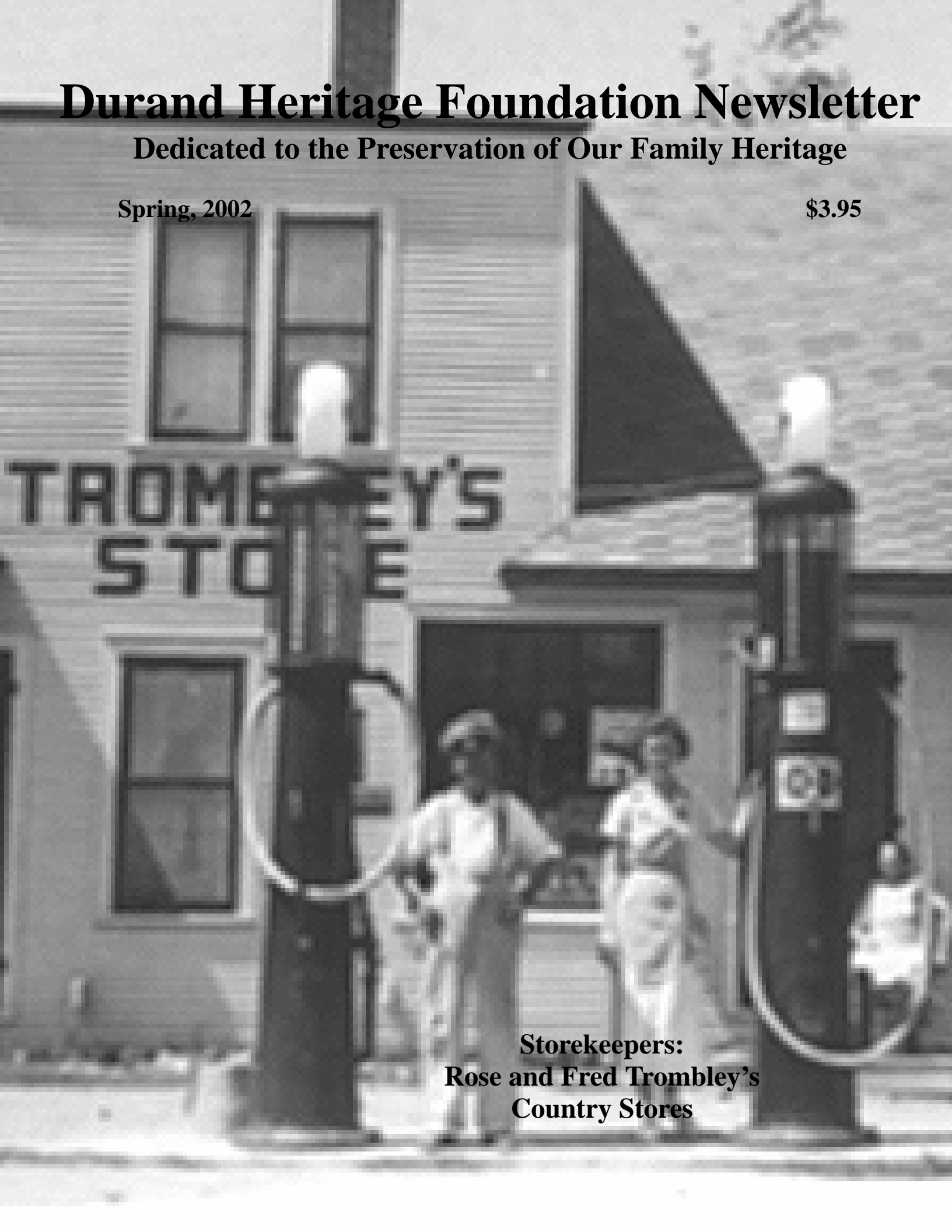


Durand Heritage Foundation Newsletter

Dedicated to the Preservation of Our Family Heritage

Spring, 2002

\$3.95



TROMBLEY'S
STORE

**Storekeepers:
Rose and Fred Trombley's
Country Stores**

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The cover: Fred Trombley (Sr.) and 20-year-old Helen Ridgway stand in front of Rose and Fred Trombley's country store in a picture taken about 1937. Rose Trombley sits on a chair in the background on the right side of the picture. This was the second store that the Trombleys operated in Scott Township. Rose was the daughter of Felix and Leocadie Durand and the sister of Louise Durand, who was married to Pierre Durand. Pierre and Louise were the first Durands to settle in the township of Scott in Burnett County, Wisconsin in the late 1890's. The Trombleys moved to Scott in the early 1930's and built their first country store across the road from Pierre and Louise Durand's farmstead. Helen Ridgway later married Rose Trombley's nephew, Wilbur Durand. Note the gravity-feed gasoline pumps.

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I remember...

Storekeepers: Rose and Fred Trombley's Country Stores

By Helen Ridgway Durand

Having received two new pens this past Christmas, I cannot find a reason to postpone writing about two ambitious and beloved people of Scott township in northwest Wisconsin, Fred and Rose Trombley. I'll give a little background of how my family, the Ridgways, got involved with the Durand family and thus the Trombleys.

My parents, Elwin and Mary Ridgway, moved from Somerset, Wisconsin to Lakota, North Dakota in 1926. However, while living in Somerset my father had bought property on Oak Lake near the farm of Pierre and Louise Durand. While in the area he met some of that sprawling family.

It was probably in 1927 that Pierre and Louise's son Moses and a neighbor named Peter Augustine came to our home in Lakota. Whether they were seeking harvest work or just visiting I don't know. I do know that while at our place Moses prayed over my sister Vera's goiter. I was about ten years old at the time and was very impressed. I also know that she was cured, because she never had a prominent goiter again. Moses' gift of healing was mentioned in another article in the foundation's *Newsletter*, so I thought I'd mention this anecdote to lend additional credence to that story.

My sister Ruth thinks it was after the visit of Moses and Peter Augustine that our sister Fern left

for Wisconsin with them. There she would meet and marry the youngest son of Pierre and Louise Durand, Gilbert.

Later, after my sister Vera married and moved to Bayport, Minnesota, she and her husband Joe Arndt would come visit us in North Dakota for their

yearly vacation. Vera would get so lonely being away from her family that after their visit in 1931 I went back to Bayport to live with them.

While I was living in Bayport, Vera and Joe took me up to Durand country to stay with my sister Fern for a week or two that summer. As Fern was working and living at Five Lakes Club, I stayed with Peter and Louise Durand in their big farm house. At the time their sons Arthur, Peter, and Ray were bachelors living with their parents and running the farm.

I found the Durands to be a kind and generous family. Their son Peter often made a trip to their huge garden to come back with a melon to share, while Ray started me on the dancing circuit. Through the Durands I met many more people in the area.

In November the Arndts and I returned to the Durand area again because my sister Fern had chosen me to be her maid of honor. The best man was Henry Tetrault, brother of Napoleon Durand's wife Louise. Fern and Gilbert (Bert) were married November 24, 1931. Just a week earlier I had turned 14 years of age.



Rose (Durand) and Fred Trombley. Rose was the sister of Louise (married to Pierre Durand). Rose and Louise were two of Felix and Leocadie's 11 children. This picture, probably taken in 1934, shows Fred Trombley at age 72 wearing his D-X cap. The Trombleys sold D-X brand gasoline at their country stores.

In 1935 my parents moved back to Wisconsin from North Dakota and for a while lived with my sister Fern and her husband Gilbert in the town of Scott. Meanwhile, living with an aunt and uncle in Lakota, I finished my junior year in high school and then joined my parents in Wisconsin.

At the time my sister Fern had one son (Robert) and was expecting another child. Bert was in a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp at Danbury and only came home on weekends. After Fern had her second son (Richard) I was pressed into service to help her. It was with their two cows that I had my first and last milking experience. After getting

swatted in the face by a cow's tail morning and night, I made a mental note not to marry a farmer.

Aunt Rose hired me a couple of times while they were running the small store that Uncle Fred had built at the end of Pierre and Louise Durand's driveway on land he leased from Pierre. I remember helping Aunt Rose prepare big juicy

red strawberries for shortcake. What a treat! In North Dakota the berries were a few small wild ones we found in our pasture. To this day I feel that strawberry shortcake can't be beat as a dessert!

