

"Special" is a word
that is used to describe
something one-of-a-kind
like a hug
or a sunset
or a person who spreads love
with a smile or kind gesture.
"Special" describes people
who act from the heart
and keep in mind the hearts of others.
"Special" applies to something
that is admired and precious
and which can never be replaced.
"Special" is the word that best
describes you.

- Teri Fernandez

NANA

REMEMBRANCES



BY
MARY DURLAND KAUSS

2005

The inscription is from a card sent
to Nana in a letter from her granddaughter.
The letter is printed in Chapter III.
The picture is from Chapter V.

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*Dedicated to Nana's
Twenty Grandchildren*

PROLOGUE



Much is known about Nana as a mother and as a grandmother but not much is known about Nana as a teenager. The following account has been pieced together from pictures, a census report, and other information from my memory. The picture is mother at age fifteen.

This booklet is the story of a woman who was born in Chicago at the very end of the 19th century when women had very little status. As I studied her early life, it became apparent to me that mother was not the ordinary woman of her day, nor did she think of herself as ordinary. She believed in her ability and integrity. Her parents were German-American and it was at a time when women were taught to knit, to crochet, to cook, and never to work outside the home. She even painted china, something else that young women of her day learned. The family still has a few pieces of that time.

She excelled in all these skills but she must have hungered for something more. She saw her brothers leave home for their jobs and she too must have dreamed of somehow becoming independent. For even in the 1910 census in her teens she and her brother Henry were both working for a newspaper as bookkeepers and I'm sure her father saw to it that Henry looked after her.

Having graduated from a German school, she was bilingual and bi-cultural at a time when knowing two languages was not considered strange or unpatriotic. In fact, it was only when the

United States entered World War I against its enemy Germany that the language became forbidden. Her mother and father were both born in the United States but also bi-lingual and bi-cultural. Due to the war, German the language was completely forbidden because of suspicion that one could be a spy for the Germans. Many bunds did exist in Chicago because of the very large population of German speaking immigrants.

Unfortunately, because of this, German was only spoken in the home, but nevertheless in mother's home, the German customs were handed down for generations from mother to daughter. Today, in spite of two wars with Germany, being of German descent is no longer a stigma and I regret that I had not learned the language because I remember so many of the German customs.

Mother's forte when she was in her teens was music and voice for which she had a formidable background due to much training. It was in this realm that she excelled so when she was still in her teens she found a way to use both of these talents to further her desire to be independent. At age seventeen, she went to work for Lyon and Healy, a music company, not only demonstrating their equipment, namely the Victrola (see the appendix) but also playing the piano and singing the current music of the day. In this way she no doubt gained the approval of her father because it was music, even though at that time young women did not earn money outside of the home.

I heard many stories about how her brothers would take her with them to parties because she could entertain them. She

even had a steady boyfriend at age seventeen who would bring her flowers and candy. He wanted to marry her but her father said she was too young. During that courtship she



always spoke of going to all the operas and musical activities in Chicago. Besides that, as a young woman she was active in the Yacht Club in Lincoln Park, taking part in their plays. She went swimming in Lake Michigan and played tennis too. In fact she even belonged to a sorority although I do not believe it was

connected to any academic institution. All in all, she told me, her teenage years were exciting and full of fun.

Her job was also fascinating. Because of the nature of the company, supplying musical instruments and selling the records of the day, she met many famous artists who would come into the store. These men and women remained in her memory and I, too, learned about the singers: Caruso, Schuman-Heinck, and McCormack, just a few of the celebrities of the day.

She performed so well in her job, that when she did marry, her new husband-to-be wrote to his mother that he was allowing her to continue because of the status that she had achieved as a manager in this music store. Another unheard-of activity for women who at that time did not work when married.

So please keep in mind that this is a story of an indomitable spirit who was far ahead of her time but still was a product of her heritage. She respected her parents' wish not to marry young, yet she had enough courage to believe in herself to defy the existing taboos for young women of that time. Her independence began in her teens. It remained with her through all the diversity in her life and sustained her through all her ill fortune. She was a rebel in regard to what women could or could not do and she arranged her independent life within the parameters of the arts so that she could still respect her father's position.

Also in her teenage years she began to develop her gregariousness and she learned that she loved to be with people and that people energized her. And what an abundance of energy she had! She never was at a loss for friends and her address book was full of people she had met throughout her life beginning in her teenage years. Contact with her sorority friends from her early years remained with her throughout her life. Her courage was boundless. Sometimes her spirit of independence was difficult but all in all, her tenacity for life began as a teenager and remains an example for all of us.

As you read about her influence on her family during the years, keep in mind, everything about her began as a teenager. It was as though she charted her life in the beginning and followed it with determination and knowledge about herself knowing that she had the intellectual ability to accomplish whatever she desired.

ELVERA SCHUENEMAN DURLAND
1893-1985
MOTHER AND NANA



CHAPTER I

BEFORE BECOMING “NANA” MOTHER

Harry and Elvera still lived with Grandma and Grandpa Schueneman on Hermitage Avenue in Ravenswood, a suburb of Chicago, Illinois when I was born. But my remembrances of my mother began not at Grandma’s house, but at our first house that Dad owned in Evanston.

The earliest recollection I have of my mother is a picture I have in my memory of when I was very young, and she was in a flowing gown. It may have been a peignoir but it is very vivid in my mind. It was pink and she was rushing through the hall and the gown billowed around her. I had a sister, Jane, at the time but I have no memory of Jane, only this image of my mother. It must have been because she might have been



scolding me for some mischief I had been into. I learned early on that Mother had rules to abide by. I am the one in the picture.

In my baby book Mother had written that I would visit the neighbor’s house and ask if she had baked that day, because I was forbidden to ask directly for a cookie. She noted that I was two and a half years old. I don’t remember it but I must have learned very young that Mother had rules to follow.

At that time, in the same house, I remember with much clarity Mother brushing my hair. It was very straight whereas Jane’s hair was very curly. Needless to say, the reason I remember it so graphically is due to the force that she applied with the brush. She was determined to make my hair glisten. That, too, was a signal as a toddler that Mother meant business. Those are the earliest memories I have of Mother at that age.

When we moved to New Orleans, many thoughts of Mother keep coming back. Mother loved to play and sing at the piano.



Our baby grand piano accompanied us on our move. Even though Mother loved people, she was confined at home with the two children she had the first year, and so she played the piano and sang the popular songs of the day. Mother played very well and it was at this time that I became a frustrated musician for I never could achieve her level of accomplishment. Nevertheless I always have had a love of the era of the music she played. In fact I still have some of her music so my fond memories of this time still linger. In the picture I am on the left and Jane is on the right.

I never asked why, but Mother returned to her roots and her mother in Chicago to have her third child, Mitzi. The most vivid memory I have is of the train trip back to New Orleans with the new baby. We had a compartment on the train and, lo and behold, not only was the new baby in the compartment with us, but also our bird in its cage. I can still see Mother now with the new baby in her arms and holding the birdcage with the bird before boarding the train. How she juggled both is a complete mystery, but Mother was not one to let anything daunt her, much less a bird in a cage. I do not know why the bird was so important, only that it was not to be left behind. From that train ride on, I have loved to ride in trains so it must have been a wonderful experience in spite of the new baby.

Other recollections that I have of that time are very indistinct, probably because life became a series of moves. We moved from New Orleans back to Chicago to a house on Morse Avenue in Rogers Park and from there to an apartment on Damen Avenue where Joan was born. While we lived in the apartment on Damen Avenue, I remember Mother taking me and probably Jane to little theater plays. I'm sure Mother was duplicating her experiences for us of when she was a child. She always was one to appreciate the performing arts, which was a carryover from her professional singing experience and all the plays she attended while growing up. I have silently thanked her many times for giving me such a base of enrichment at such an early age.

I don't remember Dad accompanying us to these plays but I do remember that the two of them would take us downtown to the

circus and then out to dinner at one of the private clubs. We loved those occasions but I really enjoyed the time Mother and I spent together more than the time with the whole family. I was the first-born and we did share so much.

Mother always took us downtown to Kranz' Ice Cream store on State Street and we never missed a Christmas without going to Marshall Field's to see their tree in the Walnut Room. These activities included all of us and it could be that my younger siblings do not remember these excursions, but for me they were exciting and something to cherish.



School for me on Damen Avenue was just up the street at St. Scholastica's Academy where Jane and I could walk the few blocks. Mother was always very active with the nuns. She took great delight in all the special events. This was the beginning for me of seeing how much Mother treasured education. At this time I don't remember being pressured by her but I do remember that she was enthusiastic about everything that took place, from the spelling bees to the evening events. Probably because she did take such an active interest in everything, her zeal rubbed off on me, and school was always a challenge and a wonder. The picture is Mother and me in 1928.

And Mother saved everything. I will always be beholden to her for saving my records from that school. This was the time also that she introduced me to responsibilities. That trait has stayed with me throughout my life. Many times, I was responsible for my siblings and I knew Mother depended on me. However, I wasn't unique in this respect. I think she instilled this in all my siblings as this was such a powerful distinctive characteristic of Mother's personality that will be illustrated many times as her story unfolds.

Mother had many personas, which will be revealed in this little memoir of our remembrances.

THE FAMILY



This photo is of the complete family when we moved to Mulford Street in Evanston. Dad is holding Joan. Next is Jane. Mitzi is on Jane's right and Mary is seated on the sofa. Mother is the clearest one. This photo was taken with others around Christmas time in 1930.

I include this photo with Dad as a shadowy figure because he was not a secondary player in our lives. He was an example of families of the day. The father's primary role was to be the wage earner and the mother took care of the house and children except when problems arose. Then Dad made the final decisions. How much influence Mother had on Dad's resolutions was not apparent to me. I just knew he made the rules. Now I know that many of his beliefs were the result of his strict childhood.

CHAPTER II

WE ARE SIX

When we moved from Damen Ave. to Mulford Street in Evanston we were all very young so only traumatic memories remain in our minds.

Joan can remember one instance when she was only a toddler. Dad was supposed to be watching her as he mowed the lawn. She wandered off and Mother found her on Ridge Avenue, a busy thoroughfare close by. Mother must have been frantic, for this incident was indelibly imprinted in Joan's memory.

Mitzi was in kindergarten and one day Mother asked me to take Mitzi to her class. Oakton School was very close to our house and I probably walked by myself, but Mother would take Mitzi. I was so awed by all the toys in the room I asked the teacher if I could stay and watch. I don't know if Mother ever found out I didn't show up for my class. Maybe Mitzi didn't tell.

This was before the Great Depression so we had a colored maid (that was the way we referred to her and I don't remember her name) but Mother made Jane and me help her with the dishes. This was all part of the training we received growing up and she never relented with her teaching.

I was at the age of beginning to be curious about sex. I had a girl friend across the street and one day Mother caught us in our attic talking about the subject. I truthfully don't remember what we were saying but I do remember Mother said very little, and when Dad came home, I sure got a lecture and was told by him this was not acceptable in the family and not to do it ever again. This was the beginning of the realization that Mother wasn't equipped to handle anything of this nature and that Dad was the final authority.

Another incident happened when I was old enough to begin puberty. Mother had always said there would be a sign. I had absolutely no idea what she was talking about. One morning I woke up and thought I had cut myself during the night. I didn't know how, but I threw my pajamas down the stairs of the

basement and went off to school without saying a word to anyone. The next thing I knew Mother appeared at the door of the classroom and took me to the girl's bathroom. These introductions to life were Mother's way of facing the situations; wait for Dad if possible and, if not possible, just remedy the event without any explanation.

I often wondered but never asked how her mother with three boys and only one girl approached this stage in her daughter's life. Maybe her mother evaded everything too, and that was why my mother wasn't capable of explaining such topics. But we have to keep in mind the eras in which both women lived. I mention these stories about Mother only to illustrate that these issues were too taboo to discuss for her generation and how uncomfortable she felt when these growing-up events happened in my life. They also illustrate Mother's role, where it began, and where Dad ended it on these matters.

