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University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2007

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Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project



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The recorded interview and transcript have been made possible through the generosity of Dr. Harold Boyer and the Library Advisory Committee. The Oral History Research Center enables students and staff to work together with community members to generate this selection of first-person narratives. The participants in this project thank the university for the support given that allowed an idea the opportunity to flourish.

The transcript received minimal editing that includes the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator. In several cases, photographic sources (housed separately) accompany the collection as slides or black and white photographs.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director
Director, Oral History Research Center
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Preface

In this interview, Helen Daseler shared memories of mining work in Colorado, living in Europe, and working for the U.S. government, in addition to opening the "Las Vegas Day School".

Helen was born in 1929 in Newton, Iowa. She matriculated at George Washington University but earned her degree from the University of California Santa Barbara. After graduation Helen married Jack Daseler who joined the "Lighter-Than-Air Program with the Navy and flew blimps along the Pacific Coast, Atlantic Coast and South America. Later, Jack worked as a teaching principal in France and Germany where their three children were born.

Helen and Jack, both certified teachers, moved to Las Vegas, Nevada, 47 years ago and started the Las Vegas Day School in a Unitarian Fellowship building on Bond Road (Tropicana). The initial class started with 14 students. Helen taught kindergarten the first year, and Jack assumed the administrative and management duties. As the nineteen seventies approached, they played a major role with school integration in Las Vegas.

Since Jack, the daily operations of the school are performed by the three sons, Neil, Jack, and Frank. Helen is retired and lives in Las Vegas.

[Today is October 9,] 2007. This is Claytee White. I am with Helen. Helen, please pronounce your last name correctly for me.

I would be happy to. Daseler.

And would you spell it for me?

D-a-s-e-l-e-r.

And I am in her home here at --

Apartment.

-- her apartment here in Summerlin today.

So how are you doing?

I'm doing fine. Thank you. Nice to meet you.

Wonderful. Nice to meet you, too.

Thank you.

I would like to get started by just talking about your early life. Tell me where you grew up, what your family life was like and early schooling.

I'd be happy to. But it was an enviable life for me. I enjoyed it. I was sort of a tomboy. And I loved the mountains. I was born in 1929 as an only child. And with the Depression coming up, that decided the only-child factor in my life. My dad was a graduate of Colorado School of Mines. I lived in many small Colorado high-mountain mining communities -- Fairplay, Breckenridge, Leadville, and many, many more, just to name a few.

Then the mining industry just wasn't doing well. So my father left mining and sold an investment company, now INVESCO. But it was called Financial Programs in those days. So that put us into Boulder, Colorado, and Grand Junction. Then he got word of this last mining job available that he applied for in Bishop, California, at the U.S. Vanadium company and stayed there until the war started. And things weren't going as well as he liked there. And Bishop was small. I was in the age for high school. So we moved to Los Angeles and my dad took a job with the government. And from then on until he retired, he was employed by the U.S. government.

So what kind of mining was he involved in?

About anything that would hire him at the time. When you're a mining engineer, you're trained to do everything. Of course, Golden, which is Colorado School of Mines, is considered I feel the

best in the world, but among the best if nothing else. And so he was trained for everything. But he worked in the mines and he was a surveyor. So he did all kinds of -- and the office eventually became to be part of it, too, when he worked at the Vanadium.

Now, tell me about your mother prior to marriage and then afterwards.

Very well. They were both born in Newton, Iowa. Actually, mother was born in Indianola, moved to Newton as a very young child with her family. And mother and dad had known each other all their lives through school. And just as kids were in those high school days, they just dated back and forth and just enjoyed life as it's meant to be. But then he got this opportunity to go to Mines and mother decided to follow him. But it wasn't until later that they did marry. But they did marry in Colorado in the mountains outside of Denver.

So what did you mean "to follow him"?

Go with him, lived with friends, to be married in time. I'm sure he had proposed. I don't know. I never asked. But she definitely found him most attractive. [Married when she was a senior.]

My father is from a family of dentists. My great-grandmother was the first woman dentist to graduate from the University of Iowa. That's in their hundred-year yearbook, her picture standing by the dental chair. But I think he just didn't want to be in a dental office. He liked the outdoors and went on into mining.

Oh. That's interesting about your mother.

Yes. And then she worked in Newton. Dad was born in Newton, Iowa. Mother moved from Indianola to Newton early in her lifetime. And she worked in the bank, again because as a woman she could get a job in a bank as a teller. So then when she moved to Denver, she worked in the First National Bank in Denver.

And at some point they were married, of course.

Yes. They were married prior to graduation. Then I'll make this statement now. We had discussed about this earlier. If it had been discovered that they had been married, mother would have lost her job at the bank. So she wore her rings around a chain around her neck. And dad didn't wear any rings and would have been expelled from Golden if they had found out they were married. But they didn't find out. They were married in May.

Wow. That's amazing how times have changed.

So tell me how the family eventually came to Las Vegas.

That's a story in itself. And I think probably the best way to do it would be some of the information that's in this printed material that you have that you could use.

Jack -- I got my degree at Sacramento State. Again, it was hard for him to get a job. So we went back to school on the GI bill and we lived on the GI bill for the first year of our marriage. But then he got his degree and worked as a teaching principal in a small county school called Waverly outside of Stockton, California. [She graduated and moved to Stockton where she taught Physical Education at Stockton High School.]

And that worked fine until the second year. And evidently in the county schools in California in those days, they would have a certain amount of money to use for various benefits for the schools and students. Well, Jack discovered they hadn't used any of it. And there was quite a bit of money. So he proceeded to get encyclopedias in the classrooms. He got a bus. He would even go out and wash the bus. And all of these things. Well, the county board, a lay board, discovered -- well, realized that he had pretty much spent all of that money. And I think he fired a teacher because she insisted on bringing her dog to work to sleep under the desk. You know, it's just one of these things. So things weren't of a happy nature for him.

So he was always a researcher and discovered that there were opportunities in education with the military, dependent schools. So he came home from a movie one night and blown off the doorknob was a wire from the U.S. government stating he had been hired to go overseas to work in the dependent school program. I don't know what would have ever happened if we hadn't found that in the wind. But anyway, then he left that job. And we went to Europe, to close this off briefly.

Tell me before you went to Europe, did you already tell me on tape how you met Jack?

No. I don't think it was mentioned on the tape.

Would you like to tell me?

Prior to the war his first year of teaching was in 1940-41. And, of course, that was Pearl Harbor and so forth. He taught that year. And then I was in his seventh grade class the first year he taught school. He had gotten his degree from -- I believe it was San Jose, which is of no particular importance. Anyway -- my thoughts, again, on all of this.

So you were in his seventh grade class.

I was in his seventh grade class. And then he was going to join. If he didn't, he would have been drafted. So he asked his class to decide what branch of the service we wanted him to go into. It was the navy. Well, Jack being as clever as he was, he didn't really want to get shot at. So he joined. He put a scrapbook together and went to be interviewed for Lighter-Than-Air, which is blimps. So he was accepted as a lieutenant in the Lighter-Than-Air program. Well, see, he had a college degree, which automatically gave him the rank. And he was a trainer and so forth.

So tell me about Lighter-Than-Air. Do you know anything about that program?

Well, he knew more about it than I did. And, of course, I didn't know anything about it in those -- we weren't dating then. I was still in high school and on and on. But the blimps flew along the Pacific Coast and along the Atlantic Coast and also in South America later on as the war continued to protect the ceilings because the Japanese were bombing the ships.

During the war we had no rubber in the United States. So all of our -- were not elastic. We buttoned our underwear. That's one of the sacrifices we made during the war. At any rate, that's where he had his air force experience with the Lighter-Than-Air program.

So he didn't pay any attention to the suggestion that he should go into the navy?

That is the navy. That was a branch.

Oh, that program was a part of the navy.

They put together the scrapbook to go in for an interviewer. And he had made pictures of all of these blimps and all of these things to show how interested he was. And they accepted him on that basis. This was a rare group, very rare group.

More men died in the Second World War air force with Lighter-Than-Air than Heavier-Than-Air percentage wise because so many foolish mistakes were made with those blimps. Lots of them.

I see. That's interesting.

One was a practice run at night, because they didn't need to do it, on Catalina. And the blimp crashed into Catalina Island. I mean needless things.

So that was his navy experience. And, of course, when he got out he kept his navy retirement eligibility or whatever, which is kind of nice.

Yes. Now, tell me about once you finished high school and how you got to George Washington University.

Again, through my father now working for the government -- he was in the synthetic rubber program, a safety engineer. He branched off into safety engineering. And his office was transferred to the District of Columbia. And that's why I went to George Washington. I had enrolled in Santa Barbara. [never attended because father was in D.C.] They had only been open about three years. I guess it's still a party school. So that's just where I went. You know, you just go and do. And was there three years.

And I would have graduated without any problem, but then I would have had that other -- you know, a relationship that I didn't want. So this worked out quite well. And then Jack and I married [in August 1950. I enrolled in Sacramento State and graduate the following spring.] And then he got this job. Then we went on into Europe.

Yes. Now, tell me about Europe.

I'll cover that briefly because that shouldn't have anything, really, to do with this.

Yes. It's just so exciting.

The first year was a teaching principalship in Metz, France, M-e-t-z, which is close to the German border, sort of a broken area. And it was shortly after the war. But the French didn't clean up after the First World War. I mean there were still bullet hole marks in the walls then.

And then he got a very nice job with the military in Kaiserslautern, Germany. And that's where we stayed for two and a half years. Neil was born at Landstuhl, where the military is now sent, L-a-n-d-s-t-u-h-l. Anyway, that's Neil. Then the weather was so terrible in central Europe. So two and a half years in Germany was just about all the rain and cold weather we could take. And we lived like kings and queens. No question about that.

Tell me about that. So this is right after World War II. Tell me what it was like in Germany where you were after the war.

Well, we had won the war. That makes a big difference. We had everything we wanted. They built apartments for us and we had all the medical facilities and things you wanted and PXs. And the rate of exchange for the Mark was practically -- now the Mark is more valuable than the dollar. But in those days it was about a dollar and a quarter. So that made living was wonderful. Gas was

still rationed as far as the Europeans. But we had gas coupons. So our gas was about 25 cents a gallon. And we had a commissary with all the things you'd ever want and all the facilities.

How were the German people at that time, just regular folks like us after the war?

That war was unfortunate for everything. You can't look back on the total picture of a war. But they were workers and pulled themselves together as has been proven.

So after that with the weather as bad as it was, Jack had an opportunity to go into Turkey for better weather. We were expecting second son Jack. And he was born in Izmir, Turkey. And a year and a half later or two years apart, Frank the youngest was born in Ankara, Turkey. So I have two Turks and a German, all in military hospitals. And both Neil and my lives were saved there with the military expert doctors and care. Of course, Neil was born in Landstuhl as I said.

So tell me how the two of you -- or the five of you came back to the U.S.

Well, that really closes off that part of my background, which is of no particular importance except that that was a wonderful time of my life. I'd repeat every single minute of every day for all my life except this right here.

But it wasn't going well for Jack because in Turkey there were some supervisors and superintendents that loved to create things for themselves. And if they wanted to have a conference with the Mid East complex, which would be Turkey, Greece, Saudi Arabia, just that one school, which was an American dependent school, they'd have it where they hadn't been before. Then that means everybody would go to Athens or go to wherever they had these things. Well, Jack made the comment, not being hesitant in voicing his opinion, of that fact. And he stepped on the supervisor's toes. And life was not good. And he knew he wasn't going to be ever transferred out of Turkey. And he was principal of a high school and superintendent of schools in the Far East complex finally at that point, but he wasn't going anyplace.

So then he did get in touch with someone and got a job with troop education back in Germany. So we moved back into Germany for about a year. And then it was just time to come home. The boys were an age we would have kept them in the German schools. We would have not put them in the dependent schools. While there, Neil was fluent in German. Of course, we learned German, as well.

And all of that is in some of this stuff that you can read about Joe Ward advising us and so

forth, his advice. He put an ad in the Review-Journal stating

“Anyone interested in the possibility of starting a private school write and contact post office box such-and-such.” And this ad was put in the paper. The newspapers weren't very big in those days. And we got some responses. And I frankly don't remember how many we had, maybe 11.

On the strength of that, we came home. And we didn't go to California because Jack and I wanted a fresh start by founding our own private school. We came here because of Joe Ward. And he said I don't know what I'm going to be doing the rest of my life but I'm going to be doing it in the state of Nevada because that's where the opportunities are.

So now, tell me who Joe Ward is.

He was a magistrate. Well, he was a close friend at one time. And these friendships -- he finally went to law school and earned his law degree. But Joe was a very, very important friend, first friend. And when we came to Las Vegas he helped us with advice and guidance. And he retired as a magistrate here in Las Vegas. It's a big family. There's still enough of them here. Joe is not alive.

So without even seeing Nevada, Las Vegas --

Well, I drove through it. To get to Iowa you have to drive through Nevada as hard as you try not to. And I can remember sitting in the backseat of that car mumbling to myself, I'll never live in this state, I'll never live in this state. And we've lived here for 46 years.

So how did you feel as your husband was making a decision to come to Las Vegas?

It was fine. We had no place to go and it seemed like a sound idea. And we both had our teaching degrees. You could always fall back on that, which we did do in order to get started and establish the private school.

So tell me what it looked like. So you came here, what, by plane that first time?

We drove in.

So tell me what it looked like.

When Jack was hired he was hired in San Francisco, [the military discharged him in San Francisco] which gave us the privilege of shipping all of our furniture and the car back to where his hiring point was, which was San Francisco. So there we had the car and we drove here. But

we didn't have a place to stay. So we lived in Joe Ward's home for two weeks until we bought a house on 17th Street. We moved in on 17th Street.