That fall I got a job in Bayport at the home of the sales manager for the Andersen Window Company. It was a lovely home and the work wasn't hard, but it was time-consuming and lonely. I worked seven days a week...all for \$4 a week, including my room and board. Thursday afternoons I would get a couple of hours off and go to my sister Vera's house.

When spring arrived, I quit that job and headed back to Durand country to seek employment at Five Lakes Club where I worked in the kitchen. By that time Gertrude Durand (Napoleon and Louise Durand's daughter) knew me and took me under her wing. In the afternoons we had time for a swim in

Oak Lake. That was our recreation and also our bath for the day.

After Labor Day the club closed, and I was again faced with unemployment. I wrote to my aunt, Agnes Weaver, in East Grand Forks, ND, and she agreed that I could live with her while I finished my senior year of high school. I was graduated in May, 1937. It was about that time my mother wrote to tell me that Fred and Rose Trombley wanted to hire me to work in their new and bigger store.

The Trombley's had sold their old store to Pierre and Louise's son Arthur. Their new store was located at the intersection of county roads A and H,

not far from where my folks now lived

I was ecstatic at the news! I wanted to return to Wisconsin! Aunt Rose wasn't my real aunt until I married her nephew Wilfred. However, with all the Durand connections in the area, nearly everyone called the Trombleys Uncle Fred and Aunt Rose.

They were loved and respected by nearly everyone and admired for undertaking such a huge

task as running a country store at their ages. Aunt Rose was 65 and Uncle Fred was 75 when I came there to work for them in 1937. Because the upstairs of the store was unfinished, I chose a space in the front dormer with two windows facing the gas pumps.

I enjoyed keeping busy, doing everything from pumping gas and waiting on customers to housework. It was exciting to meet so many new people.

After the summer tourist season was over most of the girls my age would leave with the families they worked for to go back to their city homes, mostly in Minneapolis and Chicago. With the shortage of young women during the off-season I had an advantage at the store in meeting and dating many young men.

Our candy salesman came out from Webster to



Rose and Fred Trombley pose in front of their first country store in Scott township, situated across Country Road H from Pierre and Louise Durand's farm on land leased from Pierre and Louise. Fred Trombley built this store, then operated it from about 1931 to 1936, at which time he sold the building to Arthur Durand, one of Pierre and Louise Durand's 11 sons.

keep us stocked with candy. On one visit he treated Aunt Rose and me to a new candy bar, the Nut Goodie. He advised us to charge 10 cents instead of 5 cents like the rest of the candy bars. Today that candy bar costs about 69 cents.

One of Lewis and Jennie Durand's daughters has told me how Aunt Rose liked buttermilk. The children would bring her a jar of buttermilk; she'd drink it, rinse the jar, and fill it with candy for them.

We had a slot machine put in the store that made about \$35 a month. Uncle Fred and Aunt Rose kept this money separate for the monthly payment on Uncle Fred's new pick-up truck. When the jackpot paid out the winner should have played another nickel to take the machine off the payout mode. Uncle Fred would get really upset if the winner didn't and he'd have to put his own nickel in to move the wheels.

Gas was 20 cents a gallon and Wisconsin longhorn cheese was 69 cents a pound. Uncle Fred and I would compete to see who could cut one pound on the nose off the big hunk of bulk cheese. It wasn't easy, because the longhorn was large and tapered smaller at the top. It was fun to compete though, even if neither of us hardly ever won. We sold and ate a lot of cheese, because refrigerators and freezers weren't in the area yet. The huge ice-box could only be loaded with big blocks of ice.

One day a group of Indians stopped to sell us blueberries for 10 cents a quart. With the money they earned from the blueberries they ordered ice cream cones for the women and children but bought cans of near beer (3.2% alcohol) beer for the men. Because of a pending law about how much beer he could sell to Indians, Uncle Fred after a while told the men that they had had enough and asked them to leave. But they were feeling too good to stop and put up a fuss, so Uncle Fred picked up a crow bar. The Indians took the hint and left. Uncle Fred was known for being fearless. Some compared him to a feisty bantam rooster.

Another day an Indian couple stopped by the store and sold me a beaded bracelet for 50 cents. The name "Rose" was beaded into it, so someone must have told them the woman at the store was named Rose. I enjoyed wearing the bracelet, but one day it slipped off my wrist and was gone. What a wonderful memento that bracelet could have become!

Aunt Rose loved flowers. Knowing that, a friend

named Harry Rannetsberger brought her a hydrangea plant and taught her how to care for it. It bloomed beautifully, and she proudly displayed it near the store entrance. Uncle Fred and Aunt Rose also hung a Sacred Heart of Jesus scapular above the door of the store. They both possessed a strong Christian faith.

With the tourist season over, winter meant slower business. In her spare time Aunt Rose made an appliqué quilt of squares with a lily and lily pad on each square. The pink and white quilt was beautiful, and all the



Helen Ridgway Durand in jodphurs donned for the motorcycle ride she took with a friend from high school who made a surprise visit to the Trombley's store. The two young people helped douse a fire from a gasoline lantern.

hand-stitching kept her busy for a long time. The quilt graced her bed, and she proudly showed off her handiwork to her many friends.

Aunt Rose was a very good cook, but Uncle Fred didn't have a healthy appetite. I recall him taking a slice of bread, spreading it with meat drippings, folding it over, then eating it as if it were a chore. I've since read that the French love pork roast because they save the drippings and spread it on bread. It's

called *Grece de Routis*. Now I know how Uncle Fred came upon such an unusual sandwich.

One day a motorcyclist drove up, probably the first one ever to stop at Trombley's store. When I went to greet the rider I recognized him as a fellow student from East Grand Forks in Minnesota, Joe Maszk. As evening drew on and while Joe and I

were visiting, Aunt Rose thought that the lantern above the gas pumps was too dim. As I brought the lantern in she was ready with a can of gasoline to refill it. Suddenly the can of gas caught afire! The air around us was filled with fire from the gasoline fumes, singeing my hair and clothes. As Aunt Rose tried to put the fire out with an apron I remembered a tub of rainwater by the corner of the store, so I called to Joe to come quickly. We each took a handle and swung so the water doused the fire in the doorway. After the excitement abated I noticed the pain on my wrist. I'd burned myself, but wasn't aware of it until the fire was out. In the photo of me dressed in jodphurs I have a bandaged wrist from this incident, but Aunt Rose was not injured by the fire.

During the slow months of winter I would look through Aunt Rose's photo albums. One picture that piqued my interest was of her brother Azarie's four boys. Aunt Rose must have noticed. When she went to visit her brother in Faribault, Minnesota she told his two eldest sons that she had just the girl for them. She must have roused Wilfred and Edward's curiosity, because they made a trip up to Durand country to meet me. But I'm sure they also enjoyed the opportunity to travel with their parents and to get a break from the daily farm chores.

I was especially attracted to Wilfred. He stayed on the farm with the family and the responsibility was on him to keep the farm going. His brother Edward, on the other hand, liked to roam, and spent years in South America and then in Alaska.

Wilfred and I courted for a while, and eventually set our wedding date for September 26, 1939.

Uncle Fred traveled once a week to Spooner to

pick up stock goods for the store. When he came home he usually laid down after his tiring 40-mile round trip, and this particular day was no different. A short time after he got up, however, he said that he didn't feel well. He went back to bed. We called the doctor. The doctor treated him, but Uncle Fred didn't make it, and passed away.



Above: Helen Ridgway Durand (center) on her wedding day in 1939 with new husband Wilfred Durand (son of Azarie and Clara Durand) and Helen's sister Ruth, the maid of honor. The wedding took place at the Crescent Lake church. Missing from the picture is best man Henry, Wilfred's brother

Of course, his death came as a blow to Aunt Rose, because she'd depended on him to keep things going. After his death I moved down from my upstairs room and shared Aunt Rose's bedroom.

