

Grandma's Story

Helen Kem Carstarphen Cox
In her own words

A
Keepsake
and Memories
Album for
Grandchildren





"Grandma, were you born around here?" "Was that a long time ago?"
 Name: Gretinkle Date: 5/26
 At Home: Washington Year: 1956
 Town: DC AM: 1:30 P.M.
 County: D.C. State:

Grandma's



"How big were you?"

Weight: 7 lbs
 Length: 20 inches
 Eye Color: blue
 Hair Color: light brown



"When did you walk and talk?"

I walked at 14 months. Babies were longer dressed then and weren't put down much.
 I started talking at 9 months.

"Any other facts?"

I crawled backwards.

"What was your whole name? Who did they name you after? Why?"

Helen Helen Carstensen
 I was named for my mother's sister.
 Helen Janney Tamm - T for my father's mother, Margaret Tamm.

"Anything special happen?"

I came to NYC on the train when I was 2 months old and back to Washington when I was 3 months old.
 I remember the park where my mother took me in my carriage.



"Who did they say you looked like? Why?"

"Did you have a baby nickname? Who did they call you that?"

My grandmother called my daddy and me "per" because I was her pet. I called her "Pappy". We were best friends.

"Who did they say you looked like? Why?"

My daddy and I say Aunt Helen. My profile was like Aunt Helen's built like daddy.

Baby Da



"Who were your grandma and grandpa?"

Great Grandmother
 Name: Mary Elizabeth
 Birthplace: Wales
 Date: 1872

Great Grandfather
 Name: John Christopher
 Birthplace: England
 Date: 1872

Grandmother
 Name: Elizabeth Lorraine
 Birthplace: England
 Date: 1890

Grandfather
 Name: John Christopher
 Birthplace: England
 Date: 1894

Mother
 Name: Grace Keay
 Birthplace: Wales
 Date: 6/7/1887

Father
 Name: George Keay Christopher
 Birthplace: Wales
 Date: 4/10/1875



April 29 1928. 1



1932

'ne' u



"Could you roller
skate? I'd skate? Where?"

I liked to
roller skate
on the side-
walk. I did
it a lot.

We went
ice skating
on the tennis
court in Jackson
Heights. They
would flood it
when the weather
was freezing.



"What kind
of games did you play?"

On summer nights
we played outside
hide and seek,
cops and robbers,
red light, green light,
giant steps.
I played "little dolls"
with my friends in Wash-

"Did you have a tooth fairy?"

I don't
remember
a tooth fairy.
I do remember
falling down
stairs & knocking
out my
front teeth when
I was 11.

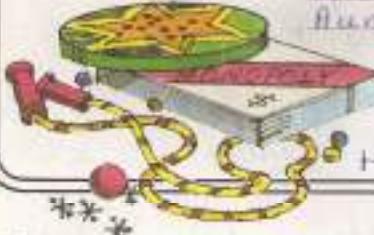


I didn't have too many "What kind of birthday parties
but loved the one did you have? Your favorites?"
when I was 15. It was a
surprise party



a Little Girl

"What were your
favorite toys? Did
you have a bicycle?"



"Did you get to stay up to watch
television? Or to listen to your
transistor radio?"

We didn't have TV then.
We just had one radio.
I got to listen to
Ames in Andy &
sometimes the Squeaky
Door.



1935

"Did you have your own pet? What? Name?"



I never had a pet of my own but my Aunt Helen and Aunt Edith both had dogs. Jerry was my special dog. He was a white spitz - real pretty and smart. Buddy and lady were biggle dogs.

"Did the boys tease you?"



Yes - sometimes I would so.

Not really - I would daydream instead & think about my grandmother who called Pappy and who was my best friend. She died.

"Who was your best friend?"



In elementary school a girl named Mary Armstrong but she went away to school in high school it was Helen Cree. In Washington my best friend was Betty Streck.

"Did you have secrets? What?"

Betsy & I made up stories about movie stars we liked. Helen and I had secrets about boys.

"Were there trains and automobiles? Did you ride streetcars? Buses?"