So tell me about that first --

Well, Las Vegas -- it took some adjustment to say the least. With the temperature being about 113 when we came in, it was hot, July. But then Jack would look around for -- well, he found this Unitarian Fellowship building. That's the first one. It was on Bond Road. Tropicana was called Bond Road in those days. And we leased this facility. Lucille Bruner leased that home to us. But it was also a Unitarian Fellowship building. So we had the school, in quote, in this house. Then before Sunday we had to clean up everything that was there and put it away so the Unitarians could come in. And Lucille Bruner was a very well-known artist in Las Vegas. She had a house next door. And she rented this all to us.

Well, Roxy Copenhaver was another very important person in our lives. She was at that time I believe superintendent of schools or in a very important position. They should have named a school after her. They never have. But it should have been. But when she came out to observe the school, which the first year I don't think they even knew we were here -- but she finally found out and came out -- she spent the whole day. She and Jack just hit it off like two peas in a pod. And she would say, Jack, I'm sorry, you cannot stay in this facility more than one year.

We started with about 14, ended with -- well, I thought it was 27, but this says 29; so it's close enough -- ended with 29. And we would take any youngster that would walk through the door because Jack was credentialed to teach through high school. And we didn't teach high school. It was only elementary years. Then I had a high school physical education degree, no more elementary than fly. But I figured with what I had to do with the managerial part of it as far as paying the bills and hiring, you know, just paying -- Jack did all the hiring and so forth. It was my job to do that. Well, I had to do more than just that because there wasn't that much to do. So having three boys that age -- seven, five and four -- made me feel confident that I could manage kindergarten. So I taught kindergarten that first year.

And I got a temporary teaching certificate. We never did anything that wasn't correct. But it was temporary and I had to go to GW [George Washington University] and what was there and get my elementary credential, which was no particular problem. It just meant you had to go to

class. And I had time to do that.

So you went to class where?

GW. I'm sorry. I'm in error. Thank you for correcting me. It's UNLV. I went to UNLV for summer school and occasional courses. I don't know if I went to many night courses because I couldn't with a family the age they were and our schedule and so forth. But what I would do is I would teach in the morning and work in the afternoon or reverse it. Later on I did all the office work in the morning and taught in the afternoon when we built the buildings that are there now. [I was the business manager and he was the administrator and teacher.

So tell me what are your first memories of that move to Las Vegas?

Being so far away from everything. It's smack in the middle of the desert. There were only about 140,000 people in all of southern California (sic), including Boulder City. As far as I know that was the approximate population. And Henderson, of course, was a separate city, a very low-income-type thing. Then in the main part of the city, some of the hotels were there. That was fun. We couldn't afford to go into the lounge and buy a drink for a dollar and a half, but we would peak through the window, the little curtain in the Sahara, and saw Frank Sinatra and things like that. But it was all right.

You know, we just were able to adjust to things. And we had a close family unit and did a lot of things, you know, scooting around in the desert and enjoying things.

What did the boys enjoy doing here in the desert?

Now or then?

Then.

Well, they would just go out -- very simple -- play hide-and-go-seek or kick-the-can or run all over the place. The house we lived in was on South 17th Street between St. Louis and Sahara. And the back lots were -- still is -- an easement for the power company. So there were never any homes behind us. But neighborhood boys playing, just simple things. As time went on they built an ice rink up now off Maryland Parkway and Sahara and all that. That's all changed. But they were footloose and fancy-free, could go wherever they wanted to go.

And you felt really safe?

There was nothing to worry about. They were safe. But they were good boys and they always --

as far as I know. Once in a while now you find out things you didn't know, but that's all right.

Of course. Now, tell me how your husband got the school started. We know about the ad in the paper. So once you got here --

Well, on the strength of that we put an ad in the paper that we were going to start the school with this beginning enrollment, preschool and kindergarten because that's really where the interest was. The public schools had just gone on double sessions, which was very upsetting to a lot of people. So by that coming summer, they were wanting summer school. We advertised again -- it was through the newspaper, advertisement -- a summer school. We had 97 youngsters in that summer school. We went on double session, too.

We used my brother-in-law's car. We had VW buses. We didn't have a school bus at first. You'll see pictures in here of our bus fleet. Wouldn't that have set the safety division of Nevada vehicle department on their edge?

Well, I don't know, because I don't think buses have any seat belts or anything today.

A VW bus? Where is the safety feature of a VW bus? None? But we used them because we had them. And we drove the children to school. I think they enjoyed the bus run as much as or more than the school.

But anyway, then we did get -- the original land was subordinated to us by Bill and Hilda Covey. And that's all in some of this. I don't know if you know what subordination is. They gave us the land, scot-free without any payment. Of course, that has been paid back many years ago. But it gave us the collateral we needed to get the loan to build the school.

And then we opened with about 127 I think. That's a little off from this, but I don't think it makes --

And so at first it was just kindergarten and --

No. We took preschool, kindergarten, first through -- whatever came through the door -- second or third grade was just about what it amounted to.

Of course, that first year one of the people that subordinated the land to us was Bill and Hilda Covey. They owned and operated Coffee Pot restaurants here in town. And because Raeanne, their daughter, had done so well in school with the California Achievement Test, which is very, very easy. Rea is what encouraged them to help us establish the school.

And that person you just named, was that one of their children?

Raeanne Covey was one of their children. I had a picture here, but I can show you that later. She's in one of these pictures with some of the others.

One of our first students was Mitchell Posin and others.

Who named the school?

Jack did. Why? Because all of our friends can find us. If it's an easy name to remember, they're going to look up Las Vegas Day School. It isn't some other name. They will find it through Las Vegas Day School. We are currently registering the school name.

Did you get the feel that this was a tourist town already when you moved here?

Oh, there's no question about it. It had to be a tourist town or it wouldn't even be here. Of course, tourists came from Los Angeles. We had an airport, but it was the one out here where the private planes park now.

So it's the north --

No, not the North Las Vegas.

Oh, which one?

It's the international -- it's the one that's down here off the old Las Vegas highway or the Los Angeles highway.

Oh, okay.

Private planes fly in and land there. It's on the far west end of the McCarran. It was McCarran still I think, but not the international part.

When you would do recreational things, did you ever take the family to Mount Charleston?

We did to some extent, yes. You do because it was close. We went to the lake. We camped because this is how we traveled in Europe. When we lived in Turkey, we camped because the hotels were kind of iffy and we had the VW bus. So we just camped.

(End Tape 1, Side A.)**With a family of five what kind of places did you eat when you would go out? Were you familiar with places like the Blue Onion?**

Actually, no. We didn't go out very much. We couldn't afford to go out. We were living from -- finally our accountant, Mr. Leo Patterson, told us that we better start -- we were taking in tuition

and we were just using it to live on and everything else. We ate at home most always. There weren't the restaurants to go to. Yes, you could go to the hotels, but they were very expensive and we just couldn't go. I don't know if we ever had anything to do with -- we had friends and we would share dinners. We had very nice neighbors right next door to us on 17th Street, the Lennings, Gilbert and Jackie Lenning. They had three children, two girls and a boy. We did a lot of neighbor back-and-forth things. And that was fun. But there wasn't much going out to eat, very seldom.

So tell me more about the school. What did people think about it? And what did they say? What kinds of things were said about the school?

I think it was all very, very positive and very good. You just had to have enough people whose students attended the school for word-of-mouth to get around. But that was really -- we advertised for every year we had the school. We advertised for summer school. But these were great introductory things.

Then what really, really made a difference as far as numbers and growth is concerned was, in 1970, integration. When they started busing youngsters in the sixth grade level to the Westside schools -- and I'm sure you're not aware of this -- there was a definite line there. No question about it.

Oh, yeah.

And to send their child at the six grade level from maybe a school within a block from where they lived way over there where they didn't want them to go anyway -- if they got sick or something -- you know, it was a big problem, big problem. Then they bussed all the other students, all the black students, into all these other schools throughout the city. Well, needless to say, that caused more than enough turmoil. And that was enough to really solidify the school. At the sixth grade level we had three sixth grades because we took as many as we can. And that built the foundation for everything. Now it's very difficult to get in.

Oh, isn't that wonderful?

Uh-huh. There still is some interest in going with friends or neighborhoods and so forth. But that's made the difference. But our graduating classes were a good size in the 60s. Currently, Neil with the enrollment at 875, it has grown.

Well, the buildings have also improved. We finally got a third five-acre piece of property. And that has made the difference as far as expansion and so forth. And really to develop we saved every penny we could in construction because it had to be that way, wise decision on the types of buildings and with the heat and the sun and the whole thing. But still it was now time to change all of that.

It's turned out for the better. I think if we had that additional now 15 acres -- additional five acres has been recently acquired -- not recently, but has -- we probably would have spread all over the place and not have it develop the way it is now. I mean this is a finished product now.

Have you been out to the school?

No, I have not.

Go. Please do go.

I will.

The original front buildings are there. But with the last phase of the classrooms, which would be sixth, seventh and eighth grade, those front buildings will be pushed down for more parking space. Parking has become an item.

Do you specialize in any area?

The three Rs, academic excellence. And the children generally are well ahead a grade level. It varies. It's kind of tough on the little ones coming in that hadn't started with kindergarten because we have reading -- well, reading starts before that and limited number of enrollment in the class. In some of the classes the enrollment is limited, but it's greater. But we know how capable the youngsters are. And we pretest everyone coming in. So we kind of know what we're having.

How long were you involved in the school administration?

I retired -- in business management? Quite awhile. I don't know the exact year. But I was just in teaching. We had plenty of office personnel and business managers and so forth in the meantime. I fortunately didn't need to do that anymore.

So did you continue to teach kindergarten?

Yes. I retired in 2000. It was just time. I had taught that many years, 40 I think it is. And it was just time to step aside. I had a knee replacement, this knee, which is now fine. It was just time to step out.

Now, tell me about your husband's position in the school and how it changed over the years.

He was a teaching principal. When we first started school, he taught second grade, of course you can, and did all this extra. And then things added on. Once then the classes grew, he stepped out of that elementary level and was kind of a principal of the upper grades to kind of keep his eyes on things.

And we taught German. German was the first foreign language we taught in the school because that was -- some people would ask, well, why not Spanish? Well, I don't speak Spanish. But then the demand came for Spanish. And so that's what we did.

But did you continue to teach German, as well?

We tried as an elective, but it just wasn't going to work.

Now, tell me did you ever add a high school?

Never were interested in high school. We had one year of ninth grade, but began to realize that was a financial mistake. You had to hire all teachers with the credential for high school, even though it was only ninth grade. And, yes, we had a class. It was small. Danny Greenspun was in it. He married Robin. Anyway, it was a nice group, prominent families. But it just wasn't meant to be. And we didn't have the room. We have a football field now and a soccer field and all those things, but not at the level of the high school, what you need. So then other schools were being built. And that was just great. Let them have the high school headaches.

So did you also have any kind of music program?

Oh, yes, always. Always had music. Music and the foreign language. As time went on we even taught Spanish with the three-year olds.

That's wonderful.

So everybody has that and the sciences and advanced in science and math.

I think we all should have a foreign language earlier than we do.

I agree completely.

Tell me about your son's education.

Well, Neil was -- first of all, he attended the German public schools because the American dependent schools didn't open the way the German schools did. So we put Neil -- he was kindergarten age. Well, actually, when we lived in Turkey, he was in first grade as five-year-old

because the German Embassy school had a first grade. Well, we figured that Neil was bright enough to do the work, but emotionally he was ready to go home at noon, you know, as a five-year-old would be. But he finally adjusted to that. So he had that as a background in the German language, which was absolutely wonderful.

Then when we moved back into Heilbronn, central Europe, the German schools hadn't quite opened. They don't open until, at least in those years, late October because of harvesting. So many students worked. So we put him in -- correct age -- kindergarten in the American military school. Well, they were cutting and pasting and all this stuff and I rapidly realized that was wrong. So we put him when school opened in the German schools. We entered him as a first grader. It was tough for a while on him because they were more advanced than he was.

I'll never forget one time he came through the door -- this was living in Heilbronn -- so excited he couldn't contain himself. You know, we all get the star. Well, he got the Rota Pund, the red dot. And that was just like our gold star. So then finally they did start to grade him. But his teacher was wonderful, as German as ever could be with the lederhosen nickers and the white jacket with the buttons down the front. Herr Pola was his name, a great man.

So from what you saw at that point, a country coming out of war and everything, do you think even today they're ahead of us when it comes to education, our public schools?

I can't answer that because I haven't been there enough to see it. But it wouldn't surprise me at all. They handled it differently. I think they are still testing when you're 11 whether you're going to go to the professional schools or trade schools. But I tell you some of these plumbers make more money than -- but that really doesn't have that much to do with school here.

Well, your sons went to school at Las Vegas Day School?

Totally. When we started Frank was three and Jack was five. So we had a kindergartener with Jack. And Neil was second grade. So Neil just continued on doing what he was doing and did quite well.

And where did they go to high school?

Bishop Gorman High School. And then Neil went to University of Redlands in southern California. Jack went to San Diego State pretty much. He went to University of San Diego or something, a Catholic school the first year, and wasn't getting what he wanted. So he got his

degree at San Diego State. And then Frank got his degree at Redlands. So they're all college-educated, of course, because now they're back and working at the school.

All three sons work at the school?

All three. Oh, yeah. All three are working at the school.

Oh, that is wonderful.

Neil is the director and Jack and Frank are assistant directors. Each has his own calling and their own specialty. They work well together.

That is wonderful.

