Attachment:
Tom Keene was the father of A. M. Keene, the publisher of the Midway Driller for many years. A. M. built the building at 216 4th Street in honor of his father and where the paper was printed for years. The father's name "Tom Keene" appeared at the top of the building until recently when it was removed when the building was remodeled. Gene McGee is Tom's great grandson. (Nov. 1930 during Taft's 20th birthday celebration.)

Reunions
Class of 1943, 65th, O.T. Cook House, Oct. 17-19, Taft, Contact Stan Barrett, 661-765-5337
Class of 1953, 55th, OT Cook House, Oct. 25, Taft, Details 588-6940
Class of 1968, 40th, Details, 559-252-4549 or e-mail gense1950@yahoo.com

Edward F. "Eddie" Coffee
The Eddie Coffee article will not be shown this week but will continue next week in order to bring you the message below.

Mary Glenn (Shepherd) Robinson
(Note: The following message was sent to me by Mary Glenn (Shepherd) Robinson from Santa Maria, California. Her father and mother were our neighbors years ago around the 5th and
Lucard area of Taft. When Mary came through Taft High, she was the first girl in the history of the school to be elected student body president.

What a memory she has. The parenthesis and the addresses of the locations of Mary Glenn's recollections, I have added.)

From Mary Glenn (Shepherd) Robinson, Class of 1953, from Santa Maria, California

Hi Pete!

Reading about the Eiland family and Old South Taft and the stores listed on Harrison Street in 1949 and the memoirs from Eddie Coffee stirred up a lot of memories about the wonderful neighborhood I grew-up in the heart of Taft. My Mother and Dad moved to Taft in the early 1930's and bought the little house at 508 5th Street. We were three blocks from town, where my Dad, Shep, walked to work at the Westside Barber Shop he owned at 415 1/2 Center Street next door to Dr. Harry Harps, an Optometrist. On the other side of the shop was Milo's restaurant (417 Center St.) where I enjoyed delicious cherry cokes, popcorn and candies. I could always walk to school, Taft Primary, Roosevelt, Lincoln and Taft Hi! I could also walk to the natatorium to swim and to the Peacock Dairy (510 Kern St. where they even bottled mild for delivery around Taft and the West Side.) for chocolate milkshakes and .05 cent ice cream cones. Then there was Bobby's Store (416 Kern St.) for snacks and incidentals.

More than the convenience of the location is the fond memories I have of the neighborhood. We all knew and loved and looked after our neighbors. They were the best!! Grace and Hally Morris and beautiful Marjorie (Class of '42) lived next door to the alley (510 5th St.). Marjorie married LeRoy Hogue (Also of the Class of '42) during the war years. I was junior bridesmaid in her wedding at St. Mary's church on North Street (301 Kern St.). Across the alley lived Miss Catherine Paulson, a counselor at Taft High and Miss Dorothy Boring (511 5th St.), who worked with Mr. (Walter) Glenn at the natatorium (who was a star football player at Fresno State and my 7th grade teacher). Mr. and Mrs. Agen lived in the big house on the corner of Fifth and San Emidio (515 5th St.). They owned an insurance company (The Agen Insurance Co. at 217th 4th Street and 529 Kern Street) and drove a Lincoln Zephyr. Across the street on San Emidio was the home of Donna and Tommy Vaughn (426 San Emidio St.). Mr. and Mrs. (Billy) Nicholson lived on the opposite corner (501 San Emidio St.) from the Agen's. He owned Nicholson's Machine Shop (707 Center St.) and Mrs. (Martha) Nicholson was a school teacher. I remember they had a son named Arthur and other grown children. Miss Hazel McKern, the P.E. teacher at Lincoln, lived in the apartments behind the Nicholson's (513 5th St.). Elmo Evans was the Lincoln boy's teacher. On up Fifth Street lived Mrs. Della Brannon (505 5th St.) and around the corner lived the Tom Gianopulos family (504 Lucard St.), with our own famous son Pete, lovely Margaret and young George. Mr. and Mrs. Gianopulos would sit out on their porch in the evenings and I visited them quite often. Next were the Manley's (512 Lucard St.) with Jacquie and Ronnie. The Glendening's lived further down the block (516 Lucard St.) with their youngest son, Dale. Mr. Glendening was a baker. (Oldest son Gene Glendening, class of 1942, became a chiropodist after WWII when he was stationed in the South Pacific near where I was stationed.) Around the corner lived the Hebert's (522 San Emidio St.). I remember Bill was an excellent swimmer. Across Sixth Street lived my Kindergarten pal and longtime friend, Jeanine Garrison, who is a cousin to Jeanne Cooper (the actress on the daily soap program "The Young and the Restless")

