

# TIBURON – A MAGICAL PLACE

LOIS SMYRES

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**Lifescapes**

## A MAGICAL PLACE

It was May 1967. How could we live through another Salt Lake summer? Summer brought sultry hot days with an occasional rain that left salty streaks on the windows. All year the Kennecott smelter, oil refineries, and brick-making plants belched pollution over the city.

How could we live through another Salt Lake winter? Inversions kept thick fog trapped in the Salt Lake valley. The fog could last for weeks and would be so thick you couldn't see across the wide streets planned by Brigham Young. The depressing fogs were new to me. In Colorado warm Chinook winds blew down the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains and across the Eastern Colorado plains whisking away anything in the air and leaving warm, clear winter days. There were no Chinook winds in Salt Lake City. In Golden, Colorado we had looked down on the brown murky stuff which settled in the Denver basin, but the winters in Golden were clear and cold. In Salt Lake City even the snow was not pretty – black soot settled on the snow within hours of the last flake falling.

We were not Mormons. How could we raise our children in a city where the Mormon Church organized all children's groups and social programs?

Gary had learned a lot the four years he worked at the U.S. Bureau of

Mines in Salt Lake City, but he was ready to move to a new job. I was ready to move. A job opening was advertised for a research metallurgist at a new Bureau of Mines Research Station in Tiburon, California. Gary applied for the job and an interview was scheduled at the Tiburon station. We left Craig, Julie and Trudy for three days with friends and Gary and I flew to San Francisco. It was our first airplane trip. The fog was thick as we approached the San Francisco Airport. The plane crept down in increments as it made an instrument landing. We weren't worried. Nothing could have quelled our excitement.



Golden Gate Bridge

The Bay area was a wonderland of flowers and greenery. We drove over the Golden Gate Bridge toward Tiburon and as we drove along the Bay through Sausalito we saw colorful houseboats. I was enchanted. I imagined myself living on the water in a funky houseboat. Tiburon is a peninsula that sticks out into San Francisco Bay. The views from the narrow and winding road that followed the coast of the

peninsula were spectacular – the San Rafael Bridge, the East Bay, the Bay Bridge, and the CITY! There were ferry boats, sail boats, fishing boats, barges and freighters. I was in heaven. Only heaven could be so green and include so much water.

Howard Higginbotham was the head of metallurgical research at the Marine Minerals Research Center at Tiburon, California. He stopped at the Tiburon Lodge the next morning

to give Gary a ride to the interview. Howard asked if I had any plans for the day. I had none so he said I should come along and sit in on the interview. The interview went well and Howard asked if Gary and I would like to have dinner with him and his wife, whose name was also Lois, that evening.

Gary got the job and we moved to paradise.

## A GOOD PLACE TO GROW

Everything grew in Tiburon – fleas, tadpoles, plants, fruit trees, snails, dogs, cats, and children.

The house we decided to rent at 12 Juno Road was empty when we looked at it, but the people who lived there previously had kept several exotic pets. A jaguar had been kept in a cage in the back yard. As we walked into the living room the fleas attacked our ankles. They were hungry and missed all the animals. We had to get a flea collar for our cat, Nancy, right away.

The back yard of this house was overgrown with bamboo, ivy, and other plants. A small stream, which bordered the back of the lot, carried rainwater to the Bay. It was a breeding ground for large tadpoles. The children caught tadpoles and kept them in muddy water while waiting for them to turn into frogs.

Ivy had grown over the lattice patio cover until the mat of dead leaves was about a foot thick. Dead leaves and bugs fell down through the openings in the cover and made eating or sitting on the patio impossible. I chopped and pulled down all the ivy and made the patio cover leaf and bug free. Soon the ivy was working its way back up the poles and onto the lattice. After renting the house for three months we bought the house across the street at 15 Juno Road and moved into it.