We rode the train a lot - back and forth to Washington. I loved the train. In NY we rode on the subway or a two story bus. My grandmother had an old Dodge auto that would roll away by itself. Then my aunt would bring it home.



"Did you have ice cream? What could you buy for a penny? A nickel?"



Ice cream was my most favorite food. We could get a scoop for a nickel or a double scoop for a dime. We would go to the candy store & get candy for a penny. My favorite was a tootsie roll.

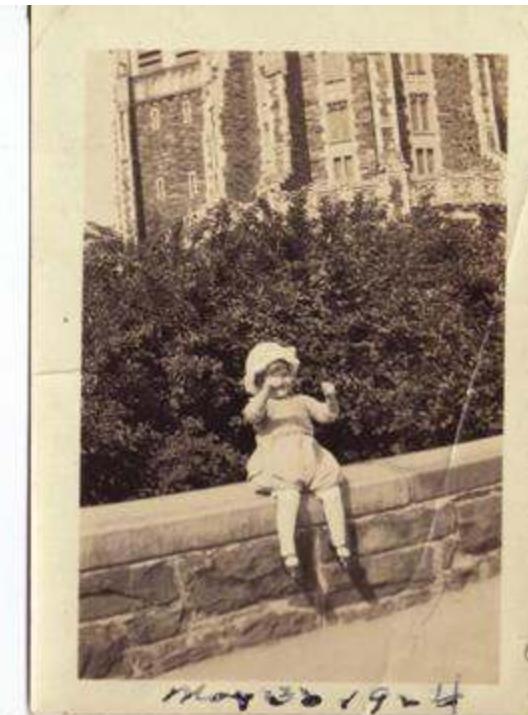
One summer after I had been sick the doctor said I should get a lot of sun. That was the best summer. We went to the beach every week. When I was a teenager I went with "my" girl.



"Did you ever have stitches or broken bones?"

I had two stitches in my lip after my tooth went through it. It wasn't bad but it was bad to have a false front teeth. I broke my arm once when I was skating.





Helen Kem Carstarphen



The House Where I Grew Up



"What kind of house did you grow up in, Grandma?"

I really grew up in two houses. We had an apartment in Jackson Heights N.Y. which was very nice. My room was really the sun parlor. It had its own bathroom. We were allowed to play in the gardens if we were very quiet. I liked my grandma's house in Washington better. I slept in the room with her until she fixed up the upstairs back porch for me. It was such but I still liked to sleep with her. She told the greatest stories in the world.



"Did you have a secret hiding place?"



Sometimes I would go into the attic. I liked it there when it rained. I also liked to play under the umbrella trees - then lightning struck one of the trees and it wasn't as good.



Grew Up

"Did you have a fireplace to keep you warm?"

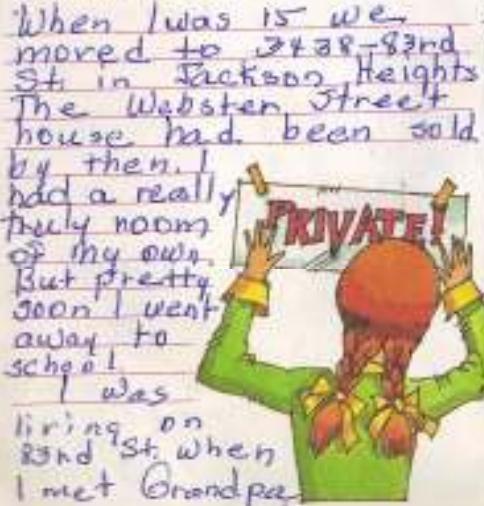
There was an imitation fire place with gas logs in the apartment. I don't remember it being used. The fireplace was in the corner of the Webster Street house. My Aunt Helen liked it a lot. Later we had a house in Jackson Heights. It had a real pretty fireplace.



"Did you have your own bedroom? Bathroom?"

When I was 15 we moved to 3438-83rd St in Jackson Heights. The Webster Street house had been sold by then. I had a really truly room of my own. But pretty soon I went away to school.

I was living on 83rd St. when I met Grandpa.



