

#2

From my story  
to  
Our story

Today is 29 december, and the year is almost gone and it went so fast, it is like when we get older the time speeds up. In the beginning of the year I made the decision to try to remember every thing that happened during the year in order to slow down time, but that did not work, 1997 went as fast as the year before. It was a good try, and if it had worked, I would have lived longer. I think, that when I'm going to write my second book, I start from now on, and go back in time, I do not know why, but it make sense to some people who read from the back to the front. How ever all joking aside, I better get going. I have to go back in time to the year 1960, or there abouts. We were now settled as good as we could in our house, but we had quite a bit to go before it was where we wanted it to be. It was not only the inside of the house, but also the surrounding garden. The land was so low, that we had to have brought in about 10 to 12 loads of black dirt, which was not that expensive, but with everything we had to buy, it made a big dent in our pocket book. I wrote that it was the year 1960, but it was a little earlier, everything was so new for us and full of excitement. Back to the dirt, it was me who had to spreadit all out, and that took a while, but it al all had to be done before seeding time. Nothing was left to grass, but we used every square foot of dirt to make a garden for vegetables and spuds, which we still called potatoes.

While I was doing the garden, work inside the house was not standing still, Mary was enjoying the cooking and baking on her new stove and oven, which we did not have in Holland. Friends were very helpful with providing all kinds of receipes, and it was fun for her to try them out, and for us to eat them all, we were not used to all the varieties which were available by doing your own cooking, and Mary loved the cooking and baking

When Mary was making cookies or any other culinary delight, the girls were usually sitting around the kitchentable and making their own cookie dough in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes one of them had just come in from playing in the garden or where ever they played, and pulled a chair to the table and asked for a piece of dough to make there own creation and when Elsje was finished, it looked most of the time like a gray lump of sorts because Mary might not have told her to wash her hands and she was too young to think about that by herself, because at that time she was only 4 years old and we were sure that in time that would change, and it did. We had only 1 bathroom, and at times that would create panic situations, especialy when some of the 4 girls became teenagers, and ofcourse I was in the minority and was up against 5 women, no chance. We never got an other bathroom until years and years later, but every thing turned out o,k, and nobody got hurt in the battle for the bathroom.

Talking about battles. While most of the world was still suffering from the great war which was suppose to end all wars, there was a war going on in Korea, where they fought each other with tooth and nail, but we did not hear to much about it. If there would have been television, it would have been to see in detail. But anyway we could now understand about the sufferring what was going on, having been in that kind of a hell ourselfs. Someday people have to learn that in a war nobody wins, and everybody is a loser. How ever everything was going on very peaceful with us.

By now the 3 oldest girls had made friends and brought them home quite often, and sometimes all these girls were sitting around the kitchen table and it was a beehive of activities, and the girls did not have any trouble anymore with the language and fitted right

in with the rest of the school crowd, and when there was a birthday party for one of the girls it was always, or most of the times anyway held in a big empty room in the basement, and that was out of the way of the main floor. Most of the young ladies we know now we got to know from these birthday parties, and I was always in awe of the nice cars the friends were picked up with, and we thought every body was rich except us, but soon enough we learned that one could buy almost anything when you went to the bank and was a homeowner borrowing was not a big problem. When we bought the car from Dick, paying was not a problem, because he wrote my paycheque, and we had agreed that he could take of 5 dollars every 14 days, and that did not hurt us that bad. We did get payed every 2 weeks, the first half approx, and the next 2 weeks the rest. I come now back to "The car" and I go back a little while, when we were living in that first house we rented from Barth, that is why we called it Barth,s house, how appropriate. Wel anyway, the girls were asked for a birthday party for a friend, and they lived in the last house north of town, and that was not to far away from us. The party was in the afternoon and I was going to pick them up just before supper. It was in the middle of the winter and pitch dark, and while it was a very nice winter day untill about 2 o'clock, it changed drastically later on, and by the time I was getting the girls, the temperature had dropped to- 24 C. I do not know how I knew that because we had no radio or thermometer, but anyway that was how cold it felt. I got to that house and the 2 oldest girls had climbed in the car, and while I was backing out of the yard, my bumper snapped around a gate post and I could not move the car forward or backward. The older bumpers were made of springsteel, and I was stuck. I went out of the car but could not see much, because it was vere dark. You all know the saying, I could not see a hand in front of my eyes, and that is what it was. I thought I had to cut a hole in the darkness. There I was, what to do. I put my foot against the post, got hold of the bumper and tried to pull the car away, and guess what, it did not work. All I did was got my hands frozen to that darn bumper. I lost some of my skin, and that hurted like you know what. I said to the girl; have no fear, Daddy is here, I put the car in the first gear ( yes by that time I had found out where the first gear was) revved the engine, and the car shot forward and we were free because the post broke and by doing so I almost hit the house. Mary, Mary jr, and Elsje had stayed home, and did not know where we were, and of course I had to tell them the whole story, but I did not feel like a hero, all I felt were my sore hands and the cold. I have read that people can do great feats of power when the adrenilin started to flow, but my adrenilin I think was frozen. Well that was an event that ended not to bad. I never went back to look at that broken fencepost, but I am sure that it was welcomed as fuel to their fire. These people were vere poor, and I was told the inside walls of their house were insulated with newspaper, and they had a wood stove burning red hot in the room, and still there was ice build up at the inside walls of their house. They had running water, but that only lasted until the creek was frozen and then cut a hole in the ice and when that was frozen, melt chunks of ice. but it was a happy family, so long there was a big bag of puffed wheat in the house. For our girls that was something new, they had never had puffed wheat, so now we had to buy that too, but they had not to eat that as a meal. We met these people once in a while, and they were always very friendly, and I remember that when one of their girls was visiting us, she mentioned that her father could not afford to buy tobacco and I gave her a bit of tobacco along for

him, but a couple of days later the little <sup>one</sup> came to our house, and asked if I had a bit more of that good tobacco. All I had left was some fine stuff in the tin can and I gave her that. Later she came to thank me for that, and said that any time I had some fine stuff left over, her dad would be happy to get that. That was the end of that, I could not refuse to give some tobacco, but we were not the Rockefeller family.

Once when I was walking to work, because my car would not start they offered me a ride, and I thought that our car was old, but their car had no cover left on the seat springs, but that did not matter to them, so why should it bother me, and I accepted that lift.

A lot of people had car trouble in these days, but it was not much of a problem because there were always people who wanted to give a helping hand, I remember one time when a mans car was stalled and he asked me for a push and I was so proud that I could give somebody help, but after I pushed the car and he got his started we could not disconnect, because my bumper had slid under his bumper, and was stuck. We tried to lift his car but that did not work, until a few more people came to help.

The Tenbrinks also had a car, but was a few years newer than ours, and at times he helped me or I helped him, and at times when it was very cold and the grease was stiff, it was very difficult sometimes to even get the wheels to turn and then the clutch was slipping so bad that it almost started to burn, and one could smell that all over the neighbourhood.

When a family is emigrating, there are a lot of things we never think about, and one of them is what we call, the uprooting of a family. We take a whole family unit and plant it some where else, not thinking about our traditions we were used to, and start all over trying to understand different traditions, and I think we can never totally forget what we had learned and lived. We have always tried not to compare one country with the other, but enjoyed what we have in our new country and never forget our heritage, and when that is the way, we can enjoy both. We really never asked the girls what they thought about going to Canada. They had no idea where that was, and they thought [we think] that that was a nice adventure, and that is what it was for all of us. Mary has been homesick for the first 7 year. We left a lot behind us, our parents, sisters and brother and all the friends we had there, and we should not forget especially our parents, what it did to them, but they were always good sports about it. They realized how difficult it was to raise a family in "after the war Holland," but it was difficult for them never the less. We always enjoyed

the packages they send us most of the time around Christmas with all the Dutch treats in it. I still see it before my eyes, and I could feel the expectations. I would come home at noon with a parcel from Holland. We did not have mail delivery then, but I picked up the mail from the post office. Every body would climb on a chair around the table, and when we unpacked the parcel, the ooohs, and aaahs were filling the kitchen and it was a time for a nostalgic feeling. There was something for everybody. Sometimes the package was delivered by the delivery truck, and then every body was waiting for me to get home so we could find out what was all in there. Th delivery man always brought it to the house with a big smile on his face, because he knew that it was a surprise for us. A lot of the goodies related to the birthday of St Nicolaas, which was celebrated in Holland on December 6 and was more a feast for the children than for adults, but when the package came it was also a feast for all us. It does not matter how old or rich a person is, it is

we sure like to get surprises. A big surprise in 1956 was, when Flip de Ruiter phoned us, and asked if we wanted to buy their t,v, set, because they were moving to the U,S. We were a little bowled over, because it was not in our plan yet to buy one. I asked him about the prize, and he said that we could take over the payments, of 11 dollars per month for a year. Mary and I talked it over, and ofcourse the young ladies in the family thought that it was terrific. There was one house in our street where they had t,v, because there was an antenna on the roof,(we did not have cable then). I asked the people there how the reception was, and they said it was o,k. When I came home, I phoned Flip and told him we would buy it, and would come over to Edmonton and pick it up. So the next Saturday we all piled in the " the car",and were on our way to pick up the newest addition to our possessions. While we were there we said good bye to our friends, and wished them the best in their new venture. We saw Annie and Flip once more, but that was years and years later. There were some letters letters send and received, but then the friendship petered out. We have known quite a few people in the beginning of our life in Canada, but eventually we all went our own way to find our fortune

Now back to our t,v. Soon as we came home the t, v, was plugged in, and we were ready to start watching television. There was something on the screen, but not very clear. I went to a dealer in town, and asked what I could do to improve it, he said I can sell you an antenna, install it on your roof and there you go. After a long while I got that thing installed on the kitchen roof, strung the cable through the window, and when we turned it on, there was a good picture in living black and white. In no time at all the 4 girls were lying on the floor, watching the magic of television. I still can vision some of the girls , and sometimes all of them on the floor watching a show.

In the beginning there were no squabbles which show to watch, because there was only one, the CBC. On year later we did get one more, the CTV. It was very enjoyable, especially in the winter when all outside activities were postponed until spring, except skating, but we did not do to much of that yet.

Buying new appliances was always a family affair with a lot of excitement. The first year when we harvested the first fruits of our labours in the garden. We had so many beans,and we did not know what to do with it all. So we decided to go to Wilson and Cassidy as it was called then, and looked at a freezer. We decided on a 21 cubic feet one. It was sure big, and it had to be placed in the kitchen which was big enough. The whole family was helping to prepare the vegetables to be frozen, and the most fun for the girls was shelling peas, and a lot of them were eaten raw. There was a lot of work to be done. the vegetables included carrots, long beans, cukes, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, lettuce, spinach, and any what could be frozen, was tucked away in the freezer. We ate a lot of fresh vegetables which could not be frozen. We were fast learning the Canadian way of life, and it suited us very well. In Holland nobody had a refrigerator or a freezer but we found out that here it was common. The first year in our house, we had to buy a refrigerator, and the same thing happened as with the freezer, we all went to the store to buy one. Our choice was a used one, because that fitted our budget better than a new one. We had to buy a lot of things, because we were starting from scratch, like newlyweds, except we had 4 children, who were growing and needed new clothes and shoes ever so

often, which was not always so easy. Mary and I did not buy much for ourselves, because there was just not enough money, but it did not bother us that much. We had nice clothes for going to church and visiting, and that was all we really needed. It was always exciting for all of us when we bought something new for our house or for ourselves. We would always stand or sit around the kitchen table to look at the new stuff we bought, and we would say to each other, are we not rich?, and then there was a kind of happiness in all of us. One thing I will always remember is, seeing some of the girls climbing on a chair, putting their elbows on the table, and their chin in their hands, and see the excitements in their eyes, it still makes me feel good about these times. There were so many things we could buy, which we had not seen back home, because of the scarceness of goods after the war. Now we were slow but sure getting everything we needed.

I am going to write something now about the Christmas times. In Holland we were celebrating St Nicolaas feast on December 5. It is quite different from Christmas, and the one does not have anything to do with each other. The bishop of Myra, who on his birthday, would go to the local school and gave all the children an apple. How it came to Holland, I have no idea, but it is a feast for the children, who got presents when they had been good through out the year, out of Black Peters bag with goodies. The children who have been bad got a spanking with his switch. As you can see it does have nothing to do with Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the reason for the season. Well any way, what I wanted to tell now, is the buying of a christmas tree, and all what goes along with it. When the weather was bearable, we would all go ofcourse looking for that one tree we could all agree on buying. Not too short not too tall, not too big not too small. That sounds almost like a poem. When we came home, I brought the tree to the basement to cut to the right length, and to make a base for it. When it was set up in the living room, all of the children had their favored ornaments to hang in the tree, but they had to wait a little while, because at first I had to string the lights in it. After that was all done, it was up to me to plug it in, and than the Christmas season had started.

In Holland we used to have real candles, quite small, about 4 inches tall and they were held in the tree with small clips, and we always had to have a pail with water ready in case of fire, and many have been started in Christmas trees especially when they were getting dry toward the end of the season. I want to tell you one more story about buying Christmas trees, which happened quite often. When the temperature dipped far below zero, I was the chosen one to buy the Christmas tree. All of a sudden I was trusted to do that very important job. Usually I went around town to the best place to buy a tree because I knew that when I came home the tree would be under heavy scrutiny, but it did not matter where I bought the tree, when the trees were packed together in the cold they did not look much like trees. So when I came home, tired from work and looking for a good tree, the whole family watching me to drag the tree in the house, and the only comment I got was, is that all you could get. I had to agree that most of the times the tree did not look much like a Christmas tree in its frozen state, and all I could say, why don't you all wait until it is thawed out, and most of the time it came out alright, but I felt that I had lost their trust, but that was not true, and after a while it was all forgotten, until next

next Christmas. But all in all it is a very nice season, with peace and good will toward men and women, at least that is what we all wish for.

When we came to live in our own house, there was an old furnace in the basement, which gave enough heat, but was very slow to heat the whole house, and our children had the idea, that when you turned the thermostat to high, the house would heat up faster. Of course that did not work that way. Once Hetty did it like that, and after a while it became very hot in the house, and we did not know what was going on, until I found out that she had the thermostat turned way up, and that brought the temperature up to 90 Fahrenheit. Her bedroom was upstairs, and on her way up, she casually turned it higher. I have to mention that it was an updraft furnace without a blower fan, and I thought that all houses had the same kind of heating system. I was wrong, but I learned that later. That furnace lasted for 30 years, but after the first 10 years I installed a blower in it, and was that ever an improvement. I bought the fan from Dick, my partner for 60 dollars. When we got a new furnace, I sold it for 30 dollars, we did get our money out of it.

When the weather was very cold for instance -10, I would come from my job to pick up the girls to give them a ride to school, much to the dismay of one of my partners, who said that I should not mix business with family affairs, but that did not bother me, it had to be done. It took only 10 minutes to bring them to school, and pick them up in the afternoon. They took their lunch along on these cold days. We lived close to the 40 th street, and the school where they had to go to was in the 52nd street , and that was quite a distance to walk. They had good clothes, but we, Mary and I thought it was better to give them a ride, what we did.

In the summer time there was not a problem, because we had bought bicycles for the older ones, so they did not have to walk so far to the John Russell school. When that year was finished, they could go to the Charlie Killam school, which was close to where we lived. But before that was so far, Leni had an accident with her bike, which was not her fault, but that of a boy who lived a block away from us. On her way home from school, and when she was almost home, that boy put a hockey stick between the spokes of her front wheel, and the result was that she fell and broke her knee. She limped home, and Mary did not know what to do, so she phoned me and we took her to the hospital, and there the doctor put a full leg cast on it. We went than to the drugstore and rented 2 crutches, and for the next 6 weeks she was on crutches, And there we go again. Every day I had to pick her up from home and school. When we came home from the hospital, I went to the boys home, and I told his parents, but they did not know what to say, except to tell the boy to go to Leni and apologise for what he had done. It sure scared him to see what had happened, because of his stupidity. I think we could have sued them for damages, but we never thought about that, we did not know that it was possible to do so. Well anyway we never know what will happen to us on any given day, After 6 weeks when the cast was taken off, Leni had to learn to walk on that leg again, and that was not so easy, but she did eventually. The janitor at the school was very nice to her, and helped her in any way he could, helping her down the steps and in the car. By the way, his name was Bernard Pedersen, and that family owned Pedersen greenhouse, where in the spring we always bought our bedding plants, and when there were special occasions also flowers. Paul Pedersen their son has now a flowershop in mainstreet Camrose.

He is just as nice and easy going as his parents were. I have to say one thing about the merchants in Camrose, they are all very friendly, we really still live in what we call small town Canada. We have 3 flower shops now, it seems that there are many more flowers bought than when we first came in Camrose. Of course we have to realise that with the airplanes there are flowers coming from Holland and other parts of the world in a very short time. Life was quite a bit easier than it is now, even with the unpaved streets. What I really mean is, that there was so much honesty, that we did not even have to lock the car when we went shopping and as a matter of fact, some cars did not even have keys to open the doors or for the ignition. Times have changed, and some times when we talk about the good old times, these were some of the things we are referring to.

The city had only one grader, and after it had snowed, Boyd Limberg who ran the grader and about everything else the city had, would go with high speed through the streets, piled all the snow at the imaginary curbs, that at the end of the winter there were high ridges at both sides of the streets. The snow was not taken away to be dumped somewhere out of town. So you can realise that with unpaved streets, some were still clay, the walking was almost impossible, and you can also realise that when that mud dried, the dust became very bad, but because every body had to cope with that, it was not too bad. But on Sundays when we went to church, and the girls and we had our Sunday church going shoes on, the shine did not last too long. I remember sometimes when I was just a young boy, that all the shoes had to be shined on Saturday so that they were all nicely shining, and that was mostly my job, I do not know why, maybe I did a good job. In the farming areas where the people were wearing wooden shoes, they all had to be made white, not to go to church with, because they had black shoes for that, but after church they wore these white wooden shoes. That was the custom. I believe that has all changed now with the modern age. I write this because I remember it all now, and of course they wore these wooden shoes to the market which was always on Monday. We were going with the tent covered carriage with the little window in the back. Saturday was not the day off, but Monday. I think I told this all before, especially about the covered carriage.

Well anyway, back to Canada. For immigrants who came from Europe it was quite difficult to cope with the mud and the dust. For Mary the first 7 years were not that easy, because she suffered from homesickness, not because of the difficulties, but more because she missed her parents and family, but she did not want to go back to Holland to live there anymore, and neither did the rest of our family, we all loved Canada.

When every thing in the garden was getting ready to be harvested, we hired our own girls in a matter of speaking. Most of the time we had a bumper crop of green beans, and we paid them 25 cent a basket to pick them, and that way they learned to earn their pocket money. They did not always like to work in the garden, but it was that or the poorhouse. Leni always liked it to walk in the dirt with her bare feet, maybe she had a feel for the soil. When the corn was good and ready to be picked, yes we had corn once in a while, the girls ate the corn raw from the cob, and they all got sick from the diarrhea. I do not think that will happen again, they all learned by experience. One time Elsje came home feeling sick, and Mary wanted to know why. When she asked Elsje if she had eaten something she should not have, she said she had eaten the yellow flowers from the neighbours carriage hedge.



The neighbour hood we lived in was a very quiet area, more or less a dead end street, with access to the lane. When we came to live there, the city or town which it was still then, had just started to pick up garbage. Before that every body was burning their trash, which was not always a pleasant smell. In all the backyards there was usually a big drum which was used as incinerator, but we never had that, we came there just when the modern age started, too bad because I liked it to make fires.

Beside us to the east lived the Kehoe family with 7 children in a very small house. We could never figure out they all slept, but we know they had rooms in the basement, but when we had a rainy period, there was water coming in there, and had to be baled out, a very poor situation. Many houses had no weeping tile, and it was the same with our house, but we did not have to sleep there, we just had to sweep it to the drain, which was higher than most of the rest of the basement. Years later I installed a pump, and that took care of most of the water coming in. The 12 loads of dirt made it that the water drained toward the lane instead to the house, and of course drainpipes from the eavestroughs away from the house also helped. There were many things we had to do to make live easier, but slow but sure every thing was really shaping up, and we were proud of our achievement every time we made some improvement, but it all took time, and that is what we had.

At the other side of our house on the west, there lived the Zarsky,s. An older couple, and we did not see too much of each other, but once in a while when we were working in the yard he came over for a chat, and than we talked a little bit. The lady of that house was about 80 years old, still had black hair, and once in a while Mary and she would sit on the step and talked or had coffee with her. Mary saw more of them than I did. Once when Mary was up town with the 4 girls she met Dominique, that was his name by the way, and when he saw them all, said, You are in the fullness of your life. It was such a nice saying, he expressed himself so gentle, and of course it was nice to hear it said. One time When Mary and the lady were talking she said that her husband was always buying and selling their houses. He would go out, and after a while come home, and would say to her, we are moving to another house, I have sold this one. He wanted to move to Manitoba where his sister lived, but she refused to do that because here was where all her family was living. Later on she became confused, and they moved one time to many, and in her confusion walked through the wrong door and fell into the basement. She did not break anything, but had to go to the hospital, and never came home anymore, because from there she went to a rest home in Edmonton, and we have never seen them anymore.

Ships that pass at night, and it happened so often when you befriend older people.

Now to get away from the neighbours for a little bit. Winter time arrived, and the girls wanted skates. There were 3 or 4 outdoor skating rinks in Camrose, and their friends had skates and enjoyed them selves I bought some pairs of skates from Dicks sons, about the right sizes for the girls, but I had overlooked the fact, that girls do not, and I mean do not skate on skates with black shoes. I learned something again, life is one long road of learning. We went to the Marshal Wells store and bought used skates, and that made every body happy, and off they went to the skating rink. One time that winter I brought them to the rink, and soon as Leni stepped on the ice, she fell and broke her wrist. To the hospital

we went, and there they put a cast on it, that was the end of her skating that year. She sure had her share of broken limbs, In the excitement of the season, I also bought a pair of skates, but I just could not get the hang of it, I was more horizontal than vertical. It did not work in Holland, and it was the same here. I felt a little jealous when I saw everybody on skates in the rinks, especially in the indoor skating rinks with the music going. But I could always throw snowballs. And that we all did one time. The Tenbrinks were over at our place , the weather was nice, and we decided to go outside and get a snowball fight going, and that we did. For a short time we could imagine to be back in Holland again, where after a good snowfall it was quite common to see the whole neighbour hood outside pelting each other with snowballs. It was not so in Canada, where maybe the children did it, but never adults. Some neighbours stood behind the windows and looked at us, and figured we must have gone nuts because of the long winter, but that was not so, we enjoyed it thoroughly. It must have looked funny, 4 adults and 4 children enjoying snow, when most people saw it as a bother. After we had become tired of it, we all went in to the house, brought our wet clothes in the basement and a little later we all drank hot chocolate and talked about the nice time we all had, and it showed from our red cheeks and and bright shining eyes, and we did not care what the neighbours were thinking.

We sure did have long winters. One of the early years in Canada we went on one of our rides exploring places around Camrose, and we ended up at Ma Me O beach. It was in May, the weather was nice, and to our surprise the whole lake was still covered with ice. It was no beach picnic, but we ate our lunch in the car, it did not make any difference to us, we had fun anyway. I will refresh your memory about the Tenbrinks, because they are mentioned quite a few times in the stories. Bram worked for a painter and had fallen of the roof of the Calgary Power building and broke his neck which was terrible, and had to be in the hospital for 6 weeks. It was a scary time, especially for his wife, who was so young yet, and was alone in Camrose, so naturally she spent a lot of time with us. That is the reason they were a lot of times with us in our car. After he came out of the hospital had to be in a body cast for an other 6 weeks. Eventually he got better and could resume a normal life.

The first 8 pages of this addition to the book, The early years, was called My story, but from now on it will be named, Our story.

Well now I go a little further, and we are in the early spring, and we start to think about the holydays. The first holydays we had rented a tent cabin in Jasper I already wrote in my first book and that was a great succes, even when Mary was chased by a bear, but that was no deterrent. We were planning to go there again, it was just a too beautiful place, we had to go there for the next time. But it was not so far yet. I remember the first time after we had been there we went home, because it had started to rain, but when we came as far as the Pocahontas junction the rain stopped, and we decided to go back again for an other couple of days. While we were at that junction there was an other Dutch family having a picnic at the tables there, and the woman said in a low Dutch voice, Mot er nog brood wezen, it sounded so funny, especially when one does not expect to hear that.

