

PROFILE

By Jewlee Tedrow

Foresta Jean Davis is a highly valued citizen living in the Longmont community. Born as Foresta Jean Johnson in a birthing home in Longmont, she has lived there most of her life. Mrs. Davis lived in a farm house not far from what is now Niwot, near Longmont, Colorado. Children couldn't work in the fields until they reached the age of 14, and until that time she and her sisters would help their mother with chores around the house, like feeding the cat. She participated in 4H while living on the farm and competed in sewing and baking. One year she even went to the state competition for her delicious ginger bread recipe! A sad tragedy struck when her younger brother Warren died. She wasn't allowed at the funeral, and the memory she has of her little brother is of him crying. He now rests in the Niwot Cemetery located on the west side of Niwot.

Mrs. Davis went to Niwot Elementary—back then each room had two grade levels and only one teacher. She recalls that only about 15 children were in each grade level. She walked to school and if it was a bad day they would crank up the engine of their "Model-T like" truck and drive. Her father became sick one year so they decided to drive to Seattle to help him get better. In Seattle her father worked at a honey factory. Mrs. Davis went to school in Niwot in the fall while her father worked at a honey factory. The school was unlike her other one as the kids moved from class to class much like middle school today. During the New Year and Christmas, breaks the Johnsons traveled to Long Beach, California. She later attended Niwot and Longmont High Schools after they returned to Colorado.

Mrs. Davis had the chance to go to college with her cousins Edgar and Bert. She attended CU but eventually changed to CSU. At CSU she cleaned a dormitory with her friend Amy who was Japanese. Not only did Mrs. Davis have her good friend Amy, but her beloved cousin Edgar worked as a janitor in the same dorm. Her cousin Bert majored as an engineer and another cousin, Rudy, majored as a lawyer. All in all, Mrs. Davis had 25 first cousins! She majored in agriculture and received a job.

She recalls the shock and horror she faced the day after Pearl Harbor. Mrs. Davis remembers bowling and scoring over a hundred. When she and her friends went outside they found news-boys yelling out about the tragedy. On a blind date she met a tall young soldier named Frank Davis, who she eventually married. At that time many girls attended USO dances. Before each dance the YWCA would count all the girls on a bus and let them dance; when they were done, count them, and take them home. Mrs. Davis never did want to join, and she said, "I just wasn't a fighter." She and Frank married at Lowry Air Force Base and many family

members were present. Jean's sisters, Margaret and Betty, were her Maids of Honor. It was love at first sight, although Mrs. Davis had told her friend, "You can have the tall one." Her friend declined and she met the love of her life. Sadly Mr. Davis died a few years ago, but she will always love him.

Denver is a new place. Mrs. Davis tells of bands such as Tommy Dorsey and Glen Miller performing at Lakeside and Elitches, but now different bands play there. The war is over. The USO is a memory. Playing baseball on Sunday afternoons is no longer bad. But Mrs. Davis has watched this land change, be it good or bad. She has lived her life as she wanted to and has made me proud to say I am her grandchild!