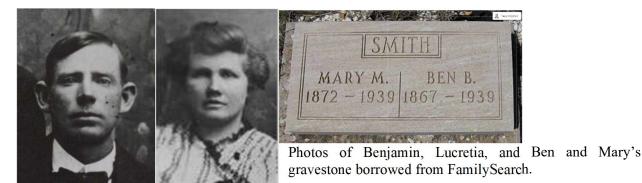
11. The children and grandchildren of Benjamin Benton Smith Sr and his two wives Lucretia Ann Gilliland and Mary Margaret Wilson

11. Benjamin Benton Smith Sr 11 SEP 1867 • Pleasanton, TX - 4 NOV 1939 • Silver City, Grant, NM Lucretia Ann Gilliland 31 OCT 1876 • Kimble County, TX - 11 FEB 1962 • Newberg, Yamhill, Oregon Marriage: 30 Mar 1892 • Dona Ana, New Mexico – Divorce 16 Apr 1909 Mary Margaret Wilson 23 JAN 1872 • Bosque County, TX - 19 FEB 1939 • Silver City, NM



One of the final two children of Jesse and Elizabeth was Benjamin Benton, the twin brother of Jesse. We don't have birth certificates to know who came first, but they arrived in Pleasanton 12 years before the family's move north to the San Angelo area. I think I stated it wrong earlier, but it appears as though they moved to Runnels County in 1879 and then in 1880 at the time of the Census, they moved to nearby Tom Green County and bought a ranch. Not knowing where they would be when the Census counter arrived, they were actually counted in both places. I guess if you are a twin you need to be double counted.

70. James William Smith 18 FEB 1893 • Cloudcroft, Otero, NM - 29 JUL 1936 • Morenci, AZ Ima Naomi Johnson 8 JAN 1907 • Alamogordo, NM - 28 JUL 1980 • Alamogordo, NM Marriage: 20 Oct 1924 • Dona Ana, NM



New Mexico.

Photos from Ancestry of James and Ima.

James was the first child from the marriage of Benjamin Barton and Lucretia Gilliland. While he would have been in the 1900 Census if we could find it, he does not appear until the 1910 Census after the split up of Ben and Lucretia. At the time he was 17 and was helping his "widowed" mother run the farm along with his younger brother Ray. Also present were 2 more younger brothers and 2 more younger sisters. They were living in Hope,

Children of James and Ida Johnson Smith

241	Imogene Naomi Smith	1925	2001	James and Ima Child#2
242	Wilma Ruthena Smith	1927	2013	James and Ima Child#1

 241. Imojean Naomi Smith 30 SEP 1925 • Morenci, AZ - 26 JUL 2001 • Visalia, CA Rudolph Thomas Williams 25 APR 1922 • Cobden, Ill - 3 AUG 2005 • Visalia, CA Married: about 1942 either in Arizona or California



Imogene from Findagrave and Rudy from FamilySearch

James and Ima's first child arrived in Arizona on my wife's birthday, but a few years earlier. Near the time of her birth, they lived in Greenlee, AZ and her father was working as a cashier at a Phelps-Dodge, a large mining company. She was joined by a

younger sister Wilma in 1927. <u>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phelps_Dodge</u> Her father died in 1936 when she was only 11 and Wilma 9. The 1940 Census finds Her mother, Ima working as a beauty saloon operator in Greenlee as a widow with two young daughters. Ima had married Lewis Paetzel after James' death, but he died in 1940 before the 1940 Census so poor Ima was a widow twice in 4 years and the girls now only 16 and 14 had lost two fathers. Lewis was a barber and maybe worked at the same beauty shop as Ima. I have not found Ima in 1950, but sometime around 1942, Imojean married Rudolph "Rudy" Williams. I have not found marriage records, but records show that he in the Army in Phoenix on 5 Jan 1943 with Service Number 39854366. At the time of his enlistment, he had been living in Freemont, Colorado so perhaps he and Imojean married there. We know that their first child, James Allen Williams was born in August 1945 in Arizona, but I haven't been able to find Rudy's military records, but I do know that he achieved the rank of SGT in the US Army based upon burial records.