I was able to buy a tent, but there were no poles and no ropes with, the same as the tent we borrowed the first year, and I wondered what they did with the poles and

ropes, must have been used for different purposes. But anyway we had so much equipment. that we could not fit it all in the trunk anymore, and because of that I decided to make a utility trailer, that was easy to pull with our car. We had bought sleeping bags from Sears, a double one for Mary and I, and one for each of the 3 older girls, and for Elsje we had a sea bag or also called a kit bag. When she was ready to go to sleep she was dressed for the night, and then I would hold up that bag, and Mary would let her slide in, but most of the time when she was ready to go to sleep, she had to go to the bathroom. It was not so easy, because we had to take her to washhouse where the toilets were, and then let her slide in that bag again, but then she was sleeping throughout the night. We had also bought cooking utensils and a cookstove. On that trailer I had made something like a table, so that we could make lunch on the road, because we did not have money to go to a restaurant. One time when we had lunch at the roadside picnic area, a couple came to us, and the woman said that it was a nice and handy way to make lunch. When we arrived at one of these picnic areas, the first thing I would do, was to make a fire in the firepit, and brew a pot of coffee, and light the coleman stove so that Mary and the girls could make lunch. An other thing which is almost law, is frying bacon and eggs. After we had eaten our lunch, the girls would go to the stream, if there was one and play for a while. The playing consisted most of the time of throwing as many rock in the stream as time allowed, and they had fun doing it.

On our way to Jasper, or coming back from it, we would pass through the town of Hinton and once we had stopped there to go to a restaurant, we must have found some money, and had eaten french fries there, and now every time we approached Hinton the girls would start to chant, hint, hint, hint, that meant it was time for us to treat them on fries again. We did that most of the time, because we understood that after sitting in the car for hours they were getting restless, and for that matter so were we. The finances were not really so bad, but anything could happen that we needed money for. One time we were in Jasper and it was raining for quite a while and the girls shoes were soaked and could not be worn anymore. We went to a shoestore in Jasper and told the owner that we needed shoes, but that we did not have enough money with us, and if it was ok to pay with a check, and I promised him that there was enough money in the bank to cover the check and he said that was good enough for him. I think I wrote that once before, but it is good to mention the nice things twice.

In the early years of our holiday trips, we had to leave home very early in the morning because otherwise it would be difficult to get a place on the campground since there were not as many places to camp as there are now. We had to get up at 5 in the morning, get every thing ready and be on the road at 6 o'clock. The highway to Jasper was not more than a narrow 2 lane highway, and passing was almost impossible, we all had to go at the speed the slowest one in the convoy was going. When all the packing was going, we wanted to be sure that the girls had all the warm clothes with them, because from experience we knew that it can be quite cool in the mountains and to be cold would spoil the holidays. While packing everything we had to be sure we would not forget anything, and you know what happened, yours truly forgot his jacket and like I said before, it could be quite cool in the mountains and that is what it was when we arrived

there. When I was looking for my jacket I remembered that I had not seen it. What to do now, buying a new jacket was out of the question. Since I was the designated driver I could not stay at the campground but had to drive the family to all the beautiful spots around Jasper, and there are many in the park. Well I did the best I could do, and that was to drape an Indian blanket around my shoulders, and that was good enough, but it did not look so great. One activity to stay warm was to go to the hot pool in the town of Jasper. That sure is great, and the girls would warm up. We dropped them off at the swimming pool while Mary and I went to town to do some shopping, groceries etc. We gave them one hour to swim and warm up, and than we would pick them up again. When we came at the pool we found Hetty, Leni and Elsjje, but we could not find Mary jr. We became a little panicky, until we saw a lifeguard coming toward us, and he told us she had fainted because she had been under the hot shower for too long a time. It scared us, and from thereon we were sure that did not happen again. We think we know all how children are, but once in a while they surprise us and do things we do not expect. A shower was a novelty to her, because we did not have one at home. Later I made one in the bathtub, but we were sure it did not happen again, it really scared us. Well so much for that. The fee for a camping spot was only 50 cent per day for a tent, and we did not have to pay for the utility trailer. There were no laid out places to set up your tent, but what ever suited you was fine. There were some grassy areas, and when you were early enough then you could choose the best place to your liking. The camp attendent would come around every morning to collect the 50 cent. Every thing was so easy going, and each camper was warned not to leave food or sweets in the tent, because the bears could smell that a mile away. You see we did not have the metric system yet. Gasoline was 34 cent a gallon, not 8 cent a liter doesn,t that make your hair stand up on end. That year going home over Banff, and all the driving around Jasper added up to 1200 miles, and and the cost of gasoline came to 22 dollar, and I thought that the car was very expensive to drive. I might be a little bit off in my calculation, but it is close enough.

I could not afford more than one week holydays, and than back to work again, but I did not mind that at all. What we had seen gave us enough memories to last for a year, and we felt rich. The girls had bought some souvenirs for them selves, and we had bought some little things to send to our families in Holland, just to show them what we had seen here and how proud we were to be able to do that all, and of course we had taken pictures with our old Brownie box camera and we send them to Holland to, to let them enjoy a little bit of what we had enjoyed.

Yes back to work I went. It was the busy time of the year, and I had a lot of times to go back to work after supper, that made some extra money which we sure could use. The girls were growing and needed new clothes more often, and we still had to buy a lot of stuff for our household. I did not mind it that much, but Mary and the girls would have liked it better if I had been home more. On Saturday afternoons and Sundays I never went back to work, that was for us. Saturdays we worked around the house, and Sunday was used for exploring. We visited a lot of small towns around Camrose, went picknicking and fishing at Dried Meat lake. I was the designated unhooker when somebody caught a fish. Some times we took the fish home, but when we found out how many bones there were in

jackfish, we returned them to the water, to be caught again another time. I still remember when I was unhooking the fish, the girls were standing around me and once in a while poking the fish with a finger, but when the fish moved they jumped back for fear that the fish would bite their finger. That was in the time that there were still big fish in Dried Meat lake, up to 12 pound, and it was really something to catch one like that. There is no fish in Miquelon lake, that is the place where we in the summer went swimming, and getting sunburned. Years later when we were there Anita went with us, and stepped in a piece of a glass bottle, and we had to rush her to the hospital, that was the end of that day. People can be so careless with their garbage. Anita was Elsjes friend, and her last name was Morck. The Morcks had been missionaries in Colombia.

There was a couple fishing at that Dried Meat lake every day, that is what I think, because when we were there, they were there, and they took all the fish home for the deep freeze, and they must have hundreds of pound, and when we would throw a fish back, they would ask us if they could have it. But most of the time we would put the fish back in the water, like I said before, to be caught another time.

We were a very closeknit family, we did a lot of things together, and we were never afraid to show our love for each other, to hug and kiss, and even now so many years later we still hug and kiss when the girls and grandchildren come to visit us, and that is one of the good addictions in life, and it never hurts anybody.

The fishing and swimming were some of our summer time activities. The winters were of course a whole different story. One time we all went tobogganing in the Jubilee park, we all went, and it was so much fun, but when Mary went down one time, she hit a bump and ended up in the creek, and there she fainted because it hurted so much. It was not funny, but it looked a little funny to see a lady in a borgana coat sitting in the water which was on top of the ice. It took a little while before she came to, and then we went home, because the fun was out of it. We never went tobogganing anymore, at least not us adults. I remember that somebody was on a toboggan going downhill, while he was lying on his stomach, hit a tree stump, and his head became stuck under the bent of the toboggan. He could not get it out, and had to wait until somebody came with a pair of cutters to cut the chain. His face was black and blue, and it hurted real bad, and maybe he would not do that anymore either.

We were really enjoying the television, and on those cold winter days when it was cosy in the house, we were watching all these nice shows the whole family could watch. It happened sometimes of course that the tv would go on the blink and then the repairman had to come to fix it. That was most of the time no problem, but when it happened on a Sunday there was no one available then it became a problem, because all of a sudden the girls had to find something else to do. One of the things they did together was cutting out doll clothes from the catalog. Mary jr would cut out cardboard dolls, and than after that who ever wanted it, fit the cut out doll clothes on the dolls. Leni and Hetty would always find something to read. Our tv repairman was a real nice guy, and often when I phoned him on a Sunday to ask him to come Monday to have a look at it, he would say, I will come over right now if you would like that, and I said of course that would be fine, and than there was a chorus of hurrays. That was the good old time. The mans name was Cliff Macleod. His daughter was Hetty,s friend. Later he moved away from Camrose and we had to find an other repair man, which was than not so easy. I tried to fix it myself, by

buying tubes at Mcleods hardware store, and I could bring them back if they were the wrong ones, and then they would give me a few more until I found the burnt out ones. Like I said before every thing was so easy going. That did not last a very long time, because the bulbes were replaced with other things, but I cannot get on the name of them, if I should remember before this page is finished, I will surely write it in, but it will test my memory. Guess what, I remember the name, they were called transisters, I am happy that that name came in my memory, other wise I might have been awake in the middle of the night, going through the alphabet to try to come up with the right name. Well a long explanation. But is was the end of my own repair business so far as fixing a telivision was concerned. By then we did get more repair men in town and the service was real good, most of it was done in the home, but if it was a picture tube, it had to go to the shop. So that is enough about televisionsets. We grew so accustomed to tv, it was almost impossible to do without it.

Mary sr was a real teaser, she was quite often doing that with the girls teasing, I mean. One time I remember while Hetty was in the bathroom, Mary who was standing outside the door, was saying to her, I can see you underneath the door. That was not true of course, because nobody can see through a 1/4" space under the door, but Hetty believed her and was yelling, Mam go away. Talking about modesty. And of course Mam was laughing her head off as a matter of speaking and later on Hetty to when she realised that no one could see anything under a wooden door. Mary jr was scared to death of spiders and all kind of crawly things, and you guessed, that Mam was chasing her often with a make believe spider, and Mary jr would say, Mam don,t do that you are scaring me to death, you know how afraid I am of spiders. By the way she is still afraid of crawly things.

When we came to live in Camrose, everything was of course motorised, but one group of people lived more or less in them olden days as it was called. They were the Hutterites, who lived in a colony 10 km north of Camrose. They sold vegetable and potatoes door to door, but we had our own veggie,s and we did not buy these from them but they also came in to our shop and one time I bought a sack of potatoes from them, but when I took them out of the bag at home, half of them were bad. What they did is, when filling the bag hold a stove pipe in the middle and filled that with bad potatoes, and fill in the rest with good ones, and that is cheating, and when I told them a little while after that they said we will give you other potatoes, but we want the other ones back for the pigs. I never bought anything from them anymore, except one time I bought a goose, and that was the last time we bought a goose. By the time the goose got cooked, our goose was cooked to. There was not much left, after all the fat was of, there was not much meat left to eat, an other disapointment, but we were learning, and that was it with them.

We were getting better in the motorised department and we had sold our second car, and bought a Nash car. A nice small car, and we all liked it. Elsjie lost her place to sleep when we were traveling. In the former car she would crawl on the rear dashboard at the rear window, and she fitted nicely in that space. From now on she had to sit between Mary and me, and it was good we did not have bucket seats, other wise we would not have fit in that car. It was good that we had a trailer to carry all our stuff, and I was thinking about building a bigger trailer where we could sleep in, but is was not so far yet, first we bought a 9 by 12 foot tent from Sears, realy nice and we enjoyed that one for a

couple of years. I remember one year, when the Tenbrinks went along with us, and we still had the utility trailer, that it was loaded to heavy. In Edson we had to change that, because the tires were touching the bottom of the trailer, and it was like someone pulled it back when we went through a dip in the road. That was no problem for to do it right there. Bram had tools with him and so had I. I bought some bolts, and we fixed it, and for the rest of the trip we did not have any more problems. Every year we went to Jasper and or Banff, we could not get enough of it, because we loved the beauty of these parks so much. That year all 8 of us slept in the tent, that was not so bad, but at one time we were sleeping on a hilly side and in the morning when we woke up and we had all rolled to the lowest end of the tent. It was funny when you think about that, and Elsie had to be rescued, because she still slept in that sea or kitbag, and could not get out by herself. After that was done we all had to go to the bathroom which was in a building beside the cooktent. Every where were fire pits, and it usually was my job, to make a fire so we could warm us, but when Bram was with us, we did it together. It is quite cool in the morning, because the good old sun is not peeking over the mountains till later in the morning. If it was raining we would make fire in the cook tent, and warm us there while we were having our breakfast. After all that was finished the ones whose turn it was, would do the dishes. It is almost a duty to leave the campsite neat and clean, and that is what we always did. Now we would go sightseeing again. It does not matter how many times we have been there, it was always spectacular again for us. This time we decided to go to Banff to go to the hot pools there. That was always a treat for all of us. On the way to Banff we visited the Columbia Ice fields. We did not go on the tracked vehicles to go to the higher up on the icefield, because we could not afford it, but there is always an other time. Our girls were very good about it, and there was never whining if there was some thing we could not afford. They enjoyed every thing else, and there was a lot to see. Like every thing else, there was an end coming to this holiday, and we were going home, happy for every thing we had experienced again. When we had loaded every thing on the trailer and in the cars, I found out that there where no brakes on our car. What to do now, we had to go to a garage to see if they could fix the problem. We had to wait a while until the garage was open, because we were planning to go early on our way. They could not fix what was wrong with it. There was air in the system, and they did not have the tools to bleed it. Well we decided to go home without the brakes fixed. It was decided that Bram would pull the trailer, and I would drive behind him, and in a emergency would by driving against the rear of the trailer. Any other time I would use the emergency brake. As you can understand that it was a dangerous thing to do, but we had to go home. It was not so busy on the road as that it is now, other wise we could never have done it. Talking about guardian angels, we must have had a whole group of them guiding us home. We stopped in Red Deer to have lunch, and for the girls to have their french fries, which was always their treat when we had been on holidays. Well as you can see, we made it safely home, but it had been a tense situation. And I would not advice anybody to do the same.

The next day I lifted the car in the shop, and I was able to fix it myself. I wished now that I had tried that in Banff, but it is better not to look back. Even with the older cars we were able to buy, we never had to much trouble when traveling, only that first year when the car was boiling over quite often. We should have put rice in the radiator

than we would have had lunch on the way. It was the last time that we went with the Tenbrinks on a long holiday, but we went with them for a weekend to MaMeO beach. That was an indian reserve, and there we could rent a spot to put up our tent. There were washrooms and toilets and on a whole it was not to bad. The first night we were sleeping ere, we would wake up from the howling of the dogs. There must have been a dozen or so dogs runnig around the reserve. We had not seen them in the daytime. After we had washed ourselves, and had breakfast, which was the usual fare, bread and fried bacon, Bram went to the people who were running the campground, and complained that we were kept awake by the howling dogs, and if they would do something about that. One of the indians said, if they bother you, just shoot them. We did not even have a pea shooter let alone a gun. We spent the day with swimming and the normal things we did when camping, and went for a walk to the small village, and maybe bought some pop or fries, and also did some grocery shopping. After evening supper and the dishes were done we sat around for a while and a little later brought the girls to bed, and a while later the adults wanted to go to sleep to, because there was not much else to do. We just were nicely sleeping, dreaming sweet dreams, when the canine chorus started their nightly opera. Of course we were wide awake, and disgusted with the situation. Bram put on his shoes, and opened the tentflap ready to chase the dogs away, but soon as he stuck his head out of the tent he was met by a snarling dog, who was ready to make a meal out of Bram. I have never seen a person get in a tent so fast as that time. We came through the night as best as we could, but still scared for the dogs. The next morning we packed up and went home, never to go back to that same campground again.

We went back to the same beach once more a year later, but far away from were the dogs lived, and we did not have any trouble that time. It was early summer or late spring, I do not know exacly when, and I think it was a time of purification for the indian population, because all men women and children were washing themselves in the lake, all in their birthday suit. It was a sight to behold. It was something like all creatures great and small. They were soaping and rinsing for a long time.

Beside our tent was an other tent with a couple on their honeymoon. I do not know how we knew that, but that does not matter. We were all sitting around, having coffee or lunch or what ever, when all of a sudden the couples one pole tent collapsed. We laughed very discretely, and not very loud, because it was funny. They set the tent up again without coming even out of the tent.

Bram and I decided to make a campfire that evening. There was not a lot of wood to be found, and we did have to search every where to get enough. We had a lot of help from the girls, because they were looking forward to it as much as we did. When I say we, I mean Bram and myself. Eventually we did get quite a high stack firewood. We had an early supper or dinner or what ever it was called when one is camping, but that does not matter. After every thing was cleaned up we started the fire, and when we were sitting around and singing campfire songs, some people from around asked if they could sit with us. We said of course find yourselves a place to sit. In no time at all there were about 40 people. The girls knew more songs than we did, so they were more or less leading the sing song.



It was a spontaneous gathering without any planning at all, that makes it so nice. Some people brought fire wood, and threw that on the dwindling fire, that made the sparks go in all directions and made the fire last longer, but every thing comes to an end, also our sing song, and after the goodnight wishes we went to our tent thinking about our nice evening. Good will makes good friends, even if it is for one night.

After a good night sleep it was time to pack up. Our neighbours, the honey moon couple had already left. We did not see them at our sing song. After a good one hour drive we arrived at home, and were ready to get back at our job again, the girls were ready to go to school, and Mary to go at her daily duties, with Elsie at her heels, still enjoying her freedom.

for a couple of years until she had to go to school.

Some of our daughters friends had gone on a holiday to Disneyland, but we could not afford that yet, and maybe not for a long time. We felt sometimes guilty that we as parents could not give that to the children, but they always said that we had given them so much in their young life that they did not have a need to go to Disneyland. There was no envy. What they told us was, that a lot of their friends had never been to the mountains in Jasper or Banff, and they had seen that all, for which they are still thankful.

When we were not gallivanting around the country, we were most of the time working around the house or in the house. One job we were doing was installing a new ceiling in the living room. That was some sight to be hold. Every body helped with that job. I had never done something like that before, but with the help from Mary and the oldest girls we did get that job done. I had made 2 supports from 2 by4 and soon as I had put the gyprock against the ceiling they would bring the supports under it, and third one used the broom, after that I had to start nailing it to the ceiling. In the living room we took all the old plaster off. Was that ever a mess, but that way it was easier to see the beam for the nailing. Lucky for me I had so much help. For the girls it was so much fun to do these things, and it was so rewarding to be able to do all these things by ourselves even if it was hard work. Even unpainted it looked a lot better than it was before. I did a little taping and plastering myself, but it did not get finished until many years later.

The outside around the house took also a lot of time and hard work. The garden was taken care of by Mary and the girls. There was a lot to do, because every thing was not weed free, and there was a lot of quack grass to be dug out, but that was mostly my work, because that was heavy work. The people who lived in our house before, had a driveway at the front of the house, but we did not like that. I used a pick axe from work and dug it all out, and with a wheelbarrow brought it to the back of the yard, which we kept as a parking area. It was all rocks and gravel, 6 inches deep. It took a long time, but eventually the work got done, and we had more room for the garden.

Hetty took it upon herself to go with her sisters on a walk, and she had chosen the nuisance ground as their destination. Why, we never knew, but to her it was an experience every body should have in their lifetime. If you had not been at the garbage dump you had not lived. Well anyway she made soup from grass and some other green stuff, and she made her sisters and some neighbour girls drink it, and they did. When they came home later Leni said it tasted awful. Why did you drink it than?, because she made us. We never got to know why Hetty did that, there was no logical reason for it. They had been gone for a long time, and nobody knew where they went. Elsie was with them, and she was still so

young, maybe a little over 4 years. We had been very much concerned about where they were, that when they came home we were so happy that we did not punish Hetty, but she had to promise not to do such a thing anymore.

Hetty was in Sunday school in the class where Mrs Pedersen was teacher, and the students did not like her, and they were not very nice to her, disrupting the class. Hetty did not like that very much, and so she stood up and gave the students a talking to, that it was unfair of them to do that, and that helped. From then on there was a little more respect for the teacher. I have to say that the teacher was a very strict person, not much humor in her teachings. So you see that Hetty could do an irresponsible thing, and on the other hand could do such a nice thing for the teacher. Mrs Pedersen was the wife of my partner in the machine shop. She had a soft spot in her heart for Hetty since then.

Now I go back to the neighbours again. The Kehoe family who lived east had a boarder, which was the brother of Francis Kehoe, and that man was crippled, so much so he had to use a motorized wheelchair, not a very nice one, but more or less a home made affair, but he could get around with it pretty good. He went to the Alice hotel quite often and there he was a frequent visitor of the beerparlour. At times he had had a little more than he could stand, and in that state he quite often ran the battery dry, which made him unreasonable mad. If it happened when he had made it into the street, then there were always some of the neighbour hood children who were willing to push him home. I already told you about the state of our streets, and then there was not enough childrens power to get that heavy thing home. He would become mad, and had abusive language which made these young people afraid. They would run to his house and warn the family that Edsel (that was his name) was stuck with his wheelchair in the street, then his brother would come with his truck and pull him home. We did not judge him to harshly, because we could understand his frustration. If he had not been drinking he was actually a nice guy. We lost sight of him when he was going to live with an other relative.

I come back to that Mrs Pedersen again. Sometimes, but not very often she would come over and visit with Mary and the girls for tea. When she came in the door, the first thing she would say, was, I do not want to have anything to eat or to drink. Mary did not like that too much, and would say, are you sure you do not want any tea. Then she said no, just some luke warm water in which she would pour a little milk. To your health, but that was what I would say, but I was not home. If the girls were sitting in front of the tv, watching a show or so, then she would turn her chair around so she would not have to look at it. You can not win them all. The girls did not care whether she liked it or not. Mary (Mam) would be polite, and turn the volume down, and one of the girls would get to the tv and turned it up again. It was like a sea saw. You know what, I made a mistake in time, because it was not one of our girls who was turning the volume up, but Leah our granddaughter. Forgive me, it is difficult as it is to get all the facts straight, but it was something that really happened. Grandma was baby sitting at that time, and Leah was watching the muppets show. All that woman could say was, Silly.

We thought it was good that Mary (Mam) would learn how to drive the car. Here is a free advice to all men, Do not try to teach your wife to drive a car. It has nothing to do how good a relation ship is, or how bad. Maybe with an automatic transmission you may have a chance, but not with a standard. Deep down I think that Mary was not very

keen on learning how to drive, but it would have given her more freedom to go where she wanted and when she wanted. It was going quite good, and we used the country roads where it was not so busy with traffic. We also had been on a road behind our house, where there was just an open space, where a road was going to be made. I had told Mam, (that is the name I am going to use from now on) the basics of the clutch, the brake and the gear shift. Well we went on our way to the drive-in road north of town, it was still a town then, and we were driving along peace fully when we hit a just graveled part of that road, and I mean graveled. The ruts were so deep that it caught the front wheels, and Mam wanted to steer against it, but the gravel was so thick, it caught the front wheels and pulled us into the ditch, which was not so bad, but the car turned over, and we were sitting on the roof inside the car. Actually more or less hanging and crumpeled. We did get out of the wreck, and we did not know what to do. There was a farm house close by, and also a church, but I did not find anybody there, and I crossed the road to that farmhouse. There was nobody home, but the door was unlocked and I walked inside to find the telephone. I did find a phone but it was one with a handcrank, and I did not know how to work that thing. So we sat by the side of the road trying to stop a car, but the amount of traffic on a Sunday morning was very scarce. After about half an hour a car came our way at a high speed, but the car stopped and the driver told us to get in what we did. We knew the man and the woman in the car, and they drove us with high speed to the hospital. The ladies name was Gloria Grue, and the mens name I forgot, but he worked for the CFCW radiostation.

When we arrived at the hospital, doctor Fjordbotten was called away from his dinner, when he came, he had to stitch a hole in Mams forehead, and I had to do some blood letting, because my eyebrow was swollen so much that I could not look up. Mam had also some bruised ribs, very painful, and long lasting. The Dr gave us a ride home, and there was Rietje standing in the front yard with a big butcher knife in her hand. That gave us a big scare on top of every thing else what had happened to us that morning. We should have gone to church that morning, but regardless of that, there had been an angel taking care of us like that has happened so many times before and after.

Well as you well can imagine, my private driving school went belly up, and I was fired as a teacher. From there on I was the principal driver in our family, until some of our girls got there own drivers license.

The next day Fred Hansen and I went with the tow truck to pick up the car, which was damaged beyond repair, and towed it to the shop. I sold it to the carwrecker for \$100 and The insurance co paid me \$400, and that was enough to buy an other car. Oh by the way, Fred was the foreman in Dicks garage.

The car we bought for that money was a Chevy bath tub look alike car, with an automatic transmission. We had arrived in the age of technology. There is still a story to tell about that little Nash car, what happened the year before. We had a little nostalgic feeling about that little car, which had served us so good, but that wore off because life must go on.

Here is a statement that has nothing to do with cars, but is an observation. Do you know that very few chickens die a natural death.

I am now going to tell a little story, something like the grass is always greener at the other side of the fence, but has nothing to do with grass. There was a poor farmers

family who lived on a small farm. They had a few cows, some pigs and a flock of chickens. There was a young son, who had to do his chores every day, and with his schoolwork and going to school, his days were quite filled up. In the morning he had to be out of bed very early, when the sun had just risen above the horizon, to help his father, and when he was looking toward the west, he saw a house in the distance which had golden windows. One morning his father said to him, why don't you take a day off, because you have been working a long time without having a day for your self. Well his father did not have to say that to him twice. The boy thought that it was a good idea to go and look for that house with the golden windows. After walking for a long time in a western direction he lost sight of that house, and was discouraged that he could not find it, and by now it was already afternoon, and then he saw a house on a hill, and went to it. He knocked on the door, and asked the lady if she knew where the house with the golden windows was located. The lady looked at him and said, you are going in the wrong direction, because the house with the golden windows is in the east of here, and when you look that way, you will see that house. Indeed there it was, but what he saw was his own house with the sun shining on it, which made it like the windows were golden. End of story.

