I Remember...

Memories of Life in Carmel, Maine from the 1940s to the 1960s

Herbert Dean    Arthur Dean    Diana Dean DuMond
“I REMEMBER---“
Some remembrances of growing up in Carmel, Maine during the 1940’s thru into the early 1960’s. This starts at the tail end of the 1929 recession.

This sort of started when I was asked in 2008 if I remembered WW II. I had a few remembrances and wrote them down, along with some other memories of the time. Recently I was talking with my brother Arthur and mentioned it.

Come to find out, he had been writing down remembrances of growing up for his grandchildren. We combined efforts and while talking we would remind each other of yet other things to add...

This is a collection of those remembrances. They are not in chronological order by any means, tho we have done some grouping. The material has Arthur’s name for straight type, and mine are initialized. Sister Diana weighs in at the end.

While remembering some of the good experiences, some of the bad came out as well. Also some that should not be told, for the most part we went with putting the good ones down and leaving the rest lay.

I was born in October 1938 and Arthur in May 1942. David and Diana were born in 1945 and 1947 respectfully. We are the children of John R. and Leila M. Dean. Dad grew up in Winslow Maine, Mother in South Brewer, Maine. She and her parents were immigrants from England in 1914. Her father worked for Eastern Fine Paper. Dad’s father worked at the Hollingsworth and Whitney paper mill in Winslow. Mom and Dad met while Dad was a student at the University of Maine at Orono, and she was a secretary for one of his professors.

We lived off the Grist Mill Road, up thru the maple lane on the north side of the road. As I remember the farm was about 135 acres, more or less, about 50 acres of field. The folks moved onto the farm in January 1, 1938. The farm continued until February 1972 when Dad was injured in a farm accident, passing away a week later. The farm was sold in June 1972. Mother died in April 1980, and is buried beside Dad at the Pine Grove Cemetery in Waterville.

Read them, and smile, or wonder, or weep, as the case may be.

Herbert Dean
(Herb) This starts with Arthur’s “I remember” to his grandchildren.

(Arthur) Jan 2010
Dear Devon, Tom, Talon, and Thane.

Here is a story for Talon & Thane. I wish I could be there to tell it myself but I might do better writing it anyway.

(Arthur) When I was seven years old, I started milking the cow. I guess my dad taught me. Every morning before breakfast I’d take the pail and go out into the barn. I’d pitch hay down from the mow with a pitchfork, open the manger doors, and stuff in some hay. Actually I’d put in grain first, then milk the cow, then put in the hay. I also fed the pony and goats, too, and the calf.

(Arthur) For a cow to give milk, she first has to have a calf. To get more of the milk for ourselves, we’d feed some to the calf from a bucket. Now teaching a calf to drink from a bucket is quite a trick. You dip your fingers in the milk, & the calf will quickly start sucking on your fingers. So then you lower your fingers down into the bucket until the calf is sucking milk around your fingers. Sound easy? Not so. You see the trouble is the calf has a natural instinct to butt the cow’s udder when he’s nursing. So bang goes the bucket into your shin, and the milk splashes all over you, the calf, and everywhere in between. Then too, until the calf gets the hang of it, he’s apt to suck milk up his nose, jerk his head up and sneeze it like a fire hose. It’s quite a process.

(Arthur) Milking the cow takes strong hands, or your hands get real strong fast from squeezing the teats. The milk smells good as the streams squirt first from one hand then the other, making a purring sound in the bucket, and making an inch of foam on top. You rest your head against the warm side of the cow, and I used to whistle a tune quite often while I milked.

(Arthur) Now once in a while this peaceful scene could be interrupted. If the cow had a sensitive crack in her teat, she might decide to kick the bucket, or even step into it – her feet are not always very clean. Another special trick? Well, you know a cow very often switches her tail around a lot to slap away flies, or even straw stuck to her. (She can wiggle her skin too, to shake it off). So during the night as she’s lying down her tail might hang into the gutter and get
some soaking wet with...well, you guess. So a slap across the side of the face is most unpleasant when you’re daydreaming and squeezing and whistling Dixie.

Beulah and her calf.

(Arthur) So now you see the barn cats parade into the stable. They know what I’m doing. So I squirt streams of milk across the gutter at the cats --- who try to catch the milk in their mouths, or bat it down with a paw. Quite messy and funny, but they lick it all off themselves pretty soon.

(Arthur) Now when I first get to the cow stalls, the first thing to do is get rid of all the poop they did during the day. I take a hoe, lift up a board in the gutter, and hoe it all down into the cellar where it adds to a big pile --- which I must load into a trailer next spring and haul out and spread on the hay fields.

(Arthur) During the warm parts of the year, the cows are out to pasture eating grass all the time. So to milk them I call “come Boss” a few times, clang the handle of the milk pail, and they come plodding into the stable for a quart or two of grain.
(Herb) When the cows were first let out in the spring they would run and kick their heels, and stumble and even fall down, they were so happy to get out of the barn. If you put a cow to fresh grass too fast it will taint the taste of the milk and that always seemed to happen. Even in later years I’ve caught a hint of that taste from store-bought milk in the spring.

(Arthur) In winter the tie-up windows would get covered in frost from the cow’s moist breath, sometimes with real pretty feathery patterns you could admire in the morning sunbeams lighting up the windows. I’d press my finger against the frost and make a clear spot so I could see out, or I’d melt a penny into the frost and it would stay there for weeks and weeks.

(Herb) One time a male calf had been born and would be raised for beef. Dad called on Frank Palmer, a local farmer and cattle dealer to do the castration. Arthur and I watched the operation. When leaving the barn a big black male cat came in, which Dad grabbed and told Frank he would like the same done to the cat. I was sent for a grain sack and the cat was wrapped in this and the proper end presented to Frank. When it was done Dad stood up and let the cat roll out of the sack. The cat was in high gear running before he hit the ground and went around the corner just hauling. Arthur watched the cat go and then turns to my dad and says, “I thought they didn’t have so much pep when you did that to them”. It was three days before the cat was seen again.

(Arthur) Now the huge hay mow was a wonderful place to play. We’d climb the ladder and big beams and leap into the springy hay. The barn swallows, lovely dark blue and rusty brown, would fly around the huge barn, twittering, or flutter to their nest where their babies sat and wiggled and yelled for food. Sun came thru the knotholes and cracks in the boards, and the beams lit up all the dust in the air, and tiny specks floated thru the beams. And we were breathing the dust all the time tho usually we couldn’t see it.

(Herb) I remember the door I had in the backside of the barn. One day when I was home alone I cut one of the large vertical boards and hinged it on top, with a magnet to hold it on the bottom. I did a neat job and it was hard to see, both from the outside and inside. It was some time before the others figured out what I’d done, I used it when we were playing hide and seek and they just couldn’t figure
how I would be where I shouldn’t be. I miss the barn swallows even to this day and have only occasionally seen them since then.

(Arthur) I would take the pail of milk into the house, strain it thru a big funnel strainer, then pour it into narrow-necked (glass) bottles. In a day or two the cream would be so thick on top you could tip it upside down and the cream wouldn’t even let the milk come out. I would spoon big gobs of cream onto my cereal, and add a lot of maple syrup, and dig into my Raisin Bran, my favorite cereal.

(Arthur) We also had a machine called a separator. I poured milk into a big bowl tank on top. Then I cranked it until it was spinning very fast, turn on the spigot, and from two spouts came skim milk from one and cream from the other. Mom made butter from the cream with the mixer. Somehow the separator used centrifugal force to separate the cream from the milk.

(Herb) The separator had a bell that would “ding” each time around of the handle. When the speed was fast it would go “click” instead. If you had the speed right on, it would alternate ding and click. I remember Mother making butter with the Hamilton Beech mixer. We also had a churn with a pottery jug with a clamp-on glass cover that was turned by an electric motor. As I remember it would hold up to a couple gallons of cream.

(Herb) I remember the ice cream made from this cream, so very rich. We had a hand-cranked ice cream freezer. Rock salt would lower the temperature of the ice water so the ice cream mixture would freeze in the inner container. The cows were Guernsey’s and their milk was high in milk fat.

(Arthur) Well I’ll tell you another time about haying, and tunnels, and scarlet runner beans. But for now, good night, sleep tight, don’t let the bed bugs bite.

(Arthur) Be careful of giraffes too.
Love, Grandpa
DE LAVAL

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CLEAN COVER WITH DAMP CLOTH SHOULD IT BECOME SOILED
Episode 2

(Arthur) We had to have hay to feed the cow and pony. Dad had a mower with a cutter bar with big sharp teeth. It was made for a team of horses, but Dad put a hitch on it so he could pull it with our old ‘38 Chevy panel truck. Herb, my older brother, would sit on the metal mower seat. He could raise the cutter bar if they met an obstruction or got tangled up in thick hay. They mowed nearly all day, then the hay dried in the sun for a day. Next we hooked up a big tined rake with big wheels behind the truck. It would catch a swath of hay 8 feet wide. When it got full, Herb would trip a lever, the tines would fling up and drop the row of hay. Soon the whole field would be in rows we called windrows. Then the rake would be turned down the length of the windrows and gather it into big piles all over the field. Then we would pull a trailer around the field. Herb and Dad would pile hay onto the trailer around the field. They would use pitch forks while I tramped round and round packing it down. The load would soon be 10 feet high, then I would jam the pitch forks into the hay and ride to the barn on top, holding onto the pitch forks.

(Arthur) I still have a pitchfork I use regularly. It came from the barn where I lived in Michigan.

(Arthur) Once Dad had backed the trailer into the barn he would set a big hook onto the load. A tractor or horse or motor would pull half the hay high into the mow --- Dad would pull a smaller rope and the fork would trip and drop the hay. We boys then spread the hay around the mow.

(Herb) It took more than two lifts to unload a trailer of hay, a half load was too heavy to have been hauled up by a horse. We also had a jitterbug tractor that was no more that a cut down truck. The cab was cut off, leaving the front, engine, clutch, transmission, dash board, steering wheel, and seat. The frame and drive shaft were shortened and the rear wheels moved forward, and some kind of drawbar welded on the back. I’ve heard them called homemade Farmalls, and seen some good examples at the yearly antique tractor show in Farmington.
(Arthur) Later on, years later, Dad had farmer friends come and cut, rake, and bale the hay with tractors. We’d then throw them on the trailer and pile bales in the mow. Once my dad made tunnels in the bales and a little room by the barn wall and our friends and cousins always thought the tunnels were so cool.

(Arthur) As a teenager I helped a neighbor put bales on a trailer, then up a conveyor into a barn and piled them in the barn. Hay is dusty and itchy too. I often wore a wet bandana around my neck to keep me cool in the hot sun.

(Arthur) We had several apple trees. Wolf Rivers were huge, twice the size of normal apples. Astricans were ripe early, in August and made the first pies. Duchess is striped red and cream, and was yummy off the ground. Ben Davis apples are small and hard but would keep all winter, tho we didn’t store them. When cousins or the Vicnaire boys were over we’d team up and apples would be
flying everywhere. Kids would be hiding behind trees and trailers with pockets full of apples.

(Herb) We would take apples to a cider mill and have them made into cider, jugs fresh for the table, and a small barrel full to make vinegar.

(Arthur) Maybe twice we had tomato fights, when September frost came we picked any tomato left --- some were too ripe or half rotten so ... but it was really messy.

(Arthur) I remember David, Diana, and I shelling peas with Mama out by the sandpile. We had two one-hundred foot rows of peas, so we froze many cartons of them to eat during the winter. We also froze corn and string beans. Herb and I each had our own sections of garden, where we grew our own carrots and lettuce and corn.

(Herb) We had a large freezer in the garage that was 20 cu. ft. as I remember. It was right outside the kitchen door. It was left setting right there when the farm was sold. Mother also filled a lot of canning jars with various foods, including many pickles.

(Herb) I always grew dry beans, usually about 300 feet of them. When they were dried we would sit and listen to the radio, later the TV, and shell them. Mother always set a quart of dry beans out to soak Friday night for Saturday night baked beans. I still use her basic recipe, with modification, for yeast rolls to have with beans, tho I usually do Sunday night beans. I also prepare the beans a bit different than she did. We boys were expected to learn to cook and I would modify Mother’s recipes, which bothered her. When she passed away I found a cook book that she was given when she was married, and guess what. Many of her recipes came from that cook book, with modifications.

(Arthur) I remember picking blueberries to freeze, gallons of them. And blackberries for pies. Mom spent a lot of time in the kitchen cooking. She had a big draw full of flour, and another of sugar.

(Herb) When you bought flour in those days you bought a 25-pound bag, not the 5 pound, or smaller, bag of today. I think sugar was in 10-pound bags.
The garden at the home place

(Arthur) Now among our stainless cutlery there was a certain silver spoon, a soup spoon, one of a kind. We three boys would hide it in one place or another. Once I hid it in the paper towel roll, once in the flour drawer. We were quite creative in hiding and finding “The Silver Spoon”. I think Herb still has it.

(Herb) Yes, I still have it. What is not known is that after Arthur left for college I pulled a switch on David with a virtually identical spoon and he didn’t realize it. When he passed away I cleaned his home and looked for the spoon, and found it. I have given the virtually identical spoon to Arthur.

(Arthur) I mentioned a sandpile. Dad had a truck come about every other year and dump a load of sand behind the house. Herb and I each had our “land” in the sandpile, which was actually spread out pretty far. We each had our trucks and bulldozers. Herb made roads for the “town”. I sold little maple trees. Our money
was white rocks about the size of marbles. We spent many happy hours and days there. We had streams and plowed fields, too.

(Herb) That sand was originally for making concrete and never got used for that. Thus evolved the sand pile, which got added to with sand left over from pouring concrete. Dad poured a good concrete and I can show you exposed sections that have weathered well over all these years. I had a wooden play tractor I made, complete with a moldboard plow that would turn sand just like the real thing turns sod. Wish I had it now.

