

## Larry & Pat Morrison

Larry Morrison was born in Smackover, Arkansas, on October 25, 1940, but lived in nearby Norphlet, Arkansas, through the first grade, which he began in 1946. His family, which included his parents Tiny (her real name) and B. A. "Doc" Morrison, an older brother David, and a younger brother Bryan, moved in 1947 to El Dorado, Arkansas, where he attended the second grade. The next year, the family moved to the Cullendale community and then to the Elliott community, both near Camden, Arkansas, where he attended Fairview schools from the third through the start of the seventh grade.

In 1952 after beginning the seventh grade at Fairview, he moved with his family to Poplar, Montana, where his dad worked in a newly discovered oil field on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. The Sioux Indians in the town were the descendents of those who had taken part in Custer's Last Stand in 1876; in fact, there were old men and women living in Poplar in the early 1950s who had been children at the time of the battle. Larry's best friend was the great grandson of Chief Sitting Bull. The frigid winters on the Great Plains of Montana were a shock to a South Arkansas boy, but all in all, he enjoyed the experience greatly. The coldest weather he experienced was 53 degrees below zero on a morning when he delivered his newspaper route in spite of the dangerous temperature. Montana cold was the proverbial dry cold, so it was dangerous but bearable. He completed the seventh and eighth grades in Poplar and lived there until he began the ninth grade.

In 1954, the family moved to Phoenix, Arizona, for a healthier climate for his older brother who was ill. They had moved from one of the coldest climates to one of the warmest with Phoenix sometimes approaching the 110+ mark. He completed the ninth grade in Phoenix. In 1955, his older brother was left recuperating in Phoenix, and the other members of the family moved back to El Dorado for his dad to receive medical treatment. David, the older brother, back in full health, rejoined the family the next year. Larry entered the tenth grade in El Dorado. He was joined in the eleventh grade by his older brother who had missed a year of school while ill, and they graduated together in 1958.

Larry attended college at Southern State College in Magnolia, Arkansas, and then attended the University of Arkansas for a couple of years. In 1962, he returned to SSC (now Southern Arkansas University). Larry married Patricia Ann Ainsworth of Parkers Chapel near El Dorado in 1962, and they completed college together. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and history in 1964 and Pat with a Bachelor of Science in Education in physical education and English in 1965. Larry says that he crammed four years of college into six years, and it is notable that Pat did complete her four years of college in three and a half years.

Pat had attended all her grade school and high school years at Parkers Chapel and graduated in 1960. She enjoyed playing basketball in school. She was a defensive guard, and since her school played half-court, she only scored two points in her career in basketball. Her skills on defense were recognized when she was named to the All-District team, which was the highest recognition for her school's level of play. After graduation from high school, Pat worked for a year at the Arkansas Revenue Department in El Dorado. After a year of low wages and long hours, she decided to go to college.

While in high school and from time to time while in college, Larry worked in El Dorado at his uncle's gasoline station. (Fatefully, that's where he met Pat while she was a senior in high school.) While attending college in Fayetteville, Larry worked at George's Majestic Lounge and then for the Top Hat Drive-In. He took off a semester of college in the spring of 1962 and worked at the Eldocraft

boat company at Smackover, Arkansas. Later, in Magnolia at SSC, he was a dispatcher for the Magnolia police department. After graduation, he worked for a short while for Universal C.I.T. Credit Corporation in Fort Smith. While in Fort Smith for a few months, Pat worked at a financial institution. After being transferred to Camden, Larry resigned his employment and returned to college for a semester to complete his teacher certification. Pat began her teaching career in Camden in 1965.

In January 1966, Larry began teaching English, history, and driver education at Harmony Grove School near Camden. He taught there for 12 ½ years. While there, he attended Henderson State College (now Henderson State University) and, in 1976, received a Master of Arts degree in education. Sharon Marie, Larry and Pat's first daughter, was born in 1970, and Charlotte Ann, their second daughter was born in 1972.

In 1977 Larry began teaching English and history at Southwest Technical Institute, which soon became Southern Arkansas University Tech at East Camden, Arkansas. He taught there for 17 ½ years and retired with 30 years of service in teaching in Arkansas in December 1995. Pat had begun teaching at Camden High School in 1965 and retired in May 1995 from the Camden Fairview school system.

While teaching school, Larry was very active in local and state historical activities. He was a member of the Ouachita County Historical Society, a board member of the Southwest Regional Archives at Old Washington, Arkansas, and a board member of the Arkansas Historical Society. He wrote papers on cotton gins, local people, steamboats, and stagecoaches for the Ouachita County Historical Quarterly. He collected hundreds of historic photographs of South Arkansas (mostly Ouachita County) and helped copy them on slide and print film and reproduce many for display. A major use of the photographs was in the presentation of programs on local history to many civic, church, and school groups. He authored a photo-history of Ouachita County in 1986 for the Arkansas Sesquicentennial celebration. The book is displayed at

<http://peace.saumag.edu/swark/photos/sautech/Morrison-EppinetteBook/Contents.html>, the SAU website.

When Larry retired from teaching in December 1995, he spent the next year working to help maintain a towboat and three barges on the Ouachita River at Camden. A local medical doctor wanted to encourage companies to use the river for cargo transportation and had created the Camden-Crossett Towing Company. We had lots of adventures on the river but no cargo.

Pat and Larry moved to Siloam Springs in early 1997. They had made many trips to Northwest Arkansas over the years to visit his two brothers and had come to love the area. Larry's parents lived nearby in Camden; so they moved to Siloam Springs ahead of Larry and Pat. After waiting for a year after retirement while Larry worked (played) on the river, Pat became impatient and told him she was moving and he could come along if he wanted. He moved. Both of their daughters now live in Siloam Springs. Their grandson Troy Marsh Henderson (he goes by Marsh) was born in 1997 and granddaughter Cymber Ann Henderson was born in 2000. Larry and Pat have been blessed to be able to enjoy their two grandchildren living close by from the time they were born. On December 31, 2008, Larry's mother celebrated her 102 birthday in Siloam Springs. She passed away on December 25, 2009, just six days before her 103rd birthday. His father died at the age of 91.

Larry had no intention of sitting idle in retirement. He was interested in continuing his involvement with historical matters but wanted something hands-on rather than textbook, and a tractor club seemed ideal. He had attended a couple of Tired Iron shows by the time he met Glenn Smith, the first president of the club, and Glenn invited him to a meeting. After noting what a great group of folks were a part of Tired Iron, he joined and soon after Pat joined too. Larry had already purchased a 1953 Garden All Gard'n Mast'r riding garden tractor, and he soon purchased a 1950 Mayrath from Glenn.

He has added a 1946 Gibson, a 1947 Perrin, two Wheel Horses (1957-8 and 1966), a 1948 8N Ford and a few small engines. A highlight for him was being elected president of Tired Iron in October 2002, where he served until October 2005. He served as a board member until 2008. He and Pat continue to edit the Tired Iron newsletter. Tired Iron, with all the friends they have made in the club, is an important part of their lives.