So that was that. Now back to our Nash car, the Rambler. On one of our Holidays to Jasper, Rietje got sick, and we had to get back to Camrose in a hurry. She had bronchitis and that turned into pneumonia. We had been to the doctor in Jasper, and he told us to go home. We did that, but with the small car and towing a utility trailer, we could not get enough speed. I took the air cleaner off to get more air to the motor, and that gave a little more umppff. It took us 7 hours of hard driving to get to Camrose, and we went right to the hospital where she had to stay for a few day, until her fever, which was high had come down. Ever since that, she had trouble breathing, but we think that my (Dad) smoking had something to do with it. I do not smoke any more since 1974, and she lives 1300 km away from us. That made it double sure that she would not get it anymore.

By driving without a air cleaner, the car had sucked up so much dust, that some of the cylinders and pistons had worn so bad, that I had to rebore the motor block. Lucky for me that a customer had some oversize pistons which he sold to me for very little money, but it created a lot of work for me, but that was in my line of work anyway.

In Dick's garage was a salesman who was also our cross the street neighbor, who sold eggs. We bought at times eggs from him, because they were cheaper than in the store and very fresh. The problem was in the peeling of the eggs after cooking, that the shell did not always came off easy, and we did not like that. Ever since that time when we have eggs like that, we call them Jack Hirsch eggs. The Hirsches were a large family, and throughout the years that we lived in our street, there has always been a Hirsch living in the street. One of our close neighbours was Fred Hirsch. About 40 years ago he went to the rail road beside the river, and dug a lot of spruce trees. He planted these between his yard and ours. They were about 2 or 3 feet high, and at the time they looked quite spindly, and I did not think to much of them. I was wrong there, and they started to grow and grow, there was no end to it. Now they are about 40 or 50 feet high. Right now there is a lot of snow on the branches, which makes it an absolute beautiful sight. It makes the winter bearable, because there is so much beauty in that season, even if it is very cold at times.

There is a saying in the Dutch language that says, Boompje groot plantertje dood.. Which

means roughly translated, When the tree is grown the planter is dead. It sounds a bit morbid, but that comes from the translation.

One of the guys who worked for Dick's garage in the parts department, helped us with moving our belongings from our first house to the present one. After we were finished he asked us if he could have the empty crate. We did not have any objections, because we did not know what to do with it, and he used the slats to make a sidewalk in his yard. We were not so far yet, because we did not know where to make a sidewalk. Oh by the way that crate had brought all our belongings from Holland to Canada.

Well that was a little back to the past, but I think quite often, Where have all the people gone. Most of them were just ships passing in the night The 2<sup>nd</sup> winter in Canada we were asked for coffee on a Sunday afternoon by a family who lived in Ohaton, and it was the first time that we went out of town in the winter. It is only 7 miles from Camrose, but for us that was a first. The family who lived there were also new immigrants like we and their name was Smith. There were more Dutch families there, and it was very nice to be with them, and listen to their stories of how they were making out in this big and cold country. There was no electricity on that farm, no indoor plumbing, and no running water. Guess what, Elsje had to the bathroom, and there was only an outdoor toilet. The lady of the house gave Mam a chamber pot and let her and Elsje go into the bedroom, that was very nice, but Mam had to throw it outside in the outhouse. There was also a Vandenberg family, the ones who had lived in our house before we bought it. Two of their daughters sang a duet, a Christmas song, and that sounded real good. The next time we read in our local newspaper that these Vandenberg sisters had sung a very nice Christmas song with angelic voices.

There was also an older man visiting who lived nearby. He had a big white beard, and could have been Santa Clause. There was a sad story connected with him. His wife had gone to Holland for a holiday and had never come back. We thought that was very sad at that age to be left alone. We do not know the whole story, why she did not come back. We thought that the man was about 70 years old, but then anybody with a long white beard looks old.

We did not see any of these people anymore, except the Vandeborgs, but then only once. They moved also away from Camrose. Many years later one of their girls, Tina died with her husband in a car crash close Wetaskiwin. This whole story is a nostalgic look in the past. All the people we met at that visit had their ideals and hopes for a prosperous future, and some made it some did not. It took a lot of hard work and not every body has the stamina to do that.

We are going now again to about 1957. We are now the proud owners of a green bathtub look alike Chevy car. It had a stronger motor, and now I am thinking again of building that bigger trailer with more comfort for sleeping and cooking etc. We loved the camping and spend our holidays in the mountains. After talking about it with the family we decided that we should go for it, and to tell the truth all of us were looking forward to sleeping in a trailer. I was making it with a wooden frame, 12 feet long, and 6 feet wide, so that we could sleep crossway in it, It took a lot of work, but it was nice to do. It would have a roof made from plywood, which we could raise after we arrived at the campground, nothing fancy but practical. I had 2 month to work on that project but is was going to work.

One thing I want to tell about is, blue jeans. Mam had bought winter blue jeans for the school going girls, which had a lining inside, and the colour was red and white checkered, and

also green and blue in it. Mam thought that looked so nice, but the girls did not think so and had to wear them that way anyway. It gave the idea that they had more than one pair of pants.

One day Mam got a phone call from a lady, who was also Dutch, if it was ok that she would come over to our house for a visit. She said to Mam that she wanted to meet Dutch people. Mam said that was nice, and the lady came for tea and every thing went well, and we became good friends with the whole family, it clicked right away. The ladies name was Elma, and her husband's name was Jack. They had 3 boys named, Jan Willem, Maarten and Peter. Jack worked as an accountant for a firm in Camrose. He was not a certified accountant yet but was taking lessons by correspondence and Elma worked part time at the Camrose library. After 3 years of studying that way, Jack graduated cum laude. Since he could not get a good paying job in Camrose, they moved away from Camrose to Saskatoon, and later to Ottawa and worked as an accountant for the government of Canada. But before that all happened we went 2 times on holidays with them. More about that later. Jack had been a captain in the Dutch East Indonesian army, as a career military.

Elma and Jan Willem who was just born than, ended up in a Japanese concentration camp in 1942, and Jack was until the end of the war in an other concentration camp. They would not see or hear from each other for more than 3 1/2 years. When that war was over and they came back in East Indonesia they found that they had nothing left of their possessions and also there house was gone. When Indonesia got their independence the family repatriated to Holland, and in 1955 they emigrated to Edmonton Canada. For a while he worked as a janitor in hotel Mc Donald, before moving to Camrose. Every body found out that here the streets were not paved with gold.

When all these people came from Indonesia back to Holland they started to tell about the terrible time they had in the concentration camps. It did not make much of an impression on their families in Holland, because they just came through hell themselves. We heard from our friends that there was always a bit of a conflict, about who had suffered the most. From what I have heard, the suffering was the same. Suffering by any other name is still suffering.

The Kramers liked it also to go camping, and Jack had asked me if I could make a utility trailer for him. I told him that was no problem and it took me not to long to do that. I did most of it in the machine shop, there I had all the tools needed at hand. With 3 boys in the family there was not much room for storage.

A question, not related to any of the above, do navel oranges have innies or outies?.

Now a days, we hear a lot of talk about quality time. I do not understand anything about that. Time spent with family is always quality time, but it is 24 hours a day, and that is the quantity time. We were always together and did things together, and we never thought that 2 hours or 3 hours was enough to spent with your children, and call that quality time. I remember when we were out for a walk or went visiting with our parents there was always a little hand in my hand, sometime one on each side, holding on while they were hopping or skipping along. When the smallest one was getting tired, I would carry her on my arm or on my shoulders, and I can still feel these little arms around my neck. I think we sure had a lot of quality time. Well that is enough nostalgia for a while, but it is nice to think back at times.

Elsje came home from school one day with a story how she had seen a teacher chasing Guy Wilcox through the hallway with the strap. The reason it made such an impression on her was because Christine Wilcox was her girlfriend. He was quite a rowdy boy. Once when Mam was

walking along in our street, Guy threw a very hard snowball to her, and hit her in the back, so hard that it hurt her. There must have been a rock in. No use to complain, because he was already in the next street. Well anyway he never grew up to be a nice person. End of this story.

When I was a working in the shop for a while, it was my job to pick up the phone and take what ever message there was. One day I answered the phone, and a women's voice asked, could I talk to Daddy please. I did not know whom to call, and I said, who is Daddy? She said Richard Pedersen. The woman was the same one who wanted luke warm water wit a little bit of cream in it at tea time.

A conversation through the phone has been difficult for me for a long time. I liked it much better to go to the persons home, and talk face to face, but one cannot do that in business. For immigrants it is easier to talk and understand when you can see the person you are talking to.

I can not tell the real time when the next story happened. It is not really a story, but just something that happened. Elsjie had a new bike, and she was the first one to get a new one, the other girls all had used bikes. One day she came home crying her little heart out. Somebody had stolen her bike. She was so upset that it had happened to her. I (Dad ) was still at work, and Mam and the girls went to the place of the crime, and looking for the bike, around the school and the streets and lanes, and it paid of, because they found the bike abandoned on a side walk. It never happened again that anything was stolen from us.

As a matter of fact, we never ever locked the doors when we went away. We have been on holidays, and even than we did not lock the doors, we could not even if we had wanted to, because the doors were not lockable. We did not even have car keys, all we had to do was, turn the lock, and the car would start or not. Times sure have changed, and not necessary for the better. We do not remember if we ever bought a lock for Elsjies bike.

The time had come for me (Dad ) to buy some new clothes. As we always did, we all went to Lawrences department store for the big event. When we were all inside, I asked the store clerk to have a look at a combination, that is what we thought it was called. The man went away and came back with something that did not look what we thought was a combination. It was white, and what we wanted was a pair of pants and a dress jacket, and he thought that we meant a pair of long johns. We had to laugh about it, because it would have been funny for me to go to church in that. The clerk had to laugh about it to. That was one of the things one will encounter as an immigrant. The clerks name was Merv van Slyke, also from Dutch origin.

One time when we went fishing in Driedmeat lake, which we did sometimes when the evenings were long, and light enough after work. The sun was just going down when a flock of swans were landing across the water. It was a spectacular sight , the low sun throwing some light on the big birds. All I could do was think, what a beautiful place it was to see that all, and that we were able to enjoy it.

One thing, or rather many things we would be craving for, were some specifically in Holland used "stuff", For instance salted herring, licorice, Dutch cigars, and a variety of candies. It was not that some of these thing were not available here, but we had to go to Edmonton to the Hudson bay store in order to buy them. When Elsjie got to know Keith, I drove them nuts some times, because when they were coming to visit us, I always asked them to bring Dutch cigars for me. Sometimes they had to search for various stores to find what I wanted. It was like a treasure hunt, but they always tried. I still miss them, the cigars that is, after 24 years on the wagon.

One more thing, or things we missed were flowers. In Holland we had flowers galore. We could buy them at flower stands or from vendors who came with a cart through the streets with all kinds of flowers, and that started quite early in the year. It was a custom when visiting friends or relatives, to bring flowers along for the hosts. On birthdays every body brought flowers, and we have had it, when we were visiting in Holland that 2 people had birthdays in the same week, there would be flowers every where. We still had our memories about that, when we look back to that. We had the best of 2 worlds. The fantastic sceneries in the mountains which were new every time we went there to go camping. Holland is very flat, so flat that you can see the curvature of the earth, or the sea, it depended in which direction we looked.

Well that is enough nostalgic looking back.

I think about spring time, and that it is time to plant the garden again. I had been digging out quack grass. These pesky plants have a stronger will to live, then I have a will to kill them, but eventually I will get it done. As it was every year, it was a family affair. Leni loved it to walk in the garden with her bare feet in the dirt. As always the rows were set out, and Mam looked after the vegetable stuff, while I (Dad ) planted the potatoes. After a week or so we were getting anxious to know how every thing was growing, and once in awhile we would scratch the dirt away to see if there was any life. Most of the time it was a disappointment, but when the right time was there we saw the beans, lettuce, cabbage sticking their first leaves through the dirt. Now the fight started against the cutworms. There was not much we could do about them, because we could not see, they were an underground force. After a while the plants grew stronger, and the cutworms could not eat through the roots anymore. When I saw a plant with drooping leaves, I knew what it was, and I dug up the worm and killed it. By than it was to late, because it had done its bad deed already.

In the backyard we had a berry patch, raspberries that is, and they grew beside the spindly little spruce trees Fred Hirsch had planted there. But these little spruce grew and grew, and pretty soon they sucked all the moisture away from the raspberry plants. It was not so bad, because they started to grow wild anyway, and it was time to dig them all up. Raspberry plants were invading the garden and started to come up every where. I think that we had them at least 10 to 12 years. Our girls and the neighbour hood children just loved to pick them, and we had more or less to fight to get some for ourselves. We had to put a stop to that, and we designated part of the berry bush for the neighbourhood children, and that stopped the plunder so to say. It was really funny, that when we told our girls to pick berries for dessert they came in the house with very few berries, but with there faces red from the berry juice. When Karin our first granddaughter was about 3 years old we still had the plants, and she loved it to go there and eat as many berries as she could, and she would also come into the house with her little face red from the juice.

In the month of June we had, as we have now the Jaywalkers jamboree. We could not give our girls an unlimited supply of quarters to go there. They were happy with what we could give them. Almost all day they were gone, and we did not even know what they were doing there, but there were friends with them, and they would just spent their time walking back and forth in main street. There was apparently enough for them to see. Once and a while they would make a detour past Beyers flour mill, where they would get free ice cream, and on their home they passed there again for ice cream, so they sure did get their fill of ice cream, and that started again the next day all over. More about the Jaywalkers jamboree later. It was always on a Friday and Saturday.



Elsje thought that every thing that grew outside or came down from heaven was edible. One time during a winter Elsje complained that she had diarrhea. It was the same as the problem she had after eating buffalo beans or the yellow flowers of the carrigana hedge. She was eating snow which gave her the problem, and since we have so much snow in the winter, she had to learn that the nice white stuff was not for eating. She only did that when she was still very young, and had to learn by experience that the white stuff which fell from heaven was not the same as what one could buy in the ice cream parlor.

Since I am on the subject of ice cream parlors it came to my mind that when we came in Canada, there were soda fountains in the drugstores. I just came from the drugstore, and I mentioned it to a clerk when a man who was walking past us said, that was the worst time of my life. I asked him why and he said I met my wife 43 ago, she was a waitres here. I think he was making a sour joke, he did not look to happy because he had 2 fingers, heavily bandaged and it looked like he was in pain. Mam and I have never been to one of these, but we think that Hetty has been to one of these soda counters with Ingrid her girl friend, because they were a little older than the other girls.

When Hetty got her first pay check from Red and White grocery store the first delicacy she bought was pepperoni sausages which were very hot to eat, but she liked them, and when she came home you could see on her lips that she had been eating something color full, It looked a little bit the same as when she had been talking to a boy when she had been eating water melon. She was so ashamed when she came home and saw her face colored from the water melon.

Rietje loved nature and every thing in it, except spiders and all other wiggly jiggly bugs. She loved flowers, and she still does so. In the spring time she used to come home with the first flowers which had stuck their heads out of the ground, dandelions. She would come home and gave Mam the flowers, being happy that she did that, but with it came the dirty hands, and the juice out of the dandy lions on her dress. But Mam always said ,thank you that is so nice of you, and put them in a vase on the window sill. Of course that was also when she was still very young.

Behind our house to the north there was a kind of swamp land and that was a great attraction for all our girls. Hetty was than a little bit older and did not always go with them. It was than Leni who went with the 2 younger girls. They would come home full of excitement because they had seen nesting birds, and the parents were trying to get them away from the nest pretending to be hurt and half flying half running in an other direction from the nest to save the eggs or the young birds. That was quite something to see for young people who had grown up in the city.

One day we heard a terrible noise coming from the direction of the railroad tracks. We had no idea what was going on. I went to have a look and there I saw a drilling rig drilling for oil. Because of the bushy area behind our house, we had not noticed that they were erecting a drilling rig for an oil well. When the real drilling started with big diesel engines roaring we sure noticed then. Maybe they were drilling for a month or so and then it stopped and a pumper was installed which did not make noticeable noise. It was there not for a very long time, and then it was taken away or it is maybe capped for a rainy day. Well so much for that excitement.

We were planting the garden one day when our neighbour to the west of us Fred Hirsch came to talk to us. He had been seeding lettuce, and the way he did that was very laconic. He took some seeds in his hand and just threw it among the potato plants. We did not think to much

about that kind of seeding, but surprisingly a lot of lettuce came up. It was not a flowing conversation, but more about "koetjes and kalfjes. "For the people who are not well versed in the Dutch language it means talking about "this and that." He did not drive his Dodge car anymore, but did not want to sell it either, just hanging on to the past. His wife was not living at home anymore, but was in a home for the elderly at the Salvation Army in Edmonton. So far as we know he did not visit her that often. I remember some years later he came to talk to us across the hedge so to say. He was getting a little funny, but he did not know that himself maybe he was getting Alzheimer. He was talking about his friend who had rented a helicopter, and together they would fly to Norway, and it would cost 900 dollar. It was kind of weird to listen to that and we did not really know what to say. He also told us, that he had to get his birth certificat from Russia, where he said he was born. Not long after that we missed him for a while and I asked his son about his father, and he told me that he died a week before. I was a little flabbergasted, we lived many years as a neighbour beside him, and nobody told us. Well that is life. He became about 80 years old, but did not know himself what his right age was. Mam had been suspicious about it, because she had seen many people all nicely dressed going in and out of his house.

Mam had visited with his wife back and forth a few times. There Mam met their daughter who was a missionary in South Africa and was on furlough. Mrs Hirsch had been a school teacher and she was very nice to talk with. I think that she must have been a teacher in a country school where there were 6 classes in one room, and that was some time ago.

We had a lot of trouble with these pesky mosquitos. Once in a while the City came around the neighbour hood with an old jeep on which they had mounted a sprayer that blew a lot of blue smoke, which was suppose to kill them, the mosquitos that is. It worked for a while, but the pesky bugs kept coming back.. It was just a slap happy bunch of people working in the gardens. Now we have all kinds of repellants, I mean in the nineties.

Talking about the nineties, actually it is 98 and Leni just phoned me that Dr MacInnes had died at the age of 84. That Dr was our Dr just before we got Dr Petersen, and that is over 30 years ago. Mrs MacInnes died in 1971 and he was a widower for a long time. Since I am on the subject of doctors I might as well mention that our present Dr is hanging up his stethoscope. We will sure miss him. He was our family doctor and was more like a friend, and that is what I felt when I said my good bye to him. Mam felt the same thing, losing a good friend. Our next doctor is going to be Dr Allen Smith and we feel ok with him.

Well that is the present, and now I go back to the past again and I mean way to the past. When Hetty was very small and just started to talk, she had her own vocabulary, but did not sound like any language we had ever heard. For a while she was saying all the time, are you ready for this, and my spelling correction will go wild" Moembratch ", figure that one out. I tell you Mam did that after a while and it meant tomato, and maybe you see a similarity but I don,t, The next 2 words she tortured was shoehorn and herring and she had only one word for it " lingkosh "

She would ask where is Pappa in her own language, and Mam would say Pappa is centjes aan het verdienen, and she would say then, cente nienen. She would say that over and over again. Oh by the way that meant earning money.

All the children had their own funny ways of saying things and doing things. It is very important to write every thing down, because it is so soon lost in the hustle and bustle of life.

One day she (Hetty) came to Mam and said to her, after she had seen our baker, that man

is dying. When asked why she said that, the answer was because he has grey hair. Mam must have talked to her about older people dying, and that older people get grey hair and I suppose she put 2 and 2 together so to say.

Elsje had a friend Deanna Chant who was named after Deanna Durbin an young actress who was at the hight of her carrier at the time Deanna Chant was born. Anyway that girl had a sister who's name was Linda and had polio. We had not seen anybody with polio before. It is a terrible disease, and we did get an injection against that disease which was just discovered before we came into Canada. That was very lucky for us, because there were many young people who got struck with that disease. It meant a lifetime in a wheelchair and always had to be helped with everything. She studied and became a psychologist and later she did get married.

We knew their parents quite well, and attended several church activities with them. Later they moved away from Camrose, and than later again they moved back to Camrose but than it was just a passing friendship because the girls were grown up by than.

When the girls were still quite small Mam and I would bring the children to bed when the time came. Elsje being the youngest one had to go first, that was anywhere between 7 and 7,30 . One of us would bring her to bed, and than the fun started for her anyway. She was always joking and laughing. The prayer went like this. Ik ga slapen Ik ben moe

Doe myn beide oogjes toe  
Here houd ook deze nacht  
Over my getrouw the wacht

Amen.

She would not say Amen, but Euben, and than she would laugh and we would laugh to. She would do that for many weeks, and every night it was the same thing Euben. It was difficult to stay serious. The other girls were ok, but when it came to the last two lines, they would put the emphases on the ch, which made it sound real sharp.

I will translate the prayer as good as I can: I go to sleep I am tired  
I close both my eyes  
Jesus keep this night  
Faithful watch over me  
Amen.

Rietje was always very studious. She liked it best being upstairs in her room by herself. She was making a book with all Disney cartoon characters in it. When the tv was a little bit to loud she would come downstairs and told us to turn it down. When she in high school at the Camrose Lutheran College she became friends with David Brager and some of the other boys and girls. Davids father was in the trucking business, and one day David came to our house to pick up Rietje for a hayride in one of their big cattle trucks. When they left our street, one of the guys was lying on top of the cab waving with his arms like he was swimming. It was just a bunch of young people having the time of their lives. There was never any vandalism or rowdiness. They were nice people, all of them.

One time Rietje had been on a date with David and they were kind of late getting home. I could never getting to sleep until every body was home. That particular night they came home about 12 30 am, and they were talking a long time on the step at the side door and I was lying awake and waiting for her to come in. At one o'clock I thought that was enough and went to the

door and told Rietje to come inside. She was not to pleased about that, but I was to sleepy to pay to much attention to it. We heard the big truck roar away and we thought that was the end of it. It was for us but not for Rietje. The next day when we were all together Rietje said to me "Daddy do you know who that was?" I said that I did not know. She said "That was David Brager". I suppose that had to make an impression on me which it did not, but apparently it did on her. I have to admit that David was, and still is a very nice person.

I am writing all these stories in no particular order. The time span is from 1956 approx, to the end of time. We as parents (Mam and Dad ) are very proud of our children and their families. We have experienced a lot of blessings in our life time, and even if we do not always think about them, they are there. Talking about blessings. A little story comes to my mind.

In church and in Sunday school we sang often a familiar song which says, Count your blessing count the one by one. As I said we do not always see or experience our blessings, and that also happened to a golfer in this story. Two people decided to play a par 3 at dusk just before going home. They met an other golfer with the same thought, and decided to make it a threesome. The first one teed off, the guest that is and he hit the ball, that is what he thought, in the rough. He looked for it a while but could not find it and decided that was enough, gave up and went home. The 2 other guys went on and the first one putted his ball. He found an other ball in the cup, it was from the first guy who had a hole in one and he never knew it. They did not know his name so they could not tell him. Years passed by, and the first golfer died and went to heaven. Arriving there he was asked how his life had been, and he said every thing went fine, but he never had a hole in one. But Peter who was at the gate said, Oh yes you had, just watch the video and you will see that you had a hole in one. The man said, I never knew it.

As we can see there are many blessings in our life, some of them we see some of them we don't. In life we take many things for granted, our job, our home, our health and our loved ones. We accept them all, and never realize the blessings but there is an awful lot to be thankful for. This is written by some one who knows.

I will write a little about the shop. There was always a little friction among the partners. I liked my job, and I know I contributed as least as much to the business as the others, maybe even more, but I always had to hear that I did not have Canadian certificates in welding and machining. I thought at one time that was enough and I decided that I was going to get these certificates. I applied got accepted and was told that I could write for a machinist ticket, I did and passed.

I had to go to NAIT in Edmonton to do that on 2 different days. One down one to go. It was different for the welding ticket. I had to go to Calgary 2 times for 6 weeks at the time. That was hardship for the family and for me. It was always in the winter and I did not get paid from the business, but had to use my bonus for the cost. The Government paid for room and board, and once in the 2 weeks traveling allowance. When it was all over I had passed and had my second ticket. I was proud but my partner did not say anything. He did not want my certificates on the wall in the office. The reason was that he did not have one at all, and did not wanted to be overshadowed.

One time when we came home from the holidays I hung a picture on the office wall which Hetty had made of the mountains, and that was also taken away. I have never seen that anymore. Maybe you remember that he said that we should not mix business and family. Well that is all for that, and I better stop before I get mad again.