The houses in Trestle Glen subdivision were all alike – a

concrete slab with three bedrooms, one bathroom, and a two-car garage. To those of us who lived there the houses didn't seem alike because the yards were individually landscaped and the houses were painted different colors. I had moved stones from the Salt Lake City house and used them to make a rock garden in the front yard. One night as we were sitting in our living room, two happy, slightly drunk fishermen walked into our house. They thought they had walked into their relative's house, but it was actually three houses down the street. It seemed that the houses looked different to those of us who lived there, but the houses looked alike to people who were not familiar with the area.



15 Juno Road

I discovered a wonderful advantage to having the houses built alike when we moved across the street. I didn't

have to wonder if a piece of furniture would fit in a desired location and I didn't have to tell the movers (my parents and a cousin) where to put things.

Gardening was a joy – everything grew. If you admired a rose a neighbor owned, a cutting from that rose stuck in the ground would produce a rose bush in a short time. In our back yard a climbing rose with huge white flowers had entwined itself in a deciduous tree. In the spring the roses bloomed before the leaves appeared on the tree. Tomatoes grew year round. I discovered a wonderful plant with beautiful flowers called a fuchsia. Fuchsias loved the cool marine climate and bloomed profusely. Humming birds loved to hover and sip the nectar of the flowers. We watched as a hummingbird built a tiny nest under the eaves. She laid one egg and we were amazed when the usually busy hummingbird sat immobile in the nest until her egg hatched.

The original owners of the homes in the Trestle Glen subdivision had planted every kind of fruit tree – apple, cherry, peach, apricot, kumquat, lemon, fig, plum, and pear. The trees bloomed and produced a bumper crop of fruit every year. I canned fruit; I made jelly and jam; and we picked and ate fresh fruit. My neighbors hated their fruit because it fell to the ground and rotted and then attracted bees, yellow jackets, and other bugs. My neighbors wouldn't eat the fruit, but instead raked it up and tossed it in garbage cans. It made me sad.

Sometime in the past French snails were introduced into the area – the same snails sold in restaurants as escargot. Every morning the snails were out munching away at anything green. They slid along taking their shell houses with them and leaving their silver slime trails. No matter how interesting they were, I soon learned that if I wanted to have a vegetable garden or set out tender young plants, I had to protect the plants with snail bait or they would disappear overnight. I was told if you like to eat escargot, to catch the snails and feed them corn meal for a week and they could be made into a tasty appetizer. I never tried it, but a few times after they cleaned out my garden, I thought revenge might be, not sweet, but garlicky.



We were a neighborhood of young families with at least two children per household. When it rained, and it often rained, the children wore yellow slickers and overshoes. As they lined up to get on the yellow school bus they reminded me of baby ducks waddling along behind the mama duck. No child needed to be without a playmate. Children ran freely in and out of houses and up and down the streets. One day the street in front of our house swelled and huge bubbles pushed up the asphalt. The kids jumped up and down on it and the street bounced back as the bubbles moved around

under the asphalt. The children had a great time while all the mothers stood at the edge of the street yelling at them to stop because it might be dangerous. The street had bulged because a water main had burst under the street. In the spring the grass grew lush and tall on the

hillsides. Children would sit on large pieces of cardboard and slide down the hills on the grass. The only cars on the streets were those of people who lived there and the street was a great place for dogs and kids to run.

It was a magical place.



Camping in Samuel Taylor Park  
“Speak no evil, hear no evil, and see not evil”  
by Craig, Julie, and Trudy

## THE BEAUTY TREATMENT

It all started when my husband, Gary, bought a six pack of Pepsi because of the promotional contest. The winner of the contest would win a day for two at Elizabeth Arden in San Francisco. This was the start of the magic. I entered the contest and promised my friend, Lee Ann, that if I won I would take her with me. Elizabeth Arden is a cosmetics company with a large beauty and health spa in downtown San Francisco. I was one of the winners.

We started the day with a Scotch shower. A Scotch shower required me to stand naked at the end of a long shower stall while the attendant sprayed me with cold water from a hose. The next form of torture in the guise of a beauty treatment was a steam cabinet. A steam cabinet isn't like a steam room. The cabinet opened up and I sat on a stool; the cabinet was closed and sealed around me with only my head sticking out. It was really a sweatbox. Soon the sweat was pouring off me and I told them I had had enough. Then I took a regular shower.