It's great. It's very cohesive.

The school is still in the family.

Yes.

Now, do you have other family members that you can see --

No. What do you mean, "can see"?

That will one day step into those roles?

I don't know. Yes, one has. Neil's eldest, Kyle, has gone into the business management end of it, not into teaching. But there's always that possibility, but it just hasn't come yet. Some of them might not want to. And you certainly can understand that.

Of course. Is there anything else about the school that -- let's say somebody researching education in Las Vegas, what should they know about the Las Vegas Day School?

I think the thing to do would be meet with my son Neil and talk to him so that he can tell them what we are doing, where our goals are and so forth. We have brochures. We have all of these things. So there's plenty of public contact in consideration of the school. No question about that. But it's known.

In fact, we have made every effort to encourage other private schools to start because you're not going to be able to take care of everybody. And the more executive-type and industrial-type big wigs and so forth that come in, they have to have a place and a good place to educate their children or they're not going to stay. So it's a proved effort with private schools and so forth.

But Neil, in doing some more research work on licensing and so forth, discovered we are

the oldest in the state of Nevada. But we're not parochial.

So how do you know Bob Clark?

As a lawyer. A very fine man. Enjoy him a lot. And he's been a great guidance to us over the years and has been our personal lawyer for a while. And how we actually got to know him would be through another family. He just has always been a total enthusiast for the Day School.

How have you seen this city change as a person moving here in 1961 to now 2007? What would you say the major changes have been?

They are so major I don't think you can even compare them. From a small city, small community where you could just drive up and park and go in some place like some of the hotels. I know Kirk Kerkorian. He came to our house for dinner one night. It's just grown to the point where it's way beyond itself. In fact, you just stay in your own little niche now and don't worry too much about the Strip or anything because it's so difficult with traffic. No. There's major, major changes from a little town, so to speak, and a metropolis.

Would you call us now a cosmopolitan city?

That's hard to say. To me a cosmopolitan city is Chicago, New York, maybe Minneapolis, possibly Los Angeles, but not really, and San Francisco. That's metropolitan because you have the museums, you have the opera and you have things that are well attended. Yes, they have them and the university is trying. Thank gosh for the university because that's really all. And then they have the community colleges and so forth. And that's all fine. But cosmopolitan doesn't quite fit somehow.

Well, you have the gambling atmosphere, too, and the bars and so forth, even though we never went into a bar. That's one thing my husband said he would never do was drink in a bar or gamble. We have had an occasional drink with friends and so forth. Never gambled. Can't afford to.

That's true. I always tell people who are visiting -- they say, wow, you must be in here all the time. I say, oh, no, you can't live in Las Vegas and gamble.

How do you think they built those hotels?

That's right. As a person living here and owning a business, do you feel the gambling atmosphere?

I can't really answer that. We have a lot of gambling -- hotel people with children in the school. Of course, that's a financial support. The hotels have been very good to us over the years in making things available. But we never asked for stuff. We don't like to ask. And we don't need to. It's separate. We want to keep ourselves away from that. Thank goodness the school is still protected from things like that.

What other areas of the city have you lived since you've been here? You've lived on 17th Street when you first came. What other communities?

Right by the school. We built a house right by the school. And then I bought a house that's over on Oakey and Durango. That house we're using as a student center now, which didn't bother me a bit. I moved all my life. But it made a good place for a student center for meetings and clubs. And if they want to have a party or something, they go over there.

There's a huge pool in the backyard. I don't know if you saw this picture. I have a better picture. This is the pool right here. Jack just went out and paced off how big he wanted the pool. And Bill Covey, who built our house for tuition also built the pool -- this is called horse trading.

Now, it looks as if this pool is an Olympic-size pool.

Very close. It isn't, but it's close. But it's 11 feet deep. So you can dive. And four feet is the shallow end. So it's a good-size pool. But that's just part of the recreation of it.

Now, did you have swimming competitions as parts of your --

No. No, we didn't. We're now in recreational leagues. But the public schools are still too big. You can't compete against a kid that's six-foot-four, darn near shaving because our kids are just eighth graders. But they're good and we've done very well. We've won a lot of trophies within our own league and so forth. We're competitive.

So what other sports do you compete in?

Everything. We have everything. Archery, bowling and then the usual recreational sports. Tennis.

Oh, that's wonderful.

Yeah, we have all the sports. And one of the teachers usually takes the responsibility for things like that. Plenty of opportunities to learn more than just the academic studies in the school. Field trips. We have taken field trips. That's pretty well limited now.

Why?

Time, distance, cost, danger. We don't take them to Los Angeles for five days any longer because you just don't want anything to happen. But we used to take them down to the Museum of Natural History, the La Brea Tar Pits and places like that, and then a week's camping tour throughout the state of Nevada. We used to do. To take my father, a mining engineer up into central Nevada was great. But you can't appreciate how big Nevada really is.

Oh, yes. I've been to Fallon and Elko.

Oh, you've seen it. But we've done that sort of thing. But they're an age now -- we used to take them alternating Washington, D.C. and Boston. But we've decided that that was not safe enough.

So now, as still one of the founders -- I consider you a founder of the school -- do you still give your sons advice?

No. Don't need to. Neil is 53. He knows what he's doing. Once in a while he'll tell me after something has been done like registering the name. Well, that's just good business. This is why you have a Bob Clark or some of these other wonderful advisers, to give you the necessary advice you need for whatever it might happen to be.

Yeah. That's true.

Some of the last questions -- Right now we see the downtown area of the town beginning to grow again. What does that mean to you as someone coming here in 1961?

I don't know what to say on that. What I'm seeing doesn't affect me at all. And I think it looks so bad now down there that I don't know what they can do to make it better. You put this tower up and that tower up. People still have to live downtown. It didn't used to be that way.

So we're going to finish now with just your final remarks. Anything else that I didn't ask you that you would like to comment on?

Well, thank you. I've enjoyed this interview very much. And some of my thoughts are I'm so glad we came to Las Vegas when we did, saw it the way it was, watched it develop and grow, see all of the educational systems and the other fabulous community things growing. The effort everyone is making to make this a community and a livable one is thrilling to me. You're always going to have the Strip and that environment. But this town and community has grown way up beyond that. And I think we have a right to be very proud of Las Vegas and to be part of our community.

Thank you so much.

You're very welcome.

(End Tape 1, Side B.)

Appendix

JUL 9 - 1961

27 June 1961

State Board of Education
c/o State Dept. of Education
Las Vegas, Nevada

Gentlemen:

I should like to make application for a license to operate a private elementary school in the Las Vegas area to begin operation on 25 Sept. 1961. The first year of operation would include only kindergarten and first grade, with plans to add one grade per year until the 8th grade has been established.

Because of my contract with the U.S. Army Education Program, I will be unable to appear in person until mid-July. My first action at that time will be to obtain suitable facilities and texts/equipment necessary to follow the State of Nevada course of study for these grades.

Can you tell me when the State Board of Education is scheduled to meet, and what steps I may take to meet the requirements for obtaining this license. In addition to mailing me this information I would most sincerely appreciate it if you could telephone Mr. Joseph Ward, of Fisher, Bowman and Ward in the Cornet Bldg. in Las Vegas, and provide him with this information. It is very important, inasmuch as I will be in telephone contact with Mr. Ward on 2 July.

I possess the A.B. and M.A. degrees in Education, valid elementary and secondary teaching credentials and a valid elementary administration credential from the State of California.

Inclosed is a self-addressed envelope for your convenience. Will you please forward to me any necessary application forms.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jack E. Daseler

Jack E. Daseler
Education Adviser
46th Arty. Gp.
APO 176 New York, NY

2-9-61

Mr. and Mrs. Jack E. Daseler opened "Nevada's oldest private elementary school" last September with a total of five tiny pupils in the fold. By the end of the semester they were teaching 18.

"We're the only private elementary school in the state," said the director Jack Daseler recently, a statement that admirably accounts for the fact that it is also the oldest.

Daseler now employs three full time teachers and two part time, working on the theory that the pupil-teacher ration should ideally be a maximum 20 to 1.

He, himself, is a fully accredited teacher who spent eight years teaching the children of U.S. military personnel in Germany, Turkey and France.

"I picked up some of the thorough, perhaps even startling, teaching methods that are used in German schools," he said, "and wanted a chance to employ them.

"So when I returned to the states last summer, I realized the methods couldn't be utilized in the public school system and so I decided to begin a private school here in Nevada."

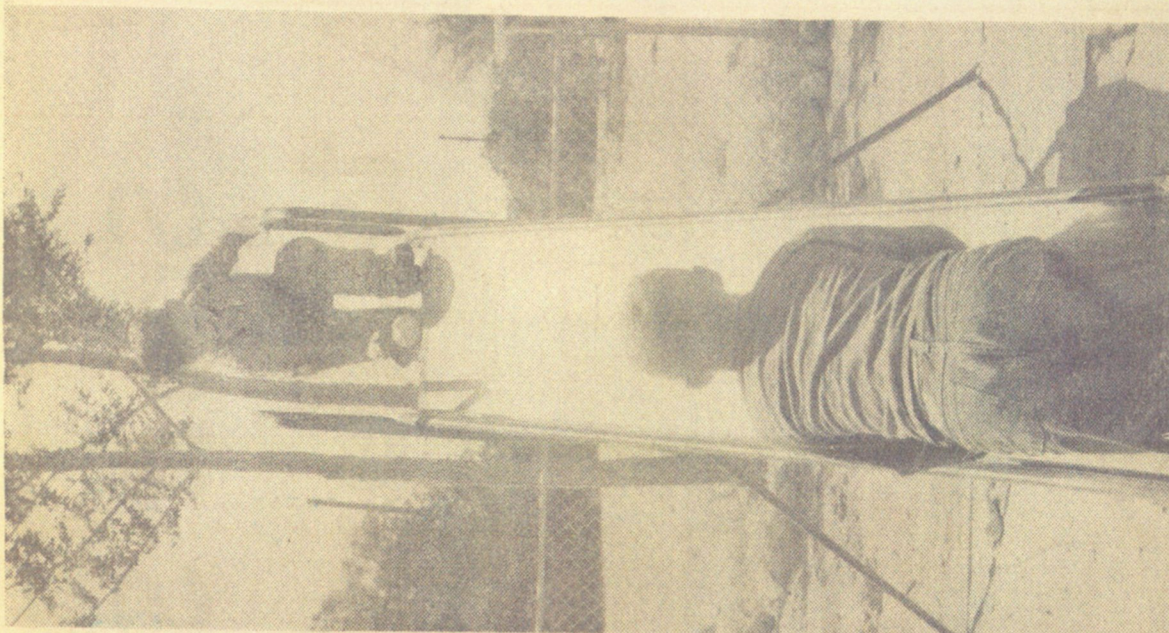
According to the school's brochure, the Las Vegas Day School is a private, non-sectarian, non-denominational day school, serving pupils from the age of three years through the sixth grade.

Instruction is given in kindergarten and in the elementary grades by "qualified, experienced, fully credentialed teachers" and the course of study is approved by the State Department of Education.

A nursery school class handles children from three to five years of age, following the pattern known to most nursery schools.

Daseler said he has mapped out a summer program of instruction to which the parent response has been "real good."

"Our enrollment for this summer's session will be very gratifying, if the early response is any indication," he said.



Playground break

The summer program has been set up to emphasize remedial reading, arithmetic, mathematics and science and it will be open to other than regular day school pupils.

Under the regular spring semester setup, pre school and kindergarten pupils are in class from 9 to 11 a.m. and the elementary grades meet from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. But on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the school day is stretched out 30 minutes to allow for the French lesson.

Daseler believes that private school classes are, in many cases, the only way for the pupil to get the attention and guidance he needs to develop at his own pace.

"We have several cases here," said Daseler "that are outstanding examples of the benefit of the progressive methods.

"One boy here, for instance, was failing second grade reading while he was attending a public school. His parents took him out of the school in January and installed him here.

"Today he is reading at the second semester third grade level and is also, incidentally, one of the top pupils in the French class."

The school is now being operated out of three classrooms in the Unitarian Fellowship Building or Tropicana Road, but by next September Daseler hopes to be in a new four-classroom school building on Jones Boulevard between San Francisco Avenue and Spring Mountain Road.

The architectural plans have been drawn up and construction should be under way by August, Daseler said.

And so the embryonic "oldest private school in Nevada" seems to be on its way to becoming older and larger.

By next year the enrollment may soar to 30 pupils and after that it's growth will be regulated only by the physical capacity of the building itself — le: bon temps viendra.





PRE-BEGINNINGS

During the past 27 years, I have often been asked: "Why did you start a private school?" and, "Why did you select Las Vegas as a location for your school?"

To answer these questions, I must go back to my 8 years of public school experiences, ranging from teacher to asst. principal, to principal and district superintendent. During this time, I honestly attempted to provide the best programs for my students and never "punched the clock". As a matter of fact, in one school, we had a time clock, and while I never arrived late, and stayed well after the required time, I often "forgot" to check in or out! The principal, a practical man, never chastised me for this "neglect". A smart administrator, knowing he was getting more than he asked in hours worked!

As an assistant principal of a large suburban school district, I worked with the principal, an elderly spinster, who had held her position since the district was formed. Very well-meaning, but most reluctant to change. Her district had 1,000 students with no extra-curricular activities for the jr. high level. With much hesitation, she allowed me, during after school hours, without compensation, to develop a sports program. She did allow me in-school time to supervise the safety patrol. Naturally, I didn't look forward to tenure in the district!

