

SCOTT PATERSON

(OCTOBER 23, 1934 - JUNE 22, 2000)

by Cindy Major



Caught in the turmoil of a union strike and unable to support his family, Walter Scott Paterson, Jr., moved his wife, Marilyn (Smith) Paterson and their eight children (Scott, Cerise, Rhonda, Dana, Cindy, Kelly, Shelly, and Christopher) to Dixon in the summer of 1967. Driving a station wagon and pulling a u-haul trailer behind, they began their journey. On June 11 of 1967, they arrived in this small town. The drive in on Highway 28 was beautiful; flowers were blooming and trees and gardens growing. And the kids were hungry. It had been a long trip.

Scott pulled up to the pay phone outside of what was then The State Bank of Dixon and called their friends, former neighbors from Simi Valley, California. These friends had encouraged them to move to Dixon with promises of a better way of living. They said jobs were easy to find, and the cost of living much better than California. And perhaps it was all true at that, but when they followed their escort down the dusty gravel road, they had to wonder. Especially when the family proudly showed off their brand-new outhouse! But the freshly-baked brownies were a welcoming touch.

Finding a place to rent and a job were not easy, in fact, but with hard work and perseverance, it all started to come together for the struggling family. After working a minimum-wage job for a couple of years, Scott set out on his own and started Paterson Carpet, which he

ran out of his house and truck for several more years, fighting the party-line phone system to keep his business running. He also had to fight the old "you have to have lived here for 30 years to be accepted" mindset. Compounding this was that he had no relatives in this town other than his own wife and children. Scott and Marilyn did add one more child (Patrick) to their large family in 1969. As to family, Marilyn's father, George E. Smith, with a proud history of American patriotism all the way back to the Revolutionary War, grew up in Arkansas, as close as they could claim for family. Scott's father had immigrated to America in 1890 from Scotland and had passed on in 1939. His mother, Thelma (Adamson) Paterson, moved to Dixon in later life and died and was buried in the Dixon Cemetery in 1985.

In the mid-70s, Scott took a big risk and opened the Paterson Carpet Store in Dixon, located in the old Barnett Store and next to Knollmeyer's Lumber Yard. There he sold carpet, vinyl, and other types of flooring. Marilyn managed the office. In the mid-80s, Scott took his son Chris on as a partner and opened a second store in St. Robert, which Scott's daughter Shelly managed. He also bought the building next door and brought in Bill's Dollar Store.

The Paterson family is well known in Dixon. Marilyn was a Sunday School teacher, and Scott was a deacon first at Sheppard Baptist Church and then at the First Baptist Church. Scott also served as a councilman in Dixon for several terms. He and Marilyn were instrumental in getting the Dixon Ambulance District started and running successfully, even going so far as to become emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and working shifts to help make the Ambulance program successful. They also played a huge part in the Chamber of Commerce which reestablished Cow Days as a large, fun town festival that is still a big hit each September.

Scott and Marilyn may have arrived in Dixon, MO to pay phones, party-lines, dirt roads and outhouses, but they made their mark on the town and made it their own. Scott passed away on June 22, 2000, leaving behind his wife, Marilyn, who died on January 25, 2007. Both are buried in the Dixon Cemetery, along with two granddaughters, Jenna Paterson and Stacey (George) Hicks. All nine children survived them, but only Cindy (Major), Shelly, and Chris still live in Dixon.

—  —
We Grow Good People
in our Small Towns, with
Honesty and Sincerity and
Dignity.
- Sarah Palin

—  —