

Frazier Allen

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 Sent: Friday, October 01, 2004 2:45 PM
 Subject: Gerald Ross Allen---MY HERO

The Mark and Blanche Allen family was not unlike the folks in the community in which we lived except as we grew up, it was obvious all of their children were innately talented. My Mother bore seven children, the eldest, Eteanor Elaine died early in life of causes of which are unknown to me. She is buried in the Ninnescah Cemetery, by her Mother. My father was always a strict disciplinarian, inculcated by his Mother, which included faith in God. He was always supportive of his children and intensely insistent on excellence of performance in all phases of life, and rewarded everything accomplished with praise, primarily by reporting such accomplishments to Mom and everyone with whom he came in contact. Somehow the entire family became, or was engrained with a competitive nature, primarily because our father was so competitive. Competition in everything we did within the family and all external activities.

Mom was an accomplished musician in piano and 1st Chair Trumpet in a Large Brass Band, sponsored by the Railroad. She traveled with that Band, in the early years, to the west coast performing all over the country. Mark was not tall, I would guess 5'10", however he was extremely agile, athletic and immensely strong. He was thick chested with massive arms and a stocky build. He always prided himself in his physical condition, and one could always see him excelling in horse shoes, baseball, horse racing, etc., etc. In his early manhood, he prided the ownership of his horses, always having the best span of horses, the fastest horse ect.,etc.

Gerald Ross Allen was born Jan 3, 1915 and I was born Sept 22, 1924, in a house which my father had built, so there was ten years differential in our age. The story goes, when I was born, Gerald exclaimed "Put on the Spirit of Liberty, March!!" Gerald soon exhibited a fast learning ability when he was quite young. My mother, who was never one to prevaricate, always insisted he memorized and recited the entire poem of Hiawatha when he was a year and a half old! Aunt Marie, who had a child, Vere of the same age, verified that this was absolutely true. She said Vere could not talk until so much later, she became concerned about him because of Gerald's precociousness. From things learned about Gerald, it is obvious to me, I worshipped him so to speak. I was always with him whenever he would allow it! I was always under foot and can remember him being quite upset when I was so persistent in being with him. In the early days on the farm, we had a 1931 Model A ford. When he would have to go to town for something I always wanted to go. Some times he would allow me to go, most the times I couldn't. Gerald was my hero. When I started to school, somehow the teacher had us telling about our family, I reported that my brother Gerald was seven feet tall, well he was to me!! This story was one of legend.

In the years 1926 to 1929, my father who had been quite successful in Oil and Oil Royalties, we were living in a nice house in Udall, with all the current creature comforts, which included a 1927 Buick Touring sedan and a four door Chrysler sedan. Gerald was in high school enjoying athletic letters he had won in tennis, and basketball and his talent with the Trumpet which he had mastered and was highly acclaimed having won several amateur contests in state and local communities. All of this was duly noted by me and only served to increase his value to me.

Though I was very young I remember one of his adversaries in tennis, Bill Pile, his father was the banker in Udall. Gerald besting Bill in Tennis was Mark's delight! This must have been in the year of 1930, which put me at about six years old.

Wham! The stock Market crashed in 1929 and Mark was forced to move us all to the farm, Mark was always very familiar with farming since He and Mom started married life farming, which went on for years until he went with the Shell Oil company, where he was a Core Driller in the Geological Department of that company. He left the Shell Company and entered into the Oil producing end of the business buying and developing oil royalties, which was very lucrative in the early days.

In the early years on the farm, we prospered in the raising of commodity's, wheat, oats, corn, and sorghum for hog feed. Mark and Gerald butchered hogs and cured the meat which was kept in the "Smoke House". I was always in attendance and watched all the goings on as you can understand how very interesting this was to a young little boy! I do not remember being allowed to watch the slaughter of the animals, but from the scalding

of the animal to the actual butchering. I was very attentive. I Gerald was at Mark's right hand and assumed the duties of what I suppose then was expected of an oldest son. I was always trailing behind him. Things were deteriorating because the drought adversely affected the crops coupled with the depression causing a distressed market for our products. Needless to say we were in dire straights, economically.

Gerald graduated in 1932 from the Udall High School; as the Valedictorian of his class. Now this is something I am not exactly sure about and maybe shouldn't even mention, but it always lingered in my mind and I always wondered what transpired. Gerald had been going steady with a girl in his class, Fern Thompson and had been for some time. When he graduated, somehow he stopped seeing her and I never did find out why. I never asked him because I never had the standing to ask such a personal thing of him, I knew this and learned it through osmosis over the years. He was a wonderful teacher, by setting an exemplary example, but he never, I mean never confided any thing to me that in his mind I had no business knowing. Somehow my father and mother engrained the highest morals and honesty in my older siblings; with Gerald, he could detect the slightest twinge of dishonesty, and I was frequently admonished by him for embellishment of a thing or two.

In the years of '33 Thru '37, Gerald was the breadwinner of the family. I do not intend to demean my father one whit because he always worked hard, trying to make the farm pay, but in those years, the Great Depression, drought, dust storms, and general economical hard times, the farm yielded little except wheat which my father would take to the mill and have ground into several bags of flour for the entire year. Gerald always worked and worked hard and long hours and gave the money he made to Mom, which she stretched from week to week. It should be noted, my father would not take county relief (now called welfare), he was adamantly opposed to receiving relief!

My brother Gerald while working for hire to local farmers during the day, also played in a dance combo in Winfield, Ks every week. Grace and Elmer Thompson on piano and bass respectively with Gerald doing the vocals and playing the Trumpet played every Saturday Night until wee hours, Gerald also submitted these earnings to Mom. Now I suppose he kept a portion of the money for his use on necessities, but to my mind his contribution to our livelihood was an act of self commitment few would do and he literally did this out of love and postponed his own life, put his life and dreams on hold to accomplish this act of unrequited love!

I was fully aware of how important he was to all of us but to me, he was special. At the time of his playing in the dance band, he always played the latest songs that were in movies etc., all these songs he would sing around while working during the week, I would be there and while he was singing all the songs, because he really did sing them while working, I learned them all. Songs you probably have never heard, like "Dancing the Prize Waltz With You".

Gerald did finally leave home in the year of, I think 1937. He had applied and accepted a job with the Burroughs Company in Wichita Ks. Emily had graduated high school and was working at Kresses in Wichita while going to the Wichita Business College. In the meantime, Mark decided to sell out and move back to town, which we did, taking all our possessions and moved to town in a small house there. In not too long, the three older siblings who were living together in a small apartment, proposed to our father and Mother for us to move up to Wichita, and the whole family could live together in a large house and they would pitch in and pay the tab for us to move up there. This was agreed to and they put it into action, we moved up to Wichita and their primary motive of getting us three little boys up to Wichita to get an education in the Wichita schools! Although all three older children agreed to this and made it happen, I strongly believe Gerald was at the bottom of this act of love!

We lived in that house which we all loved, 2500 E Second St, a wonderful home to us from June, 1939 until all our siblings had left the nest, wherein, Mark and Blanche moved to and bought 1443 North Volusia in 1951. Gerald and Galeard into the service early in 1942. I went into the AAF in May 1943, Roland and Max got married and Emily had long since been working at Boeing and was transferred to Seattle where she met and married Wesley.

Your father was a very personal fellow, not one to sing his own praises and did not speak of things that he felt were not necessary to impart. So I know not how much he has told you about what I have written here, this is composed in the event it is new to you and if not, it can be compared to what you already know. He was a brilliant man with a genius IQ, who found it difficult to suffer fools!

Uncle Frazier

10/1/2004