

What A Little Bit Of Creativity Can Achieve



Here I am standing on the corner of Corinne and Valerie streets in Santa Maria, California. I hoped one day that my sister, Valerie, would be able to stand there with me, so we could get our picture taken together. One day, she visited and I forgot all about the idea until she went home. She never returned to Santa Maria and, sadly, died soon afterward. The lesson, to never let things go unsaid or undone, was never felt so deeply as it was back then.

Never despair! My mother and her photography skills came to the rescue. What a little bit of creativity can achieve! May wonders never cease to amaze! She helped my sister to be there on that street corner and you can hardly tell (almost) that she wasn't really... Of course, in my heart, she was always there from the beginning. I love you, Valerie, and miss you still. We had a lot of fun together, didn't we?

Take Heart During These Times of Covid-19... & all the rest

A little bit of wisdom from my little black book . . . “To care for all life, not just our own, to help one another, not just ourselves. That is unity in a whole, and loving universe.”

So . . . while my book signings and readings get cancelled, I think I'm pretty darn lucky!

The Family History of Tucker James Stewart

Oh, no! You say. Here she goes again talking about family history. What a bore! Well, how about a *fictional* family history from one of my characters in *Fathers of Edenville*, Tucker James Stewart? It arrived in the form of a letter from Tucker's brother, Howard, to their niece, Patricia Catherine . . .

Edenville, California 1968

Dear Patricia Catherine:

Thank you, for attending Grandpa's funeral. It was a pleasure to see you all grown up and to meet your fine husband. I only wish your aunt Marjorie had stayed a while longer, so she could have visited with you, too. You had asked me about the Stewart family history. Well, I have done some research and found the following:

It all began with Phoebe Adano and Harrison Stewart. (Your great-grandparents.) Far as I know, she was born sometime in the 1860's in Italy. Her family had immigrated to California to grow wine grapes. He was also born in the 1860's in San Francisco. They met and married in Napa Valley in 1879 at the Adano Winery. Her father helped him to buy and transport the printing press to Pine Way, when it was an up-and-coming new settlement. He had learned they were looking for someone to open a newspaper office. (That was the brick building I pointed out to you when we took our driving tour of the valley last fall.)

When they first arrived in Pine Way, they lived in the original way station house built by Henry Henry. She worked there as a cook, while he established The Pine Way Weekly Journal. They soon built their own house on Pine Way Junction. (Where Uncle Tucker lives.) Although they had several children, only Grandpa Stewart remained to run the paper. He was born in 1891 and was named Tucker Howard Stewart. In 1913, he married your grandma, Adelaide Jones, who was born in 1892. They lived with her widowed mother in Pine Way but, in 1922, moved into this house here on Fig Tree Lane, when it was one of the newly-built, Craftsman-style, "Edenville Homes." Grandpa took over the newspaper in the 1940's when his parents became too old and had moved in with us. A sad turn of fate, the way station fell into neglect and was torn down. (That was the large picture I showed you that Uncle Tucker found.)

Grandpa and Grandma Stewart had eight children: Your mother, June, born in 1919 and, as you know, died during childbirth in 1947; myself, Howard, born in 1922. I became an insurance salesman and married your Aunt Mary Weatherby (born 1925). Their third child, Dewey, was born in 1923, fought in World War II, and died in 1953 by his own hand. (I told you about that.) Henry was born in 1925 and died in 1944, while in the war. Ted was born in 1927 and died in 1945 also in the war. Two more girls, Marjorie, born in 1930, is still living, and Lois Louise, born in 1933, still living. (If you ever run into them, tell them their brother, Howard, said, 'hi.')

Lastly, their youngest, my little brother, Tucker James Stewart, was born in 1934.

Harrison Stewart developed Parkinson's. Grandma died of heart dropsy in 1945. Unfortunately, Grandpa also developed Parkinson's and Uncle Tucker and I placed him in the Spring Hill Residence & Infirmary in 1964. As you know, my wife and I never had children. Uncle Tucker remains a bachelor. He was the last of the Stewart family to operate the printing press. He wrote for the newspaper after it was renamed The Edenville Weekly.

Well, that's all I can come up with for now. I hope it answers some of your questions. I hope we can visit again sometime real soon.

Sincerely,
Uncle Howard