



Carroll Wardwell Duke

Signature and Picture of Carroll Wardwell Duke – circa 1918

Recollections of his daughter, Carol Anne Duke Seibold
And her husband in 2005
On the hundred and eleventh anniversary of his birth

Carroll Wardwell Duke was born December 15th, 1894 on his parent's farm in Goochland County, Virginia. His parents were Lewis Frederick Duke and Florence Miller. His ancestors had resided in the state of Virginia since the early 1700's. His grandfather Frederick Henrico Duke fought in the Civil War as an artillery man in the Virginia Confederate Army, enlisting, August 8th, 1861.

Records indicate that the Duke family had arrived in Virginia from England before the Revolutionary War. A family tree traces their heritage to the time of William the Conqueror. ("Henry Duke, Councilor, His Descendants and Connections" by Walter G. Duke)



Early Duke home – Circa early 1900's

Duke was a very independent little boy who didn't get along well with his father. He told his daughter a story about his father carrying him under his arm and spanking him while Duke was shouting very loudly, "I can't make you do it." He meant to be saying you can't make me do it, but his father only said, "Well, you've got that right."

As a little boy he broke his elbow attempting to ride a cow on the family farm. In those days folks doctored at home. As a result he grew up with unusually shaped, but functional, elbow.



Florence Dillard Miller Duke
Duke's Mother – Circa 1900

Duke left home at a very early age to earn his own way in the world traversing much of the United States, including working as a cowboy in the Wild West. Duke continued his

excellent horse back riding into his sixties. Carol fondly recalls the vision of her father sitting tall in the saddle, unencumbered by the loss of his left leg. Once when he took his young daughter pony riding, the pony bucked her off. Duke insisted that “you have to get right back on when you get thrown.” She followed that rule all her life. It was also an analogy for his responses to the challenges of life.

Tales of his travels as a youth were always interesting. Often, he shared the story of being in Ely Bend during the week Arizona became a state in 1912. He recalled it as quite a celebration. Stories of his working on the railroad were always interesting to both his daughter and her husband.



Duke and Daughter Carrie
At Scott's Duke Ranch - Circa 1957

Early in his adulthood while working on the railroad, Duke was involved in a train accident and lost his left leg below the knee. He received \$500 in compensation and used the money to go to an accounting school. He became an accountant and worked in that field until his retirement at 63 years of age.

Duke married Martha G. Goode on April 13th, 1918 when he was 23 years of age. His WWI registration card shows that they lived in New Hanover County, North Carolina. He never talked to his daughter about this period of his life. There were no children from this marriage.

Duke worked for Challenge Cream and Butter in San Francisco, as an accountant, for over 25 years, retiring in about 1958. He was office manager for the company for many years supervising a staff of accountants. In the 1950's he earned about \$500 a month, which was a very good salary for that era. In the 1950's he was offered a promotion in the company if he would relocate to Los Angeles. He decided to pass on the promotion to stay in the cooler climate of San Francisco. His daughter recalls visiting one of the cheese processing plants of Challenge Cream and Butter with her father. She remembers the wheels of cheese as mammoth.



Logo of Challenge Cream and Butter
url: www.challengebutter.com



Challenge Cream and Butter Headquarters, Sept. 1, 1925

It is not clear when Duke settled in San Francisco, but he met Helen Durenberger there in about 1940 in Golden Gate Park. Helen was working as a nurse at UC Medical Center at the time. It was a December – May romance as he was almost 20 years older than Helen. Helen recalled to her daughter that when she first met Duke that “he was such a nice soft spoken southern gentleman.” They were married July 4th, 1941 in Reno, Nevada. Duke was in many ways the father figure for Helen. She had lost her father in a tragic fire early in her life.

Helen had been born and raised in Minnesota. Her grandfather fought on the side of the Union during the Civil War. In effect, the Durenberger’s fought the Duke’s in this epic war. Duke never served in the military. He was disabled before WWI and WWII.

Neither Duke nor Helen believed that fighting was good for a marriage. Not only did they not argue in front of their child, but they made an effort to be pleasant and loving to each other at all times. One rule was never to go to bed angry at each other. They believed in demonstrating their affection and always greeted each other with hugs and kisses.



Duke and Infant Daughter Carrie – Circa 1944
Room of Apartment in San Francisco

Duke was a very neat person. His personality fit the stereotype of an accountant. He was always very precise and liked to have an ordered life. He ate dinner at precisely 5 PM never 4:55 or 5:05. Helen who was free flowing adjusted to his needs. The dinner table was always set prior to his coming home from work.



Duke in favorite chair in living room, circa mid 1940's

Looking at Duke through the current Myers-Briggs personality typing, he was an ISTJ. He was an introvert rather than an extrovert. He was very detail oriented. His decisions were based on analytical thought not human emotion. He was able to make decisions easily. Helen was appeared to be just the opposite. The axiom "Opposites Attract" seemed to work; their thirty-five marriage was successful by most every standard.

