

DAYS OF DORIS

Memories of Doris Blystone

By Rick Kurtis

This book is dedicated to my mother, Doris Blystone-Heinreich, for her love and support that she has given unto me for the past sixty years.

Mom,

I love you with all my heart
and wish that I could do more.

The years have passed by so fast
and yet, we have barely scratched
the surface.

You have given me so much
and I am so very proud to be
your son,

Richard Curtis Heinreich

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PROLOGUE

Angel In The Desert

The desert is a beautiful place to explore but also, it is a very dangerous place if you lose your way. This was found out one day in my mother's late sixties. She was out venturing in the Nevada desert with her local rock club. She was with her boyfriend, searching for gems, crystals or small stones of particular colors, shapes and sizes.

Her boyfriend said he had to go to the bathroom. He asked if she would be all right by herself. She assured him that she would be fine. She had her jug of water, her umbrella for shade and told him not to worry. He pointed to the mountain, then to the red flag on the car and said to use those as a reference point and always keep them in sight. He pecked her on the cheek and hurried off while she continued to look for rocks.

Being a farm girl from Wisconsin and that she had been on these rock club hikes numerous times, I don't know where her head was at that day, but yes, she got lost. She couldn't see the flag of the car or remember which mountain peak that her boyfriend had pointed out. To her, all the mountain peaks looked the same. She walked around and when passing over a few knolls, thinking she was going in the right direction, but still no flag. All of a sudden she heard this awful scream coming from the ground in front of her. Scared, she looked down to see what it was and saw desert tortoise with a jumping cactus stuck on its head, above its eye and another on his front leg. It screamed again while trying to pull its head into a shell.

"What could I do?" she thought, "the poor thing!"

She talked to the tortoise, "What happened to you? Don't you know any better than to walk into a cactus?" She bent down and got onto her

knees, "Now hold still, this will probably hurt," she said.

She used her umbrella handle to pull off the cactus pods. Now with them removed, it wasn't all that bad. There were only a few needles remaining, stuck in the tortoise's skin. She told him, "Let me do your leg first." She pulled out the needles, one by one. With each pull, he would jerk but just a little. She poured some water on his leg to soothe the pain, then talked to him again. "Okay, now the ones above your eye. I need you to hold very still."

While she pulled, she continued to talk to him, telling him how dumb she was in getting herself lost in the desert. She also talked to God for help and guidance. She didn't know if it helped to keep the tortoise from moving but she thought it did and it did, at least, make her feel less nervous at the time.

She removed all of the cactus needles and poured her water over his head to wash away the blood. To her, the tortoise looked thirsty while she poured the water. So she poured some more of her water into her cup and sure enough he took a good long drink. She never saw a tortoise drink before. Come to think of it, it was the first time in her sixty-eight years of life that she had ever seen a tortoise in the wild.

Now that he was better, she stood up to continue her search. She told the tortoise, "Now stay away from those cactuses," she said and the tortoise was gone. She continued on her way and walked out into the desert, three knolls over and saw nothing. Then she decided to walk back to try a different direction once again. She passed the wet spot that was left in the dirt from her water and headed off in another direction. As she rounded the bend, the tortoise was once again by her feet. She stopped suddenly, almost stumbling over the tortoise, "Oh, what are you doing here?" she said while she looked around, "Are you back to say thank you? You're very welcome."

The sun was starting to hide behind the mountains, while she

contemplated her situation. She watched the tortoise as he walked out about ten feet away. He turned around and looked at her, then walked back. He pulled on her shoestring and then walked out about ten feet, turned and looked at her once again. How strange she thought and asked him, "Do you want me to follow you? Okay, what do I have to lose, this way or that, I guess this way," and she followed the tortoise.

The tortoise walked steadily while she followed along behind. She was just about ready to turn back around when she saw the red flag of the car. Then she heard the group starting to call out her name. When she crested the knoll, her boyfriend came running up, full of worry. They were just starting to form a search party.

That night around the campfire, she told them about her Angel in the desert. In the weeks to follow when she told me, I praised God, thanking Him for sending that tortoise to my Mother for guidance.

CHAPTER 1

Roy James Blystone

My mother, Doris Blystone, was born on May 5, 1930, right in the heart of the great depression. She was the eighth child of a family of fourteen children. But before we get into her youth and her memories, we need to go back, way back to her parents, Roy James and Ula Nichols Blystone.

Roy Blystone was the sixth generation born in Pennsylvania. His parents moved to Oxford Wisconsin, finding a job working for the railroad. That's where Roy met Ula. They married in 1914 and found an opportunity in Chicago, working with new technology. During this time they had their first three children, Edward, Gordon and Irma (Sis).

Technology was booming with the invention of the auto, electricity, the radio and telephone. Jobs were plentiful with the end of World War I and the roaring twenties was a prosperous time for people that worked with good sense and values. It was an era of loud clothes, flappers, jazz fun and overspending.

Roy was one of the good sense individuals. The job in Chicago made way to a new venture, when a man by the name of Mr. Weinstein saw potential in Roy and offered him a job working for his furniture stores. Roy moved to Milwaukee and had their fourth child, Roy (Bernard) in 1922. Mr. Weinstein's business not only dealt with new but damage goods from either train wrecks or when a big rig would crash due to the extreme weather that took place in those northern states. Roy's job was sorting through the salvage goods for fixing and resale. All the rest was to be burned.

It was said, one day while sorting, Roy found a dead child in a suitcase. He was told to burn it on the burn pile. This upset Roy being that he had four children of his own but he did his job. This is not to say that it was the reason for Roy to leave, but it was speculated.

While in Milwaukee, Roy met up with fellow classmates from school. One of these classmates had knowledge about batteries, so they partnered up, moved to Portage Wisconsin to open up their own battery factory. Things were doing very well for Roy and his family while they lived in a tent for three years.

Along with the battery business, Roy branched out working for the county and eventually started a lumber sawmill company. By then, they lived in a modest little house on the outskirts of town, on the other side of the Wisconsin River. This was all marshland. By this time Roy was in good standing with the community. Everyone looked up to him and knew his family. Doing work for the county, Roy was given twenty acres behind his sawmill in exchange for clearing the land on the other side of the road. Around this time there was an accident at the battery factory. Roy was talking to his partner while an employee mixed two chemicals together, causing a toxic gas. Roy saw this happen but was too late to stop him. He jumped in, pushed two employees out the door to save their lives but not before getting a good burn in his own lungs. He was taken to the hospital and had one lung removed and eventually recovered. In later years, his bad lung would catch up with him and he passed away at the early age of sixty-six. That was in 1958.