In 1942, my Dad bought the "big House" our home on 430 Lucard until 2002 when my Mother sold it and moved in with Bill and me. Our next door neighbors there were Dave and Pauline Hayes. Pauline is a gifted artist Dick and Darlene Gervais moved in next (426 Lucard St.). Dick was a City Policeman and later was elected Coroner in Bakersfield. Next were Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Topper (424 Lucard St.) who owned and operated Toppers' Pharmacy on Center Street (404 Center St.). They had two bull dogs and loved them as children. Next to the Toppers were Lou and Ann Wheeler and daughter Lou Ann (422 Lucard St.). Lou owned and operated Lou's Automotive Shop (505 Kern St.) across from the Peacock Dairy on (510) Kern Street. The Gromer's lived in the middle of the block (409 Lucard St.). There was Carl, Elinor, Charles, Joan and Gary. Elinor's brother, Kent Conger lived with them. Then there were the Fenneman (410 Lucard St.) and the Flippen's, with Jim and Clarence. Across the street lived (Mr. Charles and) Mrs. Valle Bardow (423 Lucard St.).
The vacant lot near the Gromer home was where all the neighborhood "kids" congregated. We played softball, kick the can, tag, mother, may I, marbles, hop-scotch, etc. and had great times, arguing and all!! We rode our bikes and even skated over at Erickson and Brown (501 Lucard St.) when there were no services. We also visited the Taft Library on (524) North Street and especially enjoyed the reading contests in the summer. We "kids" would play until dark or until Mother called! We barely latched our doors at nights and opened the windows to get that still small breeze!!

I thought we had great up-town stores then too. Ricards' Bootery (421 Center St.), and then Bob and Vic's (423 Center St.), Pruett's (421 Center St.), Helen's (510 Center St.), Ruth's Frock Shop (428 Center St.), Smith Bros. (429 Center St.) Havener's (409 Center St.), Goodrich's (410 Center St.), Kirkpatrick's (422 Center St.), Kerr's Jewelers (421 Center St.) and many more. I loved growing up in Taft. It might not be the prettiest place in the world, but it has the best schools and the best people in the world and holds my fondest memories.

Congratulations to Pete on all your accomplishments and thank you so very much for keeping the spirit of Taft alive in the hearts of so many. I love hearing from classmates and friends. Marie Magee was one of my close childhood friends and of course I knew P.T. as we called him. So proud of Pete Magee. I could go on and on.

Warmest regards, your old neighbor,
Mary Glenn (Shepherd) Robinson, Class of '53, Santa Maria, CA

Reader's Responses

From George Joseph Snyder, Class of 1957
Pete: Great photograph of our local cemetery. Best Regards, George Joseph Snyder, Class of "57".

From Coleen (Ballard) Hoskins, Class of 1968, from Fresno, California
Pete, Thanks for sharing the date of our 40th reunion. I would like for you to correct my phone number. It is 559-252-4549. My email address is correct. I just don't want to miss anyone with a wrong phone number.

Thank you so much for all you do. Coleen Ballard Hoskins, Class of 1968

From Neil McCabe, Class of 1958, from Chico, California
Hi Pete, The reference in you latest newsletter about Armistice Day, and the siren at the Taft Fire House reminded me of other Taft sounds: the siren at 11-C winding up, then down at 11:30 a.m. to signal it was time for the lunch break; the bell at the Taft Fire House ringing at 5 p.m. (Have I remembered this one correctly?); and the sound of the old gas engines, chugging and popping night and day out in the oil fields as they ran the pumps at the old wooden derricks. Neil McCabe, Class of '58

(NOTE: Neil has got it right. Those were some of the Taft sounds. We all were very familiar with siren going off at the 11-C Standard Oil Company at lunch time and the bell at the two-story Taft Firehouse on 4th Street between North and Kern Street. And, who can forget the "chugging and popping" noises made be the gas engines that ran the pumps at each of the wooden derricks and there were thousands of them throughout the Midway-Sunset Oil Field. It was said that the people were so used to the sound that if the sound stopped, we would wake up. That is the reason the antique gas engine display during the West Kern Oil Museum Pioneer Days is so popular.)

From Ray Alexander, Class of 1954, from Carson City, Nevada
Pete, my father Boyd Alexander and myself would set off at six o'clock a.m. around one to two hundred pounds of dynamite on twenty five hill. This was during the late 40's early 50's. Keep up the great work.

Ray Alexander

(NOTE: Boyd Alexander was the son of Ford Alexander who started the first attempts to put out oil well fires using dynamite. Ford is the one who started the business of snuffing out fires long before "Red" Adair. The Ford Corporation was located at 308 Wood Street and the dynamite was stored in a tunnel on the north side of 25-Hill. Boyd Alexander was the manager of the business. I served with Boyd on the Taft City Council from 1962 until 1966. Boyd became mayor in 1966.)

From Glynne B. Smith, Class of 1946, from Rancho Cucamonga, California
George is correct, exactly a 11 am on November 11th there was an explosion set of to bring to our attention armistsice’s day of 1918.

Pete, I really appreciate your efforts with the news letter and the many responses. It is also interesting to read some of the comments from others especially from those class graduates after 1946. Some of you might remember me as I worked for Walter Glenn at the Taft swimming pool as life guard and swimming instructor in the summers from 1945 to 1950 when I graduated from Fresno State. Some of you may have taken swimming instructions from me.

Glenn B. Smith

From Elizabeth A. Clark, Class of 1957

I do not know what the criteria are for the Hall of Fame inductees but I think that there are thousands of women who have earned the pride of Taftians of all ages: as mothers, teachers, healers, entrepreneurs, musicians etc. There are woman as well as men who have lived very interesting lives and who have served well as good, honest, caring human beings. Perhaps they will never be in the Hall of Fame but I honor them in my mind and heart, at least those whom I know and I would bet that everyone who reads the newsletter knows people who have lived or are living well and honorably.