We at one time or another poured a lot of concrete on the farm, mixing it ourselves in a cement mixer we had. It almost always was late in the year when Dad would get around to this so one day I did a poem. (There was this Johnny Dean, at pouring concrete he was most keen, but as long as I can remember, he always poured it in September.) I can remember we poured our own replacement 1000 gallon septic tank.

(Arthur) Now Dad had a photo lab down cellar, with enlargers and chemicals to develop film and photos. When I was ten or so I bought a brownie camera. The pictures I took are in an album --- pictures of the buildings, people and fields and trees of the farm, and animals. The things I loved, and love now. One picture I took from high up in the big maple tree. One of me on Chub, the big black workhorse. One of Dad making maple syrup. One of the horse the day he ate way too much grain. One of my friend Merle on top of the shed roof, the baby goats and puppies, a wood chuck in a tree. And my Dad standing in the yard in his work clothes.

(Arthur) I don’t know how he kept us all alive. Amazing. I don’t know how I do it, either. An astounding piece of work. And the thousands of meals my mother cooked, the thousands of loads of laundry she hung on the line. I wonder if I’ll ever have the chance to do as much for them, or do I just pass it on. Are we not really all one. No matter how you cut it, the love is really big and strong. From the rich to the poor to the starving this love has to win out in the end. Someday peace and love will dominate. All the rest is a mistake? A gift? Only for contrast? A part of the whole.

(Arthur) Well good night. I still didn’t get to the Scarlet runner beans. Love, Dad, Grandpa, AD Arthur
Chapter 3

(Arthur) There’s just no bluer sky then on a January morning with the sun shining. Today is like that; sparkly snow, light breeze whispering in the trees --- dark green, crystal blue, warm rays on my face. Zoe (dog) and I took a good hike down to the lower pond where I sat a while in a sunny spot while she buried her face in the snow to sniff out any critters hiding in the little bushes. Now I’m close by the back door, sitting in my favorite lawn chair, soaking in the sun.

(Arthur) Now to the scarlet runner beans. Close by the stable window my mom helped me dig a little flower garden. She gave me seeds of calendula, nasturtiums, and scarlet runner beans. We ran a string up around the stable window for the beans, and their pretty red flowers were lovely around it. I expect that’s where my love for flowers started. I still grow all three of those and about seventy others too. Mom had a large flower garden in front of the house --- iris and bleeding heart, and columbine, violets, peonies, and lilies.

(Arthur) Mom was such a loving person. I don’t ever remember her being angry with me, but always gentle. Dad however, would explode now and then, but I still knew he loved me. I see her in a light colored print dress in the kitchen, Dad in overalls and a gray jacket and visor hat. Mom with a ready hug if I’m feeling bad, Dad lifting me up on Chub, the big workhorse. Even after all these years I miss them sometimes and remember their love for me, with a wish I could hug them again.

Arthur on Chub, the horse

Clinton (Jr.) Ward & Arthur Dean
(Arthur) When I was six Dad bought me a pony. I still remember where we got him, from a place on the north slope of Miller Hill. His name was Silver, and he was a black and white pinto. He had “watch eyes”, blue & white, while most horses have brown and black. It made him look a little bit wild. And he was!

(Arthur) Once he scraped me off on an apple tree limb. Once I tumbled over his head as he skidded to a screeching stop. I landed on a barbed wire fence. He bucked me off several times, especially in the spring when he was most feisty. Whenever we rode off he was reluctant to go. When we turned toward home he would take off like a jack rabbit if I let him and boy, could he run. The wind would be whistling by my face, he’d be stretched out, pumping hard, neck low, everything moving in six directions. We’d lean hard for a turn as we hit the maple lane, and then run even faster on the road. If we happened to cross a ditch he would sail over it and surprise me with a big leap.

(Arthur) He was dreadfully afraid of the bridge on the driveway, or any bridge. They were made of wood back then, and he could see thru the cracks to the water rushing over the falls 10 feet below. So he would shy away and back off but after much prodding he would take a few steps, get half way, then bolt for the other side, me hanging on the saddle horn so I didn’t get left behind.

(Arthur) My friend Junior Ward was the only other child in town that had a pony, and we’d ride over to each other’s farm now and then to play together. We’d try to leap on to our horses over their rumps. I was lucky I could stay on because it would startle Silver so, and he’d take off.

(Arthur) Sometimes we’d ride a couple miles to the store, Mc Gown’s Feed and General Store. I’d tie him to the back platform and go buy a five cent popsicle, then share it with him, one bite for me, one for him. I had to watch he didn’t bite off half of it in one swoop. Riding back home the saddle would squeak in time to his step and I would also slap the deer flies that had landed on his neck.

(Arthur) One time I was galloping him home down the woods to the north on an old road. The saddle slipped down his side nearly under him, me hanging on, him running twice as fast now for fear of this strange happening. I pondered for 2 or 3 seconds whether to hang on and die by his flying hooves, or let go and die by crashing thru the bushes. I let go and tumbled head over teakettle into the
bushes. I came out of it fairly unscathed, and found him down by the barn, trying to buck the saddle off from under his belly.

(Arthur) Once I tied him to a big branch while Bruce and I explored the woods a bit. He took off for home with the branch in tow, which scared him to run even faster.

(Arthur) I practiced roping things from his back like the cowboys in the comic books. It’s not that easy. And pulling things with a rope from the saddle horn would startle him, and rope, me, saddle, and horse would get all tangled, once again courting death or injury.

Dad had an old sleigh, a 4-person sleigh. I managed to locate a collar and harness and hooked him up. Lucky he didn’t destroy the sleigh. It was not a carefree ride. I gave David and Diana rides, at risk of life and limb. This did not go on long.

(Herb) I never did like this pony and had virtually nothing to do with him. One morning when Arthur was away Dad tried to get him into the stable because the black-smith was coming to shoe him, but Dad couldn’t get him in. I took a jug of water and the lead rope and went out to the pony pasture, about two acres more or less square. I got him running the outside circle while I walked a small inner one and would walk directly at him when he stopped. In a couple hours he was exhausted and finally went into the stable where I closed and locked the door behind him.

(Arthur) My cousin Dick would visit us in the summer and stay a few weeks. One day we decided to build a tree house, way up in a cluster of Hemlock trees, 35’ up. (Three trees growing from a common stump.) With ropes and boards and 2x4s we managed to get a platform up between 3 tree trunks. We made a pole railing, then a rope and pulley elevator. Aunt Buddy even dared to be hauled up to our creation which we named Falcon Hurst. From up there we could look down on the pony pasture and back side of the barns and house.

(Arthur) Merle and I made forts. There was a gravel-pit shaped like a doughnut and we dug a fort in the top of the doughnut hole. We piled rocks against a ledge and made Fort Apache. From Fort Apache we fired our cannon which blew
wooden dowels far away into the woods. The cannon fired by putting in match heads and heating the closed end with a small fire.

(Arthur) Bruce and I built a cedar log cabin complete with a carpet floor and a hinged door. We camped there a few times with the light of a little red kerosene lantern I bought with my milking money. I got a quarter a day to milk the cows.

(Arthur) Mom and Dad had lived in a little cabin at UMO, and had put a wood stove in it, too, so we even baked cookies there as Mom gave us readymade batter. We shot thousands of BB’s in that cabin, sometimes at beans on the floor, or at the light string, or flies. Upstairs we had a trunk with our treasure in it. We could climb out on the roof, slide down to a tree and shinny down the tree.

Love, Daddy Grandpa

(Herb) The building was built by my dad and bolted together so it could come apart and be transported by truck. After Dad graduated from UMO they lived in the cabin for awhile in Winslow on his home farm before buying the farm in Carmel. I still have and use the kitchen table Mom and Dad were given when they married in 1936. When I got married, Carol re-finished it, and along with four chairs given to us as a gift by her sister Connie, it has been in use most of our married life. I also have Grandfathers Dean’s rocking chair, Grandmother Dean’s round parlor table, a book case, a curio cabinet, and a large pitcher and glasses, all from Dad’s home place.

(Arthur) I have two very early memories. One is picking up pears on our front lawn to eat. They were really good pears. Hornets would be feeding on the injured ones. My second early memory was in our yard between the barn and house. Our old ‘38 Chevy panel truck was there with my father and a hired hand; Dad driving, and the hired hand riding the running board. They were honking the horn over and over, and the church bells were ringing in the town a mile or two away. Mom and Herb were in the yard with me. Everyone seemed very happy, and tho I didn’t understand at 3 years of age, I was quite impressed by the revelry. I knew something real big was going down.

(Herb) Arthur and I talked this over and we think his memories are of VE day, victory in Europe, while mine are VJ day, victory in Japan.
I clearly remember VJ day, and I also have other wartime memories. We farmed and Dad had a farmer’s exemption so never went into the military. I remember a military jeep coming into the yard with two men in military uniform and my dad showing them around. They were checking up on his claim of being a farmer to keep his exemption.

On VJ day Dad, a hired man, and I were loading some August hay which was going to be used to mulch a strawberry bed for winter. We were in the lower south field when we heard the school bell ring in the tower of the Damascus School House. Then we heard the church bell at the village, and then we started to hear horns blowing. Next Mother was driving down the field in the old Chevy Carryall blowing the horn, Arthur was with her. When she stopped she yelled out the window that the war was over, that Japan had surrendered. I remember the happiness of the adults at that time so clearly. Needless to say after the load of hay was dumped by the strawberry bed no work other that the necessary chores got done that day. The hired man disappeared and didn’t return for two days. I remember Mom and Dad listening to the radio that evening and them speaking about the atomic bomb sort of in awe, but the real feeling was the relief that the war was over.

Our main product at this time was hatching eggs and Dad got extra gasoline and tire ration stamps because he made two trips a week into Bangor to leave off the wooden cases of eggs and pick up his empties at the Rail Way Express office. The eggs were shipped to a hatchery in Maryland. I still have some of these cases and use them for storage purposes.

We also sold garden produce, eggs, maple syrup, and dressed poultry at Haymarket Square in Bangor. We would dress out up to 100 chickens in an evening with some neighbors coming in to help with the work. I had my own jack knife and helped remove pin feathers. Once they were ready they were put into large tubs and cold water flowed through the tubs overnight to cool the chickens.

In those days it was not nice cellophane packages as today, but just a bird with the feathers and pin feathers removed. These would be sold off the back of the truck by weight; no ration stamps were required so business could be brisk. It was my job to move what was needed from the front of the truck to the back. On request, if things were slow, Dad would draw a chicken for a customer, remove the innards and head, but he charged extra. He would also sell to a restaurant that was at the lower end of Water Street, on the left going down. I also remember him selling to Swift Packing. People would also come to the farm to buy, one of the items was the cotton grain bags that had printed patterns, they
were used to make clothing, and I wore shirts made from them myself. Burlap bags were used later for grain so those were no longer available. Bulk grain started to come in during the early 1950’s.

I also remember the speed limit in those days was 35 MPH, to save gasoline and tires which were in short supply. After I started to write this piece I was coming home after working until 11 PM and traveled several miles at 35 MPH just to see what it was like. This was over the very same road we traveled in those days.

I remember being at my grandmother’s in Bangor and my brother Arthur spilling ink over some of her ration stamps. I remember her taking these and us down the street to a schoolhouse on Fifth Street where there was a ration office and being able to get replacements after she explained what happened. I remember one August day in 1946, a Sunday, (no Sunday sales then), and Mother ran out of sugar when she was canning. Mom and Dad conferred and decided it had been long enough. Dad went downstairs and came back with a hammer and pinch bar. He counted the stair treads of the stairway going up stairs and pried up a foot tread. Underneath that was some sugar in bags, which were removed and subsequently used. Later on I was to discover that Dad had seen the war coming and had stockpiled many things prior to the war. This included repair parts and tires for the panel truck and the tractor. We made maple syrup on the farm during the war and used that for sweetening a lot. Also during the war we were able to supply Grandmother with food from the farm, outside the ration stamps that she got. Grandmother lived on Fifth Street in Bangor and would often babysit Arthur and me while Mother and Dad attended to business in town or went to a movie.

My education through sixth grade was in a one-room school house, Damascus School, 1 3/10th miles from home. This was walked to (or bicycled to when there was no ice or snow) in all but the worse weather, when Dad would take me and my brother in the truck, or sometimes with a horse drawn sled. Snowplow service was poorer in those days and many times my brother and I would snowshoe out the half mile to the tar road and walk to school from there. On one occasion we were snow-bound for two weeks.

The world of the 40’s was so different from today. For home entertainment we had an AM radio, phonograph, and non-electronic games. There was no TV, no video games. Values were different, electric power was much less reliable, telephone service was all party lines, and a black phone as the only choice.

Yet even to this day in Carmel, where I have lived all except 11 years of my life, you can stop at the village store or the local filling station and find one to several
cars idling with the doors unlocked on any cold winter evening. Today there is one filling station, one market, one small restaurant. In the past there was one market and one general store. You could buy clothing, stock feed grain, food, tools, hardware at the general store. Two car repair/filling stations, and four other places you could buy gasoline.

(Arthur) I remember George Smith, who did some carpentry for us; I believe he paneled the living room. He always brought us kids some gum when he came, and he had a mustache. His daughter, Sheila I think, (Sylvia), came over a few times and played with us.

(Arthur) Dad had a barn full of hens, and from time to time I went out to gather eggs. I had a wire basket which would hold more than I could carry, so I would stop when it was half full. There were banks of laying nests 5 feet high in the middle of the rooms. Each side had 3 layers, each layer had a door I would open to get the eggs. The hens, some especially, were not too pleased to have me steal the eggs, and they’d try to peck me with their sharp beaks as I reached under them to get the eggs. I’d try to reach around behind them to avoid the beak.

(Later we raised only broilers.)

