

Phillip Baker, MD

Phillip Leonard Baker, M.D. was born in Sacred Heart Hospital, Medford, Jackson County, Oregon. After their marriage on September 27, 1935, Leonard and Marie Baker moved to Gold Hill, Jackson County, Oregon. They worked in the orchards picking fruit and in fields picking hops. When I was three months old Leonard, Marie and I returned to Iowa arriving on a Sunday. The time they spent in Oregon was very difficult as it was during the Great Depression. Leonard Baker worked with Tracy North (Leonard's step- father) in the elevator, on the farm and in the Conoco service station in Vail, Iowa before and after moving to Oregon. Later Leonard and Marie Baker bought a farm from Leonard Dieter on the north edge of Vail, Iowa and began farming.

I was baptized by Rev. Emery Zimmerman in the Vail Presbyterian Church on June 13, 1937.¹

I lived in Vail, Crawford County, Iowa after returning with his parents from Oregon. The family lived most of the time in the house built by Leonard Dieter on the north edge of Vail. The family farm surrounded Vail on two sides, north and east, with the home having all of the conveniences of the town. Phillip could walk three blocks to Vail Public School where he attended from kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

The Primary Room of Vail Public School in 1943 was described in the following article from the 1943 school annual. I was in the kindergarten class.

“When little boys and girls enter the primary room, they must learn to work and play harmoniously with children from many different homes. They find that kindergarten is the place to learn how to care for wraps and for materials that are used during the day. They soon understand how to use many materials such as scissors, clay, crayons, paint and tools.

Beginners must learn to respond instantly to signals, to respect the rights of others, and to outgrow the habit of crying over trifles. They must get to school regularly and on time. They begin to look forward each day to the happy time when the teacher reads and tells stories, and the picture shows. Children ask for favorites over and over.

Special days like Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, and Valentine’s Day are always celebrated. When a child has a birthday, all are eager for him to have a happy day. The others sing the birthday song for him, have games in his honor, and often enjoy treats which he has brought. On Toy Day, each brings his favorite toy to share with the others. All the primary classes had a part in the Christmas program which was held at the Memorial Hall. They also decorated their own room and tree and made Christmas gifts for their mothers.

Each morning, all take part in the flag salute. They study many things about the flag and realize how they can help our country during the war. Their enthusiasm was expressed in helping with the scrap drive when they brought in enough scrap so that it averaged one hundred pounds for each child.

During the year the children have made scrap books of pets, family fun, fruits, and vegetables. Another interesting project is the train which the children built out of butter and salt

¹ Certificate of Baptism, Phillip Leonard Baker, son of Leonard and Marie Baker, born February 16, 1937 and baptized on June 13, 1937

boxes. The train has box cars, coal cars, tank cars, and flat cars.

Emphasis on health continues throughout the year. In the fall, a program was given for the mothers. The kindergarten gave health rhymes and the first and second graders sang and gave health poems. The children keep health charts showing a record of victory foods eaten and other chores done to help build strong, healthy bodies. In connection with this study, the children made tooth powder, samples of which they took home to use.

Since they eat lunch at school and drink milk in the afternoon, the boys and girls have had an opportunity to study table manners, and such courtesies as 'Thank you' and 'Excuse me, please'.

*The most important accomplishment in the primary room is that of learning to read. Much to the delight of little folks, this work begins in the kindergarten year. At the P.T.A. meeting, Mrs. Elmquist and the kindergarten class gave a demonstration of reading readiness and beginning writing. First graders begin the study of spelling in the middle of the year. The course of study includes reading, spelling, arithmetic, language, writing, story hour, art, music, and general lessons."*²

In March of 1943 the school hot lunch program was begun. The children brought sack lunches before that time. The first year the program was financed through the WPA, who paid the two cooks and the meal tickets. The meals cost six and one-half cents per day. Free tickets were provided on the recommendation of a special committee. Food was from the surplus commodities with some from local stores. The meals were very monotonous. When the WPA funds were no longer available the program's fate was uncertain. The fee was raised to seven and one-half cents per day and the cost was still not covered. The Food Distribution Administration provided food purchased at the local stores which provided more variety to the meals. The milk was provided at meals and in the afternoon. The A.M.A. milk plan and the hot lunch programs were because of the government concern over the nutrition of the school children in wartime.³

I had the same teacher for the fourth through the eighth grades, Miss Katherine Madden. He remembers that she would have two grades recite at the same time. She also made the rules for the softball games at recess so each team wanted her on their roster! When she retired Miss Madden gave Phillip her favorite textbook of literature.