Rudy was originally from Illinois and was the 2nd youngest child of John Burt and Ida Williams. He had 3 older brothers, and an older and a younger sister, Stella and Zella. All were born in Illinois before the family moved to Arizona before 1930 where John Burt picked lettuce for a while before becoming a rock mason. His mother died in 1940 and his father in 1958. I found an article that leads me to believe that his father may have remarried in 1950, but I'm not sure and he would have been 71.

Rudy, Jean, and their two children James Allen and Pamela Williams appear in the 1950 Census in Visalia, CA where Rudy was working as a Cat Skinner. Should you not know, *cat skinners are often associated with construction and agricultural work, where they operate various types of heavy equipment for tasks like grading land, building roads, and other industrial applications*. They lived at 142 Garden Street Extension which I cannot find on today's map. Visalia is about halfway between LA and Fan Francisco in the San Joaquin Valley and is called The Gateway to the Sequoias. The Butterfield Stage line which ran across my great grand parents' property in Texas, had a stop in Visalia. Rudy was 27 and Jean 24 while the kids were 5 and 1.

Rudy and Jean divorced in 1983 when Jean was 57 and Rudy 60. I have not found a lot of information about them individually in the years after 1950 but I do know that Jean married William Carl Fritz after her divorce from Rudy. We can learn some more about them by exploring their children.

Beginning with James Allen, I found that he married Bernice Knutson in 1963 in Visalia. She was the oldest child of Arthur and Ida. They appeared to have had a daughter Cari Williams in 1964 and later divorced. Let's look for clues in his obituary.

James Allen "Jim" Williams, 76, passed away in his Visalia home in the evening of July 11th, 2021. Firstborn to Rudy and Imogene (Smith) Williams on October 26, 1944, in Safford, Arizona. After World War II, the young Williams family moved to work in the railroad and construction industries to Visalia, California, where Jim would spend the rest of his life. After graduating from Mt. Whitney High School in 1962, Jim had a career with the Visalia School District and the fruit packing industry before becoming the owner-operator of Eagle Water Truck Service for many years.

Jim was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting and fishing all over the Western US. He could often be found talking trucks, hunting, guns, and World War II history. Preceded in death by his parents and sister Pamela (Williams) Bush, Jim is survived by his daughter Cari O'Dell, granddaughter Tawny Twichell and two great granddaughters, niece Shelly Ganiron and family, nephew Jeff Stubblefield and family, Cousin Dale Williams and his wife, Shelley. He also leaves behind numerous friends and neighbors, who all loved and cared for him. A memorial gathering will be announced later, Mortuary services are being provided by Hadley-Marcum Funeral Chapel of Visalia.

From this we can determine that he may not have married again after divorcing Beverly. We see that his sister, Pamela preceded him in death and that she had a daughter named Shelley who is married to someone maned Ganiron. Shelley has a brother or half brother named Jeff Stubblefield. I have not dug deep enough into Rudy's family to have identified who his cousin Dale Williams is, but with 4 brothers, there are lots of opportunities.

Let's find out what happened to Pamela. Pamela has been a bit of a challenge to unravel and I'm not certain that I have all of the pieces yet. She was born in Visalia in 1949 and lived there most of her life. Her first husband was James Stubblefield who she married around the time that she graduated from high school. I found her as a freshman in the 1964 yearbook, but the following years are not online. James was a local boy whose father worked in retail in 1950. They had a son, Jeff in 1968. They divorced sometime before 1975 when Pamela married a 2nd time to a (I believe) Michael Wayne Butler in Rapid City, SD. If I have the right person, Michael was 3 years younger than Pamela and had been married previously to Debra Little in 1971. His father was driving a delivery truck for a florist in the 1950 Census and was from Iowa while his mother was from South Dakota. After their marriage in 1975, they were reportedly living in Tucson the following Christmas on 1976 when they visited his family back home for the holidays. It appears that they had a daughter, Shelly Butler in 1976. I'm not sure how long they were together, but he married a third time in 1984 to Norma Barringer in Rapid City. In the meantime, Pamela had returned to Visalia where she married Mike Bush. I have not found anything about him, but in 1993, she was killed in a car wreck and her obituary reads:

Pamela Bush 44, homemaker Services will be at 2:30 p.m. Thursday in Hamilton Peers Lorentzen Funeral Chapel for Pamela Diane Bush, 44, Tulare, who died Saturday in a Tulare-area traffic accident. Mrs. Bush was born in Visalia. The Tularean was a homemaker.

