

## Chapter 24 Family Ties

As the new year 1988 arrived, we were both still busy with our church callings, me with Relief Society Homemaking and Jack with being the High Priest Group Leader. We both had ward dinners we had to plan. I had Verlee cut out three snowmen families out of wood. I painted them on both sides and stood them in the middle of the tables on icy blue tablecloths scattered with snowflakes. It was really nice. I was also keeping up on my hobbies, which were ceramics and making teddy bears. And we were still experiencing shakers now and then.

As I started this chapter, I was completely lost as to our doings and goings. I have to keep ahead of my editor and began to panic. In my prayers I mentioned my situation, and lo and behold I now have a whole story to write.

It seems that April was our busy month. First we made a quick weekend trip to Ronda Read and Walt Cunningham's wedding on April 9<sup>th</sup> in the Jordan River Temple. It was very nice and I was happy to see a lot of my family members. We didn't go anywhere in Salt Lake except to the wedding, wedding lunch, and to the reception that evening. We stayed overnight at Thelma and Jay's. We left for home Sunday about 1:00 p.m.

We decided to take a different route home for different scenery. "It was different" alright. We took Highway 50, "posted as the loneliest Road in America". When we travel we do not like staying on the freeways when we can we take off roads. We drove as far as Austin, going through Ely and Eureka. Austin is an old mining town right in the mountains. After a "pretty good" nights sleep we headed out Monday morning stopping at Stokes Castle, two or three stagecoach and pony express stations. They were only ruins but interesting. What thrilled me most was seeing a large herd of wild mustangs galloping across the road a ways ahead of us. We arrived in Carson City just in time for lunch. We went on to Lake Tahoe where we played a few slots with no luck, so we just went on home.



*Highway 50:  
The loneliest road  
in America*

We were only home a few days when Cindee came from Pocatello for five days. It was a short visit but we enjoyed every minute of it. We just goofed off in places like Carmel, San Juan Bautista, some old missions, and of course the beaches. I was sad when I had to take her back to the San Jose Airport on Sunday.



*George Gilmour's Family:  
Jason (13) Becky, George,  
and Chad (1 ½)*

On Thursday April 26<sup>th</sup> we started for a well deserved vacation to Texas after not having one for two or three years. Our destination was Austin to visit George and Becky and the boys. Jason just turned 13 and Chad was 13 months. We hadn't seen them since Stephanie's death almost six years earlier. On this vacation it was Jack's turn to see his family.

We drove that night as far as Ventura, California just out of Los Angeles. We visited with Jack's cousin Peggy Langenbacker (What a name) whom he hadn't seen in forty three years. They had a lot to catch up on. We did stay in a motel as she was in a small apartment. We got a late start getting on our way the next morning as she insisted that we have breakfast with her. We drove through Phoenix and down to Tucson. We did stop in Mesa long enough to see the Temple, but stayed in Tucson for the night. We had very loud rude neighbors on both sides of us in the motel. As we left early the next morning, to get even Jack changed all the "Do Not Disturb" signs on their doors to "Maid Service".

On Saturday we drove forever through nothing until we got to Fort Stockton Texas. It was a town a lot like Burley, Mexicans and all. We got our motel and then drove around looking at all the historical sites. It was very interesting with a lot of history. We saw a Frosty Freeze across the street and decided that would taste exceptionally good that time of evening. As we made a turn in the street we ran over something , after an inspection Jack discovered a piece of re-bar sticking out of one of the rear tires. Lucky for us there was an Exxon Station just across the street Yup! We had to buy a new tire. The other one was fairly new.

On Sunday morning we got up and went to church in a tiny little branch of the church. The people were very friendly. There were about twenty five adults and the same number of

children. It was Fast and Testimony Sunday and almost every person bore their testimony and the sacrament meeting lasted an hour and a half.

