



D. Kennedy

Growing up Pacifican ~

A journey of chapters with the charming Deidra Crow

**Written by Jean Bartlett, May 12, 2021
(A Pacifica Historical Society Project)**



(Jean Bartlett photo)

Deidra (Kennedy) Crow at Sharp Park Restaurant, Pacifica, CA, April 30, 2021.

away. It was when Everett was on leave that he saw her—his future wife. Nineteen years old, Doretta Kohlscheen worked at Kearney Army Air Base. She was, as it turns out, Everett's sister's supervisor. Everett had stopped at the base to say hello.

"This is how my dad told his version of first seeing my mom," Deidra shared. "He said, 'She bent over to put something in the file cabinet and that was it for me!'"

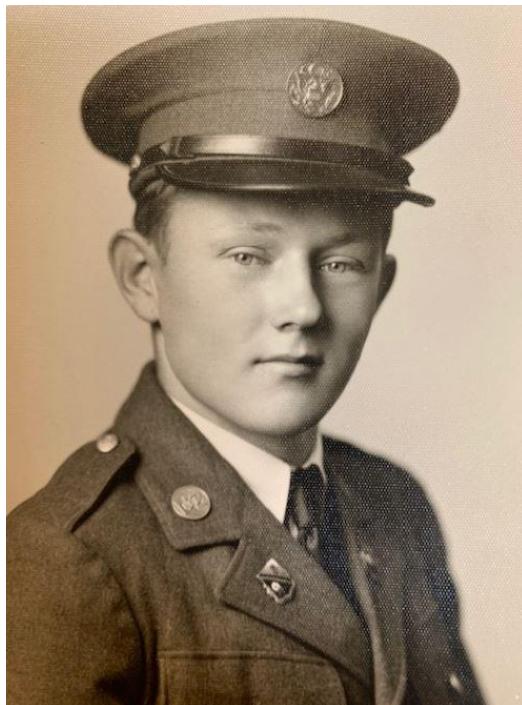
Deidra guffawed. "Of course my dad's sister, Ardelle, always corrected him, 'No,' she would say, 'that's not how it was at all!'"

The couple officially met at a USO Dance held at the Air Base and both could really dance, and dancing would remain a great joy for them throughout their 55-year marriage.

To tell the story of Pacifican Deidra (Kennedy) Crow, who moved to what is now known as Pacifica before this coastal community even knew such a moniker, it is important to take a good look at a world at war and a flip of a coin – for it was both of these things that brought Deidra's parents out West.

Born in Clarks, Nebraska in May of 1922 to Arthur and Anna Kennedy, Deidra's dad, Everett William Kennedy, was one of six kids. Five feet, eight inches tall, he knew his way around boxing and during the Second World War, the U.S. Army soldier was a Golden Gloves boxer. He spent time in the European Theater. He was also stationed in Van Nuys, California, where he got his first look at the West Coast and found it much to his liking. (His best friend in Van Nuys was character actor Andy Devine. The raspy-voiced Devine, particularly famous as Roy Rogers' sidekick, was often referred to as the "Honorary Mayor of Van Nuys.")

Raised in Kearney, NE, Everett was sent home on leave during the War. His father had passed



Everett Wm. Kennedy, U.S. Army, WWII. Everett received the Bronze Star for his service as a medic.



Doretta Sara Kohlscheen, senior year, Jamestown High School, Jamestown, ND, 1943.

Born in Vashti, North Dakota, November of 1925 to William and Helen Kohlscheen, Doretta was the second of the couple's four children. Her father had been taught to fly and to repair aircraft by Orville Wright. A farmer by family trade, during the First World War Sergeant 1st Class William Kohlscheen served in the 130th, 44th, 260th and 814th Aero Squadrons. Because of his Orville Wright education, William was personally chosen for the Aero Squadron by U.S. Army General William "Billy" Mitchell. Mitchell is recognized as the father of the United States Air Force. (On July 1, 1925, William Kohlscheen would go on to serve as both ground mechanic and inflight technician on the first airmail flight from Chicago to New York.)

The family struggled through the long days of the Depression and eventually their farm failed. In 1943, William and Helen moved their family to Kearney where William worked as an aviation mechanic and Helen worked as a nurse at Good Samaritan Hospital. The couple's daughter Doretta was a "crack" typist and in fact, her speed on a manual typewriter earned her the prestigious "North Dakota State Champion" award. She also studied and excelled at the Palmer Method of penmanship, considered the showpiece of handwriting in the United States.

→ This framed photo, which includes a few reflections, is of Sgt. William Kohlscheen, Deidra's maternal grandfather.

Doretta's skills as a typist and a master penwoman, along with her clear affinity for attention to detail, landed her that job at the Kearney Army Air Base. Given a top security clearance,



she was responsible for ensuring the aircraft at this defense airport were outfitted with all the necessary provisions, quite literally a life-saving responsibility. Beginning in November of 1943, Kearney Army Air Base served as a bombardment processing station for B-17, and later B-29, crews and planes.

Following his service, Everett Kennedy was discharged at San Francisco's Treasure Island—another West Coast location he fell for—and he headed back to Kearney to marry his girl. Deciding they wanted a fresh start, they eloped. With nothing more than a suitcase each, they hopped aboard a train and headed out West. They had heard that the Pacific Coast was opening up with lots of jobs and Everett already had a soft spot for what he had seen out West.

"They were at the train station in Salt Lake City," Deidra said. "And one train went to Portland, Oregon, and one train went to San Francisco. And Dad said, 'Where do you want to live? And Mom said, 'I don't care. I'm with you!' So he flipped a coin and they went to Portland."

They married before District Court Judge John Robert Mears in Portland on July 25, 1947. But Deidra's father could not find work in Portland and so they headed to San Francisco.

"Mom found work as a secretary and continued to work for the government. Dad got a job as a clerk at Kaiser Permanente in San Jose. He took the train to and from work."

The couple lived in San Francisco.

"They had no money. To go on dates, Dad would donate blood. You got \$12 for donating blood back then. With that, they would go have a steak and cocktails and they'd dance. It was a San Francisco night-out-on-the-town with Daddy's \$12 worth of blood. They went to places like the Top of the Mark (19th floor, *Mark Hopkins Hotel*), the Starlight Room (*atop the Sir Frances Drake Hotel*) and the Tonga Room (*in the Fairmont Hotel*)."

Everett eventually found work as a clerk at Braun, Knecht, Heimann in San Francisco, which became Van Waters & Rodgers in Brisbane and is now Univar in Milpitas. That led to a 39-year career. The company supplied scientific equipment and materials to wineries, universities and laboratories all over the Western United States. Everett became their shipping manager.

"Dad was the liaison between the Teamsters and management. Luckily he was a Golden Gloves champion in the Army because every once in a while he would have to deck a Teamster, just to show him who was the boss. Because he was only five foot eight, they never saw it coming. Mom was five foot seven. My dad didn't care whether she wore heels or not. He used to say, 'I got the best looking woman. She's taller. Who cares?'"



On June 27, 1948, Everett and Doretta Kennedy's first child was born at Stanford University Hospital in San Francisco. That child was Deidra.

"That hospital is now a dental college and Stanford's Medical School, where I was born, moved to the Stanford University Campus in 1959," Deidra said, noting that her birth was used as an educational experience.

"When I was born, my parents were moving us into a veterans' housing apartment in San Francisco's Candlestick Cove neighborhood. This was before Candlestick Park was built. And while I was in the hospital, my dad was busy bleaching the walls in

our new home and making it all nice. My mom, who worked up until my birth, was part of a Stanford program for veterans' wives, so my birth was attended by seven, freshly scrub-faced interns." Deidra lets out a hearty laugh. "I had these handsome men all around me when I came into the world. What a dramatic entrance! Then I was used as the practice baby for all the new mothers. I was the bottle baby and the bathing baby. My mother and I stayed in the hospital for ten days and then we went home."

