

9th Annual Three Quarter Century Club Luncheon – June 19th, 2008

(Submitted story)



In addition to crown and satin stole reading "Queen," Helen received a dozen long-stem roses

Photo Tom Black, courtesy of Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary

It seemed like only yesterday that Orinda held its First Three Quarter Century Club Luncheon with eighty Orinda Seniors over seventy five years old attending that gala event. The year was 2000 and now in 2008 a full house of 125 filled the Orinda Community Church to celebrate the 9th Annual Three Quarter Century Club party.

What began as an idea of John Fazel to honor Orinda's Seniors who had contributed toward the development of our great community, has now become a tradition that attendees look forward to each year. The idea is not new, as Fazel remembered how his hometown of Perry, Iowa, has been doing this since 1930. His mother used to take her stepfather and mother to the Perry event dating back to the early 1950s, then when his parents were old enough they continued to attend.

While the Iowa event was started and sponsored by the local newspaper, the Orinda Luncheon has been sponsored by Orinda Prudential California Realty, Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary and the Orinda Community Church. The Prudential Realtors and Lamorinda Sunrise Rotarians prepared and served a delicious lunch of roast chicken, Caesar salad, rice pilaf, Peet's Coffee, cake and of course the celebratory wine.

A tradition at each Annual Three Quarter Century Luncheon is the introduction of the Royal Court. This year's Royal Court consisted of 'The Baby of The Year', Marilyn Sherwin, who had just turned 75 on June 3rd; Thomas Dahl, who was crowned King for the 2nd year in a row; and our Queen, for the 3rd straight year, was the ever radiant Helen Vurek who is just two years shy of 100.

When Fazel asked how many couples had been married over

fifty years almost all the hands in the room went up. There were still many hands in the air for those over sixty years, but one very charming and handsome couple have been married for an impressive sixty seven years. Our King Thomas and his beautiful wife Aileen were presented with a bottle of champagne, wine glasses and flowers.

All of the members of the Royal Court were presented with plaques and a proclamation from the City of Orinda honoring them and proclaiming Jun 19, 2008, as Official Orinda Three Quarter Century Club Day.

The luncheon attendees were entertained with a behind the scenes story of the history of the drive to incorporate Orinda. Who better to learn it from than two of the foremost experts on the subject, Dick Heggie, Orinda's first mayor, and Joyce Hawkins, one of the three co-chairs of the Incorporation Committee and also former mayor.

Attempts had made many times in the past dating back to the 1950's, but times changed and the people in Orinda finally decided the time was right. The County Board of Supervisors and Developers were doing what they wanted in Orinda and the Pro Incorporation Committee and over 60% of the voters said it was time for Orinda to make their own decisions.

Those wishing to view the DVD of the event may contact John Fazel at 925-324-2017.