Her friends and relatives encouraged her to keep the store, so with the help of others we operated the store until Wilfred and I married. Then I moved out and Wilfred and I spent a few months living with a family named O'Brien for our room and board while Wilfred worked in the woods cutting pulp wood.

From there we moved to Faribault to live with Wilfred's folks. Meanwhile, my sister Ruth began working for Aunt Rose. Sometime later a fire broke out in the basement where the

wood was stored near the furnace, and the store burned to the ground on December 7, 1942.

Aunt Rose sold the property to John Sherrard, who built another home-and-store combination on the same location, but to me it was never the same. The new store resembled the old store, but it could never be the same friendly place without Aunt Rose and Uncle Fred. They had become legendary.

After she sold the property Aunt Rose went to live with her son Alfred in Minneapolis. She died

in 1952 at the age of 75. Now, 50 years later, she and Uncle Fred still live in my happy memories.

In 1940 Wilfred and I moved to Bayport, Minnesota, where Wilfred worked for 31 years at Andersen Windows. In 1952 my sister Fern's husband Bert built us a rambler-style home where I still live today.



Author Helen Ridgway Durand with daughters Cynthia (Cindy) and Jane in front of Helen's Bayport "rambler."

Author's Family of Four Children Has Provided Her with Fourteen Grandchildren

Born 11/17/1917 and married to Wilfred Durand in September, 1939, Helen Ridgway Durand had four children who married and provided her with grandchildren. Her four children and their children are:

Elizabeth Ann (born 2/2/1941, married Warren Utecht on 11/12/1960) Elizabeth and Warren's children are: Brian (born 9/19/1961), Gregory (born 1/6/1963), Rebecca (born 9/15/1964) and Janet (born 5/9/1948)

David Wilfred (born 4/25/1942) married Rose Trudeau, a widow whose husband was killed in a plane crash. David adopted Rose's four children: Wanda (born 9/30/1951), Linda (born 6/26/1955), Kenneth (born 9/27/1954) and James (born 2/19/1959)

Jane Ellen (born 9/29/1950) married James O. Nelson on 10/24/1970). Jane and James's children are: Philip (born 6/11/1975—adopted), David (born 2/2/1977—adopted), Sarah (born 3/25/1981—adopted), and Aaron (born 11/26/1983).

Cynthia Jean (born 11/2/1957) married Bruce Dulan on June 10, 1977. Cynthia and Bruce's children are: Ryan (born 5/9/1981) and Mark (born 9/27/1983).



Three of the five Ridgway sisters L to R: Ruth (Neumann), who served as Helen's maid of honor, Fern (Durand), and author Helen (Durand), who served as Fern's maid of honor. Their youngest sister, Jean, died from a ruptured appendix at age 12 in 1933. Their sister Vera died in 1979. This photo is probably the last taken of the three sisters. Fern died in 2001. In addition to their five daughters, Elwin and Mary (Fahey) Ridgway had two sons, Frank and Steve, both deceased.

More About the Trombleys **By Helen Ridgway Durand**

Before moving to the township of Scott in north-west Wisconsin to open their country store, Alfred (Fred) and Rose Trombley lived in Somerset, Wisconsin, and also in Minneapolis. Fred had a sister named Sophie who was married to a Paul Delisle who lived in Somerset. Sophie and Paul's family included several sons who came to visit Fred and Rose while I worked in their store.

Fred and Rose had only one child, a son name Alfred Trombley, Jr (1890-1962). This son married a Rachel Beaupre in 1913 and had six children: Dorothy (1914), Edmire (1918), Marian (1919), Edwin (1923), Lawrence (1925), and Richard (1930). I met all of the children when they came to visit their grandparents.

Fred Trombley, Sr., whose exact birthdate and date of death need to be determined, was initially buried in Crescent Lake cemetery. However, his body was later exhumed and reburied near his wife Rose in Faribault's St. Lawrence Cemetery. Rose, who died while living with her son Fred in Minneapolis, arranged for Fred and her to be buried near the graves of her sister Anna (Blais) and Anna's two children.

We Need Volunteers! Call 952-431-5610

**Durand Relatives Ran Four Stores in Scott
But Where Was Felix Durand's Store Located?**

The letterhead at the bottom of this page shows that the Felix Durand "Cash Store" was located in "Durandville, Wis." But where was Durandville?

Most likely the letterhead address was tongue-in-cheek, because the postal address for Felix Durand's store is Webster, Wisconsin, some 20 miles distant from the store's location. Felix was the 6th son of Pierre and Louise Durand. Nonetheless, the exact location of Felix's store is something of a mystery, and being able to pinpoint that location would help solidify the known history of the four stores that Durand relatives ran in the area of Pierre and Louise Durand's farm.

In her history of the town of Scott, *Great Scott!*, Beatrice Durand Derrick tells us that "Felix... operated a small store built on a corner of his father's land," a store that was sold about 1925 and destroyed by fire shortly after. At the time Pierre and Louise Durand's farm was comprised of several disconnected parcels totaling some 640 acres, so the corner on which Felix's store was located could have been in several places. Maurice Durand, Felix and Anna Durand's eldest son who now lives in Camano Island, Washington, does not remember the exact location, but relates a family story of how lightning from an electrical storm hit the store's stove pipe when Maurice was just five months old and knocked the whole family senseless. This incident would have happened in the early spring of 1925, just before the store was sold.

Some time after Felix and Anna sold their store and moved from "Durandville" to Spooner, Wisconsin (perhaps about 1931), Fred and Rose Trombley built their first store across country road

H from the entrance to Pierre and Louise Durand's farm, on land leased from Pierre and Louise. Rose Trombley was the sister of Pierre's wife Louise. This store is pictured on page 4 of this *Newsletter*. According to *Great Scott!*, Fred and Rose ran that store for five years, then sold it to Arthur Durand, Pierre and Louise Durand's 7th son.

After Arthur Durand married in 1938, he moved the building onto property he had purchased adjacent to Pierre and Louise Durand's homeplace. Putting on an addition, Arthur and his wife Elinore lived in the back portion and operated a store in the front of their house. This store is depicted on pages 4 and 5 of the Winter, 2001 *Newsletter*.

In *Great Scott!* Beatrice Durand Derrick also writes that in about 1933 Fred Trombley bought 40 acres in Section 31 (actually Section 21), a parcel located at the intersection of country roads A and H, kitty-corner from the present "A and H" store. Here Fred and Rose built a new store, shown on the cover of this issue and described in detail in the feature article by Helen Ridgway Durand. After Fred Trombley died and the store burned to the ground, Rose Trombley sold the property to a Chicagoan named John Sherrard, who rebuilt the store on the old foundations and operated it until his death in 1950, when it was converted to a dwelling-place.

Beatrice Durand Derrick concludes her description of country stores in *Great Scott!* by saying that they were "the place to visit friends and neighbors, to settle politics and community affairs, to speculate on the weather and the crops or enjoy a good game of checkers or cards."

In no small part, such country stores are also part of our Durand family heritage. JCD

<p>GAS AND OIL STATION OPEN AT ALL TIMES.</p>	<p>Felix Durand "Cash Store" DEALER IN Groceries, Flour and Confectionery PHONE 11. DURANDVILLE, WIS.</p>	<p>THE LAND OF BEAUTIFUL LAKES AND SCENERY.</p>
<p>P. O., Webster, Wis., 1924</p>		

Joyce Durand Ripley of Spooner, Wisconsin, daughter of Gilbert & Fern Durand, sent the *Newsletter* this copy of the letterhead from Felix and Anna Durand's "Cash Store." Besides showing that the store handled "Groceries, Flour and Confectionery," the letterhead indicates that the store was open "AT ALL TIMES" and was located in "DURANDVILLE" in "THE LAND OF BEAUTIFUL LAKES AND SCENERY" Note the phone number — 11. Truly, 1924 was a simpler time.

Three family stories

Durands with the Gift of “Witching” Water: Success Silences Skeptics

Story #1

By Arthur A. Durand

“Water dowsing”: a term one seldom encounters today. But I grew up with it and it has become one of the great curiosities of my life. My father, Arthur James Durand, practiced the art of water dowsing with remarkable success, as I witnessed over and over again throughout my youth. At first skeptical, later accepting but not impressed, I now look back in absolute awe at the Lord’s bestowing of this gift upon him and the way it manifested itself in our lives.

