



## Bill Drake ~ Pacifica's remarkable newsman

*"On Friday, January 20, the voice of the so-eloquent-written word in our community, for 30 years, went silent when William A. Drake, age 91, former Editor/Publisher of the Pacifica Tribune, died of natural causes at his home."—Horace Hinshaw, Pacifica Tribune, January 24, 2012.*



Written by Jean Bartlett, April, 2020  
(A Pacifica Historical Society Project)

### **DRAKE, WILLIAM AUGUSTUS "BILL" (1921-2012)**

"My father was born in Greenwood, Indiana on January 5, 1921," said Andrea Drake, one of Bill and Peggy Drake's three children. "I remember once my father and I visited Greenwood. It must have been in 1984 when I was in the Army, stationed in Kentucky. Dad and I drove to Greenwood and we went into a restaurant there. I remember thinking that Dad was going to be so disappointed, Greenwood was no longer a small town and there wouldn't be any trace of his boyhood there." (Now a suburb of Indianapolis, Greenwood's current population is close to 59,000.) "We walked into the restaurant and before we even got seated, a voice rang out, 'Billy Drake!' We visited over the next few days with his old friends, and they were truly some of the most charming people I've ever met."

Bill Drake was the son and only child of Joseph Cleveland Drake and Alma Ruth (Day) Drake. His dad was born in Bedford, Kentucky and was the eldest of eight children. Like Bill, his mom was also born in Greenwood. His parents were married on December 31, 1919, in Indianapolis. Both of his parents died when Bill was a teen. He lost his mom first to cancer. His dad died a year later from colitis. Flossie Drake Witherspoon, Joseph Drake's younger sister, took Bill in.

Bill's father was in insurance. He was also quite a baseball player. Andrea still has Joseph Drake's old catcher's mitt and the family saw to it that his Greenwood baseball shirt was framed. Bill's children wish they knew more about their dad's folks, but Andrea still treasures the time a relative took her to see the remains of the Kentucky cabin where "Granny Drake" lived.

"He told me they called the place, 'Granny Drake's Holler.'"



Bill went to Greenwood High School and graduated from Franklin College in Franklin, IN, in 1944.

"He was in the Phi Delta Theta fraternity," Andrea noted, "and because he had a little money he had inherited from his father, he was able to own a car. I think that contributed to his popularity with his fraternity brothers!" (Bill's mom was also a graduate of Franklin College where she had been a member of the Delta, Delta, Delta sorority.)

The Greenwood native caught rheumatic fever twice in his youth and was classified 4F as a result.

"Dad had planned to sign up for the Navy, to be an ensign. My mother told me that he kept his notice from the Draft Board that said he was 4F, on a prominent place on the wall of his apartment. This was to ward off the usual, 'Why aren't you in the military?'

questions. It was really hard on him and was one of the major disappointments of his life."

Advised to move to Arizona for his health, Bill headed southwest with a couple of college buddies. He had worked as a reporter for his hometown newspaper in Greenwood, and got a job in Arizona with the *Tucson Citizen*. One of his assignments sent him to the Tucson Draft Board to interview individuals entering the military service and their families. It was there he met Peggy Bilby.

Peggy was working as a volunteer in the Draft Board office, assisting incoming service personnel. Andrea said she doesn't know where her parents went on their first date or even how many times her dad asked her mom out before her mom said, 'yes.' But she does know when her mom fell in love with him.

"The two of them went for a walk in the desert and Mom's little dog, Tippy Toes, fell into a cactus and had cactus spines all over him. Dad patiently pulled them all out and saved Tippy Toes. My mom told me that that was the moment she decided he was the one."

The couple married on June 6, 1945 in Tucson. Not long after they married, Bill and Peggy Drake moved back to Bill's home state. Bill got a job with United Press, later United Press International, in Indianapolis. Their three children were all born in Indianapolis. The late Kathy Drake was their first born, followed by twins Andrea and Ken. (Andrea is older by 20 minutes.) Bill additionally went on to serve as the UP manager at the *Omaha World Herald* in Nebraska. Then he decided it was time to fulfill a dream – to own, edit and publish a small-town weekly newspaper. He looked to the trade journals for publication listings.



