

## William Joos Family History

William Frederick Joos was born on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1911 in Alta, Illinois. After living and growing up in Minnesota, at the age of 20, he decided to move back to the Peoria area. He bought a green 1928 Chevrolet coupe. Bill and his cousin, Dave Joos traveled back to Peoria. They arrived late one evening and stayed with Uncle Elmer & Aunt Pauline Farney for a couple of days. Bill found work for \$1.00 per day, plus room and board on a dairy farm owned by Sam Unsicker. He also did some threshing for them in the fall. At this time, Bill lived with his sister and brother-in-law, Bill & Bertha Michael in Tremont. Sam Unsicker came to him one day and said he couldn't afford to pay him anymore. So Bill had to look for work elsewhere. He went to apply for work at the washing machine factory in Peoria. They hired him and at 21 years old, he made 40 cents per hour. He worked there for three years. At this time, Bill and his brother Fred took a night course at Bradley University to learn how to work on heavy machines.

Bill's sister Carrie, worked in Peoria as a maid and since Bill & Carrie shared a car, they spent a lot of their free time together. Carrie worked across the street from a beautiful young lady named Clementine Knapp. Carrie introduced Clem to her brother Bill and they began to spend a lot of their time together. On the weekends, this foursome: Frieda Joos, Les Wagonbach, Bill Joos, and Clementine Knapp could be seen together swimming and ice skating.

The Saturday morning on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1934 at 10:00am, Bill Joos and Clementine Knapp were married. After the ceremony, the wedding party and the family attended a dinner held at the home of the bride's parents, William & Molly Knapp. After the meal, the happy couple traveled to St. Louis for their honeymoon. They stayed at a hotel owned by a cousin of the family, John & Lizzy Huber. On Sunday morning, they went to the zoo. On Sunday evening, they traveled back home so Bill could work on Monday.

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1935, Bill & Clem were blessed with their first child, Arletta Clementine Joos.

In 1936, Caterpillar started hiring. People were standing in line for hours just to be able to get an application or an interview. So Bill and his brother Fred got up early one morning and went and stood in line. When the doors opened, Fred was the first one in the door. When the man asked them if they had any experience to work at Caterpillar, they showed him their Bradley Certificates. Since this man was a Bradley fan, he told Bill & Fred to go around to the back. They both got a job working at Altorfer – Caterpillar that day (since they were Bradley graduates). Bill started on a small machine, 2nd shift, 10 hour days for 55 cents an hour. Nine and a half years later, he was at the top of the pay scale in the factory at 97 cents an hour. At the time, Caterpillar was making equipment for World War I. Since Bill was working there at this time, he was deferred from the draft.

On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1937, Bill & Clem were blessed with their second child, Eileen Marlys Joos.

While he worked at Caterpillar, Bill & Clem were looking for some land because he wanted to farm. A land agent showed up at 2:00 am one morning and knocked on their door. He took them to see a farm with some buildings and 167 acres. The owner lived in Ohio, so the next morning they drove out there and signed papers to buy it. In October of 1939, Bill & Clem signed up for electricity in the country. It cost \$5.00 to sign up and \$3.00 a month for the electricity. Since Bill was still working at Caterpillar while he was fanning, he had to hire people to help out on the farm. There was always so much for Clem to do, too. For the first 13 years of their married life, they had 16 borders stay with them. With two small girls and extra people to cook and clean for, Clem kept very busy.

They also had a large garden, canning 600 to 700 quarts of fruits and vegetables during the summer. They never bought fruits and vegetables from the store. They also had 1000 hens that would lay eggs. Clem washed and candled "15" 30-dozen egg cases per week until they bought an egg washer. Every year Clem would fry nine to ten gallons of steaks, pork chops, ribs and sausage down into crocks. Every summer she canned around 40 hens (that were molting), 50 quart of beef and around 100 quart of blackberries.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1941, Bill & Clem were blessed with their first son, Glenn William Joos.

After nine and a half years of working at Caterpillar, Bill decided to quit and farm full-time. At the time, Caterpillar was offering a pension to employees who had worked there for ten years. Bill didn't know this at the time when he decided to leave Caterpillar and missed out on a pension.

Farming full time kept bill very busy, since at the time, they picked and shelled all the corn by hand. Although Bill never farmed with horses, he started to farm when tractors came around. He also was one of the first ones to buy a combine in the area...a 410 Massey Ferguson. Because of this, he did a lot of customer work for other farmers. He also had cattle and hogs on the farm to take care of.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1948, Bill & Clem were blessed with their second son, Loren Keith Joos. Loren was the only one of their children born in Peoria at the old Proctor Hospital. The rest of the children were born at home.

The names of the borders that stayed with Bill and Clem starting in October of 1934 through October of 1947

- 1) Al Wahl came in October 1934 until spring
- 2) Freddie Joos came in October 1934 until spring
- 3) Harvey Wahl came in December through March and worked for Eli Zobrist

- 4) Bill Wahl came in December through March
- 5) "Hong Kong" stayed for 3 months (Arletta was several months old)
- 6) Lloyd Joos stayed for 1-3 months
- 7) George & Martha Knapp with Baby George (was born 3 months before moving back to Bachtolds rent house east and North of Eureka)
- 8) Harvey & Ruth Wahl stayed for 1 year
- 9) Paul & Margaret & Patsy Joos stayed for 6 weeks
- 10) Dad & Mother Knapp stayed for 9 months
- 11) Sam Joos came in October of 1942