

Circle of Grandmothers

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Our Marjorie and Her Bill

The Tyndalls: 60 Years After Meeting in the Air

By Ellen Sussman

(Reprinted by permission from an article in the Green Valley News & Sun)

The story of how Bill and Marjory Tyndall met in the mid-1940s sounds more like the preface of a romance novel or movie trailer than reality... he was a handsome United Airlines pilot and she was an attractive young stewardess on her second flight serving him coffee in the cockpit.

As Marjory tells it, they fell madly in love and were married six months later. For her that meant giving up on an exciting career because back then only young single women were hired for the job.

"Stewardesses, as they were called then, had the image of being young and attractive. It was a glamorous job, but I have no regrets... I live for today," she said.

Serving as a stewardess was a natural move for Marjory when World War II ended. As a warm and cheerful person her nature was to take care of and serve people, she had been a cadet nurse and became a registered nurse in 1945.

Bill's comfort zone appears to be adventurous and at great heights. As someone who climbed Switzerland's 14,693 foot Matterhorn, the higher the better.

The year was 1978, Bill was 56 and living in New Jersey when he saw an ad that said, "You can climb the Matterhorn."

After some investigating he took off to Switzerland, took the required mountaineering training and successfully climbed to the peak of the Matterhorn.

As one who enjoyed the thrill of flying and the outdoor adventure of backpacking and hiking he also climbed Mount Whitney in Yosemite National Park, the Wind River Range in Wyoming, the Colorado Rockies, the White Mountains of New Hampshire and the 2,172 mile long Appalachian Trail.

"I went with a George Mason University group from DC... it took four months... May to September, the hikers had to be back in school then," Bill said of the entire Georgia-to-Maine hike.

During the Korean War he served on the perimeter of Russia flying the atom bomb around potential targets and waiting for a

presidential order to possibly drop the bomb. Asked if it was an exciting or frightening period of his life he said, "Neither one... it was just a professional job."

While living in New Jersey Bill owned an open cockpit biplane for 10 years. Momentarily reliving those glory days, Marjory said, "Back then we could fly around the Empire State Building and all around New York City" ... "at a certain altitude," Bill added.



Bill and Marjory Tyndall

Now leading the astronomy group and observatory at [their home at] La Posada [in Green Valley, Arizona], he said his first contact with the stars was as a pilot and he still enjoys studying the stars with a 14-inch computerized telescope and 8 or 10 other residents.

Photographing nature and landscapes is another past time and the wall of the Tyndall's living room is filled with Bill's framed photographs.

As an outdoorsman who enjoyed scuba diving, snorkeling, cross country skiing and camping, he stays fit and fills his days now with Pilates, water aerobics, walking, and playing bocce ball.



In March, the Tyndalls were honored with a plaque by the La Posada (*the retirement community where they live in Green Valley: ed.*) board of trustees. It reads "Man of the Stars and Woman of Positive Spirit Award — For their leadership and enrichment of resident life through observatory programs and their generous enthusiastic support."

Balancing Bill's career as a pilot and keeping the couple literally grounded, Marjory raised four children and found her pleasure playing the concertina. Decades later, she plays at the La Posada campus and said, "That's my joy."

A member of the Accordion Club of Tucson, she explained that the concertina is a cousin of the accordion but sounds more like a harmonica. Demonstrating her skill with her exquisitely-crafted ninth concertina that was made in England, she said she waited a long time for it be made.

"After nearly three years of waiting I called and said 'I'm an older person; I can't wait.'" She ordered her first one from a Sears & Roebuck Christmas catalog.

Smiling with pleasure as she demonstrated, Marjory explained that pressing the buttons on the concertina makes one sound when the bellows are contracted and a different sound when it's expanded. The resulting sound is similar to a harmonica.

Legally blind from wet macular degeneration, Marjory no longer drives.

"I have my music, I go to water aerobics four days a week and enjoy going to clay class. I have physical problems but mentally I'm happy... I have no regrets, no remorse," she says with a sweet smile.

Her bathroom wall is filled with dozens of faces and masks she created in clay class.

Asked what stands out as a high point or accomplishment that brought the couple mutual happiness, Bill's immediate response was, "sharing and raising four children."