While the relationship with the county continued to grow, so did his family. He gave up the battery business, staying home with his family and working with the sawmill. After Bernard, came Riley, then Ethel and Artie.

Then came the great depression in 1929. Everyone was affected. No matter how you sliced it, people had to cut back, conserve and learn to do without for the next eleven years until World War II. Over thirteen million

people were out of work. Wages had dropped almost in half going from forty-one dollars per week down to seventeen dollars a week, that's if they had a job at all. People that lived high on the hog lost their homes, their jobs and even their towns. Some committed suicide, while others rode the rails in search for work. Due to the high number of people riding trains, over 30,000 lost their lives by either falling, being pushed or run over by the rails trying to get on or off. Many others died in gather camps either from illness, starvation or disagreement brawls.

Through these years, Doris was born, then came Clara and Carl, they were twins. One year later they were followed by Betty. She unfortunately only lived three months. Byron was born the following year who only lived two weeks. Three more years had passed by before Donnie was born, then Bernie, the baby and the last. This all took place in a twenty-four-year span, each child roughly two years apart.

The crash hit rock bottom in 1933. The number one song on the radio was "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime" by Bing Crosby in 1932. Also, in 1932 and in 1933, the government didn't mint any nickels to be conservative, thinking it would help to bring the economy back on its feet. Many people were trying to make a living by selling apples on the corner for five cents each or pencils for a penny. The only gambling that men could afford was pitching pennies. This became very popular in the 1930s. Men would gather around and pitch a penny toward a wall and the one that came the closest would collect all the pennies in order to feed his family.

Getting back to Roy, it was said, "Hard work and an enterprising attitude made a bad situation tolerable. You have to use it up, wear it out, make do with what you had or do without." That was Roy.

Like the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird*, growing up in the 1930s was a time of innocence where life was a struggle but everyone made do. It was about family and survival. Roy and Ula who will be referred to as Mom

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and Pa from here on, were good Christian, loving parents. They were very strict but giving all that they could to the people that they loved and to the community, that was a very important part of their lives.

CHAPTER 2

Big Sister, Irma May (Sis)

To the earliest memories of Doris was that of the age of four. Irma really didn't care for her name and everyone called her Sis. She was the oldest of the girls and helped the most, taking care of the house with Mom. She had long days, especially on Saturdays. That was the day of major housecleaning, baking pies, cakes and breads for the family on a wood burning stove. At night she gave all the children a bath in an old washtub. The girls were always first, than the boys.

As stated earlier, Pa provided for his family rather well. Doris, at the age of five, was helping Sis to wash all the clothes and the bed sheets for the week. While pushing the clothes into the washer, Doris' hand had gotten caught in the ringer. Sis screamed so loud that the other children came running from the watermelon patch, where they were pulling weeds. Sis wrapped Doris' hand and they started on the two mile walk to the hospital. Luckily there were some men working on the road, building a new bridge across the Wisconsin River. One of the men was nice enough to give them a ride to the doctor, then to the hospital. Doris had thirty-five stitches placed in her left hand that day. By three PM they were ready to go home. Sis had to carry Doris the two miles back, well at least off and on. Doris walked sometimes to give her sister a break.

Besides all the household chores and helping Mom with each new baby, Sis had other duties in the summer. The sawmill was busy and with Pa having county contracts, the Sheriff's Department would always supply Pa with labor. They would bring out six to eight young men to work off their jail time. A big tent was set up next to the children's playhouse in the

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yard for the young men to stay. Sis had to clean up the big tent and make up the beds in the tent. Sis and Mom would also cook meals to feed the crew. Sis didn't mind the cooking but she didn't like to clean the tent. At least she didn't have to pull the weeds or hoe in the nineteen acre truck garden that they had.

In later years, Sis married Clayton Bortz, when she was nineteen years old. Clayton was now a part of the family. They first lived in a tent, then lived in a trailer on the property. She worked in a restaurant in town and had her first child in 1940. When they moved out on their own, Sis would have picnics all the time that the whole family enjoyed. Doris still has a cry of love and joy now and then, of the memories of her big sister, Sis.

CHAPTER 3

Jealous Sister, Ethel

Before Doris came along, Ethel and Artie were close. When Doris was old enough to play with the others, Artie grew closer to his little sister, being the well-mannered boy that he was. This for some reason, made Ethel very jealous of Doris. But then again, Ethel was a mean-spirited girl. One day, Ethel and Artie had a fight. Bernard, one of the older brothers, was into boxing in high school. He thought it would be fun for both of them to settle their argument with his boxing gloves. They were both game and put on the gloves. Ethel was mean and threw a few good licks. However, Artie was a boy and Ethel was getting the worst end of the deal. Ed, the oldest, came home and put a stop to it. Then he ripped into Bernard. Ed put up his fists and suggested that Bernard should fight him, just to see how he would like it. Naturally, Bernard ran off and hid in the barn.

One year for Christmas, Ethel and Doris each received a white handkerchief along with a small necklace. Doris' necklace had a little yellow elephant on it, while Ethel's necklace had a pink elephant. Well, Ethel was jealous. She didn't want the pink one but wanted the yellow one. She threw a big fit and asked Mom if they could trade. Mom told her "No, you take what you get." Ethel was really angry. That night she broke Doris' necklace so she was never able to wear it. Then out of spite, Ethel wore her necklace to school and bragged on how beautiful and nice it was. Now Doris was the one that was angry but never broke Ethel's necklace, even though she wanted to.

Another year, Mom made Doris a new red dress to wear to the school

dance. Ethel was so jealous that she took Doris' toothbrush and threw it into the pig bucket. Doris and Ethel got into a fight and Doris yelled out a few obscene choice words that was overheard by Pa. Of course, Doris was the one that was punished, not Ethel.

On a lighter note, speaking of pigs, Doris remembered that they had a pet pig, a big white pig. It liked to run and play with the children. Surprisingly enough, the pig was even let into the house to lay down on a blanket. Sometimes Doris or the others would take turns riding on her back. When the pig was tired of them, she would just sit down and the children would slide off, laughing and playing.

The jealousy continued through the early years. Doris and Ethel were always butting heads. It escalated to the point that Ethel went into Pa's room and came out with his pistol. Luckily, Artie was there. He hit Ethel's arm when she fired off a shot. The bullet whizzed past Doris's ear and out of the house at the bottom corner of the window sill. Doris couldn't recall if they were ever questioned about the hole, but later it was used to put a wire through to increase the antenna of the radio.

