



I invite you to take a journey back to the good ole days. I will be sharing some of my memories with you. They may not all be exactly as you remember it; they are factual to the best of my memory. I hope you enjoy the journey with me.

“it’s more fun than a barrel of monkeys”. Barrel of Monkeys is a plastic container shaped like a barrel containing plastic monkeys. The monkeys were placed in the barrel and shook up. Then they were dumped in a pile a player would take a monkey and try to hook a monkey from the pile. You could hook it by the tail or arm. The player that had the longest line of monkeys was the winner.



Another favorite was pickup sticks. The game involved dropping a bundle of sticks. You would use the stick to try to pick it up. If you successfully picked it up without moving another stick, your turn continued. If you moved another stick, your turn ended. Of course, the winner was the player with the most sticks successfully picked up. The sticks came in a container somewhat like a Pringles container and the sticks looked like extra long toothpicks and were of various, bright colors. The original sticks were made of wood, but in later years they were plastic. I played with both, but I think the wood was much better.

In high school we had a class called Home EC. Of course, this was short for Economics. One teacher we had was Miss Hovatter; and one was Mrs. Geary. Miss Hovatter was loud and rough. She had short hair and it was wild and colored bright red. Mrs. Geary was just the opposite. She was soft spoken and every bit a lady in every way. It was a very large clean room with a couple sinks, a couple refrigerator, and numerous kitchen items. Also, a couple huge mixers and pretty much every kitchen utensil imaginable. There were sewing machines for every student. We had to learn basics such as balancing a check book, and we had to make a dress. We got our own material. The teacher let us choose from several patterns and she measured us to get the correct size. She gave us the size and pattern number. Generally, the girl at the material shop helped us match the thread. There were a bunch of irons; and we had to press every seam as we made the dress. This was not my favorite part of this class. We did a lot of meal planning and cooking. We chose a recipe and she helped us follow it. She gave us assistance if she saw us doing something wrong. We did not all have to make the same thing but we had to learn meal planning and make complete meals, including desserts. Mrs. Geary taught this class and I learned so much from her. Miss Hovatter only had the class for a portion of the year; then she transferred to teach English. Mrs. Geary commuted from Moorefield every day.

Speaking of ironing, I remember when we ironed almost everything. We had a regular iron and a pop bottle full of water. There was a cork stopper with a topper with holes in it. You would lay out the clothing and sprinkle it with water and roll it up, iron each piece as you came to it. Everything was folded or hung up. The folded items had creases ironed in them. We used this sprinkler for years. Gran had one also. When I was in high school our iron quit working. When we got a new one, it was a steam iron. That was so nice, although some things still got sprinkled.



“Come on back ole Buddy” or “there is a Bear at the 99” or “Smokey in the air”—that was all lingo used for CB radios. Everyone had a CB Handle. A handle was what a nickname was in CB calls. Bear and Smokey were the police. A base was a CB in your home; a mobile was in your vehicle. You had to have an outside antenna. It seemed the higher you could place it, the better the reception. There were various antennas for the vehicles. A very popular one was the whip. It was very tall and flexible. It would whip back and forth when it touched anything. There were many channels with Channel 19 being used mainly by truckers and Channel 9

was for emergencies. Some of the handles were cute, some funny. A couple that comes to mind right off was the Tree Topper, Left Nut, Sneaky Snake, Mad Dog, Wood Pecker, Mountain Man and Cowboy. You had to apply and receive a license number from the FCC and you were supposed to sign on and off the air by say this number. CB radios were very popular in the 70’s and 80’s. There are still a few teams that monitor CB radio Channel 9, but they are very few and losing membership often.



Paper maps used to be a must in every car. You could get one in many places including service stations. Most insurance companies gave you one with your insurance; and an Atlas with their name on it as an advertisement or promotional material.

AAA is the only place I am aware of that you can still obtain a paper map. Some service stations and convenience stores offer them for sale. I can remember when going some place people would study that map for quite some time to get the best route. Today, they pull up Google maps and use the GPS. Today it comes already installed in new cars. Although paper maps are still around, GPS has cut down the use and need for them.