Deidra's mom stayed home with her daughter for a while and then went back to work. Their "wonderful" neighbor Mabel watched over Deidra while her parents were at work, and she would continue working for the family when Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy bought a home in Pedro Valley. (*In 1957, nine small coastal communities, including Pedro Valley which became Linda Mar, incorporated to become the City of Pacifica. Those communities, now neighborhoods, are: Fairmont, Westview, Pacific Manor, Sharp Park, Fairway Park, Vallemar, Rockaway Beach, Linda Mar and Pedro Point.*)

"My family knew San Pedro Valley early on," Deidra said. "We didn't have a car until I was 2 or 3, but we'd come by Greyhound Bus to Linda Mar Beach. My dad was a shore fisherman, casting with 8-foot rods. He would catch stripers and salmon and my mom would cook them up. Once we got a car we came down more often."

They also came down with the next-born Kennedy, Roger. Roger is three and a half years younger than Deidra.

Deidra went to Candlestick Cove Elementary School for kindergarten. During the summer between kindergarten and first grade, one of her dad's Linda Mar Beach fishing expeditions opened up a whole new world for the Kennedy family.

"One day my dad saw Andy Oddstad and his company, Sterling Homes, moving dirt in Pedro Valley to build homes. My dad called his mother. 'Mom, send money! They are building houses where I fish!' So she sent him the money for the down payment. In those days, the loans for veterans were a dime a dozen. They were building houses at a rapid pace and we moved in fairly quickly, 839 Linda Mar Boulevard. We lived there until I was 12 or 13 and then we moved up to Granada Drive. A couple of years later, we moved up to the family home on top of Zamora Drive."

Andres "Andy" Oddstad, who served as one of the Navy's "fearless frogmen" of the Second World War, was also a carpenter. Following the War, the carpenter became a developer and one of his constant goals was to help veterans purchase affordable homes. He and his sister Elma Oddstad were business partners for 18 years, until his death. (In 1964, Andy was killed in a car accident by a wrong way driver. Andy was 45.) Their company started out as Homes by Sterling and with several buyouts and name changes in between, the company became Oddstad Homes. In the 1950s, Andy acquired much of Pedro Valley and began building tracts of single-family homes. He called the community, Linda Mar.

"Andy Oddstad was a wonderful human being," Deidra stated, "a gem of a guy. Here's just one example.

"My parents go to look at the house they had built and they noticed that the hardwood floors had little bumps. My dad went around each room and there was, along the baseboard, all these little bumps. They had shellacked the floors over the sawdust. And the guy said to my dad, 'You have to move in. You sign here.' And my dad said, 'I'm not paying for a house with bumps on the floor.' So my dad goes to Andy Oddstad's office and says, 'You come with me, now!' So he brought Andy down to the house and said, 'What do you think of that?'

"Andy Oddstad was shocked and appalled. My dad said, 'We've already moved out of our apartment and our furniture is on the way. What are we going to do?'



Everett Kennedy in the backyard of his first "Pacifica" home, with his catch of the day from Linda Mar Beach, circa 1954.

have them for a dollar a year. They'll come back to me when the new school is built and I'll turn them back into houses and sell them. And so this block of Fernandez Way became the original Pedro Valley School."

Originally it was eleven houses and the buildings were linked in the back by a covered promenade. There were no fences between the backyards so the students were able to use that area as their playground.

"They cleared out the walls in each house and put chalkboards and bulletin boards in. They kept the fireplace and put a bathroom in where the kitchen was. On an aside, I don't know if anyone remembers but our teacher Mrs. Jones had to leave when she got pregnant. That's what they did in those days!"

"Who were some of my fellow students?" Deidra smiled, enjoying her Pacifica history. "So many wonderful people and a few are among Pacifica's famous families. Chuck Gust was in my first grade class. I also went to first grade with Dana Denman. Later I went to school with Kathryn Pavka, although we met earlier in Brownies." (The Gust family owns Nick's Seafood Restaurant and Sea Breeze Motel. Dana is the owner of Shamrock Ranch Kennels and Kathryn Pavka's family used to own Shelter Cove.)

In 1956, the formal Pedro Valley School was built and the classrooms were restored as homes and eventually sold. Deidra attended first through sixth grade at Pedro Valley, and then seventh and eighth grade at Linda Mar School.

"Andy Oddstad said, 'As long as it takes to do, I will pay for you and your family to stay in a hotel room until this is fixed and done right. You come and get me when it's done and I'll sign off.' And that's exactly what happened. This was one of thousands of homes Andy built, but he wanted them to not only be affordable, but to be reliable – to be built right."

Andy Oddstad's good deeds also included donating the land for Oddstad Park. The park is home to the Pacifica Spindrift Players and the Spindrift School of Performing Arts. Deidra has another story on Mr. Oddstad's generosity as well.

"We moved here in October of 1954. I was in first grade and school had already started. I went into Mrs. Jones' class and the school was in little houses that Andy Oddstad had donated. They were trying to build the school but they couldn't get the bonds passed quickly enough and they didn't want to bus these Pedro Valley kids to San Francisco. Andy Oddstad said, 'Well, I'll donate this whole block of houses to use as a school and you can



(Pacifica Historical Society photo)

Pedro Valley/Oddstad Convertible School, circa 1954.

"The evening of the day we moved into our first home in Pacifica, our babysitter came over and my folks went to Nick's for dinner. They were ready to celebrate! They danced and had cocktails. They enjoyed a beautiful dinner. When the bill arrived, Nick Gust walked over to their table and tore up the bill. He knew my parents had moved to Pacifica that day. 'You and your family will live here for many years and you'll come to Nick's many times to celebrate. This first one is on me.'

"He was right. My parents lived here for many years and we so often celebrated family occasions at Nick's. I still do! And over the years, some of the Kennedys worked at Nick's. I love that about Nick's and about this town."

In 1955, Deidra, her brother Roger and their dad were without Doretta for three months. (Their nanny, Gloria, came to stay.) With Doretta's top security clearance, "the highest security rating in the federal government for a civilian," she took a special job with the U.S. Government and went to work in the Nevada desert on the top secret "Operation TEAPOT Project."

According to a Defense Nuclear Agency Public Affairs Office Fact Sheet:

"Operation TEAPOT was the fifth series of atmospheric nuclear tests conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) within the continental United States. The series, which consisted of 14 nuclear tests and one non-nuclear detonation, was conducted at the Nevada Test Site (NTS) from February 18 to June 10, 1955. The operation involved an estimated 11,700 Department of Defense (DOD) personnel who participated in observer programs, tactical maneuvers, and scientific studies. The series was intended to: test nuclear devices for possible inclusion in the weapons arsenal; improve military tactics, equipment, and training; and study civil defense requirements.

About 8,000 of the DOD participants at TEAPOT took part in Exercise Desert Rock VI. The remaining DOD personnel assisted in scientific experiments or administration and support activities for the Joint Test Organization (JTO).

Exercise Desert Rock VI, an Army program involving members of the armed services, included observer activities, troop tests, and technical studies. Observer programs, conducted at Shots

WASP, MOTH, TESLA, TURK, BEE, ESS, APPLE 1, and APPLE 2, generally involved instruction on the effects of nuclear weapons, observation of a nuclear detonation, and a subsequent tour of a display of military equipment exposed to the detonation. Troop tests were designed to demonstrate military tactics and doctrine and to train command and staff personnel in all phases of planning and conducting combat operations under the anticipated conditions of nuclear warfare. Troop tests included the maneuvers performed at Shots BEE and APPLE 2. Technical studies were conducted at Shots WASP, MOTH, TESLA, TURK, BEE, ESS, APPLE 1, WASP PRIME, MET, and APPLE 2. These projects were used to train armed services personnel and to study the ability of different types of military equipment and structures to withstand nuclear detonations.

Scientific tests studying the effects of each nuclear detonation were conducted by the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project (AFSWP) Military Effects Group, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory (LASL) Test Group, University of California Radiation Laboratory (UCRL) Test Group, and Federal Civil Defense Administration Civil Effects Test Group. Scientists and technicians from these groups placed gauges, detectors, and other instruments around the point of detonation in the days and weeks preceding each scheduled nuclear test. After each shot, when the Test Manager had determined that the area was safe for limited access, these participants returned to the test area to recover equipment and gather data."



A bit of film trivia, for those familiar with Steven Spielberg's 2008 "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," early on Indiana Jones escapes from Soviet agents at Hangar 51, only to find himself in a mannequin-filled, empty town in the Nevada desert moments before a Cold War atomic test blasts everything to smithereens – everything except a hero in a wide-brimmed coffee-colored fedora temporarily hiding in a lead-lined refrigerator. In Operation TEAPOT, mannequins and mock homes were part of the testing process.

