

Meet the Verdoorns – Lot 5



Helen and Joe Verdoorn on the left at a Chinese home for lunch on our trip to China in 2005, and on the right our annual Christmas dinner for those that brave the winter months in Mission Acres and no place better to go.

Joe and Helen were married May 1, 1958 and spent their honeymoon in the cottage they now own. Helen is the daughter of Bill and Tess Dennison that owned the lot from 1946 until they passed away. Joe and Helen purchased the lot from the family when they retired to Mission Acres in 2000. They have been regular visitors since they were married and owned Lot 1 from 1969 to 1980 before selling it to Peter and Karen Ohrnberger. Joe and Helen have one daughter – Katie born in 1972. She and her husband Brian visit in July of each year.

Helen graduated from Michigan State University in 1956. She was an elementary school teacher for many years until Katie was born. She went back to work later, when Katie was in High School, in fabric stores – first SoFro and then JoAnn. She enjoyed sewing and it was a lot easier than getting her teacher's certificate renewed. She retired in 1999, but continued to work until Joe retired in 2000.

Joe graduated from Michigan State University in 1964 after spending five years in the Marine Corps. He worked in private industry for twenty years in accounting and financial administration, and eventually human resources. He was an instructor at Dana University and made biannual presentations on incentive systems at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the 1970's. He left his job as Director of Finance and Administration to become a consultant in incentive plans just about the time that the consulting industry was hit by the recession in the 1980's. He finished his financial career with the Department of Veterans Affairs with a special project computer group developing a cost accounting system for VA hospitals. In between the two careers he became interested in gemstones and holds a Graduate Gemologist degree from GIA. He had a part time business appraising fine Jewelry exclusively for the Chicago district of Service Merchandise Company. He is a member of JCK Professional Jewelers society. He is now retired – as of September 2000, and does as little as possible.