I can remember dimmer switches being a button on the floor instead of on the turn signal. Cruise control, when it came out, was a separate smaller gear shift than the turn signal; and there was a pullout choke used to start the vehicle. Almost every car or truck had a clutch with either a gear shift on the column on the right, or on the floor. A console was rare. Most had a straight bench seat. On a two-door vehicle the back of the seat was split in the center and each side would fold up to allow access to the back seat. The steering wheel was quite plain. It was just a large (unpadded) wheel with a large button in the center for the horn. The radio controls were on the dash as well as the heat. Most seats were vinyl and there was no such thing as a heated seat. A rear window wiper or defroster wasn’t even heard of. There was no carpet, just vinyl. Heat only came out of the front vents. There were no heat or vents in the back. You had to run the heat on high to reach the back. Air-conditioning was still a thing of the future. On the front windows, there was small triangle shaped windows. They were on a swivel so you could angle the air flow where you wanted it to go. Windows were not tinted and power windows were unheard of. There was a crank with a knob on the end so you could turn it in a circular motion and roll the window down. The same was with seats; no power. There was either a lever on the left side or in the center on the front, you could use to adjust the seat back and up. Gasoline refill holes were either under the license plate or under the tail light. Rarely did you see a gas tank refill hole on the side like it is today. Tires usually had a large white circle around them known as white walls. The whiter they were kept, the more the young guys liked them and, of course, girls loved them. Every vehicle came equipped with a cigarette lighter



just under or on the dash and of course, an ash tray. In our car, it was used as a spare change holder. There were hooks above the back seat windows that was used to hang clothes on. The spare tire was sometimes mounted on the back of the car or in the trunk.



Have you ever ridden on an elephant? I have. One day as we were on our way home from town, I saw a truck pulling a trailer pull over at a wide spot. The driver proceeded to unload a huge elephant and his helper put out a sign that said “Elephant Rides”. My son was small, so I pulled over so he could watch. As the crowd gathered and people were riding the elephant, my son expressed interest in riding; so, I thought, sure, why not? Parents had to accompany children up a very wide, tall set of steps on rollers; then the parents came back down. When we reached the top, the attendant said because of his height I had to ride with him. There were several people already in the seat so I proceeded to go along. Well, it didn’t take me long to decide I wasn’t liking this! The seat moved and wobbled as the elephant did and the traffic seemed to agitate the elephant. A few years later, we went to the circus and they were offering elephant rides. We asked my son if he wanted to ride and he said “NO”! Later, I saw on the news where an elephant went berserk and ran through the tent and surrounding areas killing and injuring several dozen people. The trainer could not get it under control, so the police had to shoot it. I made my mind up after that, and thinking of my own encounter, that as long as I had control, my son would never ride one again; no matter how hard he might beg. He never did ask (and neither did I).

I used to help Gran mow the grass. She had a large yard with lots of flowers and bushes; and she liked them trimmed around. I don’t know if weed eaters were invented yet, or if we just didn’t have one. We trimmed with a trimmer and a sickle. Anyway, Gran got a new mower and I just had to mow with it. She had one particular bush-- tree-like plant—taller than me. She told me to be careful when I mowed next to it and not knock the bark off it. Oh, I was mowing up a storm and things were going well. I approached that tree and every word she said raced through my mind and I knew to be very careful, because I always hated to disappoint her. So, I started to mow around the tree; just like all the others. I did not want to scratch that bark. Next thing I knew something flew thru the air and that tree was down. Now this wasn’t a branch by any means, it was about four inches in diameter. Oh my. I felt so bad. Gran came out and I just knew I was in big trouble. She looked at it and I could tell she was upset. Very nicely she asked me what happened. I told her and she said for me to take it to the brush pile and be careful mowing around the rest. I’ll never forget her kindness. I think of this often. She knew I was beating myself up more than anything she could say or do. Oh my. The wisdom she had!