She had worked earlier for 15 years as a secretary. She is survived by her husband, Mike Bush, Tulare; one son, Jeff Stubblefield, Minnesota; one daughter, Shelly Butler, Porterville; one stepdaughter, Natalie Bush, Tulare; one stepson, Alex Bush, Tulare; her father, Rudy Williams, Visalia; her mother, Imajean Fritz, Visalia; and one brother, Jim Williams, Visalia. Visitation will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday and 8 a.m.to 1 Thursday in the funeral home. Burial will be in Tulare Cemetery.

From this we learn that her son Jeff is in Minnesota, her daughter is in Porterville, CA and that her new husband has two children from a previous marriage. This may help me find more about Mike. Her parents are still in Visalia, but her mother has remarried.

Her first husband died in 2011 and his obituary reads:

Jim "Stubby" Stubblefield, 63, of Rantoul passed away on Sunday evening (June 5, 2011) at Provena Covenant Medical Center, Urbana. He was born on Dec. 29, 1947 in Visalia, California to Ronald and Edith Holton Stubblefield. He was preceded in death by his parents.

He married Ann Davis on July 16, 1977, in Rantoul. She survives. Also surviving are three sons, Jeff (Leann) Stubblefield of Eagle River, Alaska, Kevin (Kit) Davis of Alvin and Philip Davis of Rantoul; a daughter, Shelly (Ted) Ganiron of Tulare, California; a brother, Richard (Brenda) Stubblefield of West Virginia; two sisters, Vickie (Bill) Rowley of Visalia, California and Judy (George) Briggs of Clearwater, Canada; and seven grandchildren, Sean, Devyn, Michael, Ashton, James, Daniel and Emily. He served in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a master sergeant after 20 years. News Gazette, Champaign-Urbana, IL

In 2011 Pamela's son Jeff is in Alaska after having been in Minnesota when she died in 1993. This might suggest that Jeff may have followed his father's footstep and served in the Air Force, but that is just conjecture. It is interesting that he married in Rantoul in 1977 which means that he and I were in the same place in 1978 when my son was born at Scott AFB while I was in graduate school. Small world.

Another small piece of the puzzle from 1999.

DANIEL RYAN GANIRON:

Born to Ted and Shelly Ganiron of Tulare on July 23 at Tulare District Hospital. Daniel weighed 7 pounds, and measured 19 1/4 inches. His mother is the former Shelly Butler of Rapid City, S.D. He joins two brothers, Timothy, 13, and Matthew, 9. His grandparents are Mauro and Sharon Ganiron, Hanford; and James and Ann Stubblefield, Rantoul, Ill. His great-grandparents are Imogene Fritz, and Rudy and Janice Williams, all of Visalia; and Irene Davis, Madera.

This confirms that my finding that Pamela married Michael Butler from South Dakota was correct and that this is the Shelly that was her daughter. It also tells me that Shelly married Ted Ganiron around 1983 based on the age of their oldest son and that Ted's parents are named Mauro and Sharon and they in 1999, they lived in Hanford, California. Digging a bit deeper, Mauro had come to California from the Philippines in 1953 when he was 19. Ted had first married Aimee Mazac and had two children. As of this writing, it looks like Ted and Shelly have 2 children together.

This pretty much exhausts my search of James W. and Ima's family.

Children of James W. and Ima Johnson Smith

587	James Allen Williams	1945	2021	Rudy and Imogene's Child#1
588	Pamela Diane Williams	1949	1993	Rudy and Imogene's Child#2

242. Wilma Ruthena Smith 23 DEC 1927 • Morenci, AZ - 27 AUG 2013 • Alamogordo, NM

- #1 William Stuart Henley Jr 26 MAY 1922 High Rolls, NM 5 JAN 2015 Bakersfield, CA Married: Nov 1942 – Roswell, NM – Per Alvy – Divorced 1950
- #2 Norman Richard Bolitho 20 DEC 1928 Pennsylvania 15 MAR 1966 Okaloosa County, FL Married: after 1950
- #3 Wilson Dow (Curl)McCracken 13 MAR 1924 Bent, NM 5 JUN 1997 New Mexico Married: ?



