

Archie PENNINGTON

Class of 1922

The two most precious things to Archie Pennington were good food and the good times he enjoyed with his family. So, it seemed only fitting that this Great Graduate from the Class of 1922 would combine the loves of his life to find a place in the hearts - and stomachs - of scores of people across the Greater Tulsa Area.

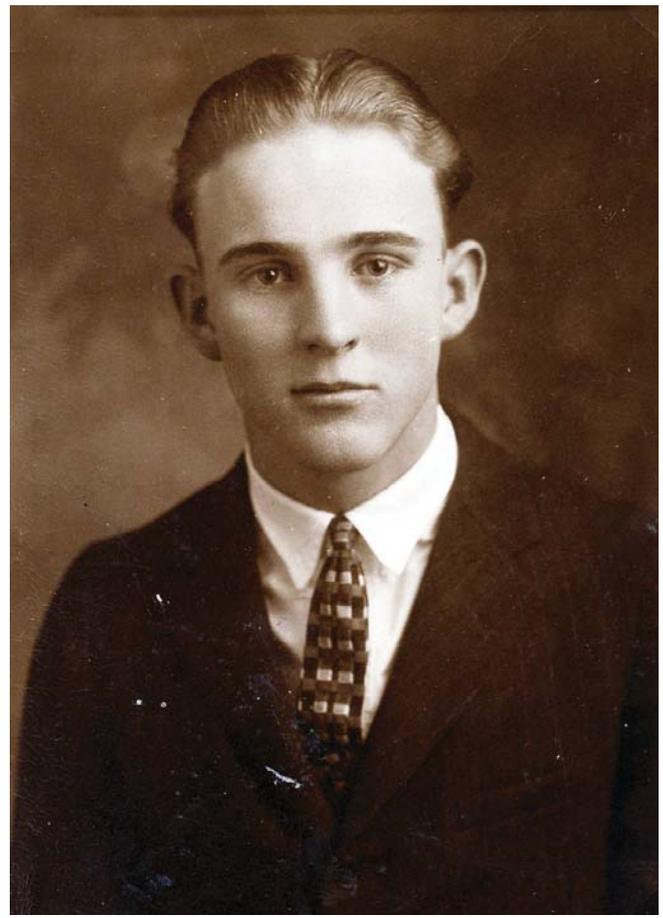
Following graduation from Broken Arrow High School, Pennington attended Tonkawa Junior College (Northern Oklahoma State College) where he majored in business. His first fling at food service came with ownership of three Lindy's Restaurants - one in Tulsa from 1934-1940; one in Broken Arrow from 1940-1942, and another in Tulsa from 1942-1951.

While each was a successful operation, none could match the elite status of his next undertaking. It was the second drive-in restaurant built in Tulsa and Pennington co-owned it with W.C. Miller before buying out his partner and turning it into a family owned and operated business in 1958.

The television show "Happy Days" had its Arnold's Drive-In where all the teens gathered for fun and food. But for local diners the eatery frequented by Richie Cunningham, 'Potsie' Weber and the Fonz took a backseat to Pennington's Drive-In.

It has been said that if you want to hear about a fond memory of the place, simply toss a rock into the air. If it lands on or near somebody who grew up in the Tulsa area during the 1950's and 1960's, your mission will be accomplished.

Without question, Pennington's was the hub of social activity



on Brookside's famous restless ribbon. Between heaping helpings of burgers, fried chicken, onion rings, fried shrimp and the establishment's trademark black-bottom pies, teens would cruise back and forth trying to see who was driving what - and who was riding with them.

Pennington's remained true to its promise of serving good meals to families who didn't want to dress up to go out to dinner until 1974 when it was leased to other operators.

An article in the April 24, 1985 Tulsa World announced Pennington's passing and burial in Broken Arrow's Floral Haven Cemetery. He was survived by his wife of 50 years, Lola, daughters Linda Gilbert and Judy Pennington, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, a brother, Virgil Pennington, and two sisters, Eula Powell and Dorothy Weirick.

Not listed in the obituary but equally saddened were scores of hungry '50s and '60s teens who to this day swear that Pennington's Drive-In was one of the coolest spots on the planet.

