

## COFFEE WITH THE DECKS

July 17, 2024

### Participants:

Denis Deck	Son of Dan & Laura Deck. Laura was a sister to Hazen Lawson
Sharon Lawson Dill	Younger daughter of Hazen and Ruth Lawson
Jane Lawson Kuka	Daughter of Chester Lawson, Hazen's older brother
David Quam	Son of Edith Grace Lawson Quam, Hazen's sister
Douglas Deck	Son of Dan & Laura Deck, brother of Denis and Danetta
Steve Quam	David's younger brother, son of Edith Grace Lawson Quam
Jeanne Quam	Steve's wife
Sandy Jones	Denis Deck's wife
Katie Lawson Gilfillen	Goes by Katie, but went by Kay growing up. Oldest Lawson daughter
Alex McHugh	Nephew of David and Steve Quam. Grandson of Edith Grace.

Lois Walker

John & Joyce O'Hara

Jack & Sue McFarland

Jim & Lorna Rittenburg

Wendy Upton

Del Coolidge

Ed Neneman

Linda Pittman

Steve: I spent a lot of time up here, on various trips throughout the years. I came by very different types of transportation. Car, train, private airplane, commercial airplane, bicycle, motorcycle. Our father was an airline pilot with Northwest Airlines. He had the fun of being captain on two different jumbo jets before he retired, the Boeing 747 and the Douglas DC-10. He retired in 1975.

Lois: Where did you land when you flew in up here?

Steve: At McFarlands and also on Sonny Bowman's airstrip. And we also landed on the Sondreson airstrip.

Joyce: The Rittenburgs own that property now.

Jim: You wouldn't want to land there today.

David: I'm going to take just a moment, since I love flying, and tell about one little incident. In 1964, my wife and I came out here for our honeymoon. Hazen owned this cabin (now owned by the Decks). They called it the Honeymooner's Cabin, and they gave us two weeks. I flew my dad's Cessna 170, and we landed at Sondreson's. But the pole bridge had been wiped out by the spring flood in 1964. Hazen had left a pickup truck parked on the other side so we could visit the park, but to get there we got in the plane at Sondreson's and took the shortest flight in my life. Because Sondreson's runway was right across the river practically from the McFarland airstrip. We took off south, we didn't get over 150 feet of altitude, and when you landed from the north at McFarland's you had to drop below the trees along the river. In the 170 it didn't matter, but later I

flew a Mooney in there. The runway was the length limit for the Mooney, so I had to get right down under the trees and get the wheels on the very beginning of the runway.

Wendy: My husband Rick and I flew a taildragger into Sondreson's.

David: Well, the 170 is a taildragger.

Sharon: One other honeymoon—my husband and I spent our honeymoon in this cabin, also. That was back when Mom and Dad still owned. That was in 1963.

?: I think everyone in the family did. We spent our honeymoon, part of it, in the trailer.

David: There were four of us Quam siblings. Patricia, the oldest, and Eileen, the youngest, have passed away.

Jack: I only knew Ruth and Hazen. I didn't know all the rest of you. It was such great fun to go visit them at Square Peg. I'm the grandson of Jack and Mary McFarland. In my youngest days, we used to mow the airstrip at the Quarter Circle MC with a push mower on the front of the Army jeep. They were too cheap to get a real mower. I remember riding around on the jeep. Then when the grizzly bear came, and the wranglers decided to chase the bear with me in it, I'm not sure if my mother killed any of them, but she was pretty mad.

My uncle David was the youngest of the three McFarland sons. George was the oldest, and my father Gordon was the middle won. Gordon and Dave were both pilots, as was my grandfather Jack. His name was Jack, but everyone knew him as Doc McFarland. He had been a bush pilot in Alaska before they came down here. He loved to fly, and that's why he really wanted to put the airstrip in. He would use that airstrip when he was the head of Fish and Game and would have to go to Helena. But in the wake of the 1964 flood, I think that's when David bought the big Cessna, the 210 with retractable landing gear.

Doug: David's the one I knew.