One time coming back from Jasper we were trying to find out who could see the furthest away from where we were driving at a certain time. The one object we were trying to spot was the CFRN tower and surprisingly Leni was one of the first to spot it. I don't know how far we were away from it, but it made us a bit happy, because Leni's eyes were in a bad shape and that was hurting us as parents especially Mam because her parents had bad eyes. As a matter of fact Mam's father was blind and her mother had very bad eyes. There was kind of a guilt feeling and she thought (Mam) that it was her fault genetically. Of course now in the 90's we know that it is not true. Leni was wearing glasses for reading and they were quite thick. Hetty had also glasses only for reading but she was losing or breaking hers. One time she went on a hayride with her class and she lost her glasses in a haystack, and every body had been looking for them but could not find them. The next day we had to go to the optometrist to get new ones, and that took a bite out of our budget but had to be done. One time when she had broken her frame, I (Dad) fixed them by joining the 2 halves together so that she could wear them, and she did that for a long time. The optometrist said it was a good job the way they were fixed.

I am happy to tell that later in the 80's the laser operation was invented. It was now possible that Leni's eyes could be operated by that procedure which happened in 1995. That was done, first one eye and then the other one, and it brought her eye sight up to par with other ladies of her age. A big Hurrah for that.

I am glad that I am able to write that in the book, because it made us (Mam and Dad) very happy. We were able to pay for the first eye, and we will do that for any of the girls who need that operation done.

While I am on the subject of Leni, there is an other story which comes to mind. All of a sudden she wanted to learn to ride a horse. She did not get that from her parents at least not genetically because we were more or less afraid of horses. Anyway Merle who was my apprentice in the shop knew somebody in Bawlf who was willing to teach her to ride a horse. Of course we went with her the first time and maybe the second time but that was enough for us. We had done enough mosquito slapping to last for a lifetime standing at that corral rail. Too bad for Leni but because of too much pain in her side she could not continue her riding lessons. Maybe her spleen couldn't stand it all that bouncing on that horse. Too bad for her, but she did get a nice pair of western boots out of it. She had bought them especially for riding a horse.

Since we are still the subject of Leni I like to tell she got her first pair of contact lenses from us and that improved her sight a lot. Then they were still the hard ones and later on she bought different ones which were made of softer plastic.

One of our favored places in Edmonton to go to was the Edmonton valley zoo. In the beginning of our life in Canada that was the only zoo there was. A little train was choo chooing around the grounds, and of course every body had to have a ride in it even Mam was not afraid to take a ride. I was left behind at the station of course to take pictures for posterity. It was just a small zoo with one elephant, one camel but a lot of smaller animals which made it a nice zoo for smaller children. I don't know which car we had at that time but that does not matter, I don't even know which year it was.

Some time ago I wrote that at one time when we came back from Jasper we had to make that trip to Camrose real fast because Rietje was so sick and had to go to the Hospital. We had the little Nash Rambler and the motor was overheating but we could not stop, and what we had to

do was driving in the middle of the summer with the heater going full blast to help cool the engine. We had all the windows open to create a little draft. We made it that way and we were not to worse for wear. The girls were well aware that we had to hurry home, and nobody said hint hint when we were passing Hinton where they had these good French fries. We stopped at a restaurant closer to Edmonton took some food out and ate that in the car.

We had always water with us, and it was always cool. It was kept in a canvas bag which was hanging on the mirror bracket out side the window. That is something one does not see anymore. The water was always cool because the bag was always wet at the outside, that would evaporate and kept the water inside cool. It was a very modern convenience for that time.

Mam and I were just talking about these stories I am writing, It is all in our minds, which is different then this computer where one has to put all these memories in before you can get them out, which makes this a thing and what we are not.

In the early 60's Jane Mansfield who was an actress or something like that was decapitated when the car she was in hit a truck loaded with pipes, and one pipe went right through the windshield and hit her with the result as I described above. When ever we were driving on our way to Jasper or Banff we often met these trucks loaded with trees on their way to the lumber or pulp mills, and deep down I always had a fear that one of these trees would fall of the truck and hit our car. Mam always had the same fear and we tried to stay away from them as much as we could. In the 50;s the engines in the trucks were not that powerful as they are now in the 90's and when you were behind one going uphill, one had to be patient, and in front of one going downhill was even worse, especially when the brakes were not in to grate a shape. Quite often we could smell the burning brake pads. We had Cory in our car once and he was hoping so much that a truck had to go on the run away hill, but we had never seen that. In case you don't know, Cory is our grandson.

It was about the same time I think that Kehoe's garage burned down. That was something to be hold, as I was told but I had not seen it. As I already wrote Francis was a truck driver, and in their garage was a lot of oil and grease and also some old tires. The fire was set by some small neighbour hood boys who were playing with matches. One of the boys name was Happy, because he was born on New Years day. He was the instigater in many troubles like the fire. The boy came from a broken home and that might have been the cause of all the troubles he had been in. I write had been in, because he died a terrible death. While working as a young boy in a tire repair shop he got killed when a tire they were inflating blew up. He was killed instantly. It was very tragic.

One person who was not mad about the fire was Francis Kehoe. He did get a nice new garage out of it, because the house insurance paid for it and that one looked a lot better than the old one which was just a broken down shack.

We had made friends with some Dutch people through other people, but we don't know who they were. The families name was Byers, Karel, Ann, and they had 3 children. They lived on the Fox farm in Kelsey, and our girls always said we are going to Kelsey. To them that was as good as their real name. Karel was running the pig farm for the Foxes. He must have done more than that, because there were not that many pigs. On time when we were visiting them, the pigs broke out of their pens and walked all around the house, ate every thing in the vegetable garden and made a mess out of it The worst thing of it all was that we did not dare to leave the house for fear of getting bitten by the pigs. My knowledge of pigs is not that great. Of course later we were

rescued by Karel who came home from what ever he was doing and chased the pigs back to their pens. I helped as much as I could but was still afraid, trying not to show it and I had to watch where my feet were going because the whole yard looked by now like a pigpen and when we were going home we had to watch out where we were stepping. Around a farm there are always flies and mosquitos galore, and at their farm it was no exception. We were asked if we would like to stay for supper, but Mam had seen the meat in the kitchen and it was all but covered with flies. She said that we had to go home and would stay another time. We had to go back an other time because Karel had asked me if I could install a duct from the heater to the kitchen. In the house was one of these old updraft furnaces which had only one outlet in the hallway and that heated the house, but the kitchen was build on later. Since it was only the house for the hired man there was not much of comfort to be found. I had taken the measurement so I could bring the duct along the next time we went. That is what we did. The girls liked it on the farm and they were more or less exploring with the 2 oldest Byers children. Their names were Lex and Marianne. The little one was only a few months old and her name was Edith. I did get paid for the work by the landlord.

We have gone there couple of times in the duck hunting season and gone hunting, but we never did get a meal. Karel was walking on the road with ours and their children once when a magpie dove down and picked the cigaret out of his mouth. I think that created a consternation all of a sudden a pair of big wings close to your face. Magpies are very brazen and will attack piglets any time they have a chance. After we knew them a few years they moved to Edmonton where Karel was trying to get a better paying job. How ever before they left we met Ann's mother and we were so surprised to hear that the old lady was living with a man while not being married, but to hear her talking about it like it was the most common thing to do, but it was not so in the 50's.

She was from Rotterdam and stayed 4 weeks with them in that little house with only 2 bedrooms.

I go back to that garage fire for a little bit. Mam was standing outside of our house taking pictures, because an event like that should be on a photo for posterity. We were lucky not to have our garage yet otherwise it would have been burned down to the ground. Mam told me later the heat was so intense that she could not stay at the side of our house.

We were still very active in the church and various committees. Mam was going to ladies aid meetings and helped when there was something going on like weddings and funerals. I was even helping with the cubs and scouts and I had never been in the scouts movement. They were short of leaders, and I thought why not. I have been a Sunday school teacher for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at one time, but that was something I did not enjoy. In the first place there were only 4 children in that class and they did not answer any questions or ask anything and I never knew if I was making an impression or not. Well about halfway in the school year I asked to be relieved of my teaching and that was no problem. I thought so much for that.

Mam and I sure enjoyed the choir and we never missed a practice or a church service. The choir was always in the choir loft as was usual in these days. In St Albert was the dedication of the new church there and we were asked to sing for that occasion which we gladly did. Pastor Raymond Olsen was the pastor there at that time. With the choir we had been practicing the Easter cantata and had been singing that in our church. Now we had been invited to sing that in a church in Red Deer which we did, but I am sorry to tell you that the name of that church has slipped my mind. We just loved the singing. Mam sang in the ladies chorus, and at one time they

had to sing in a Wetaskiwin Lutheran home for seniors. There was an old lady who said to Mam, do you know that I met you at a picnic with the Lysengs. She was the mother of Vera Lysing and she recognized Mam. At one time we were asked to sing in Bethany home after their supper and before our choir practice. Every thing went fine, and when we were ready to leave Mrs Bergh who was the director of nursing offered us all a chocolate bonbon as a thank you. We were all chewing away at these chocolates and Mam and the little swede who's name was Allan Forsen were so unlucky to have a bonbon with toffee. Arrived at the church they were both trying to get that toffee out of their teeth. Allan had to take his teeth out of mouth to do so, and he was quite embarrassed about it.

Being members of the YCF we did quite often small jobs to make some improvement where ever that was needed. One such job was to hang curtains in the sacristy to give the pastor some privacy in preparation for the service. The material was bought, cut to length and Mam did the hemming. 4 of us, Mam and I and Bernie and Rudy Magnusen took the task upon our selves to hang them. We did not have a stepladder but we used chairs to stand on to install the curtain rods. These chairs were quite old kind of gothic and had very pointed ornaments at each side of the back. When the curtains were hung and I stepped down from the chair I sat on top of these pointed ornaments before my feet reached the floor. Imagine my discomfort, and being in a church with 3 other people, all what I could say was "ouch"but it was more than just ouch what I felt. However there was no bad after effect of this experience. So beware of gothic chairs they are not sitter friendly.

Optimism is a decision!

I heard a cute story which I am going to write now, so that it will not get lost.

A 15 year old boy said to his father is it true that when I become 16 years of age I will get a car. Yes his father said, but there are 3 stipulations. No 1 is that your marks from school have to go up one point average. The boy who had not been doing so great in school promised that he would be sure to do that. What is the next one he asked. The father said that you do your homework that is no2 and the father said no 3 is that you get your hair cut. The boy did not like that, but agreed to it. His 16<sup>th</sup> birthday arrived and the boy showed him proudly that his marks had gone up, and that he had done his home work and asked if he could get his car now. His father said but you did not get a hair cut. Well the boy said I have been studying the Bible and the apostles had long hair, the prophets had long hair, Moses had long hair and even Jesus had long hair. Yes his father said you are right, but did you notice that they all walked.

Once in a while I hear a story like that and want to share it with other people it brings a smile to ones face, and that is where funny stories are for

I was writing about the choir where Mam and I sang in. We were going to sing in church excerpts from the Messiah and also in the church in Armena. There was one part where we were always afraid for, and that was the end with the 6 Halleluah's. After 5 Halleluahs there is a pause, and we were always afraid that we would forget that, at least that was my fear. Well to be sure I would not pull a booboo, I paused after no 4. At choir practice one time one of the singers forgot the pause and sang right through it. There are not many places to hide with a face red as a beet.

I have been asked a couple of times to join the Barbershoppers, but I only went to the practices once, but I did not like the atmosphere and I really never did like the sound of it. I tried the community choir but it was to demanding for me and I decided to stick with the church choir.



Miss Polly had a dolly  
Who was sick, sick, sick,  
And she called for the doctor  
To be quick, quick, quick.  
The doctor came and shook his head  
He told Miss Polly to put her straight to bed.

Imagine some teenagers doing the dishes and all of them singing that in falsetto voices and at times it were not only our girls but some girl friends joining in the chores and having lots fun.

Every time a new song came out on radio or tv all these soprano's in the kitchen mostly were trying that song and it was really fun to watch them. We did not have as we have now radio's or record players in every room, as a matter of fact the only radio we had was in the living room and all the practicing had to be done in the living room and in the kitchen, but mostly in the kitchen to give the "old" folks some peace and quiet in the living room, but as I have said it was a lot of fun and once they are all gone there is an emptiness in the house which was not easy filled.

We talked to Rietje this week on the phone and she reminded us that the dishwashing time was really the time to try out new songs. Dianne Warwick had a new song called "I never fall in love again". That song was sung so often that it was almost beaten to death, and I wondered if they knew what that kind of love was all about, they were all still so young yet.

By talking to the girls and Mam, a lot of nice things come to the fore and the memory of it brings it all back it is just fantastic. As I have said before, every parent should write down all these beautiful memories, and they will bring smiles to one's face for the rest of a lifetime.

About singing in the car, there was really a song for every occasion even a detour. When there was a sign like that on the road every body started to sing "Detour, detour, there is a detour up ahead, detour" There were a lot of detours in the early years of our car driving. It seemed to us that all the roads in Alberta were fixed and /or upgraded at the same time. Well anyway there were odes to the detours. Of course there was not much we could do about it. Imagine sitting in a car with all the windows open and then listening to 4 girls and sometimes also their Mama singing right behind me "Detour" etc.

Elsje says quite often that she does not remember much from years ago, but she has brought up things which were from years ago, like stopping in Red Deer or actually a bit before that city where we stopped sometimes at the Dog's and Suds for a hot dog and pop. For a few years that was our break in the long trip home from Banff. With 4 young girls in a car and then driving the distances we did between stops, we did only stop once to snack or eat and maybe once to go to the bathroom, the girls were always behaving pretty good. There were a few squabbles now and then, but that was only to keep me, the driver, awake.

Elsje's place to sit was really between Mam and me, but it was very difficult for her to sit still for that long a time, and it was like she was just floating around in the car. Most of the time she was lying on the backs of our seats with her head between us. No bucket seats and no seatbelts, they were unheard of. When I had said to Elsje, be quiet often enough, she would stand behind me, and comb my hair for a long time, which I did not mind because then there was peace and quiet. Elsje said to me that she could not understand that I did not fall asleep. However if that had been the case, the next detour would have woken me up to stay on the straight and narrow. The girls' chores in the back would have taken care of that. Once when we had a kind of

disagreement which made me mad and I pulled the sunvisor down to keep the sun out of my eyes a little bit to fast, and all the necessary papers to drive a car flew out of the window which was open because of the nice weather and not having an air conditioner. We were really in a panic that time to get the papers back. I had to park the car at the berm of the road and start hunting for the papers. It did not take long to find them all, but every time a car passed the papers flew away again. It all came out alright, but from than on I kept them in the glove compartment.

When we came home after a trip, we all had to help to unpack, which was a job by itself. The girls all had been rock hunting and they all had to be kept for a while, but most of the time every rock looked like the rocks we could find in the gravel pit at Dried Meat lake. On our exploring trips around Camrose we ended up quite often at that lake and there we could find petrified wood, and we often brought pieces home. After 35 or 40 years we still have some of these pieces in the house. We were always figuring out how many years it had been since that wood had been buried. It must have been thousands of years, maybe even longer but it was difficult to even imagine that these rocks had been life trees. It was so nice to go there, and I still see the girls picking through these rock to find some things from the distance past. It were not only the girls but also Mam and I were doing the same thing, it was fascinating

At the same place where the gravel pit is, there we also went to pick saskatoon berries. It was kind of a rough area close to the lake. There were not to many people living there , the only one we knew was Pete Staal who had a pig farm there and by the smell of it we knew there was something there, especially when the wind was in our direction, but that was part of life and one could not avoid that. Lucky the berries did not pick up the smell. The berry bushes were so high that at times we could not see the girls, we could hear them muttering and slapping mosquitos. They were very bad there. After a while when it was time to go home we would call the girls and tell them that is was time to finish picking and bring the harvest to the car. It was so funny to see them with their faces full of berry juice and hardly anything in the ice-cream pails. For us it did not matter that they ate them all, we had spent some nice time outdoors.

From that area was a steep hill going down to the lake toward a fishing and picnic area. I remember one time that we went picnicking with Arie's parents when they were visiting Leni and Arie. We had been there a little while when a very bad smell infiltrated our site. We started to look around and found some dead fish behind a bush left by some " I don't care people" After we got rid of the fish and we could then enjoy our picnic. Arie's, father, Wim Vanderjagt was an avid fisherman. I have seldom seen a person enjoying fishing so much as he did. All 3 men in our group were fishing, and the women were laughing and imitating us. They imitated the sound of the reel by chanting rrrrr plop, rrrrrr plop, rrrrrr plop, the sound of the reel and lure hitting the water. That was no deterrent for us, because we were very serious about the sport even if the fishes were not.

On the way home we had to climb that steep hill, in the car of course. All the way up in the first gear, and then the car could barely make it. We always did of course, but just nip and tuck. In later years when Arie's parents were visiting again I went with Wim fishing once more at that same place, and on the way we saw a herd of deer crossing the road. We waited patiently until they were gone. For someone from the big city like Rotterdam it is really something to see, and even for me who has seen that quite often, it is still a sight to be hold. I can never understand that people can look an animal in the eye and than kill it. If it is for feeding a family, that I can understand, but never for sporting purposes, How ever we are not all the same.

This is a very nice story, and I thought why don't I put that in the book. Actually it was my devotion at a maintenance and custodial monthly meeting. The date will be in the first week of March. It is difficult to get people to read devotion. I was at first a little scared, but it is easier now since I have done it a couple of times. Deep down I think we are all afraid for criticism. The year was 1998. Oh by the way this was your father.

How the Great Guest Came.

It is a story about a cobbler named Conrad, who was a very godly devoted man. Conrad loved Jesus. One night he had a dream that Jesus was to visit him the next day in his shop. It was so real that he bought the best food he could get for this great occasion, and he decked his place with green boughs so it would be beautiful for the great guest when he arrived. The poem says:

He lived all the moments over and over,  
When the Lord should enter his lowly door,  
The knock, the call, the latch pulled up,  
The lighted face, the offered cup.  
He would wash the feet where the spikes had been,  
He would kiss the hands where the nails went in,  
And then at last he would sit with Him  
And break the bread as the day grew dim.

But as the day wore on there came an old man, a beggar. His shoes were worn through from tramping the streets. His feet were cold and bloody. Conrad out of his great heart of love, gave him a pair of the sturdiest shoes he had. And as the hours passed, an old woman came by, bearing a heavy load of branches. She was tired and hungry. The cobbler gave her some of the food he had prepared for Jesus. Then along toward the evening there came a little child, lost and frightened and weeping on the city streets. Conrad took the little child in his arms and dried his tears, and asked where he lived. Then he took him home across the city and delivered him to his mother. Then he hurried back to his shop.

“ Why is it Lord, That Your feet delay?  
Did You forget That this was the day?  
Then soft in the silence a Voice he heard ;  
Lift up your heart, for I kept my word....  
I was the beggar with bruised feet;  
I was the woman you gave to eat;  
I was the child on the homeless street.”

Our Heavenly Father : We pray for a practical faith that will help us to live creatively and effectively in this wonderful world. Grant that our lives may have such depth and meaning that we can help others build a better world in peace, brotherhood, justice, and morality. Be with us now and guide us and direct us in every way. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen

While we living in Barth's house we got to know Richard Lyseng maybe you remember, the man who gave me a ride to the shop before we had a car of our own. I lost my ride when he and his family moved to the States, and from them we bought our first couch. That was something we were really happy with. We never had a couch before, and now I had a place to take a nap on Sunday afternoons. It was not something the girls liked very much. Mam and I had to work hard during the week, and we just wanted to rest, but that was when the weather was not nice, otherwise we were on the road exploring the country. We still have to hear how boring it was when we were asleep, especially when we did not have a tv yet. On one of our drives through the country we came through a small town, and there we got lost more or less. Getting lost is almost impossible, because there is always some body to guide us to the right road. Anyway that little town was Meetingcreek and it was in our eyes like a small town in Switzerland with a church which had a nice pointed steeple. We saw a man coming our way and we asked him the road to Camrose and he pointed us in the right direction. We always thought that he was a pastor by looking at his black suit and coat. By the way our Dr Petersen, who just hung up his stethoscope came from that little town. He was a pharmacist first and than became a doctor," a + for us".

When Elsje was about 11 years old the whole class was going with a school bus to Al Oeming game farm for a day trip. Parent were asked to go along as chaperon. Only 2 people came to help out. One was Mam and the other parent was Cliff Cassidy. Really not enough parents to look after about 30 young children. For Mam it was very difficult, because not long before that trip she suffered a nervous break down. More about that later. She thought maybe it was a good idea to go out with that class and that was right. Mam had made a big pan with rice crispies for snacks. When the children found that out there was a big hurrah and they were gone in no time. Mam made many friends, and it was a very enjoyable day. By the way Harry was the owner of one of the other 2 machine shops in town. He died actually quite young and after that the machine shop closed. Oops I got the wrong Cassidy. It was not Harry, but his brother from the business of Wilson and Cassidy. Sorry, just a slip of the memory, but now you know that.

The other machine shop was owned by Allan Hough. He was married to Lily, the woman Elsje was so afraid of after Mam had told her that if she was not behaving in church, Mam would sent Lily to her. Now you know a little more about the Who is Who in Camrose.

We were visiting the Hough's one time, and we found that Allan was short of breath, but it came still as a surprise to us that he got a fatal heart attack, and that happened on his way to work. He drove his car through the front yard right against a house. Lucky there were no other people involved. A little while after his death that machine shop also closed, and now we were the only ones left, and we became very busy. Lucky for me we had that couch to rest on Sundays.

I mentioned before that we had neighbours who's last name was Kehoe. One of their sons Jimmy was hired by us as an apprentice, and he was a very good apprentice, a natural. As a matter of fact we have had a lots of luck with our apprentices. One of them, Merle runs the shop now, and Jimmy was to have his own shop later on north of Edmonton. An other one was Ernie who started his own welding business after going through his apprentice ship time in our shop. I am still proud that we could give them the opportunity to learn a trade, and learn it well. I almost forgot about Tim Forre who was the most aggressive of them all. The first time he came in the shop to ask for a job, he was working for a painter. He was never discouraged, but kept coming back and asking if there was a job available yet. He was very persistent, and he never gave up.

And at last we were able to give him the job he wanted so badly. Now he works for a machine shop in town after working in our former shop for quite a few years. It has always been my hope that there would be more emphases on learning a trade, and a little less on going to a university. Anyway that is the way I think about it, and even after working for more than 20 years at a university it has never changed my thinking. Of course I am prejudiced because I love the trade in which I am now working for more than 60 years.

Cliff Hoyme worked about one year with me as an apprentice. He was going to be an teacher in the Composite High school but he had to have one year of practical experience, and that was why he was working with us. We had a fun year. To get all his credits, he had to take English by correspondents, and we were discussing what he had to learn, which was also included Shakespearian stuff, of which I know nothing. He liked to sing and so did I. We sang a lot of songs which we also sang in the church choir. It was a fun year. Cliff graduated and got his teacher certificate and started to teach in the highschool for about 25 years, and after that time he started his own business which made instruments for fresh combustion air for furnaces. I am in contact with him in a business way. We are still good friends.

Some times the girls came to the shop for a ride home, and at times walked in to the shop and were always very impressed and said that it looked like a castle. To me it did not look that way, we were still in our humble beginning. The shop was an old army barrack not insulated and in mid winter some times quite cold, and the shop was heated with home made heaters which were not adequate, but I sure liked the work. I think that I have said that before. Well what the heck I was happy to be a partner in that business.

Mam and I went quite often driving around through the country or to our favored fishing hole all by our self. The girls were growing up and did not need a chaperone any more and the older ones took care of the younger ones. One of their favored activities was making pizza's from a mixture out of a package from Kraft. They were only allowed to do that when we were not home. I (Dad) could not stand the smell. It was so way different than what we buy now, the smell that is. Mam did not mind it that much so long the girls made it them selves. Because of the smell of that strong cheese smell it took many years before I (Dad) ate store boughten pizza, because I thought that it smelled that way. Good that I tried it out once, because now I just love it and once in a while I get a craving for it, and now I can understand that the girls had that craving also once in a while

Hetty was working at different places in Camrose and wanted to buy her own car. She was working at Rosehaven as a nurses helper or something like that, and did get a paycheck every month. I looked around for her, and found a car which I thought would suit her we went to that place which happened tp be Bert Hoveland's car sales. There was a car for sale for the price of 297 dollars. It was a grayish colour and it did not look bad al all except the floor board was kind of broken. That was no problem for me, because I fixed that in no time at all, and she was happy as a lark. Oh yes it was a Chevy of which we did not know the year. She was very faithful in paying her monthly payments and she had that car for quite a long time. I do not want to go into the time that it was wrecked. It is all part of a very painful start of a time in our life. Maybe later we will write something about it, but it is not good for our health, it makes us bitter all over again.