For me, other remembrances of Mother on Mulford Street are many. This is when she made me practice the piano before I could do anything else. This too is where I packed up a little toy suitcase and was going to leave home. Mother caught me. I didn't get far but I don't remember her asking me why or what I was upset about. I was just punished by Dad for even having the idea.

Mother used to take me to downtown Chicago for some kind of a fancy rhythm system called Delcroze, which was to imitate how animals would react to music. This was within her parameters. Mother was always making sure that her children had the very finest education in music. One time, she couldn't make it to take me downtown, but I had a lesson so I had to go by myself, which was her way of teaching me responsibility. I don't think I ever told her that I got sick and got off the train but couldn't get back on because I only had enough money to return home after the lesson. So I had to walk, following the tracks, until I arrived downtown. I still have recurring dreams of being lost. Mother was only teaching me independence, but for me it was a life-long traumatic experience. Life was very different for children when I was young.

Even though Joan was very young, she remembers shopping for shoes in Evanston. When Mother took the four of us to Pool & Pipers to get fitted for shoes, it was an all-day affair.

Joan also recalls being told “children are seen and not heard!” This was why the four of us would behave in the shoe store.

Joan said one of her very first memories from Mulford Street was Mother telling her to say “goodbye” to her friend Janet when we moved from there. She was only four at the time but the move was a big trauma for her.

Grandpa had died in 1928 and Grandma was alone in McHenry. Mother said she called Grandma every day because she was alone, and we would make several trips to McHenry to see Grandma. I remember her dining room with the very large lamp above it. Grandma cooked on a wood stove, and getting the fire just right for her baking must have been very difficult. In the kitchen sink was a pump from a well. Maybe this was a holdover from when there wasn't city water.

While we lived on Mulford Street the Great Depression began. This directly affected my father because he was in the municipal bond business. Helping Grandma and traveling back and forth from Evanston to McHenry made it very difficult for the family. These two circumstances gave birth to the necessity for a change. There was only one solution -- move to McHenry.

We had to leave all our friends behind and go to a new school. I was particularly affected by this change, but children were never considered whenever a move like this changed their lives. But Mother wasn't going to move to a house that was so old-fashioned. An extensive renovation started before we moved, and we occupied a house that was all torn up. However, the pump was changed to be outside on Grandma's insistence so we had good well water as long as we lived in the house.

Leaving Evanston wasn't easy on any of us. However, we gained a loving, kind grandmother and being with Grandma made the move easier.

From now on our lives were forever entwined with both Grandma and Mother so the memories of our childhood are interspersed with the two of them, maybe one or the other, or sometimes both.

GRANDMA MINNIE



When we moved to McHenry, Grandma Minnie became almost as important to the four of us as our mother. Our lives began to revolve around her. Now that I look back on it, Grandma unconsciously usurped Mother's authority in the family. She was strong but compassionate. It became apparent where Mother inherited her amiable personality but, as fancy as Mother was, Grandma was superb at the basics. She was the one who made plain healthy meals while Mother was great on the fancy ones. From now on the anecdotes include Grandma and are told randomly from notes.

WE ARE SEVEN

Dad started to commute by train to Chicago so his life was not changed much. I can remember before Mother took Dad to the train she would run outside to Grandma's small garden and pick a bachelor's button flower for his lapel. I guess I remember that because Dad was always late getting started and when he missed the train, Mother had to drive him to Crystal Lake, sometimes over the icy roads in the winter. She wouldn't be dressed and she'd still be in her nightclothes, but Mother knew Dad had to get to his work so off she went.

I began to forget that I left Girl Scouts in Evanston which I loved when Mother, in her inimitable style, made up for this and started Girl Scouting in McHenry. She became a leader in the town and was always involved with our schools. The teachers and the nuns loved her because they could always depend on her help. Joan tells me how she was active during WW II in the Red Cross.

Mother recognized the dearth of cultural events in this little farming town so, not to be undaunted by this lack of cultural activity, she enrolled all of us in elocution lessons so that we would learn to speak properly. We all had piano lessons and we all had dancing lessons. Joan remembers when she and Mitzi had to play duets on the piano and Joan would purposely play faster so Mitzi couldn't keep up. There was much sibling rivalry between those two and it seems Grandma would always fake a heart attack to stop all the arguments.

Mother continued to play and sing on the piano. Joan recalls her playing the "Oceanic Rag." For years I tried to find the sheet music to that number but to no avail. I love this music that prevailed when Mother was at Lyon & Healy's.

Among Mother's cultural activities were our dancing lessons. I can even remember taking acrobatic lessons but I didn't inherit that talent. Nevertheless, Mother offered our dancing prowess to various clubs. I remember when we first moved to McHenry, Mother decided I should dance at one particular Irish party. I didn't feel I was good enough so she took me to Chicago to my former teacher's studio and I had private lessons.

These lessons were given in Crystal Lake, a town eight miles away, but Mother religiously took us there. Mitzi and Joan were in several dancing recitals and, even though they were during the Depression and money was tight, Mother still bought the costumes so her daughters could have that experience. Mitzi quit but Joan continued and became so good that she was invited to go with the teacher's troupe one summer. However, she was very young and while Mother gave her the option Joan decided against it.

Mother taught all of us how to crochet. Grandma crocheted an afghan for me when I went away to college and I still have it sixty-seven years later. Mother made an afghan for two of her daughters and gave Joan the one she made for herself. Plus, Mother made an afghan for each of her grandchildren, who totaled twenty.

Mitzi said she remembers Mother being able to knit a sweater, eat chocolates, and read a novel at the same time! I'm not sure about that.

Games were big with both Grandma and Mother. Bridge and pinochle for them, and all the other card games for the children. Both Mother and Grandma belonged to bridge clubs and since Grandma didn't drive, one or the other of us would have to take her to where the game was.

Mother and Grandma did not always agree. When they didn't want us to know about what they were discussing they lapsed into German. This was funny for us to hear.

Mother and Grandma were both very hospitable and loved having people stop in and visit. Grandma would bake on Saturday and the aroma of fresh bread and her honey buns would fill the house. She always let the bread rise on the radiator in the dining room. Then there would be something to serve when friends would arrive.

I specifically remember when Mother would entertain for either her bridge club or another party. We were all put to the task of helping her prepare for the guests. She taught us how to set a table the correct way. Everything had to be perfect. And she hustled and bustled and drove us crazy. But when the doorbell rang, all that hustle and bustle was left behind and she opened the door calmly and with a big smile on her face. She was fine but we

were wrecks trying to meet her expectations. All this served us well in the future for we all became adept at entertaining. Many times I have been grateful for this education.

Her hospitality was endless. She loved having our friends over and Joan recounts one weekend when she had three guys from Loyola stay overnight on the front porch. They danced in the kitchen and Mother loved having them. It probably reminded her of the time when she entertained her brothers' friends.

I, too, remember my husband-to-be being able to stay overnight on the front porch and Mitzi also remembers her boyfriend (who became her husband) staying overnight on the front porch. That front porch and Mother's bent on being hospitable remains indelible in our memories.

Grandma retained many of the customs from her early life. She always made coffee with an egg. The eggshells in water were always used to water the plants.

Joan is reminded of the time when gypsies would pass through town and would make Grandma very nervous. Yet she was a very charitable woman. Joan recalls a man came to our door when she was very young looking for food. It was during the Depression so Grandma fed him and then sent him on his way.

Another recollection of Joan's is when she was babysitting up the street and a storm was brewing. Grandma, knowing her intense fear of storms, walked one and a half blocks to sit with her. Joan never forgot her thoughtfulness.

I can remember when Mitzi would get in trouble because of her temper and be sent to her room without supper. Grandma would surreptitiously take Mitzi some food when Mother wasn't looking. Grandma believed children should never go to bed without dinner. But then we all knew that Grandma was protective of Mitzi.

Grandma also was very precise in her examples. She taught us how to iron handkerchiefs for Dad. They had to be just so. She and Mother would share the weekly washing. Mother would work the washing machine in the basement and Grandma was in charge of hanging the clothes out to dry. No dryers in those days. Grandma made us hang the sheets facing the sidewalk and street, and all our panties and other intimate wear had to be hung in the back so people walking by or driving by couldn't see them.

Yes, we all had to participate in Spring and Fall housecleaning. Grandma, not Mother, was in charge. There was window washing and rug beating. The windows had to be free of all lint and streaks. The rugs were beaten outside on the line and Joan says she thought it was fun. I, for one, hated these chores.

Grandma had other idiosyncrasies. She insisted on having the sidewalk clear of snow for the mailman and those who would walk by. Joan has memories of telling Grandma not to shovel and that she would do it. But Grandma couldn't wait, and wanted it done right then. She must have been in her 80's at the time.

Joan must have been an adventurous child for she got lost again when we all went to the World's Fair in Chicago. She says she cried and cried and a lady in one of the booths said she would take Joan to her house. That only made Joan cry harder. After what seemed like hours to a small child but in reality was only a few minutes, Mother finally found her. Another traumatic experience of Joan's that remains in her memory.

All of us remember Grandma's Kummel, a liqueur. This must have been something from Grandma's past and it was not easy to find. Anytime we had an ailment that she thought Kummel would cure, out came her bottle from her closet. It's a wonder Mother didn't object, but maybe Grandma did the same thing for her when she was a child.

There was a cherry tree on our property, and every year we had to collect cherries so Mother and Grandma could pit them with a hairpin and then make crabapple cherry jelly.

Mitzi recalls helping Grandma pick dandelion greens on our lot across the street for salad. I'm not sure about that, but I do remember the dandelions across the street.

Mitzi also recalls Mother and Grandma having a special procedure when it came to the kitchen. Mother cooked and Grandma would clean up and put the leftover food away or vice versa. All I remember is that we four had to do the dishes and I hated to wash, so I dried. I think we took turns on that also.

Baking cookies for Christmas was a big event in our house. Grandma did her sugar cookies of different shapes and Mother did all the fancy ones. It was up to us to help decorate Grandma's cookies. Both Mitzi and Joan recall this chore fondly. I, on the other hand, hated it. The cookies were then put in tins for when

people came to visit. Both Mother and Grandma were most hospitable and they loved entertaining during the holidays. Joan discovered where the tins were and had a great time sampling the cookies. But I have to admit I sampled quite a few also.

When Joan and Mitzi went on the river before it was frozen over, Mitzi fell in, and Joan pulled her out. They were both soaked to the skin. Grandma made them change and hung the wet clothes in the basement so nobody would find out.

Making a bed with square corners and setting a table correctly were all our chores of the day and not one of us dared try to get by without doing it correctly.

Mitzi tells a story about meeting a young man during WW II at a USO dance and then inviting him home. Mother spoke with him privately and said she was only 16 and couldn't date an older man. He replied that he was only 17. They became vast friends and he eventually became Mitzi's husband.

Right after we moved to McHenry, Aunt Jo, Grandma's sister, also lived there with their brother Charlie. Until they died, Mitzi said Aunt Jo and Uncle Charlie would always come for Sunday dinner.

Aunt Jo was Joan's godmother so Joan has many remembrances of Aunt Jo's favors. One particularly remains in her memory. Aunt Jo would give Joan some pennies so Joan could buy penny candy. Our pennies were restricted so this was a big deal.

Both Joan and Mitzi remember being asleep in Grandma's bed one night when I was out on a date and I decided to scare them. Grandma's room was downstairs so I found a flashlight and went up to the window with the light under my chin. Just one of the pranks we used to play on one another. If we parked too long with our boyfriend outside, Grandma would be there with her flashlight to tell us to get in the house.

Mother was the original nutritionist and made sure we always had balanced meals. Both Jane and I remember her going beyond that, making us drink orange juice with cod liver oil. Today, fish oil is considered a boon for many things. How Mother got this information when I was young is debatable, but then she was always making sure she had the best for her children.

At Easter time, Grandma would color some of our eggs with onionskins. They were a beautiful brown color. This was just an example of Grandma's frugality. We all knew about her "waste not, want not" admonition. During the war she would save string and aluminum paper in a ball. I never knew what she did with them. Her German heritage was with us all the time, from her singing "O Tannebaum" (Oh Christmas Tree) on the holiday to having a German poster in the garage with a German song.

