

## *Feelings and thoughts from Mark Landry*

*Mom met Dad while working at the National Gallery of Art. Mom married in June of 1949 in Kentucky on their way to California. Dad was 31 and Mom was 24. I've seen the paperwork but it's buried in other records presently. Living near San Francisco, Dad sold wine while Mom did some clerical work.*

*Eventually they returned to Washington, D. C. where they first lived in the upper story of Pop-Pop and Nana Landry's Victorian townhome. They then rented an apartment in Prince Georges Count, MD before moving to a house to Annandale, Virginia. This was 1953-54.*

### *The Virginia Homes*

*My first memories were of the house in Annandale. This was a brick ranch in woods (picture available) and ample distance from the road. Mom mentioned she didn't have to worry about what kids she had then getting into the street. Michele Peterson, a Potomac neighbor went with Mom to see the Annandale house in recent years.*

*I remember a black and white dog, probably a cocker spaniel. She had Cocker Spaniels growing up as evidenced in pictures and we had at least two golden spaniels in my childhood. Specifically, I remember the dog fanatically digging up dirt for what turned out to be a bone. We had a neighbor, my first buddy, "Woody Bill". I think his real last name was Belt. We had birthday parties I don't quite remember but was helped by looking at pictures available growing up. I only remember living there a year or so before we moved to a split level in Arlington. To drive to the Arlington home was through a hilly neighborhood, all newly developed and void of mature trees.*

*We lived in the Arlington home a relatively short time, perhaps for the transition to the Potomac home. We were there one winter when on New Year's Eve, Dad's cousin, Frank Shade and his family, spent the evening.*

*They had maybe returned from being stationed in Spain. We got along with their kids that evening, but didn't see them after this one visit.*

### *The Grandparents and Landry cousins*

*We went on occasion to either Nana Jay's apartment (actually owned) by Rock Creek. Or to the Landry Grandparent's apartment or town home (possibly rented) in the Southwest part of D.C. Dad's only brother, Robert, moved his family to Lemon Grove, California in about 1955. Mom of course was an only child so we did not have a large extended family. We had visited the Landry cousins at their home in Virginia and at Pop Pop and Nana Landry's apartment. A unique warm smell exuded from that apartment. Wallpaper covered the walls. There is a picture of Mary and I with cousin Bobby sitting on the grandparent's couch.*

*A time we visited the cousins before they moved to California, they were in light and dark blue uniforms as they went to Catholic schools. They lived on the Virginia side perhaps in Arlington. When we first moved into our Potomac house, Pop Pop and Nana Landry came and visited regularly. Pop Pop would fix things like the rope to pull up the garage and give us a ride in the wheel barrel. He would rock us on his knee, and built a rocking horse for us. He was handy like that whereas our Dad was not. Mom stressed he was a good man that attended daily Mass. He only had a third grade education and would read the Sunday funnies. Since he was from Maine, he had no immediate family in Washington. My father grew up with all the Irish relative of Nana Landry; and was too proud of his education to get along well with Pop Pop. Nana Landry was born on a post in Alabama where Sgt. Ryan was stationed in 1880. So she was a relatively old grandma and passed in 1962 when I was 12. We did get to know her as she would visit and stay to help Mom the four or five of us. Her sister, Aunt Ellen (Tultevil), stayed once for a protracted time for*

*either the delivery of Joanne or when Dad was in the hospital with a broken leg from a car accident.*

*We spent Thanksgivings at Nana Fay's apartment. There Dad would watch the football games and we kids would be escorted across the street to the Rock Creek Park where there were swings, see saws and a sandbox to play in. Mom mentioned they had a Victory Garden there during the War. Nana Fay did not drive.<sup>i</sup> She seldom went anywhere. She had one daytime maid that cooked as well. So at Thanksgiving it was lady dressed in grey with white collars that cooked and brought us the Turkey on a platter. Dad would graciously carve it and I'm sure Mom volunteered to help in some way.*

*Mom's Dad passed away in 1944. He was only 54. He had a heart attack, and in those days they were bed confined and a clot was his actual cause of demise.*

*Contrary to Pop Pop, he was well educated with a Ph. D. in History, Government and Economics. When he passed, Mom came home from Wheaton College to live with Nana Fay for year. During that time she completed courses at George Washington University. Nana Fay was chronically ill with migraines and did not leave her apartment. Financially they had been pressed to pay back relatives for borrowed monies. She had to give part of Harold's life insurance proceeds and all of his interest in British Columbia lands back to Helen Fay Dunn. They also rented the empty room out to a single girl (who later married a Gasque and moved to Potomac). Nana Fay kept the apartment until about 1962 when she had heart and health problems. After a period of hospitalization she moved to a "sanitarium" on Falls road just outside of Rockville. Ultimately she spent her last years in a nursing home not far from this sanitarium.*

*Move to Potomac 1954*

Mom wanted more space for horses. I remember looking at a home on Burbank Drive. Inside I admired the new white trim on all the woodwork, with pastel colored walls, a two story house. My parents settled for the three bedrooms, two bath ranch with a large recreation room at the garage end of the house. There were virtually no trees on the five acres, as it was a cornfield before; in fact, Dad had called the place "Four Cornfields". The Brays were our only immediate neighbors, to the left or East of our property. No one lived across the street or to our west. The house was on a hill. The enclosed pasture in the back was three acres with a barn. In 1962 they added a bomb shelter, over which was a back patio. A wing of two rooms on the right or west side of the house was added as well.