Every summer, one of the children would go to stay with Pa's sister, Bernda, who lived up in Oxford Wisconsin. Aunt Bernda had a son by the name of Clyde that was the same age as Ethel. The year that Ethel went up for the summer, there was a big hullabaloo. Doris really never found out what happened, except that grandpa had to bail Clyde and Ethel out of jail. Aunt Bernda sent Ethel home saying, she never wanted Ethel to come back. Pa probably gave Ethel a whippin for that.

All things set aside, Ethel grew up and things calmed down. She worked in a shoe factory in Portage and got Doris a job there later on. Her mean streak was over. Through her later years, she was wise, never married or had any children of her own. She gave back to her family by helping to put Ed's twin granddaughters through college along with Donnie's son. She also gave college money for Clara's grandchildren but it

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was lost through the courts and a bitter divorce.

Everyone said that Ethel would live the longest being that she had no stress of marriage or the heartache of children. Unfortunately at the age of eighty-four while on vacation in Germany, Ethel suffered a major heart attack that shocked the whole family. She survived and came back home but was never the same after that. Ethel's mind started to deteriorate. Her sister Clara, with the help of the church, did as much as they could until it came to the point to have her placed in a home with round-the-clock supervision. Ethel always said she would leave her inheritance to her favorite niece, Ed's daughter, Sandy. But now I guess the home will take it all.

Chapter 4

Ed and His Cars

At a very early age, Doris remembered her older brother, Ed. He was the firstborn, so there was a sixteen year span in age difference between the two. She remembered that he liked his cars. He loved to race cars and he became an excellent mechanic because of it. Ed knew how to soup up his car to make it what they called a "Hot Rod." Every weekend they would race from Portage to Columbus, a thirty mile stretch and Ed would usually win. Ed raced for years until the other drivers decided they had enough of Ed always winning the anti. So they boxed him in and forced him off the road.

In later years, Ed had a house on the other side of the Wisconsin River and a small garage. Across the road was an empty dirt field that he used to race cars around on a small dirt track. Being that they were race cars, they were very loud. The hospital, that was downriver and up on the hill, had asked him to stop because it was just too much noise for their patients. So he obliged.

His love for cars never died. Even in the winter, Ed would take his young siblings out on the frozen pond behind the sawmill. He would spin the car around and around until they were all screaming with delight. Pa would act like he was angry at Ed but they were all family and nothing was really said.

Ed was married to Mildred Spencer and they had their first child, Catherine, the same year that Donnie was born. The marriage didn't last long because Ed was young, mean and abusive. He then married a woman by the name of Gloria Allison and had four more children.

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In later years, Doris would go over to their house on Sundays. She always thought it was so elegant at his house because they had to take off their shoes before entering. The reason for this was because they had a beautiful white carpet. Some Sundays, Ed would take them for a drive around the beautiful back roads of Wisconsin. One particular Sunday, Ed drove them to Black Hawk Park. In the Park was a cabin that was built next to a small lake, so they could play. Ed told the children to wait in the car while he got out his gun. He took aim and shot a rattlesnake then picked it up and tried to put it into the car. All the children screamed, while Ed continued to laugh. That was her brother, Ed.

As the years passed by, Doris didn't go over to Ed's house as often. Ed now owned the gas station and garage right on the edge of Portage, before the Wisconsin River Bridge. That was a place where all the men would gather just to shoot the breeze or to get their car fixed.

His legacy lives on with his son, Jerry, taking over the business. He built it up into a nationally known business with tow trucks for semi's, big rigs and also was awarded the honor of being the tow truck service on the NASCAR circuit.

Jerry carries on his family's heritage of community pride by giving back. His father and grandfather would be so proud.

Chapter 5

A Sad Year Indeed

Doris' brother, Gorden, was in the Army Corps at Camp F in Portage and loved every minute of it. When he bought his first car, it had a rumble seat. That was a flip up lid that was outside of the car so two people could sit where the trunk should be. The first person he took for a ride was Mom and the children took turns riding in the back. At the time, it was the fun thing to do.

One year, Ed and Gorden had a job working at the canning company in Poynette. One rainy night on their way home, Ed, the race car driver, lost control of the car and ran off the road. The car flipped and rolled landing on its side slanted in a ditch. Ed managed to get the car back on all four tires but he couldn't find Gorden. Ed raced home to get Pa. They drove back with lanterns to search the marshland. There was Gorden, unconscious in the water. They woke him up and Gorden couldn't remember how he got there and why he was all wet.

It was December 10, 1938 when Gorden came for a weekend visit from Camp F. Pa and Gorden set out to go rabbit hunting to bring home supper for the family. Artie, at the age of ten, was chopping firewood. Doris was peeling potatoes with Ethel, while Riley was bundled up by the potbelly stove because he had a bad cold. Mom was resting in her room. Bernard came in wearing his good clothes, ready to go out. All of a sudden, Artie started to yell. Bernard opened the window to hear. They could hear Pa yelling for help down in the cornfield. All the boys took off running to find Pa, even Riley in his blanket and his rubber boots.

When they reached Pa, they saw that Gorden had been shot. He said

that he put the gun on the other side of the fence and when he went to crawl through, the shotgun fell over and went off, shooting him in the stomach. Bernard took off his good shirt and pressed it against the wound to try to stop the bleeding. Then he ran to the highway to flag down a car. Riley took off his blanket in the cold December air and he and Pa carried Gorden to the road.

It was about 4 o'clock when they arrived at the hospital. When Mom found out she ran the two miles to the hospital. Gorden held her hand and said, "Please don't tell Mom what happened and tell her I'm sorry." They took him into surgery but there was too much blood loss and too much damage. Gorden had died that day.

Being a small town, everyone soon heard. They brought food and coffee to the house to help grieve with the family. That was a sad year for everyone just before Christmas. The city gave them apples and oranges and Christmas gifts for all the children. Gorden had a military funeral and the military gave Mom a bugle. Mom was so distraught that when she made it home, she broke the bugle in half and threw it into the potbelly stove.

They all missed Gorden. He was only twenty years old when he died. Doris has fond memories of Mom playing her pipe organ, Pa on his violin and Gorden would join in with his little cantina. It was a tragedy that he left way too soon.