(Herb) I remember one of these nests outdoors being hit by a cyclone and being lifted 200 feet into the air, with chickens spilling out and fluttering to the ground. Arthur remembers the wreckage but not the flight.

Wind damage to a range house.
(Arthur) Quite often I’d be barefoot, so the poops on the floor would squish up thru my toes. I later joked that that was why my feet grew so big. Cleaning out the chicken house, with layers, was a smelly job, as the ammonia hung heavy in the air. With broilers later it was dust in the air.

(Herb) Once when we were raising hatching eggs I had one of the Bared Rock roosters go right up my back while I was gathering eggs. I got him by the neck and flung him against the wall. He came at me again so I left the pen. Dad knew which one I was talking about and the rooster soon graced the table for our supper. Arthur tells of a similar experience.

(Arthur) I remember the eggs were taken into a little room down cellar where Dad would grade them in the dark. There was a device with a light in a box that would shine thru the egg so Dad could see the yoke. I don’t know what he would see. He would also weigh them at times on a little scale that had an egg shaped place to set the egg, and I expect this would grade the eggs to large, medium, or small.

(Herb) I graded many an egg here in this room. The scales did weigh the egg to determine the size. You would candle for blood spots or multiple yokes. Today candling is done on a large scale under computer control.

(Arthur) Later this room would become a darkroom where I spent time with Dad developing pictures from my little Brownie Hawkeye camera. I still have those pictures and they fix certain sense in my mind of the farm and the land where we lived in the 40’s and 50’s. Times and farms and people change, but my memories seem to stick around, and I can wander at will around the farm and buildings and see the sandpile, the big maple tree, the cabin, the skating pond, the garden. Precious memories from when I walked “The Golden Road”.

(Arthur) I still have one of the old wooden egg crates that Dad used to send eggs to the hatchery. With so many eggs we would see some queer ones --- ones with rubbery skins shaped like a dumbbell, ping pong sized ones, rough shelled ones, or a triple yoked for breakfast.

(Arthur) When the chickens were too old to lay we ate them or sold them to eat. I remember picking chickens down cellar with my brother and two or three
women. We’d sit in a chair with a newspaper in our lap, and a chicken mostly de-feathered. We’d take a knife and pull the odd feathers the machine missed, and pin feathers from the wings. The whole slaughter scene was efficient if gory. Dad would hang a chicken from a rope by its feet, slit up thru its mouth into the brain, then hang it in a bloody barrel where the chicken would flap until dead. Then it got scalded in hot water, rolled in sawdust, then a motorized drum with rubber fingers would take off most of the feathers. I remember coming up from the cellar during a long session of this and seeing the moon up in the sky going thru eclipse.

(Herb) I still have one of the sticking knives, albeit rusty and dull now.

(Arthur) Later Dad went to broilers for a large company. He joined the 2 barns together and raised the roof of one of them to make a whole third floor. I was quite impressed with this, not knowing I would go on to build some 60 or more buildings and other structures.

(Arthur) I learned to drive in a 1938 brown panel truck with black fenders, a long stick shift coming way up from the floor. Dad had chickens on the range with shelters and nests and fox fences all around the field. He would carry a bag of grain on his shoulders and crack it open, walk across the field while the chickens would come running and flying together on the row of grain to eat. He made long lines, squiggles or even better, letters out of the row of chickens.

Chickens feeding in the field on the spread grain. John R. Dean
(Arthur) One day he got the bright idea of saving time and his energy by spreading the grain from the old truck. I was nine years old. He put me in the seat, explained how to drive and told me where to go, and got himself at the open back doors to manage the grain bags. Not really having quite enough instruction, I let out the clutch too fast which jerked me (and the clutch) which jerked the truck again. It was an unsettling ride, and the back doors were flapping around, hitting my father. I got stopped somehow, my dad was not happy, and had to give me some more words on how to drive the truck. We finally got under way however, tho I don’t remember doing it a second time.

(Herb) The fox fence was an electrified strand of barbed wire six inches off the ground and six inches outside the normal chicken fence. It was activated by a standard electric fence controller such as is used for cows. Foxes would occasionally get thru. One early morning my dad awoke and looked out the bedroom window and saw a fox inside the chicken fence. He picked up his Winchester 351 and shot the fox right out thru the screen, nailed him too. Of course the gun going off inside the bedroom made an awful noise and Mother who was sleeping came a foot right off the bed. She told him if he ever did that again she would divorce him.

(Herb) Those chicken fences were 6 feet high and I’ve seen deer jump right over them. One morning when I was walking to (Damascus) school I found a deer that had tangled with the fox fence and lost. I went back to the house and told Dad who told me not to talk of it. He and the hired man cut it up and each took half of the meat. Our part went into the big freezer. Arthur remembers going down with them to retrieve the deer.

(Arthur) In a year or two I was driving the Chevy truck all around the fields, making my own paths thru the hay and scaring my friends by driving across the slope on the big hill. Later I drove the old ‘48 Desoto 9-passenger all around those fields. Gas was cheap.

(Herb) After World War II Dad signed up at all the car dealers for a new car. The first one that came up was the DeSoto, two regular seats and a jump seat with no partition to the trunk. It weighed 4000 pounds, and it was really good in snow. It was good for our family of six. In the winter if Dad started to lose traction he
would shout “in the rear”. We boys would climb over the seat backs into the trunk to give him some extra weight over the drive wheels. We used this car in 1952 for a 3-month trip around the United States. We visited 24 states, clear to California. The movies Dad took were shown one evening at the Damascus School and the place was packed. I have that footage today on DVD.

I remember driving the car several times, taking part of the girls softball team to games in other towns. Because I carried eight players only one other car was needed, and there was room in the trunk for their gear as well. It bothered the coach that I didn’t cheer for the team but I never was into sports and didn’t care. I do have a basketball sports letter, tho. My junior year I was the “manager”, seeing that everyone was on the bus and all the gear loaded, as well as oranges and orange juice.

1948 DeSoto suburban, two regular seats and a jump seat in back.

My senior year there was class basketball. My class was a small one with only six guys. One refused to have anything to do with it. I was talked into playing, as such, on my condition that our team be shirts. I made one basket during the games, and at the last game the seniors were one point behind in the closing seconds. I attempted a shot which I fumbled into my teammates hands, he put it up thru the basket, buzzer, we win. Every one clapped my shoulder for the assist. It was many, many years later before I told the story of what really happened.
One very cold January night I was awakened by Dad at midnight and sent to Waterville to pick up some replacement chicken brooders. We had six new ones that were defective and almost burned down the barn. Dad went to putting back the old brooders while I went for new ones. The dealer had some from another batch and assembled them while I was en-route. Dad told me not to shut down the DeSoto engine till I was home again and I didn’t. Tho I was dressed for it, man it was cold that night, with a wind to boot. Going thru Waterville I picked up a cop on my tail. When I got to my destination he saw the kitchen, porch, yard, office and shop lights all on and must have figured I was out for a good reason and he just left. The next morning Dad called the school and told them what happened and that I would be at school after I awoke and had something to eat.

We would gather sap with the old truck, a big 100-gallon tank in the back. We emptied buckets from the trees into gathering pails, then poured those thru a metal strainer into the tank, hunks of sap ice staying on top to melt, drain, or be thrown out.

I used this truck and tank to deliver water to neighbors during dry summers, there were a lot of dug wells then, vs. the drilled wells of later times.

Riding back to the evaporator was fun. We could stand on the running board and hang on thru the open window, or straddle the old headlight on the front wheel fender. Sometimes we’d drive as far as we could thru the snow to the Seven Maples stream, then walk thru the snow to gather sap from some granddaddy maples that grew by the stream.

One of my earliest memories was of riding the sap sled behind Chub, hanging on to the sap tank. Chub’s powerful hindquarters pushing and pulling thru deep snow, so we could get sap from the trees down in the woods to the west.

Years later, after college, I got the old evaporator running again. I ran a 1500-foot pipeline downhill from trees on a neighbor’s property, borrowed more sap buckets, and made lots of syrup. One day I made 72 quarts in 12 hours --- 2 pm to 2 am --- 6 quarts per hour. By keeping the sap low, and the fire humping I could boil away a lot of sap. I made syrup in Michigan, Winterport, and a few times here in Mt. Vernon.
(Herb) I remember his last run of syrup in Mt. Vernon. He called me at work telling me that this would be his last run ever and I was welcome to come down. I stopped in Newport and picked up our brother David and we went down. Arthur had a lot of softwood board and 2-by ends from a building he had built and these were used for the fire. David and I fired the evaporator while we were there. I remember Arthur’s wife Annie coming up with some fresh biscuits and we enjoyed these with the fresh syrup. There is nothing for flavor like maple syrup that has never cooled any more than so you can have it with biscuits.

Arthur making syrup at the home place spring 1965

(Arthur) I remember Grandma, tho maybe mostly thru the movies Dad took. I remember her apartment --- up the stairs with the pretty banister, the three steps down to the hall, the stained glass window. A family story about her too: She would come out to visit us on the farm. She’d take the bus from Bangor to Carmel, and Dad would pick her up at Mark Mc Gown’s store, (while we waited we would climb the gas pump sign pole and sit on the cross bars with the flying horse symbol).
Well, one day we were snowed in. I guess Dad had taken Chub, the big black workhorse, out to get her, but the bus didn’t come. So later on in the day here comes Grandma up our half mile un-plowed driveway, taking giant steps to match the footprints of Chub. My Grandma. I can only imagine it.

I remember seeing her coming and Mother telling my dad to go get her. Dad replied that by the time he got the horse and sled hitched up she would be here anyway. We had actually not expected her that Saturday because of all the snow we had.

I also remember the apartment; originally she had an ice box for refrigeration, and later an actual electric refrigerator. The bathroom was shared with another apartment. She had a lot of bric-a-brac from when she came from England, some of which I have. Where her many elephants went I don’t know, there were many sizes and colors, brass to ceramic to wood. She had a big old console radio, an Edison. Once us kids jumped on her bed and broke a slat under the bedspring. Dad measured it and brought in another one the next time we went to town.

I remember listening to the radio --- mostly I remember the Lone Ranger, with his faithful horse Silver and his Indian Companion Tonto. There was also Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy, and Roy Rogers. On rainy days I’d play Dad’s classical records on the phonograph with a door that you opened to put the record inside. TV came later, when I was in high school. We’d watch Ed Sullivan, I Love Lucy, Jackie Gleason, Gunsmoke, and Have Gun Will Travel.

Add to these the radio programs, Green Hornet, Gildersleeve, Jack Benny, Groucho Marx, and Sam Spade, and there were others. When I was 12, I was given a one tube regenerative radio that I use to listen to in bed with headphones. It used a D cell and a 22 ½ volt hearing aid battery for power. I received stations from most of the eastern part of the US at night. I credit this radio to my choice of career as a broadcast engineer, a trade I practiced for 46 years. I still have the 3Q4 tube it used and it is still good, tho I don’t know where the rest of the radio went off to.

I don’t remember using the telephone, tho I may have. Perhaps my friends had no phone, or maybe it was a grown-up thing. But I do remember
Merle Vicnaire & I yodeling to each other from his house to mine, perhaps 1/3 of a mile away.

(Herb) What a difference then and now on telephones. If you wanted to call outside the local area you went thru an operator. For Dad to call his sister in Massachusetts, he first talked to the operator in Bangor. She patched him to the Portland office, the Portland operator patched to Boston, who patched to Worcester, who connected and rang the phone in Shrewsbury. It was a wonder when you could dial your own call to anywhere in the states, then into Canada. Now almost everyone has a cell phone and virtually instant communications. I use my cell phone to talk to my sister in Missouri because it costs me less than a landline. And I always first text her phone to see if she is home and can chat.

(Herb) Edith Emery was the wife of Dewey Emery, they lived on a farm on Route 2, about 4/10 of a mile east of the Etna-Carmel town line, on the south side of the road. She attended town meetings with her husband and took part in the voting, as well as voting in state and national elections. Only when she was naturalized and that was in the newspaper was it known that she was a Canadian citizen all that time...she and my mother were members of the Garden Club, sometimes they met at our house. The only other member names I remember are Hester McGown, and Bernice (Bunny) Donaldson, from Etna.

(Herb) Mark and Hester McGown one night had a party at their house. A couple of missionaries showed up that evening and wanted to preach. Dad and Mom were there and Dad said finally Mark dug out his wallet and displayed his deputy sheriff badge and told them to go, or he would take them to the Bangor jail. When I learned he was a deputy I asked him if really he was. He took out his wallet and showed me the badge.

(Herb) Arthur’s friend Bruce once made an interesting shot. I was talking with him when he spotted a pheasant up in the field. Bruce pulled a rifle out of his pickup and shot the bird. There was not a mark on the bird, but the top of his head was all soft, the bullet had passed right over the top and the concussion had killed the bird.

(Herb) One spring Merle Vicnaire was fishing Souadabscook Stream from on top of the big rock downstream from the Grist Mill Road bridge. He hooked a big bass
which almost dumped him into the water. Merle landed the fish finally and it was taken home for supper. I had never known of a bass in that stream. Usually it was pickerel, perch, and catfish. There is a pool downstream a bit from the bridge where we would sometimes swim. The cement sluice for the grist mill was still there and a couple old mill stones. Originally there were two bridges, the one for the sluice was filled in, and I remember when they did it. The other bridge was wooden planks over railroad rails for support. Dad had put a large timber across, from left to right under the rails, and large timbers down to the ledge. This was replaced by a stressed concrete bridge which is there today. The town replaced the bridge tho they didn’t want to. The cost of building an alternative road was far more than the bridge. The bulk trucks just kept getting bigger.
(Herb) I was once told a tale by a man who worked for my dad when Dad first moved to Carmel. Seems the man had told Dad there were mice in the grain room. One noon while the fellow was eating his lunch Dad came in with a .22 rifle and sat down. As they talked a mouse poked his head around a bag of grain and then withdrew. Dad said to the mouse, "Do that again." The mouse did and Dad nailed him. Then he shot five more in the next 20 minutes. I remember the feral barn cats that kept the mice down. They were fed once a day and were confined to the barn. There were cat doors so they could go anywhere in the barns. When the broilers came in we went to bulk feed and the feral cats had to be put down. It was the year I got my first .22 rifle. This was ordered from Sears Roebuck and came when I was at school. When I got home there was an open box of .22 cartridges and the feral cats were gone. Dad told me not to touch the sights because he had put them right on.