My first principalship came next in a small, semi-rural district where a Board of Trustees held tight to the purse strings, regularly ending the year with thousands of dollars left un-spent, but with a school, that upon my arrival possessed no audio-visual equipment, no encyclopedias, no maps or globes, and while covering a large area, had no transportation, even though as an impoverished district, fell into a category whereby under State School Regulations where they qualified for buses and transportation expenses from State monies.

My first goal was to get the support of the School Board to equip the new buildings (the State had recently constructed a well-planned school for the district). The two administrators before me had lasted one year each. I was determined to last longer, and did - two years! However, during the first year I accomplished my primary goals. Support by the three member board and a "carte blanche" with purchase warrants.

The Board of Trustees went into "shock" at the end of the year to find a well-equipped school, but with little money left in our account in the County Treasury! The money was spent for what it was intended - the betterment of the education program for the children of the district. The Board determined not to have a repetition of this, and probably wouldn't have, inasmuch as we had most of the equipment and materials needed.

The second year was a constant battle, with the Board meeting in closed sessions (without me in attendance) and plotting my dismissal. The vast majority of the parents were pleased with the operation of the school and the progress made. They formed a "Citizens Committee" to oust the Board by recall. All three members resigned, as an overwhelming number of names on recall petitions were presented to the County Supt. of Schools, an elderly conservative who had done little to consolidate small two and three room schools within 2-3 miles of one another. The recall effort came to naught, when the County Supt. asked the resigning Trustees who they wanted to replace them! They, naturally, named three of their small group of supporters who would, by law, serve a specified period of time before recall. I didn't think the harassment could intensify, but it did. Time for a departure from the Public School scene. It was, however, an experience not obtainable in any graduate studies program.

Noting an article in a San Francisco newspaper that the U.S. Army Dependents' Schools were interviewing personnel for their schools in Europe, I was interviewed, and assigned as a Teaching-Principal of an Army elementary school in Metz, France. It was an experience unlike anything in public schools at home. Army Dependents' Schools Hq. Staff selected your faculty, and the Base Commander provided logistical support. Even under trying conditions everyone was cooperative. Our school building was a World War I barracks in an ancient French Caserne (military post) turned over to the American NATO forces. The post was so antiquated, it had to almost be rebuilt by the U.S. Army. Each of our classrooms had their own coal stove! My classroom was not large enough for all of my 7th and 8th graders, so the Post Engineers put a large archway between our room and the one adjacent to us! When the French turn something over to anyone, it has to be unwanted!

We lived "on the economy" in a small apt. in a village outside of Metz. No central heat, so we purchased a kerosene heater and checked out a coal stove from the Army. We had no furniture, so checked-out U.S. Army steel cots! Our bathroom door that exited to the outside was frozen shut all winter! Our landlord had been personal secretary to Robert Schuman, former Premier of France, and author of the Schuman Plan following WW II. We were thrilled when Rene and Adelaide Lejune asked us to meet him.



Mr. Herman Search, Superintendent of Secondary Schools and Mr. Ralph Stutzman, Regional Superintendent of DSD schools in France.



OUR HOME IN FRANCE



Adelaide Lejune, Robert Schuman, Helen Gassy, France 1954

In May of our first year overseas, our first son, Neil was delivered at the U.S. Army Hospital in Landstuhl, Germany and I was promoted to Asst. Principal of Kaiserslautern American High School in Germany, the land of hot water and steam heat! Our apt. was completely furnished including linen, China, crystal glasses and furniture.

Here we enjoyed two years with an excellent school and staff, many with whom I still correspond - 35 years later! At the end of my first year I was offered the high school principalship at a newly built school in Baumholder, Germany, and quickly accepted. Prior to returning to the U.S. for re-employment leave, the Supt. of Secondary Schools,

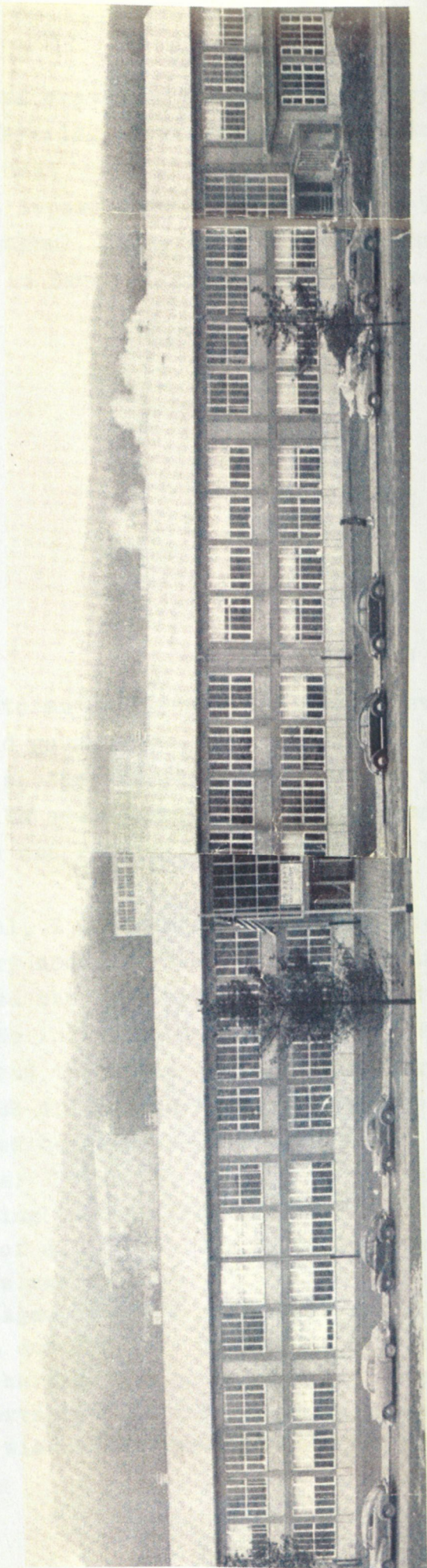
Mr. Herman Search, informed me that I could not be assigned as Principal of a high school because I didn't have a Masters Degree, as required by the North Central Assn. of Secondary Schools, who accredited the U. S. Army Dependents' High Schools. Our Chief of Secondary Schools informed me that I had more graduate credits in Education than he, I had by-passed the M.A. to work toward a Doctorate in Education, completing all of the course work, but lacking a residence requirement. I was disappointed, but not unhappy to spend another year in Kaiserslautern.

While home, I met with my Doctoral program adviser and through him, the University of the Pacific allowed me to write a thesis, take a written exam and qualify for the Masters Degree. I returned to my job in Kaiserslautern, spent many hours on research and eventually received my degree.

Kaiserslautern American Dependents School

During the 1955-56 school year, the Dependents' Schools divided into Air Force Schools and the already existing Army Schools. The Chief of Secondary Schools for the Army became Asst. Supt. for the Air Force Schools in Europe and the Near East. He had originally recruited me for the position in France, and offered me a Principalship of a new elementary and secondary school in Izmir, Turkey. The assurance of having my own school prompted me to accept and transfer to the Air Force, a decision that I would later question, but another promotion, and with these stated experiences I will begin to answer the original questions: "Why did you start a private school?", and "Why in Las Vegas?"

While our housing in Izmir was good, it was not up to Army housing standards in Germany. Our school building, acquired from the Navy, was a converted warehouse! With renovations, it was adequate for our small enrollment. Again, we had a work-hard-play-harder staff.



The Air Force Schools were expanding at bases in Turkey, and at the end of the year, Dick Meyering, Asst. Supt. of the Air Force Schools recommended to the Supt. that I be assigned to a new school in Ankara, Turkey and to be Supervising Principal of the Turkey Complex, with schools in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and Adana, and small schools on the island of Crete and in Daharan, Saudi Arabia. I accepted, and we moved to Ankara.

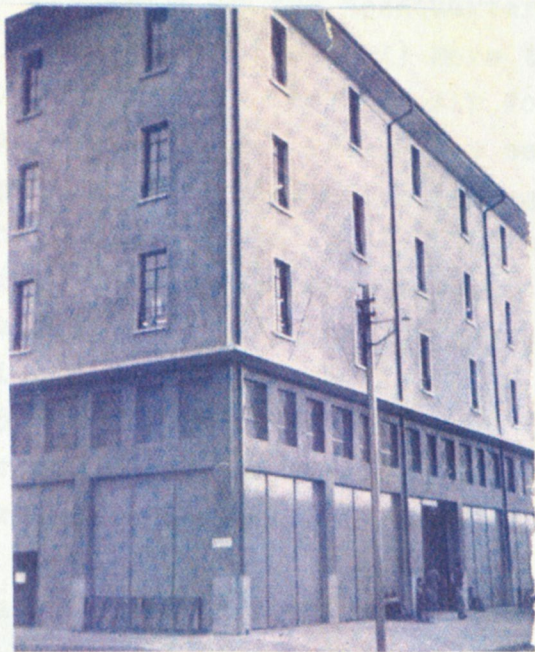
Izmir Dependents School

Ankara Dependents School

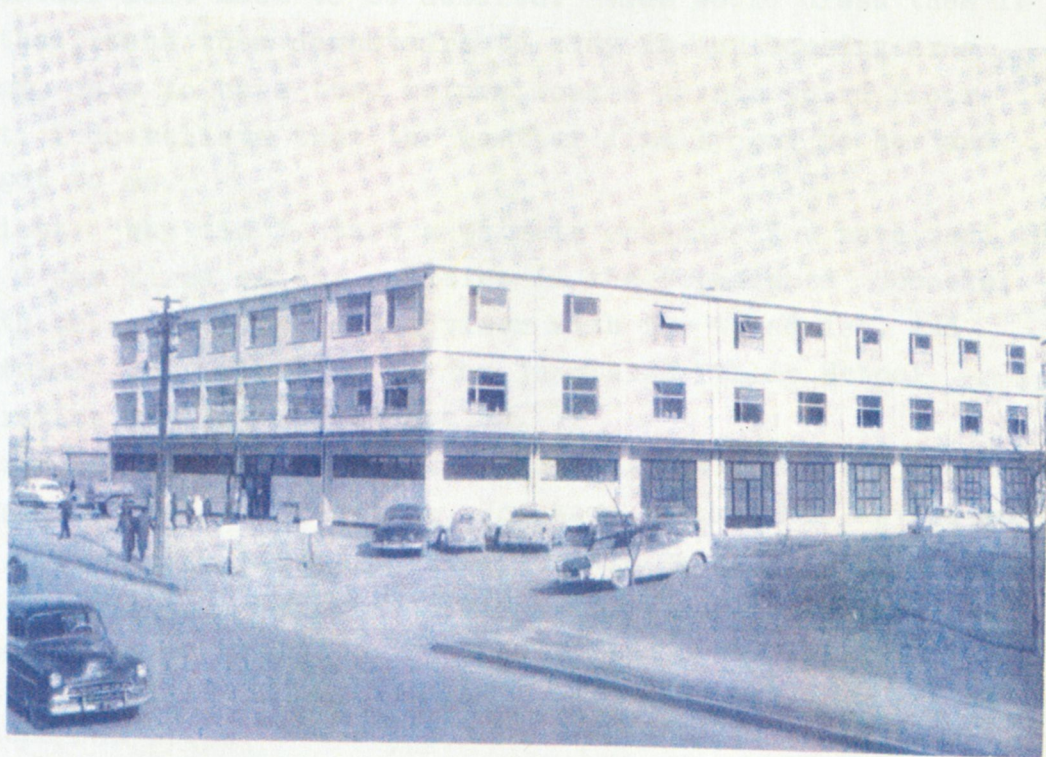
Here again, we moved into an unfinished building, previously a large automobile agency and garage, two story building, with another floor being added. It was another first year operation, requiring long days of hard work, with administrators, teachers and Air Force personnel moving furniture and setting up rooms to meet the deadline of opening day.

As Supervising Principal, I was supposed to have a high school principal and an elementary school principal. At an administrators conference in Rome, I asked the Asst. Supt. when I would be sent a high school principal. He indicated that he and the Supt. had discussed this situation and the Supt. had replied: "You think he's so good, let's let him sink-or-swim on this one!" It seemed that a personality clash existed between the Supt. and Asst. Supt. and I was caught in the middle! To add to the situation, the Supt. had brought in his former typing teacher from the States and made her a "traveling supervisor" of all of the Air Force Schools under his administration. Storm warnings ahead!

My objections to shortages of texts and teachers, and was told we were at the end of the supply line. Our sewing machines in Home Economics were parachute harness sewing machines! I encouraged our PTA to raise funds for texts needed, and we had them sent from the States before our Hq. in Wiesbaden, Germany could get them to us!



Izmir Dependents School



Ankara Dependents School

By this action I brought discredit to our Headquarters (in the eyes of my female supervisor - the typing teacher!) More trouble ahead!

Our third and last son was born in the U.S. Air Force hospital in Ankara, Turkey during our second year - Frank, our second Turk!

It would take a 300 page book to relate the "goings-on" during the 2½ years I was on-the-job in Ankara. Again, the positive side prevailed with good students and a strong supportive staff. However, I could easily see I would be left in Ankara forever, so looked for other avenues in education with the military.

In the middle of my 3rd year, an offer came from the Troop Education Program in Germany for a position as Education Adviser for an Army Artillery Group. I accepted, and got "out of the kitchen" and the heat!

Troop Education was a slow, uninspiring existence that any 90 year old educator could handle! A boring job so unrewarding that you felt as if you were being paid to do little or nothing! I missed working with young people.

At the same time our three boys were 6-4-2 years of age and the German weather left much to be desired. Helen would dress them in snow clothes, send them downstairs to play in our housing area playground, only to have them return soaked to our third floor apartment. I do believe that the weather finally got to her and the job got to me.

