

MA, MOTHER AND ME

A MEMOIR



By

Marge Huneke Blaine

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First published by Terramar 1/31/2007

ISBN-13: 978-0-9795035-0-4

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Chapter 14 Afterward 1972

That's how we found her when we walked in the door. We had loaded the kids in the brown Rambler station wagon less than an hour earlier and left Menlo Park. We drove up Highway 280 admiring the wisps of waterfall fog, still clinging to the redwoods on the coastal hills. We drove down Brotherhood Way, turned right at Lake Merced Boulevard and drove past Ev and Rudy's house. I glanced up, knowing they were away for the day. We rounded the corner at Clearfield Drive and turned onto Eucalyptus Drive. The van in front of my parent's home overwhelmed me. It was an emergency vehicle!

Daddy was lying on the living room floor, next to the couch, nicely dressed, as if he were resting. Mother was lying next to him, with her arms around him, still sobbing. "Don't leave me, honey. Don't leave me." I knelt down next to him and touched his hand, then his face. It was warm and still soft. He couldn't be gone. He *couldn't*. We just talked. We had his favorite roses and carrot cake for him. It was Father's Day. Tomorrow he would celebrate his 74th birthday. But he was gone.

Ann comforted and distracted us as she told us how he died. She said she wished everyone could die so happily. She said he was a nice man – so interesting – and the stained glass at his studio was so beautiful. She said she loved hearing him tell of his childhood in Germany. He had such an interesting accent. The coroner took him away. I wanted to stay with Mother that night but she would have none of it. She had calmed down, was profoundly sad, but in control. "Ev and Rudy live just around the corner if I need someone. I am fine to be alone. I want to be alone."

We began the ritual of saying goodbye. Mother was wonderful. She stayed calm. She got out her address book. People had to be told. Ev and Rudy came home and were soon with us. We helped Mother with all the arrangements. We told Father Donworth at Saint Stephen Church, our parish, of my father's death. He and Daddy had become close friends during the time that my father created the beautiful faceted glass windows at Saint Stephen Church.

And then another thought. "Mother, what shall I do? Tim and Greg are leaving for Italy tomorrow morning. They're going to Sicily with Liz and I have no way to contact her. They just can't go." Mother was insistent that they go. "Your father and I talked about this last night. He was so excited that they would be visiting

his home in Achim. His wish was for them to go. He would be very upset if they stayed here." So the next morning they left – all of us crying – heads hung low, but not knowing what else to do. In addition, Alitalia, the airline they were flying on, had called a strike. We weren't even sure that Tim and Greg would arrive someplace where Liz was supposed to be.

A Catholic priest at Saint Agnes Church had told my mother, years ago, that she could never receive Holy Communion again, nor could she be buried from the Catholic Church because she was a divorced woman. The Church didn't recognize her marriage to my father, because they were married in Reno at a courthouse. In the eyes of the Church they weren't married. Daddy was a Lutheran and never became a Catholic.

Father Donworth was grieved to learn of my father's death. "Mrs. Huneke, I will be honored if you will allow Carl's funeral services to be at Saint Stephen, surrounded by the beautiful windows he created. Arrangements were made and the family received visitors at Gantner, Felder and Kenny on upper Market Street, one of the best funeral homes in San Francisco.

Wednesday evening, Father Howard Rasmussen, Rudy's lifelong friend from Newcomb Avenue, Father Donworth, and other priests who had become friends, led the Rosary for more than the one hundred who attended to comfort our family and assuage their own sorrow. That night, after the Rosary, we arrived home late. A note on the front door informed us that an accident had happened and Nick, the beagle, had been killed. Nick's body was carefully wrapped in a blanket by Mark Gilles, our neighbor's son, who put it in the back yard.

The next morning the funeral was at Saint Stephen Church. The coffin stood before the altar, sun streaming through the colorful faceted glass of his windows. Mother was so proud of the lovely tributes to Daddy. All the speakers told of a talented, gentle man, who created beautiful stained glass windows in churches all over California. In all, more than eighty churches in northern California were graced with more than twelve hundred of his windows. Others remembered him as a lifelong friend who loved the Sierra, Mount Tamalpais, the Marin headlands and always the sun, wherever it shone.

Father Donworth prepared to distribute Holy Communion to all in the Church. Mother stayed in her seat as usual, since she had been told years before, that though she was a Catholic, she could never receive Holy Communion because she was married to Carl. The kindly Father Donworth came down to her from the altar, offering the piece of consecrated bread, which she accepted. She was no longer married to my father – she was a widow and was now officially accepted by the Church again. Amazing!

After the service, a long parade of cars followed the hearse as our family rode behind in a limo. They were led by a contingent from the Fire Department, who

were there out of respect for Rudy, who was a Fire Commissioner. Their route passed my parent's home and a final salute was given as they paused then passed. Mother was touched by the outward display of respect, pomp and ceremony but nothing relieved her profound sadness. I don't think she ever really "got over him." You don't "get over" people you've loved. You keep them in your heart to recapture often – at odd moments – sometimes when you least expect it. The pain of loss eases with time but it's always with you. But the payback for the pain is the joy of remembering the way it was. Sometimes you can recapture it in your mind so well – so perfectly – that it's almost as good as living it the first time. And that confirms that life is full of wonderful moments to remember.

At the graveside, the services were short and the final goodbyes painful. Daddy was buried at Cypress Lawn Cemetery, in the first of a double gravesite that Mother had bought for them. It is in the same section as Ma and Pa's graves and now Rudy, Evelyn and my niece Judy are also there. Terry and I will someday have our ashes buried at the foot of my parent's gravesite. I've never been very good about visiting cemeteries but now at least there will be a lot of us in the same place, in case anyone ever wants to visit.

Family and friends gathered afterward at Evelyn and Rudy's beautiful home. In the human way we all comforted each other the best we could. Mother was grateful for all who reached out to her at that moment. She was strong, but still, she needed her family and friends.

Early the next day I went to Stanford Hospital for a biopsy for possible breast cancer. I smiled through the anesthesia as the doctor told me it was benign. I just knew there couldn't be one more bad thing that week. Daddy dying and the dog dying in one week were bad enough. Mother called later, grateful that the tissue was benign. "We just don't have cancer in our family so I knew you would be all right." O.K. Nice to hear that. I'd like to believe that's really so. I guess if we die young enough of something, we won't get all the other bad things.

A week later I was at home alone in the kitchen. The boys were in Germany and Connie was away at summer camp. The house was quiet and I stiffened as I stood at the kitchen sink, listening to sounds in the back yard. Lovely, familiar sounds. There was the whack of a croquet mallet, the jingle of Nick's collar and my father's laughter as the boys shouted over a good shot. I dropped a plate and rushed to the dining room window. The tree branches moved gently over the large green lawn, but no one was there. It was silent. A few days later I heard those lovely sounds again. This time I went to the window more slowly. No one was there. All was silent. The third time I heard the sounds, I stayed in the kitchen and closed my eyes to listen better to those precious sounds for a long time. I understood then that nothing could ever be the same again. But I also knew that I could never forget what was in my mind and my heart.

At first I didn't want to tell Mother. Finally I told her about it and asked if anything like that had happened to her. She said yes. For the first couple of weeks she felt Daddy was there with her and it was very comforting, not scary at all. Then little by little those events stopped. I've come to believe those are very real sensations of your mind, as you absorb the reality of loss.

After Daddy died, Mother tried to continue life as she had before. She continued working with her properties. She made the decision not to clean out his studio or disturb his art pieces in the basement for one year. She had been advised by many that hasty decisions were often repented at leisure.

The first Christmas after Daddy died was harder on us than we had anticipated. As the season approached, Mother and I talked about how to get through the holiday without him. We now realized that he was the heart and soul of our Christmases. The hole he left was huge and we had no way to fill it. We were, of course, welcome at Judy and Joe's house for Christmas Eve, but somehow we needed to do something entirely different. Eventually Mother, Terry, I and our children went to see the movie, "Man of La Mancha" on Christmas Eve afternoon, then have dinner at The Chart House at the Cannery. We stopped by Judy and Joe's for a while and somehow we got through Christmas Eve. The next day we gathered at our house for Christmas dinner and the awful first Christmas passed. Connie was only nine years old, but the years of Santa Claus were finished. Grandpa took Christmas, as we knew it, with him when he died and it's never been the same again.

Mother found out quickly that the routine of managing her real estate, as she had done for years, was now disturbed by outside forces. Her credit cards had been cancelled. Credit card companies did not permit an unemployed married woman to have a credit card in her own name. In fact it was hard for a single woman to get a credit card at all! Even the bank she had dealt with for years was a little cautious about dealing with her. After all, her husband was deceased and now she was a single unemployed woman. She was not only appalled at this, but furious. She fought her battles and was soon victorious with new credit cards in her name only and with functioning bank accounts. Maybe it was good for her, because it was a distraction from her sorrow. It's hard to believe it now, but that's the way it was in 1972!

Bert Silver, her attorney who lived across the street, met with her and started the process of estate "distribution." "As you know, Mrs. Huneke, there will be estate inheritance taxes to pay. According to the government you only own half of what you and Mr. Huneke owned together, so you have to pay 25% estate tax on his half before you can inherit it from him. But no problem. You both had wills and there's no question that he left everything to you. Except you have to pay tax on half of it." Mother never got over that. Not in her whole life. She found it infuriating that she had to pay a hefty tax on something that she alone insisted on buying. Daddy had nothing to do with it and she had managed completely alone.

for almost thirty years! In time, the federal government appraised the buildings, determined the values and extracted a tax of \$125,000 from her. To add insult to injury, they allowed her attorney to charge \$10,000 in fees, a certain percentage of the total value of the estate.

That whole experience caused a change in her thinking. She was always generous, but now she determined to give away anything she could, before she died. She redid her will, making sure that her properties were left separately to Rudy and Evelyn and to Marge and Terry, not to all of us as a group. Marina Court Apartments went to Terry and me, since we were already involved in management and could handle it. The Greenwich Flats, the Union Street Sea and Ski Store and Daddy's studio building with a flat above went to Rudy and Ev. She thought Ev could handle the commercial properties and eight flats better than thirty annoying apartment tenants. She felt strongly about leaving her house to me, as well as her personal belongings. "Any personal things that I want to give to Ev and Rudy, I will do before I die. The rest goes to Marge. If she wants to share anything, that's up to her. I'm sure she will be very fair." The lawyer strongly advised not leaving the real estate to her children's spouses. "As a lawyer I have to advise against this. We know that Evelyn and Terry both are wonderful people, but strange things can happen in life. It would be much wiser to leave these things to your children only, for their own protection."

But she was adamant. She felt enormous trust in Evelyn, the daughter-in-law she loved, whose life she had greatly impacted, over so many years. She felt great loyalty to her and knew Evelyn would protect the hard earned properties better than her own son Rudy. And as for Terry, she told the lawyer, "I have great faith in him. Whatever happens in their lives, he and Marge will have to work it out together. They're both sensible and I know they will do that." Bert Silver shook his head, expressing dismay, but carried out her wishes. Terry and I, Ev and Rudy, sat in on these meetings and she said these things in our presence.

After Mother died, Evelyn, and later Judy, managed their properties well for many years until Judy's untimely death of brain cancer at age fifty-eight in 2004. They established a business name for their management enterprise called Century Properties, after Grandpa's studio. And now Judy's husband, Joe Hurley, manages the Greenwich flats and the Union Street store "just like Grandma did" and is teaching his children Tony, Todd and Lori how to do the same.

Terry and I already owned the Union Hyde Building in partnership with Mother and Daddy and she made a decision to get her half in our name as soon as possible. Unfortunately she waited to document this until less than three years before she died, so it was ultimately deemed to be "in anticipation of death." After her death we paid a hefty inheritance tax of 33% of the value on the half she had already gifted to us almost three years before she died. Terry and I managed Marina Court Apartments and Union Hyde apartments after Mother

died, as well as all the other buildings we bought. Her faith in Terry was well founded. He took what we were given and ran with it, establishing a portfolio that she would be proud of today. It still includes the beautiful Marina Court Apartments at 3445-3455 Pierce Street in the heart of the Marina District and the Union Hyde Apartments in the heart of Russian Hill.

Eight months after Daddy died little Tony Hurley was born. Judy and Joe were looking for a home and Grandma was happy they wanted to live in San Francisco. They found a beautiful three bedroom home in Lakeside – Mother said proudly “It’s in Lakeside #1 – Lakeside Proper – that is the best section.” She gave Judy \$41,000 to buy the house leaving a very small mortgage, which even a young couple with a baby could afford. She was so happy to see them in a lovely home near her. And Judy was the best granddaughter she could wish for. Judy and Joe made themselves available anytime she needed help.