Wilma's photo from Ancestry. William, Norman, and Curl from Findagrave.

Imojean's younger sister arrived

a couple of days before Christmas a couple of years after her big sister and was only 11 when her father died in 1936 and remarried only to lose her stepfather in 1940 when she was 13. She appears in the 1930 and 1940 Census in Clifton, AZ and I would think that she must have been in high school there in the mid 40's, but Alvy suggests the she married William Henley in Nov 1942. If this is the case, and I cannot find any records or news announcements, she would have a month shy of her 15th birthday so I guess she must have not gone to high school. She and William had daughter Linda in 1946 in Arizona and a son David in New Mexico before settling in Kern, CA in 1950. I have not found definitive birthdays for the children, but the Census was in April so if they were 4 and 3 in 1950, we know that the birth range for Linda would be

May 1945 – Jul 1946 for her to have been 4 and David's range would be May 1946 – July 1947 for him to be 3. It gets a little confusing at this point, as they were in Bakersfield CA for the 1950 Census where William was working as a carpenter, yet I found some news articles from 1948 with daughter Linda having pneumonia and Wilma having surgery, so they must not have moved to Bakersfield until shortly before the 1950 Census. Apparently, that did not suit Wilma as notices appear in the Oct 1950 newspaper in Alamogordo of Wilma's suit for divorce from William.

Let's explore William and see if any doors open from his side. He was born in 1922 in High Rolls, NM to William "Wid" Henley, Sr and his first wife Jean Nelson Henley. They had 2 sons before she died in 1928 after which his father married Maude Hiles and had 5 more sons between 1932 and 1943 and finally a daughter in 1946. William Jr. was the 2nd son and had an older brother Harold. "Wid" died in 1960 and per a note of Findagrave, he had a leg amputated and died of gangrene. That was not mentioned in his obituary. His widow married Billy Roy Corbett sometime after Wid's death and died in Alabama in 1995.

In Jun 1942 when he turned 20, William registered for the WW2 draft. He was living at Alamogordo and working at the bombing range that was there. His father was his point of contact. He was 6'-0"-165lbsgray eyes-brown hair-light complexion. He enlisted in the Navy on 29 Nov 1942 and in Aug 1943 was aboard the USS Cree (AT84). His discharge papers indicate that he also served on the USS Beltrani and served 2 years-10 months-11 days. He had gone to Santa Fe to enlist. He mustered out on 10 Oct 1945. He achieved the rank of Seaman First Class. If he and Wilma married in November, she had a rough start to her married life with her husband shipping out right after their marriage. Here is info on his ships. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS Cree https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS Beltrami To close the loop on

William here is his obituary from 2015:

William "Bill" Stuart Henley passed away peacefully in his sleep at the Aristocrat Monday, January 5, 2015. He was 92 years old. William "Bill" Stuart Henley was born in High Rolls May 28, 1922 to William "Wid" and Julia (Nelson) Henley. He served in the Navy during WWII and later moved to Bakersfield, California, until he retired then moved back to Alamogordo with his wife Luise.

Bill is survived by his son David Henley and wife Hilda, daughter Linda Anderson and husband Bob, sister Sandra Carlton, step-sons Ray LeBlanc and wife Darlene, Joe LeBlanc and wife Sandra, Fred Fritz (passed), Ron Fritz and wife Jan.

Grandchildren: David Tally and wife Marguerite, Brenda Smith and husband Stewart, Toni Griffin and husband Matt, Chad Henley and wife Diana. Step-Grandchildren: Amy Wright, April Blackmer, Aspen Sykes, Daniel LeBlanc, Shane LeBlanc, Danielle LeBlanc, Stephanie LeBlanc, Amanda Buchan, and Lisa Fritz.

Great-Grandchildren: Kaylin Lane and husband Dylan, Mackenna Tally, Dustin and Kelsy Luna, Grady and Gage Griffin, Elisabeth and Alexander Henley. Sister-in-laws Myra Henley, Bernice Henley (passed), and Rose Henley. Cousin Jim Henley and wife Thelma and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife Luise, parents William "Wid" and Julia (Nelson) Henley, grandparents Pascal Monroe "Button" and Mary Elizabeth (McNew) Nelson, James Allen and Lillie (Mathis) Henley, brother Harold Henley, half-brothers Guy Leonard Henley, Carl Henley, Walter Henley, Jack Lee Henley, Donnie Henley, step son Tom LeBlanc, and Great Granddaughter Raynee Griffin.