Chapter 6

Brother Riley

Let's move on to happier memories. When Riley was young, he used to babysit the smaller children. He would play The Shadow Man. With a kerosene lantern, he would make big shadows on the wall and entertain the children with stories.

Riley always had a talent of making things. He used Pa's wood tools to cut out shapes such as a covered wagon and horses, out of a new piece of wood. Then he would mounted on another board for display. Doris always admired his talent.

When Riley was older, he loved his beer. One day, Riley came home and took Artie's bike for a ride. This bike was passed down from Bernard to Artie, so he was really proud of his bike. While Riley was riding the bike, he crashed and broke the wheel of the bike. Artie was so upset that they got into a big fight causing Pa to bring out his disciplinary Cat of Nine Tales. That's right, a short little whip with nine straps was used to keep all the children on the straight and narrow. We will talk about that later.

Riley had enough, so the next morning, he decided to run away from home. Three months had passed by. One morning, Mom was making pancakes for all the children. The little ones ate first before Bernard and Clayton, Sis's new husband. Mom saw Riley walking home off the bridge and was so happy she made more pancakes and the three men had a pancake eating contest. Naturally, Riley won.

Riley entered the military and worked in the paramedic division. He would never talk about the horrors he witnessed unless he was really, really drunk and it took a lot to get him really drunk. He married Rose

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Koeing and lived in a little modest house right next to the family. Later, he married Jeanette Jacobson. Riley enjoyed children and was always the life of any occasion. In later years, he would visit Doris and her family often.

Chapter 7

Fun with Pa

Pa had his disciplinary side but when it came to his children, he doted and loved them very much. Being that he ran a sawmill, there was always a lot of sawdust and wood. Pa built the children a Playhouse, maybe just to get them out of the house for the summer. In the sawdust area, he built an ice house, root cellar. In the winter they would cut ice from the river and stored it in the cellar. It would stay cold all summer long.

When the circus or fair would come into town, they would always set up in an open field on the other side of the river. Pa would supply them with three or four truckloads of sawdust for their animals and to sop up the wet spots in the field when the rains came through. Pa would get free tickets for all the children thrown into the deal.

On the Fourth of July, Pa would make fireworks for the family by cutting up sticks of dynamite and packing them down into cardboard tubes. They were super loud and went really high. All in all, they really had a great time celebrating the nation's independence.

In the summer, he would take the older boys on a fishing trip. They would throw an old tent into the back of the truck and off they would go. When they returned, the fish were hung in the smokehouse until they were ready for storage. They sure were a tasty delight to enjoy.

Pa's cousin, Stanley moved to Hollywood with his two brothers and started in the movie business. Stanley was an actor in movies. His movies ranged from the Three Stooges, some westerns with John Wayne, others with Jackie Chan, Hop along Cassidy or with Roy Rogers. He usually played the bad guy or the heavy. When the movies came to town, Pa

would take his children to see the movies. Doris remembered that the tickets were fifteen cents each and she loved the movie, *Gone with the Wind* with Clark Gable. (What girl didn't?)

Artie had a friend that used to come over on the weekends with his accordion. They would all sit around in the clubhouse and listen to him play. Artie was really good on the harmonica and would join in. Sometimes Pa would come in with his violin, sit down and play along. Those were wonderful times to enjoy.

Pa had a spot down in the hollow where he fed the wild animals. He also used to catch wild birds there to sell to the Poynette Game Farm for extra money. He showed Doris how to catch the birds by tying a long horse tail hair to the ground with kernels of corn strung and knotted on the hair. When the bird would swallow the corn, it couldn't fly away, so it would just sit there. Pa would sneak up and quickly grab the bird and pulled out the hair. Doris recalls that Pa kept two great horned owls in the barn to keep down the rodents. She remembered those birds to be about three feet tall.

On the lighter side, the boys were tired of the beatings from the Cat of Nine Tails, so they buried the whip in the potato cellar. When spring came, the river overflowed, flooding the cellar. After the water receded, they were cleaning up the after math and Pa found his whip. After questioning, the boys fessed up and Pa was really angry. He started to whip the boys but when he did, the whip just fell apart and the boys were too big. They all started to laugh, even Pa. After that, Pa made a new whip.

Chapter 8

Mom's New House

For three years prior to December 7, 1941, the European countries were fighting amongst themselves. It seemed that the Germans were talking to Mexico to attack the United States and on September 3, 1939, the British steam liner, the SS Athena was sunk by a German U-boat. It had over 1100 passengers and 300 crew members on board. There were over 300 American passengers, mostly women and children. Twenty-eight of those United States citizens perished along with 112 other passengers and nineteen crew members. This all happened on the same day that Germany declared war on Great Britain and the United States signed an agreement to stay neutral. It wasn't until the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 at 8 o'clock in the morning that forced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to declare war on Germany and Japan. Now the United States was involved, causing the name World War II.

At that time in Baraboo Wisconsin, they wanted to build a power plant. First they needed the trees removed on this 120 acre piece of land. Pa was picked for the job. So things were going great. With all the work and the lumber, Pa built a brand-new house behind the sawmill. Doris remembered how beautiful it was and to her, it was big.

Remember Mr. Weinstein, from Milwaukee? Well, however it was, Mr. Weinstein was remodeling his stores at that same time. Pa and Mr. Weinstein were in communication and he brought out windows for the house along with drapes. The window that looked out over the marsh had red velvet curtains. Pa even built two attached apartments onto the house. One was for Sis and Clayton and the other was for Ed and Millie and their

brand-new baby. Mr. Weinstein also brought out a new dining room set and other furniture for the house. It was all set up and really nice. They were two weeks away from moving in when the whole thing was burnt down to the ground. Grandpa Blystone came over after hearing the news. That was the first time and only time, that Doris had seen her Pa cry. (Grandpa died the following September in 1942.)

It seems that a neighbor man was jealous of Pa because he got the job for the power plant. One night, he was probably full of liquor and set the house ablaze. Everything was gone. The man was found out and spent two years in jail for arson. The only reason that they let him out after two years was because he also had a family of twelve to feed and the county no longer wanted to support them. It was a shame about the house. Sis cried the most, according to Doris.

Pa later rebuilt with a new house but without the apartments. It wasn't as big and they didn't have all the furniture but it would be home for the family for the next seventy years.