The next thing she did was change her will and in an effort for some better estate planning, willed her house at 1765 Eucalyptus Drive directly to her granddaughter, Connie. She hoped to avoid double taxation that way, and in a way she was “equaling out” her down payment on Judy’s house. Now both granddaughters had a home or a start on one. As for her four grandsons, she told Terry and me, “You’ll have to take care of your boys yourself”, and we assured her we would. Later, Gus and Lynn Benton were married. Mother helped them buy their first home with a gift, partly in cash and partly in monthly mortgage payments, until the amount totaled \$10,000. She told Ev and Rudy, “Brad is too young right now, but when it’s his time, you’ll have to help him yourselves, and they assured her they would.

A year after Daddy died Mother came to grips with a decision about Century Stained Glass Studio. First, she gathered Rudy and Terry, Joe Hurley, and Bob Lane, all of whom she trusted to start going through the things in the shop. She contacted John Lukas of Church Art Glass and Bill Cummings of Cummings Studio. They were happy to take the faceted glass water saw, the inventory, the kiln and much of the other material and supplies at discounted prices. Then she began the task of packaging drawings, sample art, books and reference material. Finally it was all given to appropriate recipients and the original art work was stored away. The shop was empty at last, more than a year after my father died. Mother intended leaving the building to Rudy and Ev, so she left the shop empty temporarily and continued managing the flat above as another rental.

She decided that she wanted to travel a little more, and more important, she wanted her grandchildren to see something of the world. Terry and I worked hard at California Property Services, our condominium management business, and there was little time for vacationing. She told me she wanted to take us on a trip to Alaska in August 1973 but Terry said he couldn’t take the time. Soon Mother and I planned the trip to include Tim and Greg. Westours was a travel company specializing in Alaska travel and the four of us booked a tour leaving

from Vancouver in August. We would be attached to a group with a guide. The itinerary for the trip started with a five day voyage, stopping at Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway. After the voyage we would disembark with our forty member group and board a bus at Haines for a trip up to Anchorage. We would drive through the Yukon Territory, to Anchorage, then by train to Mount McKinley. From there we would proceed by train to Fairbanks, then we would take a two day excursion to Kotzebue and Nome before flying home on August 28th. It sounded like a great 15 day trip and we were excited. Connie would stay with Liz and Mike in Bakersfield for a riding camp with her cousin, Susan.

Once we were in Vancouver and aboard our ship, we settled in our staterooms – Mother and I in one room, Tim and Greg next door in another. Tim was 16 ½ and Greg was 15. We were sure they were old enough to be in their own rooms. At our first meal in the dining room Mother made sure that Tim and Greg observed her old technique of tipping well at the *beginning* of the trip, not at the end, as the guidebooks recommend. Sure enough we seemed to command the respect and immediate attention of our waiter.

At the first meeting of our tour group, our boys met a young girl, Janelle Jones, and her parents. They were part of our group. Janelle immediately latched on to Greg, so we kept an eye on things. Tim was supposed to be our guard dog, but he seemed to have some scruples about being a snitch, so he usually just mumbled and didn't say much. It only took a few hours the first night to figure out that Greg was missing from his room until much later than he should be. Tim said he didn't know anything. "Maybe he's with that girl." "What girl?!" "The one that's in our group."

Janelle took a liking to Greg at first sight and made a play for him. She was a beautiful petite charmer with blue eyes, and dark curly hair, sort of a mini Elizabeth Taylor. *She was eighteen years old and hot to trot!!* Light years ahead of my fifteen year old, just starting his sophomore year in high school, who was yearning to try out his raging hormones. I went next door and reported to my mother. She had been dozing, but sat up in bed at the news. She started laughing and I kept trying to tell her the seriousness of the situation. It just made her laugh harder! She seemed to think it was very funny that serious, conscientious, reliable Marge and Terry seemed to have spawned a wild one. And here was her daughter, Carl's little clone, steaming over the situation. I finally got her to stop laughing when I told her I really didn't want to have to figure out another abortion in the family.

We agreed that Tim should share Mother's stateroom and I should share one with Greg to make sure he stayed there all night. Mother said she slept too soundly and couldn't be responsible for Greg. Both boys grumbled but had no choice. The twosome plus their unwilling chaperone, Tim, spent all the hours together that we permitted, which was most of daylight and early evenings. In Alaska, in the summer, that was about twenty hours a day! By now mother was

addicted to how good it made her feel to laugh that hard and she wanted regular updates on the lovebirds. Our snitch wasn't always cooperative so sometimes I had to sleuth for myself. Mother continued laughing about the whole situation, but she agreed that it would be nice when we got on the bus part of our tour and the Joneses went their own way. *Didn't happen!* They were with us all the way to McKinley where we finally got rid of them.

We said our "fond farewells." The Joneses were a lovely older couple whose darling little Janelle was adopted when their two boys were nearly grown. He was a contractor who did big projects including several interstate highways. They lived in Concord and indulged Janelle with many luxuries and a generous allowance. She would start junior college in September in the East Bay and they all looked forward to seeing Greg after we returned home. We smiled our goodbyes with relief. If I didn't mention it, the trip was great and we enjoyed it all Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, Haines, the Yukon, Anchorage, McKinley, Fairbanks, Kotzebue and Nome. All of it. But it was overshadowed by the twittering of young love, an unwilling watchdog, a nervous mother and Grandma laughing at the whole thing. I'm sure Mother's health benefited from the gales of laughter that she had a hard time controlling.

We were only home a few days before the invitations started coming from Concord. It seemed the Joneses had four season's tickets for every event in the Bay Area. Football tickets, opera tickets, theatre tickets. Everything you could think of. Terry laughed when I first told him of the situation but soon he agreed that we had to decide what to do. Thank God, Greg was too young to drive. He wouldn't get his license for six more months. All we had to do was continue to say "Thank you so much but we just won't be able to get him there." Eventually they'll get tired of asking. "No problem", they said *Every time*. "We'll come pick him up and then deliver him home afterward." That worked for a couple of weekends and then they asked if Greg could stay with them for the weekend. "It would be so much easier" NO WAY!!! At any rate, the affair eventually cooled with our continued lack of cooperation. We thought that was the end of it.

But the "Janelle Affair" started the escalation of Greg's rebellion. Soon after he started his Junior year at Bellarmine, he pronounced to us that he was sick of staying home. He was ready to leave. Ready for independence! "All I need from you is a credit card and a car. And then I'm out of here." We both tried to keep a straight face because we thought he was joking. But he wasn't. He was serious. So we went along with it. He went off to Bellarmine for boarding school and he got a bicycle and an allowance. No credit card or car. But we let him use the old Ford station wagon once in a while when he was home.

Eventually we heard through the grapevine that Janelle was visiting him at Bellarmine in her little Mercedes sports car. I don't know how it ended. I didn't really want to. I just hoped that the Jesuits were controlling the situation. Mother got so many good laughs about Greg and Janelle that I guess it was all worth it.

The increased oxygen from the laughter alone probably extended her life a couple of years.

Even before Daddy died, Mother had discovered a talent for gambling. She used to enjoy driving up to Southshore at Tahoe until someone ran her into a snow bank one winter. After that she went on the gamblers special busses and found she liked it. Her appetite for gambling was whetted by her ability to win! She played mostly the dollar slots at Harrah's and usually made at least three or four \$300 jackpots whenever she went. We weren't sure if she was telling the truth, but more than once I was with her and saw it happen myself.

Once she went to Las Vegas with Daddy for a week while he played in a chess tournament. There was nothing for her to do for *seven days* but gamble and she lost a bundle. She admitted to losing \$1,000. From then on she vowed to get it all back from the Tahoe casinos, jackpot by jackpot. But she never went along on another chess tournament with him again. And she never went to Las Vegas again until my fortieth birthday trip, when she stayed far away from the machines and the blackjack tables.

I decided I was sick and tired of working, working, working and never going anywhere or doing anything. Here I was, forty years old and I'd never even been to Las Vegas. Every worthwhile adult had been there at least once except me! Terry told Mother, "I think she's going over the edge. We better do something." So Mother talked to Rudy, who talked to his friend Henri Lewin who now ran the Las Vegas Hilton. Soon a trip was planned to celebrate my fortieth birthday. Mother asked Kitty to join her and Rudy and Ev came along for a couple of days. We had a lot of fun going to the best shows and seeing the sights. One night at Caesar's Palace Gourmet Room we were entertained at our table by Jimmy Grippo, a fabulous sleight of hand entertainer, who made silver dollars vanish and reappear over and over right before our eyes. The men loved having their necks and shoulders massaged by the busty waitresses, as they rested heads back on soft bosoms. Decadent, but I loved it! At forty, I finally felt like I was seriously grown up!

Another time Rudy arranged a trip to Las Vegas for us. His friend Henry Lewin comped us two rooms at the Las Vegas Hilton so we invited Mike and Liz to join us. Liz struggled with her scruples, since Rudy's connections as a well known Teamster labor leader were probably involved. Her father, a Delano grape grower, had been harassed by Cesar Chavez and his Farm Workers Union. But the prospect of a free trip quickly overcame her scruples and they joined us.

Rudy had a friend who was opening a private zoo which would train animals to perform in Las Vegas acts, the movies and television. They had three week old lion cubs we could see if we went out there. The zoo cages were still just temporary enclosures of iron pipe fencing, standing unsecured on the ground. We sat where we were told and were allowed to hold the lion cubs. They

snuggled our ears and gnawed our knuckles, but needle sharp teeth gave promise of the fierce animals they soon would become.

A trainer gave Mike three alfalfa cookies to reward a chimp who would perform a trick from Mike's outstretched arms. The chimp did a somersault, but Mike, astonished, didn't give him the cookies. Mike stood there, but the impatient chimp reached up and grabbed Mike's hair and yanked hard

We were still laughing at Mike, when Terry wandered down the lane of unanchored enclosures. He approached a Siberian tiger whose face was near the bars. Terry scratched his face and he turned for his ears to be scratched. Terry stopped for a minute and turned to us and said, "You've got to see this beautiful tiger." The tiger, impatient for more ear scratching, turned and lifted his tail, spraying a cloud of pungent urine at Terry's face. The sun, setting behind Terry, etched the scene in our minds forever by illuminating the yellow halo around his head.

But the event had even longer effect than that instant. Terry and his sweater both stunk. We made him sit in the "back back" of the station wagon until we got to the hotel. He took several very long, hot, scrubbing showers before we would get near him. His sweater and shirt went into a sealed plastic bag to go home.

When we got home Terry couldn't resist putting the sweater in a large paper bag. He called P C "Here kitty, kitty, kitty." She trotted up to the bag, stuck her head in, took one sniff and took off. We didn't see her for a while. She knew better than to tangle with a tiger. At that time we had Gus's Saint Bernard, "Tuck." Terry tried the same thing. The result was a large dog's head, as deep into a paper bag as he could go, trying everything he could to get hold of that cat. Mother got the biggest kick out of all these events.

We had several real estate adventures to keep her entertained as well, especially at the Harvard cottages in Palo Alto. She always laughed at me dreading the first of the month's mortgage payment, forgetting the rent came in at the same time. "It comes in – it goes out – a regular ebb and flow. You just try to have a little bit stick in your pocket." She calmed me down when I had a vacancy. "But Mother, one third of my income is gone. I can just barely make the mortgage payment." "Calm down. You'll rent it again. That's just the way it goes."

At first we did everything ourselves at Harvard. Terry couldn't wait to tackle refinishing the hardwood floors at 2051. Only he found out they were soft wood and when you sanded down 1/16th of an inch, you exposed the myriad termite tunnels, just below the surface, tracing all over the rooms. After filling the tunnels, he varnished the wood and never sanded floors again. You don't sand soft wood – you just paint it. He tried putting in one kitchen linoleum floor, because he'd never done that before either. After that we found a contractor we could afford.

Our first tenant was my old biology professor's widow. She only stayed a month and I was dismayed when she left, until I learned that she hanged herself in the living room of her new place, a week after she moved out of ours. I guess our ceilings weren't high enough, or maybe she was just being nice to me. I was sorry she was dead, but grateful for her consideration.

I did the gardening myself each week, until an unpleasant experience cured me. Connie was a toddler, still in a stroller and I parked her nearby while I raked piles of Sycamore leaves. Now that I was experienced, I had rented to the "perfect tenant", a slight, bespectacled single girl – a Stanford graduate student with plenty of money. She adopted a minimalist Asian lifestyle. She removed her shoes at the door, cooked on a hibachi outdoors, slept on a mat on the floor and rode her bicycle everywhere. She had been an Episcopal missionary in Japan before applying to graduate school. Perfect! Until we read in the Palo Alto Times that a boa constrictor was loose and missing in College Terrace. On Harvard Street. *In our house!* It seems she had agreed to care for the snake for a biology professor. I hired a gardener immediately. No more raking leaves for me, with my baby Connie, sitting in the stroller like bait! The snake finally crawled out of a boot in her closet four months later, when it was hungry again.

