

## Grandmother's Memories

*To my grandchildren, Connor, Emily & Shannon  
With love from, Grandma Pepin/McDonald*

November 3, 2000

My full maiden name

Marian Frances Dawson

I was given this name because

In my Father's family there were many who were named "Mary," so the priest at my Baptism suggested "Marian" since it is the French derivative of "Mary" and would make me different from the rest!



My birth date and place of birth

Birth date: Oct. 10,  
1924

At Abington Hospital,  
Abington, Pennsylvania  
(which is near  
Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania)

What was happening in  
the world when I was  
born

World War I was over  
(1918) and a period of  
"peace" was present.  
(Until of course, the  
World War II broke out in  
the early 40's.) By that  
time I was in High School  
in Florida.

My Father was a  
veteran of World War I  
and was in very poor  
health most of his life.  
This is why we started  
spending the winter in St.  
Petersburg Florida – going

back to Willow Grove (Near Philadelphia) in the summer.

I graduated from St. Petersburg, Florida High School in June 1942 – the beginning of World War II in Pearl Harbor in the Pacific.

My mother's full maiden name

Mary Margaret Whyte (the Scottish version of White)

Her birth date and place of birth

January 1, 1898 (approx.) Her mother died as soon as they arrived in New York from Ireland – immediately an Irish Lady who came over on the same boat – adopted my mother.

My mother's best story about growing up

Her foster-mother had a God-given gift of healing; they lived on a farm in Chester County, Pennsylvania and my mother said this dear lady healed many people and animals brought to her, for all of the other farmers were poor and couldn't afford human Doctors or visits for their animals. She used herbs and potions made from them to do the healing. God gave this dear woman a gift to aid those poor people! (and animals)

One of my most precious memories of my mother

My mother was a very strong woman who always seemed to know what to do in bad situations! I firmly believe that God prepares us for any bad situation that will arrive. When I was 3 years old, I contracted Infantile Paralysis and Spinal Meningitis. It was a real epidemic and many were crippled and died! My mother prayed, a relic of St. Theresa was placed on me and Thank God – I survived with no crippling! My mother helped me by massaging warm olive oil on my back and legs to strengthen them, and of course continued praying – the doctors could not believe I was able to completely recover!

My father's full name

James Anthony Dawson

His birth date and place of birth

April 29, 1888 – Philadelphia, PA

My father's best story about growing up

My father was one of a large family, born in Philadelphia. His father was a "tin roofer." In those days sheets of tin were used to cover a house roof. The sheets were placed by "soldering" them together with melting strips of solder (melted with red hot irons that were heated over coal and wood pots that were carried by the workers – very dangerous for a fire could be caused by the fire pot!) Horse and wagon was used to transport from place to place.

Of the seven children in the family- all but one (my father James A.) died of tuberculosis within years of each other. My father passed away of this same disease

during the year of World War II (1945-50). He died of TB – the family disease which claimed the lives of all his brothers and sisters.

One of my most precious memories of my father

We use to go on Sunday afternoon walks. There were very few houses nearby - and we'd take a walk to the Boy Scout cabin - in the woods where there was a little stream, the cabin, and according to the season of the year – violets, daisies, and other wild flowers.

Of course I would pick a large bouquet, some wild strawberries and even some wild catnip for my cats.

My father had a little Ford truck, which he used to go on odd jobs. He could do any new or repair of houses. I loved to go with him and chattered incessantly!

My brothers and sisters names

I was an “only child” – that means I did not have any brothers or sisters. Many times I wished this was not so!

The things we used to do together

Being an “only child” was lonely – my only playmates were my cats. We lived in the country and I had plenty of cats and kittens, and I used to put them in my doll carriage, dress them in doll clothes and take them on trips to the store – all imaginary of course! Sometimes they liked it and then sometimes they did not.

The things we do together now

I am very blessed to have six daughters and one son – they make up for my lack of any brothers or sisters. I'm very proud of all of them and of my five grandsons, and five granddaughters and one great – granddaughter.

How often I see my family

Not often enough! We live far enough apart that it's quite a trip to go and see them – driving for my husband (long distances) is difficult and now I don't drive at all!

I have seen God work in our family by

Always being close by my side in times of stress, illness etc. My first husband Paul had a heart attack when my children were all under the age of 12. Until he recuperated I took his place at the church – singing weddings and funerals – and regular daily high mass. Thank God he recuperated, but he always had a “bad heart” and needed “special diets.” He loved to work with his dump truck and passed away about 14 years ago – when I moved to Greensboro, NC and while working for a priest as secretary – met my present husband, Edward McDonald, who is so good to me – a staunch Catholic and we are very happy. I hope I have been a good wife to both of my husbands!

### My earliest memory of home

My father built a lovely “Dutch Colonial” home for my mother and I. He used to let me “help” by bringing tools to him. It was large – 4 bedrooms, a beautiful staircase, living and dining rooms, complete with chandeliers and oriental carpets, and a large glassed-in sun-porch across the entire front of the house.