We drove on over to Austin, getting there late in the afternoon. The kids seemed happy to see us, After chatting a while, we left and got our motel room, and went back for the evening. On Monday morning we got up and went to San Antonio to see the Alamo. The whole town seems to be built around it and



*The Alamo*

the San Antonio River. We walked across the street from the Alamo to a big hotel that has a stream with a beautiful waterfall running through it and out to the river. The river walk was really beautiful with all the flowers and plants everywhere. We just took our time and took it all in. We ended up at the Holiday Inn where we had lunch. After a good lunch we went back down to the river and rode a river taxi that took us all around the river as it wound around the city. It was a really fun day. We drove back to Austin in time to watch Jason play ball, after visiting and playing with Chad until quit late, we went to our motel for the night.

On Tuesday morning, they came by and picked us up in a mini van that George borrowed from his company. They took us over to Houston to see the Johnson Space Center, that was unbelievable. We could spend days there and not see everything. We looked in the actual space capsules and how they functioned in space, etc. We even got to go into the Mission Control Center to see how they operate. I sure learned a lot about the Space Program and a lot of Texas history that day.



*Lunch in Galveston*

They had been there many times so they knew what was of most interest to us. After spending as much time there as possible we drove over to Galveston where we had lunch of gulf shrimp, right over the Gulf of Mexico. It was a very beautiful day couldn't have asked for any better. The water in the gulf to me looked very dirty. George had the time calculated just right, Jason had to be back to play ball again but we didn't make it. (That restaurant is no longer there, it fell prey to hurricane Ike).

On Wednesday morning George came and picked us up and took us to work with him. I did not want to go! But what else could I do? I went! George sold computers and copy machines. I was very intimidated when he wanted me to try one. You guessed it. We bought one of each. We took the copy machine with us, but had to scrape up some money for the computer.

After talking computers, George took us out to lunch. Then he took us up to the capitol building and dropped us off to see what we could do on our own. The rotunda was amazing. You stand right underneath it. If you stand in the center of the star on the middle of floor and speak in your natural tone, it sounded like you had a bucket on your head, it was unreal. He came by and picked us up and gave us a tour around town. We stopped at the tallest building and went to the top where we could see the whole city. When we got back to their home, Becky had a wonderful dinner ready for us and again we visited until late.

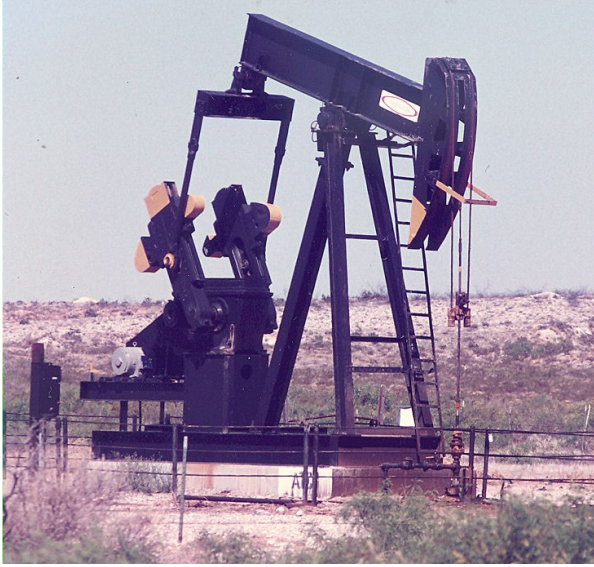


*Texas State Capitol Building in Austin*

They had lost their home the year before through bad investments, and were living in a small apartment. That is the reason we stayed at a motel. I felt much better in a motel than staying with them. They made us welcome and Becky is a good cook.

On our way home we stopped at the LBJ Ranch and took a tour. He was not my President, but it was still interesting to see where he was born, went to school, and his gravesite. Lady Bird was living there at the time. We saw her take off in a private aircraft. Texas Blue Bonnets plus many more wildflowers were all over. It was a lovely sight. We learned a little more Texas history.

We drove back to Fort Stockton Thursday night. Friday morning we took another route taking us through Pecos, "Home of the Worlds First Rodeo" and up through Carlsbad New Mexico. We did not stop there because we had been to the caves a few years before. We drove to Albuquerque where we stayed Friday night. Saturday morning we got out early to photograph Old Town Albuquerque and all of the neat places and old things, but most of all the old cathedral. We went early so we could take pictures without cars and people in our



*My Texas oil well*

photos. We spent more money there than on the whole trip. I fell in love with that place, but the only thing I would want in all of Texas is one oil well.