Fortunately, next on the agenda was a massage. That was lovely. It was the first massage I had ever had. The masseuse and I started talking about our children and I related the story of our five year old daughter,

Trudy, who had requested specific toys from Santa Claus. When Santa brought them on Christmas Day the toys broke. We had to explain how dismayed we were that Santa could have delivered all defective toys and take her shopping the next day to buy new toys. I then got a lecture from the masseuse about how terrible it was to teach children to believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. That was the end of our conversation.

Lee Ann and I moved along to another department. She got a permanent while I got a manicure and a pedicure. I ate lunch while my feet soaked. I had my hair colored, cut and styled. We were given facials and make up was applied. We were given bags of makeup. When we left Elizabeth Arden we thought we were drop-dead gorgeous.

On the way home we decided we were much too fine to cook dinner for our families. Lee Ann called her husband and told him to get the two families together and we would bring home dinner – Chinese take-out. We drove up and as we walked into the house everyone was looking at us. "My God," Gary said, "You look like a whore."

The magic was gone.



Lois - before



Lois - after

## SCHOOLS IN A TIME OF TROUBLE AND TURMOIL

The name of the elementary school was Bellaire. Well, you wouldn't expect a school in Belvedere/Tiburon to be named Clifford Johnson School, would you? Children from all over the United States and the world lived in the school district. Many parents were in the military and others were employed building the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system. Although Craig and Julie were given their final report cards when we left Salt Lake City in May and didn't have to attend school, California schools were still in session for another month. I thought it would be a good way for them to meet friends, so I enrolled them in school. The next fall Craig entered second grade; Julie entered first grade; and Trudy started kindergarten. Trudy had a male teacher who taught them to build things with hammer, nails, and boards. She had a good time in Kindergarten. The school used a grading system of unsatisfactory, satisfactory, and outstanding instead of A through F. Bellaire was an excellent school and Craig, Julie, and Trudy liked school.

When Trudy went into the first grade I decided to return to college. Before Gary and I were married I had completed my sophomore year at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Gary supported my plan to return to school. I applied to San Francisco State University and was accepted. In the fall of 1968 I enrolled in two geography classes. On the days I had classes I drove

Gary to work, saw that our children got on the school bus, and then drove the Bronco into San Francisco. Fall in the Bay area is the warmest season of the year. Summer is cool and foggy, but as soon as school starts the days become warm and clear. The mornings were especially beautiful as I drove toward San Francisco. One morning a workman on the Golden Gate Bridge took off his hard hat and bowed to me as I drove by. He made me laugh. Once in awhile I would see a man singing opera while he strolled down the sidewalk.

As the weather deteriorated to cold rain, riots erupted on campus. San Francisco State was on the nightly news and the confrontation between police and students became more and more violent. The students were protesting the Vietnam War, the fascism of the government, the inequities of the university system, and injustice in society. Even though I saw it happening I never understood how things got so out of control. I sympathized with the students, but I didn't get involved in the student's demands – I was a housewife with three children and was glad to have the chance to go back to school. I couldn't feel their passion. Instructors handed out leaflets to the students urging us to boycott classes. Drugs were sold openly. Students with money in their hands gathered around people with bags of different colored pills. Students set off stink bombs in the building and the buildings became

unusable. When a stink bomb was set off in a building where I was taking a class it took five days for my headache to go away. Attendance in class dropped. What was going on outside the classroom was more interesting than the lecture being given inside the classroom. Police in riot gear looked like Roman soldiers with helmets covering their faces, full-length shields, and batons in hand. They stood shoulder to shoulder and pushed the taunting students into corners and beat the students with their sticks. The students were defenseless. Public sentiment favored the police. The world had gone mad. I finished the semester, got my six credits, and transferred to the College of Marin.

