smoke rose high from the Arizona, and flames were flashing out from all parts of the ship. In the evening quite a number of us spent our "unable to sleep" hours listening to short wave news broadcasts from the States. The remainder of the night was spent trying to sleep and having your heart stop every time the gun crew of nearby ships made “test” shots.

December 8, 1941

We had an alarm at 5:30 in the morning so didn’t waste any time getting out of my bunk. I went up to topside later and smoke was still pouring from the Arizona, and the whole sight make a man feel sick. During the day I heard many rescue stories of work still going on in battleship row. Hundreds of men were still trapped in the Oklahoma, which was upside-down. Men were, also, trapped in other battleships as well. Later in the day I made a trip over to the yard to pick up some fire extinguishers and we passed by the Marine baseball field. There were several bomb creators right in the center of it. I bought
a newspaper while I was in the yard and the estimated causalities were about 3000 and 1500 fatal at that time.

After returning to the ship I heard President Roosevelt's message, and the official Declaration of War. By night fall the Arizona fire had been extinguished and at sundown everything was blacked out. I heard more of the latest news from a portable radio that one of the fellows had up on the focsle. About 10:00 I turned in.

December 9, 1941

General quarters began at 5:30 AM. During the day I made a tour around the yard with Jack Chandler, and we saw the Ogallala (the first ship I saw hit). It had been sunk and was lying on its side. We walked over to the dry dock where the battleship Pennsylvania and the two destroyers, Cassin and Downs, were undergoing repairs. The two cans had been completely demolished, but as far as I could see the Pennsylvania had not been hit at all.

We walked over to the hospital and saw a downed Jap plane. As it crashed, it had hit a rooftop, rammed through some rabbit hutches, across a tennis court and smashed into a house and burned down half the house. While I was in the act of getting some souvenirs, an Air raid alarm, sounded and Jack and I headed for the shelter of the coal docks. It was probably just a practice, but Jack and I were still shaking when the all clear sounded. We went back to the plane, and I got a piece of a Jap parachute, some fabric from the wing of the plane, and a rocker arm from the motor.

We started back to the ship and a yard workman gave us a lift part of the way. We passed other yard workmen who were still scanning the sky because of the air raid alarm. Back aboard ship I heard President Roosevelt's speech about "Winning the war and the peace that follows." Jack and I got back to the ship so late we missed chow so we went out on the dock and raided the galley. After sundown we went to the focsle and listened to the news again. Heard the latest about Wake, Guam, Midway, and Manila. I heard that Wiggam was ok and had had fifteen stitches taken in his arm. I turned in about 10:00 and got the most sleep I’d had since Saturday night. Woke once, but went right back to sleep.
South Pacific in WW II

Erwin Oswald was a “Home Kid” and a Gilroy High School graduate in the class of 1940. Erwin enlisted in the Navy. He was in British Samoa, New Zealand, Guadalcanal, and participated in the initial landing on Bougainville. Erwin became a Navy medic and was attached to the Third Marines.

Jap snipers wounded two men. Five men were sent out to bring the two men back, but they were killed or wounded. Oswald was then asked to bring the men back, if possible. During the night he was able to get the wounded back to safety. His comment afterwards was, "The Lord was with me that day." Below is part of the story of Erwin Oswald’s experience that night.

A Ribbon and A Star – The Third Marines at Bougainville
By John Monks Jr.

Captain Bob Keith was fighting his way forward and getting out the wounded. Berry, a corpsman, was leading group after group down through the fighting and pulling others out. Every one of the corpsmen kept pushing forward to a wounded man. There was no thought of personal safety, there wasn't time. There have never been a more courageous bunch of men. Before that day ended, thirty-five per cent of the Third Battalion corpsmen were casualties.

Bob Keith and his men kept at it. A Nambu lashed across Keith's legs and he went down. Torian came up with the rest of K Company. He reorganized and added the remnants of L Company to his own. There was a 250-yard gap in the battalion. Torian was ordered to make contact with I Company on the right, and at the same time to protect the wounded who were still out there. It was almost dark. Torian took L Company's Weapons Platoon and all of Val's men and organized a strong point protecting Keith and the rest of the wounded. He sent Railsback with K Company up to I Company. Torian closed the gap. The Third Battalion made contact with the Second Battalion on the right.