I take a big jump ahead to the year 1998 into the age of computers. Leni was here last night to set up ours to the icq network. The young people grow up more or less with the

computers the same was when we were young growing up with radio's telephones and all things of the modern time. I have seen people using the phone and talking so loud that it could be heard 2 blocks away. It still baffles me sometimes all that stuff with computers. I never really did like them, up till now. It started where I work, when we had to use the phone for long distance we had to wait some times quite a while before the line was free. That time we were hooked up to the U of A. That is changed of course, it goes very smooth now. When I go into some ones office I do not like to disturb people when they are in front of a computer, it looks that they are totally mesmerized almost in a trance. How ever we left the horse and buggy behind for cars and trains, and all other kind of transportation. I understand that we can not stand still, but can we not slow down once in a while?. Well anyway I am learning with a lot of help from my very patience daughters. And of course it is very nice to use a computer when writing a book, the spelling mistakes are so easy corrected. Mam is always proofreading the pages I finished, and I am happy to tell you that page 35 was the first one without mistakes. It took almost 125 pages including my 1<sup>st</sup> book to have at last one without mistakes made. It sure kept me humble.

Since we are on the subject of computers I am once in a while astounded by the amount of memory we have on our grey matter hard drive. The brain keeps on releasing information which has been stored there for many, many years. In my case for about 75 years. When we( Mam and Dad ) are talking with you, our daughters, about the past, more and more things which have happened in our life are coming out, like cream on milk. The nice things we remember we laugh about, but the not so nice things we try to forget, but with our brain it is not so easy to delete to forget, and that is nice with a computer, just delete what you not need. So you see there is some good in every thing.

Years ago when all the girls were still small we always sat at the kitchen table to have supper or lunch or what ever time of day it was to eat, and then Mam or Dad would pour chocolate milk or plain milk, and Leni had a habit of spilling her drink. We had to get from the table and clean every thing up, so in order to avoid that we would say "Leni throw over your glass so we don't have to get up again." Maybe it was a little bit mean of us to do that, but eventually she managed to eat her food without spilling her drink. Drink sounds like it was an alcoholic beverage, but it was milk or chocolate milk.

In the early years we did not drink to many soft drinks, and we had it never in the house, but we did always have kool-aid in different flavors. Milk was almost a staple drink, and you always could drink as much as you wanted. I (Dad ) did not drink as much milk as I should. I liked it best when I drank it out of the bottle, but since I had to set an example, that was not allowed because it was not hygienic.

Now a little bit more about the neighbour hood. Maybe I have already told that we lived in a quiet area of Camrose. We did not have a cresent than, but the end of the street turned in to the lane. There were about 12 children in our street, and they were always playing peaceful and it was so nice to watch them playing baseball and hide and seek and than some games we did not even know the names of. For the children it did not matter they enjoyed the outdoors. There were always flowers to pick in the bushes at the end of our street in the summer and in the spring it were pussy willows, there was always something to be enjoyed. One of the young boys had a Danish name and that was Borge and was pronounced burge and he was always called hamburger at school and than his name was changed to Bob, because the teasing got to him. Children can be

mean to each other, not always to be mean but just to pass the time of day. I don't think they realize how it hurts.

Our family has had their share of animals in the house. I go back a little bit in time, not too far. These stories are like a yo-yo experience, one never knows which year we end up in, but the next little story is from around 1955 I think. We found out that we had some mice in the basement just little field mice, and I caught some in mouse traps or is it mice traps, but that is neither here nor there. We decided that a cat was much better to catch the little vermin and that way I did not have to take them out of that trap. I asked around and Jens Jensen who worked for us, he knew where we could get a cat. One day he said that he brought a cat which came from a farm and when I was going home we transferred the cat to our car. Home we went the cat and I, it sounds like the king and I. When I arrived at home the family was waiting the arrival of our addition to our home. I wanted to take the cat out of the car, but there was no cat to be seen. I looked everywhere and at last I saw him or her I never knew what, under the seat and I tried to coax it from under there, but the cat did not come out of the car. I had to take the whole seat out of the car to get at that cat. I did get it in the house and it looked very wild. The best thing I could do was to bring the cat in the basement where the mice were. In no time at all it was on the beams, and that was the last I saw of that cat. I left the side door open so the cat could escape and apparently it did because we never saw the cat again. I told Jens about it, and he said it was a barn cat and they are quite shy. It's fur was full of burrs and we think the cat had never been in a house.

Our neighbours, the Kehoes had a very nice looking cat, but did not take care of it very well, it did not look cared for. Mam started to feed it and the cat started to appreciate that so much so that it started to feel at home in our house, and never went back. It became Rietjes cat and she named it Mittens because it had 4 white feet. Years later when we were going to Jasper or Banff we could not leave the cat at home all by itself, and we decided to board it at the vet. clinic with Red Elliot who owned the clinic. However the cat thought different and jumped out of Rietjes arms and hightailed it into a bushy area and we never found that "darn" cat back. It was very sad for Rietje, because she loved that cat, and so did all of us. One time we had a cat, and that got kittens and we could not keep them all so we decided to bring them all to the spca in Edmonton. We had that cat and kittens in a box and when I opened the trunk that cat pushed it self through a little opening in the box, and escaped. Well we left the kittens there and went home.

We are about at the end of the dogs and cat stories, but for about 20 years we had cats and dogs coming and going in our house.

Rietje had been very sick at one time with bronchial pneumonia and she was in the hospital in Camrose in an oxygen tent for quite a while. She was very lonesome there because we could not visit her that were the rules at that time. We felt so sorry for her so all alone, and we promised her a dog when she was all better. We would go to Edmonton to get one at the spca. Well the big day came after she had recuperated from her illness and we went to the big city. There was a lot of looking to find the right dog for her. She had her eyes on a kind of cocker spaniel and that was what we bought for the price of 2 dollars. I don't remember who all went with us, but Mam said she did not go along. We had to get out of Edmonton and that was not so easy for me, not being very familiar with the city but we made it safely. We were just on highway 2 when I heard a terrible knocking in the motor and all I could do was to slow down and than the sound was not too bad. A man in a car drove beside us, and asked if we needed any help because

he saw us driving very slow. I thanked him for the offer and said that we had to go to Camrose at a slow speed because there was a burned out bearing in the motor. We had 90 km to go and it took us 3 hours to get home. It turned out that it was a very expensive dog, but I did not say that to Rietje I did not want to dampen her happiness. Since I am writing about animals, I might as well go whole hog or rather dog and cats. In the times that the children were still home we had more cats and dogs. One of the dogs was a nervous nelly, and every time someone came at the door the dog peed where ever it was. After a while it became to much for us, and we decided to give up the dog. Guess who had to do that, me (Dad) and I decided to bring the dog to the city yard. When I came there a guy from the city asked me if he could have the dog and said he would take it to the farm. I was happy about that and when I came home I could tell them the truth that it was really going to the farm, but it was not always that way. By the way the dogs name was Sandy.

I think liking dogs is a genetic heritage, because my Dad came home quite often with a dog, but we could not keep these. In Mam's house they had a dog for a long time but that one had to leave, because Mam's Dad had gotten a seeing eye dog, and they are very protective of their owners, and that could have brought on trouble. The dog which had to leave was very spoiled by it's new owners and grew very fat. It's name was Keesje which is a boys name but it really was a girl and it had litter after litter just to prove that she was a girl ha, ha.

That was not all of our pets, we still had one pet to go and that was a cat. We did get that one from Elsje who had 2 kittens one for us and one for her. It was a beautiful calico cat and we had it (fixed) to avoid an expanding cat family. That cat was crazy in the head and was acting as an attack dog. When ever it had a chance and that was quite often it would attack my ankles and hang on with all it nails. I think it was more or less a game for her. When I (Dad) came home from work, had taken of my shoes and was going into the living room, that cat was waiting around the corner and attacked me. It was obvious that our house was to small for the both of us, and Mam realized that to, because that cat was attacking her at her arms and legs also. Guess what, it was my duty again to bring that cat to the vet to have it put down. I hated to do that, and I said that is it, no more pets and it took a long time before I agreed to let an other pet in the house.

We did get an aquarium for tropical fish, and that was a beauty to be hold. In order to get that far I opened up the wall to Elsjes former bedroom which was than separated from the living room with a wall. Elsje slept by than in Hetties room upstairs. I made that aquarium and build it in the wall between the living room and that small bedroom. It was not easy to get fish in town and we had to go to Edmonton to buy them. Woolworth dep. store had a small variety of tropical fish, but not to many different ones. Dr Young had an aquarium and we did a little bit of trading.

In the summer time we went as a whole family to the sloughs around Camrose to catch daphnia's. The best time to do that was when there was thunder storm brewing than we could see them in the water like red clouds. Mam had made a fishnet from old nylons and we netted as many as we could. We fed the fish live daphnia's for a couple of days, and than we froze the rest in ice cubes. That way we had good food in the winter time when the sloughs were frozen. It was fun to watch the fish waiting for their food to thaw out actually to de-frost. It was very good to have that kind of food for the fish, but at one time we lost all our fish, and I think the reason was that the slough where we caught the daphnia's was sprayed with insecticide against the mosquitoes because there was no other reason. It was fun to watch to see sword fish being born, and also the



guppies and black mollies which were life bearing fish. After the insecticide disaster I had to clean the whole aquarium and started from scratch and it took a long time before it was restored to its former beautiful picture in the wall. One time when we came home from being away that I saw water in the little room, and I thought Oh boy this is the end. The aquarium had sprung a leak. The back which was made of steel plate was rusted through. We decided to give it up. I gave the fish to Dr Young, repaired the aquarium and sold it to the son of Dr Clark the eye doctor. When he picked it up he borrowed our toboggan to take it home. I asked 10 dollars for it, but we never saw the money or got the toboggan back. That family was moving, because they divorced and it was difficult to talk to anybody at that time. It must have been a very difficult time for these people, because Dr Clark committed suicide a little later on.

Since we are on the subject of animals there is something I remember from many years ago when Mam and I (Dad) were not married yet. They had a cat which was white and there for was called Blackie. That cat always wanted to sneak out of the house and waited for the opportunity when somebody pulled the door open. One time when I was leaving the house I pulled the rope which opened the door, and the cat raced past me to get outside. In my haste to get to the door I tripped on the bottom step and fell against the door, and the cat got caught between the door and the doorjamb. The cat yelled and lost all interest to go outside. I don't think the cat was hurt, because it did not learn from the experience and kept on trying to sneak out the door, but I learned from it to and opened the door downstairs when I was leaving.

An other story comes to mind which was later than the former paragraph when we were still living in Hengelo. We had an aquarium there with tropical fish and at times we went out to catch daphnias the same as we did which is written on the former page. We all went for a walk and took a jar and fishnet along and soon we saw a pasture with a pond. We lived at the edge of Hengelo than. We all climbed over the fence and walked to that pond and yes we found the daphnias. While we were totally absorbed by what we were doing we did not realize that we were surrounded by cows and did not know only after we heard them snorting. We were very scared and hightailed it to the gate, and when we came there the cows were already there. We did not get harmed, I think they were only curious but they sure looked big so close by.

While I am on the subject of animals I have to tell that we did have 2 more dogs, just very small ones, Maltese. The first one was called Moppie and that was a sweet little dog who actually liked me, and of course I liked the dog in return. I did most of the walking with the dog especially in the evening before going to sleep and in the daytime I let it run in the field beside the school. It was such a nice little companion for Mam. To bad that it had a heart problem and it died when we were visiting Rietje in Manitoba. It was sick before we left and I had brought it to the vet. clinic and they would take care of it for the time we were gone but after a couple of days we got a phone call from the vet. that Moppie had died. Mam really grieved for the loss of that little dog, and I missed it to.

After a while to get over the loss of Moppie we bought an other Maltese and that was even a bit smaller than the first one. For Mam it was a very sweet doggie, but the house was too small for that dog and me. It was so protective of Mam, that we could hardly talk because the dog would start barking or more yelping at me(Dad). It would go for walks with me, but soon as we came in the house and was with Mam, I was the enemy. That could not go on, and we decided to

sell it, but Mam could not do that and we asked Elsje to do that for us by placing an add in the Edmonton journal, but she could not do that either. So it became Elsje's dog and helped them with the expenses especially with doctors bills. We think that Panda, that was her name, had suffered from cruelty by men, because she never changed her attitude toward men. When ever we were visiting at the Gummers she did the same thing to me as when she was at our home. The only time she was nice to me was when I gave her a treat. Elsje had her about 8 years.

When ever I am writing about one subject an other one pops in my mind. Once we had a budgie given to us by a friend of Elsje whose name was Warren Smistead who had won the bird for 1 cent at Woolworth. It was a real talkative bird, but in a friendly way. Since the name of the benefactor was to long for a bird, it was called Smitty. It was a friend of the family except that nobody of our family climb in the curtains. When Mam was dressing herself in the morning it would wolf whistle at her, and one time Mam really thought that there was a man in the house. I could talk a long time about that bird, but you all knew the budgie. We had it quite a few years and one time we were on holidays when Leni was taken care of her or him, there was such a heavy snowfall that she could not go to our house and the bird died of loneliness. Leni did not know how to tell us when we came home, but it was understandable.

I should stop now with all these animal stories, but there is one more to come. At the beginning of our street was a chicken and turkey slaughter plant and beside it there was a chicken hatchery. With Easter time all the young baby chicks were sold to people who raised them. I mentioned Easter, because that was about the time that they were hatched, and the rooster chicks were sold to children for 10 cent a piece. Hetty was the one who always bought some, and she would keep them in a cardboard box in the basement with a lamp to keep them warm. Too bad for the little chicks but they did not last to long. I think that practice was stopped because of the cruelty to animals law which forbade the selling of baby chicks to children. It was going to far, because some people were spraying them with paint to look like Easter chicks.

One more story and this one is about a turkey. There was a turkey walking around our neighbour hood which was escaped from that slaughter place and had a good time, because it could pick all the tasty morsels out of the gardens. I had thought of making a turkey dinner of it, but I am no hero so far as turkeys are concerned, I would not know how to handle that operation. Jimmy Kehoe our neighbour's son thought different about that, and after he had caught the gobble the gobble the gobbler he knew what to do with it and did. To them it was like manna from heaven but than in a meaty form. A day later some people came through the neighbour hood asking the people if anyone had seen a escaped turkey but nobody did, it would have been to late anyway because in one of the houses was a very nice turkey dinner.

I told before that there was a burned out bearing when we picked up a dog for Rietje in Edmonton at the spca. It gave me a lot of work, because I had to take the motor out of the car and after that to take the crankshaft out and have it reground. Lucky I could do that all myself, but it meant that I had to be 3 or 4 evenings away from home. It is nice work to do and after a week the car was mobile again. The cost was not that great, because I could do all the labor myself, but I was thankful for the couch on which I could rest on Sunday.

I know you girls did not like that to much but your Mam and Dad always worked hard and we did it out of love for our family. When we bought an other car this one was in the back yard and used for a playhouse until the time it was sold for 75 dollars. End of story.

We were about 1 year in Canada when a former colleague of mine who also worked at Signal wrote to us and asked if we would sponsor them. Mam and I talked about it and we decided to do that. We had a friendly relationship in Holland and we figured that it would be the same in Canada. I had found a job for him, not a very good one but good enough for a start. It was with a customer of us who had a gravel pit business, and he had told me to employ Kees, which was his name. When the time came that they arrived in Calgary we were there to pick them up. It was quite a load with 7 people in the car and also their luggage. With 3 children and 2 adults there were 5 in their family. On our way the trouble started when one of their children said that we had an old car, and that their grandmother had a much nicer car. By itself that was not too bad, but when we came home they already started to complain about various things. I can not exactly remember what they were but we found out very soon that their friendship with us was for the purpose of us helping them to come to Canada. They lived in our house for about 3 weeks and it was good that their belongings came from Holland and they could move in a basement suite. Right after they moved to their suite one of the girls got a ruptured appendix and had to be rushed to the hospital and that was a very bad experience, and then it seemed that everything was going to be bad, which was not the case of course. The job Kees got was about 10 km out of town and I brought him there in the morning and picked him up at night. That was a lot of driving for me, so I decided to sell our 1<sup>st</sup> car to him. He did not have a license but that was not too bad, because he only had to go over the country roads which was not too dangerous. One time he came to the shop and said that the car used so much gas. It was not so, but he did the same thing as when I started to drive, he shifted in 2<sup>nd</sup> gear and used the transmission as an automatic. After a while they moved to Wetaskiwin and we really did not see them anymore. Oh by the way I sold that car to him for 50 dollars but we never did see that money. The thing that bugged me the most, that he got a job in Wetaskiwin by showing them a picture of a drill press I made and said that he did that. How ever life much go on and it did, but it was not a pleasant time.

Now a more pleasant story at least funnier. I wrote about our neighbour who was going to fly to Norway in a helicopter just to let you know who I meant. He was telling a story about the time he was working in a coal mine somewhere in the Rockies many years ago. It was kind of a rough life for these men living in tents and working in all kinds of weather, but then there were not many jobs available 60 or 70 years ago. Most of these mines were being operated for the locomotives, that was before there were diesel engines. Well I am getting away from my story. I was telling that these men slept in tents, and one time one of the guys pulled a blanket over his head and crawled through the tent and growling and pretending to be a bear. One of the miners did not want to be a bear's meal ticket, picked up a heavy skillet and hit the "bear" over the head and it fell over and then the skillet brandishing miner saw what he had done, but it was too late. I don't think he would ever play bear again and the lump on his head would remind him of that prank. Our neighbour had a laconic way of telling a story.

A similar thing happened to us once, not really to us but to the girls. We were camping somewhere in the Jasper park with our tent, and Mam and I (Dad) were sitting outside while our girls were already in the tent ready to go to sleep, when Mam got it in her head to scare them. She walked quietly to the tent and scratched on the outside of the tent and in the mean time growled like a bear, and the girls screamed from fear. Mam was a little bit ashamed of what she had done and went in the tent to calm everybody down. One of the girls said "Mam don't ever do that

again, you scared us half to death. I cannot remember if they went to sleep. That is Mam for you, maybe you remember that she scared me half to death with her Mephisto yell in the hallway once when we still lived in Holland.

I introduced you to the Kramer family, and now we were going on holidays with them. To start we would go to Jasper. As always when going on holidays we left early in the morning to get a camping spot in the campground. We went to Jasper at a leisure speed for two reasons. One was that our cars were quite old models, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one was that it was just a 2 lane highway with out any pullout lanes and there were only sharp shoulders. It was almost impossible to pass an other car. There was also a lot of construction going on because they were starting to improve the highways. As I have said before it was about a 7 hour drive and we stopped a couple of times at a picnic area to have lunch. We reached the campground in the middle of the afternoon with enough time to make camp. In our family were 4 children and the Kramers had 3 boys and with the parents that was quite a party. Two of the boys were sleeping in a pup tent and apparently they had trouble sleeping and they started to fight like boys fight. We could hear the pounding they gave each other. We were sitting outside having our evening coffee and their parents did not do anything about the fighting so we figured that much be going on every night. Eventually the fighting stopped and than there was peace on the campground. Since we had been in Jasper before we took it up on us to give them guided tours to all the beautiful spots. We had some favorite places where we went to. One of them is the Maligne canyon and the next one was Mount Edith Cavell. We were always in awe about the Angel glacier and we would walk all the way toward the glacier. That was really fun for the young people, and even Elsje became very active in mountain climbing because she wanted to go along with the older ones. Before we realized it she was gone again on the slopes always trying to get away from us. One time she crawled so high that she became afraid and I ( Dad ) had to go after her on a rescue mission. Well any way that was not the most dangerous part of our exploration. A little further toward the glacier were a lot of crevasses. We called them crevices, but Leni corrected us and said they are not crevices but crevasses, but for us a hole in the ground was not much different than a hole in the ice. We were not a little scared but a lot of scared for these holes, because one slip on the ice into the crevasses was the end of you. I hung onto Elsje while the other young people were throwing rocks and chunks of ice in the holes and that made a funny hollow sound which meant that these crevasses were very deep. On our way back after several hours walking on the snow and ice we stopped at the tea house which was than at the beginning of the walk, to rest and have some refreshments. The tea house was there only in the earlier years but it is gone now.

The Maligne canyon is something else. 120 feet deep and that time there were no railings so it was hand holding time again especially for the little ones, we were scared to death to lose one of them. It is a beautiful and majestic part of nature. Some of the girls had just learned in school about the trees, and they were happy to let us know what they had learned. We were especially impressed with the douglas fir trees which must have been over 100 years old and were not threatened by the lumber mens saw, and the park to be kept the way nature intended it to be and to be enjoyed for many generations to come by people who love nature and respect it.

After a few more days in Jasper park it was time to go further and we all decide to go home via Banff. In the middle fifties the road between Jasper and Banff was a challenge, it was

even narrower in places than the highway from Edmonton to Jasper. In a straight line it was about 190 mile, but with all the winding roads going up and down the mountains the distance was a lot longer. It is quite high in the mountains and it heated up the engines. It took us about 7 hours to go to Banff. We had a lot of trouble with our car, because of the heat it developed vapor locks, and that stopped the motor. As I explained before that the road is very narrow and almost impossible to park, but we had to do it. I parked the car as far to the edge as possible and than I had to take the carburetor off and cool every thing down. That happened about 4 times and I said to Jack keep going we will meet again in Banff, find a turn off and we will see you there. Sometimes we had to stop at a road construction site and when we looked up we saw bulldozers high up the mountain and we always had a fear that one would come crashing down. There was one more problem, and that was the lack of toilets and all of us had to go to the bathroom sometimes in these 7 hours. There were no bushes or anything else and it was also very steep and that made taking care of our bodily functions very difficult. Lucky we had canvas water bag with us to have something to drink and also to cool the carburetor and the gas line. The road was not that bad all the way, but it seemed that way. We stopped at the Columbia ice field and we all thought that was spectacular. I can not remember if we went in that restaurant, but it must have been for all of us to use the bathroom. Actually I am telling about it the wrong way and I will straighten that out now. After leaving Jasper we stopped first at the Athabasca falls which are spectacular and there were no railings either so it was handholding again. All visitors are very careful not to slip on the wet rocks. After stopping there from a while we went on our way and than we came to the ice field which at that time reached close to the road, the tongue that is.

Actually up to the ice field the road was not to bad, but it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> halve. When we reached a pullout close to Banff all the trouble was forgotten and there was Jack and family waiting for us. We decided to have a little bit to eat and than go on to the Banff campground. It was a big campground and we did not have to go to the overflow camp. After setting up camp it was to late to go anywhere and we just rested. When bedtime came and all the young people were bedded down the ruckes in the pup tent started all over again, but now we were getting used to it and pretended not to hear it. The 2 boys names were Maarten and Pieter and the oldest ones name was Jan Willem but he did not come along on the trip, I forgot that. Maarten wanted to be with us in the car, because he loved the squealing of the tires and the car did that because it was out of alignment. Of course it only did that when we were going a little bit to fast around the corners. He was crazy about cars and he knew the make of all the cars we passed, and at times it drove us crazy. It really was not to bad, because we made only little trips around Banff, but we were not used to that. It was in the town where their car blew a radiator hose, and we felt a bit good about it after all the trouble we had it was good to know that somebody else could have trouble to. We let the car cool off and than we went and bought an new hose and we installed that and the trouble was over for the rest of the trip.

While we were at the campground Hetty took all the boys and girls to the movie which was shown every night at the campground mostly nature films. Hetty was sitting with Maarten and when it was getting late she told Elsje to go to the tent by herself. It was dark by than and Elsje lost her way. We missed Elsje and did not know that Hetty had taken her to the movie. We all went looking for her and than we saw a man with Elsje on his hand. He said are you looking for a little girl and we said yes of course. We were so happy to see her again it was a kind of

panicky situation. Jack was kind of surprised that we did not punish the girls, but we were happy to get them back, and we would not do that with all the people around us.

When we were having supper on the campground Maarten and Pieter always came to us and asked for milk which came right out of the bottle, and they always had milk from milk powder and they did not like that very much, which I can understand it did not taste as good as real milk. The family was living on a tight budget, and ate a lot macaroni and cheese out of a package. The reason I write that is to make every body understand that being an immigrant is not always so easy, and there have to be sacrifices made at least for the first years. We all had to do the same thing. Most of the people we knew did make out ok in later life.

The last evening the Kramers took us out for supper and that was the end of our holidays with them. We went home knowing that we had a nice holiday at which we could look back on with a happiness that we enjoyed the beauty of our adopted country. Not long after that Jack did get his accountant certificate. I do not know exactly how long they stayed in Camrose but it was after 1960 that they left for Saskatoon and than it became writing relationship.

A little bit back now to where we were on our way to Jasper. It was raining cats and dogs all the way to the campground, and arriving there the first thing we had to do set up camp and trying to make a fire to warm the children and get them out of the rain. It was so disheartening and we all were a bit depressed but did not say anything to each other to keep up the spirit. The next day the sun came out and after that everything went fine. The young people were singing, "Rain, rain go away, come again an other day" and a song in Dutch is "Lieve Heertje geef mooi weertje, geef een mooie dag, dat het zonnetje schynen mag".