"My parents were total partners in the decision to buy a newspaper," Andrea remarked. "My dad was the one who actually visited each paper first."

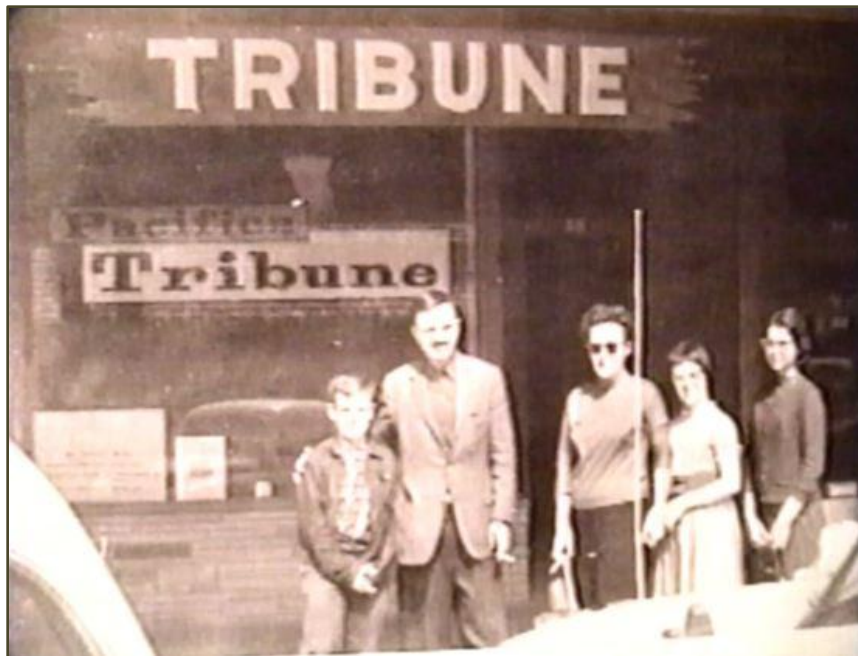
Bill looked at a couple of newspaper candidates in Colorado, one in New Mexico, and then he headed out to Pacifica. Lowell and Alice Blankfort were the owners and co-publishers of the *Coastside Tribune*, which they in turn had bought in 1954 from Arnold Kloppel. When the Blankforts bought the paper, it

was located in Sharp Park. In 1956, the Blankforts relocated the *Coastside Tribune* to Pacific Manor, where it remained on Aura Vista – renamed Bill Drake Way in June of 2009 – until the paper's current owner closed the doors to a physical location several years back.

"My dad liked Pacifica the most and when my mother came out to see it, she fell in love with it," Andrea said. "When they drove into Pacifica and she saw the view of the ocean from the highway going down into Pacific Manor – that was the moment she approved my father's choice."

So much was new back then. Not only were the Drakes moving to Pacifica to begin a new life, but Pacifica itself was standing on new legs. On November 22, 1957, the nine separate coastal communities of Edgemar, Pacific Manor, Westview, Sharp Park, Fairway Park, Vallemar, Rockaway Beach, Linda Mar and Pedro Point became the City of Pacifica. Without hesitation, the couple renamed their newly acquired business, the *Pacifica Tribune*. According to *Pacifica Tribune* writer Jane Northrop's October, 2014 interview with Lowell Blankfort, the Drakes bought the paper for \$155,000. There were no regrets with that purchase.

Bill often told his family, "I bought the ocean and they threw in the newspaper."