Shortly after dark, Keith heard a man working his way out toward him, and thought it was a Jap. "Man Mountain" Bob had a wound in his leg, but he wasn't going to be taken alive. So he threw a hand grenade. It just missed Oswald, a corpsman, buried itself in the mud, and exploded harmlessly. Oswald reached Keith, gave him morphine, and patched him up. Then he went after the other wounded. Oswald made shuttle trips from one man to another all during the night and saved many lives.

After the Third Battalion tied in with the Second, it organized a tight defensive position for the night.
The Military History of the United States
Volume 9, World War II, The War in Europe

Following the Battle of the Bulge, the Americans resumed the attack on Germany. Sgt. Raymond Burgess recalls his last fight with the 2nd Infantry Division in the winter of 1944-45:

The Last Battle

In the winter of 1944-45 during the Battle of the Bulge it was cold and more snow than normal. The ground was frozen. In order to dig a foxhole you cleared the snow from the ground, tried to break the dirt enough to plant a quarter pound charge of TNT, then blow a hole, and start digging. Everyone had two-quarter pound TNT packages on his belt and two fuses wrapped in a handkerchief in his top pocket. Beside the TNT we had an ammunition belt with only clips of tracers, two bandoleers of regular rounds, four hand grenades and a small backpack with personal items and six K-ration boxes for two days. The TNT was the way to start your foxhole.

When we were preparing the ground near an intersection someone had mentioned that the Germans usually had the cross roads zeroed in for their 88MM guns so you needed to be careful. Enemy resistance in the area was slow and the digging the foxhole was done as a defensive measure and to keep us busy. About the time the first man was going to blow a hole in the ground, in came the 88's. We were safe for the time as the shells were landing up and down the road about fifty yards away. With a pause in the shelling, everyone ran to the barn that had walls about a foot thick of brick and rock and would have given some protection.

When we got in side, we found German prisoners waiting to be transported to the stockade. One of the disadvantages was that very few Americans could speak German so communication with the Germans was not possible. Talking to German prisoners was out of the question, and it was not our job to do so. When the prisoners were taken back they would be questioned under military procedure for information that could help our cause. The prisoners were like us except for the uniforms. The feeling towards the prisoners was one of being in the same place at the time and they appeared more scared of the German shelling than we were.

After the shelling had stopped, we were ordered out and this time moved north of the main road. We walked in single file for a distance. Everyone turned east and started across the open field at about 1600 hours. We were crossing the field and up the hill to continue our push into Germany. The regiment's next objective was the town of Hellenthal. In the middle of the field was a barbed wire fence. We had to be careful as this is a good place for an ambush because you can become entangled in the wire and be an easy target. This did not happen. Another two hundred feet, as we started up a slight incline came the sound of heavy machine-gun fire. It caught us by surprise. About seventy-five feet to my left a number of men were falling; some grabbing their heads and then were still. They walked directly into the gun emplacement. Now everyone was hitting the dirt or in this case snow for protection.
The gun was well concealed and everyone was firing toward the noise. The first clip that was fired was the tracers. It was done for a psychological effect on the enemy. Then I was hit in the leg, more like a bee sting. The bullet must have just missed my buddy's head by inches. We traded rifles as he felt mine was in better condition than his. Later the rifle was placed in the ground to indicate an injured or dead person. Before the machine gun was knocked out there were six Americans killed. Later I saw about twenty wounded Americans back at the barn that served as an aid station. "Buddies" referred to here was the group of men who lived, ate, and worked together. It was not anything special and except for this short time we were together (our lives depending on each other) I never saw any of them again.

