

# How Easy It Is for All to Forget

By John Rico

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Falling leaves - There's a change in the weather and before long the trees will start to shed their leaves. This is an annual seasonal transition.

As we look up and down Main Street there have been other "falling leaves," represented by the hundreds of men and women who have spent a greater portion of their years being of service to the public.

The year 1980 witnessed the departure from the scene of several prominent men and women - people who through their long years along Vacaville's business thoroughfare have witnessed radical changes.

When an individual is blessed with the privilege of having spent over half a century monitoring the activities of downtown Vacaville, there is just cause for accolades, but unfortunately, these tributes always come a bit too late.

As I look up and down the street, memory reminds me that the faces along Main Street have changed many times. Momentarily prominent men and women are missed by their departure, but within a short time all is forgotten.

The names of many people mentioned in this column are unfamiliar to present-day residents, but from time to time those of us privileged to remain on the scene, should reflect back to the hundreds who participated in some small way in helping Vacaville along its progressive journey.

Who would think back to a unique barber shop on Main Street and gaze into the shop window and see barber Sal Bloise attempting to cut a head of hair while waving his arms in all directions and keeping a constant conversation going with whoever chanced to be in his shop at the time?

He left the Main Street scene on March 21, 1980, after having spent 56 years at a profession in Vacaville, which in fact he had not prepared for as a young man. He started out in San Francisco as a conductor on one of the old trolley cars.

Monotony in that job drove him to Vacaville where he became a ranch laborer for a short time, then he decided he wanted to be a barber. He opened his first shop on Main Street in 1924, and for the next 56 years heard "shave and a haircut" from thousands

of local residents. His contribution as a volunteer fireman are not to be forgotten.

In December, 1980, Homer Bolter, Sr., went to his last rewards. In his day on Main Street, Bolter was one of the driving forces pointing Vacaville on a progressive course. A realtor, insurance agent, postmaster, and a man about town placed Homer Bolter in that big book where his name should stay for a long, long time.

Also in December 1980, another community leader in the person of Frank Thompson departed a community-spirited life. Then, the name of Delbert Mowers was catalogued among the departed in October 1980. No abundance of accolades can do justice to D.A. "Phil" Mowers for his contributions to the community.

It would be impossible to pay tribute to the thousands of men and women who deserve to be recognized from time to time. They came from all walks of life - business and professional men and women, ranchers and ordinary laborers.

Human traits have changed radically throughout the years. The "Hi, Joe," seems to be something of the past. Clothes and hair styles have segregated the old from the new. Forms of entertainment have been noticeably altered by the advent of television, faster and more dependable automobiles and a myriad of innovations attracting both young and old.

Many were the people who would spend a Sunday afternoon watching Vacaville's baseball team perform. A member of the teams in our yesteryear was Lester Burton, who passed on during 1980.

The name Nellie Buckley means very little to Vacaville residents today, but she spent a lifetime doing bookwork, first for the old Vacaville Water and Light Company and later with PG&E.

There were doctors M.P. Stansbury and Warren Jenney, who scribbled out prescriptions by the hundreds for druggists Jim Miller, Tom Price, Alfred Johnson and Eli Manuel. There was nurse Ann Tillman Corbella whose miniature Vacaville General Hospital was a blessing in disguise.

It was a never-ending warning: "Don't dig the pool cue into the table cloth," as owners Bob Brook, Harold Hawk, and W.T. Sweeney cast an observing eye.

There was the day when the Escano family ruled the grocery monopoly in Vacaville, baking fresh bread and sending its wagons, and later trucks, to deliver merchandise throughout the valley and hills.

There was Bob Scalabrino whose grandiose plan for an elite restaurant made him invest heavily in the Bridge Coffee Shop, which was to cater to Highway 40 traffic. There were Greeks, Chinese, Japanese, Italians, and whoever in the restaurant business here throughout the years, not a one surviving except the Nut Tree established in 1921.

Parents of children always wanted to patronize Goldman's Clothing Store on Main Street. Goldman became successful by posting high prices, and then bartering with the customers, assuring them he was losing money on every transaction. He later became financially independent in a similar business in the Bay Area.

As I write this article I look across the street and see the large building identified by the wording Lloyd Chandler Home Furnishings. I want to make it plain the store founder Lloyd Chandler is very much with us today.

What I want to point out is the fact that Chandler has been a fixture on Main Street going back to his high school days. He graduated from Vaca High with the class of 1919, worked in local stores, and in 1938 founded the Lloyd Chandler Furniture Company. That's 43 years of furniture peddling. Chandler hangs around the store now and then, but functioning of the establishment is in the hands of family members.

The day will come when people will say: "Do any of you guys remember Lloyd Chandler?" You bet they will, for a long, long time.

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