**Bill and Peggy Drake, with their children Ken, Andrea and Kathy, in front of their new and ultimately very successful newspaper. Circa 1959.**

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*"Let me try to memorialize what I think is remarkable about the three decades in the careers of Peggy and Bill Drake,"* said California retired judge and politician Quentin Kopp at the retirement party for Bill and Peggy Drake in July of 1989. *"And that is the fact that they have been able to successfully, and with some degree of prosperity, operate a newspaper in a tightly knit community and to survive, not only physically—because some of those Letters to the Editor are quite intimidating—but also economically. That's not easy to do. It is a heck of a talent, individually and collectively, to be able to provide that kind of service with ever-increasing respectability in a community that is known for its strong feelings about all kinds of subjects. We ought to reflect on that as we pay honor and tribute to owners Peggy and Bill Drake."* (Source: Pacifica Historical Society *Footprints of Pacifica* Episode No. 60, "An interview with Bill Drake.")

"When Bill purchased the *Tribune* in 1959, Pacifica was in its infancy," said Horace Hinshaw, whose own relationship with the paper began back in 1969, when Bill hired him for a part-time sports editor job. (2020 is Horace's 51st year of writing for the *Tribune* and he's still writing sports. A *Tribune* legend, Horace additionally served as the paper's managing editor from 2014 until 2017.) "Over those early years, it was the *Tribune* that kept our residents informed on the civic matters of the young community. Bill always said that it was local news that was important for the readership. He made sure that the community was kept abreast of weekly events, albeit not all times were positive news. There were times his editorials upset people. But he maintained his 'just the facts' approach to reporting the news."

"Bill Drake was the *Pacifica Tribune*," Horace went on to say. "He wrote the story, took the photographs, sold the advertisements, and, on occasion, delivered a missed paper. He covered accidents, disasters, political meetings and even birthday parties. He even got his hands dirty with ink in the early years of the *Tribune*, when printing presses were used to print the paper. In the process, he lost notebooks, film and a lot of sleep, but never his sense of humor."

Like Horace, Bill was an avid sports fan.

"He wanted to be sure our local youths got their names and activities in the paper and I wanted the same thing," Horace noted. "The only time Bill and I ever clashed was me wanting more space weekly for the sports. It was a friendly discussion. Bill normally let me have my way. He was a great boss, but an even greater friend."



**Pacifica Tribune sports editor Horace Hinshaw, left, interviews his friend and former boss Bill Drake on *Footprints of Pacifica* Episode No. 60, filmed in 2009.**

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"When we first moved to Pacifica, we rented a house on Perez in Linda Mar," Andrea said. "Then my parents bought a house on Crespi Drive, just a few houses above Oddstad Park. Eventually we moved to a new house on Barcelona Drive in Linda Mar. My sister, brother and I, graduated from Terra Nova High School and all of us worked at the paper. I worked there off and on, answering phones, proofreading, etc. Ken was one of the earliest sports writers for the paper. My sister Kathy worked there for several years and was invaluable as an editor and reporter. She learned her trade as a journalist from my father. I used to love listening to them talk about the *Tribune*."

Along with co-publishing the Wednesday weekly with her husband, Peggy Drake also wrote a column. It was truly a family-run business.



One of the earliest friendship's Bill and Peggy established in Pacifica was with Yvonne Lorvan. Yvonne moved to Pacifica with her family in 1961 and met Bill shortly thereafter at a Pacifica Democrats meeting. He was covering it.

In today's Pacifica, lots of people know Yvonne. She has been an active volunteer in a number of nonprofits. She has served as the past treasurer of the Pacifica Library Foundation, was a board member of Pacifica Performances and the longtime treasurer for Pacificans Care. She is currently still active with: the Pacifica Branch of AAUW (American Association of University Women) serving as their longtime treasurer, and is also a past president; she is a past president and past treasurer of Rotary Club of Pacifica; and she is an advisory board member with the fundraising and governance committees of the Pacifica Resource Center. However, what many current Pacificans don't know was that Yvonne wrote a weekly column for the *Tribune* back in the 1960s.

"I wrote the 'Pacifica People' column, a weekly 20-column-inches piece and received the phenomenal income of \$5 per week," she recalled with a smile. "The column was a collection of odds and ends of what locals were doing such as: having relatives visit, having a new baby, their children were having birthdays, there was a new pet in the family – interesting things that people and their kids were doing."