We knew our mother was a very proud woman. Joan remembers her always saying, "Never do anything to dishonor your family and your good reputation." That probably kept the four of us from straying from the straight and narrow.

Mother valued education so highly that she would remember our teachers every year for the holidays and on occasion would invite them over to the house. When we were in the parochial school, even though the nuns at that time couldn't enter private homes, she would figure some way she could entertain them outside.

Joan was the last one to get married. She was with Mother when Grandma died, and can remember how when the call came, Mother went outside and sobbed. After that, and after Dad died, Joan was alone with Mother for seven months. Joan said they became very close. It was probably their best time together.

Mother was always called Mother, not Mom. She was a hospitable, cultured lady. She was extremely loyal to my father when he was ill in the hospital for so many years. No doubt many of her excellent attributes were inherited from Grandma. Most of these anecdotes all happened before the four of us married, but Joan, particularly, helped me with so many. After our marriages, each one of us has many more stories to tell, but they are stories of our own families when Mother took on another one of her personas, namely that of Nana.

CHAPTER III

“NANAISMS”



Back (Left to Right): Tom Griffith, Jerry Larkin, George Kauss
Middle (L to R): Julie Sharp, Janet Smith, Debbie Griffith,
Gini Caudill and Harry Durland Griffith

Front (L to R): Suzanne Kauss, Sally Hodge, Ann Cuda, Nancy Cook
Missing: Betsy Northrup (deceased), Mitzi Griffith Jr.,
Howard Griffith Jr., David Griffith, Michael Kidder,
Janie Smith, Pam Jensen, Kim Kidder

Mother's first grandchild was born while Grandma was still very much in our lives. But we couldn't have two grandmas. That would be confusing, so the only other alternative was to find a special name for Mother who, little did we know, would become in the future the proud grandmother of twenty grandchildren.

So when Maribeth (Betsy) Kauss, the baby in the following picture, was born, the name NANA was born as it was easy for babies to say and would be entirely apart from Grandma Minnie. Mother objected at first because she said it was a dog's name. I think this was because in the play Peter Pan the nursemaid dog was called Nana. I don't remember that she explained it at that time. However we convinced her it wasn't a dog's name and so she became NANA forever.



**The first grandchild Maribeth Kauss (Betsy) with Mary,
NANA, and Grandma Minnie**

The following letter from Maribeth (Betsy) was in Nana's effects after Nana died April 1985. The saying on the cover of this booklet prefaced the letter.

March 24, 1985
Mexico City

Dear Nana,

Sometime ago I bought this card thinking that it reminded me of some one, but I didn't know who. This morning as I was looking for some other papers, I came across this card and you suddenly came into my thoughts as you so often do.

Only on Friday, I was telling one of the girls at the office how you came down to stay with me when Christopher was born. Yesterday, a neighbor was here and asked me who made the beautiful afghan I have on my bed. You of course. And so it goes. So many things that are part of my life. Do you remember a sweater you made, short-sleeve brown with cable stitch? I still use it and every time I wear it, some one inevitably comments on how beautiful it is and asks who made it for me.

Memories of you fill me with love and gratitude. I remember the year I spent with you recuperating from hepatitis; I remember your Schaum Torts on birthdays and special occasions; Honey Bear Farm and how you used to introduce us to your friends; how you loved my babies; your trips to Mexico.

Further back, I remember you at the house on Riverside Drive and yes, I even have vague memories of you with Grandma. I remember you telling me how much you loved my father.

How fortunate I was to have been raised within such a loving and close extended family, to have a well-rooted sense of belonging and identity. No doubt, there were many problems and misunderstandings, but I was not unaware of them. But during my childhood and early adolescence, I knew that we had the support and love we needed surrounding us in moments of trouble.

And believe me, all these memories have comforted me many times in my adult life.

I am thankful for the strengths of character that have been passed down through the generations, mother to daughter and I only hope I have been able and will continue to be able to pass this same strength on to my own children.

But I did have something that my children have not enjoyed: my relationship with a loving, supportive and accepting grandmother almost daily for many years...

Betsy

This beautiful tribute to Nana by her first granddaughter is only one of many ways that all her grandchildren remember her. In fact Janet Larkin coined the word “Nanaisms” because of such fond memories they all have growing up with a grandmother who was not only very nurturing but who also played so many roles in every aspect of their lives.

As I tried to enumerate all the little anecdotes I received from my request for stories about Nana, it was evident that she was forever interwoven in the lives of the Larkin family more than in the lives of her other grandchildren. The Larkins were the ones who were always available when Nana needed someone.

In order to make the Nanaisms more descriptive, I had to break them down into several topics. However, some of the stories deserve to be told in the words of the authors, so those anecdotes will be quoted verbatim. These vignettes of Nanaisms are offered for your enjoyment and may even bring smiles as you read them.

Probably one of Nana’s most universal qualities was her love of games, particularly card games. Without exception, whenever the occasion permitted, she was up for a card game. She was a whiz at bridge and played pinochle for money with a passion. She played every card game known. Particularly, Julie and Sally Larkin remember the many times they played with her. Nancy Larkin would even go to her house to play cards with her. In fact their mother said Nana would tell the children to get their pennies together as she always enjoyed a wager. Mother Joan was sure that “she was heading the children down a gambling path.”

Pam Kidder, who visited from California, remembers playing cards with Nana also on her patio until the both of them got so tired they'd have to quit.

Shopping with Nana was something never to forget. Ann Larkin can recall many times she took Nana shopping and it was always an all-day event. Even Michael Kidder remembers how she had to find just the right chicken for her Chicken Divan.

This is a subject in itself. I quote Janet Larkin on this one: *“Chicken Divan. I will never eat it again as long as I live and breathe! In Nana’s later (or shall I say last) years she loved having us come to dinner. The table was beautifully set and she did love to entertain but these particular dinners were especially memorable because we ALWAYS had the same entrée – Chicken Divan and broccoli! Along with her dinner invitation (she would plan it around your schedule so you could come) it meant a trip to the grocery store for the perfect white chicken meat. This usually meant bringing three toddler or preschoolers along. Her Franciscan Desert Rose dishes also had coffee cups with handles and even a woman with tiny fingers couldn’t get her fingers through to hold them. The funniest thing was watching the guys try to drink out of them and then listen to them crab all the way home.”*

And then there were the watermelon times. All the Larkins remember having fun when watermelon was in season and they could all eat it and spit out the seeds. Ribbon sandwiches of peanut butter and jelly were a standard with Nana and always with the crusts cut off.

Her granddaughter Mitzi Griffith Jr. remembers Nana fondly because of her lunches and her “Salmon Loaf,” a recipe she said she had brought back from New Orleans. Along with the lunch Nana would tell stories of her life in New Orleans. [I wish Mitzi had remembered more of these stories.]

One of Howard Griffith Jr.’s vivid memories is the story of his parakeet Chipper:

“Nana would often come over to the house on Riverside Drive...in the mid-morning in 1950 for a visit...I had gotten a parakeet, I think, for my birthday, which I named Chipper...One morning Nana came by to visit and opened the door...With the door opening, Chipper promptly escaped into the yard...sat high in the

trees for a day or so before disappearing into the wild. Well, naturally Nana was very upset. After we were not able to retrieve the bird Nana went to the pet store and picked out an exact replica. Naturally I named this bird Chipper too... a couple of weeks later when Nana came over to the house, she opened the door with the same result... We had Chipper sightings down the Fox River for the next week."

Sundays had many other memories of Nana. Jerry Larkin remembers how he would pick her up to have dinner with them. But first, on Sunday mornings, there was church. And the family had to sit in the same row in the front on the right side of the church, the place Nana and Grandma Minnie had occupied for many years. It was as though this pew belonged to this family and no one else dare sit there.

For many years Nana wore a wig because her hair had thinned so much. Sally Larkin remembers the wig stands looking like bookends on her dresser. In fact Sally remembers quite a bit about Nana. She took her to a lot of wakes when people she knew died. Sally remembers Nana swimming in their pond on Draper Road. She always did the sidestroke.

Not only did she swim with the Larkins but she went sledding with them. One time it was so cold that when she took such a deep breath she couldn't breathe at all. They called the doctor and he told them to have her take shallower breaths and calm down because she had hyperventilated.

When Sally was much younger she loved to look through Nana's jewelry. Nana loved costume jewelry and she kept it for years. After she died, several grandchildren selected pieces they liked as remembrances.

Sally specifically remembers taking Nana to buy shoes. Unfortunately, Nana's feet were disfigured and it was not possible to find any that were stylish. This was a big problem with Nana. She never wanted to look like an old lady even if it meant in some instances suffering the pain.

This next memory from Sally was sent to me and is described in her own words:



“Do you remember the fur stole she had that was probably fox? [ed. It was mink] It had several little fox heads on it with beady eyes and things on the back of each. (kind of like clothespin style) You could press them and make the foxes’ mouths open up. I can remember being fascinated by them and sitting either on her lap or next to her and she would let me keep opening and closing all of their mouths.”

Not only would Sally be called by Nana when she wanted something, but if Sally was busy, Nana would go down the list of the Larkin girls because she wanted someone immediately. She just kept calling. Very persistent was Nana.

All of the Larkin girls were commandeered at one time or another to help Nana buy her corset. She was of the generation when ladies still wore full torso undergarments with stays. This is the account from Janet:

“What a pleasure it was taking Nana “foundation” shopping. I dreaded it! Probably because I usually had to bring a nursing baby along. It always had to be an evening excursion because I had to wait for John to come home to take care of one or two more toddlers. That is NOT a baby’s best time nor was it Nana’s and she’d have to take care of the baby in the dressing room while I ran out to the racks fetching different sizes. God granted me a boatload of patience on those trips!”

Janet goes on to say,

“During my school age years, Nana decided that all her McHenry grandchildren should spend every Friday night in October at her house on Golfview. We had to kneel in her living room reciting the rosary as she led. We always had a snack or dessert afterwards. Our friends were welcome too.”

Another memory from Janet tells about when *“I went to Nana’s one summer afternoon ... and she wasn’t at home. So I went over to Betty Nielsen’s across the parking lot. I knocked on the door and was invited in. The two of them were sitting in the living room laughing and sipping on Manhattans, which was not out of the ordinary for Nana. I detected the odor of smoke. When I investigated I found a butter fire on the stove. They had completely forgotten about the butter!”*

Much can be written about Honey Bear Farm in Wisconsin. All of her grandchildren remember going there. Nana was the

official greeter and cashier. Suzanne Kauss can remember her counting all the money and looking for rare coins. I think some of Nana's collection still exists today.

Then there was Nana's driving that was a concern for everyone. It seems that some grandchildren would not drive with her because her driving was so erratic. Everyone believed that when her license ran out it would solve the problem. But Nana somehow, somehow was able to get a new license. However, she couldn't mask the problems she was having forever. More and more incidents kept happening. One day she lost (?) her car in the grocery store parking lot and called the police to say that it was stolen. Of course it wasn't.

One time she hit a mailbox because "it wasn't supposed to be there." She could never figure out how the dents got in her car. Finally the body shop called her daughter Joan, concerned about the number of times Nana brought the car in for repairs. Something had to be done, but no one wanted to tell Nana her driving days were over. Finally, Nana herself did give up her car reluctantly and everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

Although she wasn't driving at the time, Mitzi Griffith Jr. remembers an incident when her sister Debbie was driving. They were pulled over by the police. Of course everyone in the car was very upset. The next thing that Mitzi remembers is that Nana stood before the judge in the courtroom and vociferously defended her granddaughter Debbie. Mitzi was by Nana's side when she insisted that Debbie was innocent. Mitzi was very proud of the way Nana spoke so definitely that Debbie was not at fault. The judge dismissed the case. This was a good memory for Mitzi, for it taught her to hold her ground when correct.