The first horse I remember was Pharaoh, her Arabian, and we had a small pony, "Blacky". Mom once took me on a long horse ride with me on Blacky. We went east on South Glen Road up to Falls Road. We crossed and entered a dirt road called Kentsdale. This went for about a mile up and down through the woods before we crossed a "ford", a word I learned at an early age. We continued through the emptiness of the woods and fields until we came upon a great opening off to the right and up on a grand hill was a monumental edifice facing west, grey and brown stone illuminated by the afternoon sun; a building like Emerald City when first seen; in fact, a convent for the Sisters of Mercy.

We had an International Harvester Cub Cadet tractor with which to mow the acreage. Dad enjoyed that. And when I was 12 I learned how to drive...the tractor.

### *The Glen*

South Glen Road snaked itself and wound its way 2 miles downward to a creek in a "glen". Once across the creek, the road "T's"; off to the right is Glen or North Glen Road, and turning left at the T takes you onto the Glen Mill

Road, where a mill once stood. Somehow, word got out the mill was burning, and Mom took us kids to witness the burning down of the mill as the trucks got there late and the mill was abandoned at that time in about 1956. Old mills were no longer of use.

The glen obviously attracted Mom for its bucolic qualities: serene and shaded, with soft rippling sounds of water sifting over the rocks. She took us there once to catch tadpoles. We jarred the little buggers. It was then that Mom explained they would be frogs someday. Then I seriously doubted my Mom.

A recurrent dream I had as a child was seeing my Mom knee deep in a body of water in a quiet area surrounded in shades of green and yellow.

On past the old mill that burned down, there was an old "ghost house" secluded by the woods. Here at ages between 6 and 10, I would return to this location with friends to look for souvenirs. It was unsafe as we were warned and eventually it was torn down.

Before the creek while still on South Glen there was a lady that had an art collection in her house. And because of this my parents and her were friends. Perhaps my Dad had a painting shown there. Ms. Gunkel??

### *The Beach Home*

We would make trips to the beach before 1955. At least on one occasion I remember going to the beach on the Chesapeake Bay to my displeasure. The sand was more orange and coarse, and the water, without waves was murky. When we did go to the beach, we had to drive through Washington, D. C. as the Beltway was not yet operational. The African Americans were on the porches of their townhomes escaping the heat as best they could. Most of D. C. was like this. We had to get on New York Avenue and link onto Route 50 going East.

*We also had to wait at the Bay for the ferry, as this was the means of crossing, on several occasions before we took the new Bay Bridge. My father would point out boats below from high on the bridge explaining they were not toy boats as they appeared so small. He would repeat it was seven miles long, but four miles is closer to the actual bridge distance. It was a \$1.00 toll each way for most years that I recall through High School. I'm not sure what it was when it first opened.*

*The summer of 1955, we first visited our cottage at 6506 Ocean Highway. Several WW II veteran pilots lived there. There were pictures and models of planes, some of which stayed after the sale of the cottage to my parents. They were friendly and spoke to me about flying. Maybe some of that wore off on Will.*

*The summer of 1956 was our first full summer there. Dad did not stay but for short visits. "He didn't like the sand," according to Mom. We would sit on our couch by the picture window and watch the sunset in the evenings. Counting cars, mostly by color at that age, was entertainment. We had no TV, only a radio. We could listen to rock and roll hits with Dad not around. Mom would shop at the local farms and cook fresh flounder and Delaware Silver Queen corn. We often had local cantaloupe with breakfast. Scrapple from Philadelphia made by the Amish was a favorite with eggs. We seldom ate home fries or potatoes. Pancakes and cereal were available.*

*Our French neighbors, the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goupy introduced us to French pancakes which were very popular. I played with the grandchildren visiting the summer from Rochester New York: Richard and Steve Gagnier. Richard was my age and Steve was a little younger. We became close friends building forts in the sand dunes and playing Cache-Cache (hide and go seek). Our cottage was directly on the highway. The Goupy cottage was behind us a bit closer to the beach and facing 66<sup>th</sup> Street. Between*

*their cottage and an Ocean front Apartment four-plex , there was an empty lot large enough to play softball in which we did when the other cousins visited.*

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<sup>i</sup> While in college visiting Harold at Williams, she drove someone's car in a tree and did not drive after that.