Duke was called Duke by his wife and most of his friends. At work he was called Jim. He never used his given names, Carroll and Wardwell.

Duke did not take strong stands on political issues. From the 1950's he was a fiscally conservative Republican. He supported the Vietnam War as did most of his generation.

He read the papers and followed politics but rarely expressed his views and didn't like to argue politics.



Duke and Daughter Carrie – Circa 1945

Duke was a heavy smoker for much of his life. Little was known at that time of the terrible health effects of smoking. He told of smoking his first tobacco with an aunt behind the shed on their farm at 5 years of age. His smoking took a heavy toll on his body and he had several heart attacks in his 60's and several strokes in his 70's. When he finally had to quit, he seemed to suddenly grow younger. In his youth he was probably a heavy drinker, but when he married Helen he stopped drinking, even at parties.

His other vice was gambling. He loved to play cards for money. In his retirement he went week days across the bay to card clubs. When on the family's summer vacations to Lake Tahoe, his favorite game at the Nevada casinos was craps.



Lake Tahoe, CA – Frequent Summer Vacation Spot

Duke was a quiet person who didn't have a great need for an outgoing social life. He didn't have many close friends, but was friendly with all the neighbors. His life was his family; he didn't belong to organizations. He enjoyed reading, especially westerns. His daughter's strongest memories are of him sitting in the living room after dinner reading another Zane Gray novel. When the family got a television in about 1956 he enjoyed watching westerns such as Matt Dillon's Dodge City.

For several decades Duke was plagued with stomach ulcers. At that time it was believed that ulcers were caused by stress and he did have a stressful job. He was forced to eat plain unseasoned food. His favorite place to eat out was a greasy spoon restaurant for a big breakfast. He also would eat “graveyard stew”, which was toast floating in warm milk.

He had a slight allergy to perfume and hence didn't enjoy perfume odors. He often joked about his wife and daughter's use of “stink water.”

He was a very loving husband and regularly showed his deep appreciation of his wife. He was always very vocal about how beautiful she looked. He appreciated that she was a bright and intelligent woman as well.



Duke Living Room – circa 1947
Three large bookcases covered one wall.

While not a comedian, Duke did display his sense of humor. One of his comments on looking at other pretty women was “Just because you have ordered, doesn't mean you can't read the menu.” His wife was not bothered by his obvious interest in women as she knew how deeply she was loved. Another comment about an attractive woman was “I suppose you wouldn't kick her out of bed for eating crackers.”

He was not a handy person around the house. Helen did all the painting and landscaping. He would help, but he had no interest in building or fixing.



Thanksgiving Family Get-together – Circa 1958

Blanch Briggs (Duke's sister), Duke and Robert Durenberger, J
Carol, Alyse Durenberger, Robert Durenberger, Jerry Durenberger

While Duke's birth certificate indicates a birth date of December 15th, he always celebrated December 5th as his birthday. Apparently births prior to 1900 were sometimes listed as the date of recording. Every December 5th, Helen would put up an artificial white Christmas tree that she called Duke's Birthday Tree. It was decorated with small ornaments, tiny birds and tinsel and was a signal of the start of the holiday season.

Duke loved his cars. He always maintained them very well and replaced them before they showed signs of wear. Because of the loss of his leg, he was unable to walk more than a block; he used his car to get everywhere. He drove to his office in San Francisco and came home for lunch almost every day. Most summers the family would take a driving vacation. His daughter especially remembers a driving trip the family took to Crater Lake in Oregon. Other summer destinations included Utah and Lake Tahoe.



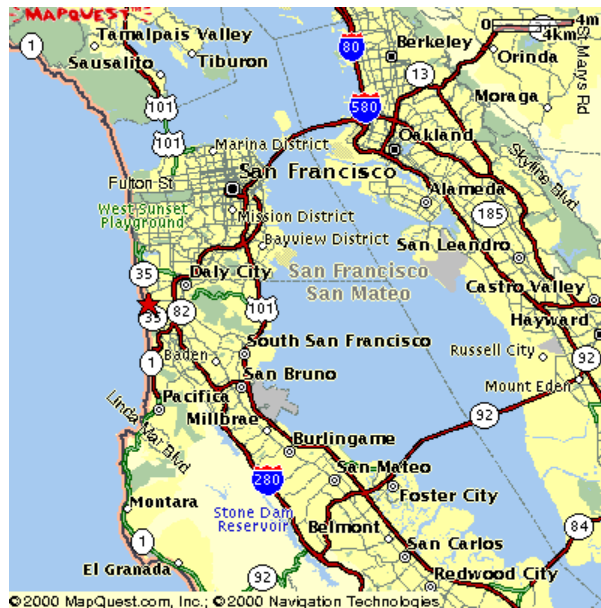
Helen and Duke, Crater Lake – circa early 1950's