Then there was Eugene Traistor, the anti Vietnam War protester, who lay down in front of the napalm truck in the Port of Redwood City. He made headlines frequently, but skulked around when we appeared. Mother loved hearing all our stories.

Terry and I were just getting on our feet with The Franciscan at 2290 Francisco. Cash flow every month was break even or sometimes a little better. Terry was too busy working at CPS to fix apartments so we used John Couden, mother's old contractor, when we had remodeling work to do. We had an empty studio on the first floor of the building, above the garage. It was situated to one side of the concrete canopy over the front entrance. When it was vacant I blithely told Mr Couden to tear out the old cooler in the front corner of the breakfast room. He called me at the office with a serious voice. "Marge, I have something to tell you, but you have to come up here. I need to show you." With his ominous tone in my ear I went up right away.

The short story was that the tear-out revealed nearly rusted through iron support beams on the concrete canopy over the entrance, resulting from years of water leaking from the roof. Termites came up from the ground through a gap in the garage foundation, iron rusting, wood rotting, beam eaten by termites, leak for years in the roof canopy above. etc. etc. etc. "In short Marge, the only thing holding up some of these beams are the termites holding hands." However, what I did hear loud and clear was, "I did a rough estimate and it looks like it will cost about \$15,000 to do it right." "What do you mean 'do it right' How else can you do it?" John Couden drawled, "Some owners might say to patch it, close it up,

we're going to sell the building in a couple of years anyway. It'll hold for a couple more years. It's up to you I'll do what you tell me."

Terry and I decided two things in a couple of minutes. First, we didn't have the \$15,000. Second, we had to fix it right. It was a beautiful building and we intended to keep it a long time. Ever since we bought The Franciscan when Terry lost his job, we were used to the idea of finding a way to do things ourselves without asking for help. We took some income from Union Hyde Apartments each month, but aside from that we made our own way. So when I told Mother our predicament, I wasn't sure what she'd say. Maybe she'd ask her banker to help get us a loan. Instead she said, "Tell me when you need the money and I'll write a check." I was grateful and with relief, immediately told John Couden to go ahead with the job. "And Mr. Couden, do it right. We're going to keep that building for a long time."

However that experience prompted us to approach Crocker Bank with a question about getting a short term loan. The young woman we spoke to instead suggested that we consider a new product – a line of credit. We immediately filled out the application and have appreciated her excellent advice ever since.

I thought of my earlier words to Mr. Couden in 1989, thirteen years later, when our son Greg lived at The Franciscan at the time of the earthquake. The building's brick fascia shook loose and fell to the ground, as the heavy concrete canopy over the entrance would have done. Anyone standing below it would have been crushed. Thank God we had done the right thing, no matter how difficult. We were also grateful for our line of credit, which gave us available cash so repairs could start promptly.

Mother was always pleased that she had started buying commercial buildings. Once they were occupied with a good lessee, they were a money machine. But she found out that once anything in that formula went awry, the money machine broke down. Don Cappa started paying rent late and bounced his rent checks. Though Union Street was booming, she noticed little activity at the Sea and Ski store, but attributed it to the "slow season." Don Cappa, the engineer from Shell Oil, who had once been bored with his job and came up with the great idea for a ski shop on Union Street twelve years earlier, had lost interest. Too much success, too much money, and too many toys occupied him more than his business, which now had stiff competition. He filed for bankruptcy in May 1973.

Mother had just finished paying inheritance taxes and was in no mood to deal with this, so Terry and I helped her with the management of her properties. She was relieved and enjoyed them again, once she knew someone else was helping. She had done it alone all these years. She loved listening to daily reports on all the properties, but no longer had to attend to every detail. She still loved maintaining her books and records and kept them meticulously until the

end Sometimes she still loved visiting the properties, but only when she felt like it.

In a short time a big sporting goods company called Streeter and Quarles took over Sea and Ski. The bankruptcy was worked out with the substitute company in command. In the process, Terry and I learned to deal with bankruptcy court and Mother laughed hard, as we told her each unhappy escapade. Before the Sea and Ski store, the original three little shops brought in a total of \$200 per month. Don Cappa's first rent was \$350 per month for five years and finally went to \$500 per month, where it stayed until he filed for bankruptcy. It was vacant for four months with no rent paid and then Streeter and Quarles paid \$900 per month for four months until Terry and I negotiated the new lease with Mike Menzies who named his store San Francisco Sporting House. He took over in February 1974 and paid \$1,200 per month. Within a couple of years he paid \$1,500 plus property taxes until after Mother died. Terry and I were happy Mother got some good money from the Union Street store before she died.

Rudy and Ev inherited the store after she died. We were always happy that Mother didn't live to see the downturn in business after her death. Mike Menzies and San Francisco Sporting House filed bankruptcy and there were six months of vacancy. But in San Francisco, bad cycles turn around with time. Now Joe Hurley owns the store and it brings in more than \$10,000 a month rent and is truly once again a money machine. Mother would be proud to see how well her investment has done. I'm also happy she didn't live long enough to deal with San Francisco's rent control laws. What she lived under when she bought Marina Court in 1944 during World War II was bad enough, but the current laws would have done her in.

She saw that Terry and I could deal effectively with the properties. She decided to give us more difficult problems to solve. "Marge, there is a woman at Marina Court that I'd really like you to deal with. You're going to inherit the building someday – it's high time you get more involved", she said, already bristling. "Of course I will Mother," and I called Kay Brown right away to set up an appointment to inspect the unit. A week later I went with Kay who assured me the tenant was away at work. We walked up to the studio apartment on the second floor of the 3455 building and Kay rang the bell, then knocked loudly before opening the front door with her master key.

She stepped back as she ushered me in first. I was stunned at the sight before me. The entire apartment was stuffed from floor to ceiling with soft goods like yarn, magazines, fabrics, rags, clothing, all piled to the ceiling on all four walls. There was only a narrow trail which allowed passage down the hall to the living room, which was so full that all the windows were covered. As I made my way down the dark, narrow trail I saw a bed of sorts hollowed out of a corner of the living room, covered with yarn, magazines and other goods. Several candles with

burnt wicks stood atop the mess. All the wall sockets and light fixtures were hidden and little light came from the windows.

At this point the hair on the back of my neck prickled because I fully expected a Psycho movie maniac to come at me from around the corner in the kitchen. But instead there were only more goods piled high. The stove was covered with cooked food in frying pans. The refrigerator was open and full of food and other things. Kay, the manager, was behind me. As I turned to look at her she smiled archly. "I told you, you never seen nothin' like this before. Have you?" I was wide-eyed and had no reason to disagree. We looked in the bathroom. The bathtub had a rack of clothes hanging above it from a pole. The toilet was covered with a board and stacked with more than thirty magazines. "You should see her go out of here every morning to her job at I Magnin's. Dressed like out of a bandbox. White gloves. Little hat with a veil, high heels and a fancy suit. You'd think she was Lady Astor." Kay was still smirking at me as we left.

Mother couldn't wait to hear from me. "So? What are you going to do?" Kay had asked her son in Sacramento to help with the situation already, but he chose to stay clear of the whole problem. Terry and I talked and decided on a course of action. We learned in the condo management business to always use civil authority whenever possible. It was cheaper and easier if you had a health or safety basis for your actions. We debated whether to call the Health Department or the Fire Inspector and decided on the latter. The Fire Inspector took one look and gave us the grounds for a thirty day Notice to Cure or Quit. It took a few weeks, but the tenant moved out, one taxi load at a time, brown bag by brown bag, until she had it all out of her apartment, to her new apartment on Van Ness Avenue. Amazing!

Mother was so pleased that problem was solved, that she turned us loose on Ann Fibush who lived on the third floor at the Union Hyde building. That situation was a little different. She was also a packrat, but not quite as extreme as the tenant at Marina Court. But Fibush wouldn't pay rent. She just couldn't come up with the full amount each month because she was self financing her candidacy for the California Assembly. Actually she was hitting the headlines regularly with some degree of credibility! Now that was frightening! In those days we still thought that political leaders were stable and sane, but of course, all of that has changed now.

We hired an attorney to file for eviction for non-payment of rent. We thought that was pretty straight forward, until we came to court. She told us her good friend was a Superior Court Judge and he would see to it that she would never be evicted. Fibush asked for and got a delay. During the delay, Fibush's friend was appointed the temporary presiding judge of the Superior Court. He declared our notice to evict was faulty in some detail and negated the whole eviction. So we started the whole ninety day process all over, this time with a new attorney. We

were granted the eviction, which would occur on a given date. The Sheriff said, "Don't worry, most of them move out ahead of time."

Fibush had no intention of moving out. She had now lived there rent free for nine months! Thank God she had lost her party's nomination to the Assembly in the primary election. At least there were no reporters to tell about nasty landlords on the front pages. The big day came. Terry was there with the Sheriff, the locksmith and the moving company. The Sheriff knocked loudly for fifteen minutes. Only silence. "O K. Go ahead and pick the lock", he said. For thirty minutes the locksmith picked and picked. The Sheriff was impatient. The locksmith said, "I don't know what's holding this door, unless she's on the other side, holding the lock shut herself." And that's exactly what she was doing. For thirty minutes! Quiet as a mouse!

Finally the locksmith drilled the lock. When he looked through the hole, there was Fibush! The Sheriff served his papers, the locks were changed and the movers came in. It took nine hours to remove her things, with her directing every move in haughty tones, like a grande dame. The apartment was piled to the ceiling and the moving truck was packed tight. We paid for two attorneys. We paid for the movers. We paid for the locksmith. Nine months rent was lost. But it was worth every penny. We got rid of Fibush! We were triumphant!

But there's more to the story. Terry sat in the hallway of the building all that day, finishing our tax returns because it was April 15 and the return had to be in the mail by midnight! When I came to relieve him at six, ten year old Connie was with me. He had made copies and handed me a ready package that I had to have postmarked by midnight at the main post office. Then he took off for his meeting with Westborough Homeowners Association who was suing the developer. After we watched the movers for a couple of hours and Connie finished her homework in the car, I thought maybe we could make something fun out of an awful day.

"Let's take a cable car ride down to Fisherman's Wharf – then we'll turn around and ride back here," I said innocently enough. The movers assured me they'd be there for at least another couple of hours. So off we went and when we returned an hour later our car was gone! Vanished! "Oh, yeah. The police came and towed it a while ago." The movers explained that they tried to stop them to no avail. The Police Citation said we could pay the fees and retrieve the car from the Police Yard, in the Mission district. As soon as the movers finished we locked the apartment, hailed a cab, got to the Police Yard just before it closed and retrieved our car, after paying exorbitant fees. Then we dashed off to the Main Post Office at Rincon Annex and got in a long line of cars to hand in our tax return before midnight. Then we went home and collapsed with the hot milk Terry had for both of us and brandy for me. My ten year old was learning about real estate down and dirty.

Mother was amazed to learn that Terry could balance her checkbook to the penny just as well as the bank did. She always did a guesstimate of how much she had on hand until she had the bank reconcile it for her every six months or so. Now Terry did it every month and she was thrilled to know exactly how much money she had left all the time.

By 1977 everyone was becoming sensitized to discrimination in our country. The "N" word was finally simply not tolerated, since we understood the terrible degradation intended by its use. One day Mother called me and said, "Marge we've got to evict Miss Jones from Marina Court." "Why? She pays the rent. What's she done wrong? Isn't she that pretty blond girl that works downtown?" She continued, "The other tenants are complaining that she lets her boyfriend stay all hours of the night. And he's a big, black buck n---" "Mo-ther! You can't say that!" "Well I'm just repeating what the tenants told me. Anyway he has to go. They make too much noise in her bedroom late at night." "I'll take care of it. Please Mother don't do another thing. *And don't talk to the tenant!*"

Another time she was in the hospital for a routine checkup on her high blood pressure. She called me, carefully speaking in German so I, but no one else, would understand. "Die frau in die nexten bett ist ein Neger" "Mo-ther! How close is her bed?" "Just across the room." "Mother, she can understand what you just said" "No she can't", she told me later "I am speaking German" If anyone understood what it was like to be discriminated against it was mother, so she took offense when I tried to explain that times had changed and she couldn't talk like that. "Marge, I understand all of that and I agree with it. But what you don't understand is that there's *always* been discrimination. Discrimination by the dollar! If you have enough dollars and know where to put them, you don't get discriminated against. Discrimination ends when dollars are put on the table" And there was certainly some truth to what she said

She laughed at us when we told her we were buying another building. "You're really gluttons for punishment, aren't you?" It was called The Alameda Apartments and was located at 3455-65-85 Alameda de las Pulgas, in the county area of Menlo Park. It was a mess and we thought it had a great future. We tried to trade Harvard for the down payment, but no one could get financing so it wouldn't sell. We couldn't get financing for the new building either, so the sellers, a group of Hewlett Packard executives, agreed to a Contract of Sale. We used all our cash for a down payment and then promised to make hefty payments annually, until the contract was complete, when we'd get the deed. We could foresee ways to get the money for the first three years payments and figured we'd just have to scrounge for the rest. We did O.K. until the last payment was due, when we ran out of ways to come up with any more money

We were always grateful to Terry's mother, Margaret, by now a widow for many years, who called unexpectedly when we were desperate for money for the last payment. "I know you have lots of money and don't really need this, but I want to

give you \$15,000 like I've already given Joan and Mike. That's only fair " I don't think she ever believed how sincerely grateful we were for that money, no matter how often we told her, it was an unexpected windfall to us.