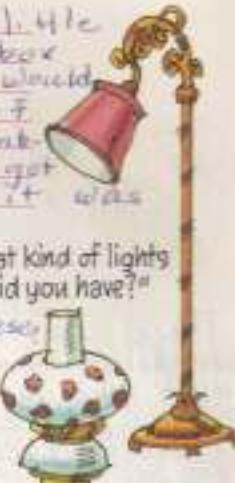
"How did you keep your soda cold?"



When I was real little we had an ice box and the iceman would send the cake of ice up on a dumb-waiter. Then we got a Frigidaire but it was not very big.

Electric lights. Some of our lamps looked like these. Others had 3 switches and one sent the light up to the ceiling.

"What kind of lights did you have?"



"Did you have jobs to do around the house?"

I always set the table at 5 o'clock. I took the dishes off. When I was bigger I took care of my room and helped on house-cleaning days.



We always spent summer in my grandmother's house in Koshkonong. She pulled all the shades in the afternoon and somehow the parlor stayed cool.

We sat on the porch in the evenings and if it was cool in the summer?

"How did you keep cool in the summer?"



real hot, we took a ride - sometimes we got to go through the bend in Rock Creek Park.

We ate a lot of ice cream. Sometimes we slept on the floor.

"Did you have an attic? A basement?"

There was both an attic and a basement at my grandmother's house. The attic had a tin roof and it was lovely up there. The basement was called a cellar and it was not fun - it was dark & dreary. At our apartment there was a basement which was spooky. I did not like the janitor. When we moved to a house, my parents fixed up part of the basement as a playroom.

"Who lived with you, Grandma?" Just my mother, my father and me when we were in N.Y. But my grandmother always came when I was sick.

In Washington, my aunt Helen, my baby and sometimes Aunt Edith & Uncle Bill.



"Did firemen or police ever come to your house?"

No. But after I was married we rented a house in Battle Creek, Michigan and early one morning it caught on fire. All kinds of fire engines,



Came Grandpa out of the field and by the time he came home the horses were gone but a bunch of strangers were there.



Me & Helen Cree.

"Grandma, do you remember your first Christmas?"



I remember all of my Christmases but I'm not sure which was the first. We all climbed into my grandma's bed and opened stockings and little presents. We did not get to see the tree until after breakfast. The doors to the living room were shut but you could peek through the crack and know it was there.

Holidays

"Did you hang stockings and decorate the tree?"

We always hung our stockings in the upstairs hall. Mine was long and black. There was always an orange and an apple which made big knobby places. Santa decorated the tree after we went to bed on Christmas Eve.



"Did you bake cookies and make candy?"

We baked sugar cookies and decorated them. Best of all was fudge and licking the spoon.



I guess so but most of all was when he came to our house on Christmas Eve. I would wait and wait and finally hear his bells. Then he would knock on the front door. One time I was sick and he came upstairs to see me.

"Did Santa give you what you asked for?"

I Remember

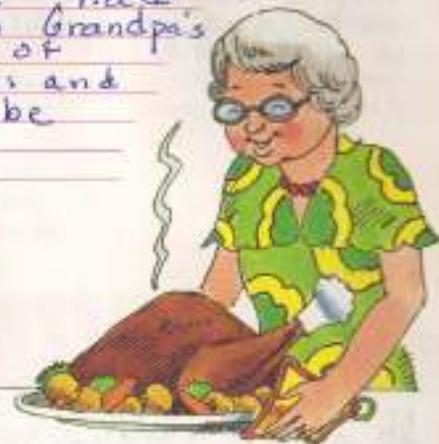
We almost always had snow. We would ride our sleds down a big hill behind the club house. Sometimes they would sled the tennis courts and we could ice skate. When I was real little there was a toboggan but it was gone before I got to go down it.

"Did you have snow, go sleigh riding or go skating?"



Place snapshot here and file additional stories, photos and keepsakes in pocket on left.

"Did you go to your Grandma's for Thanksgiving?" We never did much on Thanksgiving when I lived in New York but when I was in Washington we went to my Uncle Irving's house. After we moved to Texas we always had Thanksgiving with Grandpa's sister, Ruby. Lots of people - aunts, uncles and cousins would be there.