Bill, who also went by WD in the office, taught Yvonne to listen to the police calls when she was at the *Tribune*.

"If there was no reporter handy, I was to hurry to the location mentioned, take careful notes and bring them back to the office – ASAP!" Yvonne said. "Bill taught me how to type up my column on specially-sized sheets of paper for the typesetters and to put -30- at the very end. In those days there was a huge press under the floor of the *Tribune* office and it was always an exciting place. Paul Azevedo (*Paul's much-anticipated Tribune column ran from 1976 until his death in 2004*) was in and out often in those days, always working on either a story or on the paper's 'morgue' where he kept the news on specific people or events in labeled files. Those were the days!"

As Bill wrote and delivered the news about the community he lived in, Yvonne said he always kept a calm, professional manner.



"Bill dressed in a suit with his signature bow tie at all times – well, there was one time," Yvonne said. "However, Bill was never seen, no matter the event, without his trusty journalist's notebook and pencil. The notebook was exactly the size to fit into the palm of his hand with wide-spaced lines. His pencil was a fat one, like kindergartners use. It was always sharp and the graphite was dark grey against the white paper. He had his own method of taking notes quickly. Sometimes it looked like a form of shorthand. Other times he carefully spelled out things one letter at a time, particularly people's names or the location of where something was happening."

What does that mean... "well, there was one time?"

"One time Pacifica was having a parade on Linda Mar Blvd.," Yvonne laughed. "It may have been a celebration of its 50th anniversary of incorporation. Bill arrived casually dressed, as we all were. But I was shocked to see him, 'out of costume,' no bow tie!"

Hastily, Yvonne made her friend an origami bow tie out of a crisp dollar bill.

"I fastened it to his shirt collar with a bobby pin and said, 'There! Now you are really Bill Drake!' He gave me that sweet grin and we joined the marchers."

Yvonne stopped writing for the *Tribune* when she was given a scholarship to Mills College and spent several years studying in the East Bay. But her friendship with Bill and Peggy was lifelong.

"Bill and Peggy were devoted to Pacifica. One of the rules of the *Tribune* was that all the news was Pacifica news and even though it was difficult to maintain the level of ad income, Bill insisted that he would support only Pacifica businesses. He did accept business legal notices from neighboring communities, but even at the end of his ownership of the paper he adhered to his rules.

"I dearly miss Bill and Peggy. They were a vital part of the community and there will never be any like them, certainly no one could replace them."



**In 1962, Bill Drake, Pacifica's first mayor Jean Fassler and Jean's husband Joe Fassler visit at a local event.**

Between October 10 and October 14 of 1962, the Pacific Coast, from central California to British Columbia, was battered by winds reaching hurricane force and rainfall amounts broke records. In the Santa Cruz Mountains, daily catches of more than 13 inches were reported. The subsequent runoff also broke records. In the Bay Area, the City of Oakland was temporarily cutoff to the outside world as mudslides and floodwaters closed access roads and streets. Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek and Concord were also encircled by floodwaters. In Pacifica, more than 200 people were evacuated due to rushing water and mudslides. In the back of Linda Mar, debris poured down from San Pedro's valleys inundating Frontierland at the north fork of San Pedro Creek, and John Gay's Trout Farm at the south fork of the creek. In the western area of Linda Mar—at the Linda Mar Shopping Center and in the Anza-Arguello neighborhood—water levels reached 5 feet. And as the rain poured down, and after it calmed, newsman Bill Drake wrote the story.

*"The flood damaged 85 homes and 5 businesses in the shopping center and destroyed the Trout Farm and Frontierland. In less than an hour, water and mud crumpled the farm's metal fish rearing tanks, filled in the pond and the creek channel, and killed over 25,000 young fish, many of them being spread over the meadows just downstream from the farm. Frontierland was almost wiped off the map. Mud flowed into stables, forcing the evacuation of horses, and filled the riding ring with so much mud that the once chest-high fence could easily be stepped over. Ten tons of hay was washed away and the owners were left looking for people to board the park's horses. Fortunately, no one was killed or seriously hurt by the mud and water. Some residents blamed the city for not cleaning out storm drains, providing better drainage or building better pumps, while others attributed the flood to an 'act of God.' Everyone agreed, however, that the storm produced an unusual amount of rain."*

In 1972, floods came again to the Linda Mar Shopping Center/Anza-Arguello neighborhood, despite dedicated improvements by Pacifica's Department of Public Works. (The area is the site of the former Lake Mathilda.)