As I lay there in the snow not knowing what to do, my buddy told me to "stay where you are I will mark the spot," and they will pick you up as soon as they can. The rest of the troops were pulled back to the road to my right. They had called for mortar fire to disable the machine gun emplacement. I did hear the mortar shells go off. I do not recall thinking of anything except to wait for someone to come and help me. The next time I remember was hearing someone call, "is there anyone out here." I waved my arm, and they came over to say they thought I was dead. I was placed on a slide and moved over to the road, down the road to the barn that was now an aid station. As I went I could see all the other men lined up on the road about to move out again. What I did not know was that at this time, the shooting war was over for me.

Later I had a chance to think back on that January day and knew that someone was watching over me that day. As I mentioned before, as we left our holding position and moved out, I lost track of time. Time had no meaning, no purpose. I have no idea how long I was out in the snow. I did not even think of trying to stop the flow of blood. The bullet had traveled in the right path, no broken bones, no arteries cut, and little loss of blood. It had passed through the upper thigh and just below my hip joint and came out on the inside of my leg. When the men picked me up in the field, they never bothered to give me first aid, but waited until I was back in the aid station. God had to be watching over me that day for which I am thankful.
Fun and Games

On November 21, 1950, I flew a mission to destroy a Yalu River bridge and anti-aircraft gun positions near Sinuiju, North Korea and it turned out to be a very bad day for me. In fact, the whole month of November nearly turned out to be my Waterloo. On this particular day, our entire Air Group Eleven was assigned a maximum effort to take out a bridge and anti-aircraft positions protecting it on the Yalu River. The air group was flying off the USS Philippine Sea (CV-47). On that particular day my F4U Corsair was armed with the usual load of 20MM cannon ammo, 5 inch HVAR rockets and a 500 lb VT fused bomb. Midway in the bombing run during fierce anti-aircraft fire which was plainly visible I felt a bump and a whomp and realized my aircraft had taken a direct hit in my starboard wing and suddenly I was experiencing inverted flight in my F4U. My immediate reaction was to throw my liberty hat over the side and then go out after it, I decided not to because I had been told that shore liberty wasn't too good at that particular time!

As my airspeed was around 340 knots, it took both hands on the stick to return my wounded aircraft back to somewhat normal flight. Why that 500 lb VT fused bomb didn't detonate and suddenly end my aspiring flying career permanently remains a mystery to me. Well, it didn't detonate and I had the throttle "two blocked" and I was flying up the Yalu River all by myself with everyone on the ground throwing everything they could up at me. I was still very busy trying to keep my wounded bird flying right side up when I suddenly realized I had that 500 lb bomb on board so I quickly dumped it hoping it would hit a nice juicy target on the ground. I'll never know.

Now came the problem of getting my wounded bird and me back to the carrier for a safe approach and landing. I wasn't quite sure what this "bent wing" with a real bent wing was going to do at slow speeds with the landing gear and flaps hanging out so I decided to fly a simulated aircraft carrier approach at ten thousand feet which proved to be OK. After assuring myself I could land safely, I cleaned up what was left of my aircraft and headed back to my aircraft carrier with my squadron skipper, CDR John Timothy O'Neil flying on my wing. As I accelerated, the aircraft had a tendency to roll to the right above 170 knots so I settled on 160 knots airspeed. The approach and landing was a huge success as I caught the number three wire. Not bad for a young scared Naval Aviator Ensign with a flight suit full of you know what. As I taxied up the flight deck I folded the wings and waved at all the ghoulers on the ghoulor's bridge through the "bathtub " sized hole in my right wing. Little did I know I would have a more serious problem when I had to make an emergency landing on the USS Leyte (CV-32) six days later after being wounded during a strafing attack and bombing run over North Korea. By the way, my wounded Corsair was flying the next day with a new right wing.

Six days later another adventure during the "Korean Police Action" with VF 113 during the month of November, 1950. As I stated earlier, the month of November 1950 was not too pleasant for me and it almost cost me my life. On this particular day, my squadron flight division was assigned an armed recon mission covering an area just south of Sinuiju (AGAIN). The weather that day was very cold and clear with good visibility. During our search I spotted three trucks in the area and was told to lead the attack on these targets. Because it was very cold, my 20mm cannons would not fire so I opted to drop some bombs on these trucks that were located in a small valley with hills on each side.
After completing my run and during my pull up my F4U and I were hit by apparent ground fire and I took a hit in my upper left back near my shoulder blade just below my heart as I found out later. It felt as if someone had hit me in the back with a baseball bat and I was propelled forward against my shoulder straps. Shortly afterward my left arm began to grow numb. I immediately radioed I had been hit and after finding I could not transmit but could receive I joined up on the wing of my division leader, LCDR Leo B. McCuddin signaling I had been hit and he suggested I should return to my aircraft carrier with him flying on my wings escorting me.