"How did you trick or treat on Halloween?"

They started Trick or Treat when I was about 12. Before that the big kids did really mean things like marking up cars, turning in false alarms and hitting each other with flour sacks. Most of the time we weren't allowed to go but one time I remember being out and being scared.



"What did you do on the 4th of July?"

That was fun. We all went to my Aunt Edith's and Uncle Bill's in Maryland because you couldn't hear fireworks in Washington. At night the kids had sparklers and the grown ups shot fireworks and



"What were your family traditions?"

We always had codfish cakes for breakfast on Christmas morning. I thought the grown ups would never finish them.

We always had a watermelon party at my grandmother's in August.

We always went to a party at my Aunt Nanny's on Christmas afternoon.

After Grandpa and I got married we made some traditions of our own like always going to church on Christmas Eve.

"Did boys send you cards or candy on Valentine's Day?"

Everyone on the block was in on it. Then we had a big watermelon party.

Mostly Valentine's Day was when you were grown up. Grandpa always gave me candy on Valentine's Day. One time a boy who was away sent me flowers.



All the babies were baptized in the family Christening dress

I went to PS 69 in Jackson Heights and Newtown High School in Elmhurst. The high school was so big that I did not like it so I went to Washington & lived with my aunt. I went to C.W.U. Later on I went to Queens College and then to North Texas State University.

"How did you get to school?"

I almost always walked. Very occasionally the minister would drive us in his Model T Ford. There was a bus we could take to High School but it was so crowded we didn't use it much.



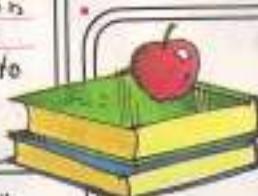
I liked reading, writing, history, geography and math. I did not like art, music and P.E. much because I did not think I was any good at them. In college I liked everything but zoology.

"What classes did you like? Hate?"



"Where did you go to school, Grandma?"

School Days



"Did you like school?"

Yes. The school believed in children skipping grades so I went through elementary school very quickly. I was only 11 when I started high school. I did not like it at all but I loved all three colleges that I went to.

"What classes did you like? Hate?"

School Days



I was never very good at sports or thought I wasn't and I got embarrassed. But I did like to skate (roller skate & ice skates).

"Did you go out for sports?"

Yes. I did not know much about it when I went to GCU but I loved to cheer anyway. I learned more after we moved to Texas.

"Were you a football fan?"



"Were you given lots of homework?"

A lot in high school. By the time I got to college I knew to keep up with it.



"Ever play hooky from school?"

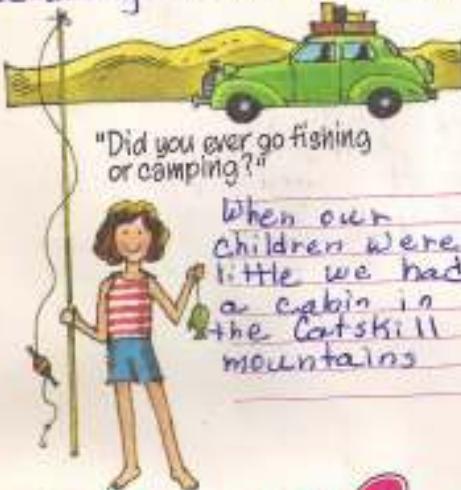
Not in elementary or high school. In college you were allowed to cut classes and in my first year I cut too many so my grades went down.

"Were your report cards good? What was your best?"

I got all A's in elem school and graduated with honors from high school. I did not do as well my first 2 years of college but college was easier after that.

"What was the longest trip you ever took?"

Out west with my aunt Helen. We drove all the way to California and back. We stopped in Chicago for the World's Fair and spent three days at Black Swan Lake in Minn. Then we went through Glacier National Park, Sequoia National Park, Yosemite National Park, Grand Canyon and Mesa Verde. We stayed with friends in Remerton, Wash., Los Angeles and San Diego. We were gone almost 2 months.



"Did you ever go fishing or camping?"