The family would like to thank all of the healthcare givers who showed patience and compassion in caring for Bill, Aristocrat's staff and Alamogordo Home Health staff. Cremation to follow. There are no services scheduled.

I am not sure who he married after he and Wilma split, but in 1970, he married Luise Hecker who was an interesting person. She was a German war bride whose first husband may have been a German soldier as she had 2 sons, Fred and Ron Fritz who were born in 1941 and 1943. She then married a GI from Massachusetts named Alfred Joseph "Frenchy" LeBlanc and had two for sons, Thomas and Raymond. They divorced and she married Sam Leonard in 1955 and finally married William in 1970. William was the father

of Wilma's children and from his obituary we discover that David has a wife named Hilda and Linda is married to Bob Anderson.

I do not know what Wilma did between 1950 and 1965, but I found the children in the Bakersfield phone book in 1962, but in high school in Alamogordo in 1963. In 1965 she married a young airman from Pittsburgh in Alamogordo. He was probably assigned to nearby Holloman AFB. According to his Findagrave, he and Wilma married on 6 Feb 1965. He was apparently married before, but I have not found who his first wife was. Records show that he enlisted in the Air Force on 26 Nov 1948 so he probably saw action in Korea. He reenlisted in 1952 and 1955. Shortly after their marriage, he was transferred to Elgin AFB in Florida where he failed to show up for work on the 15th of Mar 1966 and was discovered dead of a heart attack in his apartment. According to his death report he had only been at Elgin for 4 months and Wilma was away visiting relatives. His obituary reads:

Military Rites for Sgt. Bolitho

Full military rites will be held at graveside Monday following 2 p.m. funeral services at Mullins-Hamilton Chapel for SSgt. Norman Richard Bolitho, formerly of Holloman and recently transferred to Eglin AFB, Fla. Personnel from Holloman will serve as pallbearers. Interment will be at Monte Vista Cemetery. Chaplain Leland R. Stevens will officiate.

Bolitho, who died last Sunday at Eglin, was born Dec. 21, 1928 in Pittsburgh, Penn. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ruth Bolitho of Alamogordo; his mother, Mrs. Emily Bolitho of Pittsburgh; two brothers, Tom and Howard, both of Pittsburgh; a sister, Mrs. Albert Pison of Verona, PA; a stepdaughter, Mrs. Harvey Tally, Jr. of Alamogordo; and a stepson, David Henley of Cloudcroft.

Friends may call at the funeral home from 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. today and from 8 a.m. until service time Monday.

From this it appears that Wilma's daughter Linda may have been married in 1966 to Harvey Tally, Jr and was living in Alamogordo at that time. She would have been about 20. Meanwhile, David was in Cloudcroft, perhaps at college. I keep seeing the address 1001 Dewey pop up as the address where Wilma lived so I tried a newspaper search of that address and it didn't yield much information. I did find however that in Nov 1965, son David married Twalya Jean Hutchinson who was a young lady who was born in Lazbuddie, TX in 1949 to Harold and Tomalene Vaughn Hutchinson from Oklahoma and Texas. Part of the account of their wedding reads: *Other out of town guests attending the wedding were: Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Talley, and son, David from Bonita, M.: Mrs. Talley is a sister of the groom. Mrs. Marcus T. Hill and Naomi Smith from Hayden, Arizona. The couple are at home in Cloudcroft, N. M. where the groom is employed at Burgett Floral and the bride will continue her education at Cloudcroft High School. This confirms that sister Linda was married to Harvey Tally and that they have a son David. Since Linda was born in 1946 and has a son by 1966, she must have married around 1963-1964.*

I have been unable to determine what happened to Twalya or if she and David had any children, but in May 1980, David married a 2nd time to Hildegard Feder, a young lady who was born in Germany in 1949 and arrived in the US in 1952. On their marriage records, she and David were living together at 1517 Roosevelt, Alamogordo. Searching that address led to some interesting discoveries. It shows that Hilda had an older brother Ralph Henry Feder who was born in Germany in 1943, grew up and joined the Army and served in the Corp of Engineers, but sadly died of leukemia in 1981 at the tender age of 38 leaving a wife, Cheryl King who he married in 1974 and they had a son Ronald and two daughters, Carrie and Laurie. This in turn led me to discover that Hilda and Ralphs parents were Hubert and Johanna Luckhart Feder who were both Germans that were born in 1908 and came to America in 1952. They died in 1996 and 1992.

