



Moms' Memories
OF OAKLAND, N.J.

written by Dena Houtema Haidinger
to her family. She was my Mother
died at 95 yrs of age here in Ms.
In her file at Comfort Care (medical file,
Xrs. etc.
Medicare
there was one page missing.
The page would have been a list of
her medicines she took. That page
was missing because she never
took any. She depended on God to
keep her healthy and heal her if
she got sick. They said she was
the only patient with that page
missing since they opened the facility

After the death of the boy I was engaged to marry, I met your father. His wife Catherine had passed away two weeks after my fiance had died. We actually met when the employees of the laundry where we both worked went to pay our respects and offer our sympathy before Catherine's funeral. Later we saw each other at work, but it was quite a bit later before we began to date. It was strange that all went well with our dating until my mother realized that Chris had two children. And one of them was Rose who my mother had seen and talked to on her way to the Ladies Aid Society meetings at our church. Rose would take her doll and go through the backlot over to Hunt's Drug Store and stand there. Being friendly, I guess that she talked to the passing people and my Mom was one of these people. Of course, all would have ended right then and there if my Mom would have had her way. Instead, I persisted in dating Chris. I enjoyed Rose right away, but Mickey was not so outgoing. It was hard for me to get anywhere near close to him. But Grandma Haidinger used to tell me that even she couldn't cuddle him like she could Rose. So it wasn't easy at first. I can remember sitting at the kitchen window with Rose on my lap and asking every now and then for Mickey to come join us and him always refusing. On looking back, he being the youngest and used to his mother, I now know that it must have been difficult for him to adjust to this stranger. Also, we lived in the same house where Chris and Catherine had lived with the children and I can now understand how confusing that must have been to him.

I remember Uncle Fred renting a nice bungalow for two weeks up at Greenwood Lake. He brought Aunt Trina and Grandma and Sharon up there. He then went back to Paterson so that he could go to work. After a few days, Aunt Trina couldn't stand it. She was afraid of the night noises etc. She had never lived in the country and just didn't like it at the lake. So Uncle Fred brought them home and gave the housekeys for the bungalow to us and told us to take the kids up and use the vacation time. We spent about a week and a half there. It was great. We took you kids down to the lake about every day and were sorry when it ended. Your father came up to the lake every night. One day Grandma Haidinger decided to wash the kitchen floor. She put all the chairs in the living room and got to work, after first making sure that all the kids were outside playing. However, Norma had to go to the bathroom and came in the back door and slipped on the wet floor and sailed right on into the living room! She is also the one who has a physical reminder of the vacation at the lake. She had a frog in a jar and wanted to take it home with her. At the last minute your Dad said she could take it and so she ran to get the jar and fell over a stump. I think she still has the scar on her knee.

When we decided that we could no longer live in five rooms with six children because it was too crowded, we looked every Sunday for a place to rent. One day my friend Marie Romaine came with my eggs which she sold to me. She lived in Oakland and told me that there was a big old house for rent on Route 202. She took me to look at it. When I told Chris about it, he said that he wouldn't even go look at it because it at one time had been a house of ill repute. He said it was known as "The Green Cottage". Well, we did go to see it and ended up putting a small down payment on it and started to pay off our first mortgage on our own home. This was in 1942 and we sold it in 1964. It was a good place to raise a big family. It had no central heat and we were always worried about the kids being warm enough when they went to bed. With all the inconveniences and very little money, we still survived and I think these were happy times for me. I had the priveledge of being young enough to enjoy my children's growing up years. The children were encouraged to bring home friends and they did. Quite a number of kids did come and seemed to enjoy being there even if the house wasn't a big beautiful home. I think it was beautiful in the fact that all these kids enjoyed being there with us.

