

## John and Marge Tait

John was born in Portland, Oregon, while Marge was born 7 years later in Oakland, California. John attended Fremont High School with another club member – Sara Conley. Marge is a graduate of Acalanes High School, attended San Jose State for two semesters and eventually received a Certificate of Achievement in Apparel Design and an AA in Liberal Arts from Diablo Valley College. They are the parents of two children, 4 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Both their fathers were ham radio operators and close friends, and as a result John and his father moved into an apartment above Marge's family when she was about 6 or 7. When the parents would go out for the evening he was told to go baby-sit the "kid" downstairs. This continued until he entered the Navy in September of 1940. When he returned home shortly after the war the "kid" had grown into a lovely lady. Things progressed until they married on April 27, 1946 – by eloping to Reno.

As we all know, John was on the *St. Louis* from December 1940-December 1943. On December 7, 1941, he was at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked. This past year he was interviewed by the Contra Costa Times and KCBS about his experience.

You most likely didn't know that John was present for Operation Crossroads, the A-Bomb test at Bikini. Aboard the *Gaffey* troop transport ship, while on their way home from Japan (where they had spent the last 3 years of John's enlistment) they both witnessed another A-bomb test in the Pacific. It exploded 50 miles above the earth opening the night sky to a beautiful blue sky. They said the sight was both beautiful and frightening.

After the war John worked at Mare Island where he was supervisor of "nukes" – the nuclear submarines. Marge worked in retail commuting to the Capwell's store in Oakland. She took the Greyhound bus that cost 50¢ each way for the fantastic salary of \$1.00 an hour.

They have spent many years traveling and have visited so many countries we don't have room to list them all. Let me just mention – they have snorkeled in Bermuda, climbed Mt. Fuji, rode mules to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, hiked in Germany and skied in Japan.

John's father bought him a 1931 Model A business coupe in 1935, but sold it while John was in the Navy. He purchased his next Model A from Len Baio and joined the Diablo A's in 1998.

Marge has been the "vest lady" for the past several years but has not had a request for a vest for some time. She feels maybe people are not as interested in the vest and patch collecting as they used to be. She has some available if you're interested.

Marianne and I had another great time, interviewing another great couple. Too bad we don't have more room to share their wonderful stories.

And by the way they left on a 15-day cruise from Rio de Janeiro to Africa the first week in April. And as soon as they return, they will be moving to a new home.