Questions: "Why did I start a private school?" You have read the answers. I was tired of the politics in the Dependents' Schools; bored with being an Education Adviser with few to advise, and most certainly not returning to the jungle of Public School Administration and Lay School Boards.

A friend and teacher on my staff in California where I was learning the pitfalls of public education. Joe Ward returned to Nevada and protege of Sen. Alan Bible, working for him in Washington while attending Law School. After graduation, Joe eventually found his way to Las Vegas to practise. We corresponded and discussed the possibility of starting a private school there. The area was growing rapidly and Joe wrote: " I don't know what I'll be doing 20 years from now, but I know where I'll be, in Las Vegas!"

Las Vegas interested us young, growing, an exciting city, and with no private school. Actually there were no non-denominational, non-sectarian private schools in the State.

We sent Joe money to place advertisements in the two Las Vegas newspapers stating that a private school was to open in Sept. and interested parents of Kindergarten, first and second youngsters could obtain further information by writing the papers. About 20 people expressed an interest in such a school, so I resigned my Education Adviser position and made plans to return to the USA and Las Vegas.

You now have the answer to the second question: "Why Las Vegas?" After eight years of exciting, different living in three foreign countries, and traveling extensively in Europe and the Near East, we had to settle in a city that was exciting and different from Sacramento and Stockton, where we had resided prior to going overseas. We have never been disappointed. Friend Joe Ward, is still in Las Vegas, having served as U.S. Magistrate and continues as a practising attorney.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

The military unknowingly assisted me in laying a foundation for the proposed private school, by not allowing concurrent travel for me and my dependents home to the U.S. due to a back-log of military personnel and lack of space on all transportation to the States. They did allow Helen and the boys to remain in government housing and use Army facilities. It was a fortunate happening, as it allowed me to return home, knowing that my family were provided for, and to give me the freedom to do the groundwork necessary.

The first order of business upon my return, was to get to Las Vegas, determine the requirements by the State Department of Education and the Clark County Child Welfare Board (governing pre-school) for establishing a private school. (Not easy, considering we were the first!) Parochial schools are exempt from Dept. of Education requirements.

Applying for teaching and administrative credentials, I found I needed a course in Nevada School Law. This, fortunately, could be accomplished through the correspondence course division at UNR. UNLV was still an infant in higher education in Nevada. The people in the Extension Division in Reno listened to my problem and as I was racing against time, allowed me to send in lessons as rapidly as I completed them and not follow the usual one-at-a-time procedure. I completed the course in a short period of time, took the LTR (Las Vegas-Tonopah-Reno) bus to Reno overnight, took the written test in the early morning, and returned on the overnight bus to Las Vegas.

Southern Nevada had a State Dept. of Education office, headed by Roxie Copenhaver, the Deputy Supt. of Public Instruction. I shall be ever grateful for her understanding, assistance and belief in our educational philosophy and future plans.

Joe and Evelyn Ward were kind enough to let me stay with them until I could find housing. Joe represented me in a meeting with the Child Welfare Board. Now Chief Justice of the Nevada Supreme Court, Al Gunderson, represented the board. Joe was successful in obtaining the boards approval. Our facility, soon to be obtained, would necessarily need inspection.

Finding a suitable existing facility, with less-than-great financial resources wasn't easy. While searching for a home for

my soon-to-arrive family, I chanced upon Ortiz Realty. Florence Ortiz and one of her employees, Shelia Strusser, listened to my dreams about starting my own school, and together with Dr. Heinz Rettig came up with a temporary answer. The Unitarian Fellowship had a building (house) that could, to get off the ground, meet our needs. We rented two rooms from them with Helen in one small room with a combined pre-school and Kindergarten of ten students, and I in a large meeting room with seven first and second graders. Three of the 17 were "free loaders" (our own boys!) We actually hadn't planned on a pre-school, but our youngest son, Frank was of that age and we couldn't afford the expense of a baby-sitter! Middle son Jack was kindergarten age and first-born son Neil a second grader.

Neil had attended German school for two years in Ankara, Turkey at the German Embassy School, and in Heilbronn, Germany in the German Public School. This created a small problem when I began teaching him as a second grader. His German reading and writing were quite good, but, he had to begin in pre-primers, primers, etc. and to be tutored at home to develop his skills in reading English. With an "all work, no play" experience in German schools, he learned rapidly.



Student Body - 1961



Playground



Unitarian Fellowship Bldg. 9.

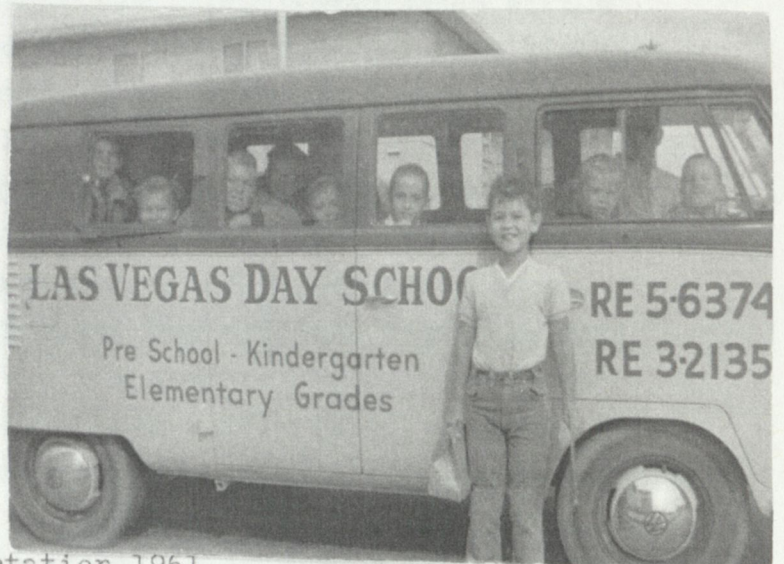
For penmanship, I had purchased, before leaving Germany, writing slates and slate pencils, used throughout European schools in the primary grades. An excellent learning tool, and one all of the students enjoyed using, unless their writing wasn't up-to-standard, and then it was erased with a damp sponge!

The 3-R's program was our goal, utilizing materials and workbooks to allow students to progress at their own performance level. With so few students, it wasn't difficult to achieve success.

In addition to teaching, driving one of our two buses and taking care of our "brood", Helen was busy taking classes at the newly established Nevada Southern University (UNLV) to obtain her elementary teaching credential. Prior to our move overseas, she was a girls physical education teacher at Stockton, Calif. High School.



Bus driver - Helen



Bus driver - Jack

Transportation 1961

Word spread slowly and enrollment increased, also slowly. The concept of private school education was slow to catch on, but at least we were in existence and growing. My original plans were to have pre-school, Kindergarten and grades 1 and 2, each year adding another class until we were pre-school through eighth grade. This plan went by the wayside, when, in the middle of the first year two parents practically "begged" me to take their 4th and 6th grade students. I explained to them that I would provide their youngsters with appropriate grade level materials and work with them as closely as time allowed, but that my primary responsibilities were with the first and second graders. I thus, found myself with a new educational experience - a one room school!

Early in the year, the Deputy State Dept. of Education, Roxie Copenhaver, made the first of many visits to our school, and indicated Helen could not have the pre-school and kindergarten together. With this, we were forced to rent another room from the Unitarians, and hire a pre-school teacher.

We hired Peggy Snodgrass (Hamel) who, though under-paid, made more than we in the beginning! She was a natural for this age level child, and prepared them well for kindergarten. Peggy stayed with us for years, taking time off to have Charla Beth, who later graduated from our school.

A word about Roxie Copenhaver - during our first year she spent hours observing our classes. I always felt relaxed under her supervision. She confided to me, after our school was firmly established with a good reputation, that she worried about giving us a one year license. Even as our school grew, she continued to visit and I somehow felt she was a part of this venture. Roxie was, and is, a great human-being, and until her retirement enjoyed talking about the early days.

Our daily routine went something like this: Hop into our two buses and pick up students from all over the valley. Teach our classes, and prior to taking our "charges" home, mop and dust the rooms and clean the portable blackboards, bus the students home, have dinner and collapse. Fortunately, we didn't have a TV! Friday evenings we had to return the Unitarian rooms to their original arrangement. Sunday evening we returned to "school" to clean-up, move the Unitarians furniture behind a screen and arrange the classroom desks for school the next day.

Our desks were purchased "surplus" from the Clark County School District for \$2.50 each. As a new student enrolled he/she was asked what color was desired for their desk. I would then sand-down and paint the desk the requested color. A colorful classroom indeed! We still utilize one classroom with these desks - 27 years later. They have been re-worked many times and of course are now all one color.

Under current Highway Patrol requirements, we wouldn't have been allowed to us the VW buses, but we were the first private school using transportation and fortunately were never checked. We did keep our buses in top running condition, thanks to the Myers Bros., George and Wilford and their mechanics. We had only one accident, when a car ran a stop sign at Desert Inn and Maryland Parkway, and Helen, trying to avoid him, slightly damaged our bus. Myers

Brothers worked overtime to keep it running. Desert Inn and Maryland Parkway was open desert at that time, with newly opened Sunrise Hospital just north of this point.

At the Unitarian Fellowship building we were required by the Fire Department to provide another exit from the new pre-school room. They were most understanding on an alarm system, allowing us to have bells operated from a battery by hand. The Health Department said we needed a flag pole on the building. The Health Dept? Finally, the police officer assigned to the Child Welfare Board required us to fence-in our tiny, always supervised play area as he found "spoor" evidence that a dog had been in the area!

The school year ended with a total enrollment of 31 students. Far beyond our expectations. We advertised a remedial/enrichment summer session, expecting about 35 enrollees. Over 90 students signed up. The reason for the large number of students was not our famous reputation, but that summer the Clark County School District didn't operate summer sessions - another stroke of luck.

The emergency call went out! Brother-in-law Mel Anglen, an English teacher in California, and a long-time friend, Frank Potvin, who I worked with in Turkey and who was teaching in the Dependents' School at the Marine Base in Quantico, Virginia were contacted and agreed to teach the 6 week summer session. Little did they know what they were getting into - double sessions, transportation of students and complete exhaustion at the end of the day.

The "moment of truth" came when Quentin Wright, my elementary principal in Izmir, Turkey and at that time Supt. of the U.S. Navy Schools in Rota, Spain, called from Berkeley, Calif. where he was doing summer graduate work, and offered me the high school principal's position in Rota, Spain. A lovely area, but the high enrollment for summer session stimulated me to refuse and continue with our dream. A difficult decision indeed.

We had been continually searching for an existing structure that could serve as a school. The only buildings capable of handling an enrollment of 100 or less were zoned for horses, or were on busy streets with no play area. Once more we were at a dead-end.

As has so happened to us throughout our lives, "someone up-there was looking after us!" One evening when dropping off two of our "plank owners", Rhea Ann and Billy Covey, their parents inquired about the future of the Day School. I briefed them on our lack of success

in finding a facility. They were obviously extremely pleased with their childrens progress and offered to "subordinate" five acres of land at W. Desert Inn and Jones Blvd. For the uninitiated, to subordinate land is to give you title for purposes of obtaining a loan, with the owner holding first mortgage. I found the approximate location, drove my students home and concluded it wasn't too far out - even though it was all desert, with the nearest dwelling a mile or so down the road. No water, an existing well that needed deepening, and no power.

In the meantime, summer session wound down and my two "volunteer" teachers refused a salary, taking only expenses, so that we might have something to add to our small building fund. My parents had loaned us \$5,000, my brother Bill, a Veterinarian in California put his recently paid-off home in "hock" and sent us \$10,000. Former Navy Flight School classmate, and name-sake for son Neil, Neil Barry sent us \$2,000. This, with what savings we had, and a loan from Nevada State Bank with the property as collateral, got the project out of the "talking" and into the "planning" stage.

Almost life-long friend, Frank Fenley, then Supt. of Schools in Cupertino, Calif. entered the picture. He enlisted the services of an architect whose office did nothing but schools, and plans for a four room school were drawn-up. Frank also put me in touch with Kaiser Aluminum in Oakland, Calif. They had developed an outside wall panel with aluminum on both sides, and were anxious to introduce it to Western builders. Through Frank's influence, we were offered the material at cost, in exchange for using the in their publicity.

Plans were filed and approval slow to arrive. It seems the Health Dept. wanted a larger septic tank, and were holding approval until a new plan was submitted. My first experience with Las Vegas "juice" without paying someone "under the table", a practise I never will or have used, came when State Assemblyman George Harmon, whose daughter was enrolled in our school, asked when the building would be started. I told him the story and within hours our contractor contacted me to say: "We have the green light, construction begins tomorrow!" You now see that politicians can do good things for the public!

With no power lines in our immediate area, we were forced to rent a huge generator, to construct the four rooms and office and to serve as a power source once the school opened.



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"It's who you know!" Whoever coined that phrase was well experienced in life. The Nevada Power Company just happened to employ a relative of Carl Brown, one of our parents. Contact was made, and because we were a school, poles suddenly came down the road from the nearest power line, and we were in business. Not, however, before we (our janitor neglected to check the oil) burned out a \$5,000 generator!

Having our own well kept our costs for District Water (not available) down, but problems constantly arose with the pump and water level. It was another year before water lines came down our street, and with our pump bringing up sand with the water, we welcomed the new source of water.