"My mom would tell stories about these physicists," Deidra said in regards to Operation TEAPOT. "She said they were brilliant men but they would run around without their shirts tucked in or their shoes tied. She would make extra sandwiches to take to work because they always forgot their lunch."

←Pre-nuclear adventure, Doretta poses with her children Roger and Deidra. Easter, 1954, San Francisco.

"My mother wasn't only about working for the government! She had several other secretarial jobs, including she worked as the Department Secretary for the PB&R Department in the 1960s. Eldred Lokker, the first PB&R Director, was her boss. Karl Baldwin, Pacifica's first City Manager and a truly great human being, was Mr. Lokker's boss. Sometimes Mom would fill in for Karl's secretary, Claire Rawlings, and do the City minutes. That was a long night for her. Dad would pick her up at 1:00 a.m."

* * *

Everett and Doretta had four more children.

"The six Kennedy children, in order of birth, are: me, Roger, Tim, Reid, Alan and Shauna. Shauna is 19 years younger than me. She was born when I was a freshman at CSM (College of San Mateo). My youngest brother Alan was born when I was 16. My mother, who always worked, had a kid about every four years. 'Because,' she would say, 'by the time they are four years old, they can make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, they can dress themselves and they can fetch and help me with the baby.' My dad always liked having little babies around. He loved little chubby babies, my mom not so much. Well, she loved us but she liked us more when we were older and she could have a conversation with us!"



The Kennedy family, 1968 or 1969, in front of their home on Zamora Drive. Left to right: Doretta holding Shauna, Roger, Everett, Deidra, Alan, Reid and Tim.

"What were my parents' personalities like? My mom had dry wit and was the master of the pithy comment. She had an enormous vocabulary. Learn a word a day; she took that seriously. She loved to have a wonderful comeback and we would just roll our eyes. Dad was more of the ha-ha, guffaw, and tell-the-jokes-kind-of person. He was naturally gregarious. They loved their kids and their folks and their siblings and all their siblings' kids. Family was huge to them. And my parents had fun together. They loved going on dates in Pacifica to: Nick's, Mori Point Restaurant, the Wander Inn, The Rose Room on Pedro Point, and their favorite place, the Linda Mar Lodge which is now Cheers. They were also incredible swimmers and they were open water swimmers."

"Before I was born, they used to swim from Ocean Beach to Sharp Park. They thought it was no big deal. They made sure all of their kids knew how to swim. When I was 7 or 8, my dad took me to Jefferson Pool, at Jefferson High School, and threw me in. That was his way of teaching me how to swim and that was terrifying! But then my parents put me through the Red Cross swimming program and I loved to swim."

All the Kennedy kids went through the Red Cross program.

"My parents would take us swimming at Lake Berryessa (Napa County). We also went to Searsville Lake which was on Stanford property. It was a beautiful freshwater lake. It's since closed. When the Pacifica Sea Lions started, I was on their charter team. Pacificans and parents Maggie Moseley and Sheila Hyman were both heavily involved from the start. Not only was Sheila one of the Sea Lions founders; she was their first swim teacher. In the early 1960s, the City of Pacifica brought in Richard Burton to focus on the Aquatics program in the PB&R Department and to grow the Sea Lions as well. (*He was the Recreation Supervisor.*) He coached and we had so many swim meets. I really enjoyed my time with the Sea Lions.

On November 22, 1957, the City of Pacifica incorporated. Jean Fassler became the new city's first mayor. She was also the first female mayor of a new city in the United States. Pacifica made headlines around the world. It had been somewhat of a struggle to get the vote to incorporate those nine small coastal communities into Pacifica. Quite a few people did not want the change. Deidra's dad was on the committee to incorporate Pacifica and he voted on the "Pacifica" name. Incorporation won by a vote of 2,603 to 2,113.

"Both of my parents worked full time but they did what they could for their community. My dad was part of the work crew that built White Field for the Little Leaguers. They were always involved in Sea Lions and Little League. Mom also had a Cub Scout Troup. She was treasurer because she was so darn good at accurate reporting. I remember one time we had \$1,500 worth of the World's Finest Chocolate in our house. The whole house smelled like chocolate, which was not a bad thing!"

Deidra was also involved in scouting. She began as a Brownie and was in the Morning Glory Troop which included classmates, and still very dear friends, Kathryn Pavka and Judy Ames. Judy's mom was the Troop's leader from Brownies through about three years of Girl Scouts when the group disbanded. Deidra has a very special memory of Judy's mom.

"I had been struggling in school because it turns out, I couldn't see. But I didn't know I couldn't see. When you are a kid, you think everyone sees like you do. Through first, second and part of third, I couldn't see anything on the board. One day someone was absent and their seat was right in front of the board. My teacher had me sit there and suddenly, I could see everything. I got glasses and was shocked to find there are all these individual leaves on trees. I did so much better in school. I went from the last group to the first group in two months flat. Thanks to Shirlee Gibbs and the Pacifica Lions Club, now no child will experience what I did. The local Lions Club provides a free eye screening for every Pacifica elementary school student.

"So I was just getting used to my glasses and I was over at our Troop leader's house. She was teaching us to sew. We were learning overcast stitching and basting, and how to sew a button. We had a little sampler we were working on. I was really concentrating with my new glasses and I sewed my sampler onto my skirt. Mrs. Ames saw this and she knew how little girls can sometimes be. They might laugh and jeer. So she came over and said very quietly, 'Put this towel next to it and come with me.' So we left the room, she took her seam ripper and she got it undone and smoothed out my skirt. She said, 'You're fine now. Don't worry about it. You are doing a good job. You just got a hold of your skirt with the needle.' She took me back and no one had any idea. It was not a big deal.

"Funny the moments you don't forget and that is one I'll never forget. Mrs. Ames was so kind to little girls, so empathetic. She was a beautiful woman.

"I had so much fun growing up in Pacifica. My brother Roger and I rode our bikes all around. They were still building houses up on Serena Drive and that was our cardboard box sliding hill. We would slide from the top, all the way down. That was a ride – a by the skin-of-our-knees ride! One day I said to my brother—because he was younger and he would always do stuff that I told him—I said, 'Roger, we need to pull these stakes out. They are not going to build houses here because now they will know we don't want them to be here.' Ha! Ha! Kid thinking! So Roger and I pulled out all the stakes we could see, threw them in our bike baskets and then threw them in the garbage at home. All those little stakes with flags on them. Well, it didn't take very long before the construction foreman came knocking on our door. 'Your daughter has been vandalizing our construction sites.' Of course I said, 'I know nothing!' My dad made me apologize to the foreman and tell him I would never do it again."

Deidra and her siblings spent most of their time in the Linda Mar side of town but as family funds allowed it, they headed to the north end of town and went to the Seavue Theater in Pacific Manor and Tic

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Tock Burgers in Sharp Park." (*The movie theater opened in 1951 and closed in 2002. It was demolished in 2007 and is now a Walgreens.*)



"Of course we loved going to the movies and we loved Tic Tock," Deidra recalled. "They had 19 cent hamburgers that were so greasy and good. They also had one in San Francisco on Third Street. We'd go there too. The one in Pacifica later became Chubby's and now that space, on Francisco Blvd., is home to El Toro Loco, a wonderful Peruvian, Mexican and Latin American restaurant."

←Pacifica Historical Society photo.

"There are so many places I miss in Pacifica from my childhood, though thankfully Nick's Restaurant and Sea Bowl (*now Sea Bowl Entertainment Center*) are still here. But I miss Romano's Restaurant in Rockaway. It was a pizza and Italian food place. It was owned by Mike Romano's dad. Mike's grandmother was there too. She was so sweet. She would sit in the back and wave at everyone. The Holiday Inn Express is there now. Sun Valley Dairy at Shamrock Ranch, I miss that! As kids, we rode our bikes or hiked up there. They had penny candy and ice cream. It was a destination. It was leased by Sun Valley Market in San Francisco. Not the same Sun Valley markets that are in Pacifica now. It was owned by my friend Dee-Dee Denman's dad."