After Uncle Ernest died, Mother kept in touch with Aunt Adele regularly. Adele was slightly eccentric, but she was Daddy's sister and we included her in many family events. We felt it was important for her only son, Warren, to know that our family was his family too. He shared our lives more often while he was getting his Ph.D. in History at Stanford. We felt very close to him. Warren never dated in college so we were happy to know, as he approached the end of his studies, that he had a girl friend.

Her name was Anna Mohn and apparently their relationship was serious. She was a Cal Berkeley graduate and a couple of years older than Warren, but who cared about details! Hopefully he'd marry her and have a happy life. Aunt Adele confided that Anna was on the rebound from a long college love affair with a Jewish boyfriend, who finally confessed to her that he could have an *affair* with her, but when he *married*, it would have to be a Jewish girl. That was enough for her. She was out of that relationship. She was looking for a husband!

Warren introduced us to Anna after they were already engaged to be married. She was attractive enough, but without exception, we all noticed her haughty demeanor. Clearly she knew how important – how special – she was. We couldn't figure out why. But she probably knew something that we didn't. And her parents, especially her mother, thought she was that special too. And told her and us frequently, in loud assertive tones, with head tilted up, looking down her nose. Bob and Mary Mohn, believed with all their hearts and Anna agreed with them, that *nothing* was too good for their daughter. She should have nothing but the best ever in her life. Bob was an Assistant Fire Chief in San Francisco and Mary was a homemaker, but worked outside the home when she wanted to provide extra luxuries for her children.

With that attitude forming Anna's personality, she prepared for life with Warren. They were married August 14, 1965 at a picturesque church in Sausalito followed by a reception dinner in the wine cellar of the expensive Blue Fox Restaurant in San Francisco. Terry and I, Mother and Daddy were honored to be included among the thirty guests invited, mostly Anna's relatives. Warren and Anna left for Germany the next morning for a year of study in Germany.

Anna had one beloved younger brother, Chuck. He was also a Cal Berkeley graduate, as well as a Naval officer and ultimately a Dental School graduate. The Mohn's doted on him too. He was a handsome young man with a broad smile and hearty handshake. When he looked you right in the eye you knew he was on top of everything! The Mohn's never thought that Warren was quite worthy of Anna. Clearly he was not her equal. So they hoped that their beloved only son would marry someone worthy of him.

When Chuck brought home a girl for them to meet they were thrilled. She surpassed their hopes. She was tall, slender, blond, beautiful and charming. Not only that – she was rich. She was a member of San Francisco's high society and to top it all, she was a Countess. Her mother, the elder Countess, lived both in Paris and San Francisco and clearly there was lots of money backing this life style. Or so you would think.

The wedding was as grand as you might imagine for a titled, wealthy San Francisco socialite and her tall, handsome Cal Berkeley graduate. The newspaper articles, with pictures on the society page, had all the luscious details about the handsome pair and their elegant wedding. The young couple took off for an extended honeymoon in Paris and the south of France. When they returned they filed for an annulment almost immediately. Virginity was still in style in those days and Chuck was an honorable young man, respectful of his fiancé before marriage. On the honeymoon he learned that she was completely uninterested in sex with him. Or with *any* male. The young Countess was a lesbian!

Soon after, Chuck entered Officer's Training School in Newport, Rhode Island. He served his time in the Navy on a river boat in Vietnam. During his time on the east coast he met the daughter of a doctor in Connecticut. Her name was Francine but everyone called her Frankie. He fell in love and soon they were engaged. The Mohns were sad about their son's bad luck in his first marriage and they were thrilled to see him in love with a down to earth girl like Frankie. He certainly deserved a good woman and a good marriage. Frankie was one of ten children so there would be little money to inherit, even with a doctor as a father. But none of that mattered. Chuck wanted to be a dentist. He'd make good money. They'd have a family – probably a big one. After all, Frankie came from a big family.

They settled down in San Francisco and Chuck started his practice. Frankie waited for the children they wanted. But it never happened. Eventually they adopted two children and life moved on. But it has to make you think. Life dishes! All of us just have to learn to roll with the punches.

After Warren completed his doctorate in History at Stanford he was offered a position as a professor at Fresno State. Anna had taught for a year in Germany while Warren wrote his dissertation. She got a good job as an English teacher at Fresno High. In due time, they bought a home in the prestigious Fig Garden area of Fresno. Eventually they were thrilled to announce that a child was on the way. Robert was born January 25, 1971.

They continued traveling in Germany each summer even after Robert was born, but the initial glow of marriage was wearing thin. There are always two sides to the story of any marriage and I heard Warren's side. Anna granted sexual favors

only when gifts or promises of special treats for her were offered. He never excused himself to me for having an affair with Christy Hicks, a thirty-something librarian at the University library. Robert was still a toddler when he strayed. He told me he bought a "breaking up" gift for Christy from Shreve's because he knew he was doing the wrong thing and was going to tell Christy they had to break up.

Somehow Anna found the bill for that piece of jewelry from Shreve's. Warren probably inadvertently left it around where she would find it. She knew it wasn't hers! Whatever! Anna confronted Warren. He confessed – probably with some sense of satisfaction that she would know that another woman found him desirable. Anna always treated him like a dork so he thought this would change her attitude! Whoops! Not with Anna.

Negotiation was out of the question for Anna. She was a woman scorned! He wasn't worthy of kissing her fingertips or even her shoes for that matter! Warren dared to have a liaison while she, the mother of his little son, worked hard, was a wonderful wife any man would be proud to have and was faithful! God knows she would have plenty of opportunities if she chose to! Divorce was too good for him. He deserved castration! But she would take what she could get and be happy to be rid of him. Clearly she would be in great demand but she would certainly be more choosy next time.

The divorce was bitter. Anna got custody of Robert. Warren got the house that meant so much to both of them. And God bless him! He got Christy! He had cheated on his very superior wife and defiled a lovely young single librarian in a scandal that was the talk of the University for a whole week. His reward was that as an honorable gentleman, he got to marry Christy.

It didn't take too long for Christy to find out that the affair was fun – after all she wasn't getting any younger and there wasn't much else happening in her life. But *marriage* to Warren. Now that was a different thing. Sex was a novelty that she didn't mind trying before she was married. After all, you hate to go through your whole life missing out on it. But after the marriage? That was different. Warren decided not to be so docile this time. He found that courtesy and politeness in the bedroom didn't get him very far. And Christy found that sex *after* marriage wasn't so great after all. It wasn't a bed of roses right from the beginning.

Further, they had totally different life expectations. Warren was used to someone with more get up and go. Anna was no slouch. He went from one extreme to another in his choice of mates. Their marriage lasted a number of years with much summer travel, which Warren planned and which took a lot more energy than Christy wanted to expend. To her credit she provided Robert with a calm aura. When Robert was with them she was a kindly stepmother for all the years she stayed married to Warren. Her presence made Robert see his father in a more favorable light than he ever heard from his mother. Anna's usual

description of Warren to anyone within earshot, including her young son was, "Your father, the fat fucker, is on the phone and wants to talk to you"

Aunt Adele was getting older and was very sad at the divorce, although there was no love lost between her and Anna. She liked her little grandson but he was such a rough little boy! She always wanted him to be better behaved but boys today were so unruly! She liked Christy well enough, but was cool in her acceptance. After all Christy was an adulteress who had broken up a happy home with a child! Scandalous!

Mother always enjoyed hearing the details of life with Warren, Anna, Christy and the Mohn's. But Aunt Adele herself got more difficult each year and began to show signs of senility. She wanted to control Warren as much as possible and felt that the only way was to threaten him with loss of his inheritance if he did not pay attention to her. "You won't get a penny of my money until you're thirty-five, so don't be expecting it," she said when Warren was pushing forty. Mother included her in our dinners together, but Adele wasn't always available. One evening just before Christmas, Terry, Connie and I stopped at Mother's house, then left to deliver a small Christmas gift to Adele.

When we arrived at her house, we witnessed a scene of total confusion. Fire engines and Police cars with lights flashing blocked the street. We approached, fearing the worst. But what we imagined was nothing compared to what we found. Adele had been drinking, then called the Fire Department threatening to jump from the Golden Gate Bridge. The Fire Department and the Police responded. Adele was not only tipsy but depressed, very depressed. We were asked to call Warren who authorized an emergency twenty-four hour commitment to the psychiatric ward at UCSF Hospital.

We followed along behind the ambulance. Terry, Connie and I sat in the hall at the Hospital waiting to hear the results of the initial examination. The Psychiatric Ward at UC Hospital at night is a strange place. Sometimes there was absolute silence and then screams or worse from some distant chamber in the space around us. Strange looking people wandered around and at first we thought they might be inmates who had gotten loose. But no! They were staff members. They just *looked* like inmates.

Eventually we got to meet with a doctor. She was a disheveled looking woman whose demeanor made me think she should be *inside*, not outside the locked facility. She mumbled something about senile dementia medication, twenty-four hour observation, released tomorrow afternoon. After we left we called Warren again and told him he had to come up the next day and *DO SOMETHING!!* He did and from then on until she died several years later, she was O.K. unless she forgot her medication and then she was a little nutty. But we all dealt with it as best we could.

Warren and Christy stayed married for a number of years until she finally bailed. She confided to me. "I just couldn't take it anymore. I should have never married him in the first place. But I do love Robert and it was my pleasure to have been part of his life all these years. He is as close a son as I will ever have." The divorce went quickly with both parties cooperating. Warren always wanted to feel he had done the right thing for Christy.

Eventually he met Isa Ehrenberg-Mueller through the sister city relationship Muenster had with Fresno. Warren and Isa traveled the world together for many years until Warren, sensing his own demise, tried to convince Isa to marry. Warren told me "I've been a professor at Fresno State University for thirty years and I have a wonderful pension which will go to no one if I'm unmarried when I die. A small lump sum will go to Robert but more than \$2,000 a month will go to no one. I don't think that's fair." "Why don't you just take better care of yourself and live longer?" was my reasonable inquiry. "You don't know what it's like to be alone. You're surrounded by people who love you. I don't want to be alone at the end. I want there to be someone who loves me too." That brought tears to my eyes and I hugged him.

Terry and I were the only witnesses at their wedding in Las Vegas. Warren and Isa were married before a Justice of the Peace in her office. Isa said quietly to me, "I feel foolish doing this but he keeps insisting. What do you think? Do you think I'm awful." "Isa, I'm so happy you're marrying Warren. You enjoy each other and you've probably found a perfect formula for a successful marriage. He lives in Fresno and you live in Germany, except for the vacations several times a year when you are together. Probably more people should try it. There'd be less divorce. And it seems to mean a lot to Warren that you receive his pension. Why not? It sounds OK to me. Beside he'll probably outlive us all." The Justice performed the ceremony which was as dignified and lovely as any I've attended. I don't remember her words but they were appropriate for us four older people. They dignified the occasion, yet celebrated it too.

We enjoyed a wonderful dinner with them later at Bellagio and were pleased that the endless barbed repartee that marked many of their earlier conversations was now subdued, with a gentle kind of teasing. Warren only lived a few years after that – long enough to validate the pension for Isa, which would have pleased him. Because she's a non-citizen she is taxed heavily on the Cal-Pers pension, usually tax free for widows, but still, it's a nice stipend for Isa.

Everything else went to Robert, his only son. Warren named my son Tim, an attorney, to be Executor of the estate. There was cash, stocks and real estate, minus the usual estate taxes which wreak havoc with everyone whose estate is more than one million. Here in California it's hard to stay under that amount. Warren was so happy to see Robert married to a wonderful wife, Alix, and a darling granddaughter, Logan. Warren helped them buy their first home and would be full of joy to know that his money helped them to buy a nice home in

Berkeley A little boy was born after Warren died They named him August and we all call him Augie. He's blonde and sturdy, a real boy, and he reminds me of both Warren and Robert. Warren's ashes are scattered at the top of Mount Tamalpais and I think of him each year when we're there at the Mountain Play He was my cousin and I loved him.

As Mother got older many of her contemporaries were dying. She had already experienced the deaths of Rudy Weederman, Ernest Gade, Dorothea Olsen, both Margaret and Bill Hillebrandt, Hilda and Elmer Rupp, Harriet and Julius Tham, Vonnie's sister June Wilson, Herta Feldman and so many in Germany Larry Prini, Evelyn's brother, unexpectedly died of heart failure in March 1975 at age forty-five. He'd been with the Harbor Police twenty years and left Norma, his widow and two young daughters, Lisa and Carla Prini Evelyn never got over the early loss of her only brother Even Chang, the dog, died two years after Daddy All of them were dead and her bitter encounter with estate taxes prompted her to be ever more generous to us and to her friends.