### My childhood bedroom

My bedroom was to the left of the upstairs – parent’s room in back of it – and a “sitting” room across from my bedroom – and next to (then) my grandmother’s room. After she passed away – a guest room (called sitting room) was made of her room.



### My favorite hiding place

I can never remember having one - you see, I was an “only” child and there was no need to “hide” from anyone! Of course, in my imagination – (I had plenty of that!) my cats and kittens were my brothers and sisters. I used to dress them up in doll clothes and give them rides in my doll carriage. I did have one large doll – (1yr old size) that I would give rides in my doll carriage!

### The yard I played in

Since we lived in the country, there was lots of vacant land where I could play. In the spring there were millions of spring flowers, violets, dandelions, buttercups, and daisies and lovely green grass all around where we lived.

I always felt sorry for the city children who had only cement steps and sidewalks to play in – and (worse) dangerous streets of brick and mortar in which to ride their scooters, bikes and roller skates. My father had made a long driveway (cement) so our car and my roller skates and bike could go as fast as was possible!

### The street I lived on

It really wasn’t a “street” but road branching off of a big highway – US #1 – the main road from Philadelphia to New York. This road was really historical – it had metal placards – every mile or so – describing Washington’s march to Philadelphia from New York and the battles, which they fought in the various places. I always imagined I was with them and tried to help them in their journey!



My favorite store and why I loved to go there

There was a big department store – (still there today) – John Wanamaker – where my parents shopped for clothing. My mother



became friendly with the “buyer” in the children’s dept. and she used to set aside dresses (usually green in color) for I had red hair – and I was thrilled for many had the inscription (made in Paris, France) and were “one of a kind.”

Where we worshipped

In Willow Grove (PA) – which was 14 miles north of Philadelphia – there was a little church – St. David’s – where we attended mass on Sundays and holy days and where I was baptized. The pastor – Fr. Edward Curran – baptized me and was a firm

friend of our family. He lived to be very old and was still there when my husband Paul Pepin and I stopped by the church and had a nice visit with him! (We were traveling back from our honeymoon in Canada to Miami at this time)



My father worked

My father always was “self-employed” for his health was poor and he could work “at his own pace” and schedule all harder tasks when he felt well. With the experience of building our own colonial house – he could work in any phase of building – lighting, plumbing and I “helped” him!

What my mother did during the day

My mother was an orphan and had little education. From the age of 12, she worked as a



maid in private families. She also worked for Quakers who are extremely clean and particular. So she kept our lovely colonial house in perfect condition and very clean – as the Quakers taught her!

The chores I had to do

One of the jobs I enjoyed the most was to help my mother to clean the chandelier over our dining room table. It was huge and shone like diamonds. She would take each crystal down, clean it carefully and hang it back in its proper place! I would “count” each one and when finished, they were so beautiful.

On summer days, I liked to

Swing on the swing set out in the yard. Sometimes I would take one of my many kittens with me for a ride. In the beginning they were frightened and would cry, but soon they got used to it and seemed to enjoy it!

On winter days, I enjoyed

Riding on my sled while my father pulled me. When I became older, he let me “belly bumper” (go down the hill) on my own – it was scary but I learned to take care and not fall off!

My favorite storybook

“Alice in Wonderland” Where all the animals had names and would talk – argue with each other and say the funniest things, dress up and act like humans, have tea parties and have tea parties in the strangest places in the funny hats and costumes!

My favorite poem

I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree – a tree whose hungry mouth is pressed against the earth’s sweet flowing breast a tree who looks at God all day and lifts its leafy arms to pray.

My favorite doll or toy

“Peggy” was a doll I received for Christmas when I was about 5 years old. She was so large that she wore a 1 – year old size dress and bonnet. She slept on my bed until I was in high school. I would wash and iron her clothes carefully and give her a bath too!

My favorite games

I loved “hop scotch” and used to wear out all the soles of my shoes from hopping on the sidewalk. I had a favorite rock that was flat and would stop at the right time!

My favorite treat

We had an ice cream freezer (you had to crank it so the paddles inside would turn, stirring the ice cream and mixture in the freezer until it was really hard to turn and smooth.) Sometimes we would put fruit in it and that would make some variety!

My first pet

“Malty” She was a big Maltese cat, gray in color and the mother/grandmother of all of my long list of cats. My parents “tolerated” her for she was a good mouser. When my parents were building and first moved to our lovely colonial home in Willow Grove we were besieged by field mice for the house was surrounded by open fields. Maltie earned her keep! I cannot say I had a “favorite pet” I loved them all! I cried bitterly when any of them were “put to sleep.”.

The different kinds of pets I have owned

Many different cats. “Tortoise shell” – (a black and orange mix) cats with three toes or six toes, cats that would eat only vegetables, left-handed cats and some who loved to be given rides in my doll carriage, and dressed up in doll clothes! I loved them all. One was fond of doing tricks (I called him Felix).