When our children were little we had a cabin in the Catskill mountains

My Vacations

After we moved go on vacations, to N.Y., we went Grandma?" "back home (to Washington) every vacation and all summer. After my grandmother died, I went on two trips with my Aunt Helen - to mountains in Mt. and out West. Later we always came to Texas

Every year I was just six months old when I made my first train trip. I loved riding on the train and having everybody in the family meet us at Union Station.

"Were you ever on a train trip?"



"Did you used to go to the fair or carnival?"



Lots of times. We went to the New York World's Fair a lot. My girl friend worked there and I would meet her and then we would go to the rodeo and the midway. We had carnivals come to our town too and most of the kids would go.

When I was little it was going to Washington but it was more like going home. My trip out West was great. When I got married, Grandpa was in the army so we traveled a lot but it wasn't a vacation. Later we had a lot of favorite vacations.

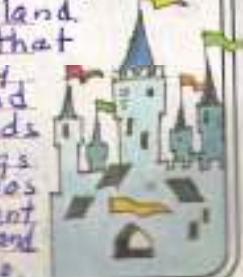
"What was your favorite vacation?"



& Trips

When I was a grandma I took Mike and Jonathan to Disney land.

"Did you ever go to Disney-land or Six Flags?"



Summertime - Washington

"Grandma,
how old were
you before you
could date?
Who was your
first date?"



We all went together
in a crowd that I got
in at church when I
was 13. Nobody was
allowed to date but
sometimes a boy would
ask to walk you
home. That was almost
like a date. I think.

"What were your
slumber parties like?"

The first one who
asked me was Bob
Glenn. Then Bill
Cagney who I had
a big crush on.

We didn't have
slumber parties but
just a girl over to
sleep. My girl friend
Helen Cree spent most
weekends at my house.



Grandpa came along & he was my real hero.

Sweet

"What's the latest you
ever stayed up?"

All night long
after I got to
college and
worked on the
newspaper. I wanted
to get to the sorority
house about 4:30 AM
and "die."



"Who was your favorite boyfriend?"

I had different
favorites at different
times. First it was
Bill Cagney - then
Tommy Lynch.
I went with an
older guy for a
while but he
was never a
real favorite.
A boy named
Haynes Mahoney
was more of
a favorite
friend than a
boyfriend. But
he was my real hero.

"What did you and
your best friend used to do?"



Sixteen

"Did you have your own car?
Ever go to drive-ins?"

No car until
after I came
to Texas and
inherited family
car.

We went to
Drive Ins quite
a lot. They were
very popular.

"What was your nickname?"
Carstop and Carzi
after I went to
college

"What used to
make you mad?"

I would get my
feelings hurt and
then I would cry
and then I would
get mad because
I couldn't stop
crying.



Fri 1st
Sept 19
age 19

We were together
every day after
school and on
weekends. We would
go to the drug store
and then go to
watch the boys play
ball and maybe
they would ask us.
We would take long
walks and eat pickles
and ice cream.
We usually went to
the movies on Sat
afternoons and to
the JYP League at
church on Sunday
night.

It was just before the war started. A lady from the Church asked me to go to a party to entertain soldiers at school at Jabaudia Field. I had just finished college & come back to NY and I thought I was too sophisticated to go to such a function but she talked me into it. The funny part was that Grandpa didn't want to go either but his Colonel said that some boys had to go since the Church ladies were being so nice.

I met several soldiers but liked Grandpa best we talked for a long time. Then I went to the library to find out more about Texas and airplanes.

When Grandpa

We went to a movie on our first date and then to an ice cream parlor. I don't remember the movie but remember they were playing "Elmer's Tune" on the juke box. The next night I had a date with a boy from work and spent the whole time thinking about Grandpa so never dated anyone else after that. We had been going together for about two

"Where did you go on your first date? Did you like him right away? Did he write you love



letters? Did you ever get mad at Grandpa while you were dating?"

"How did you meet Grandpa?
How old were you?
Did Grandpa have any rivals?"



months when war was declared so we decided what did your folks think of Grandpa? to get married pretty quick. He had to go back to his base Fort Wayne and he wrote me lots of love letters. I was so scared that he might have to go to sea that I would waste any time being mad. My son liked him a lot but my mother thought he should wait.