During this time my left arm was becoming number to the point it was practically useless. My problems were becoming more serious as my aircraft carrier was in a heavy snowstorm. After arriving over my carrier group I started a descent on instruments and broke out about 100 feet above the water. I made a left turn of 90 degrees and stayed on this compass heading until I saw a huge slick on the water indicating a large ship had been there so I elected to follow this slick hoping I could find an aircraft carrier to land on and at this particular time I could care less about which one because I knew that I needed immediate medical attention and was beginning to feel rather weak at this time. All of a sudden the fantail of the USS Leyte came into view and I flew by the starboard side looking up at the flight deck. My escort informed the carrier he had a wounded pilot that needed to come aboard and was given permission to land as they had the "ready flight deck".

As I made my approach to the carrier I suddenly realized this was the first time I had to climb in order to land aboard an aircraft carrier. As I entered the “groove” I broke a vial containing ammonia that helped keep me alert during the critical phase of my approach and landing that was successful. I was assisted out of my aircraft and to sickbay where doctors attempted unsuccessfully to remove the bullet from my back and remains in me to this day. After 51 days of medical recovery aboard ship and resumed my combat flying with a renewed vengeance. Doesn’t time go by fast when you’re having fun!
The Douglass C-133
(The Widow Maker)
By: Kenneth Hales

After I was in the Navy V5 program in WWII, I went back to college, and then
enlisted in the USAF. I was sent to Randolph Air Force Base, "West Point of the Air".
Today it would be the similar to the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. Since
aerobatics leave me green, I went to multi-engine training at Barksdale AFB. After
graduation I went to MATS, (Military Air Transport Service), at Hickam AFB, Honolulu,
Hawaii.

My tale is about an aircraft that was infamous to the uneducated but the love of my
flying career.

I logged thirteen thousand hours in twenty-five years with MATS and MAC and
over nine thousand hours of that was in the C-133A at Dover AFB and the C-133B at
Travis AFB. That accomplishment isn't nearly as outstanding as the fact that I am still
alive to tell about it! As far as I know, I am the only 49-B class member that flew the
aircraft other than Chuck Aldrich, who was a special project manager for the C-133 at
Wright-Patterson AFB.

Douglas Aircraft Company built fifty C-133's, thirty-two were "A" models and
eighteen were "B"s. The "B" had clamshell doors so it could carry certain outsized cargo
such as the Apollo capsule. The C-133 was an interim outsized cargo carrier built after the
C-124, (Old Shaky), and before the C-5, (Fat Albert). It was a high winged four-engine
turbo-prop that resembled the C-130 but was more than twice as big. Powered by four P/W
T-34 six thousand ESHP turbo prop engines, the aircraft grossed out at 286,000 pounds.
The first plane was delivered to Dover in 1956, and the last C-133's were flown to the bone
yard at Davis-Monthan AFB in 1972. Two C-133B's were sold to a company to haul large
sections of pipe for the Alaskan Pipeline.

Of the fifty C-133's built, the first nine were lost due to unknown causes but most
certainly due to flying into a stall during takeoff, climb or on go-around. The aircraft
stalled with no warning and then you were on your back and had "bought the farm". The
tenth and last crash, (which then represented twenty percent of the fleet), was caused when
the flight deck separated from the rest of the aircraft while step climbing from twenty-eight
thousand feet to thirty thousand feet over western Nebraska. This accident was the result
of metal fatigue that built up in the aircraft over its life span.

