

Carl Rogge – Clayton Memories

Carl Rogge was born Oct. 11, 1910, in the city of St. Louis, on Lucky St., which is no longer in existence. His family moved to Columbus OH, then moved back to Mt. Olive, on Olive St. Rd. In 1924 the family moved to 167 N. Central, the year that Carl started at Clayton High School, at the corner of Jackson and Maryland.

The school had a single tennis court, east of the school. Their track was a cinder track around the tennis court. This was adjacent to Jackson. Maryland Grade School was across the street, but the Bracken building site was an empty lot.

His wife's father, Mr. Duffner, was a builder. He was involved in building the Clayton High School, also McBride High School, and St. Joseph's Church. The Duffers lived in Pasadena Hills, in Normandy.

When Carl graduated from Clayton High School in 1928, he went to work for his Uncle, Dave Remley, who had a market at Delmar and Kingsland in the Loop area where the streetcar turned around. There was a hotel (for men?) across the street. Downtown St. Louis was a booming area in 1928. Carl's uncle had a number of grocery stores all over the city. One was downtown, at 6th and Franklin (now Martin Luther King). It was a huge store. On the second floor, which was cut out in the middle and open, there was a cafeteria. There was also a beauty parlor and music store, and on the third floor a bakery. Then came the stock market crash in 1929, and things were very bad.

When Carl was 11 years old, he worked in the downtown store on Saturdays, for \$1. In 1928 when he was 18 years old, he worked for \$3 a day, six days a week, with no lunch hour - he just ate and went back to work.

Just to the south, on 6th at Delmar, Uncle Dave's son had a store that was almost as large. The son's name was David Lynn Remley, and the store was called "Lynn's". David Lynn's son had a store at 6th and Lucas, called Thomas, the son's name. And there as a fourth store to the south, where Union Market was - a complete grocery store, running all the way to the rear, that a cousin Edward Remley operated. The area was very populated, enough to support all those stores. There was a large Jewish population, and they sold items on the sidewalks, in front of their homes.

The Rogge family sold the house at 167 N. Central, a Dutch colonial, for \$13,000 in 1946.

Carl eventually went into "finance", and worked at the American Investment Company, a large conglomerate that had 150 furniture stores and other businesses. Donald Barnes was the president. It was in the Ambassador Building downtown, and then moved to Clayton, on Maryland Avenue, across from the present Brown Shoe Co., in 1953, into the two buildings (still there) which Mr. Barnes built. Donald Barnes also owned the St. Louis Browns. Al Kerth was mayor at that time.

Carl retired in 1974, at the age of 63. The business was "sold out" four years later. Donald Barnes Jr. built a house across from St. Louis Country Club. He also developed a golf course at Clayton and Clarkson (Meadowbrook).

Carl has been in touch with the principal of Clayton High School, and will be taking part in the graduation ceremonies, in cap and gown. (Says he will look like Rip Van Winkle).

His 1928 graduation class had 60 students, evenly split between boys and girls. There was only one Jewish family attending school, the Kingburgs, who had the newspaper route. When the apartments were built on Skinker, across from Forest Park, more Jewish families moved in, and the school population grew. There was nothing much west of Meramec Ave. Clayton ended at Meramec, except for a small supply company.

- March 2010 Interview by Rosemary Hardy