We had a very nice lawn where I grew up. Mom made sure it was well manicured. Each one of us kids had a section we had to mow and trim. We had a buckeye tree on one side. The tree was very large and beautiful. It forked down low and that provided a perfect place to do homework or just read. There was a very long sidewalk from the front all the way to the road. We had to trim around that whole thing with a set of shears. Other places where the grass grew higher, we used a sickle. Anyway, besides all the work that we put into that sidewalk, it provided a lot of fun for us. We learned to roller skate and ride skateboards there as well as when we were small—a tricycle. There were two steps going from the side walk to the front porch; that provided a perfect place to sit and put our skates on as well as other things.





The Rocky and Bullwinkle show as another of my favorites. It was about the adventures of a moose and a flying squirrel set in Frostbite Falls, Minn. Bullwinkle's name was Bullwinkle Jay Moose. Boris and Natasha were spies, who later decided to get married. There was a dog name Mr. Peabody. Bullwinkle loved to be a magician and he would say "watch me pull a rabbit outta my hat". He wore fake cuffs and would say "Roll up my sleeve". Until I was an adult, I always thought he said "buckle up my sleeve" of which I never really understood.

Thinking about the side walk in front of our house and the steps going to the porch brought back another memory. We would go up the steps and get on the porch. It was the perfect height for getting on a set of stilts.

Stilts are a set of poles or posts used to elevate a person above the ground. Kids use them for fun. They are also used by workers to hang dry wall. Mom could walk on them fairly well. Granny too. Billy, Teri, and Jo were no slouch by any means. My sister was like a rocket on them. She would come off the porch and boy look out; she hit the ground practically running or with impeccable balance. She was good on the roller skates, too. We had a set of skates that was metal. You could extend them for longer feet or push them together for shorter feet. There was a small lip on the heel to keep you heel from sliding back too far. Also, a lip on the width part that you would push up tight against your shoe. Then you used a key to hold it on. The ability to use the skates were as equal to the stilts. I used them often and tried very hard, but let's just say I SUCKED! There was a roller-skating rink in Coalton. It was open about once a month. Joe Stalnaker would run it. Jo and I would go there when it was open, if the water wasn't high. Again, she was like a pro and I could hardly stand up. I made a couple rounds by holding the bar, gave up, got popcorn and watched. LOL



Remember I was talking about Gran's yard? She did love her trees and bushes. She was so very clean and neat all the time. All her trees had to be white washed as far up for some strange reason. I loved doing that. There was a beautiful tree right beside her sidewalk that ran from the driveway to the kitchen porch. One time my Uncle Johnny brought his motorcycle over to see us. Oh, it was nice! He took us for rides. After a while he let me take it for a few laps around the yard. As I got better, I got faster. After some practice, he let my younger cousin on behind me. Things were going well. I got more confidence. He warned me to slow down once. We were having a ball when that tree beside the sidewalk jumped out in front of me, Smack! Stevie and I fared okay. Gran's tree lost a good patch of bark. For the motorcycle, it didn't fair as well as the rest of us.

I saw something today that reminds me of slap bracelets. A slap bracelet is a flexible band made of steel encased in fabric, and can be slapped against the wrist to form a bracelet. They were extremely popular in the nineties.

Growing up we didn't have a public water service. Everyone had wells. We were one of the lucky ones; we had good water. Gran did not. She had Sulphur water and it turned most things orange. To wash rugs and things of that nature, she collected rain water, which we strained, and strained, and strained some more to get everything out of it. For sheets, towels, and clothing we took her to the laundromat. There was no liquid laundry detergent back then. Gran would put the powder in a small Styrofoam cup and add water to let it dissolve. One day she had a Styrofoam cup of soda. She set them both down on the edge of the washer. It was hot and she was thirsty. She picked up the cup of soda (she thought) and took a huge ole drink. Only it wasn't soda. It was the laundry detergent. One thing for sure, she had the cleanest insides around.



The ever-popular fanny pack.....I think it was one of the most unflattering accessories of all time. Although I admit it was handy and convenient. It was unflattering all the same, especially for the women of any size.

