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7/25/88

Dear Ann:

Thanks for the copy of your
"Back to Back - Siblings' Reunion -
April 14 - April 24, 1988" Very well
done and reported! My copy is now in
my mare's nest.

Enclosed are three pages of additions
to All in a Day's Living. Please
react to them with corrections
and suggestions.

I am re-editing this manuscript.
If you will send to me your
copy, I shall be glad to return
it "edited".

Love,
Jim

I Remember Frank

Mom and Pop had four children, one every two years between 1909 and 1916. Frank was the first-born and the first to leave the nest. Shortly after graduating from high school, he joined the U.S. Navy to establish his career. He rose through the ranks to become a Chief Warrant Officer, specializing in Radio Communications.

Frank was in the thick of the South Pacific battles of World War II. He was killed in an airplane crash in the Aleutian Islands. He was a passenger enroute home, following extended active duty in the Pacific in 1945.

My respect for him grew tremendously during my tenure in the Navy. We had not overlapped or come in contact in any official way. However, I came to respect and depend heavily upon the non-commissioned officers of his rank. I discovered that the Warrant Officers really are the backbone of the Navy--they run the show!

Frank's widow, Eleanor, helps us to maintain a sense of continuity and loving memories with Frank, Number One.

I Remember Ruby

Ruby is the number two child of Mom's and Pop's. Even though she married before graduating from high school, she was determined to finish her education. She did. It took a bit longer--what with her having a family of four children and with her having to manage her family's affairs alone for many years. She not only finished high school but also college and graduate school!

Ruby had the greatest familial influence on me, the number three child of the family. She invited me to come live with her in Stephenson (later its name changed to Crosby), Mississippi. I was just starting high school and she was just starting her family. She then had two small children, James Robert and Anelle. She immersed me gently but firmly into a discipline of being a "mother's helper" while being a conscientious student and athlete. Eventually, Ruby became the intermediary who made it possible for me to go to college. At Mom's suggestion, she had gone to see Mrs. Crosby (the wife of the owner of the mill where Pop worked) to borrow \$100 to underwrite my going to Delta State College in Cleveland, Mississippi. (After finishing college I repaid the \$100, but with no interest!)

James Robert unfortunately died as a small child. *Rheumatic fever*
Ruby's other three children--Anelle, Barbara, and Roddy--grew up in style and presented to Ruby and Clyde most successful husbands and wives and grandchildren.

Clyde Stringer is also a most successful discovery by Ruby. He is her second husband and the lovingly adopted grandpapa of Ruby's children's children.

I Remember Ann

Ann was (is) a hard-driving sister, number four in Mom's and Pop's family. Some of this drive was in her genes. But a lot of the motivation came from her being closely connected with the U.S. Army and Air Force, through ~~the~~ Husband Wade Heard's responsibilities and career. He retired as a Colonel, after thirty years of service starting in 1942.

Ann is an achiever in her own pattern. She retired from a professional career as Headmistress of a private Episcopalian school in Florida. She was an athlete and a scholar. She starred as a basketball player during high school and college years.

Wade and Ann had chosen together the field of Educational Administration pre-World War II. Wade switched to the Air Force as a career.

Melinda and Hampton, their two children, are "chips off the old blocks"--both filled with driving energy. Melinda is in a career with her husband, Jerry, at Boeing; and Hamp is pursuing a flying career as an Air Force Officer. He is a graduate of the Air Force Academy.

Back to Back
Siblings' Reunions
April 14 - April 24, 1988

With reckless abandonment, we tossed our 1040 1987, and our 1040 E.S. 1988 into the "out of town" slot a whole day early, then set out for St. Walton Beach for an overnight with our beloved Air Force friends the Tiptons who fulfilled our #1 driving motivation to drive the 2,000 mi r.t. Delivering fresh fruit to them was motivation #2. (You see, California and Texas have convinced the Dept. of Ag. and the Dept. of Trans. that Florida fruit is unfit to be mailed or carried commercially because of canker infestation - [a condition which probably exists in Texas & California] - unless unions have packed chemically washed fruit and stamped it "fit" in.) #3 motivation found us revisiting Eglin A.F.B. where we defended, and Walker Estate where we camped for three years along with deer, horses, rabbits, snakes, phosphorescent water, crabs, fish, and other fauna & flora. On Saturdays, when we drove to town in our 4 hole Buick Convertible, an observer would never guess that we were barefooted.