Continuing my voyage of discovery, I then found that in March 1972, David and Hilda had a son, Chad Hubert Henley, but then in 1973, Hilda married Paul Herbert Bass. Paul had divorce Jeanell Bass in 1972 and in Mar 1977 he was marrying Carol Sue Thomas, but they divorced about 4 months later. This must have been the reason that David and Hilda were remarried in 1980. The only other thing I have discovered about David and Hilda is that they seem to have spent some time in Davison, Michigan in 1996, but appear to be living in Alamogordo currently.

Looking into sister Linda, she is mentioned as being the wife of Harvey Talley, Jr before 1966 and having a son David. I have not found any definitive confirmation of these facts, but I did find that Harvey later married Nancy Carol Reeves and they had a son, John Tally in 1968 who died in 2013. I then was able to track down Linda's son with Harvey and his name is David Jett Tally and he was born in Jan 1964 and went to high school in Weed, NM. In 1990, he married Marquerite Heard so that is confirmed in his grandfather's obituary in 2015. In Jan 1968, I found this notice in the paper:

Harvey Claude Talley vs Linda Nadine (Tally) Poeling; Plaintiff must allow defendant the custody of two minor children. Dec. 22

This suggests that Harvey and Linda had two children and that Linda has married someone named Poeling. I found a possible Jack Poeling, but no firm confirmation. At the time of her mother's death, she is married to Bob Anderson and I cannot find him. Lots of confusion with this family. Let's look at Wilma's obituary and see what pops up:

Wilma Ruthena Bolitho "Ruth," 85, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Aug. 27, 2013, in Alamogordo. She was born on Dec. 23, 1927, in Morenci, Ariz., to Ima "Johnson" Smith Russell and James William Smith.

She is preceded in death by her parents, sister Imojean "Jean" Smith Williams, husband, Norman "Bo" Bolitho, great-granddaughter Raynee Griffin and many friends throughout the years.

Her survivors include a daughter Linda Anderson and her husband, Bob, and a son David Henley and his wife, Hilda. Grandchildren David Tally and wife, Marguerite; Brenda Smith and husband, Stewart; Chad Henley and wife, Diana; Toni Griffin and her husband, Matt. Great-grandchildren (who kept her young in her later years) Dustin and Kelsy Luna, Kaylin and Mackenna Tally, Grady and Gage Griffin, and Elisabeth and Alexander Henley.

Ruth was a kind and giving woman, always showing her love through baking and cooking. She was also a fighter, overcoming many ailments throughout the years. In her final days she was surrounded by her family and friends. She will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

The family would like to thank all of the healthcare givers who showed her patience and compassion over the years, may God bless you all. Memorial service to be held at a later date.

We have somewhat identified her daughter Linda with some gaps. We have identified David Tally and his wife. We have identified Chad as David's son. We have not identified Brenda and Toni, but I believe that Linda had at least one more child with Harvey Tally so one of these girls must be her daughter. I think that is about as far as I can go with Wilma.

Alvy suggests that at some point she married Wilson Dow (Curley) McCracken, but I have never been able to find a link to this other than a note on his Findagrave page that he married Wilma before he married Shirley Esta Henderson. I found several mentions of a Mrs. William McCracken in the 1950-1960 newspaper which may have been Wilma, but it is not clear. His photo was posted by Hilda Henley so that lends some credence.

Children of Wilma Smith and William Henley

589	Linda Nadine Henley	1946	Wilma and William's Child#1
590	David Stuart Henley	1947	Wilma and William's Child#2

This completes the saga of James and Ima. A family that seems to have made a bit of an impact on Visalia, CA with lots of family still in the area. I look forward to hearing from you at rbills_houston.com. Any additions, feedback, corrections would be appreciated. This was completed 21 Dec 2024. Rich