Chapter 9

A Christmas to Remember

The same year that Doris received the elephant charm on the necklace was the same Christmas that Pa was in the hospital in Madison. Due to the accident from the battery factory, Pa was very sick. For Doris, this was a very sad Christmas. Mom wanted to cheer up the children but they could not afford a tree. So she told Ed to go out and find one from the woods. She wanted the children to be happy. Ed went out and returned with a tree, a Charlie Brown tree. Mom cried but the children said it was all right and that they would make it work. Mom pulled out some old green tissue paper and wrapped it on the branches, while the children strung popcorn and cranberries to hang around the tree. Riley cut a star out of an old tin can to put on the top of the tree. The tree was small so they set it on top of Mom's sewing machine table and put it in the center of the three cornered window, so Santa could see it. That was a tree with a lot of heart.

That year the boys got socks or gloves and Doris and Ethel fought over the elephant necklaces. It was also Artie's turn to get his first twenty-two rifle. Luckily Pa had purchased it before his illness. With many prayers, time passed by and Pa was getting better.

Mom's cousin, Marcus, came to the house for a visit. He also bought a car that had a rumble seat and wanted to give Mom a ride. Mom talked him into giving her a ride to Madison to see Pa. Sis, Doris and Riley went along too. Riley wanted to see Pa before he left for the Army. It was a mild and beautiful morning when they left. Riley and Doris rode in the rumble seat covered with a blanket. It wasn't bad going there but by the time they left, it was getting dark. On the way home, Doris rode inside by the back

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window until it got too cold for Riley in the rumble seat. Riley squeezed in by the back window and Doris had to sit on Sis's lap.

While Pa was in the hospital, Rex the dog was worried. He was Pa's favorite companion and stayed by his side constantly. Being that Pa was away, Rex would not eat or drink. They laid Pa's clothes down on the floor but it didn't help. Rex would just lay there and mope. One day Doris found Rex out by the swing set. Poor Rex had died of a broken heart. Pa was eventually released and came home and somebody had to tell him about Rex.

Chapter 10

Back to the Children

Let's get back to the children. Bernard was a boxer in high school. While working at the power plant project, Bernard found a nice big black walnut tree. Out of love for his mom, he decided to make her a table and chair set from the beautiful wood. It turned out really nice. Mom loved it but sold it. You see, Bernard wanted to go to Washington to work in the shipyard before going into the Army. So when she sold the table and chair set, she gave the money to Bernard.

Bernard was to ship out the day after his eighteenth birthday. Mom and Pa thought to give him a birthday/going away party and everyone came. Because it was a school night, Doris and Clara had to go to bed but wanted to stay up and watch. They snuck downstairs and hid under Mom's rocker. Someone from the party saw them and told Pa, so they both got spanked and sent to bed. That morning they did not see their mom and went to school as usual. When they came home, Mom was holding their new little baby sister, Bernie, in her arms. That was October 3, 1939.

Doris recalled one time when it was a very cold and wet winter. One night while keeping warm in the house, the chimney of the potbelly stove caught on fire. Bernard jumped up to the roof with a pail of water to pour down the flue pipe. With the steam from the water, the cold air and the wind, Bernard almost froze his ears. Now that the fire was out they needed to relight the stove. I guess the children didn't think to use dry wood. Instead, Artie, Doris and Ethel went to get some gas out of the truck. While getting the gas, Artie or Ethel had lit a match I guess to see because it was really dark. That part was never clear. The part that was clear is that the

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truck caught on fire. So Artie and Doris pushed it into the snow bank and threw snow onto the flames to put them out. Doris didn't know which one was scarier, the chimney fire or the truck fire.

Bernard worked his way up to first lieutenant when he was in the Army. He then married Evelyn Puer in 1945 and had four children before 1952. Bernard and his family lived in Milwaukee. When Doris was married, Bernard came and was in her wedding party.

Chapter 11

Artie's Day at School

Growing up in the depression was hard but even harder for Artie this one particular day. Pa had a contract with the city of Portage to help in the building of a new high school. He had a steam engine on the property to keep the sand and mortar warm through the cold winter nights. He also had a small shed for tools and to keep warm because they had to stoke the steam engine all night long. So here's how the story goes.

There was a boy at school that was angry at one of the teachers. Pa was friends with all the children and told them about the steam engine and probably other stories. One day this particular boy looked into Pa's shed and saw a bunch of nails. He then got an awfully wicked idea. He stole the can of nails and put them under the tires of all the teacher's cars that were in the parking lot because you didn't know who drove what. Artie happened to notice the nails and instead of telling someone, he started to remove the nails from behind the tires. Doris' teacher caught Artie red-handed with the nails in his hand and by a tire. She didn't believe his story, so she pinned a note on Doris dress and told her to give it to her parents. If she knew what it had said, she would have thrown it away. That night, Pa took the Cat of Nine Tales to Artie's backside. Artie stuck to his story but was punished more because Pa thought he was lying. The next morning Artie was blood-soaked and stuck to the bedsheets. Doris and Ethel had to soak him loose by using warm water, pulling away the sheet and yes, Pa made him go to school that day.

Artie was in severe pain, so the teacher sent him to the principal's office. The principal questioned Artie about his pain. Artie told the truth in

fear that telling a lie about the beating would get him another beating, so he spilled it out the way it was. The principal wanted to call the sheriff but Artie begged, saying it was done. He didn't want his Pa to get into trouble or lose the contract with the school. As the word got out and rumored around town, the boy that actually did the bad deed felt so bad for Artie that he finally confessed. This didn't take away the whipping but it did clear Artie's name. He was only ten years old at the time.

I guess growing up, you could say that Artie and Doris were close. In order to help with the household income, Artie and Doris would go down in the marshland and cut pussy willows and cattails to sell. They would bundle them up, getting about ten to twelve bundles and go to the flower shops in town. There they would get ten cents a bundle.

Artie too, like his brothers, ran away from home at the age of fifteen. When he came back, he had an old model T Ford. The children had fun riding in it.

By the time Doris was getting married, Artie was stationed in North Carolina in the Army. On Doris' honeymoon, they drove down to visit Artie. He was the only brother that her new husband hadn't met. Because Artie and Doris were so close, there are so many stories to tell. Artie found the love of his life in North Carolina named Sue Justice. They married, moved back to portage and raised seven children. Their family and Doris's family would share the children back and forth throughout the summers.

Artie had his Pa's disciplinary actions but Sue kept him in check. When the children had grown, Sue wanted to move back by her family. So they packed up and were on their way, back to North Carolina. They enjoyed many years filled with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Artie would entertain with his harmonica and he loved to go fishing.