My earliest recollections were of strangers coming to our house to inquire whether he could help them “find water.” Most of them had already tried on their own or had hired well-drillers to sink pipes at the spot the homeowner wanted the well. With unabashed confidence, Dad told them he not only could, but would find water if it was there. He also warned them it might not be where they hoped it would be. Many were surprised by his somewhat cocky sense of certainty, often reminding him that they had already dug or drilled for water, in some cases multiple times. Undaunted, he would drag out his little book of handwritten testimonials, many of which read something like the following:

To Whom it May Concern,

After driving pipe with a sand point down 60 to 80 feet in several locations and ending up

with no water, Mr. Durand used his testing rod to identify a spot where he said I would find a good supply of clear water at only 35 feet. He helped us put down the well and I’m happy to report that we found plentiful water just where he said we would and at the exact depth he said we would find it. I will never again attempt to put down a well without contracting for his services.

Signed....

Oftentimes I tagged along when he went to check out the property. As a kid I never paid much attention as he paced back and forth with his little flat, metal rod in his hand. Usually nothing happened at first, but eventually he seemed to focus more on one area than another. and before long he would fix his feet in one spot and focus full attention on the rod as he counted the number of times it would bob up and down. Before long he would proudly announce to the homeowner that he would find water on this exact spot at a certain depth, sometimes entailing a strange number like “37½ feet”. When he moved the tip of the rod several inches to the right or left, nothing happened, and he did this to emphasize that the well must be sunk on the exact spot he identified, not varying by so much as a low inches. If the customer did as Dad specified, he invariably got the results he wanted! If he didn’t, it was because the pipe had been driven at an angle rather

References to dowsing (or water witching) are hundreds of years old, and in the absence of scientific proof the claims that certain people can find underground water have long been greeted with much skepticism. Nonetheless, some instinct enables birds to navigate thousands of miles to return to their nesting grounds; some instinct makes us aware that someone is coming up behind; some sub-conscious power enables psychics to assist law officers.

The so-called divining rod or witching wand, to quote a researcher named Zabo V. Harvalik, is "nothing but a mechanical parametric amplifier and can be made of any material." Whether a willow branch or a saw blade or a wire coat hanger, the device exaggerates the reaction of the body to small magnetic or electromagnetic changes and makes them visible to the eye and palpable to the hand. Nonetheless, to many people the dowser's divining rod is about as credible as a fairy's magic wand or a witch's broomstick (both of which may have their origins in the dim history of dowsing).

Harvalik also makes the point that with practice dowsers can sensitize the brain to respond to certain stimuli. Thus, the history of dowsing also includes stories of dowsers finding minerals, lost graves, and buried treasures.

Today the practice of dowsing (to avoid the controversy of calling it an art or science) is carried on all over the world, and it is not unusual to find someone who has spent thousands of dollars in a fruitless search for water sending out a plea...can anyone help me find a dowser?

JCD

than straight down, thus missing the narrow but abundant stream of water Dad had identified. Dad would then resink the pipe and successfully tap the water stream.

As I entered my skeptical teenage years and began to have my head stuffed with “science” I began to question the whole process. I couldn’t argue with his success because I had personally witnessed it too many times. But I did begin to question whether or not I had paid close enough attention, whether the pipe truly had to be sunk on exactly the spot he designated and whether water really was found at the depth he specified. I couldn’t understand how the rod bobbed once for exactly one foot of depth. And when I asked him how he came up with the half foot measurement and he answered that it was because the rod bobbed only a little bit on the last bob, I really became skeptical. And set about being far more observant. So I set up a “scientific test,” as I understood the term back then.

The test was simple. I waited until we were putting down a well with the odd ½ foot depth tacked on (47½ feet in this case) and when Dad wasn’t looking I dropped a string with a steel nut on the end down the pipe until I heard it plunk into the water. I then marked the string, pulled it out, and CAREFULLY measured it: much to my amazement it measured exactly 47½ feet. That was the last time I questioned his gift.

Over the years I’ve studied dowsing and have learned there were several plausible explanations for his success. First, he used a flat metal rod, not a forked willow stick like most dowsers use. Second, he had an unusually high amount of magnetism in his body: even an anti-magnetic watch would gain an hour or more a day when he wore it. Third, the water he found was always “flowing water,” the kind that moves through cracks in the ground, or veins, much like human blood veins. The flowing water, the metal rod, and the magnetism in his body probably set up some kind of electrical current. So far, so good. BUT, this explanation does not answer why the rod bobbed once for each foot of depth.

One day I asked if I could hold the rod. Nothing happened. He put his hands over mine as I held the rod, and it bobbed the correct number of times. Much to my disgust, I concluded I could neither make it bob nor stop it from bobbing. This gift from God was truly his own to exercise for the

good of those who sought to find one of the most precious commodities on earth, life-giving water.

To this day I don’t understand it, and I don’t think science will ever explain it. But I can assure you I am no longer a skeptic: my skepticism was replaced in those faraway days by a pure wonderment, a sense of awe that remains with me to this day.

Story #2

By John Durand

Poor water pressure was a long-standing grievance at our house. Because our house stood at the edge of town, some summer days saw little more than a trickle come from our faucets. The toilet tank took forever to refill. To protest the poor service my father refused to pay the municipal water bill. In retaliation the City shut off our electricity! Disgusted that Spooner couldn’t (or wouldn’t) fix our water problem, my father installed wells and pumps in a duplex he built on our land. Now he was determined to have an independent water supply in our new house too, and one morning Uncle Art came to witch the well.

I liked Uncle Art. He drove a red truck that he used for logging with a big “HOW DEE” painted on the front, and when he came to visit he’d say, “Well, howdy, howdy!” During the dark days of our family’s misfortunes he brought slab wood in his truck and dumped it by the coal chute. A hale man, he sometimes came to town wearing a thick, wool, patterned shirt and big lace-up boots. Behind his back the little kids made fun of his ample stomach. They thought a simple rhyme that used names found in the family especially funny:

Gene, Gene made a machine

Frank, Frank, turned the crank,

Joe, Joe made it go

Art, Art let a fart, and blew it all apart!

The morning that Uncle Art came to witch the well he took his time getting the lay of the land, then began to traverse the high side of the shell of our new house site with slow, deliberate steps, sweeping his witching wand ahead of him about waist-high. His wand wasn’t the traditional forked willow branch, believed to possess a natural attraction to water. His was a flat, metal gauge about five feet long that he normally used to measure the level of gasoline in the bulk storage tank for his farm. Fascinated, my brother Paul and I followed his pro-

gress. Suddenly the end of his wand began to spring up and down. Uncle Art paused, seeming to concentrate. In a few moments the action weakened, then ceased, and our uncle resumed his slow advance.

After several more passes he began scuffing the dirt with his boot heel to mark where his wand indicated water. We could see that he was tracing a subterranean channel that ran at an oblique angle into our new house. At last he made a mark on the unfinished wall. "Well, Adelor'," he said to my father, "I tink you got a purdy good stream down dere about turdy foot." We followed him down the embankment and into the shell of the house, where he marked the channel again. My father drove a stake where he wanted to bore the well. A few days later Uncle Art returned with a small auger and several lengths of pipe.

I had little comprehension of how to go about drilling a well, but I provided muscle to help turn the hand-powered auger and haul up the earth. The glacial till dug easily, and within a half-hour I was cupping my hands around my eyes to peer down our hole at a faint gleam of water. We used a plumb bob and line to measure the distance from the water to the top of the embankment where Uncle Art had made his pronouncement. It was 29 feet.

Story #3

By Gene Durand

Our home in Boise, Idaho was often a stopover place for Wisconsin relatives driving to and from Oregon. Boise was about one day's drive to Uncle Felix's family in Roseburg and the same distance to where "Aunt" Elna (Mrs. Phil Sewell) lived and also to where my cousin Mary Alice and her husband Nevin Morrow lived. My wife Florence always prepared a big meal for the travelers, and our lively conversations always lasted into the wee hours.

