

Ken and Betty Down

How do you say goodbye to someone you always expected to be in the Meadow? Every morning when we opened our curtains, there would be the Brunk house with smoke lofting from its chimney. One of the first people we met in the Meadow was Don Brunk. In the winter of 1990, we were visiting our recently purchased property for the first time. As we stood on Upper Meadow Road observing the snow-covered sagebrush and surrounding homes, a handsome man in a John Deere tractor/snowplow drove up and greeted us with a warm smile. He introduced himself and pointed to the sweet brown cabin a couple hundred yards in front of our lot. After a brief visit, Don headed off to finish his road clearing. The sight of snow flying in every direction continued to be the signal that Don was up early, "playing on his tractor".



Ken and Betty's View of the Brunk House

We built our log house in 1992 and moved in a year later as full-time residents. During the building process we got to know Don and Jo. They often stopped by to check on the progress of our house and pay us a visit. We discovered that the Brunks too were formerly Californians. They attended the University of California while we were Stanford fans. We all had great conversations about life in the Bay Area.

We, to this day, talk about how much Don and Jo helped with our adjusting to life in the Meadow. The Brunk's phone number was the first one posted by our phone. If we needed a tool, we called Don. If our snowmobile got stuck, we called Don. We survived many harsh winters thanks to Don and his trusty Thiokol. He was generous and thoughtful, never criticizing another person and always viewing life from a positive perspective. Needless to say, Don was highly respected by everyone in the Meadow.

Our favorite humorous recollection is the story Don told of his demonstrating how to load a snowmobile onto a truck. "I was up in the parking lot by the highway. I set up a ramp to the bed, fired up the machine and headed for the ramp," Don said, "and the next thing I knew, the snowmobile and I were balancing on top of the truck's cab. The onlookers stared in amazement while I pretended to know what I was doing."

We enjoyed twenty-six wonderful years in the Meadow with Don and Jo. We will always remember them as the neighbors that everyone wishes for.