Sadly, Artie passed away on December 28, 2015 at the age of eighty-

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seven with his family by his side. But his joyful memories and the love that he shared will live on in all of us.

Chapter 12

Mom's Blue Willow Dishes

There were a few years when Doris and Artie would work in town for this old lady on water Street. Artie would mow the lawn and cleanup around the outside of the house in the summer, rake leaves in the fall and shovel snow in the winter. Doris would do the dishes, the housecleaning, wash her clothes, clean and mop the floors.

Her daughter was a registered nurse and left Chicago to come back home to take care of her mother. She decided in order to make room for her stuff, that she would purge through the old woman's belongings and throw them out because they were no longer needed. Artie had finished the yard work and saw some boxes in the water of the Wisconsin River behind the house, so he decided to take a look. There in the boxes was a set of Blue Willow antique dishes. Artie asked if they could take them home for their mother and the woman said yes. So he found a couple of dry boxes and got another box from the neighbor along with some newspaper to put the dishes in. Then he carefully boxed up the dishes into three boxes. Doris and Artie each carried a box. When they stopped to rest, Artie would run back for the third box. This took extra time to get home, so they were late, very late. Pa was worried and saw them coming up the road. He walked up to yell at them and asked what they were up to. Artie explained and showed Pa the dishes saying that they were bringing them home for Mom. Pa believed Artie, knowing from the past experience, that he didn't lie and suggested to wait until Thanksgiving to surprise her with the dishes. The two of them agreed and Pa helped them carry and hide the dishes.

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Thanksgiving came, Pa took Mom out for a ride using some dumb excuse to get her out of the house. The children set the table up with all the new dishes and all the trimmings, right down to the soup and gravy bowl. The only thing that was missing was a handle on one of the teacups. When Mom walked into the room, the children yelled "Happy Thanksgiving." Mom was so overwhelmed, she sat down and cried, which in turn, made Doris and Artie tear up with joy. It was many years later after Mom passed away when Bernie wanted the dishes as a keepsake. She asked all her brothers and sisters but no one knew what ever happened to the antique Blue Willow set of dishes. It was speculated that Mom had sold them too, for money, to give to one of her children.

Chapter 13

Favorite Sister

Let's skip over Doris for now and go to her favorite little sister, Clara -- or should I say Doris was Clara's. Those two were like two peas in a pod. Clara was a twin, born when Doris was only two years old. Being that she was a twin with Carl, they did everything together. Doris' best story was when Clara was five years old.

The boys were digging a new hole for the outhouse. They were just about done when Clara wanted to help. The boys told her no and that she was too little. This didn't stop Clara. When they turned around she jumped down into the hole. There was a piece of tin sticking out of the wall that cut her on the ankle. Boy, did she holler. Mom and Pa were gone, so the boys took her into the house where Ed sat her down to patch her up. It really wasn't that bad until Ed put the iodine on the cut. Clara let out a scream and didn't like Ed after that. Ed laughed at her for days.

Another time, Clara and Carl were playing hide and seek. Pa and Ed were changing a flat tire on the truck. When they put the spare onto the ground, it too was very low, so they decided to drive it up the road to the gas station to pump it up. About half a mile down the road, cars were frantically honking for them to pull over. At first they thought it was only because of the low tire. A car finally got them to pull over and to Pa's surprise, Clara was hanging onto the back rail of the bed of the truck. That one really scared Pa.

One day, Clara came home with a pet kitty that she had found. Mom and Pa very carefully told her no. She was super angry. Mom and Pa had to explain to her, that it wasn't a kitty, it was a skunk. After that smelly

situation, she was allowed to have pet. It was a big, hairy, yellow cat. The cat seemed to be sick one day, so she took it to her Pa for help. Pa checked the cat out and found that someone had put a rubber band around its neck. It was probably Carl. Pa cut it off and the cat was fine.

Clara was a happy child. They would sit around listening to the radio shows and Clara could make a sound just like Woody Woodpecker. She would make everyone laugh. Although she was a happy child, she was also a jealous child. When her little brother Donnie came along, she was always pushing him down. One time she pushed him down into the creek. Doris was angry, scolded Clara and took Donnie home.

When Doris was married, Clara was her maid of honor. For the next sixty years, the two would visit each other constantly. Clara married Jim Vanderhoff and lived in the house that she and her family grew up in. They raised five children and plenty of grandchildren. Clara and Jim would always go out dancing and boy, could they light up the dance floor. Everyone marveled and watched as they promenaded around the room.

There was a time when Clara was in a bad car accident. She said that while she was in the hospital, she had died. She left her body and floated above the doctor and nurses in the room. She floated through the wall and down the hall to her husband and children that were in the waiting room. Jim had his head in his hands and the children were crying. Clara said to herself, "I can't leave him alone with those children. He won't be able to handle it by himself." So she rushed back to the room and jumped back into her body and woke up. This was a story that she confided in, to Doris. Later on in years, Doris was having trouble with her own husband. Her children woke up one day and Doris was gone. She did not take her purse, her clothes, or a car. After three days the sheriff questioned her husband for four hours then searched through the farm for any foul play. They called all of her friends and relatives and Clara said she hadn't seen her. After one week, Doris came back home and her husband was relieved.

Doris was at Clara's the whole time.

When the children were grown and on their own, Clara and Doris would take road trips to just about anywhere. One year they went to Disneyland and stayed in a hotel. Doris got up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom and she left the door ajar. Clara had the same thought and walked into the door because she did not put on her glasses. She fell to the floor with a thud. Doris quickly went to help her up and they laughed and laughed, so much that they wet themselves.

Clara had some troubling years with the loss of her son Stanley and the loss of her husband after forty-nine years of great love, Jim had passed away. Clara was diagnosed with cancer in her lymph nodes and continued on struggling with cancer but refused chemo the third time around and passed away in July of 2012. She too, was taken away too soon. The passing of her beloved sister, devastated Doris beyond words.

Chapter 14

Carl, the Twin

Carl was Clara's twin. Doris's earliest memory was when Carl was five years old. They were all playing on the haystack when Carl slid down and landed wrong. He slid down a little too fast and broke his leg. The children went screaming to the sawmill to get Pa. Pa ran back and cradled Carl in his arms and carried him to the house, where he set his leg back into place the best that he could. He used two pieces of wood to make a splint to hold the leg in place, then they headed off to the doctor's. Doris could recall that even with the cast, Carl didn't slow down any. He was still a rambunctious boy.

