



1922. The year began with the British Empire at its largest extent, covering a quarter of the world and ruling over one in four people on Earth. Later that year, President Warren Harding introduced the first radio into the White House; Joseph Stalin was appointed General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party; the Lincoln Memorial was dedicated; Mussolini became the youngest Prime Minister of Italy at age 39; Howard Carter became the first person to enter the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun in over 3,000 years, and finally, nearing the end of the year, on All-

Hallows-'Eve, 1922, Robert ("Bob") Elliott was born in Manteca, California to parents Glenn and Aida. Bob's dad Glenn ran a local butcher shop that had belonged, before him, to his father. An only child, Bob grew up spending part of his time on a dairy farm that belonged to his Uncle Ernie.

Between the World Wars, 6 years before the Great Depression, the early 1920's in California were busy – new water projects (Hetch-Hetchy); new highways (a new California Highway Commission in 1923); and new infrastructure (Naval Station in San Diego in 1920). After Aida and Glenn separated in the late '20s (quite unusual for the time), Bob and his mother moved to San Jose, where they lived with his Aunt Ethel, her husband, and cousin Ken during the Great Depression. Aida worked at Hales, a local department store. Later in life, Bob remembered many hard times and, in particular, eating lots of rice to keep hunger at bay. (He was never fond of rice after his early experience). As a boy, Bob attended Willow Glen grammar school; picked apricots to earn occasional pocket money; once, on a lark, climbed the Campbell Water Tower; attended Campbell High School and – after he'd earned his California Driver's License – enjoyed the occasional drive over the Old Santa Cruz Highway with cousin Ken in a 1920's Model A (his first car) to enjoy an evening with friends at Coconut Grove in Santa Cruz.



In 1942, as the war in Europe was raging, 20-year old Bob enlisted in the Air Force. Measles he'd experienced as a child had affected his eyes (he wore glasses from the age of 15), and he was, sadly, kept from the cockpit. He transitioned to mechanics and spent the war years as an Air Force engineer, moving from post to post, including Chelmsford, Nottingham field, Folkingham, Greenham, Oxford, Southampton (all in England); Utah Beach in France; Chantilly, France; Nuremberg, Germany; Mannheim, Germany; Vienna, Austria; Poix, France; and, finally, Marseille, France before sailing for home from Calais in 1946. All these locations –

and associated dates – are preserved in Aida's old address book, where she faithfully recorded, using a fountain pen and her neat penmanship, every single war-time location of her faraway son.

A year after returning from war-weary Europe, and living at home with his mother, Bob became friends with Aida's soon-to-be 2nd husband (she remarried in 1948) – Oliver ("Pappy") Parkes, to whom Bob would grow close. As the years passed, Bob and his step-father Pappy would find many occasions to head off into the California wilderness on hunting and fishing expeditions. Pappy was employed by Bank of America and helped Bob move into the banking world as well, where he started his career as a teller and loan officer, a job he held for 25 years. Manning his station at the bank one day in 1947, who should walk in but a young woman named Ann making a lunchtime bank visit with a friend who needed to cash a check. Some special spark surely flew across the barrier that day because – later that afternoon – Bob (who must have located Ann's contact information through bank records) called her at home and started what would turn out to be a life-long love affair. Their first date? Coconut Grove. Ann's first recollection of Bob as he stood behind the teller's window on that long-ago day? "Pretty cute!"



Ann (last name Kennard) was born in 1923 in San Jose – one year after Bob - and was also an only child. Her dad – Richard – was a purchasing agent for Southern Pacific RR, and was able to stay well employed through the years of the Great Depression. Her mom, also named Ann, was a nurse before becoming married. And while Ann remembers a "feeling of loneliness", owing to being an only child, she does not remember, thankfully, having to eat rice for weeks on end to get through the late 20's and early 30's! Ann lived in the same house in the Rose

Garden of San Jose for 27 years; in fact, she lived there until she left home upon marrying Bob! Ann and her parents escaped the summertime heat in San Jose with a cottage in the Santa Cruz Mountains in the Aldercroft Heights area – where Ann reports feeling ... lonely! As a child, Ann learned to play the piano and to sing; talents that took her into a music major at San Jose State University. Her first car was a 1949 Studebaker. After graduation, Ann took a job at a water company – Cal Water Services – where she learned accounting and ran a “comptometer”, the first commercially successful key-driven mechanical calculator, patented in the USA in 1887. Now, for the uninitiated, a “comptometer” is no trifling matter – it is extremely fast because each key adds or subtracts its value to the accumulator as soon as it is pressed - a skilled operator (like Ann) can enter all of the digits of a number simultaneously, using as many fingers as required. Her fingers practically flew!

At around this time, Pappy retired from his position with the bank and took up a new career: he raised poultry and built a chicken ranch in Morgan Hill. Meanwhile, Bob and Ann were married in 1950 at the First Methodist Church in San Jose; a ceremony that was attended by Bob’s mom Aida, Pappy, his dad Glenn and Ann’s mom (her father having passed away a few years earlier). The reception was held on a sun-splashed afternoon in the Parkes backyard, on the corner of Bascom and Hamilton in San Jose. They enjoyed a honeymoon at Lake Tahoe and Lassen, and took an apartment on Buena Vista in San Jose. Shortly thereafter, they bought their first house together: a 2br/1ba house that set them back a whopping \$40/month (\$13,000 purchase price!) and that they



eventually sold for the princely gain of \$6,000! Soon, Bob and Ann started a family: Mark was born in 1954; Donna in 1957 and Lori in 1962 (whose birth, incidentally, and thankfully!, caused Bob to abandon a long-time smoking habit). In 1961, to accommodate their growing family, Bob and Ann bought a larger home in Campbell. As a young family, they enjoyed camping in numerous California locations – Yosemite, Lake Tahoe, Big Sur and in the redwoods.



