

**T H E B R O W N F A M I L Y**

## A Short History of the Illustrious Brown Family

I happen to think that the Brown family is rather special. This is not merely because I am a part of it, but because of their surprising talents and intellects.

The proximate cause of this is the presence of the genes and influence of Herb and Donna Brown.

My father, Herbert Walter Brown, whose education did not extend beyond High School, progressed from a delivery boy for the Bank of Italy in San Francisco to the Manager of his own Branch of the Bank of America. My mother, Donna Louise Anderson, had come from extremely bright and determined Scandinavian parents (my Grandfather, a ship's Master in the Alaska Packers, and my Grandmother, a strong-willed and gifted Danish girl who raised seven quite unusual children (six girls and one boy). My mother's education took her two years beyond High School, to complete "Teacher's College", and to find herself teaching elementary school at the age of eighteen.

Herb and Donna moved their family at an early age to Piedmont, California where the schools had the best reputation in the San Francisco Bay Area. This was a financial reach for them, but they managed it well.

It soon became clear that their two children, Herbert Anderson Brown, and myself, Wilbur Knight Brown, were slated to become outstanding students. A fellow student complained to me when we were adults that "Herb" always won the Spelling Bee in their class. I followed just one year behind Herb quietly vowing to outdo him if I could. The competition had a mutually salutary effect: My bother Herb was soon spending his Summers building radios in our garage on Crofton Avenue. I soon saw that I had no electronic talent and satisfied myself working first on bicycles and later (with Herb) on "Motor Scooters". It was soon evident that Herb has a superior talent for internal combustion-engine vehicles (which I did not), and which lasted for his entire life, and which he passed on to several of his children.

All this time, although I enjoyed working with Herb on vehicles in the Summers, I committed myself to excelling in school - in which I succeeded. At the end of High School,

I spent most of my time reading, and upon graduation, won the Mathematics Award for the year. I graduated 10th in a talented class of 100, and had fallen in love with Kathryn Lomilla Lind, who was first in our class. I was captivated by both her youthful beauty and her vocabulary - which I had happily discovered was equal to my own..

Upon graduation from Piedmont High School in 1950, Kathryn ("Kitty") attended Mills College in Oakland where she studied Chemistry, while I attended the University of California in Berkeley. I passed an NROTC test (Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps) with such a high score that I was granted a 4-year scholarship to study Physics.

(This took some financial pressure off my parents, too, because I was paid a monthly stipend besides supplying all of my books and materials by the Navy).

The year 1954 was a banner year: "Kitty" and I graduated from our respective universities, were married on June 27th, and I received my Commission as Ensign in the U.S.Navy.

We soon found, to our delight, that my ship, the U.S.S. Boyd (a Destroyer) was in drydock being overhauled in nearby Mare Island Naval Shipyard. We joyously settled down to married life in a quonset hut (QH 459A) on the base. After retiring from the Navy, I returned to Berkeley, completed my Master's Degree in Nuclear Engineering, my Ph.D. in Engineering Science, & finished my Thesis at the Livermore National Laboratory. Then followed the precision measurement of the half-life of the free neutron at Denmark's Risoe Laboratory, the measurement of neutron cross-sections using time-of-flight neutrons from underground Nuclear Explosions at the Nevada Test Site, and the subsequent publishing of perhaps 100 scientific papers. My career was the direct legacy of my gifted parents.

In the meantime, my brother Herb, also graduated from the University of California in Berkeley after studying Electrical Engineering, and received (through the ROTC) his Commission as 1st Lieutenant in 1954 in the U.S.Army. Both Herb and I returned to the Berkeley campus in 1956 after serving in the Army and Navy, respectively. I entered Graduate School and Herb made a fine match in marrying a Physical Education Master's Degree holder, Betty Jordan of Sherman Texas. They settled in nearby El Sobrante, overlooking the city of Richmond.

Then followed some extraordinary Grandchildren of Herbert and Donna Brown. I have two boys, now grown, Walter Anderson Brown, and Craig Alexander Brown. Walt is the coordinator of a very wide mineral assessment drilling program, ranging throughout central Colorado. He is a Geologist, as is his wife Helen Mary Johnson, and they have two children, Walker Lewis Brown, and Andrew Lemoile Brown. Walt is employed by the Department of Forestry in Durango, Colorado. My second son, Craig is a Veterinarian married to Michele Weaver, also a Veterinarian. Together, they own and operate their own Animal Hospital near Oroville in California's Central Valley.

My brother, Herb's Widow, Betty, have four children: Jordan, Karen, Stewart and Ann. Jordan, in particular, was immediately recognized as a genius, just as his father (my brother) was. Jordan and his wife, Kim, have three precocious children: Grant, Alexandra, and Troy. All three are extraordinarily intelligent. The genetic gifts of Herbert and Donna Brown go ringing down the generations!

I now relate a visit that my father made to Kitty and I after my mother's death. He was in his nineties by that time, and essentially blinded by Macular Degeneration. He would arise from his loft in our Almanor House, and make his way downstairs for breakfast. Following breakfast, a surprising scene would take place. As I mentioned earlier, my father was a banker, and had held his stock investments through the Great Depression. His blindness prevented him from reading or writing, but with my help, he noted the value of his share holdings as I read them to him one by one. At the end of this data-gathering, he would mentally calculate the worth of each of his stock holdings, and, that done, would sum them to establish his total worth on that day, and compare that to days past. At his advanced age, I found this astonishing! This, genetically speaking, probably accounts for my own successful, lifelong mathematical abilities, to which I credit my insight when deriving my flourishing Theory of Sequential Fragmentation. My father died at an advanced age, with a clear, active mind right up to the time of his death.

Herbert Walter and Donna Anderson Brown's genetic gift to all of us is Astounding, and will be with The Brown Family forever! Wibur K.Brown, Fort Bragg, California, January, 2008

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**Herbert and Donna Brown**



**The Brown Family at the Claremont Hotel**  
**January 19, 1971**  
**Kitty, Bill, Donna, Herbert, Betty Jordan, Herb**