The weather in Holland is quite often gray and foggy, but in the mountains with the dark background was even more dreary. Sometimes we went to the weather bureau in Banff mainstreet to see what it was going to be. One can see on the peoples faces the reflection of the weather, it seems that when the sun shines every body is happy.

On the way home we were driving through areas where there were grainfields left and right of us and that was a reminder of the busy time it was going to be with the harvest only 4 to 6 weeks away. It still amazes us the amount of grain being grown in Alberta and Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and the last 2 provinces we had not even seen yet. In the shop we had 2 busy seasons, spring and fall, the fall being the busiest of the 2 because of the kind of machinery being used and also because of the length of the harvest time, and that made us go in overtime quite often.

After the summer and after the fall there was winter, that has never failed us yet and than there was the time for new sit comes. One of these new ones was Seahunt with Lloyd Bridges. It was one so different than any of the other shows. The reason I am writing this, is because we just heard on the news that Lloyd Bridges had died at the age of 85 years. Yes girls we have to realize time does not stand still for anything and not only the characters in the plays are getting older, but it is the same with us whether we like it or not. I better stop writing about getting older but enjoy the time we are living in now.

Writing is some thing to be enjoyed, because there are so many memories popping up in ones mind, and it is so nice to look back in time. Reading is some times even nicer, that Mam just mentioned to me that when there was not much worth watching we were all reading and we did not need anything else. I think that the 3 R's are so important. In my own way I like to make the people aware of the importance of the 3 R's especially the last one, so that one knows of the top

of your head how much for instance 7 times 3 is without using a calculator. I remember in the school where I went to we had one hour a arithmetic without paper and pencil. I think that it was in all schools where the teacher would ask random questions like 10 times 31, and we had a few seconds to figure it out by heart. This way we were trained to think fast, and that really worked well, at least it has worked for me all my life.

I was writing about dying and that we all get older, but one of our friends you girls all know was Flip de Ruiter who died after hardly been sick at all. You all remember the family you traveled with to Canada, these were de Ruiters, and we bought our first tv from them when they moved to the States. Flip worked for Chrysler and when he did retire they made a long car trip and they visited us about 10 years ago. By the way when I am writing this it is 1998. I think he was 66 years old and died a half year after they had been here. We got a phone call and then we send a cart and that was the end of that relationship. I have to add to it that he got stomach cancer and it spread so fast through his body that with in a few months it was all over. So sad just after his retirement. They were both heavy smokers all their life.

We have now arrived in the year 1960 and it was going to be a busy year for us. Gr Ma and Gr Pa V were planning to come to Canada for a visit, not just a little visit but for 3 months. We were happy to get them here and were making plans to make a suite in the basement. That was not so easy for me, because I had no idea how to start, and we did not have much money either, we did not even have a little money. I went to Dennis Ofrim and told him what the problem was, that we needed a room real bad but we did not have money to pay him right away. He said that was not much of a problem and that we could pay him anytime we had the money. So he sent over some of his men and materials and did all the framing and the floor. It was done whenever he could spare the men and it was finished within a week. So now we had a floor and strapped walls, the rest was for me to do. Knotted pine sheets was the cheapest material there was to buy. Many evenings after work I was in the room hammering away at the walls and it started to look real nice. It looked like it was done by a professional. I had to varnish all the walls but first it had to have a coat of shellac and even after that it was like the walls were sucking up all the varnish I could put on. It looked very rustic and outdoorsie. I always had a lot of help from the girls especially with the varnishing. After that was all done the floor had to be tiled. I did go to all the stores where they sold tile to get the best deal. Lucky for us we were well known in town and were able to charge every thing to our accounts and little by little we paid off every thing we had bought. The room has been a multi purpose room for all the years up to now. What I liked doing least of all was installing the ceiling. For me it was a tedious job which gave me a lot of pain in my neck but eventually it all got done. I had a door left over from our earlier renovations and now there was privacy. All there was left was the lighting and install plugins and that was not to much work. I said to Mam for the fun of it that we could rent the room out to somebody, but she said "no way will I have strangers living in my house". That was the sentiment of all of us. We have always been a very private family and the thought of a stranger living downstairs did not go over very well.

Early in the year we got confirmation of the time of arrival. They were coming by boat to Montreal and from there on by train to Calgary. It was quite a trip for them. Planes were not used to much yet, and it would have cost a lot more. My father had been working at a greenhouse for a long time to save up enough money to come to Camrose. They had been skimping on every thing

to get the money together. It was kind of funny to hear later how they were skimping. When ever my sisters came to visit their parents and they were getting tea or what ever, there were no cookies offered because they said we have to save for going to Canada. It really became a joke, because that was all they could talk about, going to Canada.

In the mean time we were working at the basement room to get everything ready for their arrival, the last job to do was the floor and we were finished.

Now I was going to work on our trailer which I wanted to get ready for the summer holidays. I did most of the work in the backyard, because the frame was going to be made from 2x4s and I did not have to go to the shop for that. It was going to be a trailer with a revolutionary design, one of the first ones where the roof could be raised, not as easy as the ones which came out later, but it had a wooden roof which could be lowered for traveling and that was so nice because there was less wind resistance. It was 12 feet long and 6 feet wide, and there were 2 bunk beds in made of steel pipe for you girls to sleep in, and for Mam and me a mattress from our own bed and for all of you girls we had sleeping bags, and we did not have to sleep on the ground anymore. That was quite an improvement, because it can be so cold in the mountains. When ever we were traveling trough B,C, we could notice the difference which could be as much as 10 degree warmer and that was pleasant especially in the mornings.

Well the time had come for the grand parents to arrive and we were waiting for a phone call from Winnipeg for the day and time of their arrival. Since it was a group tour there was a guide with them to help which they needed, because of the language barrier. Early one morning we got a phone call, and it was Gr ma V to let us know that they were waiting for us in Calgary, and if we would come to get them. We all did get ready to go to get them, and I told her that we would be there at 12 noon. We were waiting for them, and when the call came it was unexpected, because we thought that they were in Winnipeg. With our car it took us about 4 hours to get to the station. When we did get there it was quite a reunion, a lot of kissing and hugging going on. Before going home we had something to eat and drink before we were driving back.

While they were waiting for us they walked a little bit around the station. There was some work going on at a building and a piece of rock fell down on my mothers head and she was dizzy since than. Mam took her arm and she could hardly walk and almost pulled Mam down, that how dizzy she was. Their guide had told them that they did not have to phone because we would know what time the train would arrive because we knew when they arrived in Montreal. That was not so, but that is all water under the bridge now. Mam said that we all went to Calgary to welcome them but I (Dad ) said that we could not sit with 8 people in that car. Well what ever it was we came home tired but happy.

Their trip took about 14 days and they were very tired, but we talked quite a bit before they went to bed. Of course we were tired to after 8 hours driving and all the excitement.

The first day we took it real easy and did not do to much driving but when they were rested we took to the road and showed them all the places we had talked about in our letters over the years. They thought Canada was fantastic and they told us so. Our neighbour Kehoe as I told before was a truck driver, and one day he asked if Gr pa would like to come with him to the gravel pit to get a load of gravel. Gr pa sure liked that and of they went. I would have liked it to be there and listen in to their conversation which would have been funny because they did not know each others language, but that did not make any difference they just enjoyed each others



company, and for Gr pa to pass the time of day. It was now June, to be exactly that 19<sup>th</sup>, and Gr ma went with all the girls to the Jay walkers jamboree. On their way home they would come past the shop and I would give them a ride home. Mam and Gr pa had stayed at home, because Gr pa had been in the morning and Mam did not want to go. Lucky for us because in the after noon the sky was almost turning black and than it st<sup>a</sup>ted to hail just before we got home. It was unbelievable the size of the hailstones. We had gotten home, but we did not dare to get out of the car. In the mean time Mam and Gr pa were busy with wiping up the water from the hailstones which had come through a window pane which was broken by the hail. Gr pa went downstairs to get a piece of plywood and nailed it to the window frame to keep more of the hail out. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> mean time we were sitting in the car experiencing W,W, 2 all over, it was like being shot at with a machine gun. I had turned the car with the rear toward the storm because I figured that it would cause less damage to the car than the front. The whole storm lasted about 10 minutes but the damage it did was unbelievable. Hundred of houses were left without roof shingles and broken window panes. Our kitchen roof was in shambles and leaking badly but there was nothing we could about that for the moment. Of course we who were sitting in the car did not know anything about it until we thought it was safe to get out. When I assessed the damage I phoned our insurance agent which was Shuman and he said find someone to repair the damage. Than I phoned Dennis Ofrim and he was coming to look at it the next day, and in one week all the damage was fixed. I tell you it was quite an experience and from than on we were always afraid when we saw dark hail clouds coming our way. We did have hail once more but with little damage and no broken windows.

This was not the end of our problems, because the garden plants which were just poking their heads through the soil were totally destroyed and so were the potato plants. Gr pa had a job to do and he really liked that, and so did I because I did not have to do it. Because of the wetness and the warm weather it came up very fast. WE did get a terrific crop out of it. End of the hail story, and end of the Jamboree. In all the stores in main street the basements were flooded and all the stalls were totally destroyed. It sure was a mess.

While I am writing about rain and hail something got in my mind about a rainstorm we had some years later. We were asked for tea at the Pedersen's and early in the afternoon there was a rainstorm and I mean rainstorm. Our street was flooded and we did get a phone call from Anna Pedersen that it was better that we did not come, because their basement was flooded. I asked of I could help and she said that would be nice. So I went on my way and I did get as far as the middle of our street and there was so much water that it came in my exhaust pipe and stopped the car and it would not move anymore. I walked home and phoned that we could not come because my car was drowned. The next day I heard the whole story. They lived right across from a street which was a hill and the water came down and went right through their basement. Their basement was a dugout and the water washed all the dirt and clay away and there was a river under their house. The house was only supported at the sides and the city came and pumped the water away and helped them to plug the hole. The water heater and the deep freeze were just bobbing on the waves. Eventually they got every thing fixed again. I write this now so I won't forget it and realize what extreme weather we can have in Alberta.

Oh by the way the house is gone and so are the Pedersen's. First Dick died and not long after him Anna died. Dick became an Alzheimer patient and was in Rosehaven for a while. I saw

him once in Rosehaven, but he did not recognize me anymore. At the onset of this disease we were walking in Main street with Rietje and there we met him. Mam introduced Rietje to him, and said this is Mary our daughter, and than he said "Oh a doctor ". His mind was already failing. He was more or less a gentle man but became very mean and abusive to his wife and that is why he had to go to Rosehaven. Their son Carl died of Aids, but they never got to know that. I use the hop skip method of writing because I don't know the exact dates when every thing had happened.. I really invented this method my self out of necessity.

The car we had than was the Rambler, the bath tub look alike, and there was not a dent in from the hail.

All summer Gr pa took care of the garden, it was something he had done all his life and doing it here was no difference. It took a load of our backs especially because I did not like gardening that much, and years before Mam and you girls took care of most of it, except the potatoes that was my job special the hilling of it and the digging.

Mam and Gr pa each had an addiction, and that was peppermint they were crazy about it. There always had to be peppermint in the house. That reminded me a little bit when Mam was pregnant from one or all of you. When ever the craving occurred I had to go to the store where they sold croquettes and that could be any time of day or night. Mam just told me that licorice was also one of her favorites. What one had to do to keep a pregnant woman happy. If it had been pickles it would not have been so bad, we could have kept them in a jar, but not croquettes. I was happy to support her addiction than.

It was at the time when it was Mothers day, maybe a little bit later, and I have a nice little poem which was written by a young girl for Mothers day.

A wonderful Mother.

" God made a wonderful mother  
A mother who never grows old  
He made her smile of the sunshine  
And he molded her heart of pure gold  
In her eyes He placed bright shining stars  
In her cheeks fair roses you see  
God made a wonderful mother  
And he gave that mother to me."

It is nice to write a favorite poem or a little story. We hear so many in a lifetime and we forget them so easy that is why I write them in Our story. At the time Gr ma and Gr pa were here Elsje was 8 Rietje was 11 Leni was 14 and Hetty was 16 years old. I think that you were all at an age that you can still remember that time.

In that summer there was vacation bible school and some of you girls went there. One of the activities was playing with special dollar bills, not real ones of course but look alike with religious texts on them, like "Jesus is one" and so on. Mam got hold of one of these bills and stuck that one in Gr pa's coat pocket. They had very little money with them and had to be frugal. When Gr pa was up town he found that "Jesus is one " bill in his pocket and thought I will make Mary happy and buy peppermint for her. He went in Woolworths and bought a bag with peppermint and went to the cashier to pay for it. She was looking strange at him, but could not explain to Gr pa that it was not a dollar bill so he did not get his peppermint. He left the store frustrated and

walked in main street where he met the rest of the family who were walking there and told them the story about the funny dollar bill. Since Mam was the culprit she feared for the worst. Gr pa was really mad. But what could he do. Mam stepped back a little bit and could not stop laughing, and that was fuel on the fire. Every thing worked out alright, and I went to the store and explained what happened. She did not think that he wanted to cheat her.

They did not have very much money with them and Gr pa had to be real frugal with his tobacco money. He was not a heavy smoker but to be here for that long a time put a little crimp in his spending, that is why he was so happy to find that one dollar bill in his pocket and could buy peppermint for Mam. Later Mam told him that she had put that dollar in his pocket just for the fun of it, but did not think that he would go to a store with it to buy something.

When the gr parents were here we did have sidewalks by than and the avenue started to look like an avenue. It all was done by Fred Kellough, one of the local contractors. He had one arm but that did not keep him back from sitting on the caterpillar doing all the steering and bulldozing with one arm, it was really amazing. He came in the shop one time when we were still working the whole Saturday and wanted to get something done on a piece of machinery. Maybe I already wrote about that, it was the time when I hit my knee with a forge hammer. After so many years in the business I missed the iron I was suppose to hit and my knee which was right beside it got the hit. I almost fainted, and I had to go to the bathroom so bad. It came up all of a sudden and it gave me time to recover sitting there suffering for a while. He was always in a hurry except for paying the bills, we always had to go to him to get the money he owed us. A few years after that he moved his outfit to Stettler and we never saw him again.

After the sidewalks and the curbs were made, the City fixed the street by digging the clay out of it and than it was graveled. It sure was improvement and we did not have to scrape the clay of our shoes anymore. Of course it raised our taxes, but it was worth it.

When I see the front of our house and look back in my mind, I see Mam sitting on the front step when the weather was nice and watch you girls playing in the street with maybe Rietje or Elsje sitting beside her and the other 2 girls playing ball or hide and seek. In that little short street were about 5 families with children. The Kehoes, the Holmes, the Auerbachs and the Ennis family and there was also Dennis Hirsch. When the Holmes family moved away from the neighbour hood, the house was bought by a woman who hated children, at least that is what we thought, because whenever during play a ball landed on her lawn she stood behind the window and knocking on the glass to warn them not to walk on her grass. She was one of these people who was sitting in the blazing sun on her knees digging out dandelions. To bad for her, but watching children play is one of the best things of life.

Well I did get away from writing about your Gr parents, but I thought I have to write about this so I won't forget. These little stories come up in my mind and have to take advantage of. I am now going back to the present time in 1960. It was about time to go on holidays and we were looking forward to it. The trailer was finished except for the canvas around it. That was quite a job and Mam had to do most of it the sewing I mean. First our tent had to be taken apart and than sewn together so that we could make a wrap around with eyelets so that we could hook it in the inside of the trailer. The sewing machine was in the kitchen and it was cut in the living room. I believe that everybody was on the floor helping with this project. When every thing was cut and sewed we installed it in the trailer and it looked great. Now we could sleep of the floor in

relative comfort with our bunk beds and mattress. It was a little high to get in, and Gr pa made a little stepladder and that made it easier. That was 38 years ago and it still stands in the front yard against a tree. It has been used by children of all ages to climb the tree. Now it is just a keep sake, a conversation piece.

The first week in July we went to Jasper. Hetty and Leni did not go along on these holidays, because there was not enough room in the car for 8 people. We would not let them stay home all by them self, so we brought them to Hastings lake bible camp. That was the Sunday before we were leaving. It had been raining quite a lot, and the road to the camp was almost impossible to be driven on. We did come back a different way going through Edmonton which was longer but safer. They did not like it to stay behind but there was no way we take them along.

The day we left was hot, and we had to use our naturel air conditioner, open windows. Since it was early in the morning it was not so hot yet, but later in the day it became a scorcher. We drove all the way to Pembina and there we decided to stop for a while so we could walk a little bit to stretch our legs. As I have said it was very hot, and we did not know how fast to get back in the car out of the sun. The cooling fan was giving us as much cool air as it could, and with the open windows it was not to bad. Our next stop was a shaded picnic area where we had our lunch at least that was bearable and we stretched our legs to get our blood flowing. We did not go out of the car again until we arrived at the campground. Of course there we had to wait for a while before we could go to our spot and set up camp. As always the first job for me was getting a fire started and make coffee for the adults and maybe we had milk and lemonade for the girls, but I cannot exactly remember what they drank. We had by that time a Coleman stove, so it was easy to make supper, but we made a campfire anyway because that belongs to camping. Now I had Gr pa help me to gather firewood. There was fire wood available for campers but in the woods there was always a lot of dry twigs to be found and the spruce had such a nice smell to it.

The first evening we went to bed early because everybody was tired from the long trip and we were anxious to try out our new sleeping accommodations. We had to leave all our foodstuff in the trunk of the car because our trailer was not made with solid wooden walls, and the bears could smell food through canvass. That was one off the things we had to cope with in the wilderness. Well back to sleep again. Gr ma and Gr pa were going to sleep in the car which back rests could be put down and that made 2 beds in the car. The first day it was quite a commotion because there was no place to undress. Gr ma went in the car first to undress and put a nightgown on and then Gr pa would do the same. We had installed towels on the windows as good as we could to give them some privacy. They were good sports about it because it was not easy to get bed ready in such a cramped space but they did that for a week. We were outside listening to them and it was funny because they were laughing and muttering, but they slept well after everything was settled. They sure got to know what camping was and they had never experienced that before. Our trailer worked quite well, but it was difficult to raise the roof for the first time. Mam was a great help in that raising the roof. I would lift the roof at one side and Mam had to put pins in holes so that it could not slide back. It is a little difficult to explain every thing but it worked. There was one setback, and that was the roof which for strength had rafters and Mam hit her head quite often, it was just a little bit to low. She was also a good sport about it but once in a while she would like to swear at these rafters. Sleeping on a real mattress while camping was the ultimate of comfort in comparison to the sleeping bags we were used to when camping. Mam and

Gr ma were going for a walk in the time we were to the part of park where all the expensive trailers are. Mam said to Gr ma, wouldn't that be nice to have a big beautiful trailer like these with all the conveniences of home, and than Gr ma said, there comes a time that you will have one like that but be happy with what you have now. Mam always felt poor when she compared our trailer with theirs. How ever she was happy with what we had which was already an great improvement over what we had. At least we had a trailer with a matrass and bunk beds.

There were so many new things to experience especially for immigrants and one of the things was in the cooking department. One time Mam was invited by Elsie Auerbach with together with some other neighbours and you girls for a birthday party for Ingelieses birth day. Ingeliese was friends with Rietje. They lived in a small house across the street from us at that time, and Mam said that they could hardly fit in that house with 6 children and 5 woman. There it was the first time that Mam got strawberry short cake with whipping cream on it, and Mam thought that was really something. From there on we did get it quite often especially for birthdays and special occasions. One of her favorite things to make was and still is, are cream puffs.

Well I thought to get away from camping for a little while to tell you about that because it was also something new in our lives.

Gr ma was not afraid of the bears which walked frequently through the campsite but it looked like she wanted to make friends with them. She had a brownie box camera with the viewing glass on top and she was more or less chasing the bears with her camera to take pictures of them. It was so dangerous to do that but not in her eyes and she followed the bears to the garbage cans where they would crawl in to find some food rests. One time when a bear was in a garbage can a boy kicked the bottom of it and the bear ran away and my mother took a picture of that. She was lucky that the bear got scared, ran away and left them alone. They could have been a bears breakfast, lunch or supper. She thought the bears looked so cute with their black fur coats.

This episode ended and Gr ma was not to tired after this excitement. She never thought that the bears were dangerous. Gr pa was not so interested in chasing the bears, but if they had been horses it would have been a different story.

Since a having a barbeque is part of camping we decided to have one at a picnic ground close to our campground and where there was a grill. We went to the local butcher and bought some nice steaks. It must have been a special occasion but I cannot remember what that was, otherwise we would not have bought steak. We had our own briquets for the barbeque and we made a good fire and started the frying of the steaks and looking forward to a nice meal. Were we mistaken, because this time it was not the bears, however they would have snatched the steak right of the barbeque, but these pesky mosquitoes. There must have been millions of them and they made it impossible for us to have a meal there. The paper where the meat came in was so covered with the bugs that it was a solid layer. We had to give up our barbeque and go back to the campsite and finish the meal there. The mosquitoes were bad throughout the whole area that it had become almost impossible to be there. It was not so bad in later years and I think that there has been some bug spraying going on, but it is actually not allowed in the national parks.

That was that, but it did not deter us to go to all the sites which we were proud to show the Gr parents and one of them was Mount Edith Cavell. We took a whole day to go there because there was quite a bit of walking to do. The road to it was narrow and full of hair pin

curves which were some times not so easy to drive on but it is an interesting drive and a few beautiful small lakes to see. At the beginning of the walk one can see a small monument in the honor of Edith Cavell who was a nurse in the 1<sup>st</sup> world war and was suspected to be a spy by the Germans and was shot. We had to translate to the Gr parents what was written on the monument so they could understand why that mountain was named after her.

We did not go for coffee yet in that small restaurant but decided to go after our walk. It was the same as before, the girls climbing the slopes before we could say not to do that. They were a little older than the first time we went there and we were not so afraid of their exploring the slopes anymore. The walk was as always fantastic, but now we could show it all to the Gr parents and they thought it was fantastic. Of course we had to show them the crevasses or crevisses. what ever they are called, sorry Leni you told us once but you know how it goes when one gets older. When walking among the snow and ice one get a suntan on one side, because of the reflection of the sun on the ice from the mountain. The glacier is called the Angel glacier, and when looking up to the glacier it looks like an angel with wings spread out, it is just beautiful. It is a sight never to forget, it is truly a magnificent sight. After throwing big chunks of snow and ice into the crevassis we walked back at the lower side of the valley, and in order to get back to the car and the restaurant we had to jump over some small streams which was at times quite difficult especially for the youngest and the older ladies in our group.

I go back one or two years when we went there with the Tenbrinks and we had to jump over the same streams. The smallest girls could not jump over the streams so Bram or I (Dad ) would more or less throw the girls across and one of us would catch, but one time Rietje fell in anyway and she was so embarrassed from falling in the water. Sorry Rietje we did our best under the circumstances.

Anyway we went to the restaurant at the end of our walk after first dodging birds which were there in flocks and almost attacking the people in order to get something to eat. We forgot the name of these birds, all we know they were gray and looked like crows.

After having something to eat and drink we went back over the same winding road to the campground and we were all happy to have been able to enjoy being outdoors with so much beautiful scenery around us. It was a day to remember. One thing has always amazed me and that is with all the rock and chunks of ice rolling down the slopes plants were growing some fair size trees but never very big, and than there were little tiny wee one just poking their tender branches through the rock and ice patches, with maybe a thimble full of earth to grow in. That is nature for you. You girls were always fascinated by it. They were all spruce or pine trees.

After an evening of loafing around and a good night sleep we were ready for our next trip which was about 90 miles from Jasper and that was to the Columbia ice field. On the way we stopped at the Athabasca falls which is also an impressive sight and it was hand holding time for the girls again since there were still no railings. After a short stop we went on to the icefields on the same road where we had a year before the vapor locks at the engine. It did not happen this time, because we were not pulling a trailer and it was also less stressful for the driver. Driving with an old car through the mountains was always a risky business and as I said stress ful, and it was an unwritten rule that since I (Dad ) was doing all the driving, I did not have to do anything in the way of making the supper or washing the dishes. All I had to do was making coffee and frying bacon or something in that area and gathering firewood for our evening campfire.

I did get away from our trip to the ice field, but the rest comes tomorrow. Well tomorrow came and we were at the icefield. In the little restaurant was a chart with all the dimensions of the ice field and it is truly amazing the thickness and the length and the width of it. We parked the car and walked to the ice mass. Sometimes when I am in one of my philosophical moods I am thinking back as far as I can, but never far enough to really understand how every thing was created, and then I wished to have been there just for 1 day to witness it. Not only with the creation but with so many things which happened before my time i.e. when the pioneers came to Canada and America to go for months across the prairies and the mountains in covered wagons, when the buffaloes were roaming by the millions and Edmonton and Calgary were just forts. Not forever but just to see it all as it was in the beginning. However man just does not live long enough and I think people of my age have seen a lot of things, and also all the changes whether we liked them or not. We cannot stand still because then we are going backwards and we live in a good time, it is just what we make of it, good or bad.