Came A courtin'

"Where and when did he ask you to marry him?"

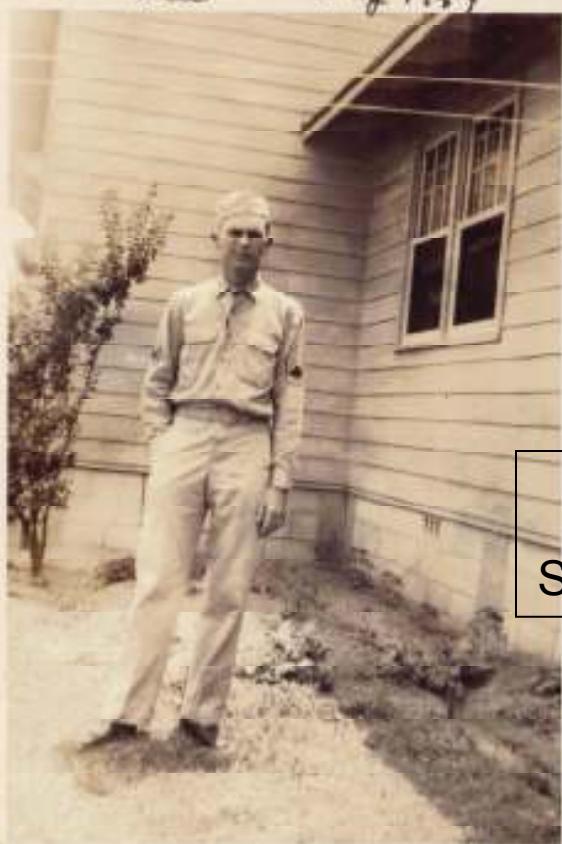


We were walking alone Fillmore Ave. and he said he would have to go back to his base now. We knew we didn't want to be apart so we both said "lets get married and go there together and we did."



Bud

May 1944



Bud & Helen Cox
Savannah Georgia - 1944

Coupe in the back



Mr. and Mrs. Osey Kew Casterophen
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Helen Kew

to

Mr. Butler R. Cox

on Saturday, the twenty-eighth of March
nineteen hundred and forty-nine

at five o'clock

Community Church

Jackson Heights, New York

"When did you get married?
What was your wedding like? Who
was in your wedding?"



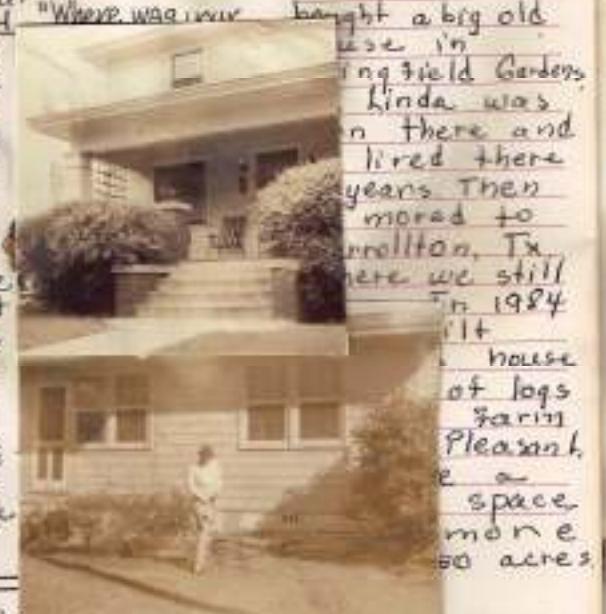
"Where did you go
on your honeymoon?"



We spent two nights at
the Piccadilly Hotel in NYC
Then we took the train to
Fort Wayne, Ind. Grandpa had
to go to the base so I
rented a room for us.