Still very much in love, the Tyndall's celebrated their 60th anniversary in October. Looking at Bill fondly, Marjory said, "We like to sit out on the patio near the chimenea at night; Bill reads to me for an hour or an hour and a half."



When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.

Reflections from Gabriola Island

By Dandelion, British Columbia, Canada

As I sit gazing out my window, blessed with an ocean view and lots of jays, woodpeckers, robins, daffodils, magnificent arbutus and fir trees, (the magnolia trees and flowering plums are also in bloom on the island right now), I feel as if I am living in a marvelous cocoon, insulated from the tremors of the world.

It occurs to me that we elders have a

very unique and privileged communion with Mother Earth right now. As our bodies begin to grow weary and disintegrate and fall apart - the same thing is happening to her. We can be as one with her in this process.

And how does she seem to be responding. With a fierce cleansing and a strong statement that she is reclaiming her own and she is definitely in charge!

And so if we, during these challenging times, can keep ourselves clear, support each other, and know that we are a part of a larger picture, perhaps we can find some comfort and support in the bosom of the Mother. We can tremble with her and we can also be strong and vibrant and let our voices be carried on the wind.



Editor's Corner

by Kit Wilson, Phoenix, Arizona

Last week I walk into John's room: "I'm waiting for one more article that's late", I tell him, "But by next weekend, for sure, we'll be able to put the Newsletter together". John looks up from his computer, sighs, and says, "Mom, I think I'm almost ready to stop doing this with you."

To be honest I've been expecting this. His work at the University has gotten much more demanding lately. He often is at his computer here at home, working into the evening hours. And over the last couple of years one or other of us have remarked that "This can't go on forever." And yet, each time we are reluctant to let go of something that has brought both us so many rewards. John adores the Grandmothers almost as much as I do and we have loved having such an up-close-and-personal vantage point as our network grows and expands, new Councils and Gatherings come into existence, and the Newsletter's circulation grows from an early fifty or so to between three and four hundred. Editing a newsletter was a new creative experience for me and John enjoys design. So it's been really hard to finally agree that it's time for another Grandmother to step up and take over the job.

We are grateful to all of you Grandmothers for your trust and your appreciative support. We will continue to publish the next two issues - September and December. But as 2007 draws to

a close we'll be closing this chapter in our lives and in the life of the Circle of Grandmothers Newsletter.

"That's the news from Lake Woebe-gone." Here are some "facts" for you to think about when you consider whether you can answer this call. I'm expecting this process will be magical, mysterious, and as is true for all the best that occurs with our Grandmothers, guided by Spirit. Neither John nor I will desert you - John will provide as much technical support as needed to launch you and I will love discussing the various editorial traditions that have evolved over the years. Gracie Rogers, who has been co-editing for the last couple of years, says she will continue in that role for at least another year. (Is that right, Gracie??) She cannot, however, take on the responsibility of the editorship at this time. Thus She-Who-Steps-Forward will not be alone. But neither will She have anyone attempting to shape her direction. All editorial decisions will be hers and those she chooses to consult.

So please, please, please you wonderful women - add this to your prayers, your meditations, your reflections - talk about it in your small Circles and at the September Arizona Gathering, and let me hear from you. I'll be waiting to see whose shoulder Spirit has tapped. And finally, as our founder Mary Diamond always said, "Just say YES".

Meanwhile, more transitions: Shirley Tassencourt's wonderful dog Joey

passed. Joey was so much a part of the land Shirley and Allegra steward, and so much a part of our early circles in Dragoon, at Whirling Yellow Way and in Sister Virginia's kitchen. I grieve with my sisters at this end of a truly noble life.

All is well here in Phoenix. The heat reached 116 on the Fourth of July but it did not deter us from enjoying our annual pool party - seventeen family and extended family from age nine months to my seventy-nine years. Shadow - who is quite debilitated but hangs in there - and the cats were relegated to John's room. The power shut down on our street for a couple of hours late afternoon. But we finished the day safely and with good memories. I hope all of you have been adding wonderful memories as well.

Much love from Kit, John, Heath, Shadow, Whidbey and Max. Namaste.



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When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.

