

Bob's & Janet's Marriage

Bob and Janet were married in the Saint Patrick's Church in Watsonville on August 17, 1947. After a short honeymoon at Lake Tahoe Bob and Janet settled at Cal Poly College in San Luis Obispo where Bob studied Aeronautical Engineering.

On May 13, 1948 they were blessed with a darling little son named Creston Gery Aldridge.

Bob's grades were extremely high at Cal Poly. Some time before graduation an official name from Hilliard Helicopter in San Jose inquiring for a capable man to work for them.

They immediately recommended Bob for that position. Even though he had some time to finish his course they knew that he could fulfill that requirement very well. Bob then left Cal Poly.

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Bob: Fill in the moves you made up until the time Janie was born and the date of we purchased the Arthur Road property and the address. Also the places and times of work before you applied to Lockheed. On Lenzin Avenue.

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At that time he stayed with Sonny and Gayle on Frank Avenue for a little while and then with Ted and me on Heatherdale until he purchased a house in Santa Clara and moved his family there in December 1957. At that time he had six children.

Bob then started going to night school at San Jose State and worked day and night, alternately for a period of time. Bob graduated from San Jose State in _____. He graduated with great honors of distinction having the highest grades of _____ engineering students and the highest grades of _____ aeronautical engineering students. We all were so very proud of Bob. At the time of his graduation he had _____ children to support. For the next _____ years Bob climbed right to the top for Lockheed's work.

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This space is for the names and number of missiles he designed and the number of employees that worked under him. Bob held a very important job at Lockheed for seventeen years and the remuneration was very, very good.

However, the fact that Bob was working on missiles that could kill so many people was definitely against his wishes and belief. His thoughts were to resign as this work was undermining his health. Bob talked the situation over with his family and they also definitely agreed that he should cut his ties with Lockheed Corporation.

Not having any other income in view and _____ children at home made this decision very difficult but with his faith in God and the help of his wife and family he knew that he could be of more help to mankind. The next _____ years was a struggle. Bob wrote _____ articles for different papers on nuclear disarmament. He was asked to speak at various gatherings and his message soon reached around the world. Various countries sent for Bob.

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Bob: fill in details about what countries, etc.

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It is known that Bob Aldridge was the first individual that has worked, written and

traveled throughout many places in various parts of the world trying hard to abandon nuclear developments in order to make this a free world for us all.

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On May 13, 1948 Bob and Janet's first baby was born. He was named Creston Gery Aldridge. They brought him to the ranch to visit Ted and me -- when he was about two weeks old. I met them at the door on the back porch. I shall never forget the thrill when Bob placed this little fellow in my arms. He weighed about six pounds. He was dressed in a pale blue short pants outfit with a cute little tilted blue cap on his little head. He was so tiny and so precious. Tears welled in my eyes. Ted experienced the same emotional feeling when he held this little fellow close to him.

My dear little Mother, Nana, wanted to live until her first great grandchild arrived. Bless her heart, she did so and she loved that baby so much. She had her picture taken with Bob's first son as well as her first great grandbaby.

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Bob and Jacquie spent much time together before he was sent to Fort Ord for basic training. At that time Bob was eighteen years of age and Jacquie was sixteen. I told Bob that she was much too young to stay at home twiddling her thumbs while he was away. She should participate in young people's activities. However, you could see that they were madly in love with each other.

After Bob's basic training was finished and being his I.Q. and grades were extremely high he was sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma to study instrumental survey for the army. There he met a good buddy named Eugene Anderson from Nebraska.

After three months of study Bob returned home to the ranch for two weeks leave. He would not tell us what was in store for him but we all surmised that he would be sent somewhere in the war zone. When his two weeks of leave were up he had to report to Fort Ord. We all realized that he would be leaving for overseas but we did not know just when.

Each evening Ted and I took Jacquie to Fort Ord to visit with Bob. My heart was very heavy but I tried hard to conceal my feelings. On our last visit Bobby dressed in his army fatigues. The three of us realized that this would be the last visit before he would sail for overseas.

On our return trip home that night we three spoke very little. Our thoughts were with Bob and for his safety. But above all we knew that God heard our prayers and our trust in faith in Him would bring our big boy back home again safely.

Ted's office while working for the Granite Construction Company in Aromas was located on a hill. At the bottom of this hill ran the railroad tracks. Before we left Fort Ord that night Bob told Ted that he would be passing by on the train at a certain time the following morning. Ted looking down from the hill the next morning, he could see Bob in the train very plainly as it passed. The two waved to each other.

I am sure Ted had tears in his eyes and Bob also. One of the boys on the train threw a paper out of the window. Ted went down the hill retrieve it. It was a letter to that boy's Mother which Ted immediately mailed.

That train took all of those boys to the debarkation point in San Francisco. From their

they left for their final assignment. Bob told me some time later when he went through the Golden Gate his departure would have been much less difficult had he known for sure that his body would be sent back home to his family in the event that he didn't come home alive. We all thank God that he did save our loved one and I still had the little flag in the sunroom window with the blue star on it and not a gold one as did the family of Bob's lifelong pal, Billy Botero.

