

Carrolls still going after half-century

by JIM HAYS
of The Outlook staff

In the 50 years he's been in business on Southeast Roberts Avenue, Lou Carroll has seen Gresham change from a sleepy rural village of barely 1,000 people to the busy suburban community it is today.

But Carroll and his wife, Florence, who operate Carroll Funeral Home, just keep on going, running a successful business and making important civic contributions.

"The town has changed 100 percent since I first came here," Carroll says. "It used to be the first little town you'd come to after leaving Portland. Now it's pretty much all one city and Boring is the first town you get to. You explain that to people who have left here and they don't believe it. But it didn't take many years."

Carroll arrived in Gresham in 1931 with his father, William Carroll, shortly after his graduation from high school in Vancouver, Wash.

"My dad had a mortuary up in Vancouver," he recalls. "After my last year of high school, he decided to leave and we came to Gresham with my mother and my brother. There were a couple of mortuaries here then run by men named Gates and Metzger. We bought them both out."

Gates was Charles Gates, who had set up his mortuary business 15 years earlier in a building constructed in 1902 by Boone Johnson, a Gresham pioneer, on what was then known as Damascus Market Road, across the street from Panther Gulch, well-known at the time for its hunting and fishing. Today Carroll does business from the same building, remodeled and expanded three times. Damascus Market Road becomes Roberts Avenue and Panther Gulch was largely filled in and is now a residential area.

Carroll and his father added a south wing to the building in 1935 which became the mortuary's first chapel. Then, shortly before he left for World War II, Carroll met and married his wife, Florence, a native of Minnesota who taught school first in Estacada and then at Powellhurst.

During the war, Carroll served in the Navy and worked his way up to the rank of lieutenant. When he returned to Gresham, his father had had enough of the business.

"He'd been working his tail off all during the war years with short help and one day he just said 'I'm going fishing' and that's what he did," Carroll says. "He lived in the building here but he had a home out on Palmblad and Palmquist Road and he moved out there. Somebody had to be here all the time, so Florence and I moved in."

With that, Carroll took over sole ownership of the business. He expanded

again in 1955, building a second chapel on the north side, but at a much bigger price than he expected to pay.

"While we were remodeling, we had a fire," he says. "It started in a brand-new DeSoto limosine. We had two of them and the fire started in a light fixture in the back seat of one. It shorted and started to arc and set the seats on fire. Both of them were destroyed in the fire and we ended up losing more than \$30,000. That was real big money in those days."

For a time, Carroll recalls, big funerals were popular and his mortuary housed some of the biggest. "We had three big ones that I remember," he says. "One was Pop Rennow, a teacher from Sandy. He was shot in his orchard by somebody who thought he was a bear. That drew four or five hundred people. That was back in the 1950s."

"Then there was a state policeman named Petrie from up on Mt. Hood," Florence says. "People either hated him or loved him but they all came to the funeral."

The third one was the service for Carroll's father.

In their years on Roberts Avenue, the Carrolls have been involved in a number of community affairs. Carroll's father served on the city council and Carroll has been involved in lodges and Mt. Hood Community College.

"You become interested in community affairs," Carroll says. "It's your town and your home and you want to make it better."

The Carrolls' greatest contribution to the community, however, is literally in their own back yard. Gresham Main City Park used to be on their property before Carroll bequeathed it to the city.

Johnson Creek at one time flowed directly behind the building but Carroll began rerouting it away from his house, as Florence says, "Just about the first day we moved in."

In all, Carroll figures he moved about 90,000 cubic yards of earth over the years. "The city moved about twice that much," he says.

The result was the rerouting of Johnson Creek into its present bed and Main City Park for the city of Gresham.

"I sold it to them for a nickel a foot," Carroll says. "But I probably would have ended up giving it to them. It was too much space to keep up. I wanted it to be a park and I guess I got what I wanted."

Carroll recently passed his 70th birthday but isn't planning on retiring just yet, though he admits that with two other mortuaries in town business has slowed down.

"One day I'll retire," he says. "Dad finally decided to retire. There's nobody in the family to take on the business but as long as there are people, there will be mortuaries."

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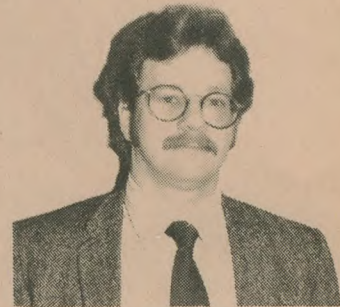


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* This rate is effective until Jan. 1, 1985. N. J. 17:27

Local funeral businesses combine names, offices

by SHARON NESBIT
of The Outlook staff

Gresham's historic Carroll Funeral Home and the Bateman Funeral Chapel have combined their names and their offices.