Well that was a little bit of nostalgia but now we are at the ice field and we took a lot of pictures of course. One of them I see before my eyes is Gr pa standing at the tongue of the ice just looking at it and maybe he was thinking the same things as I was and overwhelmed at the grandeur of it all. We did not go in the tracked vehicles on the ice, because we could not afford it and for us it was already enough just to look at it. Mam said that I also took a picture of Mam and the rest of our group all sitting on a big rock. These rocks had at one time been part of the mountain and had come tumbling down and I am glad I was not there at that time. We thought that we were walking on gravel and rock, but under all that was ice from the glacier. When we saw the ice field about 25 years later the ice had retreated a long way and the tracked vehicles were way back on the ice field. We went one or 2 times on the ice field later when Tante Ger and Oom Kees were here and one time with Bert. We always thought that there was lots of dirt on the ice, but with closer observation we saw that it was not dirt but little pieces of rock.

The guide told us that when we would fall in the holes in the ice it would probably take days before we would end up in the river, that is how long the tunnels were and they were worn in there by the thaw water.

I get away from the ice now, because thinking about the cold gives me goose bumps. One time when we were in Jasper in the busy season there were not enough pick-nick tables but we were lucky to find one and carry it to our camp spot. We had a place to put our camp stove on and a place to sit and eat. There was a couple close by with a small boy, but they had no table to put their food on and they used the car hood and the ground. When we were leaving to go somewhere else we asked these people if they would like to have "our" table. They were happy to take it, and they introduced themselves to us. They told us that they came from the states from a city called Massoula. They looked like hippies with the typical clothes and hairdo. He said to us, don't come to Massoula because it is one big mud hole. I think they were writing a book, because the woman said to the man, don't forget to write that in your book, after they had asked our name and address. Well they were happy to get a table and we were on our way to find other places to explore. We never saw or heard from these people anymore, we were just ships that pass at night. At any campground there are people for a short time living together with a common goal to enjoy nature, have fun and to get away from the daily routine and store up enough energy for a whole year. To use the jargon of the young people, the mountains are awesome.

Our holidays with the Gr parents was coming to an end and we were going home. What we had seen and the Gr parents had seen was almost too much to absorb. Every time we go on holidays and we see the mountains again, we are struck with a feeling of smallness beside the grandeur of nature.

Going home from Jasper was a 7 hour drive, but I am sure I have said that before. After driving for a few hours the chorus or actually the duet started by chanting hint, hint, hint, that meant we were getting close to Hinton where that small restaurant was with the picture of a windmill, but I don't know what that has to do with that restaurant, because there was nothing Dutch about it. Anyway the time had come to stop for french fries, the after the holidays treat, and of course it was good to stop for a bit and stretch our legs and walk around for a bit and at to fill up the canvas water bag. Before all the highways were finished we had to drive into the City of Edmonton all the way up to the Mc Donald hotel and from there on south to Camrose. It is a lot easier now since we don't have to go through Edmonton but go through Devon and hit the highway outside Edmonton going west. Now you know. In the 1960's we stopped once more to make use of a bathroom but I don't know exactly where, but that does not matter any more.

It was good to be on holidays, but it was good to be home again. There was a little surprise waiting for us in the form of a pail with young trees. They were promised to us by mister Charlie Killam some time before. The Charlie Killam school is named after him, but I think he had been the principal at an other school and when the Charlie Killam school was build it was named after him, or something like that.

We had to figure out where the trees had to be planted since we still had a lot of garden space with potatoes and vegetables. Gr pa did all the planting of the trees and they all grew beautifully to big trees, and one in particular because that one was planted over the sewer line, but we did not know that. Over the years the sewer pipe broke and than the roots started to grow in the pipe. No wonder that the tree grew so well with a good supply of water. As you all know that tree has been a tree to climb in and that has been done by our children, the grandchildren and now the gr grand children. Over the years it has been a great spot to take pictures with adults and children in and around the tree." Het kleine roode trapje" stands against it so the little ones can get in the tree. Even with all the grief we have had from the roots growing in the pipe we never wanted to cut the tree down. When the pipe is plugged I phone Jorgenson and have it augured out and than it is ok for a long while, but now I also do it with the snake from the College as a pre-maintenance measure and I have been promised that I can borrow the snake after I quit working there, so what more do I want. The tree stays where it is.

Gr pa was not feeling so good, he got tired very easy and some time after he had been mowing the grass he was lying in the grass quite often and sleeping. We thought that it was old age, he was 68 at the time but it was more serious than that but I will write about that later. He had smoked all his life and that was probably the cause of his tiredness and shortness of breath.

You all remember the Kramers I wrote about a little while ago. They also had a visitor from the "old country", Jack's mother and that is a story all by it self. One evening they came to visit us, and all that time she was cutting down every thing what was good in Canada. It became a little bit too much for the Gr parents who saw Canada as their 2<sup>nd</sup> country and thought every thing was good. Jack's mother said that she did not think that the mountains were that spectacular and that she had seen mountains in Switzerland and Italy. The Gr parents were slowly getting mad at



her and it became a word fight, because the Gr parents had such a good time here and thought that every thing they had seen was just fantastic. We know that Jack was embarrassed by it all and we were all glad that the visit came to an end. We heard later that she was complaining about the streets when she was pushing the stroller on the way home, that they were uneven, but we knew that of course. After she left to go home there was happiness in their family, but Elma had lost 11 pound. She could be an add in one of these magazines with an picture on the front page saying "Lose 11 pounds in 3 weeks, invite your Mother in law for a visit".

I now go forward to the present time which is 1998. This morning I heard a nice story from a church service on tv which goes like this

There was a small town in Europe with a small population, and in the WW2 they got caught in the fire of the 2 fighting armies and a lot of the town was destroyed. When the war was over and the people started to see how bad it had been they found that the statue of Jesus which stood at the entrance of the village had been hit. They felt so bad about that, and decided to repair it by cementing all the pieces together. All the parts were found except the hands which were broken from the outstretched arms of Jesus. Instead of making on new hands, they left it but engraved a poem on the base which goes like this:

"I have no hands but your hands to do my work  
I have no feet but your feet to lead me on my way  
I have no tongue but your tongue to tell me how I died  
I have no help but your help to bring men to God's side"

I liked that poem, that is why I wrote it in this book. They tell you some nice stuff in some church services which are worth keeping.

I will now write a few more happenings from campgrounds. One time we were camping in Vernon and beside us was a couple very much like us, and they gave us a fish they had caught not that long ago. We did not really know what to do with it and later on we had to throw the fish away, because we did not have a cooler to keep it fresh and Mam knows exactly when a fish is fresh or not and that one was not fresh anymore. This was not really what I wanted to write about. We were having our supper and so did our neighbour campers and they had the table set and one of them sat down and than the other one was going to sit at the same side, and than it happened, the table tipped and every thing including the hot coffee pot. We could not help it but we had to laugh very discretely behind our hands and in the mean time these people were scrambling to get to their feet. I went over there to see if I could help but they did not get hurt, the coffeepot missed them. Later we told them that we had to laugh about it, because it was so comical and they said that they could understand. They were laughing about that to.

For years you girls had been asking if you could go horse riding in Jasper but we never had money for the three oldest girls. However one year Mam had saved quarters for a whole year in my old tobacco pouch, and when the holidays were there, it was going to happen. We looked at the horses and they did not look dangerous to us, a little sway backed, but that was from old age. Mam paid the stable man and off they went at a very slow pace. Hetty Leni and Mary went but Elsjie stayed with us, because we thought that she was a little bit too young to go horse riding. I don't know what we did to pass the time, maybe we went to the town and had an ice cream cone or something. When they came back we were waiting for them. Hetty said that the horse was going to slow for her, but her sisters thought that it was nice. They were gone for an hour and it

really had been a surprise for them, because Mam had kept it a secret.

O.K. back to the grandparents again. We were asked by the Lysengs to go with them to Miquelon lake for a steak fry but we thought that it would be difficult for every body because if the language barrier so we decided to decline the invitation. Mam said that it maybe would be to cold at the lake, and than Glen said that it was to bad, because his Mam made a big pick-nick and Leane said that her father had gone to town to get steaks. After we heard about all the preparations they had made we decided to accept the invitation. It was a great success, we had steak, chicken, cake, salad, baked potatoes and corn. We were not used to corn because we had never eaten it in Holland. There it was used to feed pigs and we did not know that this here was a different kind which was much smaller and softer. It was a very nice after noon and for many years after they had met, Vera asked about your Gr. parents, very thoughtful of her.

Since I am on the subject of eating here is one more outing and eating but with the Y,C,Fellowship from the church. It was a pick-nick at Ross's flats, or more a steak fry. Gr pa was very shy and did not want to go and get his own food, so Gr ma went and came back with 2 plates loaded with steak salad baked potatoes one for her and one for Gr pa. Later on she went back for the dessert for 2 people. It was kind of funny to see her talking with people in her so called English language. She was not shy at all, even in church she was singing with the congregation like she had been her all her life. I was in my (Dad )eating as much as I could days, because when the pick-nick was finished there were some steaks left, and I did get my 2<sup>nd</sup> steak and had no trouble eating that one to. At home we always ate good, but steak we could not afford even when they cost only maybe 60 or 70 cent each.

Your Mama was and still is an excellent cook and there was never a shortage of cookies cake and all that good stuff. I should not say stuff so far as food is concerned but it rolls so easy from my pen or keyboard. When we were younger than now and we could eat as much as we could and not being afraid of getting over weight, the apple pies did not last to long. Every after noon Mam would sit down a while when Laura Lindsey was on TV with her cooking show from 1 to 1,30 and Mam would be experimenting with the recipes and that worked out very well because there were always willing mouth to try them.

The visit from the Gr parents worked out very well considering they were here for 3 months. Once and a while there was a little trouble because Gr pa could become very critical of what you girls were doing, and than I had to talk with him and tell him that it was their house and that they could do what they wanted as long as it was ok with us. He could become very moody and maybe he could not understand young people anymore.

In August the birthdays of Mam and Gr pa were celebrated with apple pie chocolate chip cookies and cake, and that was almost the end of their visit. Generally speaking it had been a good visit. The garden had been taken care of, and we had a bumper crop, but before we could harvested it we had to bring the Gr parent to Calgary so that they could catch the train to Montreal which made that the end of the visit. When we were waiting at the train station we saw the Spunik going over and it was the first time we had seen that, technology had come a long way. We had to drive back in the dark and we were not that sad, because we had our own life to live and there was a busy time coming with the garden and you girls starting school again. Also it was going to be busy at the shop because there would be a good harvest even after the hail which had destroyed a lot but not every thing, and the amount of moisture which had come with the hail

made all the grain growing real good. Before the Gr parents left we made a promise that Mam would come to Holland the next year to visit her parents and family. However it turned out different than we thought.

Well we went back to our own daily life again, but once in a while Mam or I will remember something of the past summer and than I will write about that. Elsje was 8 year at that time and one day she came home from school before noon at about 10 o'clock, went to Mam gave her a kiss and said, hi Mam. Mam looked at her and did not think that she was sick and asked her, why are you home so early, you are not sick I hope. No she said I am not sick, and than Mam asked her why are you home so early. What happened was that when they had recess Elsje put on her coat and went home thinking that it was 12 o'clock. Is it not nice to be so young and time has no meaning yet?. Mam wrote a note to the teacher and explained what had happened. And every thing was ok. I am sure she to must have thought that it was funny.

At about the same time we still had the little room, also called "het kleine kamertje" and that was used as bedroom for Elsje. It was also used as a sick room, so that Mam did not have to walk up and down the stairs all the time. One time when Leni was sick she occupied the bed in the little room. She had a very high fever and Mam went into the room after she heard her screaming. Leni sat up in the bed, had hallucinations and did not recognize Mam and was clawing at her with outstretched hands. It was really something to be scared about. She had a bad case of the flu and one of us phoned the doctor and he prescribed medication which we picked up from the drug store. Eventually she came out of it after Mam washed her with cool water, the doctor had said we could do that. Our doctor at that time was Fjordbotten.

When children are sick there are always hectic days and some times also hectic nights with the sick child waking up many times during the night. In Holland where it could be quite cold at night, we would take the sick one in our bed, that was so much easier than getting out of bed all the time. In Holland the stove was not burning at night that is why it was so chilly.

I don't remember the date, but one time Hetty was sick with a high fever like she was burning up, that was when we still lived in Holland. We think it was Christmas time. When gifts were given Hetty got a chocolate doll figurine and with shaky hands she took it in her hands and was admiring it and slow but sure her hands which were hot from the fever started to melt the chocolate until it was all around her fingers. When children are sick, there are most of the time 2 parents to look after them, but what happens when a parent gets the flu. That is not so very easy to solve, than there is a lot of lost sleep and tiredness. What we did most of the time with you girls was that I (Dad ) took care of who ever was sick during the night and Mam took care of who was sick during the day, because I had to go to work in the day time and we could not afford to lose 1 or 2 days of pay. A little loss of sleep has never bothered me that much.

At work we get a phone call once in a while from one of the guys telling us that he can not come to work because he did not get enough sleep. I can not understand that, but it is so easy to do when one gets paid for that day.

Well now I get away from the sickness and go to an other little story. I just go back a little bit when the Gr parents were still here. In order to show them as much as possible from Canada we took them also once to Reynolds museum in Wetaskiwin where they really could see how it was in "them olden days". That museum had it all. Gr pa was most interested in the farm machinery, especially the combine which needed 36 horses or mules to be pulled. If you think

about it that it is only 36 horse power, while the newer combines have engines in the 200 HP range, or mule power. We were walking round the grounds when we came to a old little house and we went in to look, but there was not much to see except a small doll crib. Gr ma thought that it was thrown away and she said to Mam, why don't you take it home ?. Mam said I can not do that because it belongs to the antique collection. There is a lot to see and now there is a beautiful museum where every thing is and that all has been repaired and some in working condition. Mam and I have not been there yet, some day we will go, but my eyes can see where my feet cannot go. That is poetry.

On one of our outings we went to Edmonton center. The Gr parents were still with us and we were looking around the big stores which they liked very much, because in Holland there were no big stores where so many different items are to buy in one place. Hetty was not with us, so we had you 3 girls with us. The ratio was 5 women to 2 men and you know in whose favor. Gr pa and I (Dad) wanted to look at tools and man related stuff, but with so many women we did not have to much of a chance to look at those things. Guess were most of the time was spend, in the hat department. It was like some women were let loose in that department, and they were trying on all kinds of hats. Rietje was trying out a hat and when she found a funny hat with daisies she put that one on her head and pulled Mam's sleeve and looked at her with a very naughty face, and than Leni and Elsje wanted to do the same thing. The adults did not stay behind and were doing it to, making fun with the hats that is. Gr pa and I were moving a little bit away from them, but they were calling us every time they found a hat which they thought was funny. We had the whole floor to our selves but we were still a little bit embarrassed, the men that is.

After that ordeal we went to have some lunch, and they were still teasing us but it was all good natured. We had a good time and when we looked at all the beautiful furniture we thought about the time that we could afford to buy that. But we could wait and were happy with what we had. I go now in my time capsule, replace my self in the future 38 years ahead.

The year is 1998 April 4<sup>th</sup>. Mam is watching the figure skating on tv and I am poking away at the keyboard. This morning while standing on the patio I saw a robin picking away at something only birds know what it is. For us it is a sign of spring being around the corner. Last Monday there were geese flying over and their honking was a welcome sound. This was the winter in which El Ninjo ruled. While we were "basking" in zero temperatures, around the world were places where the nature was raising havoc with storm, rain, tornadoes and heavy snowfall. Heat waves and fires in Australia. Nature was topsy turvy, a true nature phenomena. Oh yes something what has nothing to do with nature, Leni and Arie are in Las Vegas and Elsje has a cat. Quebec had freezing rain which brought the country back to the time when there was no electricity. It lasted for weeks and created a lot of hardship. Power lines and towers snapped of like small branches and it was not much better with the trees. This was some news from the winter of '97-'98. Today is Saturday with the temperature of 12C. Now we go back to the future again.

It was about the same time that Hetty was confirmed in our church by Pastor Johnson. When we came home from church that Sunday Hetty had the flu with a high fever of 104 F. Mam sent her to bed to get better and that did not take long, and during the week she had a party for the confirmants. Mam had made all kind of goodies and there were also hamburgers and of course the never forgotten kool-aid. All went fine until one boy from the class who was not invited crashed the party. Hetty came to Mam and told her about that boy who's name was Wayne. Mam

downstairs and told him to get out of the house which he did. His last name was Obenauer He is married to Darlene who is now the receptionist at our church. We did not think that he was a bad boy, just a teenager who felt left out.

The Junior Lutheran league of which Hetty and Leni were members was having a scavenger hunt. About 20 young and hungry teenagers were running from house to house where mothers had prepared all kinds of different food i.e. Mam had to make scalloped potatoes some one else had meat and an other Mam had vegetables and so on and the next one had dessert. It was a great success and before Mam realized it, every thing was gone. That was one of the times that the 2 youngest girls were sitting at the kitchen table watching all the busy bee stuff that was going on. Mam had made scalloped potatoes for us when we had our supper. I (Dad) did not like these potatoes very well and I never did get used to liking them. At that time Janet Bergman was the Parish worker at our church, and she was a very busy person. One time when I brought the 2 oldest girls to the church for one of their activities when Janet came to me, looked red in her face and was very upset. She asked me if I would help her with some very unruly boys, who were instead of being in the basement in the church running over the pews and making a real ruckus. I was able to restore order, but felt bad for her because she had to do that all by her selves.

Children are so happy go lucky and don't have a care in the world, and that is what happened to Elsjie. She was still very young maybe 3 years old that when she was playing with the neighbour hood friend at the school ground, she got warm and took of her corduroy jacket and came home without taking it along. She had forgotten it. It was never found again, maybe somebody took it home, or that it was not found because the grass was so high and nobody saw it. It was a jacket her aunt Mien had made when we were still in Holland. Something like that happened also to Rietje, but it was with a sweater Mam had made for her. I can think what was said when she came home without it." Kind weet je wel hoe lang Ik daarop heb zitten breien".(Child), Do you realize how long it took me to knit this sweater. I do not know what her reaction was, but she must have felt guilty.

I am still amazed how Mam would get all you girls ready for school in the morning. I went to work about 10 minutes before 8 in the morning and most of you girls were still sleeping when I left. Every thing had to be done in ½ an hour. Breakfast, dressing, hair braided and when it was very cold , getting lunch pails ready. Mam just told me that you when it was time to go you would all march around the table to the music of the cfrn and singing a song, but Mam could not remember the words. May be one of your girls know the words, it has something in it like Uncle Sam. Well anyway Mam was even marching around the table with all of you. While doing so you all had your lunch pail or lunch bag between your index finger and thumb while marching around the table.

It was not always peace and quiet in our house, some time there had to be some one punished and I tell you the punishment was never severe, most of the time a good talking to would do the trick. One time Mam gave Leni a talking to, and you know what she said,"Mam you spit in my eye ." That took the edge of the punishment and Mam started to laugh, Leni laughed and every thing was forgotten.

In this day and age we are so clock orientated, in 1998 much more than we used to be. When Mam and I were young and living at our parents house we only had one alarm clock and we were woken up by one of our parents calling at the bottom of the stairs that it was time to get up. Mam just told me that she was very slow in getting up. She would move the chair to give the impression that she was out of bed, but that was not true and she had to be called again and again. It was different at

school ground, she got warm and took off her corduroy jacket and came home without taking it along. She had forgotten it. It was never found again, maybe somebody took it home, or that it was not found because the grass was so high and nobody saw it. It was a jacket her aunt Mien had made when we were still in Holland. Something like that happened also to Rietje, but it was with a sweater Mam had made for her. I can think what was said when she came home without it." Kind weet je wel hoe lang Ik daarop heb zitten breien". (Child), Do you realize how long it took me to knit this sweater. I do not know what her reaction was, but she must have felt guilty.

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A few paragraphs back I mentioned the cfrn, but it was the C,F,C,W. Mam was at one time listening to that station and lo and behold she heard Dutch voices singing a Dutch song and guess who's they were, Leni's and Hetty's. They had gone to the station and the people there asked them if they wanted to sing a song, and that is what they did. It goes like this. Het zonnetje schynt zo heerlyk schoon

Het vogeltje zingt op blyde toon  
In de weide dartelt het jolige vee  
Lustig klinkt ons lied zing met ons mee

Loosely translated it is. The sun shines beautiful clean. The birds are singing happy. In the pasture frolicsome dances the calves. Happy sound our song, sing along with us.

It was a song they had learned in the school in Hengelo one of the first classes and even with learning the English language they had not forgotten the words of that song.

You all know what Lent means, it are the 4 weeks before Easter but it can also be translated to "Let's eliminate Negative Thinking". Just something I thought about but was not made up by me.

Elsje had a flair for dancing and she joined the ballet. We think that she was about 12 years old, but before that she was in a play at school for the Christmas season. Elsje and Lee Fjordbotten, they were about 6 or 7 years old and were dancing on the stage, and they were dancing so fast that Elsje's shoe flew off her foot and landed in the audience. It did not bother her and she kept on dancing. She was always what you now call "cool", That is Elsje for you.

I started to write about Elsje's ballet dancing, but I screwed up my paging and have to fix that first.

I did not fix it, because my knowledge of the computer is very limited but I do my best. I hope my writing is appreciated since I am not a typist. O yes back to the ballet dancing. Elsjé became friends with a girl from Fallun that is west of Wetaskiwin who was also taking ballet lessons. It happened that her parents were also from Holland. After we got acquainted with them we became friends we visited each other. They lived on a farm, a pig farm that is and when the wind was from the wrong direction there was no doubt what kind of farm it was. The girl's name was Brenda and she had 2 brothers Jerry and Peter, and her parents names were Margriet and Pieter. The reason they became friends was that the ballet school moved to Wetaskiwin because there was not enough interest for it in Camrose. Well any way when Jerry got married we were invited to the wedding. It was held in Wetaskiwin and after the wedding we were invited to the lunch and dance, but our left feet pointed in the direction of home.

In that time the ballet school had a performance in the Charlie Killam gymnasium where in Elsjé played the roll of Heidie, and we have the pictures to show you. We cannot remember how long she took lessons but it came to an end because it became to difficult to drive to Wetaskiwin, especially in the winter that created to many problems. We always wanted to keep Elsjé's ballet shoes, but she lend them to Brenda who stayed with the ballet school longer, but we never did get them back.

I am jumping the gun now but since I am writing about that time I have to tell about the time Karin was with us and we ,Mam and Dad and Karin went to the van Immerzeel's, that was there last name, where I was going to mount a welder on their tractor. Karin was a hyper, for lack of an other name, little girl. While I was working she was driving Mam crazy by running away all the time, and her particular interest was a little shed where Margriet always milked the cows, of which they had 3. I never did get that job finished because we had to go home. Hopefully I will write about Karin later, but I am not so far yet.

In the early 70's we became the proud owners of 2 snow mobiles and at that time we went to the van Immerzeels a few times because it was nice to go snow mobiling there on the farm where there is so much space. Margriet died of cancer in the middle 70's and after that the relation ship petered out. Peter sr sold the farm to Jerry but he could not make a go of it and the bank took over. Except for Peter, the youngest son, every body moved to Nakusp where Jerry had found a job in the forest industry. Two years ago Pieter sr died, that was in 1996. We heard that from Leni who read that in the Edmonton journal. We think that Brenda still lives in Edmonton where she is a teacher.

You all remember that we brought the Gr parents to the Calgary railway station we promised that Mam would come to Holland next year. It happened, but not in the way we thought. In the middle of March Mam got a letter from her sister, that if she wanted to see her mother alive that she should come to Holland as soon as possible. We all talked about it and the decision was that Mam should go to Holland to see her Mother. I went to Shuman travel to get a form to obtain a pass port, and after filling it out I brought it back to Shuman with Mam passport picture and in the time of one week the passport was mailed to us. There was a very good service in those days. I had to go to the bank to borrow money for the trip and also for spending money. For an open ticket that time the cost was 900 dollars, but we had a good credit rating at the bank and there was no problem getting the money. When the day arrived that Mam had to leave we all

went with her to the airport to see Mam off. It was all so easy in these days, no heavy security. After we said our good bye's and Mam went in the plane we went to the outside and we could see the plane from behind a chain link fence. The engines revved a little and the plane turned around to get ready for take off. Mam had a window seat and we could wave once more to her. Elsje was still small and I had found a crate and she stood on that so she could see better. I don't know what kind of plane it was but it had turbo jet engines. When it was time to take off the pilot revved the engines and it was such a thrust that they blew Elsje from the crate. In all our sadness we still had something to laugh about. When we were on the highway on our way home, we saw the plane flying over us. For the first while nobody said any thing we were all still thinking about Mam going away from us and we did not know for how long.