Can you “walk the dog”. “Go around the world”, “rock the baby”, do the “sleeper”? These are all yoyo tricks. A yoyo is a toy from long ago and still popular. They even have tournaments and championships. The yoyo is a toy with two equally weighted circular discs connected by an axle and a string looped around the axle. The string is wound around the cable to let it wind and rise back to the hand. In my family, even I was half decent at it. Again, this was an area where Jo excelled with her yoyo talents.



At home, there was a ditch that ran the length of the front of our property. It was between the road and the yard. You had to go down the sidewalk and then use a board to walk on to cross or you had to go to the driveway and out. This ditch was long and it was quite a job to keep trimmed. I’ve mentioned before Mom was very particular about the lawn. I was about sixteen; Jo was already married and moved away. It was just Mom, myself, Teri and Billy. Mom got the idea “we” were going to fix that ditch. If you haven’t figured out yet, Mom and I were partners in everything as well as best friends. She went to a couple oil companies and got “a bunch” of 35-gallon barrels. We dug the ditch out and we hauled truck load after truck load of river rock, from Cassidy. All loaded and unloaded by hand to line the bottom and sides of the ditch. I can’t even guess the amount of rock or trips except to say it was a lot. When we finished that part, it was quite attractive. But there was no way Mom was stopping there. Now for the barrels, we used an old hatchet and hammer to chop the top and bottom out of them. Then we placed them in the ditch, and more rock to shore them up. But we weren’t done yet. As we had to get dirt and fill in around and over the barrels. We planted grass and created more yard to mow. LOL That ditch hasn’t sunk or caved in at all. Sometimes you have to drain the upper end out where ditch debris collects when it runs down. You only have to do this in the spring and fall. Oh, the things we got into!

The neighbor’s frontage was less than half the size of ours. He asked Mom if we would do his ditch as well. Mom told him that we had enough barrels left over and if he and his two boys would dig it out and haul the rock, we would do the rest. Well, it is now a few decades later and that ditch is still open and full of weeds and trash.

Our next project was the kitchen floor. Oh boy, what a project. But I learned to run a circular saw and to read a level among some other things. It was a big project and we had some trials, but, also a lot of fun. The floor that was in there was concrete, very cold and unlevelled. We decided to do a whole new floor. We started by removing all the appliances and cabinets (whew!). We put down 2x4’s, insulation, plywood and underlayment. Then we did linoleum flooring. We also added all new baseboards. One year, before all this we relocated an entrance door. Could we stop here? After hearing all about Mom, what do you think? We added a laundry room; and enclosed porch/mudroom out the new door entrance. We had to recruit a little help with the windows on this one. But, otherwise, it was just the two of us, as usual. The worse part of this project was the plumbing for the floor drains. But we made it and everything worked just fine and still does. Oh, the projects this woman got us into! But I learned and had fun at the same time and I find myself using her knowledge, skills, and talents frequently.

One of my most emotional memories of Mom was her always using canned milk and water on her cereal. I never understood that when there was milk in the refrigerator. One hot summer day, I was doing some paper work at the kitchen table for Mom. She was doing something outside. We had just gotten groceries and milk was on sale, so we got an extra gallon. At this point, it was only me, Teri, Billy and Mom at home. Mom came in from outside, went to the cabinet, got one of the LARGE Tupperware glasses, filled it completely up with milk and downed it. I must have had a surprised look on my face. She asked me what was wrong? I told her I didn’t think she liked milk. She said she actually loved milk. When I asked her why she never drank it, I remember the words as if they were yesterday. She said, “I never wanted to take it away from you kids”. Can you imagine a mother’s love like that?



We had a large building that was the work and tool building as well as the garage. On one side there were racks where certain tools hung. Also, there was a place for the tool boxes and a large work bench that spanned the one side. In the back there was a couple steps and a nice little room there with a walk-in door that you could go out and have a straight shot to the back door of the house. On the front was a walk-in door and two large barn door type doors that allowed access for the garage. The drive way was shaped like a Y with the long line leading to the garage then branched to the left, led to the end of the driveway near the back door of the house. The truck was always parked on the right branch in front of the garage doors or in the garage. One day, Mom walked the short distance from the house to the store.

