

HAPPY MEMORIES OF CAMP LIFE SUSTAIN AND NOURISH FAMILY 4/01/97

Part II

Editor's note: Adelia (Allen) Pearson, sister of Mart Allen, concludes her recollections on the family camp (Mart's hunting camp) which she wrote recently in a letter to her brother. The first part of the letter was published in the March 25th edition of the Express.

By Adelia Pearson

I can still smell the sweet wood smoke that clung to everything. That same odor that Dad and all his things smelled like when he came home in the fall or winter from a hunting trip there that made me homesick for camp and warm weather again so we could go.

Dad would pick me up and sing "Bye baby bunting, daddy's gone a hunting, to get a furry rabbit skin to wrap his baby bunting in."

I also remember...

- The time your father-in-law (my NRA Hunter Safety instructor) took your wife, Nancy, her sister Judy and me up to camp for a day of partridge hunting. I was 14 at the time and it was a real safari for me.
- Dad taking his week's vacation to coincide with the Oswego County Fair in Sandy Creek. We stayed at camp and went to the harness races every day at the fair.
- Dad not allowing Old Joe to go to camp with us because he had to hang over the back seat and pant in Dad's ear all the way, and the time you hid him on the floor and we all sat with our feet on him so Dad wouldn't see him. That dog was so smart. He didn't make a move until we were far enough along on our trip so we knew Dad wouldn't turn around and take him back home, and then he assumed his usual position and panted in Dad's face.
- Beastly hot summer nights in Phoenix when Ma and Dad and I (I think you boys were all grown up by then, or big enough to stay home alone) would go up to camp to get a cool night's sleep, getting up early in the morning to drive home so Dad could go to work.

We gave our children, or tried to, the same memories I had at camp as a child by building our own camp right across the road from Dad's.

Knowing it had been badly abused, I couldn't bring myself to go up that road many years later, but you - at the urging of your understanding wife - took me there one afternoon. Another time when Big Brother and Hero came to my rescue and walked me through yet another difficult life situation that I couldn't have handled without you with me.

Obviously, these memories of very happy times we shared as a family are very special to me, so much so that I now make my home about four miles from where all these memories were born.

It truly is my home. Ma could never understand it, but Dad did. It was sold and abused and misused to the point that the local fire department was brought in to burn it down this past summer. Its memories are very special to my children, also. Your nephew, the fireman, had to "pass" on attending this controlled burn. It was too painful for him to see grandpa's camp go.

I cherish the old blue granite sink in its wainscot cabinet in my home now, graciously given to me by the last owner and the English ironstone soap dish still sits on it as it did when we were children. When I walk by it I can still see it filled with trillium and sometimes I picture Ma washing dishes in it and me complaining because I had to stand there and dry them.