Whenever the Larkins could see that Nana was on her way to visit, Janet writes,
"The call went out: 'Nana's coming,' which then put the Nana Plan into action.... The house had to be put into Nana-presentable shape. Laundry had to disappear, piles of things had to be thrown into closets and under beds, others thrown down the basement stairs, clean sinks, toilets and mirrors, etc. Everyone had their job and you never saw a family move so fast! Sometimes one of us would have to run out and stall her, especially if she was bringing a visitor."

As Janet asks,

“Who can forget all the things we associate with Nana:

- *Her birthday Schaum Torte [see Appendix]*
- *Her Christmas cookies that we had to help with*
- *Decorating her apartment for the holidays*
- *Going to Richmond for Anderson chocolates and caramels*
- *Learning how to clean and dust live plant leaves so that they could “breathe”*
- *Polishing furniture with lemon juice, oil and a toothbrush!”*

“We all knew she wouldn’t be caught without her wig or makeup. Nana was very proud about her appearance. She never would appear in public not looking her very best.”

Nancy Larkin too remembers vividly Nana’s insistence on washing the plants, and she can’t forget how Nana would rinse the paper towels and then dry them out for re-use. This practice undoubtedly stemmed from when being frugal was utmost in Nana’s mind.

Without a doubt Nana had many idiosyncrasies for which she is remembered, but there was a generous giving side to her also. However, on occasion her generosity affected others. Janet remembers:

“One Christmas, shortly before she died, Nana wanted every daughter, son-in-law, grandchild and great-grandchild and all their spouses to receive a Christmas gift from her, specifically pairs of socks. I had the honor of shopping, wrapping, tagging and sending them to those who lived away. I’ll always remember it gave ‘Christmas Stocking’ a whole new meaning.”

So many good memories – and there were others not so amusing but always memorable. But Nana for her grandchildren was larger than life itself. She will always remain as someone who loved them yet was sometimes demanding and domineering. They will remember that she took time to play with them. They will remember always her coaching and instruction about how to do things so correctly. They will remember her wonderful good humor and laughing at their jokes. And they will remember always how proud she was of them.

These are pages of a letter from Nana that I received in December 1970. They are a prelude to understanding why Nana had such a zest for traveling. I do not know who the "he" is but the generation she is writing about is the Vietnam War and is the generation of many of her older grandchildren.

6 DECEMBER 1970

Some people ^{to} feel I am of the generation they are fighting against and feel I did as my parents wanted up to a little less he knows I saw & traveled a great deal more than my own children did before I was married, and was very understanding. The generation gap is not as much as my grand children think. I had many opportunities that they never had. Seeing Opéra and traveling on my own because of my music and I had sent me to N.Y. to a Convention

When I was nineteen and then on to Canada New Jersey the factories and met people from all over the U.S.A. that I corresponded with. Also went with a young man graduate of Chicago Univ. who had me enrolled at the Univ. as an political science class and my mother made me come home as my father said he did not want me in politics. I went to places that were costly because he earned \$ at that time \$100 weekly

These pages give you a little more insight into other facets of Nana's personality. The man Nana wrote about was Frank Hansen. You can find him in the Photo Album.

and I was in my town. For a time I received a 5 lb. box of candy one week the next 5 day boxes. Oh yes he wanted to marry me but I was only 17 and my parents objected. The courtship lasted 3 yrs or 17 to 20, at which time we during that time between my many engagements and dated I saw just about every popular place in Chicago. Every Opéra, my nephew except even the Tragicom. King as they called it at the Auditorium in Chicago. Also when I went to N.Y. the popular play for 3 days. Nana said it clearly appeared!

NANA DURLAND
TIME AROUND 1910

CHAPTER IV

NANA'S TRAVELS

No doubt Nana's zeal for travel began at the time she wrote to me in 1970 about her trip to New Jersey and New York, all expenses paid, for Lyon and Healy, the music store that she



worked for. She undoubtedly had a wonderful time being feted by the record company for promoting their products. The picture on the left could have been taken on this trip. At the time of her 90th birthday celebration, her grandson George Kauss wrote the RCA Company requesting any record they might have

had in their files about this promotional journey. Unfortunately, the company had no record in their files, but the CEO did reply. (see Appendix)

Nana was very gregarious and not only did she make friends very easily, she kept old friends forever. An example of her continuing friendship over the years is this picture of one of the women she worked with at that music store. (from her 80th birthday party)



Her travels included trips with Dad to the north woods every year in the fall when he went



fishing at Fin and Feather Lodge. The picture on the left is Nana's friend Esther Swatek, one of the owners of the Fin and Feather Lodge. Esther was a friend from Chicago from her teenage years and remained a true friend throughout their lifetimes. The picture is from 1936 but their

friendship began long before the fishing trips. When we moved to McHenry, Grandma took care of the very young children and those of us who were older would accompany them. Most of the time I hated it. Mother would always go fishing with Dad and we were left alone to entertain ourselves. To this day, I hate anything to do with fishing.

One of my most vivid recollections is the trip Mother and I took to visit her sister-in-law Bess Durland in High Point, North Carolina. It was a present to me for my high school graduation but I really think that the occasion was just an excuse for Mother to visit Aunt Bess and travel. All went well until we reached the mountains. I had never seen mountains before and I was not aware whether or not Mother had driven in mountains before. Now I must say this. Mother was so busy looking at the scenery, I was a wreck. It was very fortunate that there wasn't much traffic for she wobbled all over the road and it was, "look at this, look at that!" Believe me, I was very happy to have reached our destination. From then on I never let her drive when I was in the car.

That trip was another eye opener for me and taught me mother's tolerance for other's feelings. Aunt Bess was a staunch Baptist and we were at her house one Friday for dinner. At that time the rule of no meat on Friday in Catholicism was in force. Mother looked at me and I looked at her to tell me what to do. Her edict in a very loud whisper was, "eat it." This incident taught me that, not only did mother not wish to be a bad guest, but also that she was sensitive to others' feelings. This was a big lesson that stayed with me throughout my life.

I found a very interesting note in a trip she took with the Stenz's in 1957. They went from Elm Grove, Wisconsin eastward to North Carolina. While on the trip they must have been near some water. This is written in her own words. *"I put on shorts and bra and sat in the sun. Dangled my feet in the water, which was cold but couldn't resist the temptation to go in. I did not bring my suit so went in the nude but didn't stay long as it was too cold."* If it hadn't been in Nana's own handwriting, I would never have believed it! In that same trip she said they all stopped to see Jane and have dinner with the family in Indiana.

I can also remember Mother visiting me in Santa Fe, New Mexico when I was there temporarily as a Vista Volunteer. I don't

think she had ever been to Santa Fe so she happily accepted the invitation. It didn't matter to her that I had to live in very humble quarters. She came knowing this, and Santa Fe became just another adventure for her. She made this statement in another travel trip in a later account. Every trip was an adventure for her. Again another lesson -- see everything and enjoy everything. Life is always an adventure. This made her a delightful traveling companion and a wonderful guest.

Mitzi's husband was transferred to the Eastern area and while they lived in Great Falls, Virginia, Mother visited them and was again reintroduced to all the historical places in the area, among them being Washington, D.C. I can remember Mother telling me that many years before she had walked up all the steps of



the Washington Monument. At the time she visited her grandchildren in Great Falls, I'm sure she didn't repeat this feat. Mother was an avid tourist. This is a picture of her at Great Falls Park in Virginia in 1975 visiting the Griffiths.

Both Mitzi and I eventually moved to Austin, Texas and Mother visited both of us many times. I specifically remember taking her to mass at St. Edward's University one Sunday. It was a very modern mass, but Nana in her inimitable wisdom accepted it wholeheartedly. In fact she wore a bright red suit, and I remember the priest taking communion to where she was standing. He said later that any elderly woman who wore a red suit deserved to be served communion personally.

Nana's travels included visiting the Kidder family when they lived in Indianapolis. In the fifties when Nana would drive down to Florida she would stop on the way back and have dinner with the Kidder grandchildren and she always wrote that she had a good time. In fact on one of the trips she wrote that it was Michael's birthday. These were included in her notations about Florida. Always she mentioned her dinners wherever she would go. Her notations of Florida were difficult to decipher but for sure she made several trips.

In one of her journals she mentioned driving to Boston and New York and visiting the Amish Country. Her friends Marie Ropp and Betty Nielsen were with her. Always one knew exactly what the menus were, in addition to the cocktails they had at dinner.

When Jane Kidder moved to San Jose, California one of Nana's granddaughters, Suzanne Kauss, had moved out there also. This was before Nana decided to move to Leisure World, a retirement community in Seal Beach. Nana had four Kidder grandchildren and she doubled up visiting them by seeing her very first great-grandchild Christine Wenks.

Nana would make many trips to San Jose, both when she was at Leisure World in Seal Beach and when she moved back to McHenry. But Pam Kidder, her grandchild, remembers when Nana would drive to see them in San Jose and when they would be in the car with her, she would drive in the middle of the highway because she said there was no traffic. Many of the grandchildren remember Nana's driving.

Later, in McHenry, Mike Kidder remembers taking Nana shopping at the market to buy the ingredients for her chicken curry. He said she would take forever because she only wanted the best.

Probably her two longest trips were one to Mexico for which we have her scrapbook. This account warranted a whole story by itself. The other was her trip to Europe, which also is a separate story in her travels.

Finally in August, 1976 Nana's traveling by car was ended. She had been concealing the little dents she had been getting until the body shop called her daughter and squealed on her. Her glaucoma had advanced to such a degree that she no longer had adequate peripheral vision and so she was running into things on the right side. Giving up her car was a painful decision for her to accept. Gone was her independence that she had treasured her whole life.

For now she had to depend on other transportation. As you can tell by this report, when Mary, Jane, and Mitzi moved out of McHenry, it was her joy to visit them, which she did often. Coupled with her love of travel and her wish to see her grandchildren, she now would only travel to places she could only go by plane.

NANA'S TRIP TO MEXICO WITH A SIDE TRIP TO CALIFORNIA

Of Nana's children, not one of us had ever been to a foreign country when we were young. But Nana, the adventurer, decided to drive to Mexico with her good friend, Betty Nielsen. First they decided to visit Betty's sister, Anna, in San Diego, California.

So the two of them started off from McHenry on January 25, 1955 at nine A.M. in a snowstorm. We know all the details of the trip because Nana left a detailed scrapbook of her journey, which will be preserved for the future. At the time, Nana was 61. I have no idea how old Betty was or even why they decided to team up and take this trip. Knowing my mother very well, I'm sure she had planned many details in advance but I wonder if she had made enough preparation for the adventure that was to follow.

According to her account, Mother and Betty planned to enter Mexico from Tucson but before leaving for the western coast of Mexico, the two of them were going to take a plane to visit Anna, Betty's sister in San Diego. But after contacting Anna about their planned visit, Anna decided she wanted to go with them, so off they went driving, Betty and Mother, to pick up Anna in San Diego. This is all written in detail in Mother's scrapbook.

For the two weeks that Nana and Betty spent in San Diego, they played the tourists, visiting various areas. With Anna joining them, back to Tucson they went. Betty on the left, Nana in the middle, and Anna on the right, all set for their Mexican adventure.



On February 3rd these intrepid women began their exciting adventure and arrived at the border in Nogales. I want to call to your attention the fact that Mexico at this time was not the Mexico of today. Poverty existed, but the country itself was not dangerous. There was great respect for older women, especially tourists, as the country flourished on tourism. No matter that none of these women spoke Spanish but all three of them were very gregarious and they smiled a lot. If they felt any anti-Americanism, it was soon dispelled because both Betty and Anna were from Europe and there was much more respect for Europeans.

Nana chronicled every facet of the trip. Each hotel was mentioned in each town they visited, and each side trip they took, even the people they met and the food they ate. Especially chronicled was the shopping all three of them did at every place they stopped. This is all contained in her scrapbook for all to read. Highlighted here are just a few of their adventures.

Entering Mexico through Nogales, this trio started their journey southward but not before buying insurance for their car. A very wise decision. They passed through Hermosillo and went on to Guymas. They decided to spend the night in Las Moches after Guymas but could not find a decent hotel room as the town was not really prepared for tourists. Obviously these travelers were not prepared either, as far as knowing about hotels in Mexico.

