

## David, I will tell you about the family!

By Jeanine Long on Sunday, November 14, 2010 at 2:52pm

What shall I share? ..... Uncle Bob, feel free to modify.

The Seiglers, my grandma and Pop (Ella and Malcolm), let's start there. They had 10 children. Uncle Ishmael, Aunt Bea, my mom (Bertie), Uncle Roland, Aunt Evelyn and Uncle Bob survived to adulthood. My mom and Uncle Bob are the last surviving their generation.

Uncle Ishmael married Aunt Harriet. They had three children: Donna Jean (Blue), Lawrence (Larry), and Dennis (Michael). These children are in their late 50s and 60s now. Donna and Dennis live in the Palatka, FL area and have grown children. Larry lives in St. Marys, FL.

Aunt Bea's first marriage was to Colie Dunnivant, a family friend and neighbor, but they were divorced before I came about. She then married Uncle Bill – the Uncle most of us know and associate the most as our Uncle. Uncle Bill had a daughter from a previous marriage, Jane, and Aunt Bea and Uncle Bill adopted Carolyn. Jane left the family in her late teens and I don't know if anyone in the family knows where she is or if she is still living. Carolyn died this past year. She adopted a son, I'm thinking in the late 60s or early 70s, David. He's probably in his late 40s and from the last I heard he probably lives in the Orlando area. Uncle Bill died, I believe sometime in the 80s, and years later Aunt Bea married Byron. Not many of us got to know Byron, but my mom and Uncle Bob did and share that he took great care of Aunt Bea in her last years as her health significantly declined.

Aunt Bea and Aunt Harriet shared the roles of Aunts and mother models for some of my cousins (the third generation) as they shared their homes and their hearts with family as parents went through distressing times. Many of the fondest memories some of us have are of great meals Aunt Bea would cook and lots of family gatherings at Aunt Bea's house or Grandma and Pop's.

My mom (Bertie) married Paul Fox and had 2 children, my brother Paul and me. When I was 6 my biological father died. I still remember so heart warningly the first Christmas after his death when, as my mother later shared with me, my Aunts and Grandma shared their green stamps with mom to get me a doll I wanted more than anything else. Looking back, we were all poor, but we didn't know it because we were so richly loved by extended family. Uncle Ishmael, Aunt Harriet and Michael moved next door to us and Uncle Ishmael tried to fill in any "father-gaps" in my life. Eight years after the death of my father, my mother remarried Dan Cheshire, who adopted me as he had no children. He died 14 years ago. My brother has 7 children and 4 grandchildren. I have 3 sons and 3 grandchildren.

About the time I was old enough to know Uncle Roland he had moved away. I know he was in the military. He served in Viet Nam and from all I hear from my cousins and my mom, like so many of those who served in that war, he returned a different man from the man who left. I remember his life being troubled. He had (best I can remember) 2 or 3 sons and a daughter. He died many years ago. I believe in his last years Cousin Larry was close to him and knew him better than most of the rest of us.

Aunt Evelyn was married to Jim Dixon. They had 4 sons. My memories of Uncle Jim are very slim. While I remember being the only cousin who lost a parent to death, my cousins Jimmy Jr., Thomas (Eddie), Carl, and Steve were the first kids I knew who lost a parent through divorce. I realize it sounds odd to hear that now, but in the day, everyone had 2 parents. Not long thereafter Uncle Bob and his wife divorced. Aunt Evelyn remarried and Trayce was born. My fondest memories are from when Aunt Evelyn and the boys lived next door to Grandma and Pop. Sundays we would all gather, as many

as could, and I have wonderful memories of my brother Paul, Jimmy Jr., and Larry bend over some car engine or going off somewhere. Carl was the closest to me in age of Aunt Evelyn's kids (he was older than me). But he and Terry often included me in their activities. Aunt Evelyn had fiery red hair and she was a hoot. She believed that laughter was good and had fun living life. Her kids gave her cards on Father's Day. I thought that was cool so.

Uncle Bob (though he was Robert then, and my mother never calls him Bob, to her he is Robert) lived in a house behind Aunt Evelyn. I will admit, I was so jealous that they got to live at Grandma and Pop's. I do not remember Uncle Bob's first wife. They had Terry, Susie, and "the twins", Bruce and Bryan. Somewhere along this timeline, they divorced – I just remember that the twins were just little boys at the time. Later he married Aunt Vivian. I remember thinking that their house was spectacular! (By then Uncle Bob had moved, but was still in Miami). There were times between Uncle Bob's divorce and marriage to Vivian, his children lived with Aunt Bea. Two things that I remember during that time was that Aunt Bea loved her nieces and nephews as if they were her own children (and I was so jealous of that) and that Uncle Bob loved his kids and did the very best he could for them, even when it meant letting his sister help raise them.

#### Other memories:

- There was a mulberry tree in Grandma and Pops back yard. It was a wonderful climbing tree.
- Aunt Bea and Uncle Bill had a laundry. They had a coke machine and penny candy.
- Aunt Bea was always sewing something. She and my mother made my first wedding gown.
- Grandma always had peppermint sticks next to the telephone.
- Grandma made awesome fried "turnovers"; chocolate was my favorite.
- Aunt Bea had a pool at one time. I was almost like the Beverly Hillbillies and the cement pond.
- Aunt Emma (Pops sister) often lived with Grandma and Pop and with Aunt Bea. Her sewing almost made Aunt Bea look like a novice. I think she and Aunt Bea made Terry's wedding gown.
- Grandma had an outdoor wringer washer. There was a tub that was filled with water (I believe with a water hose), and the clothes were washed in that. Then they were fed through the wringer rollers and hung on the line to dry. Now days, we have no idea the work of the women generations before us.
- Grandma's kitchen floor had a definite slope. If you dropped anything on the floor, it would go a rolling.
- Pop chewed tobacco and Grandma dipped snuff.
- Grandma and Pop's front porch was the place to be on Sunday afternoons.
- Grandma and Pop had very limited education. Aunt Bea usually handled their business. They signed their names with an X. But Pop could read and he loved to read. He always had a paperback novel. When he finished he would tell those stories as if he was there. Pop traveled the world through books.
- Pop shaved with a straight razor. He had a leather strap that he sharpened his razor on. It was fascinating to watch him shave.