Duke and Helen bought their house at 157 Gambetta Street in Daly City just after the war. It was a new housing development on a hill with a distant view of the Pacific Ocean. The neighborhood was filled with young families, many with young children. It was the time of the post-war baby boom. The houses were small with postage size lots of about

1/14 of an acre. The area was the basis of a 1960's song, "Little Houses on the Hillside." The land across the street was not built for another year or so. On top of the hill behind the building development was a huge white rock that was a favorite place for young neighborhood children to play cowboys and Indians. The house cost \$5,000 in 1946. Duke was very happy when it was paid off in the 1950's. The neighbors were very close; neighbors made frequent visits to one another. At Christmas and New Years there was a block party with all of the houses open with food and refreshments.



Daly City from Hill behind Gambetta Street
Ocean on horizon – Circa 1945
Westlake Development has not been built.



Map of San Francisco Bay Area

Two of Duke's sisters lived in the San Francisco Bay area. His sister Blanch was a widow and a frequent visitor to the house. She was a bit of a character and enjoyed children, even though she had none of her own. Her visits usually included gifts from her most recent visit to Goodwill. His sister Loula lived in Oakland in a house with a

gorgeous view of San Francisco bay. She was a lady who retained her southern accent and was very proud of her home and heritage.

By the time he was an adult in California Duke did not have a southern accent and he was very open-minded on racial issues. He judged people on their character and not their skin color. In the 1950's he bemoaned the fact that he could not hire a very well qualified black woman as an accountant because the company would not accept a black in such a position.

His southern heritage did show in some of his favorite foods. Helen learned to cook ham hocks, greens and spoon bread. Spoon bread is a corn bread oven cooked in an old fashioned skillet. The unsweetened bread is very soft; hence, the need to eat it with a spoon. He also loved sweet potatoes and yams.



Southern Spoon Bread
An unsweetened corn bread

Duke had a southern phrase that he recited when things got tough. Apparently in his home children weren't allowed to swear but they had found other phrases to use that sounded like swearing. "Garden damson, summer peaches, board of health, Bob Daniels." If recited quickly with a southern accent, it sounded pretty racy.



Sister Blanch, Duke and Wife Helen
In their Gambetta St. backyard – circa 1950's

Another area where Duke's southern heritage showed was music. He loved Helen to play Stephen Foster songs on the piano. The old fashioned melodies were relaxing and reminded him of home. Samples of these old favorites such as Swanee River and Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair can be found at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/foster/>, web site on the PBS documentary on Stephen Foster.

Duke was frugal and didn't spend much on himself. He believed in letting his wife do all the shopping, even for his clothes. But he did have the opinion that if you decided to spend money that you should go first cabin. He believed that you got the best value by being willing to buy the best. He bought Helen a beautiful expensive set of sterling silver tableware because she should have the best.



Duke, Helen and Carol under Backyard Crab Apple Tree

Duke loved the jelly from this tree - Circa 1954

For family celebrations, Duke would take the family to Alioto's Restaurant at Fisherman wharf. The food was excellent and the service outstanding. After dinner the family would slowly walk around the fishing boats docked behind the restaurant.



Alioto's – One of San Francisco's Best Restaurants
Fisherman's Wharf

Duke loved the ocean. He and Helen would often drive out to the beach. Due to his disability, he couldn't walk easily in the sand, but liked to watch the view and hear the breakers on the beach. Often Duke watched his wife and daughter play in the surf. In later years he showed great pleasure watching his grandson join them in the surf.



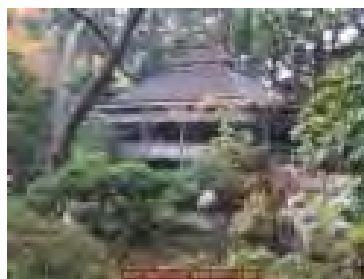
Pacific Ocean along the Coast of San Francisco

San Francisco is well known for its cable cars which run up and down the hills. The cars are open sided and people jump on and off the cars with the bells clanging. One day in the city Duke jumped off of a cable car and lost his footing. He landed on the hard pavement and his artificial leg had taken a bad fall. The foot of the artificial leg was headed backwards. People around Duke began to panic when they saw this gentleman who was obviously seriously injured. He had difficulty convincing them that he just needed a taxi to get to the prosthesis shop for a repair.



San Francisco Cable Car

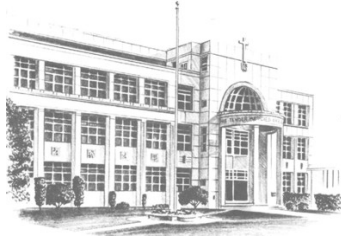
Golden Gate Park was a favorite place for family outings. Helen and Duke had met there. Thru the years they frequently went to the park to see the art museum or the Japanese tea garden or the flowers in bloom. Duke did not much care for art, but would go along with Helen to see the latest exhibition. Stow Lake had ducks and boats; sometimes Duke would take his daughter for a boat ride.