*"But this time the damage was not nearly as bad as the 1962 flood," the Pacifica Tribune reported, "with only a half dozen homes being flooded on Anza Drive, and damage estimates to homes and businesses did not exceed \$100,000."*

On January 4-5 of 1982, storms dumped a deluge of rain in the Bay Area and Linda Mar was again devastated. Pumping stations were overwhelmed. Linda Mar Shopping Center became "Lake Linda Mar" and teens took to it on rafts and boats.

*"Floodwaters surging through San Pedro Creek seriously damaged the Adobe Drive Bridge and destroyed the Peralta Road Bridge," the Pacifica Tribune reported.*

This 1982 Northern California "killer storm" closed the Golden Gate Bridge, and created mudslides in the counties of Marin, Santa Cruz and San Mateo. In the back of Linda Mar, three children were killed when a flow of debris soared down the hillside, pushing a neighbor's house off its foundation and into the children's home on Oddstad Boulevard. Where Oddstad meets Rosita Rd., a 3-foot pile of debris thrust cars aside until it came to a halt at the end of the street. Four Pacifica homes were destroyed, 300 were damaged and 60 businesses were damaged. Recovery costs climbed into the millions.

With three major floods in three decades, some Pacifica residents questioned the safety of houses built in these mud-slide-prone areas. A month after 1982's "100-year storm," Bill penned the following.

*"It's a new kind of shadow for Pacifica as residents there protect their homes from a frightening menace hidden somewhere in the skies and the hills. They are the very same soft and scenic hills that helped attract us all here in the first place, and which now, as one Pacifican put it last week, 'have seemed to turn upon us.' Should Pacifica collectively have a guilty conscience? Did this city, just moving into its 25th year as a corporate entity, do something wrong, or fail to do something, that could have prevented the*

*deaths of three children in a crushed home? Why did Anza Drive suffer for the third time in three decades a damaging flood?"*

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Throughout the years Bill gave Pacificans their *Pacifica Tribune*, he was honored with a number of California Newspaper Publishers Association General Excellence awards. But perhaps no award meant more to the publisher than the award he received from the CNPA in 1963 for his reporting of the 1962 flood.

"When my parents went to the California Newspaper PA Award Ceremony, the awards for various categories—best editorials, photography, etc.—were presented in a set order, with daily papers over a certain circulation presented first, then daily papers with lower circulation next, then weeklies, etc.," Andrea said. "So when it came time for the Best Spot News Coverage Award to be presented, my parents were surprised when the *Tribune* was named first. They thought that for some reason the award for the best weekly in that category was being presented first. Then the runner-up was announced – the *Los Angeles Times*. I believe that that was one of the happiest moments in my parents' long and happy partnership, both in marriage and in journalism."

The *Tribune's* first place award, which outstripped all of the State's other newspapers, both daily and weekly, was for Pacificans simply a reflection of what they already knew—Bill Drake delivered first-class journalism for his community. For instance, he understood that sports coverage in Pacifica was not about Bay Area teams such as the San Francisco Giants or the Oakland Athletics, or the San Francisco 49ers or the Oakland Raiders; it was about the situation on the field in Pacifica. He was dedicated to comprehensive local coverage.



"For 25 years the biggest sporting event in town was the playing of the Anchor Game featuring Terra Nova's and Oceana's football teams," Horace noted. "In 1962, Bill and then sports editor Joe Grasso, created the friendly crosstown football rivalry with the winner taking home a 100-pound anchor that supposedly they had found washed up along the beach shore. The tradition continued until 1990 at which time Oceana High School was restructured, eliminating football. In 1986, Bill was guest of honor at the 25th anniversary game."