Reading through her ledgers provides a recital of gifts to so many acquaintances and friends. I know for a fact many other instances of her generosity that are not even mentioned. But among the ones she listed are the following:

"Gave Fini \$500 to take care of her teeth"

"Gave Louise Cunningham \$1,000 for help after Bob died She was desperate." (Louise was Betty Heide's daughter) Bette sponsored both Carl and Ernst Gade when they emigrated to America.

"Gave Warren and Christy \$1,000 wedding gift. Gave more later Gifts totaled \$2,000."

"Bought clothes for Milan Sikela - \$395" Milan was Egon's friend

"Bought Fini and Mike a new car in January 1976 Paid cash for an Impala Chevrolet." "Gave Richard Michaelson \$250 cash for new drapes for his house." "Gave Fini \$2,000 to go to Europe" You'll recall that Fini was her only living blood relative, who Ma brought over to help on the chicken farm and more important, make the moonshine whisky

"Gave June Wilson \$1,000 to go on a trip to San Diego" June was Vonnie's sister and she was dying of cancer

"Brought Egon Mahdal's father Josef over to this country for a visit"

"Gave Lillian Price Hale \$1,000 so she could go to the Elizabeth Arden Salon and then go to Hawaii" That was written on the last page she ever entered in her journal. She told me while we were in London together she was sick of hearing

Lilly bellyache about never even going to see Hawaii or the Elizabeth Arden Salon in her whole life, it was worth every penny just to shut her up once and for all. Lilly was at Mother's funeral about a month later and she was still boo-hooing "I can't believe she's gone. I never even got to say goodbye to her I never got to tell her I am going to Hawaii "

And then Mother did the corker of a gift. She put \$40,000 into a down payment plus repairs and decorating on a house at 860 Thornhill Drive in Colma for Egon. The money came from the sale of Daddy's Studio and flats at 157 Fillmore Street. She never said anything to any of us 'til it was a done deal. She thought we wouldn't approve and you know – she was right. She was still trying to make a success of Gus Tham's closest relative living in America. I wish so much I could tell you that it finally turned out well; that Egon stopped drinking and kept a job and took care of his nice little house and he and his wife lived happily ever after. But it didn't. After Mother died he pissed it away in a few years, died of liver failure and his widow Debby sold the house and used up the money and then died young herself. But you can't say Mother didn't try. She tried to the very end. And you have to give her credit for that.

Mother was happy to see all her grandsons graduate from college. She went to Arizona with Ev and Rudy to see Gus Tham graduate from Prescott College. She was proud when Brad Tham graduated from Chico State. She was always happy that Judy had gone to Dominican High School like I did and she loved Judy's husband Joe Hurley.

Mother eagerly heard reports about all our children. By the time Tim was a Junior in High School he turned silent. He went off to Santa Clara University thinking he would major in business. One day after he had been at school for a while, he came crashing in the door at home saying, "Dad Dad I can't do it. I just can't do it. I can't be like those guys that take the train and carry a briefcase and read the Wall Street Journal every day. I just can't do it!" Terry said mildly, "Then why don't you change your major? What do you like?" He looked blankly at Terry "It's O.K. to do that?" With that he left the house and went back to school. He changed his major to History. Grandma went to Tim's graduation from Santa Clara University in June of 1978 and met all his friends including Kath Friedrich, who became his wife. After a few years he decided that he liked what his lawyer wife was doing much better than what he was doing and went to McGeorge School of Law. And he was right. He loves what he's doing and he's been a great trial lawyer.

She was so proud of Greg, "the wild one", who made her laugh so hard. As teens, he and Tim got summer jobs as janitors at Marine World through Rudy. Greg worked his way up to driving the "pooper scooper" at the end of the opening animal parade each day. She went to Marine World with me to see that scene one day. Greg received top honors as a Bellarmine graduate. As one of the favorites of the Jesuits, they handed him a diploma with a big black "VOID"

scribbled on it at graduation. Much later in the day two of his teachers came to the party at our home and personally presented him with his real diploma. They had really gotten him!! He was now at Stanford University, looking forward to graduation in 1981. He had many escapades with his friends – she laughed so hard at our description of his temporary ménage à trois with Cheryl Johnston, a girlfriend and Cyrus Cassells, the black gay poet. They were both in love with Greg. After Greg graduated he managed real estate for Coldwell Banker before becoming a lawyer himself. He has managed and increased the assets, including real estate holdings, for the whole family.

Mother was glad that Connie attended Sacred Heart High School in Atherton. Connie took horseback riding lessons in her spare time and at age twelve told me she would like to buy a horse. I was already giving her riding lessons at Webb Ranch which cost \$40 a month. Our business was still new and tuitions were expensive so my immediate mental response was, “No! I can’t afford it.” But then I decided I should try to use my Stanford education. I took “Child Psychology” – all right I got a “D” – but I *took* it. “What a great idea, honey. Our budget is \$40 a month. Why don’t you see what you can work out on that?” I smiled at her. In her innocence she said “O K. I’ll work it out.” And she did!

A week later she was back to me with her proposal. “Webb Ranch will lease me a horse for \$1 a year if I let them use him for lessons twice a week. It costs \$100 a month to feed him and he has to be shod three times a year. So I found a girl to go in 50/50 with me and it shouldn’t cost more than \$50 a month. If you pay \$40 I can earn \$10 a month myself.” She had a succession of horses – Critter, Chesapeake and Blackjack. Mother loved hearing about them. When Chesapeake broke her leg out on the trail and had to be put down, Connie wrote a heart rending story about it that Grandma loved. She would be so proud of Connie today, a graduate of St. Mary’s College, a real estate broker and CPM, managing Marina Court Apartments and so many more properties.

In June 1978 Terry and I bought a new two bedroom townhouse at 1202-69 Sharon Park Drive, overlooking the Sharon Heights golf course. It was just a few blocks from our house and we hoped Mother would stay closer to us several nights a week, or better yet, all the time. I furnished it and stocked the refrigerator. Her Cadillac fit in the garage below and there was an elevator to her first floor home, so she wouldn’t have to climb stairs anymore. She stayed there a few times but still preferred to go home to 1765 Eucalyptus, even if it was foggy every day. By now the house was home even if she still called it her little crackerbox.

That summer she gambled at Tahoe for the last time. Terry and I, with Mother and Connie, went to Drytown, on Highway 49 in the Mother Lode, for a play, in which Terry’s secretary had a part. We stayed at a little Inn Saturday night. The next day we were deciding which way to drive home when Mother coyly suggested we go home via Harrah’s at Tahoe. “It’s only a couple of hundred

miles out of the way", she said with a twinkle in her eye. "I might gamble a little bit," she said with a bigger smile than we had seen for quite a while. When we got to Southshore we rented a room at Harrah's so she would have a place to rest. The altitude took its toll almost immediately and she obviously couldn't stay more than a few hours.

I went to the casino with her to be sure she was all right. But I also wanted to see if she would really win anything or if it was all just fantasy. She didn't want me to be too close to her, but she just stood there for a while and listened. She said later she listened to where the bells were ringing. She finally selected a place to go and picked out a couple of dollar slot machines and started playing. If the machine didn't pay off something within ten or fifteen minutes she moved on to another machine. If a machine gave *something* she'd stick with it. After an hour she smiled tiredly at me. "I've had enough. Let's go now." She'd won one \$300 jackpot, one \$100 jackpot and lots of smaller ones. Amazing! She had a lot of fun over the years playing the slots and I can only say when you win like that, it's certainly fun.

She thought that Terry and I worked too hard and she also felt guilty that Connie never got to go on a nice trip with her like the boys did to Alaska. The mini-series "Roots" had aired in 1976 and she was as taken with it as were all of us. For her, there was particular poignancy in wanting to know where you came from, since she had been kidnapped at age nine from the only home she knew. "Terry, it's important that you learn about your roots." She gave him her big smile. She wanted to visit Ireland since she had never been there. We agreed we could take off two weeks and soon booked a TWA package tour of England, Ireland and Wales for the four of us in late August, returning just before Connie had to go back to school.

We agreed to meet at the airport on the appointed day and time and were frantic when she didn't show up. Almost too late, she arrived at the airport, breathing very hard, pale and sweating. Rudy had persuaded her not to call a cab. Wing would pick her up. Only he never came. His alarm didn't go off. When she did call a cab it was almost too late. I've never forgiven myself for not making better arrangements myself and instead, depending on someone else.

We went to New York for two days, and enjoyed seeing the sights, courtesy of friends of Rudy, before going on to London. Once we arrived in London Mother was exhausted and happy to rest, while Terry, Connie and I saw the sights. She was happy to listen to us tell her about everything.

After a few days in London we got on a bus to travel around England. She stayed on the bus most of the time, while we did the more strenuous excursions at Coventry, Stonehenge, Stratford and the Roman ruins at Bath. She loved the brief visit in tiny Wales and then we headed into Ireland. We were in Dublin a couple of days and that gave her time to rest before Blarney Castle and the

Blarney stone, and many villages. When we reached Killarney, we were as close to Brosna as our tour would go. She insisted Terry and I hire a driver and go to the village to see if we could find Terry's roots.

Brosna was still a shabby little village, one long street, with several pubs, and little display of prosperity. Even then, it was easy to understand the motivation to leave, for anyone with ambition. We went to the church and asked to see the old records. It took only a small donation and a little research to find Brosnahans in the old church books. The names didn't match and the spelling changed to "Brosnan" about 1865. But obviously the village was at some time in distant past the origin of his mother's family name. He was so excited to tell my mother about it later and her big smile let him know she was happy for him.

A farewell medieval feast at Bunratty Castle near Shannon was the grand finale to our trip. We all enjoyed spit roasted leg of lamb, Irish potatoes and smoked salmon, all washed down with steins of hearty mead and topped off with Irish coffee and scones. We sat on benches in the great stone hall and were entertained by both pipers and traditional dancers. The next day we flew out of Shannon Airport for the long flight home to San Francisco.

Mother was exhausted and I was busy getting Connie back in high school after vacation. At the same time I juggled managing our three properties plus Mother's too, and soothing my condo board clients, who did not understand me daring to take a vacation. Thank God for Judy who was very attentive to Grandma. Mother complained of pain in her right leg. She went to Doctor Paul. He sent her to a specialist who diagnosed phlebitis. She was told it would take time to subside. They gave her some medication to relieve the pain. Judy and Joe, who lived in Lakeside, did all her errands for her. Joe would do a Zimburger run whenever she craved one of their delicious hamburgers. Judy took her to the doctor or got her prescriptions. But her pain and swelling only got worse.

Finally, the first week in October she was admitted to the hospital. By now the diagnosis was thrombo-phlebitis – a blood clot in the deep veins of the lower right leg. Specialists treated her and medication was increased. She was monitored constantly but the clot was persistent and time was running out. Surgery to clear the clot was not an option because the vein affected was too small. Finally, the only option was amputation below the knee in order to save her life. At first she opted to die but we all begged her to try. "Please don't give up Mother. Please stay with us a while longer."

After the surgery she was depressed and had a hard time accepting the new state of things. She was quiet and nodded grimly when we told her we were already looking into an elevator for her house. The hospital was wonderful and therapy was started immediately to prepare her for prosthesis. Judy was there every day, as were Terry and I, Ev and Rudy as well as other grandchildren and friends.

On a Saturday Terry and I had visited for several hours. Mother was uncomfortable and had constant pain in her upper back. We told the Head Nurse we wanted to hire a private nurse to be with her from now on. "That isn't necessary Mrs. Blaine. She will have excellent care from the regular nursing staff." "I don't care. She's in pain. I want to hire a nurse to be with her all the time." They agreed and said they would get someone right away. We left at eight in the evening on October 21 and went home. I comforted myself that I had ordered a private nurse, starched and clean, bustling about the room, making sure she was comfortable. On October 22, 1978 at two in the morning the phone rang. I knew instantly it was bad news. "Mrs. Blaine, we're so sorry. Your mother just passed away. Would you like to come up here?" No, I thought to myself. She's gone. "Yes", I screamed into the phone, "I'll be there in an hour. Don't take her away until I've seen her."

An hour later Terry and I walked up to the nurse's station and the Head Nurse approached me with a hug. "I'm so sorry dear. It was sudden. There was nothing we could do. We did hire a nurse as you asked us to." I looked at her expectantly. An immense figure loomed closer to me. I looked up, and up some more, as he leaned down to give me a hug. "My name is Cecil. I was your mother's nurse and I was with her when she died." He was huge – nearly seven feet tall and close to three hundred pounds! And he was black – and clearly gay. *A huge black, gay, male nurse for my mother on her deathbed!* If it weren't so funny I would have cried. In my mind and in my heart, I expected a starched, white, efficient, Austrian female nurse, bustling around the room, making everything right.