Some of my pet’ names

Maltie, my “grandmother’s cat,” Felix who was a born comedian cat (always doing tricks) – so many cats that I cannot name the and a wire-haired Terrier dog (when I was in high school) who I named “Mike.”

I always wanted a

Horse – we lived in the country but in my (10-12 year old age) started going to Florida every fall and back home in the spring that ruled out the horse – but I did take one of my cats. Much against my father’s wishes for they don’t travel well!

What an ice cream cone cost when I was young

I rarely had one – for my mother would make homemade ice cream in our old hand-cranked freezer!

What an ice cream cone costs today

I’m not sure. We buy ice cream in the supermarket in ½ gallon sizes.

The kind of car we drove

In 1929 my father bought a big Buick sedan. We made the yearly trip to Florida for almost 10 years. He was a very careful driver and the car was given much care by him. We sold the car (my mother and I) when my father entered the veteran’s hospital in Bay Pines, Florida. When I was in my senior year of high school (1941) my mother never drove nor did I.

How people dressed

I had several hand-me-downs from the daughter of my godmother in Willow Grove PA. She worked for a dept. store and her wardrobe had to be “just so.” She sent the older ones to me! Then I had an old treadle sewing machine on which I made the rest of

my clothes – since I learned to sew in “Home Ec” in Junior High and High School. It was not electric and was powered by a treadle (foot pedal), which was operated by your foot!

How girls were expected to behave

Girls were told to be “little ladies” and to act as such. They spoke when spoken to – and dressed and acted with respect to their parents and themselves. They loved to talk, sing, and dance – but again- with respect, which would bring approval by their parents. I loved to sing – which I did on the radio (every week) and on holidays in hotels in St. Petersburg. I can remember wearing a green taffeta dress a big green bow in my red hair. I was billed as “The Little Irish Singer,” and was quite successful!

The first person who told me about God

My mother and father were both very close to our dear Lord and taught me to be the same! My mother was a “convert” to the Catholic religion. She moved to Philadelphia as a young adult – where she met my father – who was a “cradle catholic” meaning he was a catholic from birth.

My first communion

I went to a private academy (St. Mary’s) in Philadelphia. The teachers were nuns of the “Sisters of St. Joseph.” I was still very weak from the effects of having polio and meningitis when I was 3 years old, and would take spells of crying. The nuns were so good to me and helped me get over this difficult time. My parents were very good and helped me to realize that in time I would get stronger and with their prayers and the good sisters (nuns) I would get through this hard period of my life. Eventually I got stronger physically and realized that God wanted me to live for He had future plans for me – I found a good singing voice and started to use it on the radio in a few years after beginning school. (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade).

Someone who helped me be as a Christian should

Both of my parents – they lived their Christian faith – attending catholic church every Sunday and Holy days and helping everyone in need either with material goods or/ and with words and prayer. They believed that our relationship with God is a very special one – trusting Him to lead and guide us in all things.

The most wonderful thing about my father

He was – above all – an honest religious man – by religion I mean that he followed strictly the commandments of God and the Catholic Church. He was a very physically frail man, but strong in his beliefs and convictions. He was not strong physically, but mentally and spiritually there were none any stronger.



My father was especially good at

House construction. He built a “2-story” colonial home in suburban Philadelphia – complete with boxwood hedges and real flagstone walkways direct from the rock quarry. For a small, frail man he was incredible.

My father let me “help” by

Carrying tools and parts up to the second floor to him. I was secretly frightened when the steps did not have a “back” to them, but I would not “let on” that my knees were shaking!

Lessons I learned from my father

Trust in our dear Lord with all your heart, mind, and soul – He will never let you down and is always by your side ready to help you when you need Him most, and He loves to have you ask him!

The things my father taught me about God

My father was a very devout man – He loved God above all things. I have seen him cry because someone used the name of our Lord in vain! He was a small man – a victim physically of tuberculosis – like all his brothers and sisters – but he was strong spiritually – He loved his God with all his being.

The most wonderful thing about my mother’s kitchen

It was so clean! My mother was reared by people of the “Quaker” faith. They are very efficient – and clean. She lived with them until she was 15 or 16 – then moved to Philadelphia where she became a housemaid for a Doctor and his wife. Here her Quaker training was very valuable.

My mother let me “help” by

Preparing vegetables for the table (she always had a garden and insisted that we have fresh vegetables each day.) I loved them and even wanted to eat them while we were picking them – even before they were washed! Mama did not want me to do this – I insisted it tasted better that way!

Lessons I learned from my mother

Cleanliness is Godliness. Water and soap is almost always available – no matter how poor you were! Waste not – want not. Love your neighbor as yourself- when we were very poor in the “depression” she would share a cake of soap or a loaf of bread with a neighbor. Never waste anything she said.