(The Pacifica Historical Society notes that the 25th anniversary of the Anchor Game was celebrated with 4,000 spectators in attendance. The Oceana Sharks beat the Terra Nova Tigers, 48-13.)

Bill had a passion for sports and he was a great admirer of major league baseball.

When he was a kid, he met Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. When he was UP manager at the *Omaha World Herald* in Nebraska, he also met a number of baseball stars.

"My dad was a great fan of the Oakland A's during the time when they were the best team in baseball," Andrea remarked. "It gave him great satisfaction to watch a well-played game. I've often told people that my father was a true sports fan – he would rather watch a good game that his team lost than watch a blowout that his team won. The last game that he saw was a Giants game on July 10, 2009, when Jonathan Sanchez threw a no-hitter against the San Diego Padres, 8-0. I don't know if Dad understood that it was a no-hitter, his dementia was setting in, but he clearly knew he was at the ball park, watching a baseball game, and he enjoyed it thoroughly. When you went to a ball game with my dad, you never needed to take a radio with you – all you had to do was ask him what was going on and he always knew."

Bill Drake was also known for giving aspiring journalists and photographers a chance to enhance their skills as reporters in his paper.

"Many young journalists can show that their first byline story/photograph appeared in the *Pacifica Tribune*," Horace said.

There were also occasions when Bill recognized that the best reporting on a story might come from a community member with no particular reporter aspirations. This leads to the tale of longtime Pacifican and retired educator Erika Rigling.

"I first met Bill when his wife Peggy was a member of AAUW," Erika said. (Erika is a longtime member of the Pacifica Branch of AAUW, 50 years, which includes serving as President four times in four different decades. She has also served as President and Vice President of the Pacifica Historical Society, and is the pen behind the Historical Society's newsletter.)

Erika and Bill got better acquainted during the Laguna Salada Union School District—now the Pacifica School District—teacher strike of 1975, which began in April of that year. Jim Brien was the LSUSD Superintendent and Erika was Bargaining Chair for the teachers.

"I sat down in Bill's office and confronted him with the issue that newspapers were supposed to print both sides of any issue," Erika recalled. "He listened to my argument and agreed, and from then on asked me, or our president, to comment on what was going on from the teacher point of view. I always respected him for that."

Erika's own foray into journalism took place during several NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) events. The first took her to the Apollo Mission Control Center at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. It was July of 1975 and the event was the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project.

The Apollo-Soyuz Test Project was the first international manned space mission, involving the docking of an American Apollo spacecraft with a Soviet Soyuz spacecraft. Its origins date back to May of 1972, when President Richard M. Nixon and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin signed an agreement to rendezvous and dock an Apollo Command/Service Module with a Soyuz vehicle. In September of 1974, Soviet flight crews traveled to the JSC to familiarize themselves with Apollo systems and to practice crew transfer procedures. Several months earlier, American flight crews traveled to Moscow for similar training. Erika's 1975 summer vacation plans took her to Houston.

"Unbeknownst to Bill, to get into the press briefing in Houston, I claimed I was a reporter for the *Pacifica Tribune*," Erika laughed. "After hanging out in the press room for a few days, and being invited to use one of their typewriters, I was confronted by a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times*, who alerted me that the *Tribune* and I would be mentioned in Monday's paper in Los Angeles.

"Worried that I would be 'outed' and that Bill would be upset, I phoned him to let him know what I had done. His response, 'just make sure you get your film and story in as soon as you get back!' and he made room on the front page of the next paper."

Erika additionally polished out a *Tribune* story on NASA's Viking Mission to Mars, the summer of 1976, as well as a story on the first shuttle approach and landing test in the summer of 1977, via the Dryden Flight Research Center in Edwards, CA, and the neighboring desert in Lancaster.

"Pacifica was lucky to have Bill Drake."

Did Bill ever relax?