As a result of the riots, the Regents of the University of California system

allowed just about everyone to attend college and lowered the cost to a few dollars per credit. Classes at the College of Marin were overflowing. I went to the College of Marin two semesters and earned twelve credits. Biology was a favorite class. The children were fascinated when I brought my preserved frog home and dissected it on the kitchen table. California history inspired a family vacation where we visited all the Spanish missions from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

We moved to Reno in February of 1970 and I didn't return to school until Trudy entered Junior High in 1975. After starting college in 1956 I finally graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1977.

## 1967-1970 AN ERA IN THREE YEARS

The Vietnam War was going on. Students protested the war and young men moved to Canada to evade the draft. People were defined as unpatriotic who opposed the war; emotions ran rampant; and people died in Vietnam. "Love it or leave it", shouted the supporters of the war. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated.

Indians took over Alcatraz. The Bureau of Mines had a transponder on the highest cell block of Alcatraz and when it wasn't needed Bureau employees were sent to remove the transponder. Gary went along. The Indians had no interest in the Bureau employees and let them tour the prison and then remove their equipment.

Paul R. Ehrlich wrote the best seller, Population Bomb. We went to hear a lecture he gave at the College of Marin. The auditorium was packed as befitted a program on overpopulation.

We sat spellbound in front of the television as Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin climbed out of their lunar module and walked on the moon.

Whenever you have children there are unexpected events. In kindergarten Trudy's finger got shut in a heavy door. A plastic surgeon was required to patch her finger.

When she was in the first grade we discovered she was deaf. The doctor found that her adenoids had grown over her Eustachian tubes. Her hearing returned when her tonsils and adenoids were removed.

Julie fell out of the top bunk and



broke her collarbone. The next day she came down with the mumps. When she recovered from the mumps her head was cocked to one side. On her last visit to the doctor for the broken collarbone, the doctor

Julie with broken collarbone and mumps

grabbed her head and lifted her off the floor. I wasn't watching what he was doing and only saw her feet leave the floor. "Julie, what are you doing? Put your feet on the floor," I ordered. When I realized what I had said, I felt like a dummy. The doctor thought it was pretty funny.

We took Craig to several doctors to try to find out why his muscles were weak. He was diagnosed with

muscular dystrophy. Craig was in high school in Sparks before the doctors in Sacramento determined

that his type of muscular dystrophy was fairly rare. I was told that



Craig, Julie, and Trudy 1969

Muscular dystrophy is passed through the genes of the mother. I later found out that Craig's type was probably caused by mutation.

One summer day Gary's father called and told us their youngest daughter, Kathy, had died. She was 19 years old – ten years younger than Gary. As a child Kathy had been cute, bright, and happy. She was ten years old when we were

married and was the flower girl at our wedding. She would spend a week with us every summer. Kathy was always considered lucky because she would win raffles and prizes at fairs and parties. After graduating from high school she attended a beauty school and took a job as a beautician in Colorado Springs. There she met a soldier who was training at Fort Carson. She and Jim Davison were married before he

was sent to Vietnam. When he returned he was stationed at Fort Knox and their son, Paul, was born there. Jim was discharged from the army and the family moved to Round Lake, Illinois where Jim's parents lived.



Kathy and Jim, April 1968

On the day she died a neighbor saw Kathy playing in the yard with Paul who was three months old. The neighbor was talking on the phone when Kathy knocked on the door and asked the woman if she would hold Paul. Kathy said she felt dizzy and sat down on the couch. The woman took Paul and finished her phone conversation. When she turned around Kathy was dead. The woman quickly summoned her husband who happened to be home. He was a firefighter and gave Kathy artificial respiration, but she did not respond.

Everyone was in shock. Our family flew to Colorado where we drove with the other members of Gary's family to Round Lake, Illinois. Craig, Julie, and Trudy stayed with my parents in Colorado. The day before

the funeral the families of Kathy and Jim spent the day at the funeral home chapel where Kathy lay in an open casket. Friends of Jim came and went during the day. In Jim's hometown this was called a wake and was an accepted ritual. The next day a closed casket funeral was held in a church.

Two autopsies were conducted, but no apparent cause of death was determined.

When Paul was ten years old he was in a school bus accident and was killed. He was the only child in the accident that was injured.