We had to wait quite a while to hear from Mam and the next day mam phoned that she was safely in the Hague, Holland and after that it was a little easier for us. We had to do all the work that Mam usually did and I tell you that from than on we respected her even more. We all worked in the house doing our "chores" and after we were getting used to it, it became easier. Our friends the Tenbrinks were still living in Camrose and we were invited often for supper and that we never refused.

Mam just told me about her first days back home again. When she left the plane she did not see anybody so she sat down on a bench and waited and after a little while she saw Gr ma V and my sister and after the hugging and kissing they were having coffee and than Mam saw her brother and it was hugging and kissing again.

Mam still talking. Mam's brother was at the airport with his brother in law, his wife and 2 children and Mam was going with them to her sisters home where Gr pa Z was also waiting for her. It was one of the smallest cars on the market and with 6 people it was like herring in a barrel. When Mam saw the rest of her family it was kissing and hugging again. She found every thing so small in comparison to Canada. Mam sat down and the tirednes over took her and she started to cry like she never did in her life before. Gr pa Z said to her why are you crying?. Nobody understood what it was to be away from family and in strange surroundings and after an 11 hour flight and with the jetlag and all. Later in the day Mam went with her brother to the hospital to visit Gr ma Z. And of course it was kissing and hugging again and it was the first of many visits Mam made to see her mother. She went faithfully 2 times a day and that was sure sapping her strength. Gr ma Z died the 21st of May. Mam had stayed with the Gr parents V all the time, and it would have meant the end of Mam if she had to stay some where else. The day after Gr ma's death Mam went for a walk with Gr ma V to Overvoorde, a park close by. Mam started to cry again and than Gr ma said, Mary you have to go home as soon as possible back to your family, it has been enough. The same day they went to the office of the KLM to book the return flight and that was for the day after Gr ma's funeral. We had bought tickets for an open flight so that Mam could come back any time she wanted. It had taken a big bite out of our budget which we did not have. I had to go to the bank and arranged for a loan, and that was no problem because we had a good credit rating and owned a house. We needed 900 dollars for the flight and of course spending money. Now Mam is talking again, and she is telling me that she was with her Mother when she died and that was the first time she had seen that. The whole family was present when that happened.



I wrote already about the money we had to borrow, there is so much to remember, it is almost impossible to do that.

Mam phoned that she was coming home, and were we ever looking forward to that. Of course we all went to the airport to welcome her back and it was so good to see her again after she came through customs. Talking about hugging and kissing there was almost no end to it and Mam must have realized how much we had missed her and visa-versa. She looked very tired after that long trip and the ordeal she had gone through, but we thought she is home again and every thing is going to be ok

When Mam was gone I broke a bone in my hand and had to be in a cast for 4 weeks. Incidentally it was dr Petersen who did it, put the cast on that is. He had just started at the clinic. I had to be of for a while and I thought why not make Mam happy and install a new floor in the kitchen. I had to install plywood first to make the floor level and than glue tiles down. The tiles were easy to do, but the plywood had to be nailed down and that was not so easy, since I am a clutch with my left hand and my right hand in a cast. I cannot remember but am sure that the girls have helped me, they just loved that kind of work.

We had planted the garden and cleaned up every where and we showed all that to Mam but she was just to exhausted to become enthousiastic about anything. The first night and day she slept for about 24 hours, and after that when ever she was sitting in her chair she was sleeping. Some thing was wrong and we went to the doctor, who was Hamp Smith and he gave her an injection with vitamin B12 and prescribed iron pills and that did the trick. Mam had become very anemic and she was border line pernicious anemic and it could become very dangerous. She was getting stronger and showed more interest in her surroundings. I stop now to write about that time but it had touched Mam body and soul, and what happened a couple of years after that did not help to get her back to her old self again and that is one subject I hate to talk about.

Mam is talking again. When Mam stepped in the plane in Holland she was seated beside 2 ladies and they talked a little bit, but when the plane took off Mam fell asleep and did not wake up untill the stewardess anounced to fasten seat belts and they were almost approaching Edmonton, and that for a person who never can sleep in an airplane.

I wrote before that Mam was home sick for Holland and family the frst 7 years of being in Canada, but that was all over now and was never longing to go "home" again except for holidays

On one of our holidays "back home" we were driving with Bert and Tante Ger and Oom Kees some where in Holland and we stopped at a small restaurant and we had some thing to drink or what ever and when we were leaving Mam and I were the last one out, and than a voice said "Dag mevrouw" really nice and than Mam said also "Dag Mevrouw" and when we looked around where the voice came from we saw a big Parrot sitting on a perch saying good bye Ma,m to every body who was leaving the restaurant. We thought it was funny and than every body wanted to see the parrot.

I thought I write something funny after the sad part, we all need to laugh sometimes, it is said that it is good for the liver but I don't know if that is true, any way it feels good.

On page 55 I mentioned that Gr pa V was very tired and why, because there was someting wrong with his lungs. In 1963 the grand parents went to Australia where Dad's

youngest sister and her family had emigrated to. They, the Grand parents that is, went by ship and that was a 6 weeks trip, and by going through the Suez canal Gr pa was sick and they thought it was from the heat. He was lying in their cabin most of the time and the ships doctor said that when they arrived in Australia he had to go to a doctor right away. after they arrived and were settled he went to a doctor, and after a check up the doctor found that one of his lungs had collapsed. He was operated on right away and they took that lung out. He was lying in a room with more cancer patients, but Gr pa was never told that he had lung cancer, but we all thought that he knew because he was in a room with cancer patients. The 3 months they were in Australia was not so nice, because my sister had to work in the bakery all day and was so tired that when she was sitting down she fell asleep. Beside that she had to take care of 5 children. There was never any contact with the nephews and nieces from Australia. O by the way they owned a pastry bakery but are now retired and now they live in Maryborough, where ever that is.

I forgot to mention something I do that now. When Mam came back from Holland she brought presents for all of us. We all know that she had a very difficult time while she was there but still went out of her way to buy souvenirs for us. One present was a cuckoo clock for all of us, and I(dad) got a fancy pipe and a Delfts blue ashtray and for one of you a doll with traditional dress but for the rest of you, Mam cannot remember.

Talking about traditional costumes. One time there was a kind of a fair in the Charlie Killam gym and every body was asked to get their national folklore costumes and participate in the fair. Elsje was friends with Grace Vandenberg and they had 2 Dutch costumes and one of these fitted Elsje and together with Grace they did a wooden shoe dance. Grace posed as a boy and Elsje as a girl. The organizers asked every body to lend some of their artifacts from the country they came and set up a little booth and than it was open for the public. There was some music from different countries which gave it the international flair. One of the woman organizer's father was Chester Ronning and he had been missionary in China before the commies took over, and they had some artifacts from China. We had lend quite a few of our Dutch things we had, and we were guarding these with our lives. One of these was a wall hanging scene of an interior from the 1600's. All in all it was a very nice little fair.

On page 62 in the middle I wrote that I would write a little more about Karin, and I will slowly getting there. When Mam came back from Holand she was very run down and she never completely became her old self again. Hetty got to know a guy whose name I don't even want to mention. Hetty was in Edmonton where she was in training to become a nurses aid what is now called licensed practical nurse and after she had graduated she had to go to Ponoka general hospital. She had been home when she had a couple of days off and when I had to bring her back it had snowed and the roads were very bad. After we dropped her of it took hours to get home again. Bram Tenbrink had come along with us, us being me and that guy who stayed in Ponoka where he lived in a motel. I hurt me to write this, but history had to be told. When we came home, where Mam had waited with Mary Tenbrink, I saw there was some thing wrong. That was the time Mam

suffered her nervous brake down. The tension of waiting had been to much, like the straw that broke the camel's back. There had been many more problems with that guy before and after this, because the break down was not the result of our trip to Ponoka but the

build up toward this had started a couple of years before. I do not write about him anymore, we all know the rest. Hetty got married to him and out of that union was born a daughter of which Hetty could not take care, and the baby came to live with us, and stayed for 2 years. You all know her name, Karin Maria. You girls were crazy about her and every body took care of her. In the day time Mam took care of her but I did my bit during the night when she had to have her bottle. Mam was just not up to do that, and I never minded it. We all did our bit to raise her as a good little baby, who by the way had her own will. You could figure that out about what I wrote when we were at the van Immerzeels. But she was very precious to all of us and in my mind I see one of you, and some times 2 of you walking with her in the stroller. It was good for Mam that she had Karin for 2 years, it filled her days and took her mind of the problems she had after her breakdown. Mam walked often with her in the baby carriage or stroller, it depended on the weather. It was like the sisters all of a sudden had a little baby sister. We think that Karin always felt abandoned by her Mother, there was always a little or maybe a lot of resentment and there never was that bonding little babies have with their mother.

What ever it maybe, she was loved in her adopted family and the family sure enjoyed her in the 2 years she was with us, and nobody can deny that.

We still had Karin when Hetty surprized us that she was pregnant again. I believe her doctor had told her that it would be good for her, but that is hard to believe. It sure blew my cork. After 2 years with us Karin went to her own house, but we had her many times after that when Hetty had to go to the hospital. By than it was not so easy for Mam anymore because she was getting sicker and there was not to much help from doctors, and all they could do was giving more medicines and Mam needed more and more and had to go to the hospital in Camrose or in Ponoka. At one time the doctor took her of all her medication and I (Dad) was with her in the hospital sitting with her for 9 hours. The medication was mostly valium and melleril. In the summer time when doctors went on holidays and Mam had to go to an other one they prescribed all the time more medication. I better stop now about because it is to hard on us, and we rather forget about it but that is not so easy. But I have to say that one time Mam was in the hospital for 7 weeks.

I go to an other subject now but my book is almost finished. You girls all found your Man and it is up to you now to write your own story but I will write a little more. Once and a while something pops up in my head and I add a little bit to our story.

In 1961 we bought an other car which was much newer and more modern. By that time Leni was learnig to drive a car, and that was the bath tub look a like green car. It was mostly done north of our house where there was a dead end gravel road and almost made for student drivers to learn to drive a car. Eventually Leni did get her license and could go to college with the car. The green car was getting old and quite often would not start and than I had to go and rescue her. She loved the Nash Ambassador which was a car of class and when I did not need it she could take it to the college. Eventually Rietje learned also how to drive a car and when she started to work at the Booster she bought a VW, also called The Bug. Leni when she started to work bought a car of many colours, I don't know what make it was, but that did not matter, it was a good driving car. For some reason Elsjie was not interested in driving a car, and that was fine with me, because it is not so easy to teach a family member to drive a car. We kept the Ambassador for 3 years and than we bought a brand spanking new Nash Rambler, and that was in 1965. It had an

automatic transmission but not an air conditioner. We had not yet finished paying for our house and this was an added drain to our not to big budget. We did not want our new car to stand outside in the winter, so I decide to build a garage. I had hired a contractor to build the frame, but after one wall he did not come back and when I asked him why he quit, he said that he had contracted a big job and that I did not have to pay him for the one wall he did. How gracious. Bob Gilleland who worked for me at the shop helped me to erect the walls and he gave me a door which was left over when he renovated his house. I have never said no to a gift. I made the rafters myself, that was cheaper than buying, and when we had to shingle the roof Leni was helping me like a experience roofer and was not afraid to sit on top of that roof. Before I started to build that garage I had asked a trucker that if he ever had some gravel left, I would like to buy that from him. One day when I came home from work, ther was a big pile of gravel, not a little bit but a whole truck load. Pete Seiben had brought that and when I asked him how much it cost, nothing, because when I need to get something done at my truck you guys are always ready to do it, and that helps my business. Well there I was with 8 yards of gravel but now what to do with it. I had to dig out all the clay and black dirt at least 2 feet deep, and it took me quite a while to do that but with perseverance I did get that done. Oh my poor back!

In 1966 we did get the garage finished but there was not yet a concrete floor in, but about that, I talked to another trucker Ed Rudyk who also had the cement mix plant. There was always some cement left after they had to pour cement for a basement or some job like that and I asked him if I could have that, and he said I will give you a call when that happens. Lo and behold he called me one day that there was enough left for the whole floor. The trouble with that is that I always had the forms ready and than I had to level it out, because they just poured it on the gravel. But I always say, one can not look a gift horse in the mouth. Both Pete Seiben and Ed Rudyk are now in that great gravel pit in the sky. It is not so easy anymore to get some thing for free, it is a big business now.

It is now 1966 and Leni is going to Holland for an undeterment time. It was not easy for us to see her go, but she was at a time in her life that she could not decide what she wanted to do, and going to Holland seems to be the right thing to do. She was going to stay with the Gr parents V. It happened just when they were going on holidays with my sister Mien and her family and said it was ok if Leni wanted to come along. Talking about camping, they were going in a small bus with 10 people, adults and children. If you want to know about this trip, ask Leni.

In 1967 Mam and I went to Holland for our first holiday in Holland. Leni had gone with 2 of her cousins, Nelleke and Lydia on holidays in Austria and there she met Arie, and they became an item, and when we were in Holland we met Arie's parents. I write this in 4 lines but it lasted 2 years and than she came back to Canada and Arie would come a year later. And so it happened. When the time came for Arie's arrival in Edmonton we, Mam and I, went with Leni to the railway station to welcome Arie to Canada. We were all a little nervous about it and we were talking about the trip etc. Arie said that when he ordered dessert ,he said he wanted ice. In Holland ice means icecream. It is one of the things immigrants have to cope with, but if it does not get any worse it is nothing to worry about. Well anyway we were talking and talking and all of a sudden the road did not seem familiar, and than I realized that we passed the road to Camrose and were on our way to Wainwright. I felt kind of bad, because I was suppose to know the direction, I was the

driver. Any way we turned and were on our way to Camrose. Arie stayed with us as a boarder for lack of a better word in the all purpose basement room until they got married, and from there on it is their story, but there are a couple of holidays I will mention.

The first one we went on with Leni and Arie was to BC where Arie's uncle and aunt lived who had a dairy farm. I had borrowed a trailer from Bob Fitzgerald and that one was so heavy that we could not go faster than 45 miles per hour and that was bad in the mountains where the engine started to over heat. It was a very hot summer and there were forest fires which did not cool the air of either. I believe we camped first in Banff and then in Lyton and that was the hottest place in Canada. There were forest fires but not too close so that we could camp in Lyton, but in the evening a <sup>f</sup>or<sup>e</sup>st ranger came to us and said that we had to hook up the trailer because the wind had shifted and we had to get ready to go in a moment notice if it became dangerous. Leni became panicky and wrapped the alarm clock in a bag with clothes, she was a great help. The ranger said that we had to pull the trailer on the road and when we tried to do that the car could not pull the trailer out of the gravel. Lucky for us the ranger was still there and he pulled it out with his 4 wheel drive.

Arie and I were sitting in the trailer playing cards all night because we were afraid that the fire would come too close and we were not ready to go. I have never been in a place where it was so hot. There was spontaneous combustion and we saw the tree bark burst in fire. The next morning we left early, and we were just through Lyton when they closed the road and that road stayed close for 2 days. If we had to go back it would have been 90 miles back to take an other road.

It was so nice in Abbotsfort, Mam said that was as close to paradise as one could get. On our way back we took an other road to avoid the fires, but we passed an other forest fire which was so hot that it hurt our faces and we had to close the windows. Of course the engine started to over heat again and Arie and I had to go down to a creek to get that canvas bag with water to pour in the radiator. The rest of the trip home we did not have too much trouble anymore. A little bit back we had to go down hill, braking all the time, and all my companions were sleeping for at least 30 mile of that stretch, and I was sweating all by my self, because the brakes were over heating.

The next year we bought a little trailer, and talking about little. When Mam wanted to go to bed early I had to sit outside, because there was no room for me and a chair. The year after BC Leni and Arie went with us to Moose lake and some other lakes of which I don't know the names. We were planning to do some fishing, and Arie and I were catching a lot of fish. Arie cleaned some of the biggest ones and we had a fish fry of the freshest fish we ever had. The next day we were fishing again and the women wanted to do some fishing too and then we committed the biggest mistake a fisherman can make, we gave the fishing rods to Mam and Leni. That was the end of our fishing, and we were elevated to the job of fish unhooker. I had just had bought a new lure and Mam swung that one in a telephone line, and we never got it back, and it cost all of 90 cent.

Leni was pregnant with Marielle and slept with Mam in the bed, while I slept in the upper bunk and Arie slept on the floor. It was in the time of my migraines and I went to bed with a doozy of a headache. The next morning the pain was gone, but it always gives the feeling of stomach sickness the next day. All in all we had a nice time and is worth looking back at. Ok Vanderjagts the rest is your story. I forgot to tell that that weekend we caught all together 80 fish.

When Elsje was the last of you girls home she went with us on holidays, and one of the places we went to was Barkerville, an old mining town from 1883. We were actually camping in Quesnell on the highway from Fort St John to Kamloops and to get to that mining town we had to drive 50 miles into the interior, very wild. About ½ way there was a way station which was used when there were still stage coaches. The stables were still there and in there 100's of swallow nests, funny little things, round with a little hole in it. The year we went there the road was being build and the drive was not so easy. 15 years later we went there again with Bert Tigges and than the road was finished. It is such an interesting small town which has an old church, and inside that church the walls were wall papered with old news paper from the time when there were still people living there, and they were still readable. We also visited the old cemetery where people were buried during the time when the gold miners still lived there. In 1885 there had been an epidemic of mountain fever which killed most of the population, especially little children. We have seen a grave of a twin and they had planted 2 small trees on the grave, and now these trees where humounges. 2 big trees almost grown into each other.

Most of the population at that time had been Chinese, and there was still their old folks home. It had been a community all by it self at the edge of town. About noon hour there was a smell of fresh baked bread in the air. A bakery was baking sour dough bread, and we bought a loaf and went to the pick-nick area where we ate the whole loaf of bread, it was so delicious that we could have eaten more of it, but by than the store was sold out.

Before we were going back to our camp we went to a small restaurant, and I believe it was called the Golden nugget or something like that, very appropriate for that area. It was very busy and when we found a place to sit we ordered soup. And that was hot and delicious and sat very well with us, because it was a cool and rainy day. We had more than soup but we cannot remember what, it is so long ago.

Years ago where ever we went the roads were not developed and it took a long time to go from the high ways to the developing areas. One of the places was a hot pool in Nakusp where we went on a very rainy day, and we could hardly see the road. When we came to that area there were no lights at the campsite and we had quite a time to back the trailer into our spot. The next day was better and I went in the pool but Mam did not go. We did not stay there to long, because there was nothing except the pool and the whole place was not finished yet. On the way back we could see the road and we were surprised that we had made it in dark, because there were boulders all over the place, and we had not hit any of them.

In the Nakusp area we had to cross the river on a ferry, and it was law that when a truck with combustables had to cross, cars could not go on the same ferry because of the danger of explosions. One time we had to wait for more than 2 hours before the ferry came back and we could cross the river. While Mam was waiting in the trailer, I took out my fishing rod, climbed over the big rocks and sat down to fish. I caught 2 fish, but put them back again, and Mam said, why did you not bring them, and than we could have had them for supper, but I did not want to take these slime things along. It was just good for passing the time.

The ferries were free, and they were ran by the government for lack of bridges. It is such a beautiful area which goes from Nelson all the way to Revelstoke. We saw something funny when we were driving on that road, for miles and miles there were neck ties tied to the power poles, maybe every year after graduation the boys took of their ties and tied them to the poles, any way that is what we thought.

We have seen a lot of the country, in the beginning with all you girls and later on when you were all going your own destiny, and later when there were just the 2 of us, but nothing can beat the whole family on holidays. We still miss that togetherness and the enthusiasm of the younger generation.

In 1968 I believe when Rietje was working at the Booster we went on a camping trip to Lake Waskasu and in June when we went there. Rietje had some difficulty at her work and suffered a breakdown. She was hoping to get over it when going with us on that trip. I cannot remember if she was engaged at that time to Al, our assistant pastor, but any way they were an item. To get back to that camping trip. I already wrote that it was June, and we were expecting nice weather but it was not that way. It started to freeze at night and the days were clear but very cold and we had to wear heavy sweaters and coats. There was a family from the United

States, And the woman had a little stove which was outside their trailer and she was cooking and baking all day. She was baking cakes and bread. The man of the family and I had gone fishing, and were quite successful in catching a meal of fish. It put that neighbour woman right in her element because now she could fry fish on her little cook stove. She gave us our share of the fish and it tasted so good, because one could not get it any fresher.

We were in Prince Albert park in the northern part of Saskatchewan, and there was a freak weather phenomena. From where we were and into B,C, there was a strip of 30 or 40 miles wide frozen from a heavy frost which killed all the vegetables and potatoes. It was a freak twist of nature. It was not the holiday we really wanted, but there was nothing we could do about. We were sitting outside during the day with heavy sweaters and jackets on. The weather forecast was not that good so we went home sooner than we had planned.

Rietje wanted to go home anyway so that she could phone Al, but I cannot remember if she phoned him when we were still on the road or that she waited till we were home. It was good for her to talk to Al, because he was able to help her.

Believe it or not, but this is maybe the last page I am writing because all you girls were going your own way and that is what it has to be, every body getting their own life with the person you love.

How ever Mam and Dad were not going to sit still and we were going on holidays, just the 2 of us. We decided to go on a long trip, and we did that. I don't remember what year it was, but I think that we had our trailer with the bathroom. We went to B,C, first and there we went to Stanley park. It was not so easy for me to drive all the way through Vancouver. We sure did enjoy seeing the sea which we had not seen since we left Holland. The long shore men were on strike and there were a lot of ships lying for anchor waiting to get loaded or unloaded. We were in a camp ground close to the Lions gate bridge and to go to Stanley park we had to go through the center of the city and part of that was China town. It reminded us of China town in Montreal where we had to go through to get to the station. From B,C, we went to the States and there we went for the first time in our life. Except for a little bit when Elsjje was still going with us, and there she bought a small sterof foam cooler and when we passed the customs the guy wanted to see what we bought. We did not have to pay duty, and I still don't know why she bought that.

Mam and I we went to Idaho where we went to see the Grand Coulee dam, and that was worth the trip by it self. It is truly spectacular. We went into a small restaurant and was called some thing like Bertha's dinner and the hamburgers were about as big as a lunch plate. It is to much to write every thing down, but we were gone for 3 weeks.

One time we went to B,C, and there we visited Al's parents in Chiliwack for the first time, and when they heard that we were camping in a park called Cultus lake not far from there they invited us to stay with them, and Al's father went with me to get our trailer. We stayed there over night and he showed me and Mam the next day where he worked in the hop yard. We still have some pictures which we have in our album. On our way home from there we were camping close to Hope when we heard on the radio that there was a scare of poison gas in Camrose from a gas well. In order not to get evacuated from Camrose we took our time to get home, and when we got home the danger was past. From than on every time we went to B,C, we visited Al's parents, and we were always welcome.

On one of our trips through B,C, we ended up visiting the Maiers again, and there we had some fun, or not really fun but there were 2 more visitors, one woman was Russian, the other one was German and they could not speak English. Mrs Maier spoke some English and German. It was like building the tower of Babel. At times it was total confusion and we were glad when these 2 women left. We stayed a little bit longer but after a while we left also. We were exhausted from listening and talking. In Dutch it is called, "Babilonese spraak verwarring". It was the last time we visited her, because when we saw her once more she did not recognize us. We did not see Mr Maier for the last couple of times we have been there because he was in the hospital with Alzheimer. He did not recognize his own wife anymore. Some times I ask myself, what is fair, ending up like this after a life of hard work, and not been able to enjoy retirement together.

At the time that Rietje got married and Leni got married, Elsje was at nurses aid school in Edmonton, and eventually she became a nurses aid. If I am not mistaken it was about that time that she got to know Keith Gummer. When the time came for us to meet his parents we went to Edmonton. O, by the way we were invited. It was quite an ordeal for Elsje and Keith. It was like they were sitting on eggs and being afraid to break them. What does one really talk about on a first meeting of the in laws. Well any way everything turned out all right and every body was excepted by every body. I guess that must have been 28 years ago, because they are married for 26 years now. It is still 1998 and I am writing my last page. I cannot believe that I ever did this, writing that is. I have had a lot of help from Mam, because she also remembered a lot from the past and her knowledge of the English language is better than mine.

Time sure is flying like on eagles wings. When I look back at about 80 years ago I have to thank the Lord for the life I have lived and almost 60 years of it have shared with your Mam and if I could do it over again I sure would do it with your Mam and with you girls. When I am writing this, our whole family is not here anymore and that makes me sad, but that is life.

When I was about 8 years old I remember that at times I was crying in my bed, I thought that I would lose my parents soon, because in my eyes they were old. It did not happen that way and I over came that sadness. I am glad that you girls have never seen us as old people.

Mam and I are happy to have seen you girls grow up to the persons you are and we are very proud of you." God loves you and for sure we do".

It is the end of this book. Mam and I have enjoyed writing it, and we hope you enjoy reading it.

Love from Mam and Dad.

April 17 1998