

Verona Stocks'

MY PERSONAL HISTORY...continued

had heard him play with Uncle Felix. Dad and the kids invited the people they knew so I got acquainted with our neighbors.

Jack got tired of playing and asked me to play awhile. I had played with him and Uncle Felix before. Jack's brother Pete Stocks, whom I did not know played the guitar. He was talking and did not notice Jack leave. Their brother Bill was there and he played the guitar. Pete was startled when I started to play and handed the guitar to Bill. I heard him say, "I can't play with her." I felt some surprise as I had played with many people. Played the guitar or violin with Uncle Felix since I was 13 at many such dances.

Most of the dances we went to from then on, when I played the violin, Bill played the guitar. I taught my brothers and sisters how to play the violin and the mandolin. They could play by ear better than I could. Felix and I played together when we were at the same dance, but usually one of us had to be with the sheep.

That fall we moved the sheep back to Spanish Valley. Felicia, Nick, Jo and Ray went to school at La Sal. Dad would not let Felix go to school in Moab. The La Sal school only went to the 8th grade.

There was a lot of work to do on the ranch, cutting and hauling corn, putting fences around the hay stacks, and hauling winter wood. Dad was never well or very strong after Mother died, so Felix had to do a man's work. He was 15 and did not mind that kind of work, but chores such as chopping wood, milking cows, and feeding the stock was all left up to Nick.

Earl and Neva left Moab and moved in with Dad. They had two children. Earl's sister came to visit him and stayed. She had 4 kids. I was alone at the sheep camp so Dad had Vee and Bob. Seventeen people living in a five room house. Eight children under six years old. That summer we had used all the money Bob and I had saved in Vee's and Bobby's piggy banks. About \$25. We were feeding too many people, so Dad talked to Leland Redd and got some child support for me. \$10 for Vee and \$5 for Bob. That was for one month. I bought school clothes with it. But \$15 a month - at least it helped.

Boyde Hammond took our lambs to Thompson again and Dad was gone from the ranch for a week, leaving the kids with Neva. We did not get much for our lambs but paid John Jackson interest on the loan and some on the store bill.

NEXT TIME...Verona meets Pete Stocks



Thomas "Tom" Murphy, Otho Murphy, Verona Murphy (music with her uncles)



VLACHOS' VIEWS

America through the lens of PAUL VLACHOS



South Lake Tahoe, CA - 1998

There's not a lot of neon in this photo, but there's enough artificial incandescence to make up for it. At Doc's, every day is a holiday. I'm not sure if it's still there. I do remember making the run through this high altitude, mountain resort town that night. I pulled in with my friend, Peggy, after a long day of driving, and this was when I was truly obsessed with motel signs. I guess I still am but, on this trip, the first thing we did upon pulling into any town at night was to cruise up and down the whole strip and shoot signs. And, since this was in the day of slow films, we had to drive, stop, set up our separate tripods, shoot, and then keep going. Doc's was just one of about 7 places I shot that night. This photo has always looked and felt to me like some joint out of a late '40s film noir. And, being in Tahoe, it might as well have been one. I can see Robert Ryan pulling up in an old coupe and desperately trying to find a room for the night so that he can just straighten out his mind and then tend to the guy who got shot, the guy who's bleeding all over the back seat of his Plymouth. Yeah, Doc's has seen a lot of action.

Susanville, CA - 2007

If I'm in Susanville, it usually means I'm going to take that long, dirt back road up to the Black Rock Desert, the fast gravel road that dead-ends into the pavement near the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. That's usually why I'd be in Susanville. There's an old theater in that town with some amazing old neon. This bar is across the street, as I recall. It says "Pioneer" and you can just barely see the martini glass that says "Drinks" on it. A friend of mine and I once agreed that a broken motel sign was an absolute reason to not stay there, to keep pushing on until you found a new motel. For a bar, though, I see no reason why that prohibition should apply.



Flagstaff, AZ - 2000

There is so much to like here. So why is it not one of my favorites? Don't get me wrong, I like the sign, I just don't look at it much. Maybe it's the covered wagon? I don't know. By far, the most compelling thing for me is "European Hostess." What is going on here? Why is that supposed to resonate anywhere, but especially in Flagstaff? I guess it's aimed at foreign tourists who are headed to the Grand Canyon. Yeah, I guess that's it. This sign is strange - it seems like a lot of parts that should not fit together, but they somehow do.

Winnemucca, NV - 2002



This is one of my favorite motels and, the last I saw, it was up for sale, which saddened me greatly. Once I discovered the Shady Court, there was no other place in Winnemucca I ever wanted to stay. The time-capsule rooms from the late '50s, the space-age theme on the main sign, and old man who used to say, without fail, "Have a safe trip." every time I checked out. This is NOT the main sign, but a large sign at chest height at the end of the parking lot. The highway was on the rear of this sign, and this was meant for people on the main drag in Winnemucca. You see, the Scott Shady Court sits about 4 blocks OFF the main drag, so the management needed to find a way to get people to venture down to it. Once you check in the first time, of course, you are hooked. I need to get back up to Winnemucca, one of the crossroads of the hot spring universe. Shhhh! Dont' tell anybody. It's a secret.

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