Even though their hearts were sad the love they had for their country was paramount in their minds. Love and faith conquers all.

All of the time that Bob was overseas dear little Jacquie attended church service with me each Sunday at the Watsonville Presbyterian Church. I am sure God heard our prayers as he sent our loved one back safely to us. Safe is the key to the power of prayer.

Notes from Mimi:

Bob spent 33 days with the convoy of the ships on the water waiting down below the equator and not knowing their destination.

The ship that Bob was on landed in Leyete in the Philippine Islands. When he arrived there was no instrumental survey open so he was assigned to the big guns. His job was to accept orders and to pull the lanyard of the big guns or cannons. This was in Northern Luzon where all of the fighting was going on.

There is a lot of more detail and information that I hope Bob will help me with.

Due to the loud noise of the cannons Bob could not hear the orders so he was removed from that post and sent to a hospital to have his hearing checked. Where they found that he was deaf. From there he was sent to Biak Island down below the equator. He said that is there ever was a hell hole that was it. That was where he started smoking a pipe because he did not know what to do to pass the time.

Now I am going back a little ways.

All of the mail that came out of the Philippine Islands or war zone was censored. Everything was read that was sent out and everything that came in. It was about two weeks that we did not receive a letter from Bob at all. We became terribly concerned as he usually wrote to one of us daily. Every time I heard footsteps on the porch I feared that it was untimely and bad news.

In time when we received a letter from Bob and he stated that he had volunteered to go ahead of the infantry to seek out a nest of Japanese in trenches and such. He truthfully said that this was a terrible experience for him. When he was really afraid and he recited the 23rd Psalm a great feeling of peace came over him and he continued his mission. I presume this all took place in Northern Luzon.

I'm backing up again.

When Bob returned from Biak Island he was sent to Manila to work in an office for the government. His private secretary was a cute little Filipino girl named Betty Salindol.(SP)

Betty sent letters to us regularly. Bob would send his dirty underwear to be washed by little Filipino girls. He would use his worn out underwear to clean his gun. If they had a hole in them or anything the Filipino girls would mend them beautifully. The Filipino's are noted for their beautiful needle work. He sometimes would rip his underwear so that they would not mend it but they mended it beautifully just the same.

We often sent cookies, candy, salami, crackers, cheese and all kinds of goodies that we thought Bob would enjoy. Ted would seal these in different size cans which he used when canning meats and such at the ranch. Not all of the them reached Bob but what he did receive he really enjoyed – all of these goodies from home. Bob shared them with other boys less fortunate.

The day Bob left the Philippine Islands was one of the most happy days of his life. The voyage home was much more cheerful and shorter. I am sure Bob will never forget his innermost feelings as the ship sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge.

Bob could hardly wait to get his feet on good old American terra firma again. At the bottom of the gangplank coming from the ship were two people to welcome the boys home. On one side was the Red Cross serving the boys coffee and doughnuts for ten cents. On the other side of the gangplank was the Salvation Army serving the same but without charge.

As soon as Bob could get to a telephone he called home. Oh, how happy I was to hear his voice again although he did call once from the Philippines and at that time he sounded as though he were in the next room. I could hardly believe that it came across the ocean so clear.

I immediately thanked God for bringing Bob home safely. We were looking forward to meeting him but he said that he would rather we wait until he got to Camp Beale where he would be dismissed from the service of Uncle Sam. I said, "Bob, I wish you could join us for dinner for a celebration of your homecoming as we are having rattlesnake steaks." He thought I was kidding until I told him that Sonny had run over a rattlesnake with his bicycle in the driveway and Pappy skinned it out for us because none of us had eaten such a delicacy before. He said, "As soon as I get squared away here at Camp Beale I'll call home and you can come up to get me." He didn't mention anything about little Jacquie but I surmised that there was a fly in the ointment as she had not been quite as close to us as in the past.

Camp Beale was about a five hour drive from Watsonville at that time. Our dear Nana was not able to make that trip with us to Camp Beale but Sonny, Skippy, Ted and I got into our nice 1948 Buick which Bob had never seen.

Bob was waiting for us to arrive. After hello, kisses and tears Bob took us to the officer who was to release him. Much to our surprise his name was Reaves, spelled just exactly like ours which was very uncommon. After many pictures were taken with the Polaroid camera we headed back to the ranch.

I had the most wonderful surprise on our way home when I realized that I was talking to Bob naturally and his hearing was not impaired as I expected it to be.

Bob: Explain what you thought and said when you first saw the ranch, his home sweet home.

On the wall of the sunroom was a framed motto saying, "God bless our home." I know that God really did bless it as well as us. Needless to say, what a precious reunion dear Nana had with her precious grandson.

Bob's old bedroom was just like he had left it.