The Sun Valley Dairy provided a place for local residents to purchase milk and other staples. It was on Truman "Doc" Denman's 300-acre ranch, on the south side of San Pedro Creek. He established the ranch in 1939 and he ran various enterprises from it. He raised chickens and had a couple hundred dairy cows. He grew vegetables and flowers. Later he operated a horse stable and a dog kennel. Additionally he opened his own store to sell the milk from his dairy cows. But eventually he sold his milk to the Sun Valley Dairy and they leased his store in 1953.

"We had home-delivered Sun Valley milk. Mr. Russo, our next-door neighbor, was the Sun Valley milkman. He drove this big white truck. You could buy butter, eggs, cheese and cottage cheese – anything a dairy would have you could order from him and we had this little box outside our house where Mr. Russo delivered it all. We needed things delivered. Both my parents were working, plus it wasn't until my mom was older that she learned how to drive a car; even though she could drive a tractor when she was eight.



"I also miss Ben's Trading Post (*owned by Ben Sharp*). Oh, it was wonderful! It was in Rockaway Beach and it was painted bright pink. When they widened the road there went Ben's (*demolished*). Now it's a bus stop. Ben's Trading Post had everything in there: antiques, decks of cards, clothes, horse collars, buckets, hardware things, old lanterns. It overlooked Rockaway Beach. I have never been to another store like it."

←Pacifica Historical Society photo.

Deidra's parents liked their children to be involved in community activities and Pacifica Parks, Beaches & Recreation Department, then as now, had a lot to offer. Deidra's folks signed Deidra and her younger brothers Roger and Tim into the PB&R Clown Club. Taught by Jay and Janey, Deidra and her siblings received lessons in makeup, costume, magic tricks and balloon animals. To this day, Deidra can create a balloon nose, a crown or a hotdog on the spot – if she has her tools in tow.

"For years, my two younger brothers and I were the Kennedy Kyds Klowns and we would do birthday parties and it sure beat babysitting money, I tell you. We did the whole party. The moms would go in the dining room and have cocktails and we would do the presents and the cake. We also occasionally performed for little kids at the San Francisco Zoo."

In addition, Deidra was able to add violin to her part of the act.

"I took violin lessons at Sea Bowl during the summer. Mr. Steven Johnson was our music teacher. He used to come to each elementary school to give lessons. He was hired by the District. I was given a small violin to play which became part of my clown act. I called myself, "Sadivarius," because I had this little sad face and a Harlequin costume. It was a little quarter size violin. One time, Mr. Johnson took my bow and beat me on the top of my head because he would do that to people, smack them with their own instrument because what 10-year-old wants to practice? 'You have to practice two hours a day!' he shouted bopping me on the head. He was pretty frustrated and everyone was terrified of him.

"My brother Roger played a drum in our clown act. We were a semi-professional clown act. I say, semi-professional, because we only got paid half the time! That was another thing, volunteering. PB&R encouraged us to volunteer at the Recreational Center for the Handicapped in San Francisco (*now the Pomeroy Recreation Rehabilitation Center*). We did volunteer there and we made the kids laugh. We had a little act and skits. It was one of those great, completely eye-opening experiences for us as kids because until we went to the Center, we just lived in our own kid world and never realized the challenges that others might have. And of course we were hams and loved the great reception we got!

"We also volunteered at the Lighthouse for the Blind. We let the children touch our faces so they could learn about clown makeup and then we would just talk and laugh with them.

"When we used to have this wonderful Linda Mar Parade, which came around Adobe Drive and then it went all around the Shopping Center, we were always in the parade. We had a little tiny car that our clown teacher Jay drove. It was classic car stuff. We would run around like crazy and give out balloons and other clown items. My dad, who was a frustrated actor all his life, loved the idea that his kids performed in the local parade and also at the San Francisco Zoo."

There were many adventures in Deidra's childhood.

"My brother Roger and I would play in the San Pedro Creek and we would catch crawdads. One time I didn't have any bait, so I went into the refrigerator and took out a piece of filet of sole, which was dinner, and I caught and brought home 20 crawdads. My mother was furious. She said, 'My refrigerator is not your bait shop. Now we are going to have the crawdads for dinner because that is what you caught with my filet of sole.' If you caught something, you cleaned it and cooked it. When I found out how much work they were and how little they offered in a meal that ended that!"

One Thanksgiving the kids got poison oak.

"Every Thanksgiving, Mom wanted us out of the house so she could cook," Deidra said recalling one particular Thanksgiving strategy. "Our house was on the north side of the street facing Montara Mountain. Dad took us on a hike where our mom could see us from the front yard. He said we were going to sit on

this big rock and when Mom was ready for us to come home, she was going to wave this big white towel. In turn, we had a big white towel which we would wave in response. Well she never waved that towel. Dad just told us that story to get us up the hill! He told us that same story for years to get us up that hill. It took us a while to figure that one out! But there were and are so many beautiful hikes in Pacifica.

"Right above Nick's is what we used to call, 'Strawberry Hill.' It was full of wild strawberries, where the switchback is now. We would go up there and eat strawberries until we were sick! This was back when Highway 1 was a two-way highway, before it was widened.

"Then there was Pig Ranch Road. We rode our bikes on that. It was frightening but we loved it. We screamed all the way down it. And back when I was a kid, all of Pedro Point was gravel, no paved roads. My brother got me up at the top of Pedro Point, up there by Kent Road, and I rode all the way down to Danmann's Hayloft Bar on my balloon-tire bicycle until my bike went out from underneath me. I scraped my entire thigh. I had to go to the doctor's and he spent a lot of time picking that gravel out. Ha! Ha! I still have the scars!"

There were honors and errors. When Deidra was in eighth grade, she was appointed Class Valedictorian and was one of the speakers, along with *Pacifica Tribune* Publisher/Editor Bill Drake, at her class's graduation.

"Mrs. Dodie Payne, a teacher, appointed me to the position. She was a wonderful teacher. I remember she read us 'Johnny Tremain.' Even as eighth graders we loved being read to." (A Newbery Medal-winning novel about the Revolutionary War, "*Johnny Tremain*" was written by Esther Forbes and first published in 1943.)

Deidra's father helped her with her speech which highlighted Benjamin Franklin and his quote, "An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

When she was in seventh grade, Deidra erred with top secret U.S. government information.

"I had to do a report on atomic fusion. I was going through my mom's briefcase and there was a picture of an atomic bomb. And I thought, 'I'll put this on the cover of my report and I'll get an A.' I wrote out the whole thing about atomic fusion, what it's about and why we should support it and I put mom's atomic bomb photo on the cover of my report. Well, I got called into my teacher's office. Mr. Bowen said, 'Where did you get this photograph?' And I said, 'My mother's briefcase.' And he said, 'And your mother works for the government?' Because it was identified on the photo. 'Well, you know you are not supposed to bring this to school.' But I wanted the 'A,' which I told him. I did get an 'A' but I was thoroughly educated, in a nice way, on the importance of keeping government secrets, secret. Mr. Bowen was a creative teacher and a very kind man!"



In Deidra's freshman year of high school at Terra Nova, fall of 1962–spring of 1963, there was the famous 1962 Linda Mar Flood. It began with winter-like storms in October and on October 13, 1962, major flooding occurred in lower Linda Mar.

"I was at a sleepover at my friend Kathryn's home in Shelter Cove. Her dad, Charlie Pavka, phoned my dad. 'Everett, I'm sorry we can't take Deidra home until they fix this bridge.' The water had risen over the San Pedro Creek Bridge and that bridge needed to be inspected before anyone could leave the Pedro Point area. We were fine in Shelter Cove. (Shelter Cove is a small privately-owned, on-the-beach-neighborhood in the southern end of Pedro Point.) I stayed for three days. The bridge passed inspection and there was

some flooding in lower Pedro Point, but the major damage was in Linda Mar. I just felt so badly for people. So much property and so many cars were damaged. Nick's in Rockaway also had serious damage. When the storm came, boulders swept into the dining room. It was horrible. But the community came together and helped Nick clean it up and they were open almost immediately."