Doris remembered that Carl liked to play cowboys and Indians. One day, they were playing in the clubhouse and Carl said that he was to be hung because he was the outlaw. So he put a rope around his neck and called the rest of the children in to watch. He threw the rope up over the beam and held onto the end. During his speech, the board that he was standing on moved and he lost his balance but he didn't let go of the rope. Artie ran over and grabbed his legs and held him up. Doris yelled, "Let go of the rope. Let go!" Carl let go the rope and down they fell, both him and Artie. I don't believe he ever tried that again.

Other times in the clubhouse, Carl used to play a pastor. When a pet died or if they found a dead bug, bird or a worm around the farm, Carl would give a funeral service. Then they would bury them in the back marsh behind the clubhouse. Doris thought that he did a really good job of being a pastor.

One year, Pa bought Clara and Carl a little red wagon. Pa had told

them that they could use the wagon as long as they picked tomatoes first. This lasted for a couple weeks, then Carl said he didn't want to pick tomatoes anymore. So Pa took the wagon away. Carl didn't care and either Clara didn't know or tried to use the wagon anyway to play with by hauling her dolls around. Pa saw her and gave her a spanking, taking the wagon away once again. Carl had heard what had happened to his sister and took Pa's big hammer and broke the wheels off of the wagon. I am sure that he got a spanking too.

Another thing that Doris remembered is that Carl could whistle out of the corner of his mouth just like Pa. Whistling through time, Carl grew up. He married a gal by the name of Nancy Nines and had four beautiful daughters. He worked as a janitor in the school district system for over twenty years and got a gold watch from the school. Being off in the summer, he would sometimes pack up the family and come to Doris' farm to help. The families always enjoyed each other's company.

In later years Carl and his wife took in foster children to have a full house. Sadly, Carl passed away the same year that Doris's daughter died from cancer. Carl was sixty-four years old and passed away from a heart attack. Due to the stress of her brother Carl and her daughter, Doris had Bell's palsy. It took a good six months to straighten her face back out.

Chapter 15

Remembering Donnie

The next two children to be born were Betty and Byron. Doris was only three and four years old and doesn't remember much of how or why they passed. Betty was three months old when she passed away. Byron was only three weeks old and it was said that they blamed the doctor, being that six children born that same year also died right after they were born. It's sad for anyone to carry a child for nine months and be blessed with the birth, only to have them taken away in a few days. But they will always be remembered as part of the family.

It wasn't until 1937 when another child was born and they named him Donald. Doris was seven years old and had to help with the baby. Donny was the only one that went to kindergarten. Bernard had a car and would drive him to school and picked him up at noon. Although he was the only one, it didn't last long. The school had a nice little wagon that the children could play with. One day, Donnie asked the teacher if he could have the wagon. The teacher thought he wanted it to play with, so she said yes. Donny started to walk home with the wagon and the children ran to tell the teacher. The teacher had to run after him to bring him back. She scolded Donnie and Donny had a fit, arguing with the teacher. Bernard was told not to bring Donnie back to school. Pa was angry and gave Donnie his first lickin.

Because of the age difference, Doris didn't have too many memories. By the time Donny was old enough to play, Doris was busy with her teenage years. Donny, like the other boys, ran away from home at an early age. He lived with a couple in Indiana for some time until he enlisted into

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the Air Force. There he spent twenty-five years serving our great country. During this time he was married three times and divorced, then retired from the military. After he retired, he married again, became a vegetarian and joined the ministry. He was a preacher and the deacon in his church community and loved to work with children, enlightening them with puppets and telling them Bible stories. Donny now resides in New Mexico. He keeps in contact with Doris by phone.

Chapter 16

The Baby of the Family

Two years after Donny, Bernie was born, the baby of the family. Doris was pretty much on her own but the time Bernie was growing up. There was one memory of when Bernie was little that she could recall. Riley use to put Bernie on the horse that pulled the water tank. One winter, Riley was going to fill the tank and the horse slipped on the ice. Bernie was so scared. Riley caught her just in time but Bernie said she would never want to ride a horse again.

When Doris was married at the age of eighteen, Bernie was her flower girl, just cute as a button. Bernie grew up without Doris, finished high school and studied to be an airline hostess. She moved away and lived in Chicago for a few years, then came back when Mom passed away. She met and married a wonderful man, Bob Hartwig and had three wonderful children.

Bernie and Bob live in Madison Wisconsin. They would visit Doris on the farm often, trading stories while the children played. Bob and Bernie continued with the family traditions and would put together family reunions just to see how big the family had grown.

Now retired, Bernie and Bob still live in Madison. Bernie has a hobby of making beautiful Christmas or seasonal decorations out of old table legs, cups or dishes by painting wonderful designs on them. They too had a heart ache of losing one of their children but continue on making memories and were blessed with beautiful grandchildren.

Chapter 17

The Wisconsin River

The Wisconsin River ran behind the farm and was a place that was enjoyed by all the children. Some years the water was up and other years the water was down. In the summer time it was a nice place for the children to enjoy by fishing and to get cooled off. It would have huge sandbars in the middle with water pouring around both sides. This was not always a safe place, it had its dangers too. One year, Donnie was in an inner tube and was pushed for fun. He got caught up in a whirlpool and went around and around until the boys threw him a rope and pulled him out of the whirlpool. In later years, Riley's son, Butch, at the age of fourteen, stepped off a sandbar and perished. It was said that he did not drown but fell into a deep fifty foot vortex and was trapped under the water. It was also said that he was scared to death or just taken by God, because no water was found in his lungs when they found him two miles down the river.

The Wisconsin River was also fun for the children in the wintertime. They would put on their skates to go ice skating. Doris recalled that when Clara and Carl were little they would put them in a box on a sled and off they would go. Sometimes they would skate all the way to Baraboo. Also in the winter was when they would take the time to cut out blocks of ice to bring home for the root cellar. This would keep the root cellar nice and cold all the way through July. Doris would often go into the cellar during the summer but said she didn't want to stay too long. That's how cold it was.

In the spring, the river would break up with huge blocks of ice. Doris and the other children from town would play Ice Pirates, jumping from

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block to block. Doris thought it was fun to push the boys off into the freezing water.

About every three to four years, the river would rise up and flood all the way up to the house. When the waters receded, the big carp fish and turtles would become stuck between the rows in the cornfield. The children would go out and bring them home so they could be smoked and cured for food. Turtle soup anyone?