(Herb) Dam Cram was a swimming spot up in the Damascus section, behind the Triangle Saw Mill on the Damascus Road. The dam had been to power an earlier saw mill by water power, tho by the time I swam there the mill was run on an engine. A Mr. Maurice Springer ran the mill in those times. The same location was where a saw mill had been owned and run by “Peg Leg” Pete Bradford, a Civil War veteran who lost a leg in that war.

(Herb) We kids and the neighborhood kids would ride our bicycles around the yard and one time I had the idea of a traffic light. I used some Christmas lights to get the colors needed. I rigged an Erector Set motor to turn a drum with metal sections. An old wind-up clock spring provided my sliding contacts and the lights would cycle just like the lights in Bangor. I don’t know how many miles we rode our bikes but the lights were a novelty and we got enjoyment from them. I must have had a transformer to step down the voltage for the lights but I don’t remember what voltage it was.

(Herb) Back in those times more than a few homes used kerosene lamps for light at night, connection to the power grid was not universal. I would hate to read by that light. Wood heat was very common in that day and time. In my house I use a base of propane heat with a small wood stove; it has got to be a cold day before I can’t keep the propane from turning on.

Coal was used then as well. I even remember some coal chicken brooders setting unused in the shed. By that time we were using kerosene brooders. Later
there was a large furnace used to heat the barns for the baby chicks. I remember a big building used for coal storage on the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad. Going toward Bangor it was on the left just by the first railroad bridge at Northern Maine Junction. The cars were switched into the top of the building from the railroad tracks up high and the cars unloaded by gravity into the bins. The bins were then, in turn, gravity fed to trucks for distribution around the area.

(Herb) I remember a large old-fashioned Studebaker car parked out by the end of the shed. We kids must have run that car an imaginary million miles, sitting in the seat and turning the steering wheel. I remember Dad cut off part of the back and installed a buck rake for moving hay from the field to the barn. He claimed he had put more work into it than it was worth and didn’t use it but two or three summers.

It was an ark of a car and one day when Dad went to call on Mother before they were married, Uncle Moody was there calling on her sister, Aunt Neta. Uncle Moody took one look at the Studebaker and said, “I bet Noah swore like hell when John took that away from him.”

(Arthur) A door handle to that Studebaker in now on my root cellar door and I use it regularly.

(Herb) I remember keys were left in the vehicles and the house was never locked. That is until one day in the 60’s when there was a house robbery in town.
I was working away from the home place by that time, but still helping Dad. I was given a key but didn’t carry it until I got home one day and was locked out. I got a ladder from the barn and went in thru a second-story window that was not locked. I always carried my key after that.

(Herb) Sister Diana was the last one born, and I remember Dad getting hold of a stork lawn ornament and putting a large chain around its legs. Told people there wasn’t going to be any more children, and there weren’t, because he “had chained the stork”.

(Herb) While we had a full indoor bathroom many houses of that time in the 40’s and 50’s did not. There were many “privy” toilets at that time. I remember coming home from Bangor quite late and the DeSoto quit. I coasted into the blacksmith’s yard, Mr. Marley’s, in Hermon, but his house was dark. There was a light on in another house so I walked over. I stepped up onto the porch and looked thru the kitchen window just in time to see a large woman lower herself into a large round galvanized tub to take her bath. She never saw me and I beat a hasty retreat and went back and woke up Mr. Marley and he called my dad who came and got me.

(Herb) I remember when Arthur was in college in Illinois; he came home for Christmas on the Greyhound bus. Once when it was time for him to go back there was so much snow even Route 2 was hardly passable. The next day in the middle of the morning Arthur jumps up and says “It’s time to go”. We strapped his bags onto a toboggan, strapped on snowshoes, and headed for the village. We were walking from the Damascus Road to the village with the snowshoes strapped to the toboggan when here comes the Greyhound, which Arthur flagged while I unstrapped his bags. As Arthur climbed on he said to the driver, “I was lucky to catch you”. The driver replied, “Yes, considering this is yesterday’s bus”. I continued on to the village and picked up something Mother needed from the store and then returned home.

Arthur always ran with a tail wind. Once he was on Route 2 between the east end of the Damascus Road and the village. He ran out of gas so he kicked the clutch and coasted to the village and right up to the pumps at the Esso station, didn’t even have to stretch out the gas hose.

There once was a Maine Central bus that ran Route 2 and would stop at the small towns and you could flag it down as well. When they stopped running that
bus, the Greyhound bus started handling in-state passengers as well as continuing the out-of-state ones.

(Arthur) One time on returning from college I walked from the village and sneakied into the house without being seen or heard. When it was meal time I walked down the stairs into the dining room much to the family’s surprise.

(Herb) We had a Canadian cousin who used to come visit in the summer, Cousin Pat. Her mother would put her on the bus in Sudbury Ontario and she would change buses in Montreal to a bus heading to Bangor. She would get off at Foster’s Esso station and we would pick her up. She would stay several weeks and then return home. Now she lives in Nova Scotia and Carol and I usually visit her each summer, staying a few days in her guest room.

Another cousin would come in the summer, Herbert Flint, from Bath, ME. He would come by train and we would pick him up at the train station at Carmel.

(Herb) My dad’s family had a camp up on First Roach pond, Kokadjo. We went up one summer and I wound up sleeping in the guides camp. Now the rest of the kids, including Cousin Pat, heard noises outside and thought it was me pretending to be a bear. They came out looking for me and ran into a real bear, in the mean time I was sleeping peacefully. The only way in to camp then was two miles up the lake in a boat. You took a couple 20 lb propane tanks for the refrigerator, stove, and lights. Today my cousin Jim owns it and you can drive right to the back yard. While I have keys to both the gate and cabins I seldom go now, and then only for a day trip. It is 12 miles of gravel road off the tar, 6 miles from a telephone and no cell service. There are many Kokadjo stories in the family but I won’t go into them here. Here again, Arthur always ran with a tail wind, both coming and going into and out of camp with his boat or canoe.

(Herb) I can remember Earl Mc Sorley coming down thru the woods road from the Fuller Road with his D6 Cat and breaking the road down to the bridge. He didn’t dare cross the bridge with the bulldozer but came in from the Damascus Road to the bridge with the Cat, and then came in with his snow plow truck.

(Herb) I can remember one day a horse and buggy coming down the woods road from the Fuller Road and stopping in the yard. I don’t know who the woman
was but she and Dad talked for about 10 minutes while Dad held the horse by the bridle. After they were done talking she continued down the road.

(Herb) On a poultry farm English Sparrows are not welcome because they eat the chicken feed right from the feeders. Dad was death on them. One time one was up on the barn ridge pole, a three story barn, chirping away. Dad went in the house and got his .351, went out, held steady against the garage door, and touched it off. Up on the barn roof there was a puff of feathers where the sparrow had been. I went up thru the roof hatch and looked for remains. There were some blood spots and a bunch of feathers. I went and looked on the ground below the eaves and found nothing. He just exploded the bird. He once told me on his home place he used a 32-20 rifle on English Sparrows and would line up two and take them out with the same shot. I don’t doubt that after seeing the way he handled the .351. He always used a peep sight for shooting. I’m told by a friend of mine that the peep sight on Dad’s rifle is worth more than the rifle.

(Herb) I remember Dad telling about the only hunting trip he ever went on, going with his cousins. They were up Moosehead Lake way, around Churchill. The first day there he bagged a black bear early in the morning. He kept the pelt and would bring it out every so often at home; I don’t know whatever happened to the pelt. The second day there he was walking a woods road when a deer came out from the left. Dad fired and the deer went into the woods on the right. Next a deer came out from the right and Dad figured he had missed so he shot a second time, the deer going into the woods on the left. When he got to the spot he had a dead deer on each side of the road. He once told me his father would hunt partridge with the .351, shooting their heads off.

(Herb) When Mother had to be away I would be relieved of my barn duties and told to keep house. Once she had been gone a week, when she returned I had the floors swept and washed, the laundry all done, the dishes all done up, and supper ready. Mother seemed out of sorts about this so the next day I asked my dad what the matter was. “You did too well,” he said, “she didn’t feel needed.” After that, when she got home, either you could plant the floors, or laundry was piled high, or dishes were high in the sink. She would grumble and get to whatever needed doing and was happy.
(Herb) Once Sunny Vicnaire stayed for noon meal. Afterwards Sunny and Arthur left the house and a few minutes later I went out and found them sliding down the large barn roof which was a metal roof. Dad had one ladder to the eaves and another to the ridge pole. Dad was fixing the roof at the time. They climbed to the ridge pole and slid down and grabbed the ladder to stop. I waited until both were on the ladder and then shouted to them to come down. They did and I told them to never do that again or I would tell Dad. They didn’t and Dad never knew.

(Herb) One time when the Vicnaire boys stayed for noon meal mother served “Goop”, which is nothing but a mixture of Velveeta cheese, corn, tomatoes, and onion, served on toast or bread. We kids loved it and Dot Vicnaire called my mother wanting the recipe because her boys had liked it so much and told her about it. Mother was a bit embarrassed to give it out but she finally did. Mother really did not think much of it as a meal but she would make it for us.

(Herb) Mr. Foster ran the Esso station in town and he once told me of the first time he met Dad. (We were at some event at the present grammar school.) Dad stopped at the station and made inquiry if there were any farms for sale in the area. They talked awhile and this eventually led Dad to the purchase of the farm where I grew up. When I started working at MPBN Mr. Foster asked me why I didn’t buy my gas from him anymore. I replied that there was a garage near my work that would fix my car while I was at work so I gave him my gas business as well. Mr. foster replied, “I understand that, it will get you faster service in a pinch”. That was true and I had a good relationship with the garage owner, John Sullivan.

(Herb) I remember taking my sister Diana for her driving test. She had failed it prior. My car was a standard shift so we used Dad’s automatic for driving practice. She asked for the first appointment of the day so I could take her. She passed with flying colors but I drove home because I was in a hurry to get my own car and get to work. I had made arrangements to take time off but things were busy and they asked me to come as soon as I could. Dad’s car at that time was a Chrysler Newport with a 383 cu in V8. Coming out of Hermon village toward Miller Hill there were six cars ahead of us, all going slowly. They all turned onto the right-hand truck lane on the hill, and there was no traffic coming down hill. I laid the throttle down on the Newport and away we went. Two-thirds of the way up the
hill in the center lane, we were past all the cars, doing 75, and gaining. I slacked off at this point and turned to my sister and told her to never try that until she had some driving experience under her belt. That car would tow a boat and trailer like it wasn’t there.

(Herb) I remember John Deere Days back then. Once a year the local John Deere dealers would show a film of all the new John Deere products for the next year at the Brewer Auditorium and Dad would get tickets and take us boys to the show. I think that had stopped by the early sixty’s but it was great while it lasted. They passed out ledger books and pencils to all who attended. This one is the 1955 ledger.
(Herb) Speaking of cows. When Delma Vicnaire was born she couldn’t keep anything down. Mother’s milk, cow’s milk, goat’s milk. Willy and Dot Vicnaire were desperate. Mother sent down a quart of milk from each of our Guernsey cows and they found she could keep the milk down from one particular cow. It was my job to take a quart of milk down each morning on my way to school. One Saturday morning I had to snowshoe down because we were not plowed out. Needless to say Delma came out of it OK and grew up a healthy woman, with children and grandchildren of her own.

(Herb) Delma’s grandmother, Avis Shaw, lived with them and was called Grammy by her grandchildren. I was in and out of their house with the boys and called her “Grammy Shaw”. Why she liked this I don’t know but she told me so many years later. Arthur says he remembers her booming voice. One time in the spring I was down at the stream breaking off ice and went in all except my head, grabbing some bushes. I got myself out and ran for Vicnaire’s, that being the nearest. When I went into the kitchen Grammy looked at me and said, “Boy, are you a sorry looking mess”. I got dried out enough to hike for home and my folks never knew, and Grammy never squealed on me.

(Herb) I got a chance many years later to return Grammy’s favor, 1985 to be exact. I was married and we had built a home on Route 2, at the Carmel-Etna town line. One day there were sirens and they all seemed to converge on the Etna Campground. Dot and Grammy had a camp and would spend time there. Anyway, with all the commotion I walked over to see what was going on. I found fire, ambulance, and sheriff. I got there just in time to see them load Dot into the ambulance. Now I knew that Grammy and Dot were always together, and that Grammy had never driven a car, and was by that time legally blind. I stepped onto the porch, stuck my head in the door, and called out for her but no answer. I then stepped outside and started to look around. I finally saw her sitting in the front passenger seat of a car, with two other women. I walked over to the car and bent down at the open driver’s window. I said,”Hi Grammy, it’s Herbert Dean." There was a slight pause and she brightened and said, “Oh, hi Herbie”. The driver turned to me and mouthed, “Do you know where this woman lives”? I nodded yes and the look of relief that passed over her face was something to behold. We got Grammy home, made a couple telephone calls and were unable to locate Delma,
but left messages for her. This was before cell phones. I went back and secured the cabin, then went and stayed with Grammy until Delma and Dot showed up, Dot with her hands all bandaged for the burns she had.

(Herb) I was not going to put this story in at first but brother Arthur convinced me to do so by not naming the inebriated gentleman, but only referring to him.