The flooding in Linda Mar covered 140 acres. Two hundred people had to be evacuated, including some in small boats where the water was waist-deep. According to the *Pacifica Tribune*—that's their photo below—the damage extended from:



"San Pedro Creek north-northeast into De Solo Drive, Flores Drive, Montezuma Drive, Linda Mar Boulevard, Anza Drive and Arguello Boulevard, and out to Highway One. The worst flooding was in the northwestern section of the valley where a lake formed in the same general area Lake Mathilde formerly occupied, but that was now covered with homes. Eighty-five homes experienced major damages to their interiors. Stores in the Linda Mar Shopping Center were also flooded by several inches of water."

"So much happened when I was in high school, President Kennedy was assassinated. Then there was the Vietnam War. I remember when Stan Childers was killed in Vietnam. That was not long after I graduated. He was a few years older than me but really well known at Terra Nova and nobody could believe it when we learned that he had died. When President Kennedy was shot, I was in Mrs. Caciedo's Spanish class, third period. I'll never forget it. He was shot but had not died yet. I had a little transistor radio and was listening to the news and I was going to the school bus and that's when Walter Cronkite announced that President Kennedy had passed away. So here I am, Deidra Kennedy, standing on the steps of the school bus announcing that President Kennedy had passed away. (*Friday, November 22, 1963, 12:30 p.m., Central Standard Time, Dallas, Texas.*) Rich Byfield said, 'Her name is Kennedy and she is announcing that President Kennedy is dead.' He just couldn't believe it. Then there was Jack Ruby killing Lee Oswald and later, Martin Luther King's assassination. But I was a sophomore when Kennedy was assassinated and that's when I really wondered what was happening in the world. That's when I first understood that the world wasn't beautiful. To see that horse-drawn caisson and then to see John-John saluting his father when his father's coffin went by – it was unforgettable."

Deidra did, however, also have a lot of fun in high school.

"I'm still friends with kids I went to high school with including: Kathryn Pavka, Andrea Drake (*Bill Drake's daughter*) and Tami Houg."

Deidra was involved in Science Club, Inter-National Relations Club and Speech Club.



←A portion of the kids photographed in 1965 for the Terra Nova Speech Club yearbook photo. Deidra is in the second row, second from left. Their teacher was Mr. Brownstone.

"I also took four years of drama in high school. I did the posters and the publicity. I didn't act in any plays because the director wanted me to be a floozy or a drunk and I said to him, 'I just can't do it.' But I still loved drama and had a blast.

"Often on Saturdays, my friend Tami and I would take the Greyhound Bus into San Francisco – 90 cents. We had this route. We would walk down Market Street from Seventh and we would stop for pie for breakfast. Then we'd take the cable car all the way out to Fisherman's Wharf, we'd stop at Maiden Lane to

see Robison's Pet Store. (*Robison's was renamed, "Davidson's Pet Shop" in the Alfred Hitchcock film, "The Birds."*) We bought clown makeup on Powell Street. As long as we stayed together we could go on our own. We just had to be back by dark."

Deidra would also go to the Russian River with Tami's family.

"Tami's father, Ed Houg, was a very special man. He was on the Water Board for years and he was also involved with Boy Scouts and received the Silver Beaver Award. (*To recognize registered Scouters of exceptional character who have provided distinguished service within a council.*) He was an all-around good guy. He was the town barber. In the church he was choir master. Everybody knew Ed. Tell something to Ed Houg and it would go nowhere else. Ed Houg used to teach in barber school and he taught Frank Nash. (*Frank Nash and his dad opened the Coastsider Barber Shop in May of 1956 in the Pacific Manors Shopping District.*) Ed also ran Pacifica Rotary for two years."

Deidra said she did not do any of the high school dances except she did go to Senior Prom.



Deidra, Terra Nova High School, senior photo. Class of 1966.

"My friend Brenda made me!" Deidra recalled with a laugh. "She said, 'I know someone who is not going to the Senior Prom either and you are going to go together and like it!' I did like it. Rich Byfield and I went together. He was a swimmer and a good guy. We were friends and we're still friends. I'm good friends with his wife as well.

"Rich's dad told him to ask me the color of my dress. It was a powder blue long sheath. So Rich drives up in a powder blue convertible. His dad had rented it. We went to the Trident in Sausalito, upstairs. I had pheasant under glass. My dad said, 'Ugh!' Because when he was growing up during the Depression, he and his older brother had to go out and shoot pheasants and they had pheasant sandwiches. So he hated it. But my dinner at the Trident was wonderful!"

In high school, Deidra was active in her church. She was also active in the high school club, Youth for Christ. The Pacifica Easter Sunrise Service, which Deidra coordinated, was run by the youth groups of several Pacifica churches.

Author: Jean Bartlett (www.bartlettbioographies.com)

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Growing up Pacifican ~ A journey of chapters with the charming Deidra Crow (page 15)

"All the church youth groups planned for an organist and a soloist, and one of the pastors would rotate the message. We would have bible readings by the kids. Back then we did not go to Sweeney Ridge. The Sweeney Ridge service started in 1983 with Pastor Tom Nibbe. It's still nondenominational. But in these earlier days, we climbed to the top of Mori Point, to the top of Strawberry Hill and once to the top of Cattle Hill, but we didn't repeat that latter one. Too much work and people complained they were going to have heart attacks!"

"We still do it. We meet at Eureka Square and caravan up to Sweeney Ridge. The ranger opens the gate. Pastor Nibbe has brought in an incredible bagpiper. This is at 6:30 in the morning. You can see the ocean on one side, and the Bay on the other. I have been doing this always. Wherever I was, I would fly back and take my mom."



Terra Nova Drama Club, 1966. Deidra is in the bottom row, fourth from the left. Kathryn Pavka is fifth from left.

* * *

Maggie Moseley's son Karl and Deidra were friends. A year younger than Deidra, the two met through swim team. It was Karl who taught Deidra how to ride a motorcycle. Deidra owned three of them before she ever owned a car. She got her first bike when she was going to CSM, in the fall semester right after high school. It was a Honda 90 with a centrifugal clutch, an automatic. She paid for that bike with her own money.

"I worked from the time I was 11," Deidra said, "starting with clowns and babysitting. I was the primary go-to babysitter for our beloved veterinarian Dr. Shapton and his wife. I worked summers at my father's business. But my father was a terrible boss as far as I was concerned. He would just rag me at the office and his manager would say, 'Leave her alone she's doing a really good job.' And my dad would say,

'Nobody is going to accuse me of favoritism!' He was horrible to work for and that's why I went to the phone company, the summer after my first year at CSM. It was with PacBell in San Bruno. I was a long distance operator, my first grownup job. I started out using a cord switchboard and then went to TSPS." *(PacBell, or Pacific Bell Telephone Company, is now owned by and marketed as AT&T. TSPS was the Traffic Service Position System console.)*

"As to my Honda 90, I got it because I had a night class. By day, there was a school bus that went from Linda Mar Center down Highway 1, over 92 and to CSM, and back again at 5 p.m. Highway 280 didn't exist back then. But at night, you were on your own for transportation. So I told my dad, 'I need to buy this little motorbike.' And because it was a loan I also said, 'Dad, you need to co-sign for this.' And he said, 'Well, I'll co-sign but you have to promise to always wear a helmet.' It was advice that would later save my life.

"I could only ride that Honda on residential streets, and it was a freezing ride to and from CSM. So, I would buy off-the-rack, out-of-season, 75-percent-off down-filled ski jackets. I had a 7 to 10 p.m. class once a week. It was an astronomy class and they have a beautiful planetarium at CSM – and you have to be there at night to see the stars. But it was so cold driving home at night that when I got home, I would stand in the shower for half an hour to thaw out."

At CSM, Deidra worked in the library doing hand-calligraphy labels. She was taking a calligraphy class at the community college and discovered she was a natural. When the school's library manager saw what she could do, he brought her on board.

"'I want you to do all of the labels,' he told me. There were thousands and thousands of books and he'd bring them to me by cart and I would sit there for four hours a day doing labels."

Meanwhile, Deidra was fearless on her Honda 90. She would take it up and down the steepest streets in Pacifica and in San Francisco. Once, a stranger just took it into his head to climb on the back while she was going up Taylor Street, one of San Francisco's sheers.

"I popped the clutch and stood up on the pegs and off he went. Phew!"

When Deidra was 19, she moved out. She was dating a fellow at Stanford, a love that did not last, and she wanted to be closer to him. So she transferred to Cañada College in Redwood City and moved to Menlo Park. (Her early college major predilections were drama and English.)