Tea Garden at Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Duke was not a religious person. He did not believe that a person's spirit continued after their death. Yet, he supported the religious education of his daughter. He never attended church but he felt it was important to encourage the appropriate moral development of children.

Duke was a strong supporter of education, even though he did not have a formal education himself. He decided that his child should have the best possible education. Hence he was willing to pay for a private Catholic school education.



Mercy High School – San Francisco – Carol attended 1958-1961



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Daly City, CA
Carol attended school here K-8 and was married in this church.

He rewarded good grades by providing dollars for As. He always encouraged his daughter to do well in school and prepare for a good career. Duke and Helen gave money for their daughter's senior year in college even after her marriage. Their generosity continued during their first years of graduate school. Duke and Helen helped provide the down payment for their daughter's first two homes.

Duke was very gracious in hosting his daughter's fiancé, Jon Seibold, during their visits to the Duke home for both the Christmas holidays and entire summers of their first three years of undergraduate school. Carol and Jon were married the summer before their senior year on August 22 of 1964 in Daly City. The Duke home hosted the wedding reception.

His daughter recalls that on the night preceding their wedding her mother asked Duke, “If it was our wedding day tomorrow, would you marry me again?” Duke immediately replied, “No, I’d run off with you tonight.”



Duke and Helen toasting Daughter and New Son-in-law
August 22, 1964

Jon fondly recalls an unqualified acceptance from both Duke and Helen. Their intense love for their daughter was always apparent. For Duke the two most important people ever were his wife and daughter. They were everything to him.



Duke, Helen, Jon and Jon Duke Seibold
Circa 1968

Duke was very taken with his first grandson and namesake, Jon Duke Seibold. Duke and Helen made many trips to the Midwest to see their daughter’s family. Duke and Helen were in Omaha for the Creighton graduation where they saw their first grandchild on the day of his birth in 1965, the first day of final exams, eight days before graduation.



Two Dukes – May 1965



Duke, Baby Jon Duke, Carol and Dog Sparkle
At 157 Gambetta Street – summer 1965

Duke enjoyed both the San Francisco Forty-niners and the San Francisco Giants. Duke and Helen had season football tickets for many years to the SF 49ers. Duke could spend hours talking in detail about the plays of the previous week's game. He enjoyed listening to baseball on the radio. A big player for the Giants at that time was Willie Mays. Duke's son-in-law enjoyed listening to his sports talk more than his daughter. Duke finally had a son to share his enthusiasm for sports.



San Francisco 49er's – Duke's favorite football team

In his retirement years one of Duke's favorite activities was feeding the birds. He would trim old bread and take it out to the backyard. The birds would flock around his contributions. Duke loved his house in Daly City and after his death some of his ashes were placed in the backyard. His memorial urn is on Memorial Path by the lake in Minnesota.



Duke in backyard of 157 Gambetta St. Circa early 1970's

While Duke claimed to not care for cats and dogs, he was actually quite affectionate with the many pet cats in the Duke household. One of the cats, called Kissikoo by his daughter, was injured in a cat fight. Duke took him to the vet and forever referred to him as "Old 32", as the vet cost was \$32.



"Old 32"

Duke brought home for his daughter a baby chicken that he had been given by a supplier. The small chick was named Marissa and grew into a massive white hen that laid extra large double yoked white eggs. For several years Marissa was the only chicken living in Daly City.



Carol's First Chick – Circa 1959
A Present from her father Duke

Duke died on July 2nd, 1975 of a massive stroke at the age of 81. He had been hospitalized for a day or two, enabling his daughter, son-in-law and grandson, to see him and say goodbye. A memorial service was held at the home on Gambetta Street with friends and neighbors in attendance.



Duke at Carol's MS degree ceremony
1967 – Jon Duke is 2 years old
In the background is the Seibold home and car in Lincoln, NE

During the summer after his death, Duke's daughter, son-in-law and first grandchild toured Europe as a gift promised by Duke and Helen in recognition of their daughter's efforts in obtaining her Ph.D. in chemistry. While Duke attended a one room rural school house, he believed strongly in honoring education.

Like many of his generation, he saw major changes in the United States. When he was born in the rural south, there were no lights and no automobiles. During his lifetime he saw the settling of the west, the population growth in California, two world wars, rise of cities and the remarkable growth of technology. As an accountant he used a pen and

pencil, not a computer or a calculator. In 81 years he experienced upheaval and change, but surveyed it all with a calm and peaceful demeanor. He is remembered with great love and appreciation by his daughter and her family.