Then we headed out again driving to Winslow, Arizona stopping at the Painted Desert, the Petrified Forest and at a meteor crater. I could not believe the awesomeness of it all, you can sure see God's hand in everything if you just look. Sunday we drove clear through Arizona, and Kingman, past the Hoover Dam, through

Henderson Nevada where they had had a terrible explosion a few years ago that blew up the town. We drove across the tip of Nevada into California staying at Barstow, a desert town.

Monday we headed out and through Bakersfield and on over to the coast. The remainder of the trip were beautiful ocean views. The ocean was so clear that day you could see forever. I had not been down the coast that far or through Big Sur. We stopped a lot to just take in the beauty and take pictures. We got home about 8:00 p.m. and boy was I glad to be home and sleep in our water bed



*Big Sur, California*

May was the month for some special guests, my little sister Marian, Doug and Corine Harper, and I think one or two of the other girls came. Also the Larson family, Diann, Duane and their boys, Mike and Teddy. It was the first time any of them had been there. Poor Doug could not stand our grandfather clock striking every hour and again on the quarter and half. We had to shut it off, then the ticking bothered him. Too bad, we weren't going to stop the

clock. They live out there in Malta where there is no sound but the wind. Once again we had beds all over the floors. They all had a good time at the beach and other places. Our friends Jackie and John and Jack and Aurora all stopped by on Memorial Day. Anne and Bob Rogers also came during the summer.

In July we took an unexpected trip to South Shore, Lake Tahoe. Jack and Aurora decided to get married, I helped Aurora find a cute and appropriate dress. We knew this wasn't going to be a good marriage but what do you do? We kept our mouths shut and went along. They picked a tiny wedding chapel with a very funny hippy like pastor or what ever he was. Bonnie thought that our wedding was odd, she should have been to this one. Both of us, Aurora's parents and a couple of their friends were the only ones present. After they were married, they ran off to a hide-a-way place and us and her parents got rooms at a motel. The wedding took place July 24<sup>th</sup>. And Jack looked very handsome!



*Clyde*

One Sunday morning an older gentleman walked into church. He was all alone and Jack being the High Priest Group leader took him under his wing. His name was Clyde Mitchell and he was looking for some piece of mind as his wife was an invalid who he cared for 24 hours a day. He liked what he found in the church and in just a few weeks asked to be baptized. Jack was going to baptize him, but was called into work the last minute. Clyde was baptized in the Bishop's hot tub. Now isn't that unique? Both our chapel and the Stake Center were being

remodeled and there wasn't a font available at that time. Geraldine passed away shortly after that. Jack kept being his friend and he became another elderly person that we looked after.

We left for Burley on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August for the Family Reunion which was held at Rock Creek Campground south of Twin Falls. There were very nice cabins and a lodge. The Frosts were in charge and it was very well organized. We even had a cook and entrainment from Washington. Gayle won the quilt and there was 130 in attendance. Loren gave us a real scare. We thought that he had got into some rat poison. Thankfully, he didn't show any signs of getting sick.

Jack went back to California without me, I wanted to stay with my family longer. I stayed with Mother and with each of the kids a few nights. While at Mother's, she held a little birthday Party for my 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday with my children and a few of my friends, who I was really happy to see again. I don't remember how I got around without a car, but I went to Rexburg and spent time with the Buttars, Bonnie made me a Pumpkin Pie Birthday cake with candles, but not 62. I don't recall all the fun things I did at each place but I know I had a great time where ever I was.



*Birthday Pie*

I got to Salt Lake somehow and stayed with Thelma and Eunice. When my time was up, Thelma took me to the train depot and sent me home. It was an enjoyable ride over Donner Pass and on into Oakland where Jack picked me up. He had a beautiful Birthday Cake and a lovely Lenox bowl waiting for me.

Jack had back surgery Oct 12 at the Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz where they cleaned out all the calcium between his vertebrae. He had a three months sick leave from work.



