

SOME MEMORIES FOR A BELOVED UNCLE FROM A DEVOTED NEPHEW

Happy birthday, Uncle Ray

As I think back over the years that I have known you it gives me a great feeling. I guess the earliest memories I can come up with have to do with the summers when my sister and I used to go to Norman to visit when we were little kids. We lived in Tulsa and Enid for most of that time, but then eventually in Oklahoma City back in the mid 1930s.

We used to visit you at 425 S. Lahoma, in that wonderful old house in our childhood that was a continuous presence. We would spend a week or two down there, or maybe more, and we had a chance to play in the front yard and in that big yard next door where the little house was. We got to know the Padgett family and many of the other families up and down that block and ????(inaudible) that I met later on when I grew up. So Norman OK was essentially our second home.

I remember in the late 1930s when the first Action Comics came out. It was about Superman coming from the Planet Krypton and all the beginning stuff. Gee, I wish that we had a copy of that first comic book now as it's worth quite a few thousand dollars, as you probably know. Reading the Action Comic books, playing out front all those things brought back bring back some wonderful memories for me.

Another thing we used to do down there later on in the '40s just before the war I was into in playing tennis. I couldn't have been more than ten years old, but you took me over to the tennis courts next to Ellens Stadium, as it was called then, and that's where I first learned to hit a tennis ball. (or, that's where you taught me to hit my first tennis ball?) The tennis courts, of course, were large (?) probably 20 or 25 courts, but half of that at least now is taken up by the new stadium, and the tennis courts aren't what they used to be, you might say

I also remember just before the war, you were working quite a bit part time as a painter. Apparently there was quite a development of property and new houses down in Norman, just prior to the building of the north base and the south base maybe the building of those bases ?????and maybe you were involved in some of the construction help out there. I guess it was summer work for you near the university and you were a painter. And it seems to me that when you got back from the service you were also doing painting around there. Of course, those navy bases made a huge difference, and Norman OK really grew up to be a cosmopolitan area because of the navy bases and the huge population increase that came from that.

During the war of course you were in the service and I remember we used to correspond with each other and we decided to play chess by mail as you recall . We were sending chess moves back and forth by post card. It turned out that because the chess moves looked like some sort of code the people who were looking at mail (censors?) and inspecting it, it turns out that we were asked to stop our chess games because it looked too much like a secret code. (aren't all codes secret?)

And I think you were an officer doing cyptography work in the Air Force so that was even more of concern to the powers that be and the censors that were looking at mail.

I also remember you had your Air Force early training perhaps it was basic in Buffalotown (?), Florida and all the fancy hotels down there. I thought that was really the

greatest that my uncle could be in a fancy resort hotel and still getting married to a ??? (inaudible). That was interesting.

After the war, of course, when you came back we continued our tennis playing and you used to come to ??? to play on 28th Street not far from Robinson . You and I played a lot of tennis there. I was in high school by then and you were pretty much a grown guy (I hope so after being in the service for a number of years) I couldn't get very many ?????s off of you but it was so good to play over there. (Hard to understand).

Shortly after that when I graduated from Classen High, I joined the OU band and the experience of that because a definite position of a Hassler in that band being that Uncle ??? played clarinet in the band in the late 30s, and you played ??? in the band and I played clarinet in the band. That and the saxophone. Great (?) for us Hassler guys to be playing in the band and cheering for the football team.

After 1947, you were finishing your college career and you were going to get married and so we didn't kinda see each other much as the years moved (?) I remember on our trips to Chicago you were in OK city for a while then you moved to St. Louis.

So my contacts with you were more limited. So then I got to know your children, my cousins, who have been almost like brothers and a sister. (names them) and their spouses and it's always been nice to keep track of the whole family, sort of a tradition.

I think back to Norman again and realize maybe people may be reading this beside you, and ??? started back in OK in 1930 when Jasper and Arzetta and Earl and I thing Norman got off the train in the old Santa Fe Station there in 1920 (which was it?) Residence in Norma has been pretty much a ??? event and my sister moved to Norman with her first husband Bob James. While she was there she joined the University and became secretary to Dr. Kerightly, the head of the Board of Regents. When dr K retired my sister succeeded him and became secretary to the board of r. Barbara of course is still in Norman so the tradition started in 1920 (1930?) here it is 2012 and it's still going on.

Pushing toward a centennial looks like to me, and your leading the pack I'm happy to say . My sister gives you her best birthday greetings, and do Paula and I – and all of our kids here. We hope you have a wonderful party and celebration/ Ninety years and counting is a wonderful thing to talk about. I have a few to go before I hit that number, but I hope to reach it and be as great an inspiration to my younger folks as you are to the rest of us.

Happy Birthday, Uncle Ray, Bye bye, Don