I said earlier that the 133 was the love of my flying career, and it was a jewel to fly.
It had a roomy, comfortable flight deck, latrine, kitchenette, bunks, auto pilot and big fat
tires that made good landing a piece of cake. Not many of the troops, especially you single
engine jocks, could ever dream of such luxury. The flying machine could lift over 120,000
lbs. of outsized cargo, including not only large missiles such as the Atlas and Minuteman,
but even a CH-47 chopper sans its rotors. This is the good news, the bad news was
survivability.
Every now and then you were just lucky, such as the time I stood by all day Saturday for a test hop. When the aircraft came in commission on Sunday, another crew was on tap. As fate would have it, the bird ended upside down, devoid of all forward motion in a pine grove. The first of ten accidents was on the books. Every time we lost a plane there would be groundings and attempts at a fix, such as flight profile changes, modifications to the airspeed system, addition of stall warning horns, stick shaker and pusher, etc., etc. I have often wondered in all my hours as an Instructor Pilot and Flight Examiner if I might have been on the cutting edge during a two-engine go-around with an inexperienced or rusty pilot in the left seat and how I was able to survive.

My Twenty-five plus years of multi-engine transport flying was certainly thrilling at times, mostly interesting and even fun at times. Would I do it all over again? You bet I would in a minute and with surprisingly few changes. If you have time at the Wright-Pat reunion, mosey over to the museum and check out C-133B #62008. She is my baby. I signed for her brand spanking new at the Douglas Long Beach plant, and if she could talk, she would be able to tell some interesting and perhaps “hairy” stories.

I made bird Colonel in 1969. My next assignment was in Spain, as MAC commander. After four years I returned to Travis AFB in 1973 to retire in Vacaville after twenty-eight years and over thirteen thousand hours flying time. As a civilian I taught a few years in a California Community College.

Kenneth R. Hales, Class of “43”
OUR HEROES

THOSE WHO DIED

IN THE SERVICE

Of

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Russ R Richardson

Russ R Richardson was born in Camptonville, north of Gras Valley in 1890. He and his younger brother were placed in the I. O. O. F. Home in Gilroy on December 16, 1989. Russ and Don left the Home in the summer of 1904, on July 26th. The boys went to live with their mother who lived in San Francisco.

Russ became a skilled mechanic and worked in the city. He was called up for military service in WWI and inducted into the Army in November 1917. He was sent to Camp Lewis for basic training and then to Europe for duty. He was in the Army infantry and fought in France.

On July 15, 1918, at the age of twenty-eight years he was killed by enemy fire in France, just nine months after entering the service. Prior to the notice of his brother's death in July, Don Richardson volunteered for military service.

Emile Chourre

Emile Chourre went to live in the IOOF Home at Gilroy, California in 1902 and stayed there until he graduated from Gilroy High School in 1912. He was active in track, football, rugby, and assistant editor of the yearbook. Upon graduation he went to the University of California at Berkeley. Then transferred to Santa Barbara State where he graduated as a teacher in Manual Training. He was employed as a teacher at Alameda High School in 1917.

In 1918, Emile enlisted in the Navy. He went to school and won his wings as a Navy pilot. He started his navy career in Miami in 1918. Then he was transferred in 1919 to the air station in San Diego and earned the distinction of being one of the pioneers in Naval Aviation.

In 1922, the coal carrying ship the Jupiter was converted to the first aircraft carrier called the USS Langley. Emile transferred from land-based airplanes to the carrier Langley for duty. He soon became the flight deck officer. After many years of carrier duty he was transferred to the Naval Air Station as engineering officer in San Diego. He was one of the youngest flyers to attain the rank of Flight Lieutenant Commander.

Emile participated in the National Air Races, held in Los Angles from September 10 to 16, 1928, as a Navy pilot. The air races in 1934 and 1935 were held in Cleveland, Ohio. Because of his knowledge of all types of Naval airplanes, the Navy Department assigned him to act as the announcer and commentator at the National Air Races.