*Bears by Celia at the Dickens Fair in Cupertino*

He wasn't down long because he had to help me with the "Dickens Fair" held 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of November in Cupertino, over by Sunnyvale. I had been to it when we lived in Sunnyvale. I had been making bears to sell at the fair. We had put in for a booth months ahead and got a space. We rented period costumes and they were pretty snazzy. Jackie and John were helping us and also looked

snazzy. The fair is a big deal each year, people come with every imaginable item to sell. There were bands and entertainment of all kinds. We had a good booth site and got there soon enough to get everything in order. We had so much fun, but we only sold \$400.00 worth of bears in two days. We took 2<sup>nd</sup> place, worth \$50.00 for our costumes. Trades for other items amounted to another \$150.00. With the bears that I had sold prior to the fair, my total sales at that time was \$750.00. We did make enough to buy our new dining room chairs. It was a learning experience for which I got a bad sunburn on the back of my neck. I had a lot of bears leftover but was able to sell some at our Park Craft Fair. I think everyone in the family has or had one of my bears. A lot of them were given away at the family reunions. I loved my bears and hated to say good by to each of them.



*Our Dickens costumes*

At the previous year's Christmas Dinner, we told everyone that in 1988 the dinner would be held in Aptos. That was the third year that we had lived in Aptos, and it was our turn. Time was fast approaching. In preparation Jack bought two sheets of oak plywood supported by sawhorses to use as a table in addition to our table beautifully set for seventeen. We got the Christmas tree up and decorated along with the rest of the house.



*Frost family gathering in Aptos*

Thelma and Jay were the first to arrive, coming on Tuesday November 29<sup>th</sup>. Mother, Eunice and Earl flew in on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Gerald, Verlee, Irma and Don all came together on the 3<sup>rd</sup> as did Lorna and Kenneth and Kathryn and Dick. We were glad that Jacksons came early because we put them to work helping with last minute things. We served a ham dinner with all the trimming. After dinner



we had our traditional gift exchange that was mostly home made, which made for so much more fun. Needless to say our family loves each other and it shows when we are all together. Frosts, Lindsay, Goodfellows and Turners all stayed in a motel in Watsonville. Sunday morning we all went to church and came home to a huge spaghetti dinner that Jack had prepared. After feasting, we went



*Family dinner party*

sightseeing to the different beaches. Mother really enjoyed that. Frosts, Turners and Lindsays took off for home. We took Mother and the Reads to the San Jose Airport Monday at noon, and at that time the Goodfellows also left. We and Jacksons drove up to Oakland to see the

temple grounds, with all the palm trees lit up, it was so beautiful. Jacksons left on Tuesday morning and I was so lonesome. I had made a ceramic old world Santa Clause for a door prize and Mother got it. She was thrilled!



*The Oakland Temple at Christmastime*

Two days after everyone had left, Jack cut up the two sheets of wood and made floor to ceiling bookshelves for his office. It now is a pantry with doors added and seat in the back entrance hall of our home in Boise.

We almost left it with the home in Aptos. What a mistake that would have been.

If that wasn't enough to put us in a great Christmas Spirit, on the 11<sup>th</sup> we went to a Christmas Cantata that the Santa Cruz Stake put on. The Music was so beautiful, there was so much talent in that stake. The children's choir was just so sweet. I love Christmas so much. Its not the gifts and tinsel. It's the music and the lights that remind us of the Christ Child born so many years ago. Friends and family coming together. That is what Christmas is to me.



*Snowing in Aptos*

On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> we woke up to a winter wonder land. Jack Frost dressed all the trees and bushes in his finest fashion . It was gorgeous but it froze all my plants. Can you believe that on December 27<sup>th</sup> it actually snowed in Aptos? Well it did. For about one hour. I wish God had sent it on Christmas as a special gift.

Christmas day, Clyde came over after church and had dinner with us. We went from the traditional turkey or ham to prime rib. For our New Year's dinner we fixed rock cornish hens and dressing. It was very cold the day after Christmas. The whole nation was having a cold spell at that time. Jack had built a little greenhouse for our plants for the winter.