Honoring Mary


*By Mary Ann McClellan
The Louisiana Grandmothers*

This past winter, at the prompting of one of our local Grandmother group members, a memorial was literally “set in stone” for Mary Diamond. We would like to share the news with you that in 2008 Mary’s name will be perpetually inscribed in the Honor Wall at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian. The Honor Wall will appear within the Museum for all time on a magnificent

overlook above the central welcoming area called the Potomac. Mary’s name will join others who will help fulfill a promise made to the Native American and make a dream come true.

The Museum’s Honor Wall will help fulfill a commitment made by the Smithsonian Institution and is an important chapter in a story of reconciliation and cultural justice. The Museum is an honest portrayal of Native life, his-

tory, arts, and cultures throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Mary’s vision and work has enriched all of us who knew her and loved her. Her visionary gifts continue to impact so many lives and will undoubtedly continue to do so in ways beyond comprehension. This is but a small “thank you” to honor Mary for all that she has given and continues to give us. 



Spring Equinox Gathering - Louisiana Grandmothers: Doris Robin, Bobette Szyller, Temae Theriot (Holding the certificate with Mary Diamond’s name commemorating her on the Smithsonian Honor Wall), Mary Ann McClellan, Joanna Miller

When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.

2007 On the Shores of the Gulf

by Carolyn Garbett in Alabama, Weaver 2007

There was a celebration...

The Gulf Coast Council of Grandmothers had their yearly retreat April 2nd thru 5th 2007 at Beckwith. We numbered 35 women, each of which is on her own path in the migration to spirit.

So many women volunteered their time and talents to make this come together... First our colors: Red, Yellow, White and Dark Blue for the colors on

the medicine wheel... and the medicine wheel was our theme and our guide for the retreat.

There were workshops on drumming, labyrinths, writing with spirit, and discussions of how we individually follow our own paths to spirit and much more. I believe you could feel Spirit in all of the events.

Of course, the daily meeting of the

individual circles was the absolute meat of the whole gathering and why we really come to sit in circle. So much was accomplished in bonding in each circle.

A wonderful gifting ceremony again this year... letting go of possessions is hard sometimes, but when you see the new home your item has acquired it is a moment of gratitude and lifting of spirit. And when you pick up an item it is with



Crowning the crones (L to R): sitting: Hellen Herring, Maizie Dalby, Nonine Anderson, Verlie Barton, Juan Mengert, Edith Hinrichs, Freida Spaeth, Carolyn Garbett; standing: Judy McKee, Terry Bourne, Debbie Day, Jackie Blue, Janine Raby, Judi Purcell, Penny Baker, and Joan Marker.

reverence and deep connection when you find out who put that item down... It is all about connections...

This year the usual Elder Council was handled in a different way...we had a magnificent Croning Ceremony replete with purple shawls, and garlands for the hair of the Elders. Each Elder spoke about what the ceremony meant to her and about her life... there were no questions from the floor. We had cake and we danced around and celebrated being women of mature years. We might make this a permanent part of our gathering.

Then, of course, we had our final night of rowdy fun in our Ceilidh... many skits, songs, and all forms of entertainment from our talented ladies. As a special twist to the evening we all came as our favorite character in literature. Much fun was had trying to guess who each woman was trying to be. There were a few extremely difficult to identify creatures lurking about. It was an evening of much merriment of making memories to last forever.

And finally we have our dates set for our gathering next year. Of course it will

be at Beckwith as usual, but the dates have been moved up a bit. Mark your calendars ladies - we will meet at 9AM on Tuesday February 19th and finish at 2PM Friday February 22nd. And here, to fuel your anticipation, is our theme: "The Temple, The Square, The Garden - a Feminine Tapestry" We have had our first planning meeting and we will be sending out the invitation very soon. We hope you will be able to visit us in 2008.



When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.



*(L to R) Robbie Schaffner, Jackie Blue,
Lorraine Norrgard*



Judy Purcell and Carolyn Garbett



Terry Bourne as Merlin

When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.

Spring in the Heartland

by Gracie Rogers

Spring happens differently depending where on Planet Earth you live. In the American Heartland, Spring happens as a renewal: life explodes green everywhere, the four leggeds come out of their burrows, and the winged ones return with their songs; and for some, it is a time of spiritual expansion. With the same sparkling enthusiasm that Mother Nature brings to us after a spring shower, six members of the Heartland Council of Grandmothers gathered for a retreat to fulfill an intention of “deep sharing of our hearts and our gifts with one another.”