The Head Nurse stood next to me and said quietly, "We had to get someone large enough to be able to support your mother. She was a large woman." I must have still had my mouth open as I stared at Cecil. I collected my wits, "Thank you for your kindness. Please tell me everything." Cecil was a kind, loving man and told me of his last hours with my mother. "We talked and laughed during the evening. I rubbed her back when she complained of pain." And then with a last gasp it was over. Later we learned that the interior lining of her main artery had sloughed off material and created a massive clot in the heart.

Rudy and Ev and their children returned the next day; arrangements were made. Within a few days we had a Rosary and then a funeral Mass at Saint Stephen Church. Friends and family drew close to comfort each other. Flowers were sent, kind words were spoken, cards were received. Her friends called, they missed her so much. It all passed in a daze and I allowed time to wash over me and heal.

I worked alone at her house one day a week, taking care of the estate properties for one year. I never felt her presence there. There were no ghosts. If we are all going to the same destination, then I'm sure she was already there with Daddy.

and Ma and Pa and all the rest. If the destination is the same for all of us, then the only thing that matters is the journey And how well we do it.

One of my Stanford friends said, "Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out and loudly proclaiming "Wow, what a ride!" If that's so, Mother really did it right. Her body was pretty well used up, but wow – what a ride!



Above: Tim and Greg in Germany after Granpa dies. Franz Amandi took them to the Rhine River to a famous castle.

Below: Aunt Martha shows them the house where Grandpa was born in Achim. From left, Aunt Kathe Eggers, Aunt Martha between Tim and Greg. Martha's husband, Heinz Lohmann, to the right of Greg.



Christmas goes on without Grandpa. From left: Greg, Terry, Marge, Connie and Tim. Grandma, seated.



Rudy, Mother and Gus



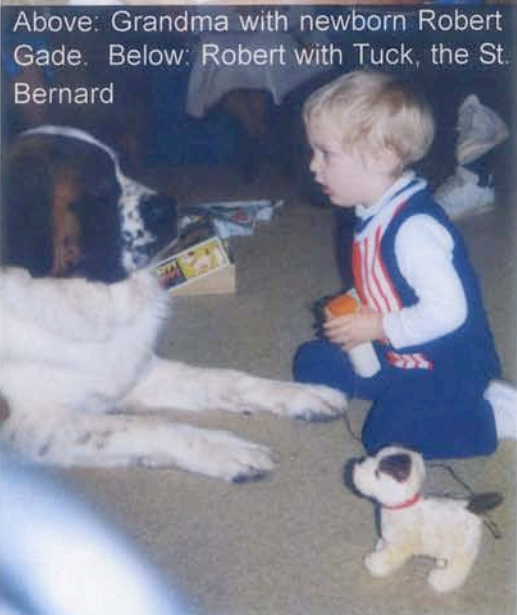
Rudy's fiftieth birthday! A surprise! From Left: Mother, Henri Lewin, Gus, Rudy, Judy, Brad and Evelyn.



A wedding shower for Anna Mohn and Warren Gade at Marge and Terry's house. From Left: Grandma, Connie, Tim, Anna, Greg and Aunt Adele.



Above: Grandma with newborn Robert Gade. Below: Robert with Tuck, the St. Bernard





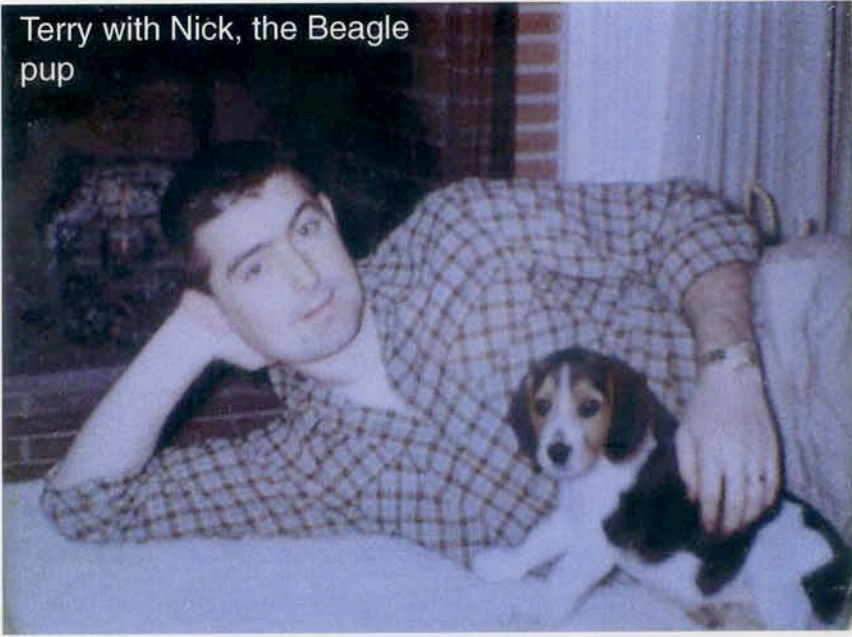
We go to Alaska!
Left: Grandma and Marge
Right: Greg left, Janelle Jones and Tim



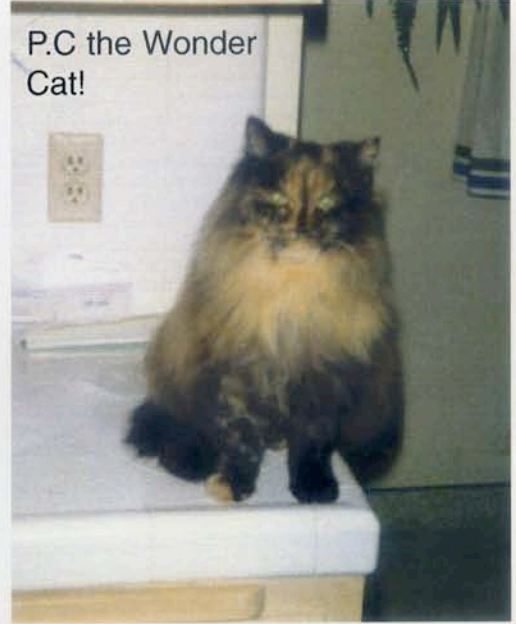
Below left: Marge, Tim and Grandma
at the Red Dog Saloon in Juneau
Below right: Grandma meets a Husky.



Terry with Nick, the Beagle pup



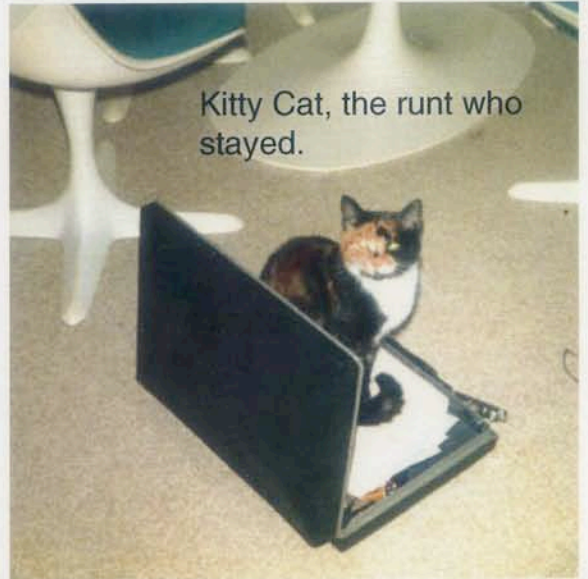
P.C the Wonder Cat!



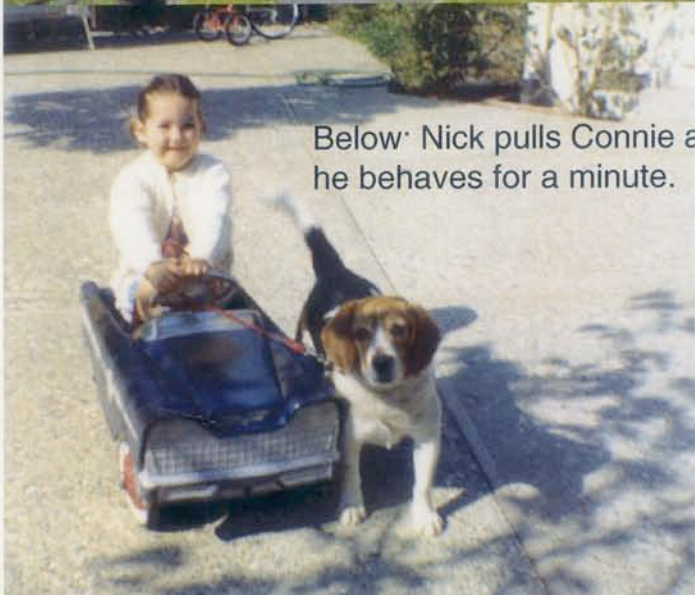
Grandma mows the lawn as Tim cheers her on.



Kitty Cat, the runt who stayed.



Below: Nick pulls Connie as he behaves for a minute.



Grandma holds part of P.C.'s litter

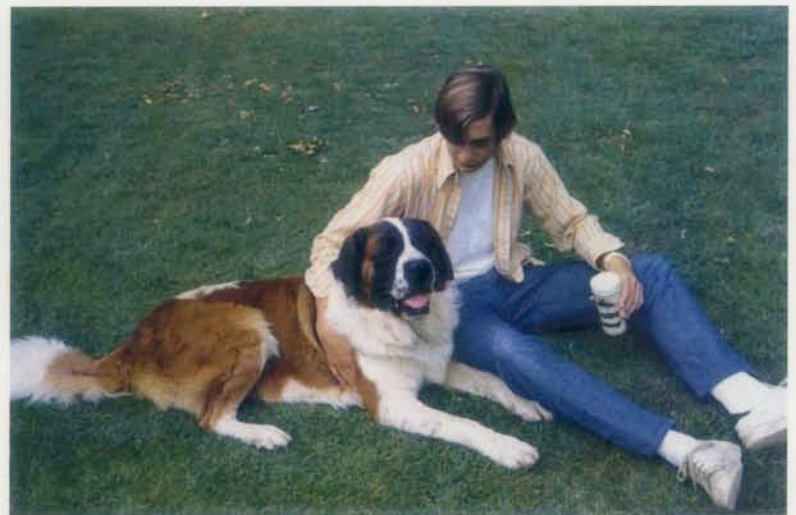




Upper Left: Tuck, the Saint Bernard with Connie, running in our back yard.

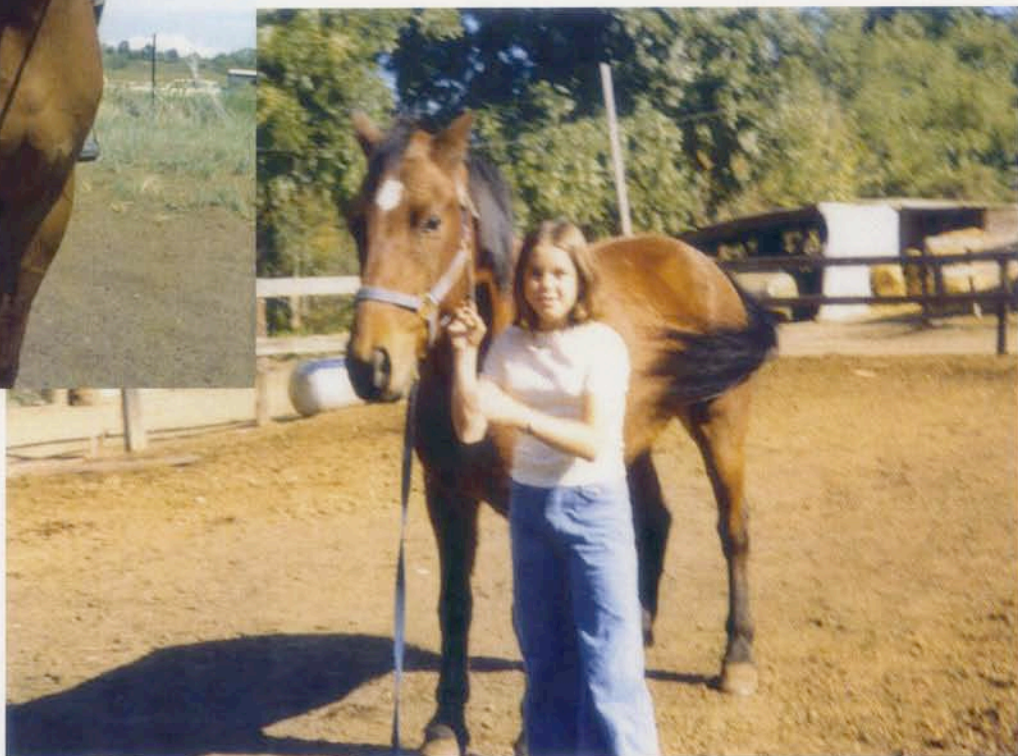
Below Right: Tim with Tuck in the back yard.

