

THE LITTLE FAMILY

Then and Now

A while ago we invited members of Transfiguration's "Little Family" (i.e., all the couples who were married here) to share some of their life experiences with us. We were thrilled to receive so many responses, especially from couples married here in the 1940s and 1950s, but also from other decades, even the new century. We quickly realized that we would have to devote more than one newsletter to our "alumni." We hope you enjoy this latest installment!

August 16, 1946 ~ Ena and Robert Fisher

Robert Volney Fisher, a member of the U.S. Army Air Corps stationed at Rackheath, Norfolk, England, met Ena Doreen Clarice Brodie, a Londoner then working for the War Office, at a dance in London during World War II. After Robert shipped home (aboard the Queen Mary) at the end of the War in Europe, the couple corresponded and decided to marry in New York. Ena booked passage on the Queen Elizabeth and the two married at the Little Church Around the Corner on August 16, 1946. The Church was selected as it was compatible with Ena's upbringing in the Church of England and Robert's Protestant faith. After honeymooning in New York (where they stayed at the Hotel Edison) the newlyweds flew to Robert's native Chicago.

In Chicago Robert, an accountant, worked for the Internal Revenue Service and Ena applied her secretarial skills to the import-export business at JustRite Manufacturing. Robert was determined to return eventually to California as he had been so impressed with the Central Coast community of Santa Maria where he was stationed at the beginning of the War. It took approximately six years, but finally Robert secured a job transfer and the Fishers (including their first child, Jenny Ellen) relocated to Southern California. They settled in Mar Vista, a seaside suburb of Los Angeles.

Robert always said he preferred giving money out to taking it from people and that certainly fit his Mr. Nice Guy personality. Thus when the Small Business Administration was formed he transferred his employment with the federal government from the I.R.S. to the S.B.A. where he remained until his retirement in the mid-1970s. Ena continued to work in secretarial and administrative positions in addition to her full-time responsibilities caring for the Fisher home and the couple's three children, Jenny, Judith Angela

and Robert James Roger. Ena also pursued diverse interests over the years such as dance (in particular Polynesian dance) and volunteer duties.



Ena and Robert Fisher on their wedding day

Robert died on December 19, 2006, six days after his 86th birthday. Ena continues to reside at the Fisher home in Mar Vista. Jenny and her family (including her two children, James Brodie and Kirstin Alanna) live in nearby Santa Monica, Judith lives in Los Angeles and Robert resides in Santa Cruz,

California, with his family (including his two children, Morgan Hamilton and Haley Alexandra).

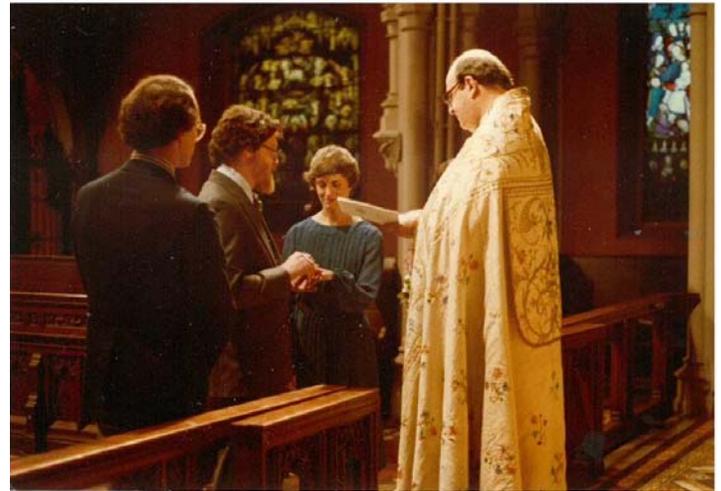
Over the years the children and grandchildren have traveled to New York and their visits to the Little Church have always been graciously welcomed. Robert's wife, Joan, and daughter, Haley, obtained a copy of the Fisher wedding registration when they visited in 2009. Ena always looks forward to the greeting she receives from the Church on her wedding anniversary, and the entire family marvels at the steadfast manner in which that greeting has arrived every year for the past 65 years! Ena will celebrate her 92nd birthday on September 23, 2013.

December 29, 1979 ~ Judith and Samuel Suratt

Judith and Samuel met in 1969 at CBS News in New York. When their romance blossomed several years later, they were surprised to learn that both his and her parents were married at the Church of the Transfiguration. It seemed only fitting that they too would be married at the Little Church! During their pre-marriage counseling at the church, they were both thrilled to be able to find their parents' marriage registration cards in the church archives.

Sam and Judy were married on December 29, 1979 by Father Norman Catir. Judy fondly remembers being out-dressed by Fr. Catir, who wore gold and white vestments with silk brocade. For their honeymoon, the Suratts spent time at their summer home on Long Island, a home which they continue to own and frequently visit in the warmer months.

Judy and Sam recall that one of their favorite memories of the Little Church (besides their marriage, of course) is that of attending mass on Christmas Eve and hearing legendary actor Rex Harrison read the Nativity story and singing Christmas carols. As Judy says, "you haven't heard the story of Christmas until you've heard it read by Rex Harrison from the King James Bible." The following year the Christmas story was read by actor Bernard Hughes.



Judith and Samuel Suratt, December 29, 1979

Sam's two adult sons are both married and have graced Sam and Judy with four grandchildren. Judy and Sam are both retired from CBS News and live on the Upper West Side.

June 20, 1931 ~ Maurine and Leonard Hole

Judy's parents, Maurine and Leonard, met at the University of North Carolina in the late 1920s. After graduating in 1930, Leonard moved to New York City to find work. Shortly thereafter he brought Maurine to New York and they were married at the Little Church. Although their families were unable to make the trip up to New York for the occasion, both Maurine and Leonard fondly recalled their wedding for many years after.

March 17, 1928 ~ Mary and Samuel Suratt

Samuel's parents, Samuel and Mary, were both born and reared in Montgomery, Alabama. However, it wasn't until each of them moved to New York that they met at a tea for young people from Montgomery. Samuel and Mary fell in love, and because both were Episcopalians, the Little Church seemed to be a good place to tie the knot, especially because at the time, the Little Church was well known both as a church for weddings and as a hub for Southern émigrés in New York City!

The Church of the Transfiguration is grateful for the continuing support of all its donors. Ways to give include annual pledging, gifts to mark life's special milestones, and donations for specific capital campaigns required to maintain the beauty of the church for future generations.

For information, please go to our website: www.littlechurch.org or call the church office: (212) 684-6770

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