My mother's best recipe

Homemade white bread

1 yeast cake (small cake or, in this day, a package of dried yeast) – (granular)

2 lbs. (pounds) white flour (approx.)

tsp salt

tablespoon shortening or oil

1pt of warm water (NOT HOT) test on bend of elbow – should be comfortable warm

mix ingredients – making sure water is not hot – only warm!

Knead mixture on floured board so it won't stick – pushing forward – turning and repeating until mix is smooth and an indentation stays in mixture. Place in bread pan and let rise under towel until double in bulk. Make sure it is not in draft or cool room – only in warm place. Bake until brown and a hollow sound emits when tapped.

My mother's favorite piece of advice

Treat others, as you would wish to be treated. A kind word is worth more than gold – a harsh word can never be retrieved! An apology is only a partial solution.

I never told my mother

I knew she would be hurt if I kept anything from her, and she understood me better than I understood myself – and would be hurt if I kept anything from her.

What my mother taught me about God

God is your best friend – He made you to love Him, to know Him and to be with Him in this world and in the next. Our dear Lord is always with us and knows all of our thoughts and desires. At times we want something so intensely – believing it is just the “thing” for us, but it is not! Rather, pray, when you make a decision, that you will be guided into making the right one – no matter how old we get – we need the Lord's guidance in making decisions – in all things!

My most memorable “woman-to-woman” talk with my mother

My mother had only a “grammar school” education, but she was wise in mostly all things. Since she had no one to depend upon, she had to make decisions by herself – always. The elderly lady – farmer that reared her was almost totally illiterate but had unusual advanced knowledge of medicine (with herbs and natural plants substituted for regular medications and medications from the earth). In my mother's work – she used only plants, etc. and seemed to know what to do with them! Folks would come from miles around with sick children, animals, etc. and she would heal them!

The school I attended

I attended many schools for my parents lived in Pennsylvania in the summer and St. Petersburg, FL in the winter.

My favorite teacher

“Auntie” Miller was the music teacher (glee club, chorus, band, orchestra) when I was in High School in St. Petersburg. I was in the Glee club and played in several of her productions – giving me an outlet for my “natural” voice and bridging the gap between my childish voice and a mature one!

My best subject in school

English, Latin, composition (writing short stories etc.)

A school event I will never forget

I did not participate in many school events for I was already engrossed in my radio work, writing, sewing (I made all my clothes on an old treadle sewing machine that was given to me). I was asked to be an “usherette” at the Fine Arts Club in an exclusive Fine Arts Club in St. Petersburg. It was a monthly meeting and any famous classical music artist that visited was invited. Any usherette would need a long formal gown, so I made one of green taffeta on my old treadle sewing machine and everyone raved about my new formal gown (not knowing that I made it myself on my old foot-powered sewing machine!)



My best friend in elementary school

Corrine Silverman. She was a lovely Jewish girl who was in my classes from about 5<sup>th</sup> grade on – she used to do “monologues” or readings as they were then known – and was called when there was a special occasion. Likewise I was called to sing my Irish songs at the same time – so it was a rather strange pair we made – but everyone enjoyed it – including us!

The school I attended

There were many – St. Mary’s Private Academy – (Philadelphia) Glen Oak (St. Petersburg) South Side Jr. High School (St. Petersburg) and St. Petersburg High (St. Petersburg, FL)

My favorite teacher and why

Mrs. Berivare – Senior English and Literature (12<sup>th</sup> grade)

Auntie Miller (Gertrude Cobb Miller) – Glee club and Music (10-12<sup>th</sup> grade) a tiny little lady who

could put a lot of meaning into music and drama – make it come alive and made even the hardest music not only understandable but beautiful and possible to obtain!!

The most important thing I learned

Everyone has a subject in school that is their “favorite” – that is, their natural interest is there, or a natural talent is present. Unfortunately, there are some subjects which are important and must be taken, and passed in addition to these that you have an aptitude in – and enjoy as well.

The friends I spent time with

I did not fit the description of “popular,” but rather had a few good friends who were interested in similar subjects – music, drama, and homemaking – but of course we all had to take a few required subjects which we did not like, but had to “work” at – such as science and math.

Popular fads when I was in high school

“Bobby socks” were rolled down socks and worn with pleated or circular skirts. Page-boy hairstyles – almost shoulder length hair – “turned under” and smooth.

Growing up, my favorite songs and musicians were

Guy Lombardo and Paul Whiteman  
(Orchestra)  
Rose Marie (song)  
Bing Crosby  
Opera – La Traviata and Verdi Opera

Your grandfather’s and my favorite son

Rose Marie I love you – I’m always thinking of you

Now, I listen to

Classical and semi classical music  
Pavarotti

My favorite hymn

Ave Maria (Schubert)  
Panis Angelicus (Bread of Angels) as a vocal solo or instrumental





A song I want to share with you

When Irish Eyes are smiling sure, it's like a morn in spring in the lilt of Irish laughter you can hear the angels sing – when Irish hearts are happy all the world is bright and gay – but when Irish eyes are smiling – sure, it steals your heart away!