The three of them finally convinced one hotel clerk to give them a room but it must have been pretty grim. It was without windows and there was only one double bed. They decided they had better barricade the door so they pushed the bureau against the door and slept three in the bed! The first of their adventures.

They continued on to Culiacan the next morning and arrived at Mazatlan without incident. There was a town, San Blas, 23 miles off the highway on the Pacific so they must have thought it would be worth seeing, and off they went. They drove through the jungle with much trepidation but arrived safely and were very glad to have taken the trip because there they were able to see a bona-fide ceremonial dance that was very colorful. They didn't understand the significance but believed it to be chasing the bad spirits away. This gave them some insight into the wonders of the country.

They had to get back to the highway and the next stop was Tepic. In the scrapbook, Tepic was described in depth and Mother made note that nothing had changed from the time when Cortez occupied the area in 1525. What a sight to see!

Guadalajara, the second largest city in Mexico, was their next stop and, wonder of all wonders, they met some people from McHenry. How strange. Thousands of miles from home, only to run into people from the same small town. In Guadalajara they hired a guide and learned this was the easiest and safest way to see the country. He took them to Lake Chapala where so many expatriates of the U.S. were living and they learned that living in Mexico did have its advantages. Most were living very well on their benefits and investments. These transported citizens of the U.S. all had maids and were living a life of leisure.

Their next stop was Patzcuaro, another very picturesque hamlet. More shopping and more tasting the different cuisine. All along the way Mother would make note of the local delicacies.

Finally they were on their way to Mexico City, but not before driving through the mountains. From the past experiences they had, they thought it best to hire another guide, and off they went to visit all the tourist attractions offered by Mexico City. One of them was the Floating Gardens where they had their pictures taken. The man in the picture at Xochimilco, the Floating Gardens, is their guide.

Written in the scrapbook is their disappointment in the Pyramids, but what did surprise them were the Indians who were on their knees, all bloody, crawling across the patio to the church “Our Lady of Guadalupe” in Mexico City to ask for a favor or to give thanks to the Virgin for a favor.

All three of them hated the bullfight and vowed they would never see another. The other tourist attractions are too numerous to mention but each one is detailed in Nana’s scrapbook.

Finally they decided to head back home but not before visiting Cuernavaca and Taxco, the silver center. All along the



way they had made numerous purchases and Taxco was no exception.

In order to return to Texas, they had to tackle the Pan American Highway, the only route going north, and it meant more mountains. They drove to Zimapan to a pseudo-Colonial magnificent hotel to wait out the day until the fog lifted. Mother wrote a great deal about this hotel. It is a replica of a Spanish hacienda and had loads of artwork and beautiful furniture depicting the Colonial era.

Their trip back to El Paso was without incident and the wayfarers arrived back in McHenry safe and sound on February 22, 1955 after a trip of 8,300 miles of which 5,000 miles were driven in Mexico. This feat was accomplished by these courageous women, bosom buddies, both in their sixties, in less than one full month. The trip in detail is chronicled in Nana's scrapbook, which sadly is falling apart, but it should be preserved for future generations so that they can admire and wonder at the bravery of their ancestor grandmother.

In fact, Nana's story of Mexico is not over. When she returned with all these glorious stories of every place the three had visited, and with all the beautiful gifts she had brought back for everyone, I decided I would take my four children to Mexico for just such an adventure. I wanted them to have the benefit of another culture so picturesque and historical. We left in October 1956 and took the same route through the mountains. We also went to Zimapan and while I was still there, Nana visited me in Zimapan in early 1957.

We decided to go to Oaxaca together before Nana left to return to the States. The older two girls had already gone back so the younger two children were put in a convent in Zimapan and Mother and I visited an area she had skipped on her original trip.

Nana returned home soon afterward, but Mexico had awakened a thirst in me for this colorful country, and that thirst led me to return with my four children for almost twenty years.

So Nana's journey to Mexico not only inspired another family, but also was responsible in an indirect way for my family becoming bi-lingual and bi-cultural, traits that remain with all of them to this day.

NANA'S TRIP TO EUROPE ALMOST A DISASTER

Perhaps the title of this account is misleading, but as the story unfolds, the reason will be evident. Nana had never visited Europe, so when her niece Pat Romano in the travel business was taking a group to Europe, she invited Nana to go with them. Pat was like a daughter to Nana (see Appendix) so Nana was not a bit reluctant to accept. After all, even though she was 79, she knew that Pat would watch over her.

For the first time she had to get a passport. This passport photo turned out very well, as you can see by her passport picture. The group left on September 14, 1972. This trip is also chronicled briefly in a travel log.



They arrived in London, saw the sights and went to the stage show *The Mouse Trap*, which had been playing for twenty years. Specifically noted in her log was that they went “pub crawling” afterwards. Nana even mentioned the free drinks!

From London they went to Brussels. Again, the highlights of her trip were the menus. She mentioned them in detail, from Brussels to the German border. I wonder how she felt entering the land of her forefathers. If she thought of it there is no mention of it but since she spoke German she must have reveled in returning to her roots.

And it was in this country of her heritage that disaster struck! There are three accounts in Nana's handwriting of what happened. In Cologne, on the side of St. Michael's Cathedral the group decided to go to a restaurant across the street. From what I can make out, the group started to cross on the red light. Most of the group evidently reached the other side, but Rosella, Nana, and Pat had not. Rosella was in front of Nana when a car going very fast hit Rosella. Pat, who thought Rosella had already crossed, saw the car and pulled Nana back. Rosella lay in the street.

The whole group was in shock and rushed to help her. Nana tried to feel her pulse. Luckily a man that spoke English and was a doctor came to their aid. An ambulance arrived and both Nana and Pat rode with Rosella to the hospital. [Nana made a note that it was the cleanest hospital she had ever seen.] Rosella had X-rays that showed that she had a broken pelvis. Rosella's son was notified. Pat and Nana stayed with Rosella all night, both of them sleeping in one bed.

Nana decided to stay with Rosella because she could speak German, and Pat had to catch up with the tour that had already left Cologne. From then on Nana took over. It was a series of talks with police, talks with American Express and with four lawyers, who all spoke English, so Rosella could communicate with them.

This was truly an adventure for Nana and was all she saw of Germany. When everything was seemingly normal for Rosella, Nana decided to join her group in Rome. Nana had to completely change her airline ticket, which was also a hassle. From her account, this good deed of hers had already cost her long distance telephone calls, taxis, and now extra cost for the airline.

While Nana was making all these arrangements, true to her gregarious nature, she made friends with a couple from South Africa and shared their taxi. From Nana's notes it is hard to tell whether she met them in Germany or when she arrived in Rome.

When she arrived in Rome after making a mountain of arrangements and myriad telephone calls, the tours had not arrived but, due to her planning, she was expected and her room was ready. Finally Pat arrived and they all greeted her as a celebrity. Thankfully, Nana was able to continue with the group and she saw all of Rome. I assume that meant the Vatican although she did not make a note of it, but since one of the group was a priest, I'm sure that was part of the tour.

This was as far as Nana's notes went in the travel log. However, I know that they went on to Madrid where I met them at their hotel. I was touring Spain myself at the time so I heard all about the sacrifice that Nana had made to forego the rest of the tour in Germany. I can't help but feel that Nana not seeing more of Germany was a big disappointment for her. Maybe her act of unselfishness for someone in need meant more to her than touring the land of her ancestry.

CHAPTER V

by

Granddaughters Suzanne Kauss and Janet Larkin Smith

80th BIRTHDAY MEMORIES

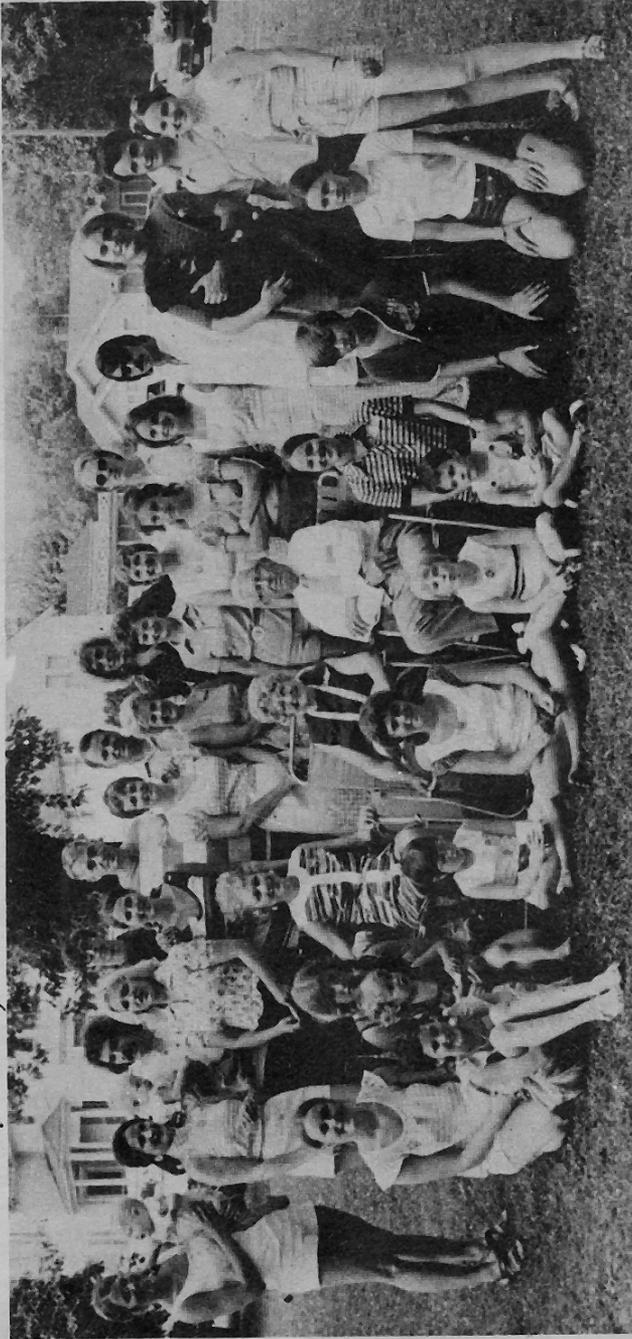
And they came from all over! It was 1973 and the 80th birthday of a woman named Elvera S. Durland, aka Nana. Now Nana was truly the matriarch of our family and as far as we all knew, she had been such for all the grandchildren's lives.

It was time for Nana to be 80 and we all knew that we needed to have a special, no, a very special party for her. But what to do? This is where her daughters Mary, Jane, Mitzi and Joan came in and they decided (according to my memory) that they would plan the party and the grandchildren would carry out the plans. (Note: It is 2005 and the grandchildren are still carrying out the plans of Nana's daughters.) I don't remember what all the ideas were but finally it was decided to have a huge party right in the middle of McHenry at the Pearl Street Park using the band shell as the background.

It seemed that the two main organizers were Janet Smith and Suzanne Kauss, aka Sissi, and for about a year they went about working on this great birthday party secretly. As the family was so large, it was decided that the immediate family would gather for lunch and then all Nana's friends would be invited for the celebration and cake-cutting.

Seemed like Janet and Sissi held a few meetings with the Larkin clan at the house behind the Toddler Shop, but most everything came to life on the day of the event. Invitations went out a year early so everyone could plan for the expense as many had to fly a great distance. According to the guest book, some came from as far away as Thailand and Alaska. Others came from North Carolina, Texas, Mexico, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and California, and then there were those here who were as close as around the corner. There were about 125 attendees in all, including the non-family guests.

JULY 8, 1973



Members of the family of Mrs. Elvera Durland gathered in the city park last Sunday for a reunion honoring Mrs. Durland on her birthday.

Gini Caudill, having just come home from Thailand, made a huge “batik” sign that said HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY, NANA. Well, the story goes that Nana was extremely upset when she saw the sign. She had spent her life fibbing about her age and now here was a sign announcing it right in the middle of town! She soon settled down.