"His family, the *Tribune* and baseball were his life," his daughter Andrea said. "He loved them all. But he did enjoy walking on the beach. The beach was his favorite thing about Pacifica and probably the only exercise he ever got. He was also very fond of cats. Over the years he had a lot of cats and he taught us all to love cats as well. The first cats I know of were ones my parents owned in Omaha: Fabian, Yummy and Nankipoo. We lived on a quiet street in Omaha so the cats could run free all day. Dad hated keeping cats inside when they wanted to be free, so he frequently had to clean up the dead rodents and birds the cats dragged in.

"I don't know that he had any cats as a kid. The only pet he ever mentioned was a stray dog that he found on a cold rainy night when he was at his father's insurance office in Greenwood. His dad let him keep the dog and they named it Henry. Henry was eventually run over by the Interurban, but he was a successful pet in that his owner remembered him fondly for decades after. When Dad and I visited Greenwood, he showed me the corner where he found Henry, and we joked about opening up a bar there and calling it 'Henry's Corner.'"

Chris Hunter – Chief of Staff to San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley, and former Editor and Publisher of the *Pacifica Tribune* (he came on board the *Tribune* in 1990 and stayed 17 years) – agrees that the *Pacifica Tribune* was Bill Drake's life.

"He probably shouldn't have sold when he did," Chris said. "He was unhappy after selling the paper. Folks are often advised to bolt when they sell a family newspaper. It's not unique to Bill. He knew that. He lived for the deadline!"

Chris said he and Bill would get together now and then for a few beers. Out of that came their collaborative effort, with the Pacifica Historical Society, **Pacifica (Images of America: California)**, Arcadia Publishing, 2002. The book is an informative tribute to Pacifica, its history and its residents from resident authors who genuinely love their town, quirks and all.

"What do I miss about not being at the *Tribune*?" Bill told Horace during their 2009 *Footprints* interview. "I miss the whole show, the idea of creating the content every week and getting it done."

Bill sold the *Tribune* in 1989, primarily due to the health of his wife. More than three hundred people attended a dinner to honor the Drakes and all they had done for Pacifica. Drake celebrants included: Pacifica residents, Pacifica business people, colleagues, employees and numerous dignitaries including: Pacifica's entire City Council; several San Mateo County Supervisors; California State Assemblywoman

Jackie Speier (now U.S. Congresswoman Speier, CA-14); retired judge Quentin Kopp and former Pacifica Councilwoman and three-time Pacifica Mayor Grace McCarthy.

Along with thanking the publishers for their first class reporting, which sometimes meant "sacrificing the scoop for the good of the town," Grace also thanked Bill and Peggy for their 1970 journey to Os de Balaguer, province of Lleida, in Catalonia, Spain – the birthplace of explorer Captain Gaspar de Portolá. (Portolá is the leader of the expedition responsible for the European discovery of San Francisco Bay, which was sighted on November 4, 1769 from Pacifica's Sweeny Ridge.)

On that 1970 journey, Bill and Peggy Drake joined Leslie O. Merrill, then San Mateo County Historical Society director, and six members of the director's family, to travel to Portolá's birthplace and the towns where he had lived. Appointed by California's Governor Ronald Reagan as an official representative of California to Spain, Mr. Merrill and his California envoy were welcomed by Spanish officials.

Grace McCarthy said, "Peggy and Bill, my appreciation includes, but is not limited to, your great representation of Pacifica in 1970 when Spain had the first celebration on Portolá. You were our first official visitors to our sister city in Spain. Peggy spoke beautiful Spanish and Bill kept quiet in Spanish!"

July 28, 1989 was then designated as Peggy and Bill Drake Day in the City of Pacifica and the packed house burst into applause.

Andrea said the affection showed for her parents at their retirement gathering was extremely touching and it really let them know just how much their *Pacifica Tribune* had meant to their community.

Bill was not much for joining local organizations during his tenure with the *Tribune*, but he did serve as one of the early presidents of the Pacifica Historical Society and was an involved PHS member after his retirement. He additionally served on the committee that helped see to it that the new Mary's Help Hospital (now Seton Medical Center) was built in Daly City in 1965. He was also named an honorary Rotarian by the Rotary Club of Pacifica.