"It was a little in-law apartment in Menlo Park. I paid \$125 a month which was a princely sum. I was only making \$72.50 a week at the phone company."

The long distance operator had relocated to the PacBell office in downtown Palo Alto. "I worked on a beautiful cord switchboard built in 1897 for Stanford University. It was mahogany with stunning gold appliques."

She also sold her Honda 90 and bought a Honda CB175 trail bike.

"My second motorcycle I could go on the freeway with."

It was the bike that nearly was her last ride.



"I was driving to work on University Avenue. I had the green light and I was going through the intersection. Suddenly, this car turns left right in front of me. I hit the side of the car and flipped over the roof. I was lying in the middle of the road, swallowing these rocks. But it wasn't rocks. It was my front teeth. I also had a double compound fracture in my right arm. But thankfully I always followed my father's advice and wore a helmet. The kid that hit me was 15 years old.

He had taken his dad's car to show off to his girlfriend. He did stop and all these Stanford medical students come running up to me."

Her motorcycle was totaled and she permanently lost 30 percent of her grip in her right hand. It would be a year before the insurance companies settled and with the \$10,000 she received, she bought a Honda DOHC (dual overhead cam) CB450 motorcycle.

"My dad said, 'You were in a motorcycle accident and you nearly died, you split your helmet in half. What are you doing?' He lectured me for about 10 minutes. I rode that 450 for about two years. I had that motorcycle chopped and tricked it out to look like a Harley. I had a thin tire in the front and a big fat Avon tire in the back, I had a cobra seat and a Z-Bar and pegs put up front. I rode it until they started grooving the freeway with those rain grooves and the front tire would wobble and my shoulders would just ache. I would ride to Pacifica and just hold on. I sold it."

The schools Deidra attended following Cañada College were California State University, Sacramento and University of California, Davis. Deidra pursued a drama major at first. Actress Anne Archer was a classmate at one point. But Deidra realized that drama wasn't a career path for her and she had a strong interest in government. It's not to say that she didn't have fun with drama.

In 1967, she was in the Pacifica Spindrift Players production of playwright William Inge's "Picnic." The play was directed by Pacifica legend Sydney Clark. (Married to Pacifica's first and longtime Poet Laureate Rod Clark, Sydney co-founded the successful theater group Spindrift not long after Pacifica incorporated. In 1965, it merged with the equally successful, and also newly formed Pacifica Players, and in 1965, the two became the Pacifica Spindrift Players.)

Deidra played, Millie, the highly intelligent, tomboyish younger sister of 'Madge,' the prettiest girl in town. By the end of the play, Millie transforms into a young lady.

"I remember Sydney told me to smoke a cigarette and pretend that I had never smoked one. Well, I never had smoked a cigarette; in fact the first cigarette I ever smoked was on stage. So when I did smoke it, Sydney said, 'Oh! That is very realistic!'"

Then there was her performance in seventh grade. She played Anita, the hopeless romantic/innocent young girl who falls for Riff in Westside Story. Deidra sang, with the chorus, "I Feel Pretty."

Author: Jean Bartlett (www.bartlettbioographies.com)

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Growing up Pacifican ~ A journey of chapters with the charming Deidra Crow (page 18)

"I cannot sing," Deidra laughed. "And I could not sing then either. But I was a ham! Originally I had visions of becoming a character actress and eventually studying at Carnegie Mellon University of Drama. However, love and life changed that course and it all worked out for the best."

So Deidra changed her major to political science and went to Sacramento State. All the while she continued to work full time for the phone company, transferring locations as school needs dictated.

"I moved to Sacramento because I had internship with Anne Rudin (*51st mayor of Sacramento, from 1983-1992, Ms. Rudin was first elected to the Sacramento City Council in 1971*). We were the first ones to initiate 5 cent refunds for aluminum cans in California. I helped her write the bill. We pushed it through and then the State government took care of it. Oregon and California, in that order, were the first ones to recycle aluminum cans. We met with the executives of the big beverage companies, which included Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, Mountain Dew and RC Cola, and we all organized how this would happen.

"Because I was an older student intern—what with working while I was putting myself through school and working in a corporate environment, the phone company—I knew how to behave. And I was very conscientious. If I said I was going to do something, I did it, which she told me was huge in her book. I was her intern for two years. I went to Sacramento State but I didn't get my degree. After I finished up my internship, I decided I would transfer to Davis."

In Sacramento, Deidra decided it was time she also owned a car. She bought a 1960 Morris Minor.



"It started out as British Racing Green but I put in three pounds of crushed pearl and had it painted all white and pearly colored. I had mink-patterned naugahyde for the upholstery. I took the carpets out of a Jaguar and put those carpets in the Minor. Then I swapped out the engine and transmission with an (Austin-Healey) Bugeye Sprite. That car could fly! A Morris Minor normally has an 800-cc engine. So, one time I was flying down the freeway to Davis, doing 90 miles an hour, and a Highway Patrolman pulls me over.

"He said, 'I'm not going to give you a ticket, but you're going to show me what's under that hood! I know a Morris Minor cannot go that fast.'"

"I was 22 then, young, thin and hot," Deidra burst into laughter as she recalled. "'Oh yes, officer,' I said. So he looked under the hood and said, 'Wow! Wow!' He didn't give me a ticket but he told me to slow down. 'Yes, Sir, I promise.' Ha! Ha!"

At 29, Deidra graduated from UC Davis with a major in art history, with a specialization in museum studies, and a minor in design.

"We had some of the best artists as our professors: Richard Serra, Robert Arneson and Wayne Thiebaud. They were amazing artists and sculptors. And my mentor, art historian Dr. Joseph Baird, was an extraordinary educator. He also founded the North Point Gallery in San Francisco in 1972."

While she was in school, Deidra was still working full time for the phone company and she was also working as a museum intern. Those internships were at San Francisco's de Young Museum, The Legion of Honor and Sacramento's Crocker Museum.

"I worked on an installation project through the de Young. At that time we were moving porcelain from the de Young to the Porcelain Gallery into The Legion of Honor. I had also interned at the Crocker Museum in Sacramento. I loved these internships and they were a necessity for my major. I lived in Sacramento and when I interned in San Francisco, I slept at my parents. The course work was intense. In one class, I had to memorize 200 Madonna and Child paintings along with what happened to those paintings."

The professor had snidely told his students that at most, only two would get an "A" on that test. Deidra was one of those perfect scores.

Deidra's original plan was to be a museum curator, but as it turns out, the injury to her right hand grip would not make that possible.

"You cannot drop a \$9,000 cup and saucer," Deidra stated. "That did not happen. But as an intern I did drop a cup but caught it with the other hand. There was another reason not to be a curator. At that time, they made about \$17,000 a year and I couldn't live on that. To be a curator, at least then, you either had to inherit money or be kept! Ha! Ha! But neither of those was happening for me. I did consider museum registration. Things come into a museum, purchased by the curator, or acquired by the curator or donated by the generous community, and then the registrar assigns it a number, describes it and writes all about it. You additionally are in charge of caring for collections, implementing policies and taking care of legal sign-offs. As an intern, you do several weeks as a curator, several weeks doing registration and several weeks as a conservator. I learned the nuts and bolts of museum work. A master's degree is also a real plus and ensures a better salary."

In that regard, Deidra applied to the Winterthur Museum in Delaware. The museum is sponsored by the du Pont family and it offers one of the world's highest level master programs in decorative arts. They only choose 12 applicants a year and despite Deidra's outstanding academics and recommendations, she was not among the twelve.

"At the time, not getting in hurt," Deidra sighed and then grinned. "But oh, what adventures I have had and continue to have!"

Deidra packed up and moved back to the coast, to Montara. As a manager, she transferred again with the phone company and worked for Pacific Bell Phone Company at the bottom of Crespi Drive at Highway 1 in Pacifica.

"This was before it was the Community Center. It was two units of long distance operators plus a 5E telephone switch. All the phone cables were placed underground. Now back when the phone company bought it, it was a cheap lot. Prior to their owning it had been a duck farm. In fact, when I was a kid it was a duck farm and we used to buy duck eggs there and chicken eggs as well. Back in the 19th Century it was Lake Mathilde." *(As Pacificans would find out in the floods of 1962, 1972 and 1982, the ghost of that lake still lingered.)*

In 1982, Deidra decided it was time to take a European vacation. She went on her own.