The first time I drove a car

I took a “Driver’s Ed” class at school near us in Tuxedo Hendersonville, NC. I just got tired of asking everyone for rides and had a good teacher – so kind and patient. I was too old to make much of my driving, however. I was still very “shaky” when around heavy traffic!

The first time I wore lipstick

It was in a show – Gilbert and Sullivan. Everyone said my skin was so white and kept trying to put a rouge and lipstick on me.

The first time I voted in an election

It must have been in high school – we voted for President and Vice President of the senior class. Later in life, of course, I voted in Presidential elections – for John F. Kennedy for one!

My first real job

As a “lab assistant” in the Radar lab in Philco in Philadelphia. They were developing the original Radar for the armed forces of WWII – which was a step toward TV. I loved the work – the engineers were so kind and patient with me – for I had no previous experience with electricity or radio! I will never forget those super – intelligent and educated engineers who instead of “putting me down” (for I had no previous experience) – were patient and kind!

My best childhood friend

Corinne Silverman – a lovely Jewish girl – I was Irish Catholic of course – and everyone used to joke about us being so different – but we enjoyed one another and our dramatic endeavors – being in dramatic productions and plays.



My best friend now

We have moved from the middle of the state (FL) to the northern part of the state – there are many nice people here – the main object of our moving here was to find a small house which would serve our needs but would not require a lot of hard work to maintain the house and grounds.

Being a good friend means

My best friend will always be our dear Lord. He has always been at my side in times of stress and trouble. I can always call on Him to help me in making decisions – which are growing harder as I grow older – things that were enjoyable to me have become almost impossible and I find that I need to forego participating in them!

Something I have learned about getting along with others

We all need help in making decisions from time to time – and this becomes more difficult as you grow older. You try to compete and participate in activities that were once so enjoyable – and which you can excel in. You must, in these cases, realize that your body and mind have failed you – and to bow out is the only alternative – bitter and difficult as it may be!

My first “crush”

One of the first motion pictures that I saw – was “Rose Marie” an early movie about a Canadian “Mountie” played by Nelson Eddy and a girl played by Jeanette McDonald. They both had lovely singing voices and he looked so handsome in his “Canadian Mountie” uniform!

My first boyfriend

The nephew of my Godmother in Willow Grove (Pennsylvania) – Robert Schroeder – went to St. David’s School (catholic) as I did, and we walked home together, after school.

My first kiss

All the kids in school played a game called “Post office” and one of the prizes was a kiss. We were very shy and bashful and I remember turning red and hid my face when it was my turn to receive a kiss from one of the boys – as a part of the game!

My first broken heart

One of the boys in the drum and bugle corps (American Legion) of which I was the Drum Major/Majorette – left the “corps” and went to a military academy – leaving the “corps” of course. I did not dance, nor drive of course, so it was impossible to see him! This was very sad for me!