#4 motivation was driving I-10 his way into New Orleans on Apr 15, to fetch Brother Jim and Tah at noon at the International Airport. Driving around the terminal a few Xs trying to maneuver the correct exit lane to Baton Rouge was a disgusting experience for everyone - except the driver "moi". #5 motivation: ditto motivation #2, and the Stringers were happy to see that fruit with all the battles scattered amongst. We set about enjoying motivation #⁵ as we tackled the most beautiful buffet of La. seafood ever designed by Clyde. Ruby's grandchildren - the Tuckers - assisted us in destroying the evidence (they are lawyers) that Clyde had robbed the sea of its very best produce. April 16 found us on the battleground - re visiting "Hall's Bridge". Tah briefed us on who, what, why, when, where, and how, since I was the only visible casualty, resting in the shade of the fire truck while a medic attempted to flush "something" from my right eye. My brother Jim advised the medic to cease worrying, since "it" was only a mate.

Following a superb buffet at

Bayou Sara's Burning (where Ruby, Wade & Ann volunteered a rendering of the ballad until the desk clerk turned up the volume of the ballad properly rendered - how were we to know?) we proceeded to visit, briefly, these beautiful cotton plantation mansions about St. Francisville. Our journey into the past terminated at Grace Church and Cemetery. The church was organized in 1827, however, the cornerstone of the existing church was laid in 1858. Federal gunboats shelled the belfry in 1863. Shortly thereafter, a momentary truce was declared so that Lt. Commander John Hart of the Federal Army could be buried by a few local masons dressed in their Confederate uniforms. Commander Hart's grave has the Masonic emblem etched into it.

April 17 gave us seats at a matinee; L. S. U. Drama department presented "She stoops to Conquer". The play was most entertaining, because it was so well presented. L. S. U. was "alive" with activity, beautiful buildings, and blooming flora. It was exciting to be on that campus.

Later, we drove through Swaggert's composed of modern, uninspiring buildings. ③

on our way to Tuckers' Barbeque where Anelle and Fred (Sherill's parents) joined us. The Tuckers' home is a beautiful consequence of their composit ideas, a good builder, and a will to persevere. Their barbeque is, also, very good.

April 18 began with an alarm - in order to deliver Jim & Fah to New Orleans for a 2:30 A.M. departure for New York. At that early hour, circling the terminal many times was not required to gain the exit lane to Baton Rouge where a farmer's breakfast was spread, and the bridge table was in place. The next twelve hours were interrupted for trip to Sigger's bar. Ruby deserves a medal for programming a function so suitable for her family.

After a few hours of bridge in the A.M. of April 19, we made our farewells, then returned to I. 10, I. 12, I. 55 to Jackson, Miss. For me, it was a trip through basketball country, tennis tournaments, and glee club-concerts - 55 years ago! By mid-afternoon, we had followed Joe Heard's directions to his back-yard. Irma was flying the "glad you are here" flag, while Joe was collecting Sara Belle at the

terminal. The family became more complete with the arrival of Ed and Mildred from Monroe, La. next day, April 20. Joe and Wade had the long awaited fishing trip; the girls visited the Jackson Municipal Museum to enjoy the originals of Norman Rockwell which are making a tour this year; Aunt Beth and the boys drove up from Natchez to have dinner with us and to share pictures on April 21. On Friday, Apr 22, we drove to Vicksburg to dine (lunch) at Delta Point Restaurant. From atop the bluff, we watched the traffic entering ^{La} Arkansas on that old, beautiful bridge while huge tug boats hauled commerce on the river, as we ate catfish served with bernaise sauce, red cabbage with carrots, scalloped potatoes - all preceded by the crab soup - memorable, thanks to our hostess Aunt Mildred. Through out the gathering, Sam Barron & family dropped by, as did Dillon, (grandson). Irma kept the calories before us, so we ate, walked, sang, remembered when and had a wonderful time while growing fatter (not a motivation). April 24 found us on the road again, but we halted our progress long enough to

to have lunch with George and
Myrtle McNeese in Hattisburg. The last
time we were with them was when we
were enroute to Jackson Hole to meet the
Kaethers. Skip Baker came along. We "caught
up on" family, raided Myrtle's jelly pantry,
then headed for Florida. At De Funiak Springs,
there is a small motel in a huge pecan grove
on the south side of I 10. We love it, because
staying there is without hassle, food is good,
plenty of walking space, has "no-smoking"
rooms, and our trip is evenly divided.
We returned to Brevard County mid after-
noon, April 24, to be greeted by the
Carolina Wren and two infants - one
promptly flew into the middle of the fool,
so Wade dusted off his life-guard skills
to affect a rescue, however, mama had flown
into the jungle, leaving us with no alternative
but to place infant back into the wire box
(covering the hole in the personnel dear to the
garage - where Hamp placed a fist once) where it
had hatched. At dawn April 25, mother wren
reclaimed the infant - much to our relief.

Best love,

Mom