I mowed lawns, delivered newspapers and plowed gardens in Vail. The newspapers were dropped at the Vail city hall and delivered them using his bicycle. Only once did his parents have to help with the delivery. This occurred when the *Des Moines Register* Sunday anniversary edition came and only five papers would fit in his paper bag. This took many trips as he delivered about seventy-five papers per Sunday and his parents helped that Sunday. He used his father's Ford 8N tractor to plow the gardens. Each spring I would advertise in the *Vail Observer* and he would be called to schedule the garden plowing. I still have this 8N tractor that I bought from my father when he retired from farming. The tractor was used to mow on the eighty acres of land that I owned in northeast Shawnee County, Kansas.

The high school had four teachers plus the superintendent. After four years the teachers certainly

² *The Cardinal and Gold*, Vail High School, Vail, Iowa, 1943

³ Ibid.

knew each student well. I used to say that *“the only way one could tell the Junior Class fall Play from the Senior Class spring Play was by the title, the time of the year and which class received the money”*. The same students were in each play because only a few could memorize major amounts of lines. I completed high school with only one B on his transcript and the rest A's. The B was for one semester in Home Economics during the fall of his freshman year.

I was a good athlete especially in basketball, track and fast-pitch softball. He started all four years on the Vail Public High School basketball team. In track he competed in the sprints especially the 100 yard, 220 yard, 440 yard sprints, and sprint relays. At the Iowa District Track Relays, Boone, Iowa, during his senior year, 1955, I won gold medals in the 220 yard dash, the 440 yard dash, and the high jump.

I played on several fast-pitch softball teams during the summers and played center field because of my speed and throwing ability. As a hitter I usually was in the clean-up (fourth) position because of my high batting average and ability to hit with power.

During the summers while in high school and college I worked on the family farm and for a local construction firm called Fabian Ryan Construction, Vail, Iowa. These two job experiences give me lifetime skills used to repair and create most things. I was responsible for milking the cows morning and night. I repeated the story that the job of milking cows was why I went into Medicine. I always told my father, Leonard, that I was going to have a boy so my son would milk the cows. I had two daughters and went into Medicine!

Businesses in Vail, Iowa ⁴ in 1943 included:

- Rodney North Trucking
- Sam's Cash Market
- J.B. Crane Feeds
- L.A. Etzel Groceries and Meats
- Vail Drug Company
- Vail Lumber Company
- Tracy North Elevator
- Monaghan & Sheridan General Store
- R. R. Hannah Insurance
- Duffy's Hardware Store

In 1949 I was a charter member of the Vail Volunteers 4-H Club. The club began with fourteen members but there were forty-one members by 1955. I attended the 4-H Leadership Camp at Madrid, Iowa and toured the state of Iowa for one week with forty rural youth from Iowa. The tour visited many of the manufacturing companies in Iowa.

The Denison Review, Denison, Iowa in January 1952 reported that *“two hundred twenty-five 4-Hers (sic), their parents and friends enjoyed the annual county 4-H party at Vail last week. The county (Crawford) 4-H officers elected included Phil Baker of the Vail Volunteers as vice-*

⁴ Ibid.

president". Myrna Yankey, cousin of Phil Baker, was the county girl's 4-H president and the master of ceremonies. "County boy's 4-H officers were elected with Gordon Hinz of East Boyer as new president; vice-president is Phil Baker of the Vail Volunteers." ⁵

In the 1954 Vail High School Yearbook Miss Katherine Madden wrote ⁶ "The best in the achievement tests when you were in the 6th grade- above the seventh and eighth grades." Harold Sawyers, superintendent Vail High School, wrote "Be not simply good but be good for something."

I graduated from Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa in 1959, was a member of Acacia Fraternity, Ames, Iowa, and was president of Union Board of Iowa State University. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology and a minor in Chemistry and Physics from Iowa State University.

In 1959 I entered medical school at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, Nebraska and in 1963 graduated with honors. I was elected a member of Alpha Omega Alpha, honorary medical fraternity. I interned at Menorah Medical Center in Kansas City, Missouri and was voted the Outstanding Intern of 1963-1964. I initially planned to go into Internal Medicine but ultimately became an Orthopedic Surgeon.