This walk takes about a minute and a half, no more than two minutes. While she was gone, Billy got the idea to move the truck so he could play with something in that part of the driveway as it was flat. The other side had a slight grade to it. Ok, he gets in the truck, it was a big Ford, fires it up, smiling all the while and “oops” thru both closed garage doors he went, OOPS BIG OOPS! Teri ran to the store and got Mom. When she got back it was a bigger OOPS, which lead to another job for us. This time when we rebuilt them, we designed them slightly different and instead of swing door, hung on hinges, they were steel double doors, barn door style, but on a track so they would slide open and closed.

In later years, after I left home, and Mom remarried; the garage was turned into a barn for Clarence’s horse (Clarence was Mom’s husband). He rented the pasture field behind our house for the horse. She was a



beautiful palomino show horse named Alley Vee. Clarence won hundreds of trophies and ribbons with her. She was a really good horse. He has the trophies on shelves and the ribbons were hung on the wall, which was pretty well covered. Alley passes away and Clarence no longer rides, being that he is now 80 years old. However, he still wears cowboy boots every day, his belt buckles, and his cowboy hat. Although Mom has been gone almost 25 years and he is remarried and moved out of the house, we are still friends and stay in contact. He comes to visit often and we call each other a lot. Let me tell you a little about our friendship. I met him when I was sixteen. I had a weekend job and he

came in every weekend and we became very good friends. He is eleven years older than me but a friend all the same. One night my mom came into my place of employment. I introduced them and I believe it was instant love. I had the best of both worlds; my mom married my friend. Now the story gets even more interesting. A few months later, Clarence introduces me to his best friend, who worked out of town and just happened to come in that weekend. Clarence introduced us and even though he was 10 years older than me, we were married six months later. Mom was my Maid of Honor and Clarence was the best man. Mom and Clarence got married shortly after this. Another piece of trivia about this union is that my grandma was 11 years older than Clarence’s mother. His mother was 11 years older than my mother. My mother was 11 years older than Clarence and Clarence was 11 years older than me. My husband’s birthday was November 20, 1948. Clarence’s is November 21, 1944. Just a spot of trivia. Mom was always my best friend from as far back as I can remember, right up until she passed away. We did pretty much everything together, especially since our husbands were best friends.

Do people still play croquet? Croquet is an outdoor game. You have metal hoops called wickets that you push into the ground. You choose a mallet which has a colored stripe on it, and that is the color of the ball you get. You hit the balls through the wickets. The object is to be the first through the course of wickets in the correct order and direction and then hit it on the wooden peg at the end of the course. Players take turns as up to six people can play at a time. Being that we had the largest yard and it was mostly level; other kids liked to play there.

Growing up, I remember there were two veterinarians in the Elkins area. Dr. Bush had an office where the present-day Wilson-Martino Dental Clinic is located. Neil (or maybe Neal) had an office where Chenoweth Creek Vision Care is now. Both were very nice and very talented. We took animals to both. If he wasn't out of town, we mostly used Dr. Bush.

Recalling the field behind our house; when we were younger and before Mom and Clarence got married, the people who owned the field, Flanagans, had an old work horse pastured there as well as a dairy cow. One day, Mrs. Flanagan mentioned the cow was slowing down and not giving as much milk as she had been. Come to find out, Teri and Billy were getting those large Tupperware glasses, milking the cow and drinking the warm milk (YUCK). Not my liking; I like my milk ice cold and from a jug, but they loved it. Anyway, they had to apologize, offer to work off the price of the milk and stop milking the cow. The old work horse was named Jug Head, and the dairy cow was named Gluten.



Jo was gone from home; Teri was a pre-teen and spent a lot of time on the weekends at a friend's house. On Friday and Saturday nights I generally had a date. I would be ready; and as I waited for my date to arrive, I would generally play something with Billy. He liked to play Ante Over. One person was on the back side of the house; another player was in the front. Whoever had the ball would yell "Ante". The person on the opposite side would yell "Over"; and the other person would throw the ball across the house. If you caught the ball, you ran around the house and tried to tag them before they got back to their side. If you were successful in tagging them, you gained control of the ball and they had to switch your sides. One Saturday night I was dressed and ready to go out. As I awaited the arrival of my date, I let Billy talk me into playing. Only I guess he was feeling particularly ornery. He chose to throw an over ripe, rotten tomato and of course, this would be the time I was lucky enough to catch the ball. Talk about a mess, and a sticky mess at that.