I was perhaps 10 when this took place. It was a cold rainy day and Dad had to go to the village to talk with Mark McGown at the store. I went with him and we found Mark the only person in the store. While Mark and Dad conducted their business I stood looking out the right-hand front window. While I was standing there an inebriated gentleman came up the steps and just stood there. I knew who he was and that he lived several miles away, that he was often inebriated, and I wasn’t surprised. About this time Arthur Small came on the scene in a pickup which he parked between the store and the Esso station. When Mr. Small came up the steps he was accosted by the gentleman who insisted that Mr. Small give him a ride home. Mr. Small took exception and the gentleman grabbed his shirt. Mr. Small immediately decked the gentleman who fell in a heap onto the concrete.

(It was then I became aware that Mark was standing to my left, and Dad to my right, quietly watching this unfold.) Mr. Small went back down the stairs and backed the pickup, tailgate down, up to the steps. He then came up the steps, grabbed the gentleman’s coat collar and dragged him down the steps into the pickup bed. He then drove off in the direction of the gentleman’s home with the tailgate still down. Mark and Dad watched all this without comment and when the pickup went out of sight Mark said, “I hope Arthur doesn’t get wet leaving him off”. Dad replied, “Meaning what?” Mark replied, “Back down the drive way real fast and slam on the brakes”. Dad replied, “I like that”. Dad and I then started home and part way there Dad said to me, “what you just saw never happened, don’t talk of it”. And you know, I never did, until 2006, when I told it to Mark’s two children and to one of Mr. Small’s, as well as one of Mark’s grandchildren. The gentleman will remain anonymous, but even today there might be a few people who would know.

(Herb) Mark and Dad were probably discussing a poultry feed order. The store sold “Unity Feed” back then. I remember feed deliveries. Mark’s son Allan and his cousin Roger would unload from a railroad car at the Carmel rail siding and deliver to the farm in a cab-over truck. I remember Roger passed away from polio when the epidemic went thru here. Roger was the son of Roger, the brother of Mark.
They ran the store together. The Unity Feeds representative for the area was a Mr. Percy Freeman who lived in Waterville. He was a full blood Micmac Indian from Prince Edward Island in Canada. I remember he always had a tie on and he was always neat, and a real gentleman. He always drove a nice car that was always neat and clean.

Percy Freeman, Unity Feeds salesman

(Herb) The store had a wide range of goods available, including clothing. I remember taking in a gallon jug and it being filled with molasses from a barrel in the cellar. I remember a small meat counter with a transparent container on top with a large round cheese inside, from which wedges were sold. I remember several varieties of cookies, one of which I particularly liked, even tho my mother was a master of making cookies. There were some tools, there were canned and jars of stuff on the shelves, crackers, bread, flour for just a few things. As people went more to Bangor after the war the store eventually closed, was rented out and became what I call an “Emporium”. One night it caught fire, burned flat to the ground, and was no more.

(Herb) When Dad moved to the farm there was a drainage problem back of the house. Dad got dynamite and blasted three ditches in all to help drainage. The left over dynamite got put in the upper spring house. One day Dad discovered that the dynamite was gelling which made it particularly dangerous. He fashioned a slide with boards to get the box out of the spring house and gently moved it out
and 20 feet away, on a rainy day. He then built a fire around the box and burned it, which is a safe thing to do. The danger is that the nitroglycerin liquid comes out of the stick and is much more sensitive than when compounded in the stick. Dynamite is set off by shock, not fire, so it is safe to burn.

(Herb) In my early 20’s I worked three summers for the DOT on road construction. We sometimes had to use dynamite and for those three years I was always the one who wired up the electric caps that set off the dynamite. George Miller, the supervisor, had a special ohm meter that I used to check continuity. It was fun to hook up the detonator, push the handle and watch things blow up. As I remember in the three summers we broke two house windows, a car window, snapped one telephone line, and snapped an electric power line, from flying rock. We never had a personal injury tho. I remember getting a dynamite headache just once and until you get one you just can’t know how bad that is. I got sent home and was told to shower for 15 minutes and then go to bed, which I did and was OK by supper time. It bothered Mother when I worked dynamite. When inserting caps into the sticks, you make the hole with a wooden stick you have rounded the end of with your jackknife. Always be gentle and move slowly when working dynamite was the rule. If you need a partial stick of dynamite use your wooden stick and make a hole thru the dynamite where you want to break it. Rogan Memorial from Bangor was always the company that drilled holes for us.

If there was a small piece of ledge, Arnold Smith, (from Etna), and I would do a hole with a star drill and use a partial stick of dynamite. I fashioned a handle to hold the star drill at a distance so as to not get hit by the maul if there was a miss. I also fashioned a small scoop to lift out the powdered rock, worked good.

(Herb) One of the school bus drivers was Myron Goodell. He and his wife Alice lived on the Hinkley Hill Road. Myron had farmed and been a mechanic among doing other things. Along the way he had picked up a smattering of electronics. He became a tutor to my budding interest in electronics. When I got my driver’s license, two weeks after my 15th birthday, I would go down and visit him and Alice. I continued to learn from him until about my 18th birthday when I realized I knew more electronics than he did. I still made the occasional visit until he passed away. I listened to many a story of the past at his kitchen table and so much wish I had had a tape recorder. Those stories transcribed to paper would be longer than this writing.
(Herb) One time Myron commented to me that he had not been on the (Hermon) pond in quite some time. I came back that afternoon with my boat and motor. We put in at Vafiades Landing on the Bog Road and went onto the pond and a ways up the Souadabscook above the Swan Road. Then we retuned and went down the stream to a point just below the third interstate bridge. We turned here and went back up stream. This was July and the water was high from a lot of rain, tho it was sunny the day we went. There were kids swimming from the bridge at the Bog Road when we returned and they hollered to us, “faster”. I went under the bridge just making headway. Just as we put in at the landing a large boat came downstream moving right along. The kids jumped into the wake after the boat passed. Well, one of them didn’t come up. Meanwhile Myron and I loaded my boat and headed back toward his place. On the road we met a state trooper coming at us with all the lights flashing and the siren in full wail, but we didn’t know until later what had happened at the bridge. I was so glad I had gone slowly under the bridge.

Myron Goodell
There was a large shed and barn with so much interesting stored stuff at Myron’s. He also had his radio room with a lot of old stuff. I have a few of the items he gave me and I treasure them. When Myron passed away I asked his son for a set of plug-in radio coils that were there, they were for a Super Wasp radio. I told Bud I wouldn’t sell them but might trade. I made a trade with a gentleman in British Columbia, Canada. He was able to revive a Super Wasp that lacked the necessary coils. I do know that Bud spent a while cleaning the place after his mother passed away. The place was sold and the barn torn down, and many years later the house burned down one night.

(Herb) I remember holding the flashlight for Dad so many times while he worked on something. If your attention wandered he would get mad so it was a demanding job to keep the light just right. I did learn how to do many things watching him work while I held the light. I learned many things working with my dad. We did our own electrical, plumbing, and repairs, even construction. Dad had an electrical Journeyman’s license and sometimes would do small jobs off the farm. Mother taught us boys basic cooking, how to do laundry, housekeeping, and rudimentary sewing. We learned so many things from our parents.

(Herb) We made trips off the farm as well. I remember a trip to Sand Beach, the waves were just the right size for kids and we had a ball. Mother always did a picnic lunch on outings of this type. I remember once stopping at Thunder Hole. The water was up and I was the only one who didn’t go down the stairs. A big wave came along and everyone got wet feet except me.

Thinking of Bar Harbor, I remember the 1947 Bar Harbor fire that burned a great deal of the Island. It was on the radio and everyone talked about it at the time. Men went down from Carmel to fight the fire. One thing needed was water tankers; quite a few gasoline tank trucks got washed out and went down. They had nothing like the capacity of today’s tank trucks but served well.

In the spring of 1997 one of the production people at MPBN, where I worked, commentated that they were looking for subject of a TV show. I replied, “The Bar Harbor fire was fifty years ago this summer.” There was a TV show produced and broadcast about the fire.

(Herb) One time Aunt Buddy and Uncle Cecil and family were staying with us on the farm. It was time for corn and Dad raised a lot. It was on the table for dinner and little cousin Bill was sitting next to Uncle Cecil. Someone had missed a corn
bore in the ear Bill was eating. He leaned over to his father and said, “There’s a snake in my corn”. True to form Uncle Cecil in his dry humor answered, “Don’t say anything, everyone will want one”.

1953, all the Dean side first cousins together at Messalonskee Lake, four families.

(Herb) One time stands out, a trip to Messalonskee Lake. Dad’s sister Frankie and her husband had a camp there, as well as Dad’s brother Jimmy. Dad’s sister, Aunt Buddy and Uncle Cecil and their family were up from Massachusetts staying with Aunt Frankie and Uncle Don at the camp. Uncle Jimmy and Aunt Betty and family boated up the lake to Aunt Frankie’s. We got there late morning but in time for the barbecue. Uncle Don had a large one just filled with chicken. Dad asked how long he cooked the chicken, Uncle Don answered, “two beers and a cigar”. There was a bunch of brothers and sisters and cousins all over the place. We swam off the beach, rowed the row boat, jumped into the water off the dock or row boat, raced the two power boats, and water skied, played games of all
sorts. We kids just wore ourselves out that day. There were other visits at Aunt Frankie’s but never another like that one. Brother Arthur got accidently dumped fully clothed into the water by Uncle Cecil. That evening Arthur nailed Uncle Cecil, with whipped cream from a can onto a piece of pie. Too much too fast and the whipped cream deflected off the piecrust right into Uncle Cecil’s face.

(Herb) We went to church in Bangor and one Sunday one of the women in church showed up with a brand new Studebaker. She had bought it because that was to be the last year Studebaker was making cars. The hood was up and everyone was taking a look. I looked in just as the owner said that she liked the reliability of the Studebaker engine. Well this kid (me) took one look at the engine and said, truthfully, “That’s a Chevrolet engine”. She actually asked the dealer and he confirmed what I had said. I understand that it took some of the pleasure out of owning that car for her. Should have kept my mouth shut.

(Herb) Then there were the two older ladies at church who once were talking with my sister. One of the ladies remarked that as the youngest, her brothers must baby her. Sister replied, “No, I have to fight every inch of the way”. I remember her reply was a bit more emphatic, but sister disagrees.

(Herb) I remember when George Smith painted the Damascus school house after WW II. It needed painting badly and George said that every time he touched a wet paint brush onto a clapboard there was, in what would be said today, a giant sucking sound.

(Herb) One time some of us kids were racing our bicycles down Norton Hill at Damascus. With my three speed I was well out ahead and went by the end of Lewis Preble’s driveway just as his dog ran out of the driveway. Dog, me, and bicycle went flying in all directions. The dog went limping back up the driveway; I was all scraped and bloody. Before the other kids got there I had kicked the handle bars straight, mounted the bike and high tailed for home. The others were concerned I was hurt and followed. By the time they got to the Peters’ house I was on the next crest and gaining on them so they figured I would make it home ok. I was talking with Douglas Small and he told me about sliding Norton Hill. On a good day they would slide as far as the saw mill, tho he said they were not going very fast by then. The sanding crew would ruin things for sliding tho. I never slid
Norton Hill because we had such an excellent slide on our home driveway. Brother Arthur tells me he had slid on the hill several times.

(Herb) The Maine Central Railroad went through the lower part of the farm and I would go down and watch the section gang work if they were in the area of the Grist Mill crossing. A Mr. Tenan was the foreman. Mother got some material that matched the railroad hats they wore and made me one just like theirs. I wore that type hat for many years; I still have one tho I seldom wear it. I remember buying one from Mark McGown at the store and he told me that he and I had the biggest heads in town; we were the only ones who wore size 7 5/8’s.

(Herb) I received a letter for Mom and Dad sent to the old farm address, 14 years after the farm was sold. I was living on US Rt. 2 in Carmel at the time. This was delivered to me because I went to school with the mail carrier and he recognized the names and knew I was their son.

(Herb) There was a field below the railroad tracks that always attracted fire flies every summer. We would go down in the evening and watch them. When the fields got planted to tree growth that eventually ended.

Arthur weighs in again with some more thoughts.

(Arthur) I had three childhood friends—Junior Ward in elementary school, Merle Vicnaire in 7th & 8th grade, and Bruce Fitts in 9-12th grades. Junior and I played with our horses, took tap dancing, and shot BB guns. Merle and I fished, swam and shot BB guns. Bruce and I had numerous adventures.

We found a bee tree in the woods, watched flying squirrels, watched horses twitching logs from the woods, stripped bark off hemlock logs, built forts and cabins, and got ourselves lost in the woods. Sometimes he would act goofy and make me laugh.

Once we made a life sized rifle that would fire a whole reel of caps with a deafening report. We lay in the ditch one dark night and fired it as a car went by, thinking he might think he had a blowout. When he stopped we lay as till as mice hoping he wouldn’t find us. We made moonlight hikes miles from home and came home foot weary. We rode in his dad’s pickup body and shot BB’s at road signs while his dad and mom spotted deer in the fields.
(Herb) Bruce’s mother Olive (Graves) always got her deer each fall, she had a 32 special Winchester model 94. I once asked her how she did it. Her reply was, dress in a green wool jacket, (before the blaze orange rule), and find a recently unused woods road. Start walking the road, 100 feet at a time, pause 30 seconds, walk another 100 feet, another pause, etc. This is so unlike nature that deer will get curious and walk right out so you can see them. Bang, meat in the freezer.

(Arthur) We hiked way down the railroad tracks to a high signal tower and climbed it to wait for a train. Luck was with us and we felt the tower vibrate as a freight train rumbled below us. Another night, on a bridge, we lay beside the the middle I beam as a train thundered by just a few feet away. The bridge shook so, we were pressed for courage to stay there. (Then there were two sets of tracks, they were lying on the opposite side of the center beam from the train.)