During his internship Phillip worked for several weeks at the Jackson County Hospital, Kansas City, Missouri. A fire broke out at the hospital and I helped remove several of the patients some of whom were restrained to their beds in rooms that filled with smoke. No patients died or were injured during the fire that was reported heavily by the Kansas City Star newspaper.

On August 5, 1961 I married Betty Ruth White in the Christian Church, Blythedale, Harrison County, Missouri. Our wedding day was very hot and the church was not air conditioned. The wedding reception was on the side yard of Betty Ruth White Baker's home and we honeymooned in Colorado.

During the summer of 1964 I entered the U.S. Army and was sent with my wife, Betty Ruth White Baker, to Kitzingen, Germany for two years. Betty and I returned to Vail, Iowa to spend one week with my parents after the end of my internship and before reporting on June 30, 1964 to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas for Army basic training.⁷

During 1964-1966 I was in the Army and received an Army Commendation Medal from the Headquarters of the 3rd Infantry Division, APO US Forces, 09036 with the following:

" Captain Phillip L. Baker, 05525523, Medical Corps, is cited for meritorious services as Battalion Surgeon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Division during the period August 1964 to June 1966. Throughout his tour of duty Captain

⁵ *Looking Back In the Bulletin and Review Files, 50 Years ago...in 1952, Denison Review, Denison, Crawford County, Iowa, January 2002*

⁶ Miss Katherine Madden was the teacher for the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades of Vail Public School, Vail, Crawford County, Iowa

⁷ Denison Review, June 15, 1964

*Baker practiced preventative medicine, making sound and timely recommendations to staff members and commanders on medical matters. His untiring efforts brought a vast improvement in the sanitary conditions of the unit's mess hall. Captain Baker was instrumental in developing the Battalion's Mass Casualty Evacuation standing operating procedures while also contribution his services to the American Youth Association and high school sports programs during off- duty hours. The outstanding service rendered by Captain Baker reflects great credit upon himself, the MARNE Division, and the United States Army."*⁸

I was the only physician to receive an Army Commendation Medal from the Third Infantry Division during these two years.

Truman Ben White, Betty White Baker's father, wrote the following birthday greeting to me in 1965.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

*I have no Hallmark card so fine,
To send you this special time,
So these few lines to you, My Son,
To Praise you for your work well done.*

*Most cards are pretty I will agree,
But the thoughts the verses leave you see,
Are usually the most inspiring thing,
So I hope you will like this, By Jing.*

*I cannot seem to find words to say,
The thoughts and praises for you to-day,
I want you now for sure to know,
That in my eyes you are the best,
And in your work I wish you success.*

*In the absence of a little present now,
You take this money and spend it some how,
To satisfy your special need,
Much better than I could indeed.*

*I wish you many more birthdays, Son,
And live a life chuck full of fun,
For you can always happy be,
Living on the bright side of Life you see.*

*With all my Love,
Truman⁹*

⁸ Citation, Army Commendation Medal, 3rd Infantry Division, 15th Infantry, Kitzingen, Germany, 1966

⁹ *Birthday Greetings*, Truman Ben White, February 1965

Leonard and Marie Yankey Baker, Truman White, Richard and Bedonna Jean White Gordon, William and Joy Ann White Lynch, and Jimmy and Mary Lou Waters White all came to Germany to visit Betty and I while we lived in Kitzingen.

In June 1966 after discharge from the U.S. Army and returning from Germany Betty and I moved to Kansas City, Wyandotte County, Kansas. I began my General Surgery and Orthopedic Surgery residency at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

I also was a finalist for the outstanding teaching resident at the University of Kansas Medical School in 1970. The treatment and cause of fat embolism in trauma was a special interest and I presented a paper entitled "*Experimental Fat Embolism in Dogs*" to the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma in Montreal, Canada. I completed my orthopedic residency in 1970. In 1970 I won the award for the outstanding basic science paper presented at the annual house staff day at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

I also was an invited guest of the National Research Council and the National Institutes of Health for a conference on "The Pulmonary Effects of Non-Thoracic Trauma". I assisted with a paper entitled "*Fat Embolism, a Pulmonary Disease.*" The conference evaluated current methods in treatment of lung abnormalities following severe accidents and trauma.¹⁰