About a year after Kathy's death Gary's dad, Glenn, was diagnosed with breast cancer. Glenn was a railroad engineer for the Santa Fe Railroad. The surgery was to be done at the Santa Fe Hospital in Topeka, Kansas. At the same time Gary's mother was mentally ill with schizophrenia and was staying with Gary's aunt in Canon City, Colorado. Gary was on the Bureau of Mines research vessel, The Virginia City, in Coos Bay, Oregon. The message came to him that his father was going to have cancer surgery and Gary needed to go to Topeka.

He took the bus back to Tiburon and the next day the children and I drove Gary to the San Francisco airport. After Gary left and we were walking back to the car I realized that I had forgotten to get the Bronco keys from Gary. They were flying with him to Topeka. The helpful mechanics at the parking garage had strings of keys, but none that would start a

Bronco. We were able to get into the Bronco, but could not start it. I knew only one person who would know how to hot wire a car, so I called him. Luck was with me because Larry Sandberg was home and he was willing to drive from Petaluma to the airport and help us out. He had no trouble starting the car and he followed me in case the car died and he had to start it again. I was cruising right along until I couldn't find the street in San Francisco that led to the Golden Gate Bridge. Then I followed him. In the Tiburon house there was another key to the Bronco.

Gary stayed with his dad for the operation and then went to Canon City, Colorado where he mother was staying. Gary took his mother to the Colorado State Mental Hospital in Pueblo, Colorado where she was admitted. Gary's aunt drove him to the bus depot where he caught a bus to the Denver airport. When Gary arrived in Denver he discovered he had left his coat in the back seat of his aunt's car and his plane ticket

was in his coat pocket. At 11:00 pm the phone rang and Gary asked me to drive to the San Francisco airport and buy him a return ticket. After I had bought the ticket the San Francisco airline personnel were to call their counterparts in Denver and let Gary on the plane. I took the children next door and left them with my neighbor until I returned from my midnight drive to the airport. Meanwhile, Gary is waiting hours for word that I had paid for the ticket. The plane arrived; a new crew boarded; the passengers boarded; and Gary was not called. He finally went to the desk and asked if they would check if I had gotten him a ticket. Yes, I had gotten the ticket, but San Francisco had not called to let Denver know. The plane was ready to leave the gate, but they opened the door and allowed Gary to board. We were all glad when Gary got home.

Glenn recovered from the cancer surgery, but died eight years later of liver and pancreatic cancer.

## THE SCIENTIST FROM THE VIRGINIA CITY



Research Vessel Virginia City

The Bureau of Mines Marine Technology Center operated out of a docking facility located at the tip of the Tiburon Peninsula. The docks had been built during World War II to service the boats which strung nets across the Golden Gate. The nets kept Japanese submarines from entering the bay. Locals called the facility the "Net Depot". The mission of this Bureau of Mines station was to try different methods of recovering minerals from offshore deposits. They obtained a 209 foot ocean going tug boat which was the largest tug boat used during World War II. It was refitted with a drilling platform, four anchors, and a helicopter pad. The name given the ship was the Research Vessel Virginia City.

Gary and his boss, Howard Higgenbotham, were given the task of making a land based metallurgy laboratory at the Net Depot and to equip the Virginia City with a ship board metallurgy laboratory. Gary developed a method of weighing samples onboard ship using a gimballed ring platform. The platform which used an old ship's compass rings was so stable that the scale could measure samples to 100th of a milligram (.01 mg) or the weight of a half an inch number three lead pencil mark on a piece of paper.

The first test of the ship, drilling equipment, and metallurgy equipment was to be in the Bering

Sea offshore Nome, Alaska. The ship left Tiburon in July and came back in October, 1967. Gary flew to Nome in August and spent two months on the ship.



Left to right: Howard Higgenbotham, Howard Hamilton, sample handler, Gary Smyres, sample handler, sample handler, and in front, Rod Rickel.

