



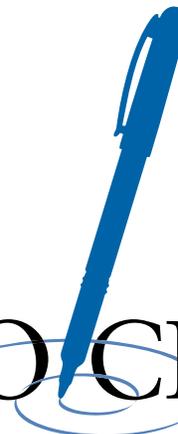
### About the Author

Paul Evans is a canonically resident priest in the Diocese of California, licensed in Albany and Vermont. [Long-term ministries exercised at Grace Cathedral, St. John the Evangelist, and the CSF and SSF communities in San Francisco, St. George's Church, Antioch, CA; the Adirondack Mission and Bethesda Church, Saratoga Springs, Dio. of Albany.] Formerly a partner in The Anglican Bibliopole, he lives in Saratoga Springs, NY. His biographical material can be found in the Clerical Directory and by googling "Winterthur Museum Paul Evans." He lives mindfully of the commitment made fifty years ago (BCP 1928, 540) to "Have always printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge." Fr. Evans can be reached at [AnglicanBk@aol.com](mailto:AnglicanBk@aol.com).

### About Vintage Voice

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# VINTAGE VOICE



## Downsizing Surprise

By Father Paul Evans

Five years ago, after thirty years of living in Saratoga Springs beside Bell Brook, the decision was made to place the property on the market. Downsizing was embarked upon, but many important things were packed and set aside for a more leisurely and reflective time.

On my 79th birthday, I began the exploration of an extensive memento assembly of letters and photographs. It took the fall and winter to read, mark, and inwardly digest the collection. The intention was to reduce each consideration to a single letter or photograph. Visiting and culling became a fruitful experience, making the winding down into my 80s a joy. The following is one delightful and surprising dimension of this creative stewardship.

A few years after my folks married, they built a home in Rahway, New Jersey, in 1930. I arrived there in 1937 and lived there two years before they relocated to Elizabeth in 1939 where I grew up. Too young to have any recollection of that home, nor ever having visited, it remained in my mind as "the house in Rahway."

However, like all proud parents with distant grandparents, there were photographs — about a dozen — taken of the house and garden from all angles as a background for happy parents steadying my wobbly legs on my first birthday.

I allow myself a Google adventure from time to time, so I decided to search the address. I was afraid it might reveal a fast food restaurant or gas station, but what appeared was the same house pictured, beautifully maintained with handsome gardens.

On a whim, I gathered about a half-dozen 2.5" x 3.5" photographs and a first-birthday greeting from the local church Sunday School, addressed to me in Rahway, and sent it off, addressed to:

Personal for Resident(s)  
Forbes Street  
Rahway, New Jersey

My name and home address were in the upper left-hand corner, and a note enclosed.

Several days later, a handwritten, three-page letter arrived. The letter began, “How do I thank you for taking time to find the current ‘caretaker’ of your boyhood home. It seemed so surreal to me, it brought tears to my eyes. These little treasures mean so much to me!”

“I often wondered who the original owners were. I purchased the house in 1995, and the previous owners raised two boys in this home and their names were left written on beams in the basement... and I can only imagine in 1939 a blond baby grasping onto the beautiful crystal doorknobs, which I refuse to part with.”

“It will be a very sad day when I have to leave this home, but many people have passed its threshold and I’m blessed with great memories.”

Enclosed along with the woman’s letter was my first 80th birthday greeting card and warm regards, anticipating the June occasion.



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