The University of Kansas Orthopedic Section asked Phillip to join the staff in 1971. Dr. Fred Reckling wrote "*I am most interested in recruiting Dr. Baker in the Section of Orthopedic Surgery.....I believe this appointment would be entirely justified on the basis of his curriculum vitae and his potential as a clinician, teacher and investigator. His curriculum vitae is quite excellent, as you can see.....Dr. Baker has had the opportunity to learn certain operative procedures during his time in practice. One of these is the new total hip procedure which is becoming quite popular throughout Europe and United States..... Dr. Baker has also gained experience in certain types of knee prosthesis, which will be an addition to our armamentarium.....As the University Hospital we must remain current and must in the near future be able to offer this procedure to patients with severe disease involving the femoral head and acetabulum.*"¹¹

Betty and I moved to Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas to begin practice initially with the Topeka Medical Center. In 1973 John Lynch, M.D and I formed our own orthopedic surgical group, *ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES, PA*. The name was later changed to *KANSAS ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE, P.A.* This group grew to become the dominant orthopedic practice in Northeast Kansas.

I helped perform the first total hip and total knee replacement surgeries in the State of Kansas. During my career I performed many thousands of such surgeries. I was known for being a very fast and highly competent surgeon. I was the first non-general surgeon to be elected President of

¹⁰ *Dr. Phillip Baker attends conference*, The Observer, Vail, Crawford County, Iowa, March 1968

¹¹ Letter to Stanley Friesen, M.D. , Department of Surgery, from Frederick Reckling, M.D., Section of Orthopedic Surgery, University of Kansas, Kansas City, Kansas, January 29, 1971

the Kansas Chapter of the American College of Surgeons. I was Board Certified in Orthopedic Surgery by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. The other associations to which I belonged included the American Medical Association, American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, American College of Surgeons, American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, American Academy of Disability Examining Physicians, Kansas Medical Society and Shawnee County Medical Society.

I was a Fellow of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery, American College of Surgeons, American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, and the American Academy of Disability Examining Physicians.

I was a Paul Harris Fellow in the Downtown Topeka Rotary, Topeka, Kansas where I was a member for many decades.

For about twenty years I was a member of the board of directors of Highland Park Bank and Trust in Topeka, Kansas and continued the advisory board of the United Missouri Bank of Topeka after the Highland Park Bank and Trust was purchased.

I began the first Orthopedic Outreach Clinics in Northeast Kansas and continued traveling to these clinics for over twenty years. Later many other physicians provided medical care as other specialists from Topeka began to travel to the smaller communities. These clinics were held in the communities of Sencea, Sabetha, Hiawatha and Holton near Topeka, Kansas. Each clinic trip required traveling about two hundred miles round trip a week. Growing up in a small farm community was a great asset to understanding of the problems facing the rural people which I treated in these clinics.

I was described in the Seneca Courier-Tribune as *“Besides being an outreach physician and coming to our community for almost 10 years, Dr. Baker continues to support our community by being involved with the Nemaha County 4-H Fair for the past six years.*

*Dr. Baker has supported the 4-H livestock auction by bidding one year and paying the premiums on two hogs, two beef, two sheep, and a pen of chickens. Each year, he supports the program by paying the premiums on numerous livestock and poultry. Dr. Baker keeps all his thank you notes from 4-H'ers and enjoys reading them from time to time.”*¹²

I was the president of the medical staff St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center from 1973 to 1975 and served as a member of the Executive Committee of Stormont-Vail Regional Medical Center, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas for several years. I was Chairman of the Medical-Bar Liaison Committee of the Shawnee County Medical Society for over twenty years that helped to foster better relationships between the legal and medical professions in Shawnee County, Kansas.

I was the *“witness”* in a mock video deposition that was presented to the Kansas Bar Association to encourage the use of this new media in depositions as this technique that was not authorized in

¹² *Dr. Baker pioneer of outreach clinics*, The Courier-Tribune, Seneca, Nemaha County, Kansas, September 5, 1991

Kansas at that time. Two attorneys, Charles Fisher and Donald Patterson “*examined*” me during a mock medical malpractice issue recorded on video with a court reporter and video reporter present. Subsequently Kansas passed laws to allow this technique of sworn testimony to be admitted into court record. I would later testify in hundreds of depositions and trials many of which were video recorded. My expertise and skill in disability and medical-legal issues was widely known. Many legal firms in Topeka, Kansas City, Wichita, Atchison, Great Bend, Manhattan, Overland Park, and Leavenworth plus those from outside the state sent cases and records for my review. Several automotive insurance companies also engaged me to review records and examine claimants.