Our Boise home was in a new sub-division about three miles from the city center on what the locals called "the first bench," a plateau rising about 200 feet above Boise, through which the Boise River flowed to join the Snake River, which in turn joined the Columbia River to seek the Pacific Ocean.

One evening Uncle Larry and his wife Harriet (Shell) and Uncle Pete stopped for the night. Early the next morning I went outside to find Uncle Larry slowly pacing back and forth across my backyard. His eyes were fixed on the blade from a bow saw in his right hand.

Seeing me, he announced that my property lay over a strong underground river about 500 feet down. He said that it flowed more or less diagonally across my lot. I followed his gesture with my eyes and asked him if this river flowed under my garage. He assured me that it did.

Ever skeptical, I asked him to follow me into the garage. There I put the bow saw blade in my bench-mounted vice with about one inch of the blade protruding below the jaws and the remaining 20-24 inches extending above. Tightening the vise jaws, I gripped the short end and tried to wriggle it. It didn't move, nor did the top part.

Satisfied, I said "Okay, Uncle Larry, work your magic now."

He gently pinched the short end of the blade between his thumb and forefinger. Almost immediately, but barely perceptibly, the long end of the blade began to move. Then the oscillations grew stronger and wider. When Uncle Larry took his hand away the oscillations stopped. He repeated his demonstration with the same result.

I had to admit to him that he had "the touch." He laughed his unmistakable half-cackle laugh, and we went inside for breakfast.

Later, when I was alone, I tried witching (or

(Continued on page 12)

Arthur A. Durand is the son of Arthur & Elinore (Becker) Durand. A retired Air Force colonel, he is the author of *Stalag Luft III: The Secret Story*, an examination of what life was like in the World War II German prison camp that became the setting for the movie *The Great Escape*. Arthur is married to Phyllis (Butters) and lives in Plattsburgh, NY. They have three children.

John Durand is the son of Adelard & Ann (Stafne) Durand. He was married to Janice (Rubenzer) (divorced) and lives in Elkhorn, WI. He has two sons and is the editor of the *Newsletter*. Story #2 is an excerpt from his memoir, *Behind Enemy Lines*.

Gene Durand is also the son of Adelard & Anna (Stafne) Durand and lives in Lakewood, CO. He was married to Florence (Kehoe) (deceased) and is the father of two sons, both graduates of the United States Naval Academy.

References in Gene's story are to "Uncle Felix's family" (Felix and Anna (Fontaine) Durand; "Aunt' Elna" (wife of Phil Sewell and sister of Lawrence Durand's first wife, Ida; "Mary Alice and...Nevin Morrow..." Mary Alice is the daughter of Lewis and Jennie (Stafne) Durand; "Uncle Larry" is Lawrence Durand; "his wife Harriet" is Harriet (Shell) Durand, Lawrence's second wife; "Uncle Pete" is Peter Durand, the brother of Lawrence, Felix, and Arthur. Peter was married to Marina (Meyers).

Keeping Up the Durand Genealogy Brings Many New Connections

By Blanche (Durand) Hammer

As I started to prepare my article for this *Newsletter* I thought of the past year and of how much pleasure I have had updating the Durand Heritage Foundation's website. When I first started this job I thought, Well, this will go fast! With the Foundation's computer program I'll be done in no time.

After making 211 changes in the past year and adding 19 marriages I began to realize that this job was not just a job, but was all about becoming involved with people who could be related and who certainly are part of the larger picture of Durand family members. I find myself looking forward to getting e-mails people who have visited our website. I've already made many new friends...and the list keeps growing.

One of my latest contacts came from Paul D. Katz, whose mother was a Durand. Paul, born on November 2, 1948 in Malden, Massachusetts, was given up for adoption soon after he was born.

Paul wrote to me: "After 52 years and a lot of persuasion from my family [he and his wife have three daughters] I started a search for my biological family."

Water Witching (Continued)

dowsing) using two wire coat hangers that I first straightened, then bent into "L's." Holding the short end of an "L" in each fist and keeping the long ends about eight inches apart, I slowly crossed my backyard.

To my amazement, time and time again the long ends of the wire would cross each other over the same spot in my yard. Did I too have "the touch"?

Shortly after that time an article appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* on dowsing. A group of scientists were trying to locate water beneath the desert for Mountain Home Air Force Base, about 40 miles east of Boise. After many unsuccessful weeks of effort, the scientists called in two "water witchers." The witchers located a plentiful supply of good water in a single afternoon. I sent the article to Uncle Larry.

I've since searched for a logical explanation, but now accept that some, like Uncle Larry and Uncle Art, simply had "the touch."

His grandfather was Louis Joseph Durand. Louis's daughter, Marilyn Jean Durand, was Paul's mother. In his search Paul learned that he has a sister named Diane and a maternal uncle named Louis. Louis lives in California and Paul's sister Diane lives in Ipswich, Massachusetts, only 70 miles from Paul, who lives in Holliston, Massachusetts. Since Paul's discovery he and his sister have visited, and together they have continued to put the pieces of their family puzzle in place.

Paul has since learned that their great-grandfather was Emile Durand, who was married to Exerilda Gosselin. Although the current website genealogy shows that Emile and Exerilda had only one child, Zenoble, Paul has learned that they actually had 13 children. If anyone can shed some light on these Durands, Paul would be so grateful to hear from you. His e-mail address is Duece147@aol.com. I hope that someone will come forward.

Paul Katz's story brings to mind how generations need to share their stories and traditions. After expressing this thought to my husband, he went to his files and retrieved an article he had saved a few years ago written by Dr. Lloyd A. Wallin in Apple Valley, MN. I'll share this article with you now.

Entitled "Generations need to connect," Dr Wallin expressed his regret at not having had the knowledge when he was growing up to appreciate the "friendship" of his father, his late aunt and uncle, and many other "old folk" in his life. How he regrets that he was not taught to sit down and converse with his elders. He now senses he may have unknowingly deprived those wonderful people of the simple happiness that comes with being appreciated by youth.

He tells us, Do not pass up the opportunity to "inspire" your grandchildren or your children, your children's friends and their children. Use your fleeting time to communicate with the younger people in your life. Make them listen to your tales, and they will not be so uncertain of their own futures.

How right Dr Wallin is! His article sums up exactly what I wanted to express and share with all of you today.

Leon J Durand Family

Descendants of Leon and Roseanna Durand Catch Us Up

Born January 5, 1909, Leo Gilbert Durand was the second surviving child of Leon J and Roseanna (Laurin) Durand (see shaded box page 16). The story is that he did not like his first name of Leo and so went by the name of Gilbert. In 1930 at age 21 he married Julia Rose Nicsic (12/28/1911-8/12/1984) and had four children: Dolores (12/8/1930), Mary (8/3/1932), Gilbert (3/19/1936) and Valerie (3/2/1938). Leo Gilbert died in 1990.

The following article is pieced together from materials sent to the *Newsletter* by his children Gilbert, Dolores, and Valerie.

Gilbert: Until 1947 our family resided on North 127th Street in Butler Wisconsin, a village northwest of Milwaukee. I was born at home there, delivered by a doctor who came up from Waukesha. On the way back home he was hit by a train and died.

Dolores: Butler was a small town, with a population in the 1940's of about 2,000, a railroad town with a round-house and depot for people to make the trip to Milwaukee. It had two hotels with restaurants, five taverns, two barber shops, two grocery stores, a meat market, a bakery, a hardware store, two filling stations (one of which housed the post office), and a dry cleaning plant,

For entertainment during the summer we had the Monday night movies when kids sat on blankets and the parents on lawn chairs. The screen was hung on

the wall of Charlie's Tavern. Charlie also provided the electricity for the movie projector.

Of course we also had 'ye olde swimming hole' that we shared with the cows. The creek was deepest there. Across the road from there was a fishing place full of sun perch that we caught and took home for Mom to cook. In winter we ice-skated, went sledding, made snow men and of course snow balls. Actually it was a good life. Very simple and quiet.