"This was a trip of a lifetime," she said. "It was all of October, November and December of 1981. I came home in January of 1982. I took six weeks of vacation, a month of manager's leave and a month without pay. I went to all the places I had studied at Davis. I went to all the museums. I still had my museum ID

from being an intern at the de Young, the Legion of Honor and the Crocker Museum, so the European museums said: 'Come on in!' I gave up my place in Montara before I left and put all my things in storage. I traveled by Eurail Pass and often slept on the train. I went to Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain, Italy, Andorra and Austria. They were having a heat wave in Europe and I had brought all of these warm clothes but didn't need them."

Deidra didn't spend much when she traveled. She said she averaged \$7 a day. That included a ride on the Venice Simplon-Orient Express from Milan to Paris.

"If I was going to Paris, I was going in style! Woo!"



One of the Checkpoint Charlie signs, on the way into the American Sector, from East Germany, 1981.

She often stayed at convents where you had to be in by 8 o'clock. She didn't care. She was there to see the art and the places her father had been during the Second World War. She had a special Visa to enter Eastern Germany. These were still Checkpoint Charlie days and traveling in Eastern Germany was difficult. But she had paid for everything in advance and picked up her rental car in Dresden. "It was a Lada, a Russian-made car, and it was like driving a tin can over their cobblestone roads!" She drove to the famous porcelain manufactory in Meissen. By happy coincidence, she came upon a guided tour of the porcelain factory set up in advance by a group of 37 businessmen from Hayward. Naturally, she was invited to join. At the factory, one of the porcelain modelers gifted her with a raw clay cherub's head, which Deidra brought home and had fired at Davis. It is still, a treasured memory."

Deidra was still touring Europe when what was called then "A 100 Year Event Storm," came to Pacifica. The U.S. National Weather Service reported that from January 3 through January 5, 1982, a major storm moved through Central California producing "widespread damage and death in seven San Francisco Bay Area counties as well as eleven other counties in northern and central California. A Presidential Declaration was issued to bring federal assistance to individuals in the affected counties."

Within a twenty-four hour period, rainfall totals exceeded the 1962 storm in Pacifica with 4.47 inches falling at San Pedro Valley County Park from Monday the 4th to Tuesday the 5th. Due to being overwhelmed, pumping stations stopped working and by early Tuesday morning the Linda Mar Shopping Center and the Anza Drive/Arguello Blvd. neighborhood flooded. One of that neighborhood's residents reported that once the pumps stopped working, he saw flood waters rise as much as one foot in 15 minutes. Terra Nova High School immediately became an emergency shelter for 80 residents. The *Pacifica Tribune* reported that: "Water in the Shopping Center was waist deep and floodwaters surging through San Pedro Creek damaged the Adobe Drive Bridge and destroyed the Peralta Road Bridge." And the worst news of all: "Three children were killed when a debris flow raced down a narrow 400-foot long draw, pushing a neighbor's house off its foundation and into the Velez home at 1249 Oddstad Boulevard."

The National Weather Service would report later that in Pacifica, that damage to personal property came to over \$3 million and public property damage was at \$2 million. Three hundred homes were damaged, five of which were destroyed. Four hundred and ninety-five homes were considered threatened because of possible future slides.

"There are really no words to describe what happened," Deidra recalled sadly. "Though Pacificans, which I truly believe is our way, got out in their community and helped out. As for the building on Crespi that housed PacBell, all their cables were underwater. When I came back from Europe, I not only had to find a new place to live, which was the plan all along, but my office was relocated to San Francisco."

Deidra noted that when she flew home from Europe, via New York, she had \$1.10 in her pocket. When she arrived at SFO, she used \$1 to pay her brother for parking.

"I literally had one thin dime!"

She lived on her parents couch for two weeks then temporarily moved into an all-women's residence on lower Post in San Francisco.

"Essentially I rented a room and they provided three meals a day, which included packing you a lunch. You had to be in by 8 o'clock and no visitors. It was fine until I found an apartment. I also didn't have a car. Well I had had a car. I had left my little Fiat Convertible at my parents' house. My brother Alan decided while I was gone that I needed new shocks. So at 19, he took apart an Italian sports car, which alas at that time, was way past his skill level. Two hundred pieces in the driveway when I came home. Ha! Thank God I paid my storage ahead and for extra time – because I knew!"

Deidra found an apartment on Bush Street, got involved with the San Francisco Opera Standees Association and went to the opera at night. "Ten bucks for standing room!" Back then, the Standees bought big bouquets and when the opera ended, they walked the bouquets down the aisle and threw them on stage.

"To get a good standing position, you had to line up at 10 a.m. and sit there until 8 o'clock at night. One time, while I was waiting in line, there was this guy standing next to me and we got to talking. The next thing you know he is giving me a ride home. The next thing you know we are engaged and the next thing you know, six months after Frank and I met, we are married."

Deidra's family, particularly her dad, was a HUGE San Francisco Giants fan. Frank was a Los Angeles Dodgers fan.

"My parents said, 'How could you marry a Dodgers fan? Didn't we raise you right?'"

They were married for eight years. The first two years were bliss. Not long after they married they moved to Los Angeles where they lived for a year and a half. Frank, who was a Spanish teacher working as a cab driver when the couple met, had a serious leg issue that required six surgeries and serious recuperation time. So the couple and their two cats, Mimi and Beau, moved to LA to stay with Frank's sister. She was an LVN. She took care of Frank during the day while Deidra worked in downtown LA for PacBell. This was during the 1984 Bell System divestiture and it was crazy times at the phone company. When Frank recovered, the couple, and their cats, moved back to the Bay Area and Deidra was promoted to Western Region Manager of Customer Service and Training. The couple bought a 1915-built bungalow in Alameda and lived there until they split.

"I divorced Frank, moved to Danville and bought a Harley all within about six weeks," Deidra laughed. "Talk about a midlife crisis. That Harley was beautiful. I absolutely loved it. But I only put 300 miles on it because I was traveling all the time and locally I drove a Toyota Camry to work."

As Manager of Methods and Procedures, Deidra took a job with the phone company in Chicago. Then she took a transfer a year and a half later to Atlanta. The next move brought her to Jacksonville, Florida.

Wherever she went she joined the local historical society and opera society, and she toured and got to know these places that she thoroughly enjoyed.

"No matter what, you have to inject fun in your life. Bloom where you are planted. But I missed Pacifica. I missed the smell of the ocean. Even as a little girl riding around on my bicycle, I would drink in the smell of the sea air coming in and it was just so invigorating. It gave you such energy. Pacifica was always a special place to live – magical, and that never changed for me. I also missed sourdough bread."



Meanwhile, what were her parents doing back home in Pacifica?

"Enjoying their retirement!" Deidra laughed.
"Enjoying their cocktails at Cheers!"

←Doretta and Everett visiting San Mateo County's Memorial Park, circa 1992.

In 1998, the phone company had to "right size," as they called it. Deidra had worked for them for 30 years and accepted a retirement package.

"I retired from the phone company on May 31 of 1998, and on June 1, I went to work for Walt Disney. Disney had an independent telephone company called Buena Vista Communications and we were definitely a match. I bought a house in Davenport, which is about 20-minute drive from Walt Disney World. It was a bungalow. It looked just like a Linda Mar rancher. It was three bedrooms and two baths. It had a beautiful little yard and all kinds of amenities because it was part of a planned development. It was \$72,000. I thought, I am going to retire here and I am

going to work at Disney because I was 50 years old, too young to stop working. So I worked for their phone company as a Disney information lady."

Deidra threw out a typical call-in question and her answer. "Can you name the seven dwarfs?" 'Sleepy, Grumpy, Doc, Bashful, Happy, Dopey and Sneezy.'"

"Dopey is the only one with blue eyes," she added informatively.