After moving away, Doris would visit her family bringing along her children. She would also revisit the Wisconsin River and walk along its shoreline. Her children would fish or bring home sand dollars and sea shells while Doris would find a nice piece of driftwood. She would clean it up and varnish it, making a beautiful decorative piece to have around the house. This was a place of serene beauty, joy and fond memories.

Along with the memories of the river was the bridge that spanned the river. When Doris first learned to drive, she was very nervous and accidentally drove into the side of the bridge with the truck. It wasn't all that bad and Riley had a good laugh. It was the year before, when Riley was driving home drunk, when he too, ran into the bridge on the other end. He told Doris with a laugh that the bridge now had a matching set.

Chapter 18

What About Doris

That takes care of the children, now it's Doris' turn. As mentioned in the beginning, Doris was born in the heart of the Great Depression. Besides the pussy willows, cattails, the Blue Willow dishes, Doris recalled that she picked berries so she could buy a new pair of shoes for school. Another thing they would do was to pick apples at Jack the Giant Killer's apple orchard. Jack was a man that lived up the road from the sawmill. Mom had talked him into letting them pick his apples so he could sell them in town. Jack knew the family and agreed, letting them work for either free or very little but Mom could have all the windfall apples she wanted. After a few weeks, Mom would always put a few good apples on the bottom of the basket so the children would have an apple for school. The windfalls that were damaged would be cut up for pies and also made into apple cider, applesauce and apple-butter that was canned for later use.

As a side note, the reason he was called Jack the Giant Killer was because to the children, he was a big scary man that lived up on top of the hill. He also looked really tough but he had a very good heart and an infectious laugh that made everyone smile.

She also talked about the truck garden. This was a huge garden where she had to pull weeds in between the rows, hoe and plant. There they grew everything imaginable. They had fresh lettuce, radishes, beets, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes and corn. Then there were the vine products of melons, pickles, cantaloupe, and later in the season, pumpkins. After the sweetcorn was done, they planted Indian corn and popcorn for a second crop harvest for the fall. It also had rows upon rows of blackberries,

strawberries, along with red raspberries and black raspberries. Being down in the marsh, they grew strong and hardy, bearing plenty of fruit. Some of the product produced was sold for an income but most of the things were consumed by or canned for the family and the workers. Doris was taught how to can and preserve a lot of what they harvested. It was hard work but fun and enjoyable times.

When Doris was in first grade, she received a part in the play *The Secret Garden*. Growing up in that era, you just didn't go out to the store and buy a costume or clothes, you made them. So Mom made her a green costume because Doris was to play a frog in the play. Doris was a cute little frog and the play went off without a hitch. The whole family showed up to watch and to cheer her on. After the play, the boys "ribbited" her for days.

Doris doted on Pa and to her the disciplinarian was Mom. She recalled that when she was small, she always wanted to please her father. One day it started to rain, so Doris thought she would make her Pa proud by putting the cows into the barn so they wouldn't get wet. She rounded up the cows, then went to tell her Pa what she had done. At first Pa yelled at her then he had a good laugh. He had to explain to her that was Mother Nature's way of giving the cows a bath.

It was Doris's turn to go to Aunt Bernda's house in Oxford for the summer. Every day she had to take care of the chickens, picked two full pails of eggs, help to wash them off and cleaning them up so they could sell them. She also had to pick strawberries and peel a whole pail full of potatoes each and every day. This was because they had potatoes for every meal, three times a day. It wasn't all work and no play, but with Cousin Clyde being four years older, he would pick on Doris unmercifully. Doris recalled that some days she would ride Clyde's white horse to town. She also remembered that she would have to walk home because somehow the horse would either untie itself or would be untied and walk home on its own. Being at Aunt Bernda's wasn't any different than being at home, just

a different farm.

It was the beginning of March when Doris was in eighth grade that Pa came to the school and pulled her out. Mom was sick and Doris had to stay home to help with the household duties. Pa was always there by her side and taught her how to cook. This was during World War II and the beef in the stores were rationed. Pa would always go to the butcher shop in town on Fridays because the store was closed on Saturday and Sunday. The butcher would give him the meat that was left over from that week and that would not make it until Monday. So Doris and Pa would cut, cook and put the meat into crock pot jars to store in the root cellar where it was nice and cold. This way they had meat all week long or until the next batch. Doris learned a lot that year.

Mom was better and it was time to go back to school in the fall. The school said even though she had the good grades and they said she had passed eighth grade, they decided that she would have to repeat the eighth grade because of missing the last three months. So Doris decided not to return to school. She continued to help Mom until Ethel helped Doris to get a job working in the shoe factory. Doris made seventy-five cents an hour. From there, she went to Poynette and worked in the canning company. Then as she grew older, she worked in the cabbage factory that was in Madison. Her job there was to inspect the cabbage heads and to pull out the big green army worms before the cabbage entered into the slicers. Doris admitted that sometimes, just for fun, some of the worms were left in on purpose and were processed. "EWH"

During this time, for leisure fun, Doris would go to dances that they had here and there in different towns. That's where she met Art Heinrich and soon was married at the age of eighteen. Art had met the entire family except Artie. So for their honeymoon, they drove down to North Carolina for a visit. On the way home, they were in a bad car accident and ended up in the hospital. What a way to start a relationship.

Doris and Art raised six children. With Doris' help, the farm grew while she drove tractors, pea trucks, corn and hay wagons, all while managing the house, cooking for sometimes up to fifteen farmhands and canning fruits and vegetables for days at a time. She also washed clothes, did a garden, butchered chickens and cleaned floors, all the household duties of a farm wife. Once the children were older she went to work at the heritage house in Madison and became the head cook of the buffet that served about 3000 people a day, twice that many on Sundays or holidays. After that, she acquired a job in Columbus at the new nursing home. She put herself through college and received her degree as a certified dietitian. The family was so proud of her and admired her strength.

When her children had grown and before her thirty-fifth wedding anniversary, she decided to leave the farm and moved to Las Vegas. This is where her beloved daughter Charolette lived with her soulmate, Jerry Brown. It wasn't long until all the children had moved to Vegas to be with Doris, their mother.

Doris never remarried and neither did Art. When he passed away in Wisconsin, Doris knew it before they received the phone call. Doris was asleep in her bed in Las Vegas and Art shook her foot to wake her up. When she awoke, the vision of Art smiled at her and said, "Goodbye, Dori, I still love you." She smiled back and said I love you too, and he faded away into the darkness.

Through the years, stories get changed but the heart of the stories remain. The love of family and the bonds that we share as a family will never wither away.