Left and Bottom Connie with Toby, the pound mutt, that turned out to be a Dandy Dinmont. Wonderful dog!





Connie makes a horse deal with Webb Ranch leading to a succession of horses: Critter, Chesapeake and Blackjack. Grandma loved them all





Top, Left: Greg proudly drove the “pooper-scooper” at the back of the animal parade that opened Marine World Park in Redwood City each day.



Middle Left: Aunt Liz, Greg, Kitty Bachman and Connie. Greg, our super-star student, gets voided at graduation from Bellarmine!!



Lower, Left: Christy and Warren Gade, Connie, Susan, Aunt Liz, Grandma and Kitty, all got a good laugh. The Jesuits got one up on him in a big way.



Above: Rich Freitas, left, and Bob Phelan, right, two of Greg’s teachers, came to our house later and brought him his real diploma, but not until he ate a lot of crow.



We buy the Alameda Apartments and throw a party. Grandma said we were gluttons for punishment but she wanted to know everything we were doing.

Left: Courtyard between 3455 and 3465 Alameda de las Pulgas. Tim's English teacher at Bellarmine, Jim Harvell and his band, played for us.

We threw a party in the cement "garden" of the apartments before we jackhammered it all out and created a real green garden. Terry at right talking to a tenant.

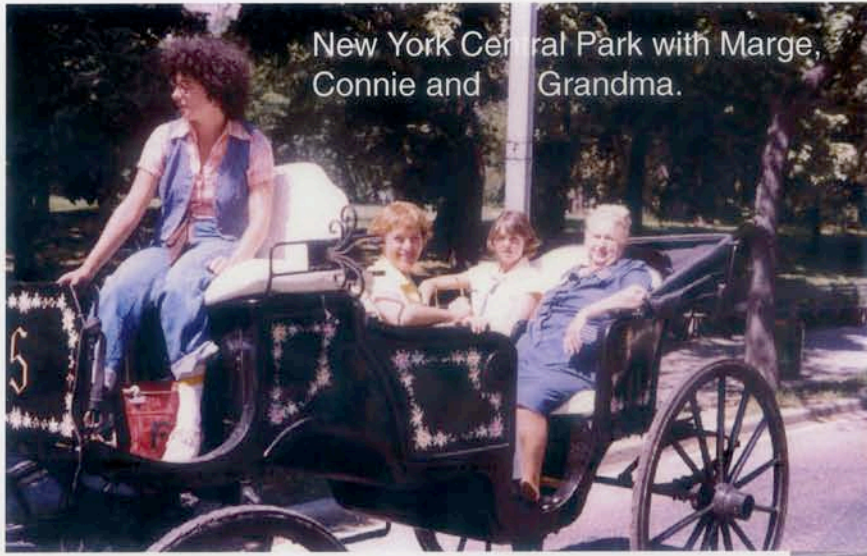


Left: Grandma loved seeing Sister Maurice when we took Connie to summer camp at San Domenico in San Anselmo. Left to right: Sister Maurice, Aunt Adele, Mother, Connie and Marge.



Tim graduates from Santa Clara University and Grandma meets his friend Kath Friedrich, who would eventually become his wife. Above: Kath, Tim, Grandma and Marge. Below Tim and Grandma.





New York Central Park with Marge, Connie and Grandma.

Terry finds his roots on the road to Brosna.



England, Ireland and Wales
 Left: Marge, Mother and Connie next to our coach. Below Left: Connie, Marge and Terry at Muckcross Castle. Below Right: Mother and Marge in Wales. Connie at far right.



MA, MOTHER AND ME

A MEMOIR

Chapter 15 Things Happen 1978

When I taught Property Management seminars for the Institute of Real Estate Management, I sometimes opened with this.

“Things happen to everyone. Some people make things happen. Some people watch things happen. And some people just say ‘What’s happening’? If you’re going to manage real estate, you’ve got to be someone who *makes* things happen”

Lots of things happened to Mother. She was placed in a foster home as a baby, stolen by her mother at age nine, pregnant at fifteen, divorced at sixteen, and on her own at seventeen or so. She had just a few years formal education. The last time she took her mother’s bad advice was when she married Laurson.

After that she plunged forward, made her own decisions, took responsibility for her own actions, was in command of her own fate. She knew that *she* would make things happen. She listened to the advice of others – but *she* was the one who acted.

She and Daddy were a good match. She always attracted gentle, sweet men who needed a leader. Lots of things happened to them. An unexpected baby, the Depression, job loss. But when opportunities appeared, Mother had the courage to go for it! “Sure I can run a grocery store!” “Of course you can be in your own business!” “We will buy Von Issendorf’s flats!”

And later, “We’re going to buy an apartment building!” “Of course I want Margaret to go to a private girl’s school!” And finally, “We’re going to sell the Page and Lyon Building and buy some stores on Union Street.”

Did she really always know the right road to take, or was she just lucky? Was she really skilled at gambling, or was it just luck? When the gypsy woman rolled the bones and told her she was on the right path, it was nice to hear, but she already knew it.

We all walk a road headed to the same place. We all pass opportunities. We all make choices. Some work out. Some don’t. Mother made things happen – she didn’t just watch what was happening. She wasn’t afraid to make a choice and to stay the course.

After she died lots of things happened. First, the estate owed federal and state tax. After Daddy's death she paid tax of 25% of *his* half of *their* assets. Then there were tax reforms to correct that injustice. After the reforms, when Mother died, her estate paid 33% of all her assets. Everyone thought that was so unjust that there were more reforms. Now things are much different. When Terry and I die our estate will be taxed at 55%! Amazing! Each succeeding set of politicians, both parties, with their tax reforms, promises and rhetoric, have managed to *double* the estate tax since my father died in 1972.

After Mother died there was plenty of income, but not a lot of cash in the bank. The buildings were valued highly and had low or no mortgages, so we could take a loan on the buildings in order to pay the estate tax. Most lawyers, including Bert Silver, Mother's neighbor and attorney, advise beneficiaries to liquidate real estate and distribute cash. The primary reason for this is self protection. *For the lawyer* Not the client.

The value of real estate does not necessarily stay stable and is not liquid. During an estate settlement, cash in the bank is only diminished by attorney fees, trust changes and probate costs. But the lawyer can defend himself from that loss. But if real estate loses value because of unfavorable market conditions, the lawyer might be held responsible for not advising the client to sell when the value was higher. Lawyers want to avoid that liability. Real estate is always a risk. But so is life. Listen to your lawyer with courtesy. After all you're paying him. Then follow your own judgment.

Government auditors have the right to look at all your books. Mother kept excellent records so when they asked to see her checkbooks and bills, I had no qualms about turning them over. I knew everything was honest and her records were excellent. The tax law said she could give up to \$10,000 to any one person within a year and not have to pay a gift tax. The boys had nice stock accounts so she wanted to do something equivalent for Connie. She heard that Benguet, a gold mining stock, was good so she bought some for herself at \$3,000 and gifted them to Connie during that year when they got up to \$10,000. In addition she gave her the usual \$100 check for her birthday that year. The Feds said the birthday check of \$100 made the entire amount taxable at the estate tax rate of 33%. They made us pay \$3,333 on the total \$10,100 Mother had gifted to Connie during that year.

We did everything we could to keep the value of the estate as low as possible. And the Feds did everything they could to value the property as high as possible. That's the way the game is played. We thought they valued Marina Court Apartments too high so we demanded to meet with the appraiser. He set an appointment with me and when we met he asked to walk through the building. So I took him to #305 on the third floor of the 3455 building at Marina Court. We walked in the apartment and I led him down the hall toward the living room. He

stopped abruptly "The floor in this hall slopes downhill to the living room!" "Yes. It does," I agreed innocently "Well, what do you think is causing that?" "The building has settled several inches and we don't know how much farther it will go." His appraisal was adjusted lower and we won one small battle. In reality the building had settled before Mother bought it almost thirty years earlier and she had it jacked up as far as she dared and there it remained stable for thirty years. To tell the truth it still slopes and it's still stable today, another thirty years later

During the estate settlement period, Rudy and Ev and Terry and I had secured written commitments for loans to pay estate taxes, from a savings and loan at 11% interest. That was pretty high. Jimmy Carter was president, oil prices were off the chart and savings and loan scandals were climbing. On a Sunday afternoon, the day before our loan would close, President Carter raised reserve requirements for savings and loans and banks. The next day our savings and loan withdrew their loan commitment to us. Things happen to everyone and something had definitely happened to us!

The government wanted their estate tax and our allowed time was drawing to a close. We extended and paid 9% interest to them for a while, but we had to find money or lose the buildings. I tried to find money everywhere and couldn't. All banks and savings and loans were under the same restrictions. We called everyone we knew in the money lending business and finally Rudy got a lead from a friend, Ken Kidwell, at Eureka Federal Savings and Loan Their reputation was a bit unsavory, but they came up with the money we needed to pay the estate taxes. It was at 14 ¼% interest!! The payments were so high they took more than half the monthly income at Marina Court. But we could hang on to the building That was the important thing. Time was our most precious ally If we could buy enough time, everything would eventually work out. The same thing happened at the Greenwich flats. Rudy and Ev also managed to hang on to the property

Six months after we paid the estate tax, the Feds came sniffing around again. This time they told us that Mother didn't live long enough We knew that! No, she didn't live long enough for her gift to us of her half of the Union Hyde building to be tax free. She was short a few months of the three years necessary if the gift were not to be deemed "in anticipation of death" We argued for a while and then gave up. Back to the bank for more money Time would heal us. All we had to do was hang on.

Then we got the double whammy when the properties were reappraised for property tax valuations. But they didn't get around to that for another year and then they played catch up with us for another couple of years. About three years after mother's death we began to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

In the meantime, San Francisco's Board of Supervisors passed rent control laws in September of 1979 in spite of rent control being rejected by voters in three earlier elections.

During the last years of Daddy's life, Mother spent little on capital improvements and just maintained her buildings. She was living the precept, "If you take care of your buildings when you're young, they'll take care of you when you're old" They refinanced Union Hyde, put all the remaining debt on that building which we owned in partnership and paid off all other mortgages, giving them a wonderful cash flow. Now that we had paid estate taxes and were drowning in debt, the buildings would just have to stand on their own for a while. Someday we'd have the money to improve them again. But not now. For now, we would just hang on and survive.

All those things happened. And more. We made lots of decisions. We decided to keep all the buildings. We decided to keep mother's house which she had willed to fifteen year old Connie. It was a good location and would go up in value. After a year, we rented it and used the money to help with Connie's college tuition while Greg was still at Stanford. After he graduated we refinanced Grandma's house and used the money to buy seven apartment units on Noel Drive in Menlo Park for Connie. She kept the Noel apartments for many years, refinancing them again and again, to buy her own home and eventually sold them in 2006 to buy her share of Camille North, a forty unit building in Mountain View. Connie finally sold Grandma's house in 1989, eleven years after Grandma died, to buy into DelaMart Center in Santa Clara with the rest of us.

Greg got his real estate license the day he was eighteen. He soon found a derelict duplex on Menalto Avenue in Menlo Park, that he could almost afford, if he used the money he'd been saving from Grandma's gifts all these years and his real estate commission. Soon he and Terry were pouring sweat equity into his first investment. Eventually he traded it for a lovely six unit building on San Carlos Avenue in San Carlos and he was off and running. Buildings in Santa Clara, the Marina and Menlo Park followed after that.

Terry and I found an awful dump at 1674 Hollenbeck in Sunnyvale. But it was a great location and it was sixty-six two bedroom townhouse style units to boot! We sold the beautiful condo we had bought for my mother in Sharon Heights and traded it for the Sunnyvale property which we soon renamed Village Square. After that we couldn't wait to buy more and bigger buildings.

Tim got a good job with Southland Corporation after graduation from Santa Clara University and found a three bedroom condo in Mountain View that he could afford, with Grandma's gift money for all those years, his Alaska salmon cannery summer job savings and his own salary. He had to rent out two of the bedrooms to make the mortgage payments, but he made it work. He traded that into the

Harvard cottages and DelaMart Center and then a gorgeous Marina building that Grandma would love

And so it goes. We've made things happen and so have Tim, Greg and Connie. And now it's the next generation's turn

Things happen to everyone. The only thing that matters is what you do about it.