We had a very small apartment in Ft. Wayne,
Indiana. The people were very nice. Then
we moved to a larger apartment
and fixed it up a little. This was
during the war and we moved
a lot. Finally we got a little
house of our own at 4008 Bull
St., Savannah, Ga. We lived
there for 2 1/2 years. Kenny
was born there. Dad shipped out
when he was 3 weeks old.
I went to my father's house
in Jackson Hts N.Y. About a
year later we

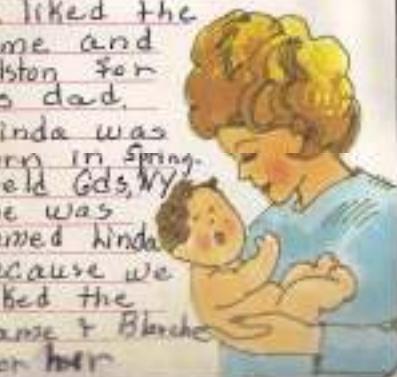


"Where were your babies?
Who were they named after?"

Ken was born in
Savannah, Ga. He was
named Kenneth because
we liked the
name and Halston for
his dad.

Linda was born in Spring-
field Gds, NY. She was
named Linda because we
liked the
name & Blanche
for her

grandmother



Kenneth Roston Cox
b. July 9, 1945
Savannah, Ga.



3438-13 St.
Jackson Heights
N.Y.



Springfield Gardens, N.Y.



My sister-in-law Leha showed me how to do a lot of things other than that I just followed recipes.



A chocolate cake. The cake was good but the icing got so hard you couldn't cut it. My mother was sick but my daddy said it was good and ate it.

Recipe Days

"Did you have to help in the kitchen?"

My mother really did not like anyone else in the kitchen but I liked to help and did with my aunt Edith who made real good chocolate cakes.



During the war we had to give ration stamps for meat. I ran out and the butcher gave me a pig's tail. You should have fried it to make the grease come out but I boiled it. Then I put in potatoes. I threw it out.

"Do you remember any disasters?"



"Did you have a garden?"
"Did you can?"

We always had tomato plants. We also had a peach tree, an apple tree and a pear tree. I made preserves and canned some peaches, pears, tomato juice and

apple sauce.

After we had house at farm I had a flower garden and liked working in it.



"What was your favorite recipe?"

roast leg of lamb, spaghetti chicken & rice brownies chocolate cake, home made ice cream

Our first Christmas I cooked for neighbors



"What was Grandpa's favorite?"

vegetable soup, roast leg of lamb, apple pie made with brown sugar, pear preserves, peach preserves, corn bread, chicken and rice, home made ice cream, fudge.

Linda Blanche Cox
b. March 15, 1950
Springfield Gardens
N.Y.





Hotel Piccadilly

presents

in the Piccadilly Circus Bar
THE THREE SUNS

Singing and Playing Nightly

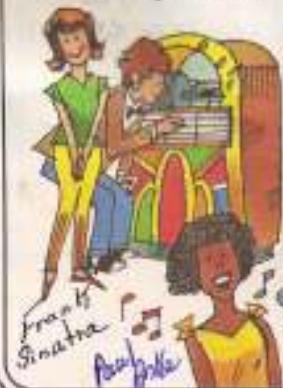
For DINNER and SUPPER

Did you have your own
stereo and tapes?"



The Music

"What were your favorite songs? Singers?" *Always*
'Til We Meet Again
Somewhere, my love
White Christmas
I'll Be Home For Christmas
In the Garden
Stardust
Good night, sweetheart
Only Make Believe
Pear Barrel Polka
Partners
Waltzing Across Texas
Yellow Rose of Texas
Tie a Yellow Ribbon
Let There Be Peace on Earth



"Grandma, did you have to take music lessons?"
 For a little while my aunt
 Leonine taught me then my
 grandmother died and the
 piano was sold. Much later
 I took a music course at
 Queen's College and learned
 to read a little music.
 I practised on the
 church piano.



"Do certain songs
 bring back memories?"
I've Told Every Little Star
Thanks for the Memory
Fall in Love - Says my heart
Always
Anniversary Waltz
Thank you for Touching
my life



in My Life

"Do you
 remember
 your
 first dance?
 Who with?
 What
 dances?"



Later on I danced a lot
 with a friend who taught
 me how to jitterbug.

We had dances at
 our church and I
 danced with lots of
 boys. One time I
 went to a big party
 and I danced with
 the captain of the
 basketball team. He
 was a very good
 dancer. We danced to
Over Somebody Else's
Shoulder and Dancing
cheek to cheek.