An attractive new 4 room school rose up from the desert. Problems still existed, but we were underway. Our contractor went "over" the estimated cost by \$5,000 and we had exhausted all of our sources for borrowing! In the midst of this problem, Helen was contacted by an attorney in Denver and notified that she had been included in the will of Anna G. Derry, an old family friend that had taken a liking to a little girl - Helen! The legacy was of the amount that, used as collateral, money was borrowed and the bill paid. Someone up there was looking after us! Helen's parents had this painting of Mrs. Derry done from a 1938 newspaper clipping. We later named our school library the Anna G. Derry Memorial Library.

insert
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photos
+
Kaiser

Our first year in our own new building brought us 97 students, mostly in the lower grades, but with enough other students for a combination class of 4th, 5th, and 6th grade. We added our present Kindergarten building during the middle of the first year, and had enough students to almost fill the new classroom. The pre-school utilized the facility in the morning, and the Kindergarten used it in the afternoon.

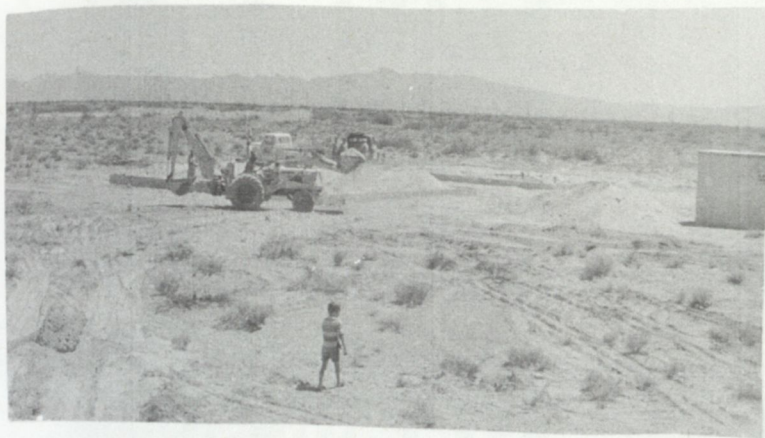
Our first school year ended with a total enrollment of 130 students. This increase together with many applications for the next school year encouraged us to add four additional classrooms, a science room and three other rooms.

Anna G. Derry
Portrait in School Library



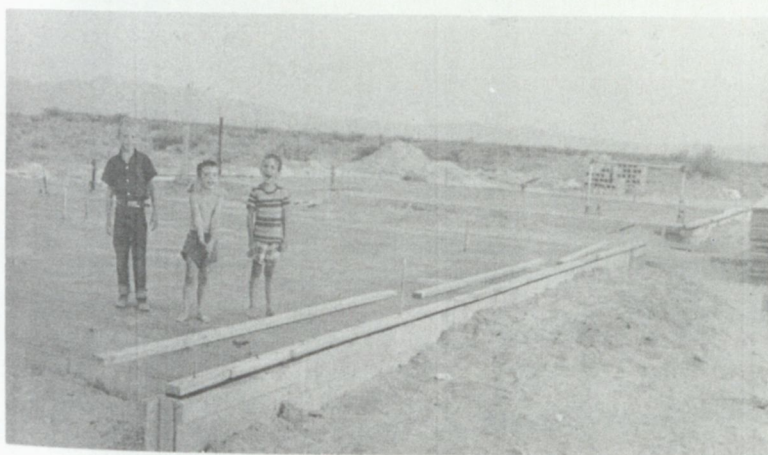
Early School Scenes

*Insert
on pg. 18*



"Ground-breaking"

Checking the foundation.
Neil Daseler



All three check the first
pad poured. Left to right:
Neil, Frank, Jack. 1961

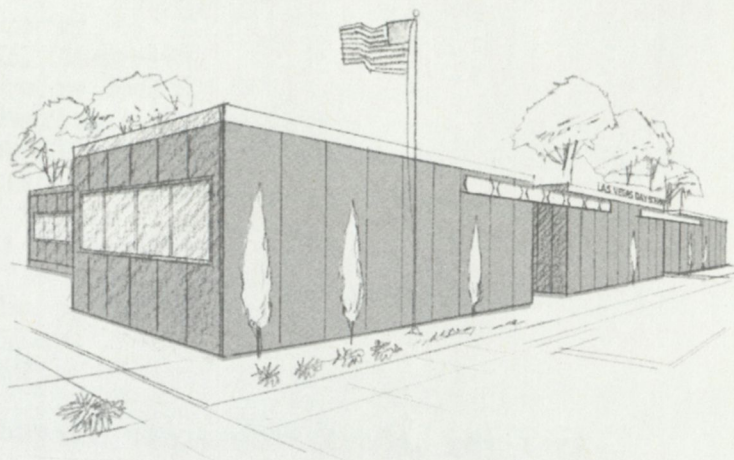
The kindergarten goes
up. Note the Kaiser
Aluminum wall panels.



Kal-Bond panel

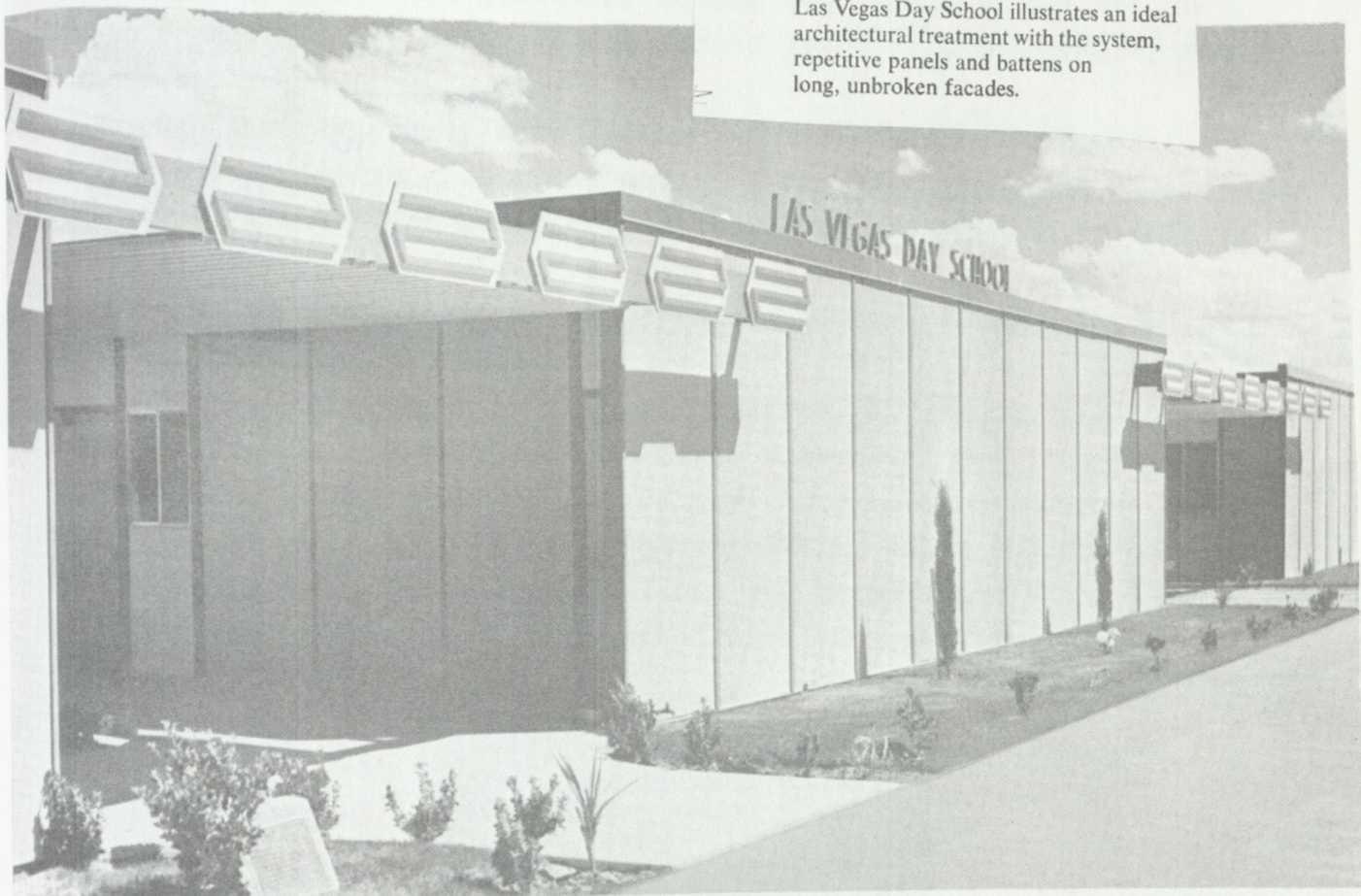
A prefinished exterior aluminum-plywood panel for exterior walls and decorative panel applications

KAISER
ALUMINUM



Schools

Las Vegas Day School illustrates an ideal architectural treatment with the system, repetitive panels and battens on long, unbroken facades.



Las Vegas Day School illustrates contemporary modular appearance of KAL-BOND Panels and batten accent.

YOUNG & DAVIDSON, ARCHITECTS
AND ENGINEERS, SAN JOSE, CALIF.

Nationally distributed Kaiser Aluminum panel
publication - first building west of the
Mississippi constructed with this
material. 1962

The dedication of our building took place in the middle of our first year in our new school. The building was dedicated to my parents, William C. and Maude L. Daseler. The plaque reads:

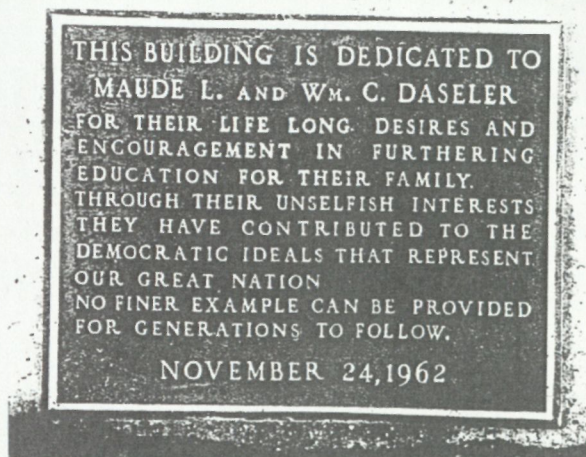
This building is dedicated to Maude L. and William C. Daseler for their life long desire and encouragement in furthering education for their family. Through their unselfish interests they have contributed to the democratic ideals that represent our great nation. No finer example can be provided for generations to follow.

November 24, 1962

Neither of my parents progressed beyond the eighth grade, yet they did without many things so that they might assist their children in achieving their academic goals. My mother was a housekeeper who knew how to economize. My father worked for 50 years as a boilermaker for various railroads.

Through their support, together with all of the children working summers and part-time during the school year, brother Edward earned degrees in Pharmacy and Medicine; brother Bill a degree in Veterinary Medicine; myself degrees in Education, as did our sister Faye. In our home town of Oroville, California, old-timers, even today refer to the "Daseler miracle."

The dedication program had as it's speaker, life-long friend, Frank Fenley, then Superintendent of the Cupertino, Calif. School District, and having grown-up in the same neighborhood in Oroville, California and knowing both of my parents well, was a superb choice for the dedication of the school. About 100 parents and students witnessed the program which culminated with the unveiling of the plaque



Reduce photo

Standing: Jack E. Daseler, Helen J. Daseler, Frank O. Fenley

Seated: William C. Daseler, Maude L. Daseler Nov. 24, 1962





In our third year, second in our own school location, we had a total of three buildings: a large Kindergarten/Pre-School room, four classrooms for grades 1-4, and 4 classrooms for grades 5-8, with a departmentalized program.



Las Vegas Day School 1963 with bus fleet.

Landscaping was a never-ending job, with son Neil and I working on week-ends, digging irrigation ditches and planting trees and shrubs. Watering our meager lawns was a steady job for all, as we couldn't afford a sprinkler system, which meant the hose and sprinkler had to be moved constantly. We only had planted grass in the front of the school and our play area in the back was desert cleared land with the rocks raked off regularly.



Mitchel Posin looks for more eggs - 1963



Jenny Weber (Cooter) Easter Egg hunt - 1963

Left: On the lunch bench Hellorado 1963

Most of the inquiring parents or possible teachers coming for interviews couldn't believe I was the Director/Owner of the school judging from my workmans attire! This is one part of owning your own school that never ends. It has slowed down a bit in recent years, but, then again, so have I!

One needn't guess where and why we chose the scorpion as our school emblem/mascot. During the first years in our new school, they were still around. After all, we were intruding on their home ground! Needless to say, the students were warned to stay clear of them. Our athletic teams are still known as the "Scorpions" and our new gymnasium proudly displays "Las Vegas Day School-Scorpions" on a newly painted wall.

Our enrollment continued to climb, and in the summer of our third year on the Jones, D.I. campus, we constructed what was to be our final building for some time. Future investments were to go into tables and seating for the eating area. Covering the area to ward off the sun. Sod-laying on the football field together with sprinkler systems all around, and additional black-top poured to add outdoor basketball and volleyball facilities. Within the school, replacement of furniture and adding equipment took place.

Classes in the lower grades (pre-school thru 4th) were basically full, and the upper grades continued to grow. Our first graduation, in 1964 had six students receiving their diplomas.



Las Vegas Day School - First
Graduation - 1964

To illustrate our growth during these beginning years, the following years upped the number of grads to 10 and in the fourth year to 16. Summer sessions continued to bring in students, not just for the summer, but for our regular school year. Parents were seeing the benefits of a "working" school. Advertising became

more of a "word-of-mouth" program, and summer sessions, so necessary for survival was the best-seller for our program.