Streamers, flowers, and a Money Tree all decorated the band shell but the cutest decoration of all was the mural done by her granddaughter Julie (age 8) and great-grandchildren, Christine Wenks and Carrie Northrup (both age 7), and Christopher (age 5). There were other great-grandchildren there but they were too young to participate.

All family members had name tags made of construction paper, either yellow with an orange daisy or orange with a yellow daisy. (How appropriate for the time – did that make us all “flower children?”)



And how can we (Janet and Sissi) not recall what Nana had on! Of course she was overdressed for the picnic with her best dress, pearls and all. More importantly we remember the pointy, cat-eye glasses she wore with the jewels on each corner. The picture is Nana greeting her guests.

The Larkin family did most of the planning and brought all the food. Lunch was picnic style and there were 3 cakes especially made at the Riverside Bakery, in order to have enough to serve everyone. It was impossible for us to make Nana’s traditional birthday cake, her Schaum Torte.

After lunch, the friends assembled with the family and Uncle Howie Griffith was the Master of Ceremonies. Many told memories of the past and the “grand dame” Elvera Durland. We can only imagine some of the remembrances that were recounted that day. Included were the memories of all the Schueneman cousins and how they had known “Aunt Elvera” since they had been little children and visited her in her house on Riverside Drive.

It was a very momentous occasion and one that all of us remember to this day.

These are newspaper clippings from the McHenry Plaindealer. The picture of Nana is the one on the cover of this booklet. The account of the 90th birthday celebration is in the following story.

PAGE 4 - PLAINEALER - FRIDAY, JULY 8, 1983



EARL WALSH

So I Hear

It was a real pleasure to join Elvera Durland, her family and friends in the City Park Saturday afternoon.

Was this an event?

Boy, was it!

This was the honored guest's 90th birthday.

One of the highlights of the celebration was the singing of "Happy Birthday, Nana" by her great grandchildren.

Ninety years. That goes back before the turn of the century.

A 90th birthday must be great when you can stay as sharp as Elvera Durland and enjoy the sincere love of so many.

Admiration was evident for this good, intelligent Christian woman.

We are pleased to count Elvera Durland as a true friend.

As Georgie Gobel would describe her—"They don't hardly make those kind no more".

Albert Stilling read about "Fishhook Joe" Miller and told me of helping assemble those famous fly swatters. Al's brother John operated a gasoline station on Elm St. and found space for Joe to manufacture fly swatters and fishhooks--his own patents.

We are still trying to gather more history on Joe.

Had a good chat with Wally Smith at the Durland shin-dig. I'll never forget him as a slick-fielding, hard-hitting first baseman for the Johnsbury Tigers.

Wally never lets me forget the ti

Celebrates 90th Birthday



ELVERA DURLAND

On Saturday, July 2, Mrs. Elvera Durland will be guest of honor at a party in commemoration of her ninetieth birthday. A celebration will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Pearl Street Park in McHenry and the family cordially invites friends of Mrs. Durland to join them in the festivities.

The celebrant and her husband Harry moved to McHenry in 1934. She has been active in the Women's Auxiliary to McHenry Hospital, American Legion Auxiliary, Catholic Daughters of America, Girl Scouting, and the McHenry Choral Club.

Mrs. Durland has four daughters, Mrs. Gerald (Joan) Larkin of McHenry, Mrs. Howard (Mitzi) Griffith of Austin, Tex., Mrs. Mary Kauss of Austin, Tex., and Mrs. Jane Kidder of San Jose, Calif.; 20 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

90th BIRTHDAY MEMORIES

Oops, here another decade passed and it was time for the 90th birthday of Nana. That meant it was time to plan another party. The daughters of Nana again decided it was the grandchildren who should organize the party. However, we remember well because of Nana's age they probably had only one more time to plan an event. Again it was Janet and Sissi who had the job of carrying out the orders.

It was a little harder this time because Sissi was not in town so most of the work fell on Janet. Because the family had grown so much, it was decided that each family would wear a different color polo shirt to differentiate who belonged to whom. The Kausses wore red, the Larkins green, the Griffiths burnt orange for U.T. (which if we remember correctly caused a little problem because some of the family didn't go to U.T.), and the Kidders light blue.

And again the family came from all over: Arizona, Wisconsin, Mexico, etc. to sign the family tree that was the backdrop in the band shell...hmmmmmm...wonder where that went!

The celebration was again held at the Pearl Street Park in McHenry, with another huge sign strung across the band shell that said HAPPY 90th BIRTHDAY. However, this time Nana did not object. The theme of the party was about the same as the 80th picnic; balloons decorated the band shell and the new generation of "little ones," the great-grandchildren, Scott, Patrick, Jonathon, Brian, Ben, Mara, Michael, Nicole, and Brian did a mural. I wonder where those darling drawings went and what happened to the family tree?



Nana's glasses had toned down this birthday and Janet and Sissi remember this time

she wore a “picnic-appropriate dress” and sported a corsage. There was much food and the Larkin clan prepared most of it as they were the ones who lived in town. All the men, both in town and out of town, were responsible for coolers, ice, and drinks. We don’t have a clue who coordinated that effort but the good news is that it did get done. If we remember correctly it was John Smith, George Kauss, and the Griffith men.

For the first time, we met many of our Durland family from out of town. And it was our memory that they were sure OLD! Of course, all the Schueneman cousins were also on hand for the festivities. Then came the town people to wish Nana a Happy Birthday. Two of Nana’s grandsons, Durland Griffith and George Kauss, did the announcing. George presented Nana with a plaque and a letter sent from RCA Victor to commemorate the promotional trip Nana took for them when she was a teenager. [ed. note: see Appendix]

It never ceases to amaze Janet and me how everyone really got along in the family on these occasions. If there was anyone being ornery the elders of the family took care of these incidents and we had another wonderful family reunion celebrating the 90th birthday of a lady who was loved by so many. As we look back on all the memories of Nana we all laugh at how she was such a “ruler” and how we always respected her wishes and behaved the way she insisted. Never again do Janet and I believe we will have a woman in the family whose ways and ideas would represent our family as Nana did. How special is that?

Little did Janet and I realize we had started a family tradition. I’m not sure who is writing about the 100th birthday reunion in Nana’s honor but I do have a little chuckle to add here. When I was telling my friends that I was on my way from Vancouver, Canada to Illinois to celebrate the 100th birthday of my grandmother, my friends were in awe. They asked how she lived so long and I blurted out, “Oh, she is not alive...” They roared in laughter that a family would celebrate the birthday of a lady that was dead. They thought it was hysterical. However, I found it rather special that we continue to celebrate the birthday of a woman the likes of which, in our family, we will never have again.

CHAPTER VI

OBITUARIES

Elvera S. Durland

McHENRY — Elvera S. Durland, 91, of McHenry died Thursday, April 11, 1985, in Crystal Pines nursing home, Crystal Lake.

She was born July 9, 1893, in Chicago, the daughter of John and Wilhelmina "Minnie" Kuhnert Schueneman.

Formerly of Evanston, she resided in McHenry for 51 years.

She studied music and trained as a mezzo soprano. She was employed by Lyon Healy Music Co. in Chicago and New York, N.Y.

She was former owner-manager of the Toddler Shop, McHenry, and former head cashier and hostess at Honey Bear Farm near Powers Lake, Wis.

She was an organizer and chairwoman of McHenry County Red Cross during World War II and founder and organizer of McHenry Girl Scouts.

She was a former member of McHenry Chorale Club and McHenry Women's Club. She was a member of American Legion auxiliary to Post 491, McHenry, and Northern Illinois Medical Center auxiliary.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Harry Durland, in April 1949.

She is survived by five daughters: Mary Durland, San Antonio, Texas; Jane Kidder, San Jose, Calif.; Howard (Mitzi) Griffith, Texas; and Mrs. Gerry (Joan) Larkin, McHenry. She has 20 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by three brothers.

Funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, McHenry. Burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, McHenry.

Visitation was Sunday, April 14, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Justen & Son funeral home, McHenry.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or Montini School, McHenry.

Woodstock Sentinel

April 11, 1985

Elvera S. Durland

Elvera S. Durland, 91, of McHenry, died Thursday, April 11, at Crystal Pines Nursing Home, Crystal Lake. She was born in Chicago July 9, 1893, the daughter of John and Wilhelmina "Minnie" (Kuhnert) Schueneman.

Mrs. Durland lived in McHenry 51 years, having come from Evanston, Ill. She had studied music; worked for Lyon & Healy Music Co.; was a bookkeeper at a Chicago construction company; owner-manager of the former Toddler Shop in McHenry; and head cashier-hostess at Honey Bear Farm.

She was an organizer and chairman of McH. Co. Red Cross during WW II; founder of McH. Girl Scouts; former member of McH. Choral Club, Catholic Daughters of America, McH. Women's Club, American Legion Auxiliary and McH. Hospital Auxiliary.

Surviving are four daughters, Mary Durland of San Antonio, Tex., Jane Kidder of San Jose, Calif., Mrs. Howard (Mitzi) Griffith of Austin, Tex. and Mrs. Gerry (Joan) Larkin of McHenry; 20 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband Harry Durland, in April of 1949; and three brothers.

A Funeral Mass was conducted at 11 a.m. Monday in St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, McHenry. Friends called from 3 to 9 p.m. Sunday at the Peter M. Justen & Son Funeral Home.

Memorials are requested to the American Cancer Society or Montini School in McHenry.

McHenry Plaindealer

Photo
from
Xmas
1984



ODE TO NANA

By
Grandson Jerry Larkin

A long and full life is a precious gift,
And beginning to end is most times too swift.

The life that one leads is judged only by Him.
One can use it or waste it – the difference not slim.

Nana was someone that I'll never forget.
Nor will most of the people that knew her, I'll bet.

All of my memories are from her last twenty years,
But she told us all stories of her earlier careers.

She was interested in music, and loved to sing.
She even worked in the business for a brief fling.

Then she started a family at age twenty-six,
Four daughters that were probably always up to some tricks.

She ran the local Red Cross during the war,
Joined the Women's Club and Choral Club, among many more.

The McHenry Girl Scouts were founded by her.
She had a strong sense of duty no one could deter.

She bought the Toddler Shop in '45,
In order to let the business survive.

Throughout her life she traveled a lot,
From New York to California, and Texas so hot.

From Wisconsin's north woods to Mexico City,
She saw plenty of our country so pretty.

She “retired” to California for about three years,
Then came back to McHenry to her grandchildren’s cheers!

She’d come over for dinner every Sunday night,
Driving an old car that was quite a sight.

She taught us “Kings in the Corners” and let us win,
And reminded us that cursing “is, too” a sin.

She’d bring us good treats from Honey Bear Farm;
Candy and sweets never did us harm...

They made her stop working when they found out her age,
But that didn’t stop her; she just “turned the page.”

She volunteered at the hospital and American Legion,
And was known to everyone throughout the region.

An old Chevy Nova was her next and last car.
We tried to keep her from driving too far.

We’d visit her apartment and have Schaum Torte,
And even at her age, she was always a good sport.