Bruce on his dad’s crawler                      Roland, Olive (Graves), and son Bruce Fitts

One night we wandered a big loop of back roads in the moonlight and found some apples to eat as we hiked. As we sat by the road eating them, a police car stopped, the window rolled down and a deep voice said, “everything all right boys?” We assured them we were just on a hike and stopped to rest. Probably not too many people go for moonlight hikes. Perhaps they should.

Two adventures would have scared my parents, had they known. The Vicnaire boys and I were breaking off ice chunks upstream of the bridge. We’d watch the chunks go under the bridge and over the falls. A good thing we didn’t go with them. The boys had made a little wooden boat, not very seaworthy, and towed it upstream to Etna Pond. Glenny and I, one fine afternoon, paddled it across the
pond (no life jackets) with boards for paddles, bailing now and then because of leaks and waves too big for the tiny boat. We must have been a funny sight for two drunks in a boat we met halfway across.

Mom called Herb “the Bear” and me “the Bobcat”. I guess we’d get into hassles, though I don’t remember them. But I do remember we once pretended to fight just to pull Mama’s chain. Now and then, if some chore had to be done, and reluctance reigned, our usual response was, “it’s your turn, you promised, and I’ve got to check the chickens”. *(We had to check chickens [35,000] a lot to keep the temperature and air flow liveable.)*

(Arthur) When baby chicks came we’d already spent days leveling the sawdust, laying newspapers, filling water jugs, getting the brooders going, putting up cardboard fences, and folding feeder flats. There were 100 chicks in every box, 4 sections of 25 each. Some 2000 chicks, 20 boxes would go into a pen. We would scoop big double handfuls of little yellow fur balls under the brooders, and gently shake out those remaining. In ten minutes all 2000 would be cheeping—very loud, almost deafening. They would dash around; tiny wings a’flapping, taking in food and water. At night they’d all snuggle up in tight bunches keeping warm under the brooder stoves. The brooders were later replaced with central heating pipes.

Kerosene brooder stoves and new chicks
Now and then I would climb up through the roof hatch and walk the barn ridge pole. Once Dad came from the house into the yard below and looked up and saw me doing it. Awhile later he says to me, “Don’t let me see you doing that again”. He didn’t say I couldn’t—but he didn’t want to see me do it.

Between batches of chickens, we would clean out the barns top to bottom, plow and shovel, blow and spray till it was clean and ready for the sawdust trucks to bring in many cords of sawdust. For a day or two, it might be clean with a bare floor, so we kids would get out bikes, trikes, wagons, and scooters and move in. With chalk we’d draw on the floor to make roads, parking, homes, stores, gas stations and stop signs. My older brother Herb made an ingenious motorized switch to run a real stoplight at a busy street corner.

David and I developed our interest in rockets. We wrapped tin foil around bulk matches at first, and maybe got 20 foot flights. Then we advanced to match powder fuel and maybe got 100 ft. on a few rare occasions.

I believe Herb suspected we might hurt ourselves or burn down the house. He got us an Estes rocket catalog, and there was no stopping us then. We made rockets far into the night and fired dozens 1000 ft. into the blue sky to come down on chutes or streamers. Some were 2 or 3 stage, some would go out of sight, some drifted far away in the wind. Some were beautiful. A few exploded. Many would arc into the blue sky leaving a trail of white smoke, quite gratifying to see.
(Arthur) Perhaps inspired by our brother Herb, Dave and I set out to log radio stations, to see how many we could receive. We set up long wire antennas across the fields, and listened intently into the night to catch call signs of a weak station. I recall WOR in N. Y. state, WOWO in Ft. Wayne Indiana, WBZ, a Boston station, one in Virginia, and possibly Texas, (probably WOAI, 1200 Kc). I’m sure we had a list of dozens. No doubt Herb had heard them all before.

(Herb) I was the one bitten by the radio bug but once my brothers Arthur and David got into listening for distant stations, called AM DXing. They had an old radio and lots of wire and ran it out in all directions. They tried different combinations and had logged a large number of stations. They discovered that by grounding wires it would help. What they were actually doing was distorting the radio waves around the house and barns, I could actually hear the differences on my radio as they were playing. Arthur told me that I advised them from time to time on different things to try, tho I’ve forgotten that.

(Arthur) I remember being maybe 5 years old, a sunny day, an Easter basket of candy in my hand, skipping down the road to watch my Dad make maple syrup.

(Herb) I remember the steel cable that was strung between the big maple tree by the house down to the big crabapple tree. There was a pulley on the cable with a rope down to a board to sit on and a tag rope. We would climb on up by the house and ride down to a stop on the cable by the crab apple tree. Then climb off, grab the tag line and return up the hill. Great fun for kids.

One evening there were about 9 or 10 of us neighborhood kids playing with the cable ride going continuously. When it started to get dark Dad brought out his surveyors transit because he recognized that the planet Jupiter was bright in the southern sky. We each got to see the moons of Jupiter. When everyone had their look I asked Dad what a star looked like, his reply, just a point of light. I asked to see for myself and pointed out a star near Jupiter. When Dad moved the transit, lo and behold, we were looking at Saturn and its rings.

(Herb) Speaking of the Damascus school house. The historical society has a DVD of footage taken at a birthday party for me on Oct 8, 1946. This was typical of one room school houses of the time. While I was working at MPBN I was able to get the 16 mm color film onto video tape, and later onto DVD. I remember listening to Mr. Bickford sawing fire wood each fall. His farm was north of the school, across the tracks and stream and straight up the hill. He used a make and break engine
and a circular saw. This would go on and off for two weeks or more. I remember the last day of school at Damascus. We would all go to the Auto-Rest Park for part of the day. I remember the merry go round, animals in the cages, the place to buy snacks and ice cream, a jungle gym, and the big field out back. I don’t remember how we got there from the school tho. Check out the DVD. Take note that none of the kids are chubby when you watch the video.

(Herb) I was thinking of the last time I played with the toys of childhood. I was perhaps 18 at the time and home alone. I took some of the toy trucks and such and went to the gravel pit on the property. I played with the toys a couple hours and then went home and put them away for good.

(This brings to mind the last sled ride. Our driveway made for excellent sledding anyway, so once when conditions were right I did a super slide. We had a lot of snow one day, the next afternoon we got rain which soaked in. The weather forecast for that night was for well below freezing temperatures. I took a shovel and went down to the end of the maple lane and cut a path so I could get a sled through the plowed snow bank. I then shaped and banked the snow bank at the curve at the end of the lane. I went to the railroad crossing and laid and packed some snow in the center of the wheel tracks across the planks at the crossing. Then I did the same for the bridge over the Souadabscook. Come morning you could walk anywhere on the snow and it would also support a sled. I went up to the highest and furthest point I could in the back fields and started down. I made the curve ok at the end of the maple lane and continued over the tracks and to a point about 25 feet beyond the bridge. That was over a half mile slide. I did it three times and put up the sled for good.

(Herb) My niece read this, and the person-oriented person she is, commented, this is more about things than people. How true, this reflecting the person I am, Arthur being the same. Also a reflection of the town of the time, a reflection of the times. Carmel is a full township, 36 square miles. The population was less than 1000 during the 1940”s. Otherwise, about 25 people per square mile. You did most of your own repairs and made do with what you had for the most part, no Sunday sales then.

(Herb) I hope you have enjoyed a bit of what it was like growing up at the time I did. Because I married late my children have a hard time believing what I’ve told them over the years. It was truly a different world.
Sister Diana has sent some contribution as well.

(Diana) One early memory was the excitement of Christmas Eve night. When we were young, Mon & Dad allowed David and me to sleep in the old double bed, the old bird’s eye maple bed that was in the large bedroom in the south east corner of the house. Our stockings were hung at the base of the bed and the feeling of excitement and anticipation was great. In the morning we were allowed to enjoy the gifts in the stockings. Always there was a candy cane in the top and an orange in the toe, with other toys in between. We had to cover our eyes to come out of the bedroom; the path to the kitchen was thru the living room where the tree was. We were never allowed to see the tree, and gifts surrounding it, until after the farm chores were done and breakfast was eaten and cleaned up. Then we could pass through the living room door and see the tree, including any unwrapped gifts. Someone was chosen to be “Santa” and hand out the gifts. It was one gift at a time, leaving time for every gift to be opened and viewed by all. I recall being the Santa often because, I suppose, I was the youngest and last child, so no one wanted to take over my job below me.

A big part of Christmas was always the food. It began early, with Mom making cookies and fudge and quick breads in advance and freezing them. Later she would choose samples of each kind of goodie to give in a goodie box for special people like church friends.

Christmas Eve dinner was a special menu. For David there was crabmeat salad. For Dad there was a fruit salad dressed with a whipped cream/miracle whip dressing. There was a bowl of potato chips with an onion dip made with sour cream and a package of Lipton onion soup mix. After supper we would go into the living room and sing Christmas carols around the piano and Mom played the tunes. Some night before Christmas we would watch a TV version of Dicken’s Christmas Carol. Herb probably remembers more listening to the story on a set of records Dad had. (Lionel Barrymore?)

(Herb) The records were mothers and I at one time copied them onto audio tape and since have put them onto a CD, which I listen to at Christmas time to this day.)

(Diana) We were always anxious for Mom to stop cooking, prepping, or cleaning up and come into the living room so we could all be together.

As we grew older (David & me), we liked to have our own special branch on the tree. David liked to decorate his with a special bubbler bulb. We had our special chair next to the special branch. I remember wanting to sit in my chair wrapped
in Mom’s “granny-square” afghan that she had crocheted square by square while riding the street car to work, so I was told. I still have the afghan. I shared it with David when he was sick, and Herb got it back to me when David passed away.

(Herb) The street car ride was from South Brewer to the University at Orono which would have put this in a pre-marriage time frame. The trolley at that time went from Old Town to Orono to Veazie to Bangor to Brewer. I remember an encounter with the street cars. At the intersection of Union St. and Hammond St. in Bangor, Mother stalled the old brown Chevy. While she was trying to re-start it a street car came up behind her and started clanging its bell for her to move out of the way. Mother took issue, set the hand brake, got out and went back to the street car. There ensued a terse and brief conversation between her and the motorman of the street car. The bell remained silent while Mother went back, got into the Chevy, and got the engine going again, and out of the way. You didn’t give Mother much grief or she would get on your case.

Mother also told of riding the Bon-Ton ferry across the river between Brewer and Bangor. It crossed where the Chamberlin Bridge is now. Check it out on the web.

(Diana) Mom had a nativity set, consisting of one Mary & one Joseph, and two sheep. At least that is all I have left of it. What did we do for Jesus? One year I made a clay cow and donkey, and we had some type of stable. The nativity decorated the top of the piano or some low table.

Mom also liked to have a separate, smaller tree to hang cookies on. Once I made a choir of tissue paper angels and once we did a “bouquet” of popcorn strung on stiff wire. Mom liked to display all the Christmas cards. Once she made a large wreath shape of them, using a hula hoop base.

We used Dad’s grey wool socks to hang. I remember begging Dad to get them out of his dresser drawer so we could hang them. When I was a teen, Arthur’s wife Annie, knit a sock for me from a kit. It had Santa on it. I late removed my name and stitched my daughter Joy’s name on it. She still has it.

Christmas dinner was always the same basic menu. We had turkey, (or 2 chickens), mashed potato, squash, peas (frozen), cranberry jelly, gravy, stuffing, and for Mom, creamed onions. Maybe even mashed turnips. Rolls weren’t usually a priority because we ate Mom’s special Christmas bread and strawberries (frozen) for breakfast.

Desserts were pies: pumpkin, apple, mincemeat, and pecan; and there was plum pudding accompanied by hard sauce or a custard sauce. As kids we didn’t care
much for the mince meat and the plum pudding. We also bought and ate a large fruit cake from the A&P market. Mom liked to serve it with sharp cheese.

(Herb) I loved both the mince meat and plum pudding the best. I have made Mother’s mince meat on and off over the ensuing years. As I remember the fruit cakes were Ann Page, not made any more, very tasty in their time. I also remember yeast rolls with strawberries during the holidays.

(Diana) I remember we usually just had family present for Christmas but I suppose Grandma might have come. I remember her most at Easter.

I remember that when we entered her apartment, there was the scent of Lavender “toilet water”, as her perfume was called. Also Grandma had often made peanut butter cookies for us to snack on.

Somewhere Grandma found, or had, some old dolls which were given to me. I never knew if they had been Mom’s as a kid or if she did “find” them as I was told. I named them Alice, Mary, and Peggy. I still have them and their original outfits and shoes. My granddaughter likes to play with them. I remember Grandmother died at a nursing home. I guess she couldn’t care for herself any more. We went to visit there once and she was in bed. Later I was told she had died. I think I was about seven years old.

(Herb) Grandmother passed away in early 1955, her last visit to the farm was in early 1954 so Diana was not that old to remember her. Grandmother always came for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, and many other times as well. Another holiday visitor was Jim Ewing from Winslow. He was a friend of Dad’s growing up, even tho he was quite a bit older than Dad. Jim would often come for several days in the spring time and make maple syrup with Dad.

(Diana) Mom kept a scrapbook for Christmas. She must have started it in the ‘40s. In it she glued cuttings from magazines of Christmas decorating ideas. She also typed up the poems that each of us recited at the Damascus school Christmas party. These she dated and gave the name and grade of each of us who memorized the poem. The older we got the longer the poem. These were typed inside an old Christmas card which opened on the page where it was glued. She saved a few cards that were personalized Dean cards, from Jo-Le-De Farm. I still have the scrapbook and added more ideas and my kid’s things to it.
Easter brings a whole new set of memories. I recall Grandma coming for that. Mom started the policy of each of us saving up our own candy on our Easter basket and not eating what we bought at McGown’s (Lent fashion) until Easter. Mom’s contribution was usually a chocolate bunny and the jelly beans hidden about the house for us to find. Of course we had to go to church first, and then we could hunt jelly beans after that.