For the first seven years, we lived at our home on S. 17th St. commuting first to the Unitarian Fellowship Building on Bond Road (Tropicana to you newcomers), and then to our new building on "the fringe of the desert" for the following six years. Our fencing of the school in the beginning was minimum, but eventually, we had the 5 acres completely fenced. Prior to this time, the front of the school was only gated with entrances closed. Without a real perimeter fence, we only had "discriminate" stealing. Ron Bartlett, one of our first custodians, noticed small shrubs we had planted disappear. He asked me where I had transplanted them. From this question, with a negative reply, we decided that someone was digging up one plant a night to landscape his house! I hope his matured as well as ours!

One of the other thefts was an old college "trick". Fraternity boys from UNLV climbed our fence and made off with our old symbolic school bell. One of our former students, while attending UNLV, told me where our bell rested. In the meantime, we had found another in Arizona, and our son's imbedded the chain to the bell in 200 lbs of concrete to defy the next intruder. It still stands, and is to me symbolic of our initial school philosophy - the 3R's.

Las Vegas Day School Bell

We had inquired with the owner of the 5 acre parcel north of the school, about the possibility of purchasing an adjoining one acre upon which to construct our future home. We met with little success, until the owner became involved in a financial matter that required additional funds. He contacted us, and offered to sell us not one acre, but five! Opportunity knocks but once, and as with everything in our life, something good happened.

With the acquisition of the adjoining 5 acres of land north of the school, we began plans to build our home next to the school. While this added much to our feeling of security, it put the school next to the business, but, with our teaching and working schedule, it was a good move. I had always said: "Our school is my vocation and my avocation!" This philosophy continues with my retirement, as all three sons, and of course mother, not only teach, but spend many hours keeping the school looking the way a school should look!

One parent, upon investigating private educational facilities in the area, commented: "This is the first place that really looks like a school!" This helps one's morale after working as one must, to maintain a school dependent only upon tuition and not existing on donations and grants such as used by non-profit institutions. I had elected when founding the Day School, not to have anyone, other than family members determine the direction we would take. Benefits such as non-profit organizations have, i.e. no taxes; write-off's for gifts; etc. all have cost us much money throughout the 27 years of our existence, but, the "peace of mind", of knowing you control the destiny of your school is worth all of the money sent to governmental agencies.

Living next door to the school slowed down, but didn't stop theft. When gas prices increased, so did theft of gas from buses increase. It was next to impossible to combat this activity, and only placing a full-time security guard in the bus area would stop pilfering, but the cost against the loss factor always gives you a hint as to what decision to make.

While not being "non-profit", for many years we managed to remain in that status without actually being incorporated as such! Kirk Kirkorian, whose daughter, Tracy was in my second grade class, offered to build tennis courts for the school. We decided to build a larger-than-average swimming pool rather than tennis courts, as the pool would accommodate far more students than 3 tennis courts. Kirk gave us a check for \$3,000 to pay for half of the pool construction. He would have paid for it all had we been non-profit!

Another "doner" was Tona Cashman Siefert, who provided our first basketball teams with uniforms, and we didn't have to have "Cashman Cadillac" on the backs! We were the best-dressed team in the league, but usually at the bottom in the standings!

An old Chinese proverb says: " One picture is worth 1,000 words!"
These photos will illustrate this saying.



"Just starting"



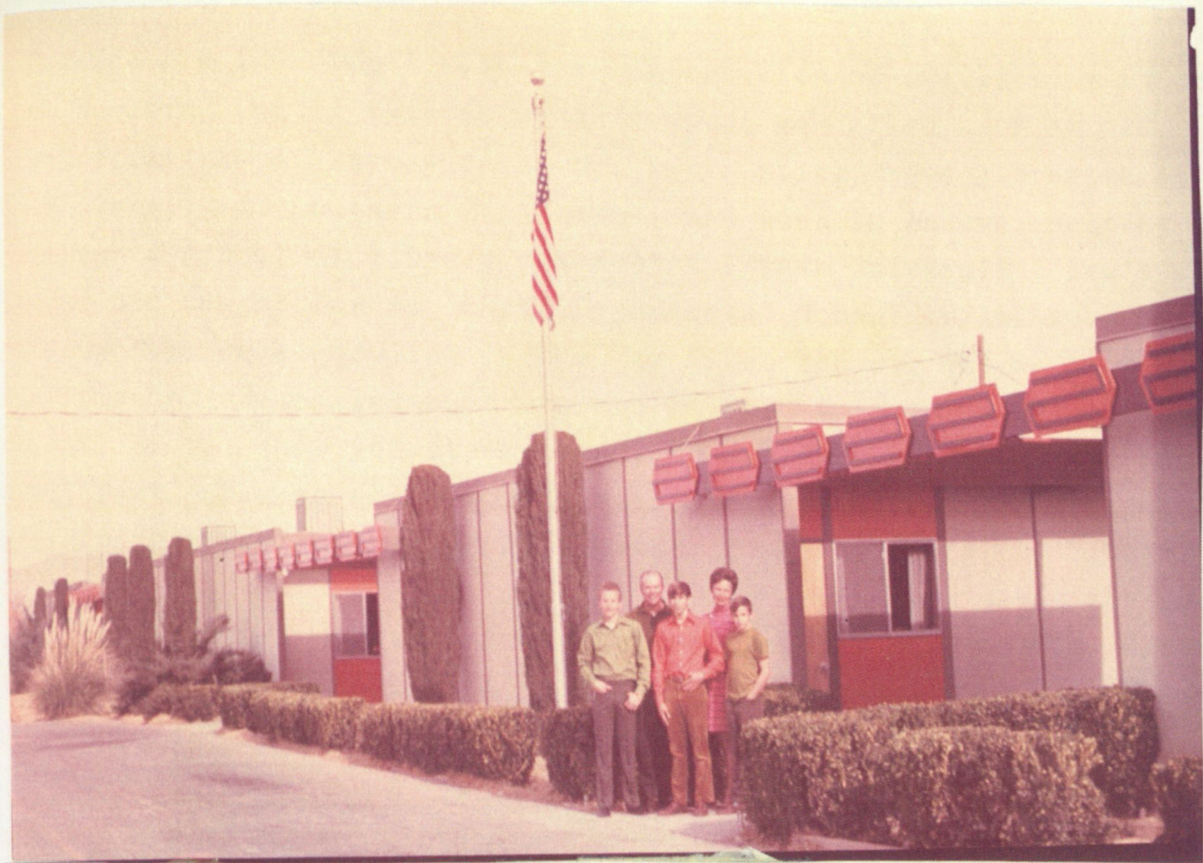
1964



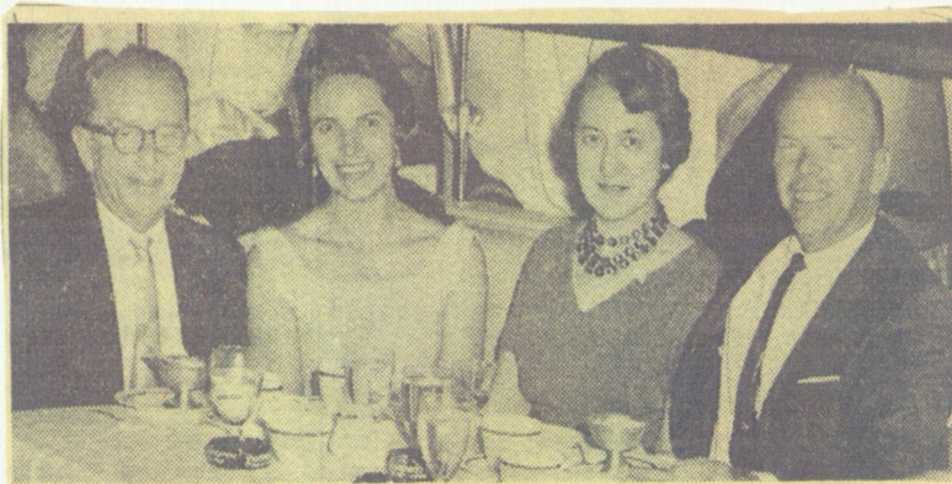
"older"



School 1969



Friends are important! With the construction of our library in the final building (until Neil assumed command) we called upon an old friend from Ankara, Turkey days. Dr. Lewis Stieg, head librarian at the University of Southern California, had been in Ankara, helping to establish a school of library science at Ankara University. Lew's wife, Mildred had taught for me in the Dependents' School in Ankara. Their two daughters were enrolled in the Air Force School, and we became good friends. We called upon Lew and Mildred to help us set-up our school library. They volunteered and, as would be expected, did a magnificent job. We all labored until the late hours of the night, cataloguing books and making file cards. It got a fledgling library off to the right start - what school anywhere can boast that the head librarian from a major university helped them get started? We were deeply indebted to them.



ENTERTAIN — Mr. and Mrs. Jack E. Daseler, owners of the Las Vegas Day School hosted Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Stieg, of Los Angeles here recently. The doctor is librarian at USC and is serving as consultant librarian at the Day School.

Extra-curricular activities: Sports, primarily basketball, cheerleaders, of course, was for some time our only "out of class" activity. We did have, and will later continue with this, field trips that we felt were worthwhile. These have continued to the present time, but are not as adventurous as some previously taken.

The "Las Vegas Sun" billed us as the youngest team in the city. We played in a 6th grade league in the city and had no 6th graders! In one game we were fortunate enough to win, the opposing coach said he would protest the win as we had no 6th grade players on our team! Members were: Jeff Roen, David Rosen, Danny Greenspun, Neil Daseler, Johnny Lane, William Smith, Jo Jo Kasprsak, Jerry McGowen, Hal Peterson, and Ricky Carlson.

As our school grew in size, so did our extra-curricular program. We participated not only in sports, but in food drives for the needy, and clothing drives for charitable institutions.

Still too small in enrollment to compete with public schools in Las Vegas, we ventured out into the "cow counties" and soon established a relationship that would last for years (until a B-Ball dynasty) was established by son Neil and a group of dedicated players. Winning in tournaments in Tonopah, Pahrump, Austin and Alamo, soon eliminated our "Scorpions" from the invited list! This paved the way for participation in for several years, the Potosky League (boys and girls club), and more recently, in a league composed of Parochial and Private Schools. Here, the emphasis is upon participation by both boys and girls, with mixed teams competing.

Our earlier years competition in the rural counties, was more than a game, but an opportunity to see how people, other than in L.V. or Reno live. We visited historic sites coming and going to games, seeing reminders of Nevada's past. On one such visit to Austin, Douglas Tueller, told of the role his grandfather, Judge ^{John} Sexton, played in the early history of that area.

Here are some pictures of our early years basketball teams, and the one's that were from the "golden" years.



Coach Gayle Moots and our first 8th grade team.



Neil's Little Beasts
Neil a SENIOR at Gorman
Many of these 3rd/4th graders
played on Neil's Golden
Era teams 13.





Jeff Warrington, Daseler, Ted Dake, Jay Powell, Radie McNamee, Frank Armsworthy,
 Lee Siert, Jan Kilduff, Doug Teller, Matt Singleton, Coach
 Jack Daseler



Eddie Kopf, Robt. Beatty, Sam Boyd, Wade Wilson, Tom Bennett, Ag
 Alvin Hubert, Bill

Field Trips

We have always felt that education should be more than just classroom experiences. With our first graduation (6 students), I offered to take them camping at Lehman Caves. Two accepted and both of the young men were excellent fishermen, so we didn't do without dinner during our three day stay. This provided the background for what would be in many years ahead, the Nevada Trip. We would visit historic and scenic sites in Lincoln County, Lehman Park, Ely, Eureka, Austin, Fallon, Tonopah, Hawthorne, Genoa, Beatty and anything else that we passed. A great educational experience for the students and the chaperons.

One field trip that I set up, was a train trip from Las Vegas to Caliente. We would leave early in the morning, arrive in Caliente around 10 a.m. walk around the town (10 minutes!) play in the park, have our brown-bag lunch, play games and catch the train back to Las Vegas, arriving home at about 7 p.m. A unique experience for kids who often had never traveled on a train, even though they may have traveled in Europe or the Far East.

One of my most enjoyable experiences on field trips came when, Helen and I together with our very knowledgeable, science instructors, Rolf Pederson, took the 7th and 8th grade students camping to the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley and Mesa Verde in Colorado. Lee Siefert, son of Tona Cashman Siefert, was overawed with the Grand Canyon, even though he had lived in an Alpine area of Switzerland for several years.

One of the first chaperons who volunteered (?) was my father-in-law, Hollis Joy, a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, and with years of experience in mining that made him a "natural" for field trips in Nevada. The "Fox" as we called him, because of his silver hair, added greatly to the many field trips he accompanied. He and Lenore, my mother-in-law, also managed to make the trips to our basketball tournaments in Tonopah and Austin. Even though Hollis "the fox" complained long and loud about the noise that 7th/8th graders could make on a school bus, he always forgot about it and was around the following year to help with the trip!



Fox and
Foxess
Hollis & Lenore
Joy
Helen's parents



Titanium Visit 1967



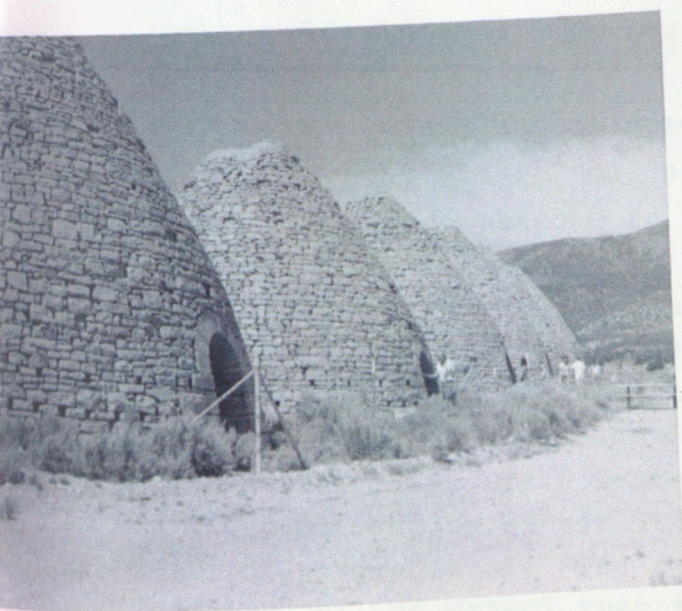
The Park 1974



Nevada Trip - Ely, Kennecott



Lehman Caves



Ward Charcoal Ovens



Ely, old Nev. Northern 27.