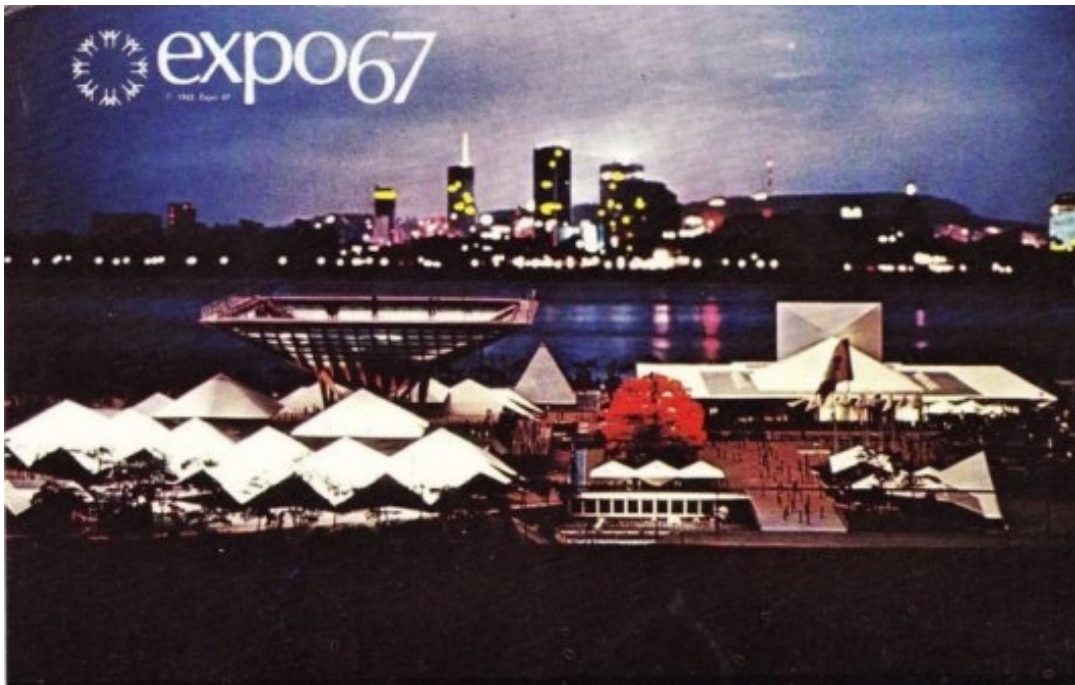


First time I rode my bike

I can remember that around the driveway of our home in Willow Grove was a tall boxwood hedge – very prickly and dense! I had to ride fast in order to stay erect on the bike – and usually wound up in the midst of the hedge – giving myself many scratches from the prickly hedge!

The best vacation

In 1967 - there was a World Fair [Expo67] in Montreal Canada – my first husband’s hometown. He built a “camper” that was pulled by our station wagon, and all seven of my children and my husband Paul, and I went to Montreal (Canada) to see the Fair and meet his relations and family.



My first plane trip

I was working at Pan-American Airways Ground Radio Shop in Miami Airport (I had experience as a Radio Telegraph Operator and some small applications on radio classes) so I worked in the original radar lab of Philco Co. in Philadelphia. I learned many things – it was just like magic. At night I went to school and studied radio code – the original Morse code – and later worked for Immigration Service as a Radio Telegraph operator.



The Place I would most like to see

Hawaii – it must be beautiful. I am fascinated particularly by the gorgeous flowers on the Island.

My most recent trip

My present husband and I made a trip through the West – (my first husband died of heart disease over 20 years ago). When my present husband and I were married we traveled through the West Coast States – as I had never gone west before. Many parts were beautiful and far different from the East where I was born.

I think faith is

An unquestioning trust in God – when you talk to Him and ask Him to guide you in doing the right things, following the rules and examples that Jesus set for us – then you cannot go far wrong – and will ultimately succeed in doing all that is right and pleasing to our dear Lord.

A real Christian

Follows all the rules and wishes that were set down for us by Jesus – and then accepts whatever consequences that follow – either pleasing to you or displeasing!

My favorite passage of Scripture

Jesus meek and humble of heart makes my heart like unto thine.

God seems especially close when

You meet adversity – either from others or from adverse circumstances. Then you must place all your trust in Him – so that He will guide you in the right way to live out your life here on Earth so that you can be happy with Him in life hereafter.

Someone who helps me be a better Christian today

The memories and examples set for me by my Father and Mother. They were very staunch Christians and Catholics who followed their religion unquestioningly – even though at many times life was hard and offered an easy way to escape situations but they stood firm and did not take the easy way out!

A goal I set and reached

I loved music (singing) from the very beginning and used to swing on my swing set and used to sing at the top of my voice (usually to a cat in my arms) although I'm sure the poor cat was terrified and thought I was trying to destroy him!

My biggest disappointment

I was not successful at playing games – either indoor ones (cards, board games, etc.) or outdoor ones such as soccer, baseball, or any other “team” sports such as volleyball or basketball!

Defeat can be turned into success when

You realize that we are destined to excel at a few things, play reasonably well with others, and do not lose heart when others are better players than we are – not everyone can be acceptable in many things and all can not be good in all things!

A goal that I was proud to see you achieve

Good grades in educational subjects and a good record in sports activities. But most of all – a great respect for your parents, your sisters (and brother) but most of all – of God and the wonderful things He has given us – of each other, all of nature – but mostly of Him.

I always thought that love was

- (1) a good feeling for another person of the opposite sex
- (2) an intense feeling for your parents and close relatives

God says that love is

A close regard and warm feeling for our brothers’ “meaning your actual brother or sister or a close relative, or even a friend or associate “friend”. We should give others every care and love that we would like others to give us.

How old I was and what I was doing when I met your grandfather

I was about 22 years old – and was a member of the same Catholic Church choir (Gesu church in Miami, FL). The same church had a very fine Drama teacher who later became a Catholic priest. He produced Gilbert and Sullivan light operas in which your Grandfather and I participated – they were great fun!



I was attracted to him because

First and foremost – we both loved music and enjoyed singing and acting in these grand old operettas! The music is great and the acting and stage experience was very fulfilling and just plain fun!

Your grandfather proposed by

Taking me to a movie/date on St. Patrick's Day – aptly named “My Wild Irish Rose.” This began many other dates – mostly with music background since we both loved music very much.



The day, time, and place we were married

It was on a Monday morning at 10 AM at Gesu Catholic Church in Miami, FL the pastor Rev. McAtee officiating.

What I wore

I made my bridal gown – a white satin with long over-all lace sleeves and a white lace veil with a pointed crown of lace and  $\frac{3}{4}$  length train. Our drama director (of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas) [Father Val LaFrance] walked me down the aisle and is a good friend to this day! He joined the priesthood soon after we were married.