Valerie: I am the youngest child. I was told there was a terrible thunderstorm the night I came into the world, and that they also weren't expecting me for another month. The doctor was at bicycle races and couldn't get to the house in time, so my grandmother, Anna Nicsic, delivered me.

Gilbert: After Grandma Nicsic passed away my folks decided that our family should move to

Alaska. The government was giving a 1/4 section to settlers at that time.

Dolores: All you had to do was make certain improvements over a period of five years and the land was yours free and clear. So they put the house up for sale and it was sold that fall.

Gilbert: Dad bought a 1935 GMC bus and made a motor home out of it.

Dolores: He put bunk beds and beds that also made into seats, a fold-down table and a two-burner stove. Off we went right after Christmas, 1946: Dolores, 16, Mary, 14, Gilbert, 10 and Valerie, 8, bound for Ladysmith, Wisconsin to visit Dad's parents, sisters



Three generations of Leon and Roseanna Durand descendants are pictured here. L to R are Homer (the youngest son of Gilbert, whose narration is featured in this article), Leo Gilbert (the son of Leon and Roseanna Durand, who moved his family to Texas instead of Alaska), Gilbert (son of Leo Gilbert), Jessie Cordrell (the daughter of Gilbert's first wife Frankie), and Joe (the eldest son of Gilbert). It was Joe who contacted the Durand Heritage Foundation for family information after discovering the Foundation's website and who coordinated the submission of information from this branch of the Leon and Roseanna Durand family. The photo is undated but was probably taken in the early 1970s.

and brother.

Gilbert: Just ahead of one of the worst snowstorms in Milwaukee history. Grandpa drove a truck for the local dairy, an 18-wheeler, and was a little mad because the dairy would not let him drive any more. They told him it was time to take an easier job. In his early days Dad told me that Grandpa was a cabinetmaker/carpenter, and took the dairy job some time in the 30's.

It was one of the few times I saw my grandparents. We left for Alaska in February, 1947.

Dolores: Since in winter the Alaskan/Canadian highway to Alaska is closed we decided to take a tour of the U.S.. On our way we went through the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas. It was beautiful even at that time of year. Going up the first mountain was not too bad but it sure looked a long way down when you looked out the window. When we started down something we didn't know about the bus was that you have to gear down. The only problem was the transmission kept jumping out of gear, and since my dad had to keep both hands on the steering wheel it was up to me to hold the gearshift in place. My mom and sister Mary were sitting behind us praying and Gilbert and Valerie just crawled into their beds and stayed there. I can tell you that it was scary, and we all breathed a sigh of relief and thanked the Good Lord that we made it down to Texas okay. Now I can look back and it was really a fun time. We had never been further than Ladysmith.

Gilbert: As we were going across the USA we developed some mechanical problems and it shrunk our savings quite a bit. Since the Alaskan Highway did not open until June or July, Dad and Mom decided to go to Houston, Texas. It was booming at the time. We did this to recoup the money we had to spend on bus repairs and to wait out the Alaskan Highway opening. As it turned out we never left.

I attended four schools in the Houston area because we kept moving. Our first year in Houston a nitrate ship blew up Texas City, about 50 miles away. We were at recess when it happened but the explosion rocked the building and blew out glass in the upper stories of the school.

I joined the Texas Air National Guard in 1952 at age 16 because I told a little story about my age. The next year I went on active duty to attend Aircraft/Engine school on F51 Mustangs. I finished in December that year, second in my class.

I married Frankie Moore on April 23, 1954. She had one child, Jessie Cordrell (born 3/24/52), and we had 2 more children: Joseph (born 5/18/55) and Homer (born 3/30/57). Both of our children were born in Jacinto City, Texas. Later our marriage turned bad.

Valerie: In Texas I married George A Gilliam on June 21, 1958. He was born in Popular Bluff, MO on September 12, 1936. Our first child was a son we named James Arlen, born January 26, 1959. My husband was in construction so we traveled a lot. We moved to the west coast when James was six months old and traveled around Washington and Oregon for a couple of years. Our second child, Valerie Eudora, was born September 30, 1960 in Vancouver, Washington, just across the Columbia River from Oregon. We migrated to sunny California when she was six month old.

There my third child, Alan Matthew, was born in La Mirada, California on September 23, 1964. We bought a home and lived there until 1970. That year I divorced George and moved back to Houston to be with family. I had been a housewife for 11 years and had no job skills.

Gilbert: Frankie and I separated several times over the years and during that time I met Jackie Elliot, who would later turn out to be my second wife. I filed for a divorce in 1964 and moved to Garland, Texas because Jackie had moved there. After my divorce became final in 1964 I married Jackie on October 2. She had been married earlier, but her husband had died in a car accident about 1962. She had four children by that marriage: Billy (born 12/23/58), Steven (born 8/22/60), Jena Lee (born 11/23/61) and David (born 6/23/63).

Jackie and I had 12 years together. She told me many times that she would die before she was 40, and made me promise to take care of all of the children. She suffered a brain hemorrhage at Six Flags Over Texas on May 23, 1976, and died instantly.

My son Joe was in the Army stationed in Germany at the time, and had been trying to come home earlier that month. However, we learned that if he did not take a leave in May he would get an early discharge in July and be home for good. So it was kind of a strange thing that morning on the way to Six Flags that Jackie spoke up and said that Joe would be home before midnight the next night.

I said, "You know he won't be home until July." But she repeated that Joe would be home the

next day, and he was. Joe landed at the Dallas-Fort Worth airport at 11:30 the next night on emergency leave.

As Mom had passed away the year before, Dad was alone and retired, so I asked him while we were all gathered for Jackie's funeral if he would move up and help me with my family. He told me he had his clothes with him.

I think everything that happens for a reason. Dad was not doing well after Mom died, and I think he would have given up and died. When he moved in with me he started doing a lot better. He had someone to look after again, and he was a great help. When Cordrell (that's what we call Jessie Cordrell) moved to Maine with her husband Scott she left at home a 40-year-old Dad, a 65-year-old Grandfather, and six of the seven children at home. We had quite a time.

I kept my promise to Jackie and adopted her four children. David was mine anyway. We sold the house and bought another in Garland, Texas. Time passed and the older ones moved out on their own, leaving Jena and David still at home. Then I met Sharon Cagle in August 1980. We went together for a time, and on April 17 1981 I married her. Sharon had two children Carlana (born 9/4/64) and William Clint (Clint) (born 11/25/70)

Valerie: After I moved back to Texas I met and married Albert Faktor in 1971. His brother was married to my sister Mary. (My first husband, George, had ended up in Hawaii and never saw his children till they were grown) Albert and I had a daughter, Juliana Rose, born August 16, 1972, but we were divorced in 1982. Later he was killed in a highway accident when Julie was 14.

My eldest son James quit high school when he was 17. He went to a GMC trade school and found work with a Buick dealer. In 1983 he met Donna Neeley, who had 3 children by a previous marriage. They moved to the Fort Worth area and married on June 1, 1987. By that time James had become a diesel mechanic and worked on large trucks. Just this year, their children all grown and gone, he and Donna moved to the Roaring Fork Valley where he is working as a mechanic for the local transit agency. They are living in Glenwood Springs.

My daughter Valerie (we call her Eudora), graduated from Reagan High School in Houston in 1988 and married Richard Presley on May 19, 1989. (Richard is descended from a man who

fought at the Alamo) She went to work at a bank while she was still in high school and continued in a banking career till the present. After she divorced Richard in 1994 she moved to Aspen, Colorado. She was an avid outdoor person—skiing, biking, and hiking...and partying. She worked her way up to mortgage officer for Chase Bank. She met Jim Githens when she bought a condo in Carbondale, Colorado. He was living in Carbondale after his own divorce. He had 3 sons.

Valerie and James were married September 17, 1994 and live in the mountains outside of Carbondale. The two older boys just finished their first year of college and the youngest just finished his junior year of high school. Jim, a native of Colorado, was born in Denver and is an experienced outdoorsman—rafter, biker, kayaker, skier, etc. They just finished a 3-week rafting trip through the Grand Canyon. Jim is a project manager for a earthmoving company.

