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By Ann Elsbach

“My father used to say to me, ‘If you want to learn how to climb that tree, go climb it even if it’s 200 feet tall, just make sure you know that you have to hang on or you are going to fall and get hurt.’ I knew that there was never anything I couldn’t do if I really wanted to do it.” These are the words of Trinity Center resident Marge Lauerman.

Around 1875 Marge’s grandparents, Alfred & Elizabeth Dean, moved to Trinity Center tired of yearly flooding in Sutter County. Alfred died not long after the move. Marge’s father, Arthur, was only 13. The family then moved to Redding. Arthur who was born in 1868, spent most of his summers in Trinity Center after the move. Marge remembers coming up to TC when she was about 4. She and her father loved to fish all the streams in the area. Marge has a picture of herself at about 4 on the Eagle Creek Bridge proudly holding up a 4-5” fish on a very long pole with her dad’s big creel hanging on her to make the shot more interesting. She has lots of childhood memories of camping summers at White Cedars.

Marge’s parents bought Redding property with two houses that had been built by two brothers who had a logging mill where Turtle Bay is now. The houses have floor joists 32 feet long, all one solid piece with no knots. Later the Deans built a third house on the property. It was in one of those two original houses that Marge was born in June 1926. She grew up spending summers in the Trinity Center area.

Marge started college at the University of Washington at Seattle, but when her father died, Marge transferred to Chico State where she got a degree in secondary education. Her mother died about two weeks before she graduated. So instead of getting a job as a teacher, she had to take care of her mother’s estate. It was quite time consuming as she had a ranch in Lake County, and had to split her time between Lake County and Redding.

After Marge was married in 1948, she continued coming up to the Old Trinity Center area to camp, and when the children arrived, she brought them too. When oldest son, Dean, was tiny, he loved playing hide-and-seek among the many boulders in the area. One day they had quite a scare when they only found him just before dark. Initially the family camped with just a bedroll and camp stove but eventually ended up in old Trinity Center at Loren and Agnes Hoffman’s place. The Hoffmans had a gas station and a garage there. There was a little house behind the store where Ray and Elva Jackson stayed nearly all summer. Ray and Marge’s father were both masons and had known one another for many years. Marge and her husband, Bud, camped in the Jackson’s back yard. “Mary and Dick Hamilton were in a little house up the hill from us and we became friends.”

In 1951, Marge and Bud converted the garages on their Redding property into a stationery store, which they ran for about 35 years before selling. When the buyer’s lease ran out, they moved their store across the river. Son Terry then continued the family store in the same site, where it still is today.

In the 50s people learned that their town, old Trinity Center, was going to be flooded to create a lake. They “watched with great sorrow the demise of old Trinity Center in 1960 when they started filling the lake. The government purchased both their property and their houses, but they had the option of buying back their houses. Little by little people

were bought out, but thank goodness for the goodness of Mr. [Edwin] Scott's heart. He had this property and developed a subdivision so that the people who were being 'outsted' had a place to move their houses."

"Where the lake is now, out here in front of the airport and towards the marina, was a huge, beautiful meadow that my father admired. This was well before the dredger came in and started making the rock piles. That's where the original airport was – you can see it when the lake is low. The river flowed around the rocks and there was always some water between the old county road (now highway 3) and the airport. Bull frogs gathered in there, and at night time they could really put up a good song."

"More and more we just stayed in Trinity Center, and when Mr. [Edwin] Scott opened the subdivision in the new Trinity Center, we looked but were not prepared to buy anything at that time." For a while Marge and her husband, Bud, considered building up near Norwegian Meadows but decided that it would be too hard to get in and out in the winter. They waited until the third section opened up and then in 1964, they bought the two lots Marge owns now and built two houses. By 1964 Marge was a pilot. Having an airport right in front made it very handy for her to commute back and forth to their stationery business in Redding.

Marge has always stayed very active. She currently teaches silversmithing in Arizona in the winter. In younger days, she joined a service organization, the Soroptimists. Marge became president, district director, and later the regional treasurer of the Southwestern region. Flying also came in handy for covering the region. In 1968, she was instrumental in getting a building down on the river for senior citizens who had no place to meet that would hold their membership. It was barren property and people said, "Oh you'll never get the City of Redding to give you that property". Marge, Alma Hein and Gladys Hoffman started a discussion with the City and were able to secure the right to build there on City property. The Soroptimists' Club gave a first-time grant of \$12,500. The women worked with carpentry classes at Shasta College to do volunteer work and got Union leaders to donate help. The building went up. When the laminated beams arrived, there was a big snowstorm. Many buildings in town caved in. The beams were put up but began to crack. A special contractor came in to drill a hole every three feet in each layer of every beam, and to pump in a special glue under high pressure to keep them from splitting or cracking further. That cost them \$10,000 they didn't have; that's when they instigated Little Reno Night, which made them \$16,000 that year. The building, with its beautiful lawn adjacent, stands there next to the river to this day.