"Did Grandpa
 sing or dance?"
 He played the piano
 by ear and
 played a
 mouth organ.
 He waltzed
 beautifully.
 We didn't
 dance much
 but he
 was a
 good dancer
 and I liked
 to dance with him."



These are
a few of **My
Favorite Things**

Color Rose
Blue (medium)
Book Gone with the Wind
City Washington, D.C.
Movie Waterloo Bridge
Actor Jimmy Stewart
Actress Katherine Hepburn
Game Bridge
Song Always
Bird Bluebird
Radio Program Kay Kaiser's
College of Musical Knowledge
TV Program Double Jeopardy
Ice Cream Chocolate
Jelly strawberry
Soup Home made vegetable
Sandwich chicken salad
Toy doll
Hobby embroidery
Spectator Sport basketball
baseball - football
Participation Sport miniature golf
Variation Place Cruise ship
Cookie sandy
I like horse racing best
of all spectator sports.

Restaurant Old San Francisco
Steak House
Washington, D.C.
San Francisco
Actor Jimmy Stewart
Game Bridge
Bird Bluebird
Flower rose
Pet cat
Candy chocolate
caramels
Month October
Season Fall
Tree Sweet gum
Magazine Southern living
Cartoon Mickey Mouse
Automobile Monte Carlo
Vegetable spinach
Time of Day morning
Dinner Steak & baked potato
fried chicken



"How many different homes have you had?"

3442-80 Street Jackson Heights, N.Y.
1821 Webster St. Washington D.C.
3438 83 Street Jackson Heights, N.Y.
4520 Conn. Ave Washington D.C.
714 Richmond Ave. Silver Spring, Md.
Fort Wayne, Ind.
Thunderbolt, Ga.
9007 Bell St. Savannah, Ga.
13706 219 St. Springfield, Gds. N.Y.
1820 Spring Hood St Carrollton, Tex.
1831 Spring Ave. Carrollton, Tex.
log house, Rt 5, Highway 47
Mt. Pleasant, Tex.



"Ever had any family reunions?"

When my grandmother was alive, Christmas was our reunion time. Every body came to her house on Christmas Eve and stayed over to Christmas night.

After the war I always had some of our family - always Aunt Helen at Christmas. Our own family always gets together for birthdays, at Mothers Day and Fourth of July. We have a big reunion of Coxes at log house in October (around the time of Grandpa's birthday).



"Where are all your relatives living now?"

Linda & Jonathan - Lewisville, Tex.
Lyn, Janice Mike - Ft. Worth, Tex.
Toma Yates - Omaha, Nebraska
Baby Cox Pierce Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Nellie Cox Thomas " "
Alfred Davis Bill Cox " "
Dorothy Frances Cox " "
Louise Jerry Thomas " "
Ella Lee Thomas " "
Lou, Elmer Silvey Anna May
Elmer Jim Potts - Lubbock, Tex.
John Ernest Miles Hobbs, Tex.
Sammy Loring - Waco, Tex.
Don Loring " "
Gordon Sartley " "
Grace Brown Mt. Pleasant
Audrey, Linda, Nathan, Vicki K.
John Charles Shattox " "
Mary Karen Anthony " "
Donald Robert Jr. Virginia
Alice Ruth Southern Fla.
Ed George McBeth NYC
Alice Virginia

More Memories



...in the last
one thousand
years
there
was no long
ago
no progress



This son never played
soccer but our
daughter did



"Did you ever work
besides at home?"

I always or almost
always worked
outside home. In
summer & right after
college I worked
for Home Ins Co. NYC.
During war I

worked as Bookkeeper for Bass Foundry,
Munson Foundry in Ft Wayne & Liberty Metal Bk
in Savannah, Ga. When Linda was 3, I went
back to school at Queens College & became
a teacher. I taught school for 31 years in
NY and Carrollton, Tx. After I retired I
became a part time instructor at
Brookhaven Junior College which I am still
teaching.

More Memories

Ratio at Log House, Mt Pleasant, Tx
Grandpa & Mike