My youngest son Alan was graduated from Waltrip High School in Houston in 1983 and moved to the Fort Worth area to work with his brother. He is a truck driver now, not married and no children, but he is a video game addict and has a horse.

My daughter Julie and I moved to the Fort Worth area in 1989. She graduated from Crowley High School in 1991. Julie is morbidly obese and has a learning disability. She went to Tarrant County Junior College for a couple of years but she was never able to get past the basic courses. We had her on Social Security disability for a while, but she is working for Headstart now. She has never married and has no children.

After I divorced my first husband George I went to a keypunch school to learn a trade so I could get a decent job. That was in the pioneer days of computers, when data was fed into the computer by means of punched cards. I operated equipment that punched the holes in the cards. I also learned to operate the computer, and eventually became a programmer analyst.

But with the new generation of computers I would have had to go back to school, and with Julie's father not giving any support and with Julie's physical and learning disabilities there was just no time for me to go to school. So I used accounting knowledge I picked up as a programmer and changed my career to office manager.

Gilbert: In January, 1986 my company trans-

ferred us to Woodward, Oklahoma to open a new plant. I retired in 1997 and opened a small computer store. We still reside in a town called Sharon, about 7 miles from Woodward, and I still have the store there. And there Sharon and I celebrated our 20th anniversary last year.

I have not said where all of the children are and what they are doing. That's another story.

Valerie: So here I am in Carbondale, Colorado, where I have worked for Aspen Floor Covering for 10 years. It is a small retail store so I wear many hats. I earned my high school diploma after I divorced my first husband, George. I am the Secretary/Treasurer for the local League of Women Voters and a past member of Mensa. I've always had a serious weight problem, so I call myself a short, fat Mama. I quit a 40-year smoking habit four years ago. I took Phen/Fen until they took it off the market, and I'm now on Meridia...and I've been working out the past two years.

Leon J Durand, the father of Leo Gilbert Durand, was the 12th and last child of Pierre and Marie (Boucher) Durand. Born in Rhode Island in 1877, he was brought as a 2-year-old to Minnesota when his family moved to the Faribault area to farm, then about 1894 helped his father and mother establish a new farm near Turtle Lake, Wisconsin. Ten years later at age 27 he married Roseanna (Rose) Laurin June 28 in Cumberland, Wisconsin. Roseanna was 19 at the time.

Although their first-born child died in infancy in 1905, Leon and Rose went on to produce six more children. Born in the Turtle Lake area were Rosella (3/2/1906-10/1981); Leo Gilbert (whose family is featured here); Harold (5/29/1911-11/1968); Gladys (8/29/1913-?). Their last two children were born in adjacent Rusk County, in Ladysmith: Delores (11/12/1919 -?); Mary (8/25/1921 -?).

On Mary's birth certificate in 1921, Leon's occupation is listed as "manual labor," but according to his descendants he also worked as a cabinet-maker and truck driver. He died in Milwaukee on February 11, 1956 after an extended hospitalization, and is buried in Ladysmith. His wife Roseanna preceded him in death by less than a year; she died on April 29, 1955.

We Need Volunteers!
Call 952-431-5610

Let's Have No More Argument! Golden Wedding Picture Taken in 1931

The controversy over when the so-called Golden Wedding anniversary picture was taken can be laid to rest. Several pieces of evidence have come in confirming that the picture was taken in August, 1931 and not in 1933 as some maintained. Both Mary Alice (Durand) Morrow of Bend, Oregon and Joyce (Durand) Ripley of Spooner, Wisconsin supplied solid evidence to support the 1931 date.

Mary Alice wrote that she was born on May 23, 1931 and not in 1932 as is recorded in Beatrice Durand Derrick's *Durand* and in the genealogy accessed through Durand Heritage Foundation website. In Mary Alice's words, "Mother told me that Dad was holding me in the picture." An article on the dating of the picture in the Winter, 2001 issue of the *Newsletter* included a picture that pointed out Lewis holding a baby in his arms, which was presumed to be Mary Alice. Mary Alice's parents were Lewis and Jennie (Stafne) Durand.

Mary Alice continued, "I remember [my mother] telling me that I was the only cousin born in time to be on the picture. Wilfred, Jack, and Stella were all born later in 1931." Wilfred was born to Napoleon and Louise (Tetrault) Durand; Jack was born to Lawrence and Ida (Sewell) Durand, and Stella was born to Felix and Anna (Fontaine) Durand.

By way of further evidence Joyce Ripley sent a newspaper clipping from *The Spooner Advocate* dated September 3, 1931 which described the Golden Wedding celebration. The clipping reports that celebrants Pierre and Louise Durand renewed their wedding vows at the Crescent Lake church on the morning of August 22, 1931.

Joyce also included a newspaper obituary for Pierre Durand saying that he "was married to Marie Louise Durand on January 29, 1882...."

The Golden Wedding celebration was thus held several months after the actual anniversary date of Pierre and Louise's 50th year of marriage. Doubtless the big celebration was arranged so that those coming from a distance would not have to contend with the hazards and uncertainties of winter weather. The newspaper clipping reported that more than 150 guests attended the event.

Louise died less than two years later on October 8, 1934. Pierre died on January 14, 1936. JCD

Have You Checked Out the Website for the Durand Heritage Foundation?

Below is the new look of the home page of the Durand Heritage Foundation website at www.durandfoundation.com. Several areas of the website have been updated. The site's Country Store now

offers a preview of all back issues of the *Newsletter* and the Foundation's reprint of *Jean Durand and His Posterity*. In addition, paid members



can access back issues of the *Newsletter* to read online. Readers are unable to print the back issues, however.

A link to *Current Events* brings up a breezy and informative potpourri of news, including a list of new members and links to such conveniences as signing up as a dues-paying member of the Foundation.

The Library on the website offers access to several articles that have appeared in the *Newsletter* as well as documents relating to the Foundation as a corporate entity.

The most popular feature is the on-line genealogy. The website has been visited more than 165,000

Notice of Family Reunion

The descendants of Pierre & Louise Durand will hold their biennial Family Reunion on Saturday, August 17, 2002 at the Shell Lake Community Center in Shell Lake, Wisconsin.

Registration and Quilt Turning...11 a.m.

Pot Luck Lunch...1 p.m.

Business meeting and Entertainment...2—4 p.m.

Leftovers buffet...5 p.m.

For further information call:

Shirley Durand Muller (715) 635-2506

Karen Durand Urben (262) 681-1280

Gay/Martha Derrick (715) 635-2385

In Memorium

Marie Marcelle (Durand) Dufresne Born August 7, 1916 in Spooner, Wisconsin, Marcelle died on February 19, 2002 in Tahlequah, OK, where she had resided in retirement for several years. Marcelle was the daughter of Elzear & Eva (Dufresne) Durand.

In 1940 she married Harold W. Grant and by him had three children, of whom two daughters survive: Margaret (Robert) Bollin and Mary (Daniel) Brusegard. In 1971 she married Leonard J. Dufresne and became stepmother to five children: Denis, Diane, Dean, Derrick, and Debra. Her husband Leonard preceded her in death last year.

Marcelle worked for the Minnesota Department of Commerce for over 25 years.

A graveside memorial service will be held sometime during the summer of 2002 at the Calvary Cemetery in Spooner, Wisconsin.

Memorials preferred to the Cradle of Hope Motherhood Fund, 1935 W. County Rd. B2, Suite 241, Roseville, MN 55113 or to the Durand Heritage Foundation.

Requiescat in Pace

Phillip P. Durand Born April 18, 1925, youngest child of Arthur & Leona Durand. Phillip died on September 7, 2001 in Minneapolis, survived by his wife of 51 years, Emily, his daughter Diane and his son Brian, a sister LaVerne, and many nieces and nephews.

Phillip (Phil) was an active church member in Our Lady of Lourdes parish. He was a block leader and member of the NE (Minneapolis) Garden Club and was instrumental in creating the French School Triangle Garden. A special plaque will be dedicated to Phillip in the garden.