Guided by our honored elder, Edna Groves, Anna Sayles, Marti Beddoe, Vivian Londos, Hannah Rees, and Gracie Rogers spent the first weekend in May in The Porcupine Cabin in White Pines Forest State Park in Morris, Illinois, about 90 minutes west of Chicago. The cabin was a miniature retreat center in itself, allowing us to sleep, eat, pray and play together from Friday until Sunday. During our April council, we had agreed to begin on Friday afternoon with check in and then to just let the weekend flow naturally from the abundance of activities available to us.

After dinner on Friday evening, Gracie led us in a ceremony honoring our motherlines since Mother’s Day was the following weekend. In turn, each woman placed a photo of her mother on the fireplace mantle, selected a flower that she felt was a vibrational match from a big bouquet on the table and put it in front of her mother’s photo, and then shared her mother story.

Anna brought a hilarious game that we played during meals and Edna gifted each of us with spring flower seedlings ready to be planted in our gardens. Saturday morning Hannah led us through the Golden 8 of Qi Gong which filled our lungs with cool, fresh air and invigorated us for the day. Then Marti and Vivian guided us in making SoulCollage cards. In the evening we sat in circle and shared the stories generated by our SoulCollage cards. Marti also brought materials to build a life timeline reflecting the major

events in each of our lives, but, alas, we didn’t have quite enough time to do it.

On Sunday morning, Edna, who has led us through legacy writing experiences several times over the last year, gave us the opportunity to write about the meaning of our names. We continue to be amazed at how legacy writing can give us information we didn’t know was missing from our life stories. Sharing the stories of our names gave us the opportunity to end our time together in a deep and heartfelt way.

At the end of the retreat, when everyone had gone, Gracie took all of the flowers chosen for our mothers and let them float, one by one, from the top of a bridge down to the stream below, each “Mom” flowing on as they have always done for their beloveds.

Throughout 2006, the women of the Heartland Council began exploring how we might serve younger women. And, as often happens, Spirit provided an opportunity. Early this year, our Grandmother friend, Kathie Murtey, sent us an e-mail about a women’s group she had connected with in California called Grandmothers-Speak. Marti Beddoe and Gracie Rogers made contact with this group’s Chicago representative, Ilona Diementiene, and learned that Ilona and the local GrandmothersSpeak women were all younger than we are, and that they were all from Lithuania.

Several planning meetings with Ilona resulted in a joint Summer Solstice celebration held June 3rd at The Loretto Convent Spiritual Retreat Center in Wheaton. After checking in and placing our symbols of the Summer Solstice on the center alter, we each spoke of our symbol and its meaning to us. We also spoke of where we see Grandmother consciousness/energy rising in ourselves and the world. Ilona showed us a 30-minute interview with Sharon McErlane who founded the GrandmothersSpeak movement. (On the cover of Sharon’s book, *A Call to Power: The Grandmothers Speak* is this quote: “When the wisdom of the Grandmothers is heard, the world will

heal.”) We then had a Summer Solstice ceremony, acknowledging the fullness/sweetness of our lives, and releasing to Spirit’s care our worries and wishes. We closed by speaking of what sweetness we might take from the circle back out in service to the world.

During our July council we plan to share our impressions of the June 3rd council with Heartland Grandmothers who were unable to attend in June. We feel there is value in reviewing our process with regard to how the June 3 meeting took shape--in its inception as well as its actual happening--to clarify learnings, in case we decide to meet with this group or some other group in the future. We also would like to share some thoughts and feelings about our May retreat--for the same purpose, to add to our experience and wisdom in planning gatherings.

And, last but far from least, The Heartland Council of Grandmothers happily welcomes new members Kelli Adamson, Renata Marroum, Mary Ann Reed, Jane Cimino, and Sister Therese Fenlon of Loretto. The Heartland Council now has an even dozen active members! In addition, we welcome back “Grandma” Gwen Hudetz from her winter golf outings in South Carolina, and pass along the prayers of Sr. Virginia Mary Barta to Council Grandmothers everywhere. As we savor the sweet gifts of new friendships and the bounty of summer in the Heartland, we give thanks for all the Grandmothers who continue to back us and hold us in their hearts. Peace and Joy to all, dearest Grandmothers.

