

Earl Alexander Olson m. Anita Marie Boucher Boerjan

Born: 31 Dec 1908, Brownlee,
Saskatchewan

Married: 19 July 1942, Elrose,
Saskatchewan

Died: 14 July 1966, Elrose,
Saskatchewan

Born: 28 Feb 1919, Crookston,
Minnesota

Married: 19 July 1942, Elrose,
Saskatchewan

Died: 05 Oct 2007, Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan

Children: Elaine Marie Olson Hanna, 1943
Julianne Gail Olson Ordog, 1945
Patricia Ann Olson Bachand, 1948
Murray Earl Olson, 1952
Evan William Olson, 1953
Adrienne Gay Olson Wendt, 1953
Cheryl Lee Olson Harper, 1960

The Earls

The Olson boys and their families were called the "Earls", the "Lawrences", etc. This section is about my father, Earl Olson, and his family.

Earl was born on December 31, 1908 at Brownlee, Saskatchewan, and moved with his family to Aquadell, where he attended school at Rolling Prairie School with his siblings. He was always interested in music and in his youth played at dances around the area, mostly in Vic Johnson's orchestra. He and John Svaren directed the Lutheran church choir for church services held in Rolling Prairie school. The choir was a quartet consisting of John Svaren, Lawrence Olson, Arthur Olson and Melvin Johnson. Earl also was an organist over the years, along with his brother, Lawrence, his sister, Marion, and Gayleen Svaren.



Rolling Prairie School

In the mid 1930s, Earl left home to play with an orchestra in Swift Current. This orchestra operated for a number of years. As well as being a professional musician, Earl was also a barber. He moved to Elrose in the late 1930s, where he operated a barber shop and played in a local orchestra. In the summer, he operated a barber shop at Clearwater Lake during the day and played saxophone in the dance band in the evenings. His brother, Ernie, operated the pool hall at Clearwater Lake. Earl and Ernie were very close - best friends in fact. There were many attractions for the young people at Clearwater Lake in those years - swimming, boating, fishing, and dancing in the evenings. It was the summer fun spot for the whole area. At the end of the summer season, Earl would move back to Elrose and operate the shop there for the winter.

Earl met his future wife, Anita Boerjan, at Clearwater Lake, where Anita's father had a cabin, and her family often spent their summers there. Earl was a favourite of all the girls, but Anita won his heart. They were married on July 19, 1942, on the Boerjan family farm.





The war years had arrived, and Earl joined the Royal Canadian Air Force as a bandsman. Earl was a member of the Air Force Band, which entertained the troops throughout the country and promoted the sale of War Bonds. Earl was stationed at RCAF Victoriaville, 2 hours from Montreal, so Earl rented an apartment for Anita in Victoriaville which she would share with another wife of an RCAF member. Their first daughter, Elaine, was born in Victoriaville in 1943.

When Anita became pregnant with her second child, she and Earl decided she should come home to Saskatchewan to give birth. Their second child, Julianne, was born in Elrose in 1945. As Earl was still in the service, Anita lived in a small house in Elrose with her sister, Blanche, and Blanche's son, Billy, as Blanche's husband, Carl, was stationed overseas. Earl was released from the Air Force in August of 1945 and returned home to Elrose. Earl again operated the Elrose Barbershop and Pool Hall on Main Street in Elrose. The family home was situated immediately behind the business and was very large. There was also a large yard for the children to play in and a garage.

Anita and Earl had a further five children, Patricia, born in 1948, Murray, born in 1952, twins Evan and Adrienne, born in 1953, and Cheryl, born 1960.

In the early 1960s, Earl converted the pool hall to a Laundromat. He no longer wished to work the long hours in the pool hall, 10:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night, and he also wanted to spend more time with his family. Because the barbershop closed at 6:00, Earl finally had his evenings free. The Laundromat was successful financially and Earl made enough income from it to pay the utilities and family expenses and was able to save the income from the barbershop.



Opening Day - Elrose Laundromat

In the 1960's, Earl developed a bad case of asthma, and suffered from that until his death. Happily, he was able to take his family on many camping vacations, which they enjoyed very much. They vacationed in such places as Cypress Hills, Good Spirit Lake, and Banff, Alberta.

During his married life, Earl played in two dance bands, the Hugh MacDonald orchestra and the Corbet band. Anita used to request this song when they went to dances, "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" to tease him because Earl was always playing with the orchestra and she was left with no dance partner. It used to annoy Earl no end.



McDonald's Variety Band, playing with Bobby Gimby

Earl died on July 14, 1966, just two weeks after his second daughter, Julianne, was married. He died as a result of a burst aneurysm at the base of his brain that led to a stroke. This may have been exacerbated by complications of his asthma. His brother, Lawrence, also died as a result of a burst aneurysm. Anita had been quite ill for some time and was exhausted after Julianne's wedding. She went to the lake with her parents to rest and recuperate. At that time, Earl was in good health, so his death came as a surprise to all his family. Just the weekend before, he and his children had attended an Olson reunion at Central Butte. He had spent time with his family and visited with many of his old friends; he even took part in a jam session with his old orchestra pals.

Anita carried on the coin laundry business until her family got a little older. She then went to work, first in the Elrose Post office part-time and then as the Elrose Hospital administrator. She then retired and eventually married Claude Treinen of Remsen, Iowa. They spend their winters in Texas and their summers close to Central Butte, at Prairie Winds Park, on Lake Diefenbaker, and at Elrose.

Earl is thought about often by his children. He left a legacy that continues to this day. His sense of humour is remembered with great fondness. His Sunday drives on Old Tobacco Road with his children are also fondly remembered, and his nicknames for people are often quoted. Every time we drove past the sign to Sanctuary, Dad would say "Sanctuary Much". His grandchildren wish that they could have known him as well.