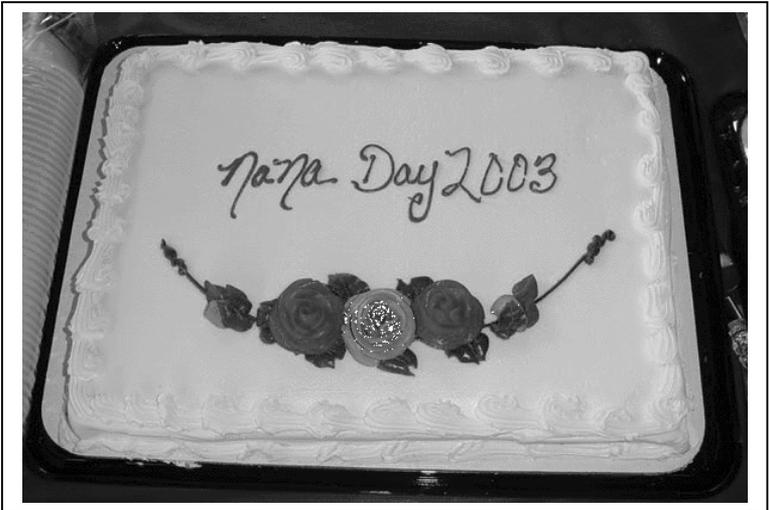
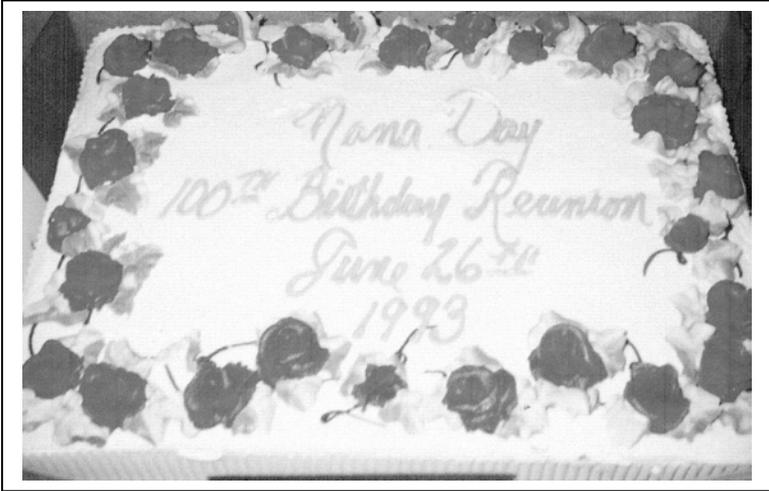
She knew she was weakening and growing old.
“Pray for me, children,” we were told.

To make a difference in others’ lives
Is the goal to which almost everyone strives.

Nana’s influence is still felt by us to this day,
As we raise our own children to “honor and obey.”

Her children and grandchildren have followed her lead.
From the examples she’s given us, let us never recede.

CAKES THAT TELL IT ALL



These cakes represent symbolically the spirit of Nana and her influence, which is felt to this day and will remain with us through those who follow.

EPILOGUE

By

Grandson Dr. Harry Durland Griffith

NANA DAYS

In the 1950s when I was growing up, I fondly remember all the get-togethers the family would have for birthdays and holidays. It was exciting for me to watch the men playing baseball and horseshoes. I especially remember cousins my age having fun with each other. This was the family of our “Nana.”

These family gatherings faded as the families moved away from the town where they all began. Perhaps this decline of family connection was due to the changing of generations, or the general malaise of the times. It was picked up again for Nana’s 80th and 90th birthdays. However, when Nana passed away it seemed that these family reunions would again be lost until my family proposed celebrating her 100th birthday and calling it Nana Day. Thus another family tradition was born.



The families of the four sisters got together and rallied the “troops,” and the grandchildren of Nana planned everything. The picnic would again be in McHenry in the same park on June 16, 1993. Games were planned for the little ones by the Larkin crew and the Griffith family. It was a beautiful

day with balloon tosses and races. The picture is of Nana’s great-grandchildren. This was all to commemorate our “Nana.” The Schueneman cousins also were there.

We even took a river cruise, which was great fun as many who had lived in McHenry could enjoy recalling the area. Even some of the great-grandkids of Nana’s got together and went to a theme park, Great America, close by. It was a momentous occasion.

Five years later, in 1998, the great Schueneman family picnic took place in Johnsburg, Illinois, close to McHenry, and while it wasn't specifically a Nana celebration it was in commemoration of the original Schuenemans in the United States. Nana originally, before her marriage, was a Schueneman. George Kauss and I emceed the event and the Larkins again had taken hold and planned everything. I recall the 110th birthday event began as a conversation I had with the four Durland sisters of which my mother was one. It was on a day when I took my mother and aunts to dinner on a visit to McHenry. We all agreed it should occur and, of course, the Larkin family would be the ones to take the reins.

However, when the 110th birthday of Nana rolled around in 2003, there was some discussion about whether it would be held exactly ten years from 1993 or postponed. The families were getting so large, it was necessary that the decision be made by the executive committee, namely the four daughters of Nana with Aunt Joan as the Chairwoman. After a vote, the majority decided that Nana Day to commemorate Nana's 110th birthday would be held as planned in 2003.

It was not as well attended as the other celebrations. Many in the families were not present and one of the sisters missed it. Nevertheless, those that were there, including the Schueneman cousins, had a great time. The food was fantastic and was planned by Janet Larkin Smith and her husband John. Both went above and beyond the call of duty.



Again, I was in charge of emceeding the occasion. There was a lot of discussion about when the next birthday commemoration should take place, in five or ten years. A vote was taken and it was decided to have it in five years instead of ten.

The weather did not cooperate; a tornado warning sounded and a heavy downpour forced us to leave the park. However, Janet and John very graciously invited us to their house where we waited out the storm. Above all, I enjoyed talking with my aunts about their lives and exchanging thoughts with all my cousins. I look forward to the next Nana Day in 2008.

APPENDIX

NANA'S SECOND FAMILY

Although Nana was not known as “Nana” by her brother Henry Schueneman’s family, Henry’s children were as loved by her as her own. They called her Aunt Elvera, and after their mother Florence died, Aunt Elvera became their second mother.



This photo taken in 1983 with Aunt Elvera (Nana) shows the love she had for her second family. Pat Romano on the left was like a daughter to her because, being the only female with three brothers, she became Nana’s fifth daughter all during her lifetime. Ted, next to Pat, is the youngest of the family, and Henry Jr. next to him was the eldest. George, sitting next to Nana, was not around as much as the others because he left the area.

After Henry, George, and Pat died, Ted often visited Aunt Elvera and was as devoted to her as were the members of her own family.

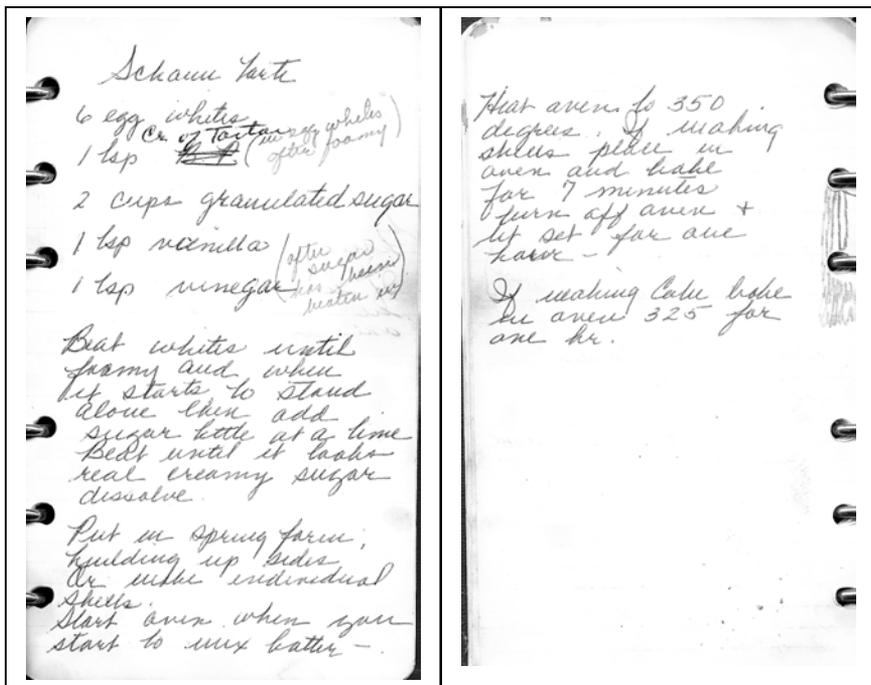
NANA'S RED RECIPE BOOK

In The Possession Of

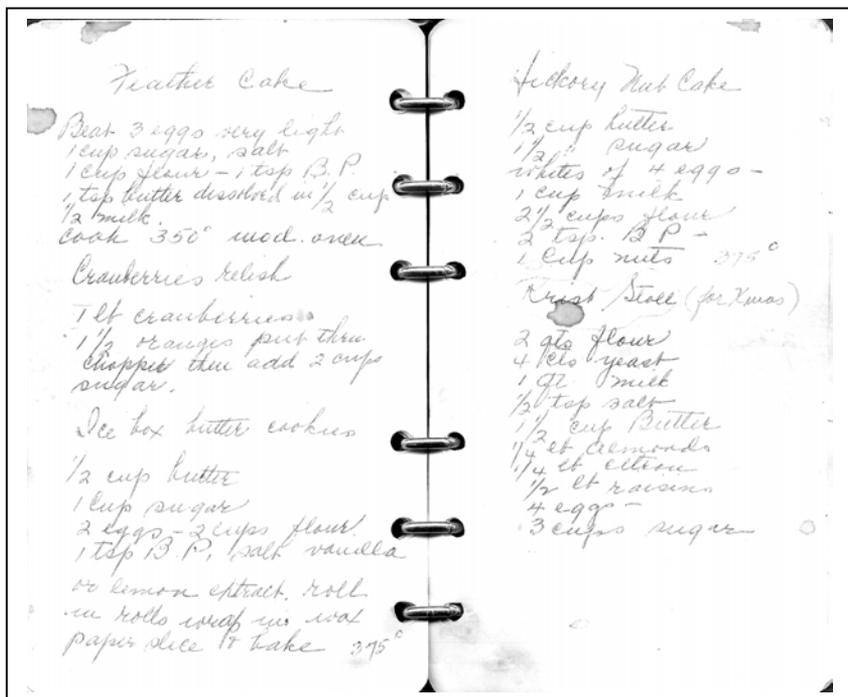
GRANDDAUGHTER SUZANNE KAUSS

These pages are complete with all the blotches, which attest to the many times Nana used her little red book. She was an excellent cook and had a knack for making leftovers seem like an entirely new meal.

This Schaum Torte was made for every one of our birthdays. Nana in the beginning didn't have an electric beater so she had to use a manual one. It was not easy, as the whites of the eggs had to be just so before she could add the sugar. The beating took a long, long time but after Nana had an electric beater it was a lot easier.



The Feather Cake was a favorite recipe of Nana's and she baked it often. The Cranberry Relish was always a mainstay when turkey was served. I especially remember the Hickory Nut Cake because in the fall when the nuts began to fall from the trees we always had to make an expedition to someone's farm to gather them. Krist Stoll (I think this was stolen) was only made at Christmas time. This too was a seasonal sweet bread and I'm quite sure was a hand-me-down German recipe. It was not as rich as the traditional fruitcake.



I wasn't too fond of the Rhubarb Shortcake but when Nana would combine rhubarb with strawberries it was a real treat. The Pineapple Butterscotch Upside Down Cake was a regular dessert in the family and one Nana made to perfection. My real favorite was Lemon Whip. Again this was difficult without an electric beater but that didn't matter to Nana. Her Crumb Coffee Cake rivaled anything in the stores today. In fact, it was better than the store-bought because she always used butter. Butter "substitute" was a bad word in our family.

Rhubarb Shortcake
 2 cups flour
 2 ^{3/4} tsp B.P.
 2 ^{1/2} ^{1/2} tsp butter
 1 cup sugar
 milk enough to make
 a stiff dough -
 Cook shredded in
 shallow pan sugar & salt
 Pineapple Butterscotch
 upside down cake -
 1/8 lb. butter
 1/2 c brown sugar
 1 can pineapple
 1 c sugar & eggs -
 1/2 c boiling water
 1 c flour 1 tsp B.P.
 Beat whites separate & add
 last - Bake in moderate
 oven 30 minutes.