I enjoyed a perennial garden and large garden of miniature and hybrid tea roses. I obtained the rose "*England's Rose*", named for Princess Diana of Great Britain, the first year it was shipped to the United States. I self-installed an underground sprinkler system in the rose and perennial garden for regular watering.

In 1992 Betty and I became the majority stock owners of the Citizens Bank located in Blythedale, Harrison County, Missouri after the Bank developed financial trouble. In the early 1980's the FDIC issued a Cease and Desist order to the Bank. The Bank borrowed money on our signature and was saved by this capital infusion into the Bank. When these loans were called Betty and I obtained controlling ownership of the stock in exchange for our money. This was the bank that Betty White Baker's father, Truman White, owned for many years and beginning in 1965 was managed by Jimmy Dale White, Betty's brother.

Betty and I were members of the First United Methodist Church and the First Presbyterian Church of Topeka, Kansas. I was a Sunday school teacher at the Methodist Church. We transferred our membership to the First Presbyterian Church in 2001 from the First United Methodist Church where they had been members for twenty-five years because of frustration with the Methodist Church procedure for selecting pastors for the church. We transferred their membership back to the First United Methodist Church in 2003 but returned to the Presbyterian Church.

I was instrumental in founding the first Open MRI unit in Shawnee County, Kansas called Topeka Imaging. I formed Red Brick Ventures which and a partner in Topeka Imaging.

I invented a leg exercise system and held U.S. Patent No. 4,357,009 issued on November 2, 1982 and also held a Trademark for the "*B-Q Bag*" which the invention was called.

I took piano lessons as a youth and he again tried to master those skills at age 40 by taking lessons for 3 years but this goal was not accomplished. I developed an interest in the computer and was self-taught the computer fundamentals that were used to prepare family histories and genealogy books for the family.

I used the computer to compile several family books of genealogy and history. My first use of the computer was in 1998 when I was recovering from shoulder rotator cuff surgery. He was a member of the SAR and served as president of the Thomas Jefferson Chapter of Topeka, Kansas.

In 2007 Betty and I established the *Dr. Phillip and Betty Baker Genealogy Center* at the Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library in Topeka, Kansas.

Betty and I traveled extensively during their lifetime and returned to Germany many times to visit the region in which we lived during 1963-64.

I would have been listed with the Leonard Baker family on the 1940, 1950 and the 1960 Iowa U.S. Census of Westside Township, Crawford County, Iowa. Betty and I are listed in the 1970 Census in Johnson County, Shawnee, Kansas. We are listed in the 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020 Census in Shawnee County, Topeka, Kansas.

Sources:

Family records

U.S. Census Records

The CARDINAL and GOLD, Vail High School, 1943

Denison Review, Denison, Crawford County, Iowa, January 1952

Citation, Army Commendation Medal, Headquarters 3rd Infantry Division, US Forces, 1966

U.S. Army records, Captain Phillip L. Baker

U.S. Patent Office records, Phillip L. Baker

Kansas City Star, Kansas City, Missouri

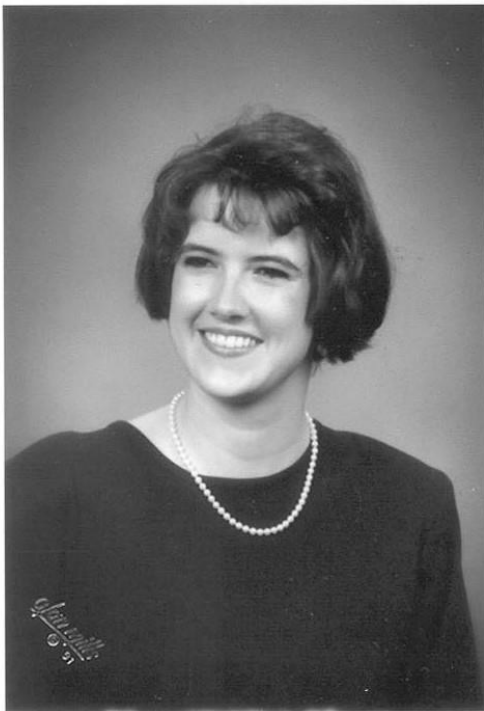
Phillip Leonard Baker, M.D.

Topeka, Kansas

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Phillip Leonard Baker Family
Betty Ruth, Nancy Ruth, Phillip, Susan Marie
1991



Nancy Ruth Baker
University of Kansas
1991
University of Kansas, MA



Susan Marie Baker Anderson
Baylor University
1993
Oklahoma University, JD
1996