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Mike & Mary Webber - Returning Seldovians!

by Mary Glover



The Webbers are back! Like many Seldovia residents, the Webbers have come back from being “outside” (or “in the lower 48”) for the winter months. This is one of the signs that we Seldovians know spring and summer are quickly approaching. Mike and Mary Webber winter in San Diego where one of their daughters, Kristen, their son-in-law, Tim and two small grandchildren live.

Mike and Mary have a wonderful story. They have been going together for 52 years now and Mike tells their story with great delight. They both were born in Madison, Wisconsin. Mary’s parents were dairy farmers in Black Earth, Wisconsin and she was the youngest child on a “happy cow” farm. Mary says, “Black Earth lives up to its name as the soil actually is so rich it is black and the top soil is 2-3 feet deep.” Mike’s father and

When asked how Mike and Mary came to Seldovia. Mike said it began with a trip in 1988 on the M/V Tustumena. Mike’s Dad served on the USS Fox in the Aleutian Campaign during the early years of World War II and he had a shipmate that now lived in Sand Point, Alaska. They took the Aleutian cruise that the Alaska Marine Highway System offers and went to Sand Point. About an hour after leaving Homer, a small child fell and was injured. The Captain of the Tustumena decided to off-load the mother and child in Seldovia for emergency treatment by Seldovia EMTs and Dr. Larry Reynolds. The ship tied up in Seldovia for less than an hour and the Webbers decided that “if they ever got the chance, they would come back to visit.”

One fateful day in 1993, they made a return trip to Seldovia, Alaska. The first night they stayed at the Crow Hill B&B (This is the red house now owned by Paul and Jenny Chissus). The next night they stayed with Peggy and Dave Cloninger at the

uncle built a bowling alley/bar in Black Earth and Mike was designated as a “townie” as he lived in Black Earth while Mary lived on the farm. Mary attended a country school for grades 1-8. They both attended the same high school and that is where they met. Mike stated he “gave his class ring to Mary” on November 18, 1955. That was what kids used to do when they went steady. This was the start of their 52 years together. Mike likes to joke about “Mary being the older woman” in his life! ... “She was a Senior – I was a Junior”.

After graduating from high school, Mike went into the Navy and after basic training and Electronics School he was selected for flight training. Flight training was conditional. He had to sign a contract with the Navy that he was not married and would not get married until he received his wings. While Mike was in training, Mary attended college. Their relationship survived this separation period.

Mike got his wings before he was of legal drinking age. He could go into the Officer’s Club at age 20, but because he was not yet 21 he could not be served alcohol! Mike and Mary were married in a Lutheran Church in Black Earth when Mike turned 21.

Mike’s first assignment was a squadron at Naval Air Station, North Island in San Diego. Up until this time Mary had never been further west than Iowa. (Little did they know then how west they would eventually come – to Seldovia, Alaska!) Mike’s squadron duties were in the Maintenance Department and from 1961-62 he flew the Navy’s FJ Fury (a version of the F-86) for fleet support missions.

Then, like so many military families, they were transferred to Naval Air Station, Lemoore a new installation in central California. Three of their four children were born at the base hospital. Mike’s many assignments over the next 16 years included a number of carrier based squadron tours as well as two flight instructor tours and two years in Monterey, CA to complete a BS in Engineering Science. In this timeframe he advanced in rank from Lieutenant (Junior Grade) to Commander.

During this period he served in carrier-based squadrons in Southeast Asia and Vietnam and completed over 250 combat missions and over 500 carrier landings flying the A-4, Skyhawk aircraft. After Viet Nam, Mike served as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of an A-7, Corsair II fleet squadron aboard the USS Ranger. Mary’s job was taking care of the household and four young children while Mike was at sea.

From Lemoore, Mike and Mary were transferred to the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island for a year and then to Washington, DC. After three years, they transferred to San Diego where Mike retired from the Navy in 1984. Mary got a job in San Diego at the University of California Registrar’s Office where she worked until she retired from that position. (<http://www.ucsd.edu/>) Mike worked as a Marketing Manager

Seldovia Fishing Adventures B&B. Peggy and Dave’s neighbor, Ken Warburton, took Mike out halibut fishing and Mary went to town and had a delicious milkshake with Peggy Boscacci when Peggy used to run the ice cream shop. They got a taste of Seldovia and got bit by the Seldovia Paradise bug.

After returning to San Diego, Mike and Mary called Carol Stavik who used to be a realtor in Seldovia. Everett Boscacci was working for Carol at that time and Everett was successful in getting some property by Inside Beach subdivided and annexed by the city. They made an offer on one of the lots and it was accepted.

In 1998, after Mary retired from her job at the University, they bought a used Ryder truck, filled it with their San Diego belongings, drove the Alaska Highway and came over on the M/V Tustumena to move into a trailer while they built their new home.

Mike and Mary were the first ones to build in this new subdivision which has a beautiful view of the shoreline and Kachemak Bay. They watch the M/V Tustumena come and go in Seldovia Bay from their living room window. Construction on their lot was not an easy task. Jim Hopkins first blasted a level spot on the bluff with an equivalent of 750 lbs of explosives. Dillon & Dillon Construction built the house. Mike was one of the four people on the crew and he has done all the finishing work in the house.

The Webbers have four children, two boys and two girls. Son Scott lives in Salt Lake City, UT area. He is married to Mary Jo who is a special-ed school teacher. Scott and Mary Jo have two children: Sam (10 years old) and Marianna (6 years old). Daughter Sue is a chef (she went to chef school in France) aboard a luxury yacht which is based in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Daughter Kristen is a cashier at a Safeway store in San Diego. Her husband, Tim, is a 3rd grade teacher. They have two children: Micah (6 years old) and Emma (4 years old). Their youngest son, Steve, is a carpenter in Mt. Shasta, CA. He has a stepdaughter Ashley (13 years old) and daughter Kyah (8 years old).

One of Mike’s hobbies is woodwork and he does very nice work. He has built everything from cabinets to wooden marble toys to beautiful little birdhouses. Mary likes to quilt and enjoys entertaining. One of their greatest joys has been sharing their home with family and friends and opening their home to new friends. Mary is a member of the Seldovia Arts Council and both Mike and Mary are non-business members of the Seldovia Chamber of Commerce. They are also quite active in the Lutheran Church in Seldovia. Mike says that they enjoy the simple things in life such as “waiting for the beautiful sunset at 11:30 PM”. They both feel that their Seldovia lifestyle lends itself to really being able to enjoy their visitors. They are looking forward to another busy summer, as their calendar is already filled with people coming for a visit to their idyllic little spot in Alaska.

and Systems Engineer in the aerospace industry in San Diego.

Views at the Webbers' House (images enlarge by clicking on image)



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