

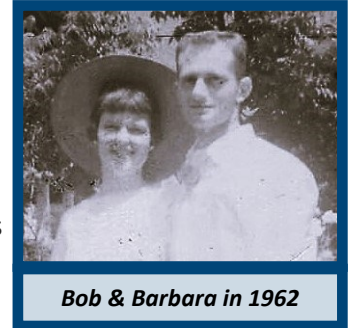
Diablo Honors.....

Bob & Barbara Beratta

By Maryann Cella

For Barbara and Bob Beratta, the road to Green Shutters, their historic Diablo home, began in Victoria, British Columbia.

A few years after they moved with their two young daughters into a brand-new home in Danville, the couple visited Victoria and fell in love with its wood lap-siding homes and beautiful tree-shaded gardens. A short time later it seemed like serendipity when Barbara drove up Alameda Diablo for the first time and saw a "For Sale" sign nestled among the overgrown shrubbery that nearly obscured Green Shutters from street view. It reminded them of the Victoria homes they loved. Undeterred by the work that needed to be done on the home and grounds, they bought the house. Fifty years later, their love for Green Shutters and Diablo continue to grow.



Bob & Barbara in 1962

Barbara was born in Sioux City, Iowa, but moved to California as a small child. Bob was born and raised in Antioch. Fate and sports education brought them together at Chico State University, where both were pursuing education degrees. Bob asked Barbara to be on his co-ed soccer team in a PE class. Little did he know that he had chosen a ringer with a sports legacy. Barbara's father was a University of Wisconsin ice hockey All-American who later played for the Oakland Seals. Barbara accepted, and needless to say, Bob was happy she did! That was the beginning of their courtship, which led to marriage for "62 blessed years", as Barbara lovingly says.

Barbara's athleticism is reflected in her longtime hobbies of horseback riding, swimming, and skiing. Bob excelled at sports as well. At Antioch High School, he played halfback, and was also a talented center-fielder on the baseball team. At Chico State, his center-fielding skills for that team caught the attention of a professional baseball scout, but he chose to complete his degree rather than pursue a professional sports career.

Bob's athleticism was complemented by writing talent that led to a part-time job during college as a sports writer and photographer for the Antioch Ledger. Bob interviewed some well-known local sports figures for his stories, including NFL Hall of Fame's Gino Marchetti, 13-year Baltimore Colts defensive end and an Antioch High grad. An "out-of-this-world" story resulted from Bob's interview with an Antioch government official's wife that claimed to have seen a UFO and met an alien while in Roswell, New Mexico.



Shellie & Karen in 1972

Barbara and Bob married in Hayward after completing their degrees--Bob's in secondary education, and Barbara's in primary education. Barbara's first job was teaching second grade in Chico. Daughter Karen was born there. They then moved to Lompoc, where Bob taught sixth grade for one year and had the unusual experience of being an umpire for softball games at Lompoc Prison. Thankfully, the only "crimes" Bob witnessed during his umpiring stints were stealing an occasional base! Meanwhile, Barbara taught third grade and gave birth to their second daughter, Shellie.

After a year in Lompoc, the Berattas returned to the Bay Area. Barbara taught at Morello Elementary in Martinez, which had only four grades. Barbara loved teaching there, as it reminded her of when she was a first grader in a one-room schoolhouse in a remote area of northern California where her father was managing civil engineer for a PG&E hydroelectric dam project. Barbara's father also managed construction of other major dams and air bases in California.

Bob taught P.E. at Stanley School in Lafayette and coached sports. He then taught PE and Math at Castro Valley High for 23 years, and was head coach of the cross-country team and freshmen basketball and baseball teams. One of his proudest moments was coaching his freshmen basketball team to an undefeated season. Barbara began teaching at Green Valley Elementary School.

After Bob and Barbara remodeled their kitchen, removed the 60s-style wood paneling that darkened their living room and bedrooms, tamed the landscaping, and performed other updates, the family enjoyed their home's great floor plan and large rooms with lots of windows overlooking the 18th fairway. They loved the two ponds and arbors that grace the garden. They shared an interest in history and became students of Green Shutters' past. They researched its famous architect, William Raymond Yelland of Oakland, and discovered that he had also built homes in Carmel, where for 33 years they spent summers at an adobe cottage just off the beach.



At their vacation home in Carmel

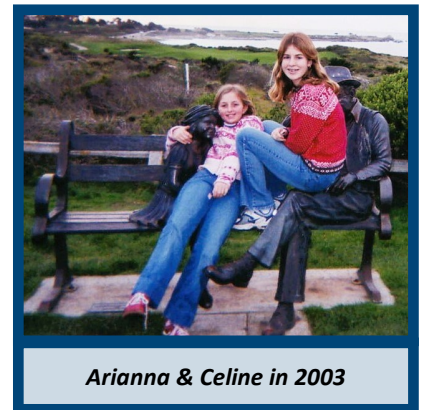


Lance & Karen

Shellie and Karen became accomplished horsewomen riding their horses, Lance and Frosty, who resided at the small building now called "Horsch Castle" across the street from Green Shutters and at the Puccini pasture on upper Alameda Diablo. The Beratta daughters tell wonderful tales of playing a game called "pickle" on the golf course with neighbor kids; going to Alpha Beta to get a huge ice block to slide down the big hill on the first fairway; and running down secret passageways throughout Diablo that only the kids knew about.

Shellie graduated from UCLA and Karen from St. Mary's College. Karen earned a PhD in education, owns a successful business, and lives in Tennessee. Shellie also owns a successful business and lives in Lafayette, where she raised two daughters: Celine, another UCLA grad, who also holds an MA in psychology from Wright Institute and is a therapist; and Arianna, a Cal Poly grad, who is employed in the tech industry.

Bob and Barbara spent many years volunteering for the betterment of Diablo and the tri-valley area. Bob served from 1971-75 on Contra Costa County's Parks and Recreation Service Board. They bought the land for Osage Park and Oak Hill Parks and developed them into the beautiful public treasures they are today. Bob also served as a director of the Diablo Property Owners' Association and as a member of the Diablo Advisory Committee.



Arianna & Celine in 2003

Barbara is a longtime member of the Diablo Historic Preservation Committee and served as an editor and writer for the Committee's book, Diablo's Treasures: The Historic Homes & Heritage Oaks of Diablo.

Thank you, Bob and Barbara, for being treasured members of our Diablo community since 1972. We all are so fortunate that you chose Diablo to make your home!