Of course we dressed up for church. I recall my big brothers hating to dress up and wear a tie. They would take them off as quickly as possible as soon as we got in the car to return home.

(Diana) I remember sitting in the back of the DeSoto in the little bench seat, sometimes with Delma *(Vicnaire)*, when she went to church. I remember the street *(French St.)* where the church was. It was lined with Norway maples and seemed very pleasant. It was paved with cobblestones which could be seen near the edges. Maybe the middle had asphalt over it.

I remember that each year, sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas perhaps, our family would go to visit the Trueworthy’s in Brewer. Mrs. Trueworthy, Arleen, had been a Girl Scout leader for Mom, as I recall, and they became friends. We would be invited to their house for a meal, usually after church, and we would arrive at their house with some food gifts. Mom and Arleen had a great tradition that involved a special dish. Each year whoever currently had possession of the dish would fill it with a special food for the occasion and bring it to give to the other, thus the dish passed back and forth between the houses. An especially fun idea I thought.

Mr. Trueworthy worked for Eastern Fine Paper as an accountant and had access to reams of paper. He would give us as a gift a large package of 8 1/2 x 11 colored paper that I was allowed to use for whatever projects I liked. Maybe that is why I still love colored paper.

The Trueworthy’s had a summer camp on Philips Lake and we were sometimes invited to go there. What I remember the most about it was the large boulders around the camp. They were big, maybe from bushel baskets to 10 to 12 feet across and fun to climb on. I can't remember if we swam there. The Trueworthys had a daughter, Joyce, but I don't remember ever meeting her.
Then there were the Bowden's. We would go visit them in the fall, they lived in Orrington. The Bowden's had a commercial apple orchard; they would give us some and we would buy more. The apples made for many pies and much good eating of apples at our house. Oh, we had apples at the farm, but these were always better. A bushel of Macintosh was my favorite.

The Bowden's had six sons and no daughters. Mrs. Bowden, Thelma, was a friend of mother’s when they were growing up in Brewer. It was quite a crew when we all ate together. I have pictures of us getting together for picnics, tho I don’t specifically recall one. Usually the picnics were on Kings Mountain in Orrington. I sort of remember the driveway to their farm house went off the main road and the house faced away from the road, and the drive re-connected to the road on the other end. Their house burned one year and they built another with a climate controlled cellar for the apple storage. The two younger boys were Barry and Brian closest in age to me. There was a Richard and a Philip but the rest is lost. I recall once walking up a hillside into their orchard.

(Diana) Around Memorial Day we would go over to Brewer to the cemetery where Mother’s parents were buried. Mother would take flowers and clean anything that had accumulated around the stones.

I recall that having company at our house might be occasion to get out the family movies. If it was afternoon and not dark enough Dad would close all the venetian blinds and the heavy old curtains and get everybody in the living room to watch the movies he had taken. The movies of the trip to California, summer 1952, a lot. There were other movies of the family and picnics and the blacksmith, which Dad made go backwards so that the smoke went into the chimney. Also Arthur and the mailbox trick. I don’t think I ever got to the point where I watched the movies too much and was tired of them. They were always interesting to see, to me.

I remember going to the drive in. We usually made popcorn and took our own or just didn’t eat. We’d hang the speaker from the post over the car window to hear the sound that went with the movie. It was harder to see from the back seat. When the boys got older, they would take their money and walk to the concession stand. I remember going and looking once, but don’t recall buying.

Mom took the Camp Fire Girls to a series of movies at the Opera House. They were old time operettas featuring Jeanette McDonald, Nelson Eddy, and others, in black and white.
Mom started the Camp Fire Girls troop just for me because Girl Scouts would not let her have a lone troop without a council. Mom invited all the girls around my age at Damascus School, Vickie St. Louis, Judy St. Louis, (cousins), Cathy Burns, the Shaw girls Louise, Nancy, Maxine, & Carolyn, Edie Sewell, Linda Bradford. It was quite a service she did for those girls who couldn’t afford uniforms. She had us meet and work on earning the beads for our vests for various projects we did.

(Herb) Many years later I chanced across one of the girls from Bluebirds and she said that the Bluebird experience had been an eye opener for her, and ultimately changed her life for the better in many ways. She at the time was grown, and a wife and mother.

(Diana) We worked up thru the ranks from Bluebirds on up. I still have my Bluebird pin, my ring, and the charm that hung under the campfire pin. For years I had Mom’s old Girl Scout pin too, but when Joy was in Girl Scouts it got lost.

(Before Mom started “Camp Fire” there was a brief attempt to have a Brownie troop in Carmel elementary but it lasted only a year I think.)

Mom had us Camp Fire girls volunteer as helpers to serve a meal at some function in Carmel in the basement lunchroom of the elementary school I think.

Mom took the group on camping trips and taught us how to cook over an open fire. She had the girls do decorating of cookies and even baking. Each meeting usually involved a craft project.

We kept “Memory Books” of the things we did. I wish I knew what happened to mine. Would love to re-read it. Mine was illustrated too.

Mom taught us songs out of the Camp Fire song book, (I still have it). There were lots of folk songs and camp songs. We would sing special ones for the ceremonies we had for giving out the awards for what we earned. She even acquired a long Indian gown from somewhere that I could dress in. Vicki and I were maybe the only ones with uniforms. She planned work parties, leaf raking, where the girls could earn money to pay for their own red neckerchief.

(Diana) One great thing about living in the country as we did was being able to take long solitary walks all over. Of course there were Arthur’s trails to walk, but also the old discontinued road at the bottom of the maple lane. An old rail bed to the sawmill, even the railroad itself. If you walked far enough east the Bowen kids lived off the Five Road. As I got older, I learned where roads connected and how you could make a circuit around the farm.
I loved best the Seven Maples Stream. It was a wonderful clear “babbling brook” to play in and follow its course. I recall going there one winter and finding it ice encrusted, chattering away below the ice formations that were so beautiful. In summer it dwindled small enough to cross on rocks. There were woody areas and overgrown fields. Once I discovered a rock ledge area and near it wild strawberry plants in fruit. So tiny were the berries but so sweet.

Did I tell you about Halloween? What a long way we had to go to get a few meager goodies. Mostly nobody “trick or treated” us as our drive was ½ mile long. But we would walk the old woods road north to Fitt’s and left down the road past a few houses to try to get goodies from, to Damascus, over the tracks and back the Damascus Road to the mailbox at Vicnaire’s, back to our house up the drive.

I can picture practically every inch of that driveway. I had to walk it to get to Delma’s house to play with her, and later up the road past Plasket’s farm, later Donald (Ducky) St. Louis, to get to Vicki’s house.

(Diana) Going down the front driveway, I passed the lower orchard, the pear tree on the lawn, the apples, a crab apple, the white fence, the short drive to “Art’s cabin”, the evaporator, the slight hill with the sumacs, then down to the maple lane. Left led to the gravel pit and Seven Maples Stream, but through the maple lane was a leafy archway of pleasure, especially when fall turned the leaves bright orange, red, and yellow.

At the end of the maples the driveway turned right and headed for the tracks. Toboggan Hill was to the right, overgrown field to the left. Up over the tracks came next, then a grade to the top of the hill, overgrown field to the right. David claimed a bush there, called it an “am bush”. To the left a pile of chicken manure, then down the hill and a left curve to the bridge. A trail to the left led down to the stream and access to the lower swimming hole. Then over the bridge and up the hill, a path to Vicnaire’s to the right. There was a large white pine there. The Moran’s lived on the left. Then our large mailbox on the Damascus Road, you could go out the driveway left or right with a grassy triangle in between.

(Herb) The “y” at the end of the Grist Mill Road was done away with in the summer of 2010 and the road now ends straight onto the Damascus Road.
(Diana) There was a church to the left; they were talked about as the “Holy Rollers”, (Pentecostal). It was rumored that if you peeked in the windows you could see them rolling on the floor.

(Herb) One hot summer Sunday us neighborhood boys rode our bikes back and forth on the road to see if we could see them rolling on the floor in thru the open doors. Dad got wind of what we were doing and gave us his own version of holy hell and we never did it again.

(Diana) Somewhere down behind Vicnaire’s was another swimming hole where we went as young kids. I suppose the holes came and went with changes in the water course. Further up the Damascus Road was the old saw mill and “Dam Cram”. We would swim here when we were older. It was a deeper hole and there were stories of boys jumping off the concrete works and hurting themselves. Did I write about the bridge, I remember when it was deemed unsafe and needed to be rebuilt? Of course it was our only access to the outside, so I don’t recall what we did while it was in the process of getting fixed. Two great I beams were brought in to temporally support the bridge, which was eventually replaced with a pre-stressed concrete bridge.

Temporary bridge beams

That old bridge and Souadabscook stream are a part of memories of dreams/nightmares. I would dream I was trying to cross the bridge, but the water would
be too high and only a few boards could be stepped on to attempt to cross over. The valley was filled with water upstream as well in my dreams.

(Herb) I too had bad dreams about the old bridge, in that I would fall off the bridge on the down-stream side, but I never got hurt when doing so. I don’t know the meaning of the dream but Dad had a strange explanation which I will tell you if you ask me. I have in the spring seen a great deal of water going under the old bridge, so much so it would scare you if you looked at it and gave it some thought.

(Diana) I have mentioned the excitement of going to Kokadjo, which beat out a trip to the ocean because it wasn’t a day trip, but possibly a week. In retrospect it must have been a big fat lot of work to prepare for if you were the adult, all the meals and clothes for Mom to plan and the boat preparation and car details for Dad. For us kids, the main deal was to collect boxes of crab apples to throw out the windows at trees and signs once we got beyond Greenville. The old dirt logging roads were narrow and not too busy, so we could throw apples out open windows with no fear of getting in trouble.

(Diana) Getting to South Inlet meant launching the boat. Usually I had to pee. Mom would take me off into the woods to “water the flowers”. Then we would don life jackets and get in the boat for the spray-splashed trip to camp. What fun, what excitement. The older boys would make a second trip to bring in the rest of the supplies. Then there was camp to open. The shutters needed opening & propping, the chimney uncovered. The blankets and mattresses taken out of the metal lined box smelled like moth balls, a smell I associate with the excitement of the Kokadjo outing. The propane tank was set up for the lights, refrigerator, and two burner stove. Rooms were cleaned and beds set up. The outhouse and boat house were trips to make. Maybe there would be blueberries or raspberries to be picked and saved for pancakes or eaten as a treat.
Up North Inlet in the early morning in the canoe was a chance to see moose and the loons. What a pleasure to hear the slightly spooky sound of a loon in the dark evening. There was even the possibility of a bear coming to the “dump” in the night (or possibly it was some of the boy cousins trying to scare the girl cousins.)

It was probably the most fun trip when the Deans and Daggetts all went to camp. I remember the girl cousins had the maid’s room off the kitchen. The adults were in the main camp and the boys in the guide’s camp. I remember how the mice would run across the rafters in the dark. I’ll bet they even crawled over the moose head over the fireplace. Ah, the fireplace. We would sit around the fire in the rocking chairs. The boys would pretend to smoke the pipes and would tell 1924 stories. The 1924 stories were always everything bigger and better than imaginable. There were no 1925 stories, nothing of note happened in 1925.

Arthur and David telling 1924 stories at camp.

Arthur taught me how to make birch bark baskets strung together with spruce roots. It was such a neat craft thing to do-a la natural. The boys made sail boats. A piece of pulp made the boat shape with a birch bark sail, big enough to go across the lake. Then there was swimming, in frigid waters. We’d have blow-up air mattresses too, and ride the waves when the wind blew.

Usually there was a trip to the town of Kokadjo in the boat. Once we were there we went in the store and looked at everything and bought some gas or such, and candy bars for a treat.
A trip to Kokadjo wasn’t complete without the adults watching the wind and weather like worried hawks. It was always a gamble that the wind would be bad and we couldn’t get out on the day we were supposed to. But we all survived. I never worried, but then I wasn’t the responsible adult.

One of the many sail boats made and sailed at Kokadjo camp.

The family went on a cross country trip from Carmel, ME, to Carmel, CA in the summer of 1952. Being just 4 going on 5, I recall very little, just the oft played movies. The one thing I do recall is the time we picked up an Indian in Arizona. He was hitchhiking and Dad decided to give him a ride. The old DeSoto was packed to the gills, so I was moved to the front seat between Mom and Dad. The Navaho Indian was put in the back seat with my three brothers. I don’t know what they thought of that, but I was scared. There he was behind me and I couldn’t see him and he was an Indian!! What would he do? Scalp me? None of that was documented on film, so that’s all my own memory.

(Herb) I never realized Diana’s fear until I read it now. I don’t recall us boys having a problem with his presence. He was dressed in denim and he was clean. What few words he spoke showed he had a command of English.

I also remember the ice cream parlor, as such. We were going thru a small town and saw a sign telling this place sold ice cream. Dad stopped and we all went in. They had a selection of flavors and we each got a cone and sat down at one of the tables. Now this place was a model for a western movie. The chairs and tables
were the right style, there was a bar and there were two guys seated there and drinking, and three guys playing poker at a corner table with a bottle on the table. That is the closest I ever got to the old west. All that was lacking were six guns and saddled horses at the hitching bar outside.

(Diana) Sometimes we would go to Aunt Neta and Uncle Moody’s and visit with them if we were near Bath. (Years later I remember going back with my three children, and finding their house (a different one). When I knocked Aunt Neta, who had recently gotten out of the hospital answered the door, and looking at me, said she didn’t know me and wouldn’t let me in. Uncle Moody heard and came to the door. He said “you should know her: she looks just like you.” I was invited in but we didn’t stay long as Aunt Neta wasn’t herself.

(Herb) Years later I too stopped in to visit with them, Aunt Neta was talkative and I picked up some family stories, and some family dirt as well. From talking with her I added an interesting story to the family genealogy. I was planning to go back again but she passed away. I hadn’t known, when I was talking with her, about a serious medical condition she had.