"It was so much fun. We had contests all the time and there was a lot of morale building. It was just the best place to work. I won the best costume prize for Halloween. Halloween was like a national holiday there, just like in San Francisco. I dressed up as the Fairy Godmother. I had it all – a gown, a tiara, a wand and a cocktail glass full of champagne. In 1998, they had the launching of the Disney Magic, the first Disney cruise ship. They had a shakedown cruise, 'a cruise to nowhere,' and they wanted people who got picked to fill out a 30-page questionnaire on how service could be approved. I had all these years of customer service. I had never cruised before and I went on this three-day cruise and I was hooked. I thought, 'I have to work for this division, immediately!' I put in my transfer. I went over to Disney Cruise Line and was there for all the rest of my seven years at Disney. I coordinated trips. I worked with Make-

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A-Wish Foundation. I traveled all over the Caribbean, 10 cruises. In those days they only went to the Caribbean. Now they go all over the world."

In 2002, Deidra's father died. Her mom did okay for a while. Over a period of nine months she lived temporarily with three of her children, at each of their respective homes, while Reid, Tim and Alan oversaw 40 years of delayed maintenance on the family's Pacifica home. They did a beautiful job.

In the springtime of 2006, Deidra got a call from their neighbor, a dear friend of the family.

"Your mother is in the cul-de-sac, in her nightgown, with her legs crossed, rocking back and forth."

"I thought, 'Oh, that's bad,'" Deidra said and she retired from Disney to move home and help with her mom.

With some assistance, Doretta was okay for the first year and a half. Deidra leased a house in Hayward. Having become a Certified Travel Consultant through Disney, she got a job in San Francisco with High Country Travel.

"We were travel consultants and travel managers. We catered to educational travel, to alumni associations such as Stanford, Cal Berkeley and Harvard. The alumni associations subcontracted us and we had contacts all over the world. It was a wonderful job and each of us also went on a trip as a liaison. I went on a Yemen, Jordan and Saudi Arabia trip with 45 Stanford alumni. Jordan was so fascinating. Yemen was dangerous. As to Saudi Arabia, I think of their citizens as people who really enjoy partying, outside of Saudi Arabia." *(Included in her Jordan adventure, Deidra rode a camel into Petra with an Indiana Jones hat to shade her.)*

Deidra also got a job in San Francisco doing 311 calls.

"People called wanting to know the bus schedule. I loved telling people where to go. Ha! Ha!"

About four months shy of being home two years, Deidra began heading over to Pacifica every morning.

"I made sure my mom had her pills, ate her breakfast and was looking good."

When the economic downturn happened in 2008, the travel company had to close its doors. It was time anyway, Deidra said, to move home and take care of Mom.

"From 2008 until she passed away in 2013, I was Mom's primary caregiver. In that time, I signed up with the Pacifica Historical Society. I wanted to be involved and I wanted Mom to be involved. I wanted her to interact and have a good time. I also took Mom to the Pacifica Senior Center for their congregate lunch Monday through Friday. She loved it. She made friends there and she was dating. Here she was 86-years-old and she had two boyfriends!"

"I discovered the Pacifica Historical Society through Kathleen Manning's Prints Old and Rare, in Pacifica's Crespi Business Center. I had gone there to buy a beautiful map of Hawaii for my brother Roger."

A longtime Pacifican, Kathleen was and is very involved with the Pacifica Historical Society. She served as its President for ten years. During her presidential tenure, the PHS found and saved Car 1409. It is the last passenger car of the Ocean Shore Railroad. The Ocean Shore Railroad once traveled through today's Pacifica and its passengers, inspired by what they saw, disembarked to build a life in our community. Through the PHS, Car 1409 is undergoing an extraordinary restoration.



The car, at that point, was being worked on, outside, at a donated location on the Denman's family Shamrock Ranch. Deidra's mom loved pulling weeds so both women got involved as PHS volunteers.

←In 2009, Doretta pulls weeds at the OSRR Car 1409 worksite.

In 2009, Deidra went to her first PHS Castle Adventure Tour at Pacifica's Sam Mazza Castle. Members of the PHS dressed up as Pacifica's famous and served as docents to raise money for their historical causes. Longtime PHS member Jerry Crow was there

dressed as the notorious scoundrel Galen Hickok, whose association with owning Pacifica's castle came to an abrupt end in August of 1920. However, something else that day was in the air for the completely unaware Deidra and Jerry, and it is the stuff of which stars are made.

* * *

"I remember the first time I really saw Jerry," Deidra said. "My mother was at the train car renovation site, pulling weeds, and sipping discreetly from the beer behind her back. I had brought with me a postcard I had bought off of eBay of the Ocean Shore Railroad. I showed it to Kathleen, then PHS President, and she said, 'Oh, you should show this to Jerry.'

"Jerry pokes his head out of Car 1409 and I thought, 'Oh! OH!' He was so handsome I nearly lost my breath. He, of course, did not have a clue I was fainting inside."

The two, however, did become friends and eventually with other friends, they just kept having dinner together every Friday night. In addition, they were always working together as PHS volunteers. For her part, particularly for the PHS labor-intensive events, Deidra brought treats – and as anyone who knows Deidra knows, this woman can cook and bake.

On December 13, 2013, Doretta Kohlscheen Kennedy passed away in Pacifica from the complications of heart disease. The very last of her siblings, she celebrated her 88th birthday bowling with family and friends, and eating birthday cake. She died 26 days later.

In 2013, Deidra was elected to the Board of the Pacifica Historical Society and became chair of the Building Use Committee in October of 2014. When the PHS saved Pacifica's 1910-built "Little Brown Church" from development in 2005, and opened the completely restored historic building as the Pacifica Coastsides Museum in August of 2015, Deidra served as Museum Director, a post which she held for three years. As she turned the empty inside space into a museum of Pacifica pride, she additionally used her museum knowledge to administer and lay the groundwork for the Museum's future administration, and she is credited with getting the Museum operation up and running on a paying basis.

Author: Jean Bartlett (www.bartlettbioographies.com)

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(Jean Bartlett photo)

Inside the Pacifica Coastside Museum at the Little Brown Church with Museum Director Deidra Crow, 2015.

As always, Deidra continued to travel and she began traveling with her friend Jerry Crow. But it was when they went on a trip to Kauai, Hawaii together in 2016 that they both realized – you are never the wrong age to fall in love.

"We went on a cruise to Tahiti after that, same year, and we just travel so well together," Deidra said, gushing like a school girl. "He's so cute!"

It should be noted that Jerry, a retired engineer, a writer of history, a member of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus—"a fraternal organization dedicated to the preservation of the heritage of the American West"—and an extraordinary volunteer, is very well known in Pacifica – and he is thrilled his wife's journey to date is being honored. **Wife?**

That marriage proposal happened on Earth Day in 2018.

Jerry proposed on bended knee.

"He looked into my eyes and held my hand and said, 'Make me the happiest man on Earth.'"

The couple married November 23, 2018.

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Jerry and Deidra spend their first Halloween together.



Jerry and Deidra celebrate Mrs. Crow's 70th birthday on a cruise around San Francisco Bay.



Deidra and Jerry at the E Clampus Vitus Widder's Ball 2019.

"My parents taught us to participate, to be good citizens. They taught us to donate blood. I began donating blood at the age of 15. My siblings have donated gallons of blood. That stopped at age 70 for me. They'd rather you don't donate then. You need your blood. Ha! Ha!

"They taught us if someone needs something you help them and help can take all kinds of forms: a shoulder, an empathetic ear, sometimes it's money, but mostly it is just your time and your attention. That is what everybody needs and that is the most valuable thing we have, our time. They also taught us that family matters, always.

"Where is everyone now? Roger lives in Kauai and owns Tropical Taco. Tim lives in San Francisco. Reid lives in Klamath Falls, OR. Alan lives in Watsonville, CA. Shauna lives in Independence, MO. We don't see each other as often as we'd like but we are always talking on the phone or playing Word Blitz.

"Why be involved in your local Historical Society? Well, you never know who is going to walk out of that train car! And it gives you perspective. It is like when you plant a tree, that tree grows and gives shade but you are probably not going to be the one sitting under it, at this age. You are doing things to make sure things are right for the future."



(Jean Bartlett photo)

**Deidra at the end of her "first" interview,
Nick's Restaurant, Pacifica, April 22, 2021.**



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, San Mateo Times, Portraits & Roots, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Contra Costa County Times, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco. She is also a former Hallmark Card writer, a produced playwright and a published author.