He served aboard the aircraft carrier the USS Saratoga for a time. In 1936, he became the Naval Inspector at the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation located at Lindberg Field, San Diego.
Lt. Commander Emile Chourre and a flying cadet Michael Ola were ferrying an airplane from Dayton, Ohio, back to San Diego in January 1938. They were in the process of landing for fuel at Scott Field, Belleville, Illinois, on January 26th. The visibility was ten miles and a strong wind was blowing making a landing impossible except for flying over the hangar. Their Naval scout plane struck an unused dirigible mooring mast that stood two hundred and fifty feet in the air. The mast had been used by lighter-than-aircraft years before. The impact sheared off the right wing, and the wreckage fell to the ground two hundred yards from the mast. Both men died in the accident. Emile’s body was brought back to San Diego, California, for burial.

In 1945, the Navy named one of their new ships the USS CHOURRE in his honor for his contribution to the advancement of Naval aviation.

Clarence Dishmon

Clarence entered the Home in Gilroy in March 14, 1931, and lived there until his graduation from Gilroy High School in June 1939. He felt the Home was a "swell" place for kids to grow up in. "I have had good training and have never wanted for the necessary things."

Other activities include being an Eagle Scout and in his senior year helped the scoutmaster in the training of other scouts. To show his appreciation to the Home he joined the Odd Fellows in Gilroy. In this way he would be able to support the Children’s Home.

Clarence enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1940. With the start of World War II he was one of the first to go to the South Pacific. He was assigned to the 22nd Marine Division and in November 1943, he was wounded. Clarence was awarded the Purple Hart and spent a long period of time in the base hospital. Upon his recovery, he went back into action in the Marshall Islands. In this battle Clarence was awarded the Navy Cross, the second highest medal in the Corp. On February 22, 1944, in one of the many battles in the Marshall Islands, he was killed while trying to help his buddies.
Jack A Wiegand

Sgt. Jack A Wiegand was a member of the 134th Infantry Regiment, 35th Division. They landed on July 5, 1944, at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. Most of Normandy is rolling hills with hedgerows dividing the different farms and pasture lands. The objective was to liberate the City of St. Lo. Unknown to Jack, Lawrence Caillau, another Home boy, was in a Tank Destroyer unit during the battle for St. Lo.

On July 16th the 134th Regiment was and on to Paris. Hill 122 was rolling hills with large hedgerows, high brushes and many land mines. The Germans were dug in, around and through the hedgerows. The fighting became a series of hand-to-hand engagements.

On July 17th the Germans launched a counter attack on Hill 122. This attacked was stopped, and the road to St. Lo was open. The cost to given the assignment to capture Hill 122, which would give access to the city of St. Lo, the 134th Regiment that day was 102 killed, 589 wounded, and 101 missing. Jack Wiegand was one of those killed during the engagement of July 17, 1944.

Jack Wiegand is buried in the Normandy American Cemetery; plot J, row 1, grave 16. The cemetery is situated on a cliff overlooking Omaha Beach and the English Channel, east of St. Laurent-sur-Mer, France. All those buried there are facing home toward the Untied States.

Malcom T Kaiser

Malcom entered the Home on August 24, 1933, and left in June 1940. He graduated from Oroville High School. In 1943, he entered the service. Malcom was sent to Luke Field in Phoenix for training as a pilot in the Army Air Force. During World War II he was a pilot flying a number of difference airplanes in Europe.

At the end of the war he came back to Gilroy where he was a surveyor. Malcom had a light case of polio that affect his leg. He spent months exercising to keep the leg in good condition. During the Korean War the Air Force kept sending him letters to reenlist. The promises from the air force were good, but Malcom was not interested and sent back letters telling them he had had polio. One day he decided he would show them by taking the physical and flunking it and they would have to send him home. The end result was that the Air Force accepted him as a pilot.

He married Lois Geneieve Denlau in December 1955. They had two children, Malcom Jr. and Kathleen Elizabeth. During the Vietnam War in 1968, Malcom was flying out of Martha's Vineyard on detached service testing the national radar defenses of the United States. On one of the test flights in April 1968, they were sent out at night in a heavy electrical storm. The airplane was hit by lightening that knocked out most of their electrical equipment according to the last radio transmission. When the storm was over, the airplane or wreckage was never found.