Gary was the head metallurgist aboard the ship and was in charge of a nine man crew. The day began early – about 5:00 a.m. After breakfast the crew cleaned 200 – 300 buckets with a strong detergent to insure that no grease had contaminated the buckets. Gold in the samples could stick to the grease and float off with the oil. His crew wrapped the anchor cables in plastic to prevent grease from the cable getting into the samples.

The ship was anchored in four directions to hold the ship in position during drilling operations. There were two different drills. The Becker drill was a diesel ram pile driver. The drill rod was driven down into the sea floor. The rod was brought up using hydraulic jacks mounted on the sea floor. The drill pipe was 11 feet long and the samples were taken every 5 ½ feet. The Sonoco drill was a hydraulic resonance

vibration drill and the drill steel was vibrated down through the sea floor. Reversing the vibration brought the drill rod up. The Sonoco drill steel was 12 feet long and the samples were taken every 6 feet.

There were several expert divers on board. Some were former Navy Seals. When the Becker drill was being used the divers would follow the pipe down to the sea floor to check that the hydraulic jack was set properly. The current was three knots and if a driver did not follow the pipe to and from the ship the swiftness of the current would carry the diver away from the ship. A dingy would have to be sent to pick up the diver. The sea was so murky that the underwater lights were useless. All their work was done by feel.

The drill samples were dropped into a cyclone which is essentially a funnel which allowed the air to escape and the solids and water to drop down into a settling and decantation tank. There were two tanks – one clean and ready to receive the next sample and one being used and waiting to be emptied.

The sample material, which was mostly sand, was poured from the tank into Rubbermaid buckets. Approximately 300 buckets were used during a day. Each bucket was filled three-fourths full of sample and then a specified amount of sea water was added to the top. Gary had calculated a table of pulp density based on the average specific gravity of sand and the specific

gravity of sea water. Each bucket was weighed using a spring scale hung from part of the drill. Two methods were used to check the size of the sample – weighing and inserting a measuring stick into each bucket and measuring how many hundredths of cubic feet of material was in a bucket. There were anywhere from 3 to 30 buckets per sample. The drillers were able to drill up to four holes per day.

Each sample was treated to recover the gold. Clay in the samples had to be broken up and washed to free the gold particles. Each sample was panned by hand. Four sample handlers had been hired when the Virginia City reached Nome. The Head gold panner who had been hired in Placerville, California was 69 years old. The other gold panner was hired in Nome and was 78 years old. All the pan concentrates from one sample were combined and the colors (individual pieces of gold in the pan) counted. The color count was 1 through 4. One meant a piece of gold equal to one milligram. Two through four would be pieces that increased in weight. Anything above a 4 was a nugget and was weighed separately. Pieces less than one milligram were recorded as: a very good trace, a good trace, or a trace. No nuggets were found in any samples.

The pan concentrates of the entire sample were combined and the gold was amalgamated using a bead of mercury. Gold stuck to the mercury bead. The mercury was dissolved with a 10% solution of nitric acid. The nitric acid was washed away

leaving the gold. Gary weighed the gold on a Chan Electro Balance set on the gimbaled platform. Gary had to write a report for each hold drilled. He often worked 18 hours a day. Holes were drilled every day if the weather cooperated and there were no mechanical failures.

Gary was known as the scientist from the Virginia City, even though there were mining engineers, geologists, and a mineralogist on the ship. Gary was in charge of the lab. Gary could only leave the ship when drilling was not possible. He only left the ship to go to Nome three times. One time he went into the vault of the Bank of Nome and screened their gold. The Bureau bought five ounces of gold. He screened the gold to make sure he had particles weighing approximately one milligram each. He took those pieces back to Tiburon to be used in a test drill tank.

While on shore Gary and his crew sampled the black sand on the beach. The gold panner from Nome showed Gary where the wave action had concentrated the black sand on the beach to a depth of ½ to 3 inches. Gary and his crew bagged 30 (80 pound) bags of black sand to take back to Tiburon. The panner also taught Gary to pan for gold in a shovel.

