

Lamar & Lily Enderlin: Their 50 Years Together

Lower Lake, California, 1991 (in honor of their 50th anniversary)

**Copyright (c) 1999, Dean A. Enderlin
All Rights Reserved**

Lamar Enderlin and Lily Langensand met at Oat Hill (near Middletown) in Napa County, California, in 1940. Lamar was a miner at the Oat Hill quicksilver mine at the time, earning \$3.00 a day for his labors. Lily worked in the boarding house, and made \$27.00 a month. Life at a mine isn't usually all that romantic, but these two fell in love. In 1941, Lamar had officially become a bachelor, having celebrated his 30th birthday in January. Lily had just turned 21. About that time, while visiting his Uncle George, Lamar announced that he had met a young girl up at Oat Hill. "She's kind of wild, but I think I'll marry her," Lamar confided to his uncle. To this day, Lamar maintains that he married Lily for her money! It's true that Lamar needed cash for his \$19 monthly car payment on a '37 Ford coupe, but he was more impressed with Lily's thriftiness and pleasant personality. What Lily saw in Lamar is less clear!

Lamar and Lily were wedded in Reno, Nevada, on July 2, 1941. They spent their short honeymoon driving in the Sierras, passing through Lake Tahoe and down the Feather River canyon to Marysville before heading to their new residence near Wilbur Springs in Colusa County. Lamar was working at the nearby Manzanita quicksilver mine for his cousin, Lilburn Davey. The cabin they lived in was meager, but cozy. It was screened in, and was furnished with only a bed. They improvised, using old boxes and benches to sit on. Cooking was done on a gas camp stove. Water had to be carried from a nearby spring, and being high in sulfur, it turned Lily's silverware black! Worst of all, there was no toilet in their little love nest, so one of Lamar's first marital duties was to build an outhouse! Still, the old cabin had its charm. Even the old bed, which sagged in the center, was conducive to closeness in the evenings! Despite such crude surroundings, Lamar and Lily hit it off well. Their relationship was probably assisted by one of Lily's bridal shower gifts: A rolling pin with the instructions, "Use it as self-defense if you need to!"

The newlyweds spent about six months at the Manzanita mine, before returning to Oat Hill. Lamar worked there as a furnace operator, until Uncle Sam invited him to participate in World War II (also known as being drafted)! Lily was pregnant at the time, so Lamar's military service was deferred. Their son, Marvin, was born on August 4, 1942, and Lamar was drafted into the Army and sent to Fort Ord six days later. Lily and Marvin stayed with Lamar's father, Henry Enderlin, in Lower Lake, California, during Lamar's absence. During his brief military career, Lamar rose to the prestigious rank of "sergeant janitor," before being furloughed from Fort Douglas, Utah, in September, 1943. Lamar's furlough was granted because of the urgent wartime need for experienced miners to work in the copper mines. He immediately went to work as an underground miner for the Anaconda Copper Mining Company in Butte, Montana. Lily, who was still in California, loaded the 1937 Ford with her belongings, and she and Marvin made the long trip to Montana all alone. She drove via Nevada and Idaho, taking about three days to make the trip.

Lamar worked in the underground mines at Butte for eleven years, before he and Lily went into business for themselves. This took place in 1954, when they purchased the King Dan Donut business. Lamar soon acquired the title, "King Dan the Donut Man," and was often called by that name during the six years that they operated the business. The donut business was very successful, thanks to Lamar and Lily's personable ways of dealing with the public. Even the local inmates appreciated "King Dan's" day-old donuts, although some admitted they were "hard as rocks!" Well known by many, Lamar even ran for mayor of Butte in 1958. He ran on the Democratic ticket, with the slogan, "Be Progressive." Apparently, Butte wasn't ready for that much progress, because Lamar was soundly defeated. When later asked what went wrong, Lamar explained, "My Political Machine broke down." In 1960, they sold the donut business and, with a portion of the proceeds, went on a nine month vacation to tour the West! In 1961, they purchased the S&L Ice Cream business on West Broadway Street in Butte. Soon, Lamar became known as "Dan the Ice Cream Man." From 1961 to 1975, Lily and "Dan" successfully operated the S&L Ice Cream store. Their business was good even on the coldest Butte winter days!

For recreation, Lamar and Lily often went hunting and fishing in the beautiful mountains of Montana. Many a trout met its fate in a frying pan, thanks to these two avid anglers. Lily holds the record for the largest trout they ever caught, much to Lamar's frustration. And when it came to hunting, she could bring the big game down with the best of them. She could even shoot from the hip and hit grouse on the fly!

In 1975, Lamar and Lily decided to hang up their aprons and retire. They sold their home in Butte in 1978 and moved to Lower Lake, California, where they owned a lot next to one owned by Lamar's father, Henry. Henry was in his 90's when they came back to California, and their move allowed them to assist with his needs until he passed away at the ripe old age of 101 1/2 years.

Lamar and Lily admit they have lived a long and useful life, and have enjoyed all of it. They are both active in the community, and are well thought of by all. Their son, Marvin, resides in Missoula, Montana, with his wife, Darlene, and children, Sheri and Dan. They and the rest of Lamar and Lily's family and friends wish them a happy Golden Wedding Anniversary, and "many, many, many more!"