(Diana) This reminds me of going to the dentist in Waterville. We went faithfully every six months to see Dr. Bill and Dr. Steve (Kierstead). Usually the whole family went so there was time spent in the waiting room. Usually David and I got a lecture about brushing out teeth faithfully from one of the men, and for awhile took it to heart until the memory wore off.

(Herb) Their father had been the family dentist to Dad’s family, and Dad, Bill and Steve were friends, having gone to school together. When I started paying my own dentist bill I always went to Dr. Steve and continued to until he retired. I would have appointments in the spring and fall, after snow and before snow.

(Diana) A trip to Waterville usually included a visit to either Aunt Betty & Uncle Jimmy or possibly Aunt Frankie & Uncle Don. If we went to Betty’s I recall Uncle Jimmy in his wheelchair after his stroke. It seemed so sad that he couldn’t walk and talk like before. The older home had a certain smell to it, not unpleasant, but just an older home smell perhaps. It was at the end of Prospect St. There was an old garage as well.
Sometimes we had a meal there. I never quite knew what Mom thought of Aunt Betty. They weren’t even related, just married to brothers. I recall Mom complained that Aunt Betty never waited till Christmas to open the family gift Mom sent, but would find it out of the gift wrap before the holiday. One year Mom decided to get the best of her and brought a gift that was intended to be used before Christmas. It was a generous supply of Christmas wrapping paper, tape, labels and bows to be used to wrap gifts.

If we went to the Corbett’s, the feel was different, Aunt Frankie’s house was newer and all one story, large rooms. I don’t recall eating there but perhaps we did. This farm was known for the round barn built to house the milk cows.

(Herb) Yes, we ate at the Corbett’s a few times. The round barn was built by my Grandfather James Dean. The cows faced inward with manure gutter behind. This had a conveyor to clean it out, going up another conveyor to exit to a pile outside the barn. The hay was kept above under the dome and was let down in the center for distribution. The grain was kept in the center as well. The barn was equipped with automatic milking and the milk room was outside but attached to the barn.

(Diana) When I was younger, I recall getting hand-me-down clothes from Ann, Gina, and Priscilla. Later I outgrew them. The best gift was an outgrown doll house and especially the furniture and some jointed people to use it. This furniture was nicer than usual and was more detailed. There was a grand piano (like Aunt Frankie had) and a sewing machine that dropped down inside its little stand. The dining room table and chairs were detailed like real wood sets, even though it was all made of heavy plastic that was sturdy, since the pieces were not broken. I wish I had them to this day, but when I became a teen Mom had me give them to Vicki’s younger sisters, Cindy and Sandy St. Louis. I think they would be worth something today, but more to me as a keepsake.

Later Aunt Frankie gave me some horse models that had been her girl’s toys. I thought they were great, but am not so keen on horses now. I remember getting some neck scarves, too. One was a navy paisley that later became Joy’s favorite.

I remember the “Eclipse of the Sun” party that Mom threw. Actually it turned out to be somewhat overcast, and it never got totally dark. It was summer and as usual Silver the pony, went inside the barn in the hot afternoon and came out in the cool of the evening to graze. When the sun began to darken Silver came out
and began to graze. The chickens bedded down in the barns. But then it got light again.

(Herb) I remember seeing the “diamond ring effect” during the eclipse, but I don’t remember that it was overcast.

(Diana) Mom planned a picnic lunch and invited the Daggett’s from Massachusetts, Dad’s sister and family. She had a table set up outside in the back yard near the clothes line and covered half with a black table cloth and the other half with white to represent the eclipse. I think she had some food that went along with the theme as well. Does anyone else remember this?

Mom liked having a special time on Epiphany, Jan 6th! When we were younger she invited our friends and had an un-decorate the tree party. She had special gifts for Twelfth Night as well. She continued to do a small gift on Jan 6th in later years, (a tradition Joy still does with her kids.)

How about the 4th of July! It was our combined birthday party for all. Mom called it our “Independence from Matter Day”. We all got a chance to choose a dessert we liked and she would make it. We’d have a special meal. The boys would make loud booms and shoot off rockets. I’d make paper houses and glue caps on them and burn down the village, and the caps would pop! We’d do sparklers if we could get them.

Our goal was to have fresh peas by July 4th. Once I recall going to the garden to pick peas, carrying a cardboard box to pick them into. As I picked, I heard a strange zinging sound followed by a bang! Zing, bang! Zing, bang! Zing, bang! I figured out that the zing sound was bullets landing in the raspberry bushes. The bang was the delayed sound of the gun that fired the bullet. I got out fast. I ran for the house, and told Dad. He called the deputy who went down to the town dump to see who was shooting. Of course, the young men denied shooting up in the air, but that was what they were doing and the speedy bullets were landing in the raspberry bushes before the sound of gun shots got to my ears.

I recall later walking to the mailbox and thinking as I walked that usually my life was pretty quiet and average, but the day I went to pick peas changed it all.

The garden was a big deal at our house; it had 3 long rows of wonderful asparagus and a short row of rhubarb over by the red oak tree (my favorite for climbing). The raspberries were at the north end. The south end could be wet in the spring. In summer we were all expected to put in time weeding the garden. Usually it was right after lunch. When we’d get out there I’d have to go to the
bathroom #2. My brothers would accuse me of trying to get out of work, but I still had to go after I ate.

In the fall, we would have frosts at night, starting shortly after the first of September. We’d go out at dusk and “cover the tomatoes”. After awhile, it would be too cold to try to save any more. Then we’d collect the remains and pull the vines. We’d have tomato fights with the squishy over-ripe tomatoes. What a mess we’d be after several direct hits! All our clothes would have to go into the wash.

I recall once I was little and out in the garden with Mom. Silver had gotten out of the pasture and decided to see what he could eat in the garden. I practically climbed Mom’s back I was so scared of the horse.

Mom had a flower garden all around the south side of the house and on the east side, (known as the “East Lawn”). In summer she would get up and go outside to walk her garden to see what new flowers were opening up. The grass was dew covered and the air fresh. Such a special sweet time.

There was a flower bed down by the stone wall and fireplace too. It was special because it had yellow violets and lupine, and delphiniums, and lily of the valley. Little chipmunks lived in the stone wall and it was cool and shady under the basswood and apple trees. Usually we had one of the old Adirondack chairs there to use by the fireplace.

Mom grew Turks Cap lilies and tiger lilies and columbine and peonies and iris. The east bed had a red flower called Maltese Cross and Sweet William. There was a mock orange bush on the SE corner and bridal wreath. Lilacs grew, a special French Lilac by the house and regular ones at the east end of the lawn below the hill.

The north side of the house was too shady. Mom wanted to build a “patio” out the back door, the French door that led off the living room, but it never got done. The sand pile was beyond that. We spent many happy hours there. The two apple trees had a pole rigged into the branches, (north of the sand pile) and Dad hung two swings there for me. I loved those until a hurricane took one of the trees down. Then Dad built a swing for me from the maple tree that was in front of the house that was even taller. I loved to swing.

Out back by the climbing red oak tree, there were three horizontal telephone poles 2 to 3 feet off the ground. I would walk these poles and jump from one to another, practicing my balance.
I also loved to climb the red maple in the 4 acre field. It was near the NE corner and there was a large rock under it. From the branches the view was great of the farm and the distant Dixmont Hills.

I remember the gravel pit, what a great place to play. Mom decided once to make bean-hole beans to cook in the coals. We buried the bean pot in coals and let them cook.

I loved playing in the attic. It was really just an upstairs room over the living room, at the top of the stairs, opposite Herb’s and Arthur’s rooms. Since it was unfinished it was the attic and much was stored there. The train set was sometimes set up there. There were big storage boxes and trunks. I had my doll house cribs there and eventually set up an extra doll house, large size, in the space just at the top of the stairs. Mom always wanted to put a bathroom there but it never happened. David and I would play there. It had a tin roof and on a rainy day the sound was-well, totally nostalgic now.

(Herb) Not that the house lacked bath facilities. Down cellar was a toilet and sink you used when you came in from the chicken house. On the main floor was a full bath with a combo tub-shower. Upstairs was a full bath with a shower only.

(Diana) Above the attic was a real attic where there were more boxes stored – apparently photos and paper records, and there was the wonderful 3 ft. attic fan. In summer we would turn it on in the evening, open doors and windows and pull the cool outside air through the whole house.

View of the home place taken from East end of Damascus Road near Rt. 2. The power transmission line was not built at this time. When the line went in electric power became much more reliable in Carmel.
Pictures I took over Carmel, the center of town and the high school from the rear.

David, Arthur, Diana (DuMond), Herbert Dean, last time we were together, June 2000. David passed away October 2001. The picture was taken at Arthur’s house in Mt. Vernon, ME.
The right hand portion of the barn was built in Massachusetts in 1811. The well was also dug in Massachusetts, before Maine became a state in 1820.

(Herb) Charles (Charlie) Small lived at the junction of US Rt. 2 (Main Rd.) and the Fuller (Corless) Road. I remember Mr. Small sharpened saws and going over there with my dad to pick up and leave off saws. Mr. Small had a market garden and Dad would get strawberries for his birthday strawberry shortcake from there. I remember Mr. Small had a John Deere Model L tractor he used. When Mr. Small died his daughter Minnie continued to live there. She married a Mr. Niles and they lived there. Minnie continued to live there after her husband’s untimely death. Her brother Raymond (Ray) lived in Etna on Rt. 69 at the Carmel town line. Minnie’s great-great-grandfather settled the property, coming from Massachusetts to Bangor by sailing vessel, and then from Bangor to Carmel by oxcart. The property has been in the family since 1803 and is to this day, presently occupied by a descendant of Ray. The barn was built (1811) and the well dug in Massachusetts,
before Maine became a state. The kids above are my children, Patrick and Morgan Dean.

(Herb) The picture below shows Parson’s Garage on the right, they sold Gulf Gasoline. Across the road is Foster’s ESSO station, behind that is the sign for Mobile Gasoline at McGown’s store. The stage house, hotel, is in the center.

Carmel Grammar School, where town office is now.
(Herb) When mom and dad moved in, January 1938, there was no electricity or telephone, tho Dad told of telephone poles that came down from the Fuller Road. Lighting was by carbide lamps with an automatic carbide gas generator. Also there was no indoor plumbing. The summer of 1938 brought in electricity and the indoor plumbing. A telephone came in the next year. The original water was a spring blasted out of the ledge uphill from the house that flowed in by gravity. A spring down the hill to the west was dug out, tiled, and piped, and became the main water supply, with the up-hill spring the backup during a power outage.

Home place 1938

Home place, probably the 1950’s
Chummy, John, cat, Leila Dean

Leila M. & John R. Dean

Mr. Marley shoeing Silver

Early Carmel School bus
Damascus School, my guess 1947

(Herb) There was electricity but no running water or telephone at the school. Heat was a wood stove in the center of the room, which took a two foot stick. There are some of the two foot sticks still in the woodshed to this day. The toilets were privies on the back. The wood was stored on the boy’s side. Water was brought every day from Lewis Preble’s next door. In the winter there was often a stew pot on the wood stove so each student had a bowl of hot soup at noon. I remember one of the first graders stomping a mouse that was running along the north wall.
Douglas Small, Carlton (Buddy) Preble, Herbert Dean

Grandmother Dean’s curio cabinet.
If you have never done so, load Google Earth and look around Carmel, fascinating.

Maple syrup time at the home place.

(Herb) Up to about age 12 maple syrup time was fun, after that it became work. We sold maple syrup to some regular customers. Also it was always on the table and was a source of sweetening during the war when sugar was rationed. We also had trees to the left of me in the picture and some to the west of the barns.
David Dean, Glenny Vicnaire, Sunny Vicnaire, Mary Lou Small, Arthur Dean, Eddie Staples, Herbert Dean, Merle Vicnaire, Duane Small, Diana Dean, Paul Peters. The dog is our dog Lassie.

Bartlett Small at the home place, 1943

(Herb) Then there was the impromptu race on the Damascus Road between Sunny Vicnaire and me, each of us driving an old beat up Chevrolet. We didn’t get caught, nobody got hurt, nothing got damaged.

And did you know that the 1943 penny coins were steel, not copper, you could lift one with a magnet.
James Ewing, Dad’s friend
(Herb) Grandmother Munday was the only grandparent us kids ever knew. Grandmother Dean passed away in 1937. Both grandfathers passed away the year I was born, 1938.

Jim Ewing visited about twice a year and was always welcomed. If we were in the Waterville area we would often stop at his place in Winslow.
Earl Mc Sorley on his D7 Cat, storm of 62-63 New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day. 

(Herb) The weather man said flurries, 3 ft. came down as I remember, overnight. Took us a long time to clean up at the home place.

I learned to handle a trailer early on      Dad believed in working us young.

(Herb) I never remember not being able to back a trailer, it always seemed so natural to do.
Ralph Tozier, (Levant), on his Cat D4            George Miller, (Hampden), foreman
(Herb) We were re-building a section of the Plymouth Road. Only had to
dynamite one small piece of ledge on this job, to the west of the swamp up the hill
before the Dyer Road. I would spot dump trucks in front of the dozer and trip the
tailgates so they could dump. I would swap off with a driver-owner of one of the
trucks, mid morning and mid afternoon. Dell Spinner was his name, as I
remember, he had back problems. I got to drive and he got to stand and do my
job. This scene is early 60’s.

Sister Diana read this entire document one evening and said afterward it so much
took her back in time that when she finished and looked up, it was almost as if she
was in a strange place, even tho she had lived there many years.

The grammar, spelling, and punctuation are not that important, it is all about
the telling of the story. I write it as the person I am. Every story has to end so I do
so now.
Also remember that written history is the version as seen thru the eyes and
senses of the person who wrote it down.
Herbert P. Dean.
November 28, 2011.
Maple lane (driveway) at the home place.