In the summer we went fishing a lot. We never bought bait; we always got our own. After dark we would get flashlights and look for fish worms and night crawlers, especially after a rain. We looked under rocks, wood and any place we thought they might be. I was always afraid to touch them and I still am. I loved looking for them and was thrilled to find them, but someone else had to pick them up. This was generally Gran or Teri. I never would bait my hook with them either. If some one else couldn't do it, I always took a slice of cheese and used a piece of that or some corn. I loved to fish and was pretty good at it. However, I never took the fish off the hook either; just the thought of it creeps me out. Knowing my fear of the worms, that was something else Billy used to torment me. He would chase me all over with them; actually, throw them on me or put them down the back of my shirt. Thank goodness, I could shake them out. LOL

Another thing we liked to do after dark was get a pint jar, one that pickles or sandwich spread, etc. came in. We didn't dare use one of Mom's good jar. We took a hammer and nail and punched holes in the lid; added a small amount of grass and caught what we called lightening bugs. Some people refused to call them fireflies. A lightening bug is a soft bodied beetle that uses light at night to attract mates. We would catch them and put them in the jar. We kept them on our dressers overnight to enjoy the dancing lights and then released them the next morning.



I've mentioned some of the early country stores where I grew up. I've also mentioned that we had to buy our school books. Butch's store was a very large brick and stone building, that sold anything and everything. When we went there, we always got items from the deli. When Billy got new jeans, they came from there. Mostly we got our school supplies there. He had everything needed from first to twelfth grade. He was a man

of average weight and maybe a little less than average height. He had a funny little mustache. Most people thought he was grouchy; most kids were leery of them; although everyone that went there, he gave a treat to them. But I knew another side of him. My Gran had it really rough. She never drove, but always worked, but it was still hard. Her husband died when she was in her thirties. She still had children in school. She **always** was a firm believer that you paid your bills first, then if there was anything left you should stick it back; but there was hardly anything left. She would tell stories about worrying about how she was going to feed her kids; and then a couple bags and boxes of groceries would show up on her porch. No note or explanation. One day she told Mr. Butch she knew it was him. He denied it though. The groceries kept coming. One day, she told him she was keeping track of everything and would pay him back. Anytime she had an extra \$5 or \$10 she would take it to him and every time an extra delivery showed up on her doorstep.



After thinking about croquet, it made me remember Lawn Darts. These were round hoops that reminded you of a hula hoop. You tried to throw your dart within that circle. It was played similar to horseshoe. The darts looked like a dart, but much, much larger. They had a good-sized pointed end, just like a dart. When you threw it, it would stick in the ground. I don't know if you can still buy them or not. At one point, they were considered to be dangerous. Lawn Arts were also known as "Jarts": and were banned in the US in 1988.



Another store that comes into my memories was Antolini's. One section was a nice store with a meat and deli counter, groceries, candy and gift items. The side was a full-service station and garage. Both sides had very competent and polite people working there, most of which were family. This was a large building. There is now a convenience store, where it was.

Another thing we did as a kid, then I did it with my son and even my grandchildren. As kids we packed a lunch-with my son, we mostly packed sandwich makings; with my grandchildren we generally picked up fast food. If we went out to eat, we would let them get something from Dairy Queen. We would go to the airport and watch the planes come in. As kids there were a lot of planes, with my son, not as many; and with my grandchildren-even less. Occasionally a private plane pilot would see the kids watching and let them see his plane. One even let them go in his hanger. He was very nice about everything and apparently liked children a lot.



Thank you for taking another journey with me. I hope you had as many smiles reading it as I did remembering it. I leave you with these words of wisdom; A Wise woman does not keep her wisdom to herself. She spreads it around.

HAPPY FALL!



