



## Face of Fillmore

*By Sherry Shepard*  
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When you hear the news, that the Shepard's have added three great grandbabies to the family in the past few months, two in February, you will not be at all surprised that the subject of today's column is babies.

Some of the information was found in a 2009 column. If your memory is like mine, it will seem like new.

On October 5, our granddaughter Haley gave birth to Maisie Maelynn Speakman in Tooele. On February 12, our granddaughter Cori had little Paitlyn Marie Cordova at St. Marks Hospital in Salt Lake and on February 28, Cori's older sister Camille had Aiden Harper Jeffs in Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston, Texas. The mothers and babies (even the dad's) are doing well.



Aiden

Thoughts went back to the years ago, when the first babies were born in Fillmore in wagon beds or crude cabins in the fort. Even after more "luxurious" homes were built, babies were born at home under less than favorable circumstances than we have now. As I have interviewed owners of pioneer homes I am often told that people stop by and tell the owners that they were born in their house.

The first baby born in the new settlement of Fillmore was Columbia Fillmore Call, the daughter of Josiah and Harrietta Call. She was born January 28, 1852.

Later on, in Fillmore's history, many babies were born in the home of Dr. Evans whose home was also the hospital at that time. On August 9, 1929, the Progress records: "New Hospital Completed. The entire upstairs of the T.M. Ivory home, which was recently purchased by Dr. Evans, has been remodeled and equipped for a modern hospital...The hospital will provide for six beds and will have an operating room and kitchen...The lower portion of the house will be used for living quarters."

The old Robison Hotel on First South and Main Street became a maternity home and hundreds of Fillmore's citizens who are now in their early Social Security years were born there. This home began early during the World War II years when Dr. Evans, who was the only doctor in the county at the time, approached Mr. and Mrs. Christensen about turning the hotel into a maternity home. Dr. Evans was in need of help and Mrs. Christensen was a mid-wife. Estimates in the number of babies born in the maternity home range from 500 to over 900 babies. Mrs. Christensen was a very strict nurse and would not allow the new mothers to get



Maisie's First Smile



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out of bed or even to read the Progress. The cost of a baby being born and a ten day stay in bed at the home was only \$50, a far cry from the cost to have a baby these days.

There is an interesting story in connection with the maternity home. Former Mayor David Christensen and his wife Gaye Kimball Christensen were both born there. Mrs. Kimball gave birth to a baby daughter late one evening and in the early morning hours of the next day, Mrs. Christensen gave birth to a baby boy. The mothers were roommates for the next ten days and years later these two babies were married.

For several years, the building where the Fillmore City Library and City Offices are now housed was the hospital and saw the birth of hundreds of babies.

Over three decades ago the existing Fillmore Community Medical Center was built on the south end of town. Our first grandchild – Arthur Burton – was the first baby born there on March 12, 1986.

With the many changes in the hospital systems in Fillmore one fact remains, babies have always been a top priority in the Face of Fillmore.



Maternity Home, now home to the Orton Family