

Glancing Through My Past

By Barbara Mooney Myers

As I excuse myself from my routines and chores, I glance once again at the book, *Pictures of Our Past*. I go over and over the pictures and see so many individuals I can recall and remember so well from my own past. Seeing these photos again takes me back to my childhood days, and the happy times we shared together.

We'd spend a lot of time at Henry Flury's Store just glancing or glaring at the many kinds of tasteful candies. There in front of us was a large glass candy display, each container with assorted kinds of candies in them. If we earned a nickel, we'd head to the store to buy our favorite candies.

There was the Dixie Theatre—"Oh, how I enjoyed the special time I spent there watching a lot of western movies." We saw a lot of them in those days. Today, I'm still a western movie fan. My children have always expressed how different I was because I watched westerns. They would say, "Mama, these are men's movies; they are not for women." I just laughed and told them that it had rubbed off on me when I was young. At the Dixie Theatre we spent many long hours reminiscing about our time together as teenagers.

The old Coca-Cola Plant was on the Lankford Town road which we walked to and from school. There we would see Mr. Albert Bonholzer, who was either the owner or manager of the plant. He always handed us girls a Coke—chilled and so good. Often we even shared it with someone else if we were not all given one. Anyway, it just didn't last long enough for us. I know it didn't for me. I still taste that flavor today.

Another store was Cheek's Drugstore where we'd all go for a cherry sundae with Dr. Pepper floating from the top of it. We sipped and dipped until it was all gone. We tried talking while gazing at Mr. Cheek's many books there on display. We'd do anything that allowed us more time to spend together in this wonderful store. Whether it was the cherry sundae or our scoop of ice cream, we always enjoyed our visits there. Today, we adults never forget those wonderful moments spent with friends in our childhood.

Partins' Store is where my parents always traded when Dad got paid on Fridays. Here they got supplied with all they needed, or what the dollar could afford to get. We were taught at home to never pick up the items in any store. "Just look," Mama always said, "Don't touch." So we obeyed and were rewarded by getting a Coca-Cola and a candy bar. My, we felt big, just about then. It was a treat maybe once a week for us kids to receive this.

Many recall the Hutchinson Rolling Store and the many times it pulled up in front of our homes. As a kid we always looked forward to sitting on the front porch, or in

winter, staring from a window while anxiously awaiting its arrival. We didn't receive much, usually a Coca-Cola, a RC or Double Cola. My brothers and I would look around wondering which choice to pick from the little store. I always chose a RC Cola and candy bar. Then Mama told us to sit on the porch while she did her trading. She often made trades with the driver. She traded eggs or fresh vegetables during gardening time.

After I married, I also traded with the Rolling Store. My two daughters loved seeing it pull up in front of our house just as it did when I was a child. Hutchinson Rolling Store helped many families in those days since they'd buy for another month a batch of flour, meal, sugar, coffee, dried beans, and lard. Even a few small items that were needed could be bought. Many older families who probably seldom visited a grocery store used the Rolling Store. It was their only means of getting supplies they needed to survive. Walking was the transportation for many people in those days when few had cars, and some did not even have a horse and wagon. The Rolling Store was their supplier.

My greatest moments and days were spent attending Shook School with the wonderful teachers and classes I shared with so many of those I grew up with. Many have died throughout the years. Although, they and time have passed, my memories are still there to fill my heart and mind. Education came slowly for many, but for me the interest I had was in writing of the history of our families and the ones around me. I loved spelling, geography, history, science and writing stories for our English classes. Math or arithmetic—I would have loved to leave it for the smarter ones, for I really didn't like it that much. Yet, I had to study it and did quite well in it. Shook School to me was my home away from home. When it burned in 1976, I cried like a baby,

Looking back, I see so many faces I've known most of my life like my families, my friends, and many others. I see business owners like the Flurys, the Cheeks, the Partins and Mr. Elgin Ramsey. I well remember the school teacher and our principal, Mr. Doug Gofoth. There was Mrs. Ella Fults' Café where we all shared many a meal of her hot homemade soups and crackers with a Dr. Pepper, all so soothing and tasty as it went down. She huddled us children under her wings as if we were her own, providing us with food or a cold drink whether we had the money or not. This was our local hangout whenever we had free time on our hands. These are the faces and people we don't forget.

Many of the old houses are still standing. I walk pass them and appreciate the care that has gone into their upkeep. Some of the residents in these old homes still have the original family names. It thrills me to see that these old homes are cared for even today.

There are still very few of our churches left—the Methodist, the Episcopal Church, Hobbs Hill and very few others that haven't burned down or been torn down and rebuilt. I still attend the First Baptist Church where we've passed through around 32 pastors since the building of it in 1892. Later it was rebuilt, and renovations were done again in 1984.

Now it has over two hundred members. Many of its earlier families attended the older church before a new one was built. Now the younger generations attend where they went along side their parents and grandparents so many years ago.

Tracy City has been building for generations; we are trying to keep our town going strong. A lot of our old places, stores, homes and people are gone, but there is always a reminder to bring us back to our wonderful memories that we once shared as a child growing up at home or taking a stroll through our town of Tracy City.