Phillip was retired from Griggs, Cooper & Company, a spirits wholesaler.

Requiescat in Pace

Birth and Obituary Information Invited

The *Newsletter* invites readers to submit information concerning births and deaths for publication. The notices above can serve as guides for obituary information. For births include the genealogical connection to a branch of the Durand family.

Notice of Spring Board Meeting

The Spring meeting of the Durand Heritage Foundation Board of Directors will be held at 10 A.M. on Sunday, May 5 at the home of Mike Durand & Marilyn Durand at 1501 Rushmore Drive, Burnsville, Minnesota. Members of the Foundation are invited to attend. If you want to attend, please call Mike Durand, President (952) 431-5610.

President's Report

Spring Is Here!

By Mike Durand

When the late fall and early winter sets in I seem to go into a natural hibernation mode. Winter has become a love-hate relationship for me. I enjoy the fresh new fallen snow and the holiday season. It's then that I like to light a fire in the fireplace and smell and watch the flames lap and diminish the glowing logs. I don't like fighting the bitter cold and the imprisoned feeling that winter gives me, though.

Springtime is upon us and my thoughts turn to planting flower and vegetable gardens. And my constant annual battle with the deer that like to rob us of blooming flowers, tomatoes, watermelons and the like. I wonder, am I ever going to get the upper hand?

It's also time to prepare for the spring Durand Foundation meeting to be held on May 5th this year. I will begin to prepare the agenda and ask for input from the other directors. I'll also think about my annual ritual of handing out awards for those who have worked so hard to ensure our success.

Starting in July of 1998 with about a dozen people (the dirty dozen), our membership is nearing 200 and is dispersed through out the US, Canada and New Zealand.

As we have grown in size our mission and scope seem to become more difficult. It's those thoughts that are in the forefront in my mind for this next meeting. In other words, how do we provide useful information for the ever-expanding membership. How do we avoid appearing too narrow in scope? I've got some ideas about how to do that in the form of developing partnerships with other businesses, historical centers, and foundations. I think in a sense that we've outgrown our britches.

We have provided a rich resource center for people seeking to trace their roots. I can't begin to relate to you about how many people happen upon our website and express their pleasure with finding so much information. We only have a fraction uploaded to date. It could fast become a full-time job to expand it.

I'd like to tell you a little story about what happened at the fall 2001 Board meeting. Richard Durand, my first cousin and one of the original dirty

dozen, told about this young girl who was a descendant of one of the orphaned DuRand kids whose parents were killed in a fire while their father was on military assignment in Germany. The couple's three children were brought back to the US. This girl, a descendant of one of the orphans, had called Richard and left a message on his answering machine. Richard was telling us with tears in his eyes and voice cracking with emotion about how this young girl was nearly crying and wanted him to return her phone call. Upon her discovery of the Durand Heritage Foundation she felt as if she'd found a treasure chest. Previously she had had little information about her past and was disconnected from the main trunk of the family tree. But now she'd finally found her roots. She is happy indeed! It's heart-warming stories like this that makes all our efforts and hard work worthwhile.

It's the broader scope of the Foundation' efforts that I am more concerned about now. I have some ideas about how to add value and interest for our members.

Last week I attended a class at the Minnesota Historical Center. The class was *Simple Suggestions for the Care of Papers, Photographs and Books*. The instructor, a reference librarian, shared with us one of Charles Lindberg's photo albums about his early aviation experiences. Other books were passed around, some of which were at least two hundred years old. I learned that just about everything that I am doing in trying to preserve photographs, papers, and books is wrong. And I thought; we need to make this information available to our members. We can add this information to our *Newsletter* and perhaps even sponsor some workshops. The wheels of my mind really started churning. After all, if we are in the business of preserving family artifacts, we should be leading by example.

It's with these thoughts in mind that I prepare for the spring Board meeting. This meeting will not be like all the rest. Oh, my God, another boring board meeting where the same stuff gets hashed over and over and over.

This time I'm going to WAKE THEM UP! I am going to get everyone energized, expand our mission, and hopefully provide a whole new thrust about what we're all about. For starters I'd like to see us double in size in 2002. Because if we don't, I think we're fast going to become a dinosaur.

I didn't discover until last year that I'd been born a girl. What a jolt! To think that all this time I believed that I had been raised as the third son in what would become a family of four boys and five girls. I wonder if my mother and siblings were confused when they changed my diapers.

I made this discovery when I needed a copy of my birth certificate to apply for Social Security. (Yes, dear Reader, 'tis true, we all are growing older!) And there was the proof, typed plain as day on items 2 and 5 of a certified copy:

2. FULL NAME OF CHILD...Julia Clifford Durand 5. SEX...female

Our family never was much for official records. Except for the framed Certificate of Marriage that hung in my parents' bedroom, just about every important paper in our lives was kept in one drawer of a little oak secretary that moved back and forth between living room and dining room, depending on our latest scheme for arranging kid-battered furniture. This drawer also came to hold broken crayons and pencil stubs and dried orange peels and Tootsie Roll wrappers and jammed Tinker Toys and other assorted leavings of kids too lazy to make the trip to the garbage pail that stood at the top of the basement steps. Besides, the only official papers that mattered to us were our school report cards.

Thus, it doesn't surprise me that amidst all this clutter my parents didn't notice the error of my sex until I was almost 13 years old. After all, they did possess an official penny postcard with my name on it from the Wisconsin State Board of Health. Entitled "Certificate of Birth Registration," the postcard enrolled me among the living as John Clifford Durand, born July 16, 1936.

I'm rather embarrassed to admit that for most of my life I thought this penny postcard *was* my birth certificate. Thus, when I left home to seek my fortune I took this postcard with me as proof of my date of birth and American citizenship.

And for years it stood me in good stead. Whenever asked to supply a copy of my birth certificate, I'd produce this penny postcard from among my own growing file of official papers, and that was that. And why not. The postcard certified that "a registered certificate of the birth of your child has been filed and is now carefully preserved in the Of-

ficial Records of the State of Wisconsin...." Oh, I'd get a dubious look now and then, but never any real trouble, and I never looked at the language closely enough to see that the postcard only *certified* that an official *certificate* was on file.

Anyway, in 1949 family circumstances required that my parents produce birth certificates for us kids still living at home. I was late into adulthood before I figured out why I found among my mother's effects those particular birth certificates but none for the older kids.

The reason lies in a piece of our family's history.

In February, 1949, after a couple years of "doctoring," my father underwent surgery for cancer of the stomach. For months before and for months after he was too sick to work. With five kids at home and no income from work, our family survived on welfare for a time, another discovery that I made only late in life. I'm sure that the stigma of being on welfare ate at Mom and Dad's pride, and I'm sure that they did their best to conceal this information from us kids — and probably most others also.

That bleak time was when uncles and aunts and family friends rallied round — a roast from the locker plant, an "extra" pound of butter, a load of slab-wood to help heat our house. Of course, we kids understood little about the context for this sudden burst of family generosity.

That was period when my folks had to prove that none of us kids still living at home were too old to be eligible for welfare, and when they acquired "official" copies of our birth certificates.

In any event, that was when my parents discovered the error of my birth. Thankfully, the Register of Deeds was a familiar figure in our little county and he believed Mom and Dad when they said that I was really a boy and that my name was John. He may even have said "Oh, yes, isn't he an altar boy?"

Thus, on "the 2nd day" of March, 1949 (less than a month after my father's surgery) the Register of Deeds officially crossed out "Julia" on my official birth certificate and wrote in "John" and officially crossed out "female" and wrote in "male" and officially signed his name. And I officially became a boy. As I wasn't even aware that my sex change had taken place I didn't notice any difference.

But I wonder now what other surprises await.

For What It's Worth

By John Durand

The back page...

Next issue: Joseph and Celanise Durand came from Canada to Faribault, Minnesota in 1879 in the great migration of Durands; Mary Herzig of Satellite Beach, Florida relates the family history of Josephine Durand King, their daughter and her grandmother. Plus an article on the Jean and Josephine Boom DuRand family...promise! And pictures, pictures, pictures!

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