My attendants

Beatrice Patenaude – a sweet Canadian lady who was with us in the Church choir. She never married and is deceased several years ago.



What they wore

I believe Beatrice wore a very sedate suit or dinner gown – she was very reserved! Joe Zerblus (roommate of Paul my first husband) was very tall and wore black pants and a white “dinner jacket” and was quite a contrast to your grandfather who was quite short! He is also deceased.

For our honeymoon

Montreal, Canada – your grandfather’s (Paul) birthplace (in 1911) – He had 1 brother and 4 sisters living there and they all gave us a great welcome. This was my first glimpse of Paul’s mother (who was quite elderly) and we never saw her again for she died a few years after this. She spoke little English but your grandfather would speak to her in French on the telephone. As of this writing - they are all deceased.

The first place we lived

In Miami, FL – we rented a house in the N. East section and my mother rented a room from us – (while I was “expecting” my first child (Theresa)). After Theresa was born we purchased a small house in the N.W. section of Miami. My mother rented an apartment in the NE section of Miami. She believed that married folks especially when they have small children – should be alone – although she was always available for baby-sitting. It was hard for her, however, if there were more than 1 child at a time – for you see – I was an “only child.”

Our first fight

My husband Paul, was French-Canadian and had an explosive temper, but recovered very quickly and did not “hold a grudge.” In a few minutes after “we would have words” – he would forget what the argument was about!

One thing we still laugh about

At times Paul would mispronounce a word and made it quite funny - and I could not keep from laughing! He took it very well and laughed too when he understood how to correctly pronounce the word! I would tell him “Oh how I wish I could do as well as you do – in French!”

Where we worship

Our religion has always been very precious and foremost to us – we met in Gesu Church choir and then he was a Choir Director for some 20+ years and taught Boy’s Choir groups as well as solo vocal lessons. I was always in the choir regardless of my pregnancies at approximately 2 years apart!

Our children, their names and birth dates

Theresa, Cecilia, Bernadette, Paul, Veronica, Rose-Marie, Rita Margaret

The thing I love most about being a mother

Holding that precious gift from God in my arms – what an awesome responsibility! I was doubly blessed for I could breast-feed all of them – a closeness that cannot be duplicated by any other – with practically no exception. Thank you, dear Lord!

The most difficult thing a mother has to do

Stand by and watch her child make a mistake – sometimes a small one and sometimes a large one – and try to keep her tongue still and not interfere! It may be months or years later that the “child” will find out what was the true course they should have followed and listened to their mother!

An important lesson I hope all my children and grandchildren learn

Before making any important decision in your life, pray that God will guide you in making this decision and show you how to make the correct decision instead if it is necessary. Our dear Lord is the only one who can see in the future.

I know there is a God because

All through my life – whenever I had to make an important decision – I have asked our dear Lord to guide me and I could feel His hand in mine and He always helped me to go the right way. I know that He wants us to ask for His guidance and He always will help us!

I experienced a turning point in my faith when

Even when I was very young I could feel our dear Lord helping me. When I was only 3 years old, I was very sick. I caught Polio and Spinal Meningitis. My parents had a very strong faith in God and asked our local Priest and Sisters to come and pray for my recovery. They did so – and I recovered without any permanent crippling or bad effects! The Doctors were very amazed for Polio and Meningitis were new diseases at that time (1924) and Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia was just beginning to learn about these terrible diseases. While these Doctors were very knowledgeable – I know our dear Lord healed me and I recovered with no crippling and no serious after-effects.

When I die, I believe that

We will be rewarded if during our lifetime we obeyed His commandments and took care of our children and loved ones, as we should. Our dear Lord has given us the “road map” to get to heaven – by loving Him with our whole hearts and taking care of our family to the best of our ability.

Your mother’s full maiden name

Rita Margaret Pepin

Her birthplace and date of birth

Miami, FL – Mercy Hospital

The thing I love best about your mother

There are so many wonderful “things” about your mother! First of all – she considers everyone else before herself! She is always doing something for others. She put herself through college on several scholarships she earned – and was an excellent student (UNC – Chapel Hill) and registered nurse. I hope that all of her children – 2 girls and 1 boy – will have the same sense of responsibility and be such an excellent student as your mother was!

Your grandfather’s full name

Paul Emile Pepin

His birthplace and date of birth

Montreal, Canada – April 1-

The thing I love best about your father

He is so kind and gentle – which makes him such a good husband, father, and Doctor. All of these things would be impossible and make it impossible to succeed in those activities. Can you imagine how horrible it would be for someone who was cold, cruel, and unfeeling to take care of sick persons – and guide them back to health! The same person will also make a loving husband and father – and does!

The ways you are like me

I hope you will always remain loving and sensitive to other's feelings – and love God with your whole heart and soul!