P.S. If you happen to be in the Chicago area on the 2nd Sunday of the month, please know you are most welcome to come sit in circle with us. Contact Marti Beddoe at 630/369-2802 or Gracie Rogers at 630/510-8940.



When the Grandmothers speak, the world will heal.

TX/OK Council of Grandmother's Gathering

Year 1, 2006... The Intention

Year 2, 2007... The Implementation

By Nonine Anderson and Caroline Kane Krause

We came together
Dragging along
The past we had become

Strengthened muscles carried us up
Until heaviness was overcome

Quantum effect produced synergy
Symbiosis fed the Clan

Spirits merged, energy fed
We saw that we are the I AM!

In Hindu philosophy the whole creation is regarded as the Vishnu Lila, the play of Vishnu. Lila means dance or play. Also, the Hindu call the world an illusion. In Latin, the root of the word illusion is ludere, to play. Jesus who was the Christed said when many of us are together, the synergism, the combined power, is greater than the sum of the members. The Lakota say there is no word in their language for me or I... only us! The Cherokee name translates simply to The People, as does Dine'h, the word for the people we call Navajo.

Even subliminally we remind ourselves daily. Listen to our words. We, the United States-U.S.! We are all one. We are the ones we've been waiting for. Imagine this-IM-A-Gine-US. We called you all into our gathering circle in Mead, OK; the Texas/Oklahoma Gathering of 2007!

Oh yes, you were there. Our opening circle reverberated as the smoky prayers of sage lifted and lingered; the love of your spiritual presence called to us; we called you in-into our circle; into the us! In the illusion of this plane of reality, we were seven. But seven is a mystical, magical number to the Cherokee, as well as many other cultures. Our strength grew with every circle.

We felt you there, Gulf Shores, Arizona, and Heartland Grandmothers. We felt Mary Diamond there, and all our absent companions who are now glowing for us just beyond the veil. All came. Our full moon ceremony at the water's edge of Lake Texoma, the largest man-made lake in the U.S., drew us, grew us in unity of Spirit. Dancing barefoot in thick green grass, we sang to the moon in her orange birthing glory, peeking above the treetops. From the east-the direction of things to come; here she came, growing more and more golden on her arching path above us!

This was World Peace Day so we chanted simple but powerful words over and over, louder and louder our prayer grew:

Lead us o lord
From death to immortality,
From darkness to lightness,
From surviving to living,
From the unreal to the real.

We chanted it, then sang it-we grew! And, as often happens when Grandmothers gather, we walked into circle unsure of what we would become. We danced away differently-lighter. Energy of love grows beyond bounds! We are pleased to report we have become.

We welcome you to next year's gathering with open arms-with larger, new and exciting accommodations! We planned for 2008, Year 3, the Manifestation. It

will be even better, even bigger. We have grown and stand strong, ready or not, we will be 32 in number next year with our lovely Verlie Barton as the Weaver!

We have outgrown the abode(s) of our host Grandmothers (thank you, dears) so next year we will meet at the ancient Indian gathering grounds on the Texas side of Lake Texoma. Just one year old, this secluded Episcopal campground is a twin sister to Gulf Shores' Episcopal Camp Beckwith. Ample delicious food in a spacious, new cafeteria; cozy cabins; large meeting house; and, a fire pit at water's edge will be our gathering home for next year.

We will offer four days, three nights, from Monday, May 19 to Thursday, May 22, 2008 with the modest cost of \$200 each for triple occupancy including meals. The camp is close to Dallas/Ft. Worth and there is a Holiday Inn Express at the exit for North Dallas for those who arrive early.

Circle the date. Register early. We will have more information on the registration form in the October newsletter. If you have questions in the meantime you can call or e-mail the contacts below. To make this work, we'll need you to confirm with a \$100 deposit by February 1, 2008 so we can reserve space(s) and not lose our deposit. To plan for last-minute changes, we will maintain a waiting list. May our words fly to you on the wings of a dove. Namaste' y'all!

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