

## **The Bailey Family**

by Helen (Robb) Garrett

In February 1940 a new family moved to Kinmundy. There were eleven children (eight girls and three boys) and the mother and father, Cecil and Irene Bailey.

Cecil worked in the oil field, and they had moved to Illinois with the 'oil boom', when the oil field between Salem and Centralia was being developed. They purchased the 'Ed Doolen Place' at the west edge of town [712 W. Fourth Street], a house with twenty acres, which is where they lived for the next fifty years.

The whole family worked hard. They planted an orchard, complete with apples, peaches, cherries, etc. They maintained a grape arbor, and they planted red raspberries, black raspberries, goose berries, strawberries, so fruits and berries were plentiful. They planted huge gardens, which furnished plenty of vegetables. Mother was in charge of the kitchen, and hundreds of quarts of fruits and vegetables were canned by Irene and the girls each summer. The boys did the farming. We had dairy cows, steers, hogs, chickens, and various other animals on the farm. We did our own butchering. Food was plentiful, and all home grown.

There was a lot of music in the Bailey household. The oldest eight kids all played the violin. Every kid had their own instrument, three saxophones, three clarinets, two trombones, two trumpets, and one flute. Through the years they all played in the school bands. Most of the girls played the piano, and all of the children sang. Cecil sang bass in a local quartet; they had a couple of quartets within the family, and for many years they were called on to sing and play for weddings and funerals. They also were called on to play and sing for special occasions, political gatherings, singing conventions, etc. Shortly after moving to Illinois, the Bailey Family won first place in an all area talent contest with the 'family band' and their singing. Mrs. Lillian Grissom, recognizing the talent in the family, offered her professional services to refine, teach, and help the children with their music. Mrs. Grissom had directed the music at Northern Texas University for many years.

As the years passed, the children married. Several of the girls married into 'old' Kinmundy families. All were active in the community and in the church. All three boys served in the Armed Forces. During WWII, Lloyd was wounded twice, once in Italy and again during the Battle of the Bulge, which rendered his right hand useless for the rest of his life. During the Centennial in 1957, Lloyd flew his airplane all over Southern Illinois dropping leaflets advertising our Centennial, thus making it even more successful. Maxine was the first woman to serve on the Kinmundy School Board. Two of the girls have served on the City Council. Another of the girls was City Clerk for several years. Three of the girls have been designated as "Woman of the Year". Several of the 'Baileys' contributed to the business economy of Kinmundy. Cecil owned and operated Bailey Drilling Company; Lloyd owned and operated Garden Drilling Company; Frances and Dick Gray and Pola and Howard Robb had the R&G Restaurant on Main Street. Maxine and Wayne Robb had a café on Highway 37 on the west side of town. Marie and

Bob Johnson had a shoe store on the west side of town, and Lillie and Ted Phillips currently have an antique shop on the east side of town. Cecil was instrumental in the building of a ball diamond for Kinmundy, which is now the Lion's Ball Park at the original location on Highway 37.

Cecil and Irene were married fifty-four years, so an excellent example of hard work and commitment seems to have been passed on to the children. Six of the children have celebrated fifty-year anniversaries with their original spouses. The two oldest boys (Bob and Lloyd) died at an early age, and three of the girls have been widowed. Only three of the children still live in Kinmundy. The family is still very close and get together often. With kids, grandkids, great grandkids and in-laws, it now numbers well over one hundred. The Baileys are all better people for having been raised in Kinmundy, and Kinmundy is a better place because the Baileys lived here.