The ways you are different from me

I cannot be sure of this – for I have not been blessed with being near you (Geographically) very much! I was surely not perfect, but hope you will be close to perfect and learn constantly from your mistakes and the mistakes of others.

One thing that I admire about you

You admire and love your parents very much and obey them in all things.

My prayer for you

I pray that you will love the Lord (our guide to all that is great and good) above all things and follow His guidance always and ask Him to show you the way in all things!

My best Christmas ever

Christmas when I was 5 years old and received my “Peggy” – a large doll who could wear size one year dresses. I had her on my bed and close by me until I was a very big girl.

The real meaning of Christmas

The birthday of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

A favorite Christmas cookie recipe

(Cookie Jar Gingersnaps)

$\frac{3}{4}$  C. Shortening

1 C. Sugar

1 egg

$\frac{1}{4}$  C Molasses (Brer Rabbit. Cooking Molasses)

2 C. All Purpose Flour

2 Tsp. Baking Soda

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tsp. Ground Ginger

1 Tsp. Ground Cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$  Tsp. Salt

Additional Sugar

In a large mixing bowl, cream the shortening and sugar. Beat in the eggs and molasses. Combine the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Roll teaspoonfuls of dough into balls. Dip one side of each ball into sugar; place with sugar side up on greased baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes or until lightly browned and crinkly. Yield – 3-4 dozen



My favorite books

Alice in Wonderland

My most comforting possession is

My animal pets through the years- cats or dogs – They can give you such love and devotion – and teach us many things!

My most cherished piece of jewelry

A hand painted brooch, which belonged to my grandmother, and gold cross and chain centered by a diamond given to me by my dear present husband, Edward.

That which I value most in life is

My dear children (7) and my dear grandchildren

The dearest people on my earth

My parents (I never knew my grandparents) and my dear children and grandchildren, and of course my dear Paul who was the father of all my children and of course my dear Edward who married me and took such good care of me after the death of Paul and “put up” with me and all my older aches and pains and showed me that love can come a second time in one’s life – with equal passion!

The people I miss most

My deceased parents and my first husband Paul – also deceased. I know they are in Heaven and will help us all to reach this goal to the very best of their ability. How good it would be to be all together once more in the Father’s kingdom.

There is nothing more important than

Loving our dear Lord with your whole heart and soul – and loving and obeying your parents!

In my life, I want to

Be able to keep in contact with all of my children and grandchildren and watch them grow and mature. I want to be proud of them, for what they are, and what they will ultimately be – to be a good example to themselves and their children and grandchildren and to love God with all their hearts and souls.

I think that real success means

Finding your abilities and desires in this life and having the chance to exercise them to the fullest and enjoying them for a very large part of your life. Leaving the world and your children for having them and for being in the world with them.

You are only a failure if

You accept all of your talents and abilities that God has given you and neglect them and throw them away. Our dear Lord would react to this, I am sure – to a present given in good faith, which is thrown in the gutter and never used for its purpose!!

My favorite hobby is

Reading – history, geography – learn the ways and customs of foreign people – what type of animals live in their lands – what crops grow in their farms – what foods do they like to eat and how do they cook it...

I would like to teach you to

Cook some of the plain American food that I learned to cook from my mother – also some baked bread cakes and cookies that I learned to make when I was your age

Doing something you love is important because

You will put all of your wits and energy into doing it – and wanting those you love to share it with you

In my twenties, I thought I would

Make my living by being a singer or actress. In my mid-twenties I married your Grandfather and gave all of my energies to him and then into loving all of my dear children – taking care of them and loving them and their dear father – your Grandpa!

In my thirties I became

The same as above – continuing to have more children (7) and loving them and their dear father with all my heart. The 8<sup>th</sup> baby did not live and I was so sad for I could see that I would not have any more!

In my forties

I had some problems with my health, and even had a mild heart attack or “pulmonary edema” but after a short time in the hospital, I continued resting for a while at home. I was sad, for I could see that I would not have more babies, but thankful to God for those I was blessed to have!

In my fifties, I discovered

That I must plan my housework and (with the help of the older girls) continue taking care of the babies and my housework as usual. I learned to take a nap in the afternoon, so I could make dinner and take care of the younger children before bedtime!

Now that I am a grandmother

I look back and thank our dear Lord for giving me health and strength to care for my dear children when it was necessary! Also, I thank God for all of my children) – and for the good help of my older girls to take care of the house and family after my illness.



When you have a grandchild, be sure to  
Hold them and love them – and of course pray for them.

Being a grandparent means  
Holding your grandchildren in your hearts always

Never be too busy to  
Pray – talk to our dear Lord and ask for direction in your life. He will give it to you – if you ask!

The best thing about being your grandmother  
There are many “best things.” I am proud of all of you – and pray that you will succeed in your chosen occupations and make your father and mother proud of you.

[This memory book is in the Thomas Kinkade publication format, copyright 1999. Emily Pearl Esterwood transcribed the entries in December 2016.]