Now known as the Bateman Carroll Funeral Chapel, the business offices of both facilities have been merged into a single office at 520 W. Powell Boulevard. The Bateman company purchased Carroll Funeral Home in April, 1986. The Carroll firm, most recently operated by Lewis and Florence Carroll, began in Gresham in 1930.

"The name Carroll has a great deal of significance in this community and has for a long time," said Stan Morris this spring. Morris together with Dale Turner owns Bateman Funeral Chapel and bought Carroll's in April 1986. Since that time the two firms have maintained separate business locations with combined management and personnel.

Morris emphasized that the Carroll company will continue to serve families in the community and that records of both companies will be maintained in the new, combined office. All funeral arrangements, as well as pre-arranged funeral plans of both companies, will be handled in the merged office.

"But some families prefer the chapel at Carroll Funeral Home," Morris said, "and that is still available to them." Business arrangements for a funeral there, however, will be conducted at the new office.

In addition, the Carroll facility is undergoing a metamorphosis as Parkside Chapel, a facility that will be ready in mid-June for use for weddings and receptions.

The Carroll site, located at 257 S.E. Roberts Avenue next to Main City Park, is being remodeled for all kinds of wedding and party services. It will have a full commercial kitchen and banquet hall.

"We looked around in the Gresham area and saw a need for a non-denomination, independent facility to cater weddings. This buildings has lots of room, it sits next to the park and we have a parking lot to accommodate 90 cars," Morris told the

Outlook in April. He added, "Formalities and the ability to take care of a crowd are not totally foreign to us. We already have expertise in running a business like this."

The Powell Boulevard offices of the Bateman Carroll firm also house the Columbia Crematory, which was built in 1984.

The merger of the Bateman and Carroll firms combined with the crematory, Morris says, makes the firm the largest and most complete funeral service establishment in mid- and East Multnomay County.

Merging of the business office, Morris said, should result in serving families more effectively and efficiently.

We at Bateman Carroll Funeral Chapel want the families of those that entrusted loved ones into our care this past year, to know that our thoughts are with them this holiday season. As a community, join us in reaching out to these families and support them during this holiday season.

IN MEMORY

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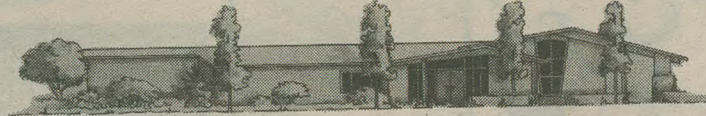
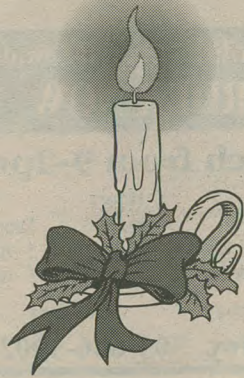
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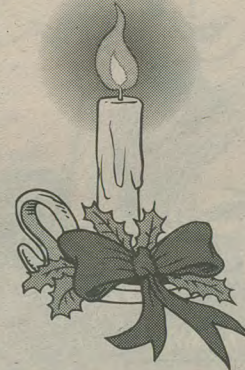
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Short, Ravella
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503-665-2128



F. G. Halvorsen Now Partner Of Carroll, Inc.

F. George Halvorsen has become a member of Carroll Funeral Home Incorporated and will serve as secretary-treasurer, Lewis C. Carroll, president, and Florence G. Carroll, vice president have announced.

Halvorsen was born in Salem. He married Marcia Moore in 1951 at Tacoma, Wash. They have two children, Gordon, a sophomore at Gresham high and Scott, attending the fifth grade at West Gresham.

Halvorsen enlisted in the U.S. Marines in 1948 and served in the Korean Campaign attaining the rank of Company Commander. He is a graduate of the San Francisco College of Mortuary Science and for over 10 years was associated with the funeral profession in Salem.

In 1961 he was employed by Carroll Funeral Home.

Halvorsen is a member of the Methodist church, the Chamber of Commerce, past vice president of the Gresham Kirwanis, past president of South Salem Kiwanis, charter president of the Gresham Optimist club; and a vice president of Eastern Multnomah County Council on the Aged, of which his wife is secretary. He is on the budget commission for the city of Gresham and a member of the Oregon Funeral Directors Association.

8-31-67