More National Coverage

While visiting my brother in Pomona, I commented, after watching Art Linkletter's House Party TV show, that we could provide possibly better participants than those that were shown. I, on an impulse, called the TV network headquarters in Los Angeles, and they "bought" the suggestion, and agreed to have two groups of youngsters participate; a young group of first and second graders, and a group of third and fourth grade pupils.

The younger group consisted of: Frank Henry, son of the legendary Hank Henry, "top-banana" in burlesque at the Silver Slipper; Shallon Ross, daughter of Frank Ross of the Mary Kaye Trio; Douglas Decker, whose father Larry, was President of Bonanza Airlines, and Faith Goffstein, daughter of Ben Goffstein, President of the Riveria Hotel.

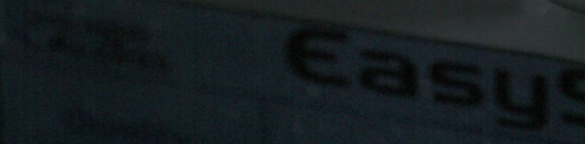
The second group; 3rd and 4th graders, were: Neil Daseler (as Art Linkletter commented: "I wonder why you were chosen?" Rhea Ann Covey, one of our first students and daughter of Bill and Hilda Covey, the wonderful people that "subordinated" the five acres our school stands upon. Danny Greenspun, son of Hank of the Las Vegas SUN, and Beth Kolburg, whose father, Wally, is an executive with Nevada Power Company.

They were an interesting cross-section of Las Vegas, and performed commendably on the program. We received several telephone calls following their appearance on T.V. from "long-lost" friends across the country, wanting to know if Neil Daseler was the son of Jack Daseler, who had previously lived in France, Germany and Turkey. A small world, indeed! The Las Vegas SUN ran a full-page report of the performance.

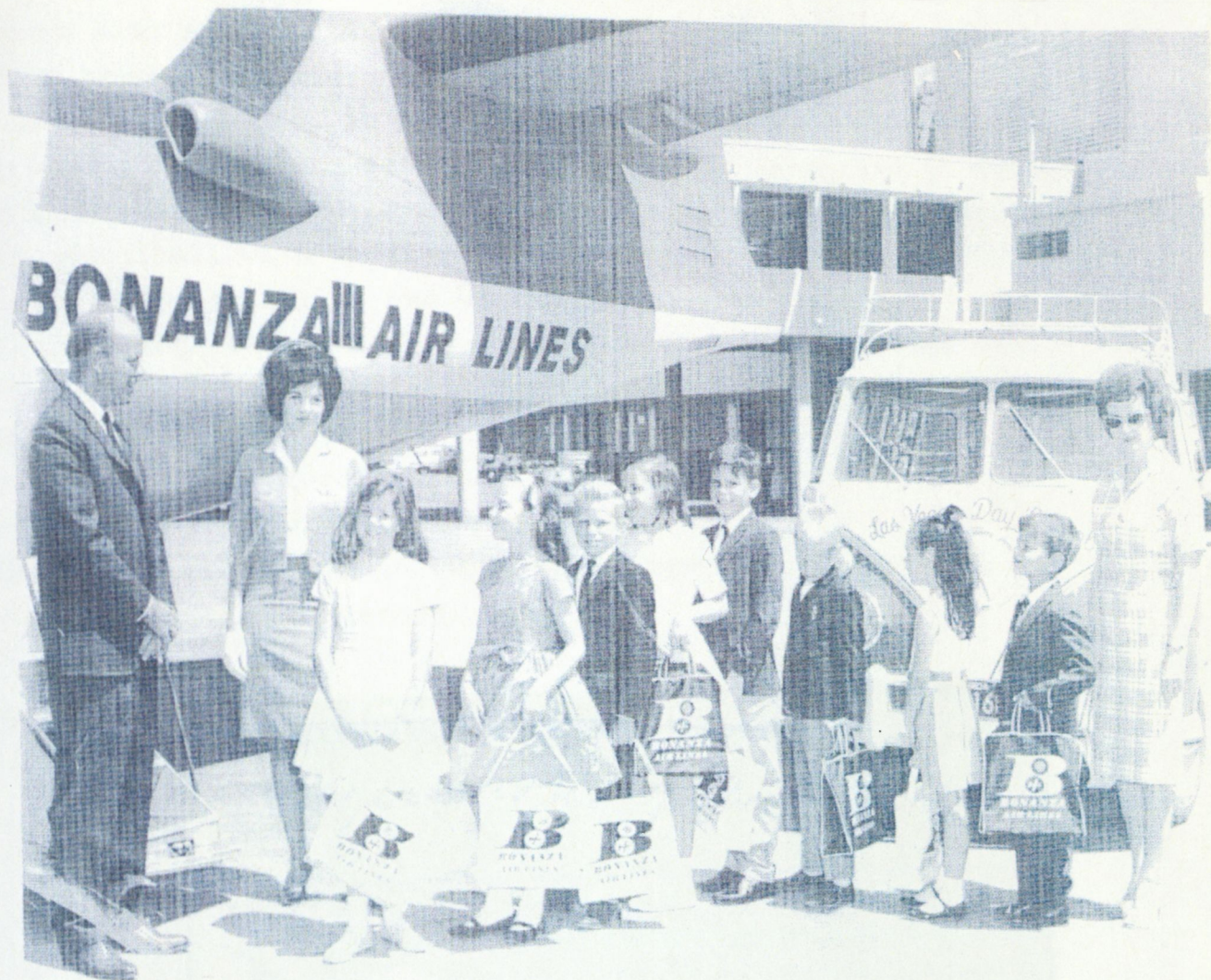
During our third year of operation, we hired a new third grade teacher - Dorothy Sutherland, a motherly lady and excellent teacher, whose son, unknown to us, was the prominent actor, Donald Sutherland.

An incident during our second year worth noting: As Director of the only private school in our state, I was asked to participate in a round-table panel discussion on education, public and private. It was at the West Charleston School. The then President of the PTA, prominent attorney, Drake DeLaney, Quizzed me following the meeting about our philosophy of education, and immediately enrolled his eldest daughter, Debbie (who later became our first honors graduate), At the end of the school year they enrolled Monica and Adrienne

Faint, illegible text covering the majority of the page, appearing to be a document or report.



their two younger daughters. As PTA President, Drake heard rumbles of impeachment!

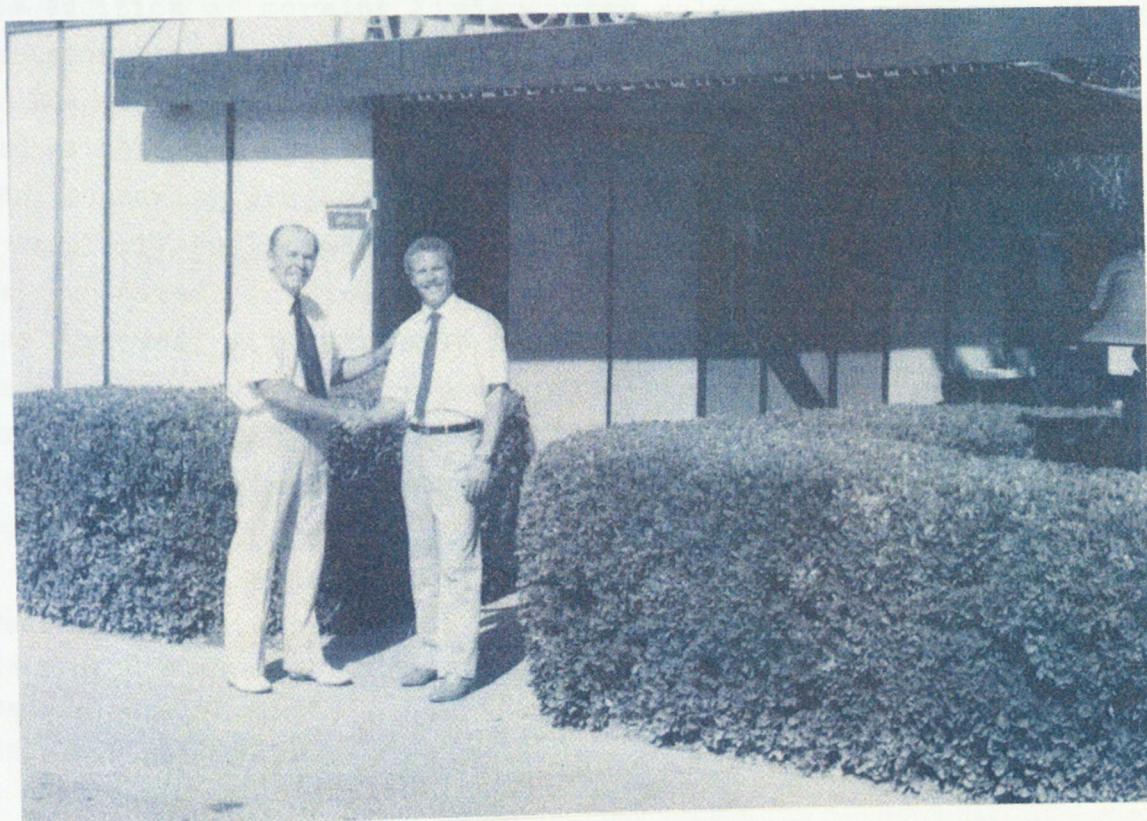


Off to L.A. - Director Jack Daseler, ~~our~~ stewardess, Shallon Ross, Beth Kolburg, Neil Daseler, Rhea Covey, Danny Greenspun, Douglas Decker, Faith Goffstein, Frank Henry and Mrs. Larry Decker

Transition Time

As previously noted, our eldest son, Neil, was involved with our school at an early age, assisting me on week-ends and during "vacations" planting shrubs and trees and digging irrigation ditches. More than once he met with prospective parents and did an outstanding "selling" of the school program. While a student at Gorman High School, he coached a 3rd and 4th grade team. As a graduate of the Univ. of Redlands, he immediately began teaching at the Day School. He continued to accept more responsibilities, and served as assistant Director. His apprenticeship was very practical, with my slowly stepping into the background. It has all ended successfully, and with my retirement, welcoming back our two other sons into the school program. Maternal guidance was, and still is, always available through Mom, who possesses the "business acumen" so necessary to operate any business.

The formal change-of-command was more symbolic than actual. Neil had been heading the school for two or so years, and had taken-over the administrative duties, allowing me to teach German without, or seldom, with parent conferences.



With the "new" Director, Neil is tops in the category of "movers and shakers!" We always worry when he doesn't have a project to pursue! He creates it! Fortunately, it usually is successful! I have often accused him of cutting down trees, only to plant more!

Since the "change-of-command", the school, previously debt-free after 20 or so years; is now improved with the addition of a multi-purpose room (gym) and additional classrooms - all adding to the school facilities in a positive way.

Fortunately, acreage controls expansion, and while our "Director" plans for more buildings, only so much space is available. He has, however, planned intelligently, and with the growth of our city, and County, made what we feel, have been the correct moves - "hang the expense!" Being from a "pay-as-you-go" family, it wasn't comfortable to return to the "friendly arms of our banker" - but, progress requires money, and it doesn't grow on trees!

In addition to the building expansion, the internal program has improved. The elimination of the pre-school program, and the addition of morning Kindergarten solved many problems - i.e. transportation, and continuing of students into the first grade.

The school became affiliated with the National Jr. Honor Society, and established a well-organized Student Council that has sponsored many community projects, from assistance to the young and elderly. A regularly published school newspaper and school yearbook have been up-dated. Participation in various extra-curricular activities has improved, with students competing in nation-wide math competition (and performing well!); speech contests, and a well-balanced sports program involving mixed-boys and girls teams. A well-rounded, academically-oriented program, with enough extra-curricular activities to balance the program.

Our testing program has been improved, with the Stanford Achievement Test being administered at all levels yearly. It is also used for testing new students requesting entrance. As in the past, family members are "exempt" - the name of the game! Fortunately, to date, this has not posed a problem!

Final Comments

Nothing worth-while comes easy (unless you have wealthy parents!) Both Helen and I are most grateful for having 3 son's who are interested in education, and have chosen to continue providing a program for young people to challenge their capabilities and better them for future years.

Even after 27 years, one cannot divorce himself from the Day School. There is always something that needs some attention. I have honestly tried to allow the "young one's" to go on their own, but it hasn't been easy!

Expansion and change has taken place (rapidly!) but, despite my protests, all goes well. Enrollment has almost doubled since Neil took charge.

I'll end this with a short story. Taking some trash from the house to the dumpster, near the football field, I noted a new student (about 6th grade age) swinging a metal chain that was supposed to be on the gate - I said: "Hey, Mr. Chain, put that back where you found it... slowly, he complied....as I returned to our home, I overheard a young man who knew me say to the "chain boy" - "That's the MAIN Mr. Daseler! It made my year! Or longer!

I have mentioned parents and friends that have supported us throughout the years, but, with the passage of time, memories fade, but we will forever be grateful to those of you who "stuck with us" during our trying times. We thank and bless all of you.