During this time, Bob developed a deeper passion for fishing and hunting; a passion that he shared with his stepfather Pappy. When the mood struck and the opportunity presented itself, the 2 of them would pack their gear and hightail it to the California High Sierras – Lassen, Red Bluff and other locales – to hunt white-tail deer, fish for brown trout in mountain streams and sit

around the fire and tell tall tales. Some of the trips were to a hunting property owned by a friend of Pappy’s; during these trips, Bob and Pappy chanced across the well-worn Indian grinding stones that grace their expansive decks. According to Ann, who heard of their exploits “post trip”, Bob and Pappy found themselves in more than one long-lost cave, hidden deep in the rugged Sierras, where they happened upon all manner of forgotten Indian treasure. The grinding stones, in particular, were especially prized – relics of an active Indian lifestyle from the 18th and 19th centuries and before. Very possibly, some of the grinding stones you can see on Bob and Ann’s deck are from a long-ago Miwok family who used the stones to grind acorns, which made up a large portion of their diet.

Bob and Ann bought their lot at Sunset Beach in 1972 and built their home in 1973. Initially part-time residents, they moved here full time in 1980 after Lori graduated from High School in San Jose. In 1977, they also bought the house across the street from a former resident and local builder – Dick Wenzel; a house that they owned (and rented occasionally) until they sold it in 1992. Donna lived in the house for 3 years. Bob loved to go clamming at Sunset Beach – back when Sunset Beach was an active clamming site. His old clamming fork is still in a place of honor in the house. As their children grew up and left home, Bob and Ann took to traveling more and more widely – Hawaii was a favorite destination (although it must be said that an enduring memory from one trip to a particularly musty cottage in Kauai was Ann’s very first sighting of a cockroach!). They also became quite involved with the Tauck series of tours – and found themselves touring Alaska, Colorado and New England with a growing group of



like-minded traveling friends. Palm Springs, also, became a favorite destination. Wherever they went, Bob and Ann went in style!

Many of you will also know that Bob had an abiding interest in wine, a taste that he cultivated for much of his life. A favorite family story has it that once, on an excursion into his wine cellar, Bob was accidentally locked into the cellar by Donna's daughter Kari, leading him to remark, upon being freed, that he'd need to make sure that he always had a corkscrew in the cellar in the event that he was ever locked in again! Bob (and Ann's) interest in wine took them on any number of delightful wine sojourns – to Napa, Sonoma, the Carmel Valley, and beyond.



A long-term bladder-cancer survivor, Bob came to be known (quite belovedly) in his later life, by one of his nicknames: "Sweet Ole Bob", or, more succinctly: "S.O.B". He retired at the ripe young age of 65, but not before having the supreme pleasure of making a daily commute over Highway 17 for several years: an experience that – for those of us who know it well – is not to be missed! (Ahem). After 25 years with Bank of America, Bob transitioned into a rewarding career as a real estate appraiser with a large Savings & Loan, a career that was also adopted by Mark. Once "retired", Bob managed to stay quite busy with many diverse, and challenging activities – one of which was to manage a 320-acre Dairy Farm on the San Joaquin River - the very same farm he'd played on as a boy - that had been bequeathed to him by his Uncle Ernie. In those long-ago years, Bob had grown to know – and love – spending time with his Uncle on the dairy farm, learning to milk the cows. Once, Ann reports, Bob and his Uncle thought they'd found a large stash of gold by the river; a dream that lasted only until some mean soul had to point out that it was only a pile of pyrite. A boy can dream!



Bob was especially proud of his long-term membership in the Masonic Lodge, in which he became a Master in San Jose Lodge #210 in 1970 after only 8 years of membership. Attending meetings every Thursday night for years, Bob and the other Masons dedicated countless hours to philanthropic activities and cemented life-long friendships. And speaking of friendships, this correspondent remembers well one occasion when Bob was confined for a 2-week period to a local convalescent facility with 2 "room-mates". By my 2nd visit, I could see that, somehow, Bob had created a connection with his 2 roomies that was extraordinary – they chatted and joked like pals who'd known one another for years. I suspect that Bob had that effect on a great many people. Many of you will

also know that Bob managed our Sunset Beach signboard for over 30 years – constantly updating the names to reflect our ever-changing roster. Truly a labor of love! At right is a photo of Bob and Alberto making some changes.



Married 66 years, Bob and Ann had a full and happy life together, blessed in so many, many ways. A beautiful family, legions of friends, countless marvelous shared experiences. Among the memories, Ann remembers one notable

Christmas – 1980 – when Bob presented her with a brand new Rolex: a gift so unexpected, and so extravagant, that it nearly took her breath away. From the moment that she laid eyes on him: that fateful day in 1947 when their eyes met across a short expanse of countertop in the Bank of America, Bob and Ann shared a lifetime of love and joyful creation.



From their children Mark, Donna and Lori and their granddaughter Kari, to their immediate circle of closest friends, to their neighbors, to the wider world beyond, Bob and Ann brought so many people into their circle of experience. Bob's ever-present smile, his infectious enthusiasm, his joyful sense of humor, his ready willingness to be a friend to all – all of these things we deeply miss. Bob – we bow our heads at your passing, and thank you with the deepest gratitude for your many years of friendship.

Your friends at Sunset Beach