

TAPE #16

BABE GARBARINI RETIREMENT DINNER

Recorded: APRIL 20, 1977

...Babe was born on the North Creek side of Jackson Mill Fork. That was now where the Argonaut Title building now stands. Babe said he was born in bed, upstairs above the blacksmith shop. The family blacksmith shop was on the ground floor, the home was on the second floor. There were a series of shops around them: cabinets, restaurants, and a spacious..... on the corner of Water and Main Streets. Where that vacant lot is now. Next door, north, was a very busy Water Street saloon. That was Joe Lima's domain, and the local cowboy's haven and delight. He shared his home with his parents and a brother and sister. All of us went to Jason(?) Grammar School, just a few steps from here. With us tonight are Ernie Lucco, Mrs. Doda and my wife; we all went to school together. In high school Babe was quite a basketball player, but at that time on Peek Hill there was a tennis court. There were only a few houses there, and the tennis court was more or a club. The Super of the Argonaut was an avid tennis player, and he decided to put the tennis court up there, and that was that. Well, that left us high school kids out on a limb; we didn't have any place to play. So Babe, being the promoter type, decided we should have a tennis court. So he almost singlehandedly promoted it and we established a doubles court that is still here today. In those days rattlesnakes were around, and you had to worry about getting snake bit. It was right

by the high school they are going to demolish.

Well, Babe played basketball too, and we had to practice outside. And we played our indoor games at Love Hall. That was the sports center of Jackson. They had dances there, and Native Daughter meetings and everything else. When they tore it down, they tore down a big piece of Jackson history. They didn't really tear it down, they expanded it into Sprouse-Rietz store.

Anyway, someone promoted a ten cents a dance thing. And zing-zing-zing the ten cents was gone. It was popular for a while, but then it came about that the girls were alledged to be having outside activities, and the DA closed it up. Then Babe became Editor. He didn't straddle the issues. He'd take a stand. He wasn't always too forceful, but he had to be diplomatic, I guess. For instance, paving the Jackson streets, I guess that was contraversial. And the sewer system, that was something. And the re-alignment of 49 and 88. That involved taking homes away from people.

We had a lot of fires in Jackson in the early days. Babe always covered the fires with a camera. The California Hotel fire, that was up by the Shell station, that was a big wooden, two story, structure. They used that for a red light district.

And the most disasterous one was the Alpine Garage fire, that happened on a Sunday morning about 10.30. One man lost his life; a wall fell on him. It was Matt Thomas. This was about 31 or 32, just about the time Babe took over.

Now we go to the Ledger office, that was really the hub. Just stick your nose in the door, and find out the news. Marie came later, and she was custodian in the front office. She took care of the money and

the books and the rest of it. She did a great job at the Amador Ledger. Babe was always promoting something; see, we needed a swimming pool. So he wrote editorials and asked for donations. He put the present swimming pool in almost by himself.

(Babe)

Actually the pool was the joint effort of about seven people here in town. The city gave us a deed to a little piece of land at the end of the park and they let us have a bulldozer too. We opened the land but found out we were down in hard rock. Well, we couldn't get help from anyone else, so the ~~XXXX~~ seven of us pitched in with crowbars and punched in the rock to make the foundation earthquake proof. Eventually the idea caught fire, and the Winton Lumber co. offered us lumber for the forms, Andy Pierovich, who was a state senator at the time, pulled a few strings and got us almost all the cement. Well, we got it ready to go, and we rounded up four big cement mixers. On the day we were supposed to pour we all got out there; we were supposed to pour about 6 in the morning. We waited and nobody showed up. But soon we had a lot of people, and they were all mixing cement. And pouring and vibrating---everything! And the outcome was, we had a pool. Then someone thought we should make it safer; all it was then was some walls. So we had someone put an apron all around. And after that it just seemed to take hold. Then we formed the Jackson Recreational Club.

(Back to the speaker)

Babe is always promoting raising the price of Gold.

(Babe)

Out there behind our shop is a creek. Burl has spent hours in that creek panning for gold. He the proudest guy when he comes in with a little vial of gold. He thinks he struck it ~~with~~ rich with this.

And there is a guy who used to live here, his name is Mitchel Soso, he's superintendent of schools in Santa Rosa. One time Mitchel walked in the shop and asked, Babe, mind if I go out there and pan for gold. And I said, Sure, but I get half. Well, he came in a week ~~later~~ later and said, here's your half. And he gave me a bottle of wine.

(speaker)

Babe was always an advocate of the Consumnes River and ~~Pink~~ <sup>Pie Pie</sup> Valley. He was backed up by a lot of people interested in water development. That didn't really get started. They got married in 1938 and started raising a family. Now they are blessed with childred and grandchildren.