In all the drill samples gold was found near the surface of the sea floor. The Bering Sea freezes over in early winter and storms blowing through pile the ice on the beach. The beach sand which includes the black sand sticks to the ice. The

next storm washes the ice out to sea. The melting ice releases the black sand and it scatters gold onto the ocean floor.

Nome was a town of 12 bars and 12 churches with a population of 2,000 people who were mostly Eskimos. The streets could not be paved because of the heaving effect of freezing and thawing. On a trip to Nome, Gary along with some of the ship's crew and drillers were in a bar drinking. Everyone was taking turns buying rounds of drinks. Gary had had more than enough to drink. An Eskimo came up to Gary and asked if he was the Scientist from the Virginia City. The Eskimo didn't think the Scientist from the Virginia City should be drunk. "You need a cup of coffee," he told Gary and took Gary away from the bar, down the street, and up an outside staircase to his apartment. As they walked into the apartment Gary saw the man's family sleeping on the floor in rows. There were no doors on the openings between the rooms, only curtains. The stove was a Coleman camp stove. Gary's new friend tried to pump up the stove so he could light it, but he was too drunk. Gary tried, but he was also too drunk. The Eskimo put instant coffee in a cup with cold water and they drank the coffee cold. They didn't have much to say to each other. The Eskimo kept repeating, "So you're the scientist from the Virginia City." After they drank their coffee they went back to the bar.

When it was time for the ship to sail back to Tiburon and Gary was getting ready to fly back to Tiburon,

the Sonoco consulting engineer took Gary and the other supervisors to the nicest restaurant in Nome and treated them to reindeer steaks.

The next two years were spent in various projects closer to home. In 1968 the ship sailed along the Northern California and Southern Oregon coast. One drill hole was made in Coos Bay and another at the mouth of the Klamath River.

A truck was equipped to recover gold from placer sand and water. A Walker-Near reverse circulation drill was set up to drill for gold in a placer gold field near Yuba City. The rock bit used to drill through the boulders in the placer field failed after two 10 minute attempts. The experiment was ended and the crew returned home. The placer gold field was at one end of Beale Air Force Base and Gary got to see several spy planes from the Lockheed Skunk Works. Gary thought they looked like planes out of comic books.

Howard Higgenbotham designed the land based Metallurgy Laboratory and Gary built it. Gary oversaw a crew of six college students, two of which had never used a hammer. The two story building was 3,300 square feet and included a reception area, two offices, a metallurgy laboratory, and an analytical laboratory. When the station closed they locked the doors and walked away.

Poor management and lack of fiscal responsibility resulted in the Marine Minerals Technology Center over spending their budget. Money from

other Bureau stations had to be used to cover Tiburon's debts. The Tiburon station lost political support within the Bureau which led to its

closure. Gary learned a lot working with Howard Higgenbotham who was said to be the world's foremost design metallurgist.

## HAPPY MEMORIES

Tiburon was a beautiful place to live. In spring everything was green with flowers everywhere. In summer the fog cascaded like a waterfall over the Golden Gate Bridge and the headlands. We could look across the bay at the City and see a golden city when lit by the last rays of the afternoon sun. At night we listened to the comforting sounds of the fog horns.

Living in Tiburon will always be a time of happy children and good times with friends. The three years we lived there were like being on vacation. We partied and played bridge with our neighbors. We went to the theater in San Francisco and went on camping trips. In the neighborhood the women met for morning coffee in each other's homes.

Our family went to the beaches, took trips to the City, explored Golden Gate Park, and visited museums and historical sites. The children still have good friends from the neighborhood and we still have friends we see regularly that we met during those special years.

The Bureau of Mines turned its Marine Minerals Technology Center over to the Department of Commerce. Bureau of Mines personnel had to find other jobs or transfer to other Bureau of Mines stations. Gary decided to stay with the Bureau. Gary could have transferred to any Bureau station, but decided to stay close to the Bay

area. We didn't want to leave the West and Reno seemed a good bet.

So we left the magical place.



Lee Ann & Smokey Stover  
and Bert Barnes



Lois with Lea Sheppard at our going  
away party given by the Stovers.

**Lifescapes**