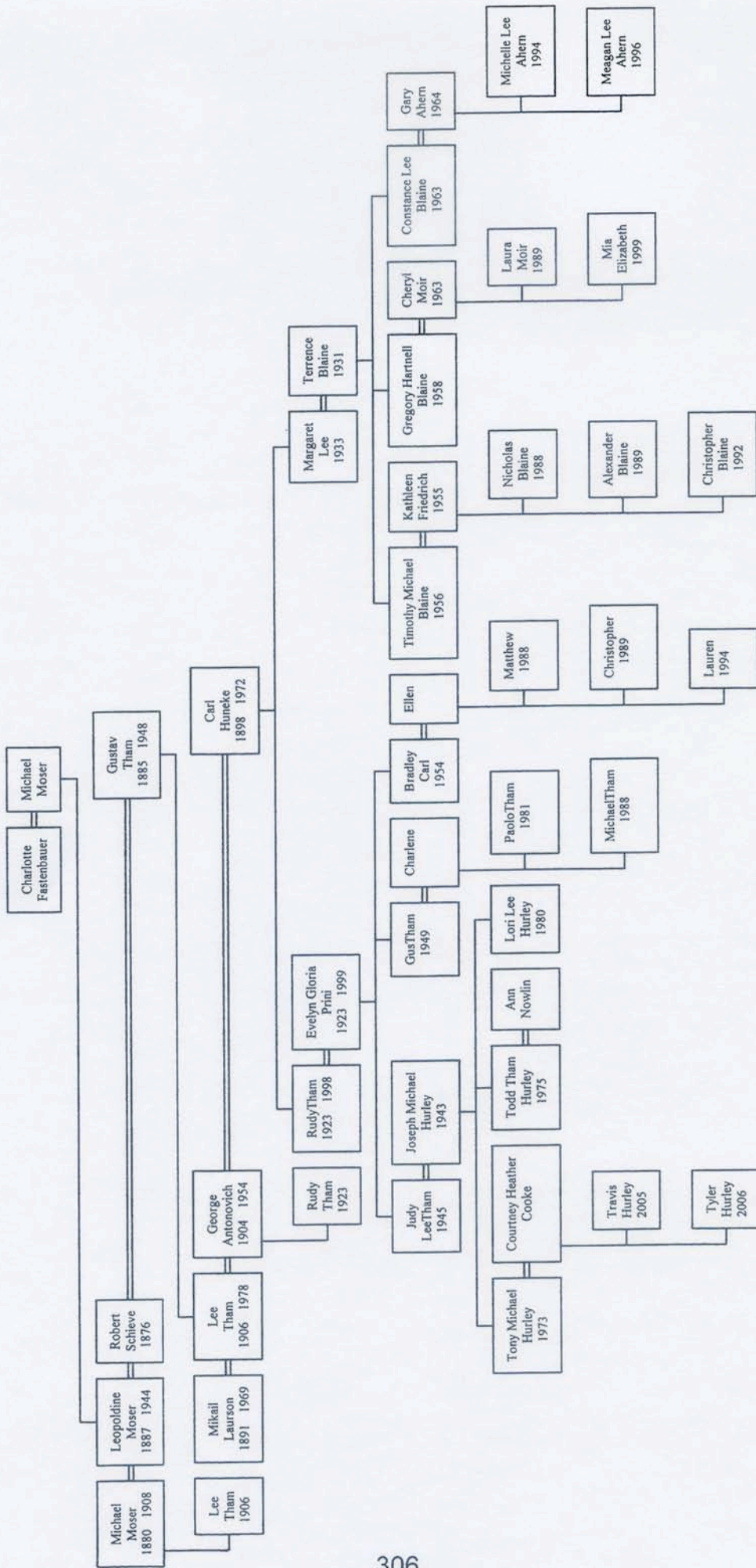


My Family

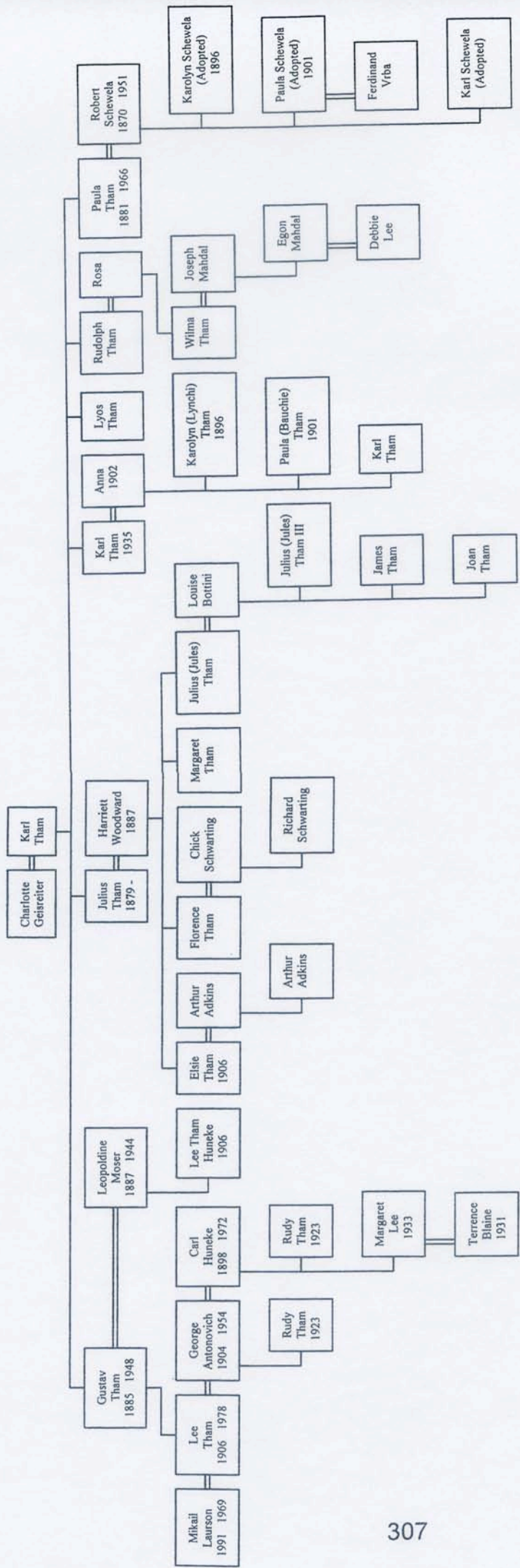
December 2006

From Left: Connie, with Meagan front, Michelle behind and Gary. Nick, Tim, Kath, Alex and Chris. Greg, Cheryl and Laura with Mia in front. Marge and Terry

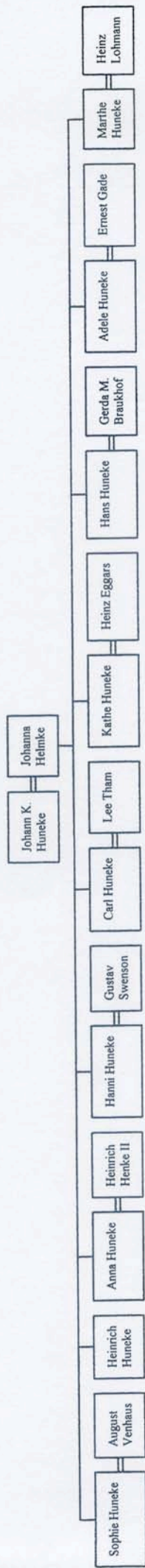
Lee Tham Huneke's Family Tree



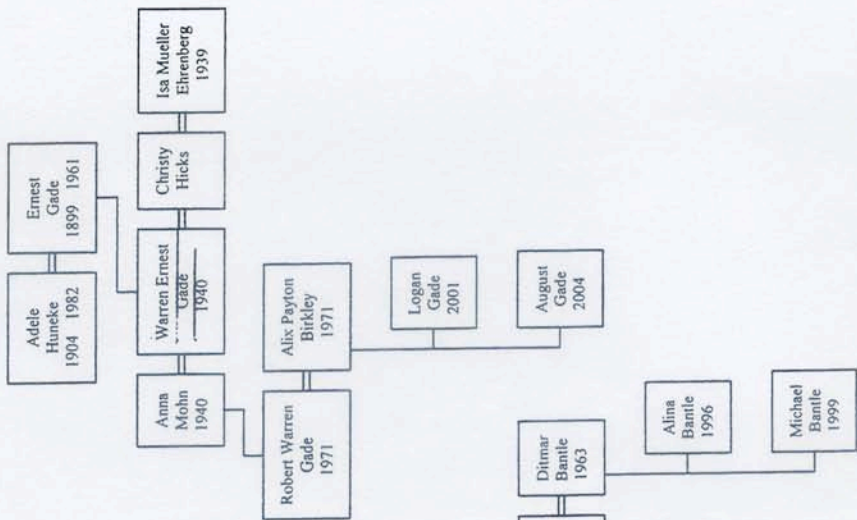
Gustav Tham's Family Tree



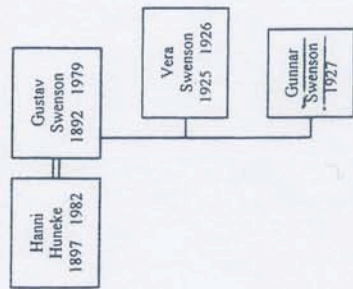
Descendants of Carl Huneke's Siblings



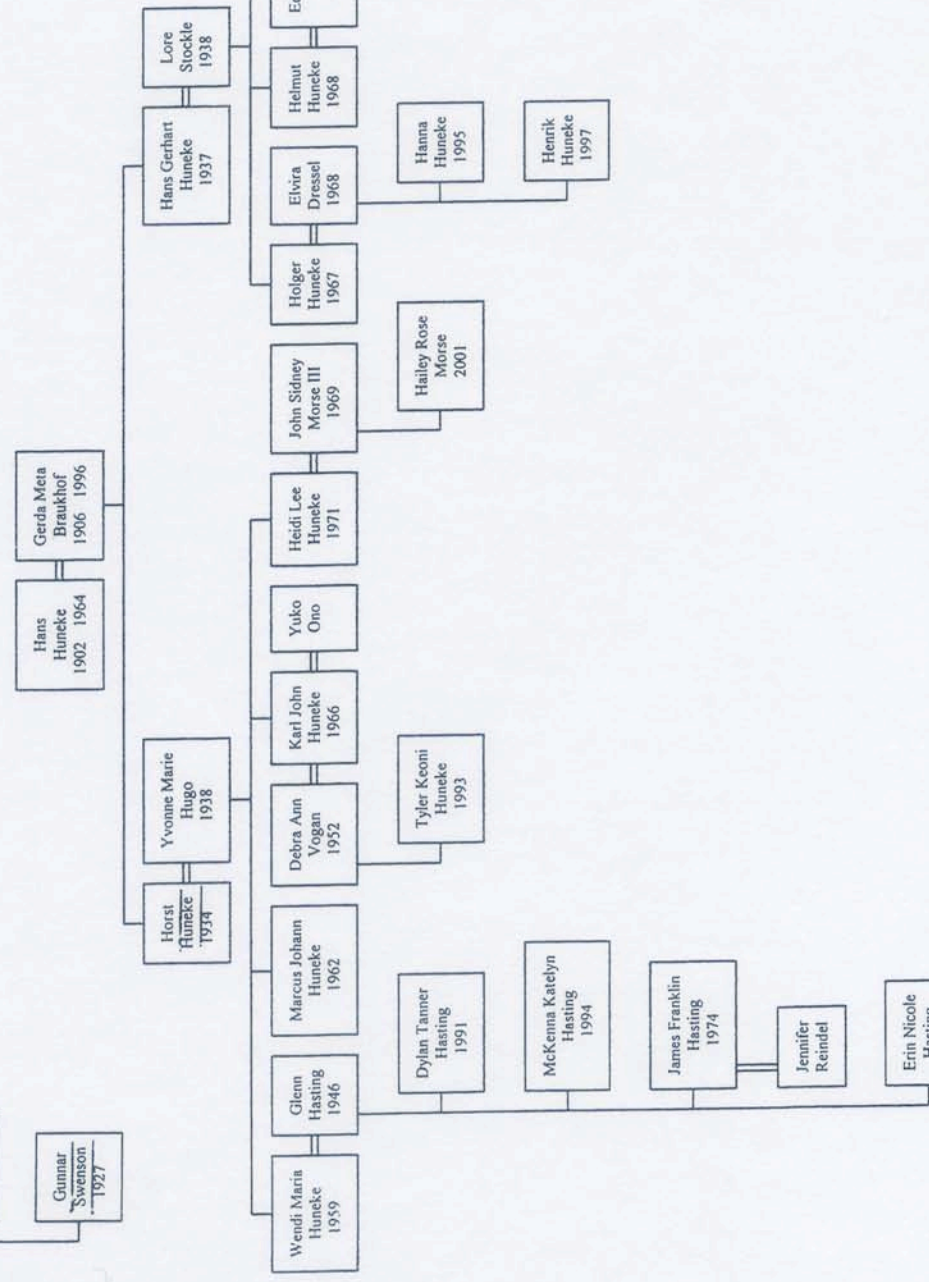
Warren Gade's Family Tree



Gunnar Swenson's Family Tree



Horst Huneke's Family Tree



Fini Michaelson's Family Tree