On November 5, 1996, Bill lost his beloved Peggy whom he had devoted his time to during her difficult illness. He did marry again. In 1998, he married Jackie Ellis. Jackie, who was known as "the voice of the *Tribune*," had worked at the *Tribune* as a receptionist and proofreader for 38 years. The two were married until Bill's death on January 20, 2012.

There was a memorial for Bill Drake at the *Pacifica Tribune* office on February 4, 2012. Elaine Larsen, who was an ongoing presence at the *Pacifica Tribune* for 26 years – always as a writer, and eventually as the paper's editor and publisher – wrote about Bill Drake's memorial on February 8, 2012.

*"It was truly a Pacifica Tribune family affair last Saturday when more than 100 people attended a memorial service for former Tribune Publisher Bill Drake, and later came by the Pacifica Tribune office at 59 Bill Drake Way for a food and beverage reception hosted by the Drake family and current Tribune staff.*

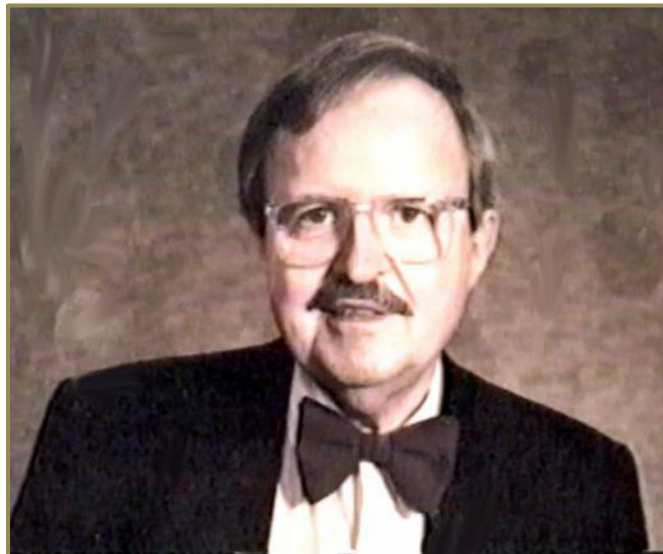
*"Drake, who died at 91, is a true Pacifica icon whose 30 years running the local newspaper and setting the stage for three decades of quality news making in the community, was eloquently memorialized by more than a half dozen speakers. Among them were longtime sports editor and friend Horace Hinshaw, former Tribune editor and publisher Chris Hunter, Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Pacifica's 'first lady' mayor and longtime San Mateo County Supervisor Jean Fassler, first Pacifica City Manager Karl Baldwin, and numerous family members, including son Ken Drake, daughter Andrea Drake, and grandchildren Alexandra and Julia Drake.*

*"Clorinda Campagna sang a cappella beautifully to cap off a memorial that included numerous VIP attendees, including four-time mayors Nick Gust and Pete DeJarnatt, San Mateo County Supervisor Adrienne Tissier, and many local businesspeople and former politicians and civic activists, including Pete Periera, Ginny Jaquith and Fred Howard who, incidentally, was dressed in a black suit with bow tie as a befitting tribute to Drake, who, many people noted, was known for his perpetual bow tie, notebook and camera."*

Elaine, who referred to herself as one of the numerous among the 'younger generation' of the Bill Drake legacy, was particularly charmed by the actions of one event attendee.

*"Bill's good friend, Yvonne Lorvan, took the time to fashion 'bow ties' out of dollar bills for the Drake grandchildren."*

"My brother and I could probably talk for hours about what it was like having Bill Drake as our father," Andrea said. "He was truly one of the two or three best people I have ever met in my life. When I was in college at Berkeley and my sister was at Stanford, Dad would pick us up for a weekend at home on Friday, and then drive us back to our dorms on Sunday night. I never appreciated how hard that must have been, how exhausted he must have been, doing all that driving during his limited free time, just so his daughters could have some time at home."



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco. She is a former Hallmark Card writer, a produced playwright and a published author.