Lemon Whip
 Juice 2 lemons rind
 of 1 lemon - 1 cup sugar
 4 eggs - Beat yolks add
 sugar rind & juice
 beat in double boiler
 till stiff, then add beaten
 whites of eggs & cool -
 Top with whipped cream
 return & freeze
 Crumb Coffee Cake
 Put in a bowl - 2 c flour
 1/4 tsp salt
 1/2 c sugar
 3/4 c butter
 2 tsp. B.P.
 Mix with hand - set aside
 1 cup of crumbs - to the
 rest add 2 well beaten
 eggs & 3/4 c milk. Put in
 baking pan with crumbs on
 top. Bake in Mod oven 35 min
 350°

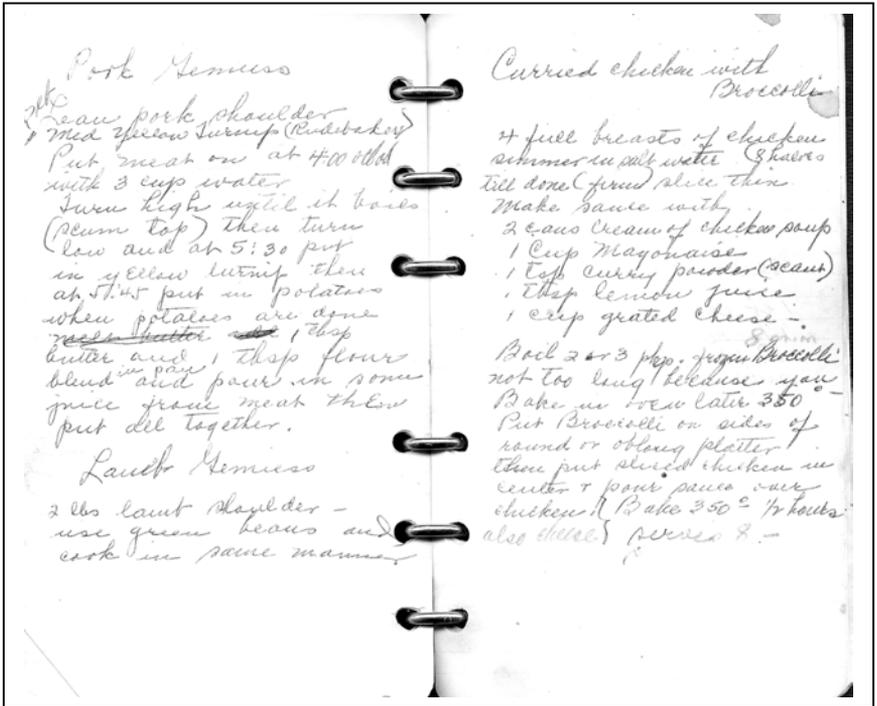
Long before the Catholic Church relaxed its rule on eating meat on Friday, Nana always had a wonderful way of fixing fish. The Baked Halibut was one of her specialties. Another was Shrimp Creole, which I did not find in her red book but which I'm sure she learned in New Orleans when we lived there. Nana was the original nutritionist. Our meals were always balanced and included two vegetables and/or a salad. Her recipe for French Dressing was made ahead of time and stored for future use.

Baked Halibut
7 thick slices Halibut
1 small onion
1 tbsp. butter
1 small pinch pepper
1 tsp. Kitchen Bouquet
1 level tsp salt
1/2 cup water -
Chop onion & put in
bottom of Baking pan
Put halibut on top salt &
pepper. Pour water
to which has been added
to Kitchen Bouquet and
then add melted butter
Bake in quick oven until
nicely browned. Garnish
with parsley & lemon and
pour over sauce. 375°

French Dressing
Mix in bowl until
sugar is dissolved
then put in quart
bottle and shake before
using
1 Can Campbell's Tomatoes
1 Cup white vinegar
1/2 " of seasoned olive oil
3/4 " sugar
1/2 " 1 tsp pepper
1 " salt
2 Tbsp grated onion
2 " of horseradish, juice

These stews were Grandma Minnie's recipe. The word "Gemuss" means stew in German. Actually the word in German has an umlat over the u and is not spelled with 2 s's. This is another example of a recipe that was handed down through the generations.

The Curried Chicken is strictly Nana's and is a take-off of her Chicken Divan, which she served ad nauseam every time anyone was invited to dinner. This was her standard menu for her guests until the day she died and it became a joke in the family.



PAN HAAS

This is a recipe handed down for generations. It could have been a staple in the German diet for many, many years. Mena Wiggernhorn Kuhnert no doubt learned to make this type of scrapple from her mother Josephina Brockhaus Wiggernhorn who without question brought the recipe with her when she came to this country with her family, which included Mena, in 1848. Josephina, Mena's mother, taught this recipe to her daughter; in turn Mena taught her daughter, Minnie, the mother of Nana.



Mena, grandmother of Nana

This form of the recipe is in Nana's handwriting on the back of an envelope, and in order to preserve the tradition, Nana's grandsons George Kauss and Durland Griffith attempted to

revive it, but since everyone is scattered no one else has taken up the gauntlet. Too bad that this tradition may die out in the future. Dad in the recipe is Nana's father, John Schueneman.

Pan Haas.

Officially Panhas in Germany

*1 lb. Suck fat (cut in thin rounds)
1 lb. lean pork
1 1/2" beef liver
boil in 3 qts of water
when tender put thru grinder
with 1 large onion add to liquid then add
3 tsp ground allspice 1 tsp pepper
2 tbsp Thyme 3 tbsp salt add gradually
Buckwheat flour to thicken about 3 lbs.
mass, or less until mixture leaves spoon
or paddle (Dad made a wooden paddle to
stir the mixture paddle was 1" deep 4 1/2" long)*

NANA'S CHRISTMAS COOKIES

In Her Own Handwriting

No discussion of Nana's recipes would be complete without mentioning her Christmas cookies. These four recipes are only a few of the many that Grandma and Mother would make every Christmas and store in tins. Others in the family have more recipes not printed here. These cookies were expressly made for the visitors who came for coffee at this time of the year. Mother would make the fancy ones and Grandma would make her cookies cut out of many shapes. It was our job, all of us, to decorate Grandma's cookies. How we all hated that chore.

Macaroon Cookies
 4 eggs 1 lb sugar
 1/2 lb almonds 1/2 tsp cloves
 1/4 c citrus 1/2 c cinnamon
 3 tsp A.P. 1 lb flour
 Mix rough before. Leave enough
 flour to roll out about 1 small cup
 Use small glass to cut. Roll
 about 1/2" thick.

Moon Cakes
 1/2 pd butter
 1 c gr. fine almonds
 1/2 cup sugar
 2 c flour
 Mix & fix in 1/2 moons
 325° till light

Grandma's Butter Cookies
 1 lb butter 3 cups sugar
 3 eggs - 1 " milk
 1/2 tsp salt
 3 c 1/2 flour to stiffen
 Chill & roll.

Candy Cane Cookies
 1 Cup butter
 1 " sifted confectionery sugar
 1 egg -
 1 tsp vanilla 2 1/2 cups sifted flour
 1 tsp salt
 Divide dough in 2 parts 1 part
 red coloring - 1 top red Cut
 into 1" strips white & red
 Then cut side by side & twist
 Bake 9 to 10 minutes 350-375
 minutes

THE PRESENTATION

George Kauss presenting the letter and ad from RCA's CEO, 1983



Ad from May 1916 when Nana was working at the music store, 90th Birthday.

MAY, 1916 COUNTRY LIFE IN AMERICA

Victrola

The instrument of the world's greatest artists

It is natural that in the musical world there should be singers and instrumentalists whose transcendent art places them in the forefront of their profession.

These artists have attained their commanding positions by reason of their superb artistry, and it is no mere coincidence that they have chosen the Victrola as the instrument to carry their sublime art into the home with the utmost fidelity.

The Victrola is the greatest of all musical instruments not only because it brings you the exact renditions of the world's famous artists, but because it has through sheer merit and through world-wide recognition by millions of music-lovers earned this high honor the artists have conferred upon it.

Any Victor dealer will gladly show you the complete line of Victors and Victorolas—\$40 to \$400—and play the music you know and like best.

Victor Talking Machine Co.
Camden, N. J., U.S.A.

Victrola Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

Important warning: Victor Records can be easily and satisfactorily played only with Victor Records on Victor Gramophones or Victorolas. Victor Records can not be easily played on machines with patents on other reproducing parts.

New Victor Records Announced at all dealers on the 28th of each month.

Mr. George Kauss
Director
Public Relations
La Quinta Motor Inns, Inc.
P.O. Box 32064
San Antonio, Texas 78216

Dear Mr. Kauss: March 14, 1983

Your request for a suitable memento that might honor your grandmother's 90th birthday took some digging on the part of our staff. I can assure you that it was a labor of love -- your grandmother is clearly a remarkable woman, and we are as proud to count her as part of the RCA family as you are to count her as part of yours.

Under separate cover, we are sending you a framed 1916 Victor Talking Machines advertisement and some related historical information to honor your grandmother's 90th birthday. Please tell her that all of us at RCA send our regards for the happiest of birthdays.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,
T. F. Bradshaw
T. F. Bradshaw

Nana at Lyon & Healy,
1914 (note the Victrola)



MORE BIRTHDAY PICTURES

1973



NANA
ARRIVES

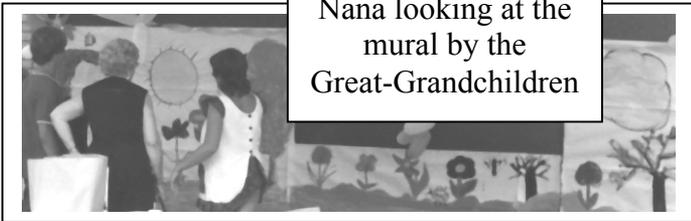


Grandchildren preparing for Nana

The
Mystery
Guests
From
North
Carolina



Nana looking at the
mural by the
Great-Grandchildren



Niece Betsy
Durland
Davis and
Dr. Philip

1983

Last pictures of Nana
with her four daughters.
Mary helping her speak to
her guests.



Mitzi

Joan

Jane

FROM THE AUTHOR

My mother was a formidable figure throughout my entire life. I decided to write this booklet about her for two reasons. First because she was an extraordinary woman whose story deserved to be told to her descendants, and second because, as the first-born, our lives were irrevocably intertwined and her influence stays with me today. There are many facets of “Nana’s” life: as a young woman, as a mother, as a daughter, as a traveler, and most



importantly, as a grandmother. No story would have been complete without including her mother, our grandmother, Grandma Minnie, who was so important to all of us.

In early spring 2002 I sent small notebooks to my three sisters, Jane, Mitzi, and Joan asking for anecdotes and stories about our mother and our grandmother. I also asked them to speak to their children about their remembrances of their grandmother they called Nana.

I suggested that they write their remembrances about Grandma and Nana’s personality, characteristics, and beliefs, and how they affected everyone. The purpose of the notebooks was to be a composite of isolated thoughts, which I would then put into a booklet for posterity. A time limit of a year was mentioned but 2003 passed, and 2004 went by. At various times, I spoke with my

sisters and Nana's grandchildren, to make notes of their stories. Some did comply and sent their memoirs to me. I collected the notebooks in the spring and summer of 2005 with an absolute cut-off date in June 2005 because I had to begin this journey before more time passed.

Consequently, this booklet is a compilation of my thoughts and everything that I received from others. Most of it is written in the first person because it is the story of my mother. Besides that, it is a collaborative effort with some of Nana's grandchildren. I have tried to credit the authors the best I can.

In some stories, I have used the names Mother and Nana interchangeably. However, the majority of the stories are about when Nana became a grandmother and that is why the booklet is titled NANA. Grandma Minnie, Nana's mother, was also a very vibrant influence in our lives so she is included as she means so much to the four of us.

I wish to thank everyone who contributed and particularly Nana herself posthumously because if she had not saved these records of her life I would not have been able to document her stories. I'm sorry if some were omitted because of time constraints. I included everything I received during the time limit, both from my sisters and the grandchildren. No doubt, as everyone reads this account, more memories will ensue. I appreciate those that contributed, with special mention to the Larkin family. They were the ones who daily were a part of Nana's later life and that is why the abundance of remembrances were so vivid in their minds. I also wish to thank my sister Joan for her extremely legible account of both Mother and Grandma. I will return her notebook to her for her children to cherish.

It is my hope that these women will always be remembered for their outstanding qualities and that our family's future generations will revere these memories and honor these two role models of admirable women in our ancestry.

NANA
By
Mary Durland
Edited by Jerry Larkin Jr.