One morning I was in the kitchen when I heard a real loud noise which seemed to come from the other side of the house. I went to the living room and looked out one of the windows and to my surprise saw an oil delivery truck practically in our cesspool which was for the front apartment. The cab of the truck was down and a man was climbing very carefully out of it. This was a new driver and was making a delivery to us. Only problem was that no one had told him to go almost to the end of the house where the cellar door was to make his delivery. He drove up on the lawn and the full truck was just too heavy for the roof of the cesspool and so it collapsed. The man was unhurt but very upset being afraid that he would lose his job. He called the company and I gave him a cup of coffee to calm him down. Before long a truck came to pull his truck out. It was fully loaded and it proved to be too heavy for the second truck to pull out. They tried all day and after sending a big wrecker it finally was lifted out by five o'clock. Chris informed them that they had to repair the cesspool to the way it was before the accident. I spoke to Sam Brain who was the owner and asked that the driver be allowed to keep his job. Sam had gone to the same school in Totowa Boro that I went to when we were kids. It didn't do the poor driver any good though because we had a different driver after that day.

We also had a problem when the sand hill up the lane and in back of us was sold. Sand was being removed by big trucks which would be in the lane and on our lawn and in back of the luncheonette that we now rented out. There was a cesspool behind the luncheonette and we were afraid that a truck would one morning land it and we would have history repeated. We asked the drivers not to park back there but no one listened. Although they couldn't get their trucks loaded until after 8 A. M., they were lining up there around 6:30 each morning. Finally they continued this business with their motors running loudly until we called the police. The result was that there would be no more parking on our property. Now there were trucks lined up all along the road and all the way up Long Hill Road. Then a sign was put up saying they couldn't park on either side of the road. Thinking our problem was over, I was surprised one morning to hear a loud motor which sounded rather close by. It sure was! A bulldozer was removing top soil from our back field and also widening the lane. We made another call to the police and Chief Joe Woods himself came down. He ordered them to get off the private property and to replace the soil.

I think that running after Mildred, our big black curly-haired pig, was quite an adventure. Chasing that monster several hours in the rain and ending up with Mr. Ahlers getting her into the shed wasn't exactly fun. This was before we converted the garage into the luncheonette. So by the time Chris came home from work, Mildred had one or two bicycle frames draped around her neck and was stamping all around. So I informed the owner (Chris) that it was either sell Mildred or I would leave. He sold her. Before that I had had the experience of chasing young pigs into their pen on many occasions. My life was never dull!!

V. L. Ke + Mike

There were nice times too. There were backyard picnics and the boys playing horseshoes or the girls against the boys playing softball etc. There was the picnic when it began to rain and I asked everyone to bring something in the house as we all ran from the rain. They all did but Barbara Henderson outdid the rest of us with her item that she rescued from the rain. She brought in a big bag not knowing it was the garbage. We had some good times in that old house and the yard.

I also enjoyed going to the football games when Jack played and Dot~~ies~~ as majorette. I was proud of them both. There was the Saturday that we were going to a football game at Butler and Pompton was going to bash Butler. We even had a sign on Norma's car to that effect. But we had car trouble twice going up a hill. I suggested that it might be the gas line not knowing a thing about cars. Turned out that it was the gas line. We got it repaired and finally got there.

When we decided to run the luncheonette business, it was decided that I would make the sauce for the hot dogs and also bake the pies. One Sunday morning I was busy baking pies for our opening. Catherine and Harry McThomas and their two kids, Patty and Bobby, came by for a visit. I was putting the last two lemon pies in the oven to brown the meringue. One pie tin hit the edge of the oven rack and fell to the floor. Of course our dog Pal was right there to lap up the filling. I cautioned Patty not to say a word about it to Uncle Chris when she went down to the luncheonette. The very first thing she did was to run and tell Chris as I learned later. Of course we laughed about it later but it wasn't funny at the time.

Some years ago, when we lived in Oakland, there was a small cesspool near our patio just off the kitchen. Since the sink pipes often got clogged and stopped the water from flowing out of the sink, the pipes had to be flushed out at times. This went into the cesspool unless there was a problem. The cesspool top had often been taken off and after a while Chris just put a large piece of metal on the top and covered it with dirt. Of course we all knew enough to stay away from it. I had just gotten a new winter coat which was light blue and very pretty. One Sunday afternoon we decided to go out for a little while. Chris went down to Ahler's gas station to get gas and came back and parked right by the cesspool which was something that he never did. He came and told me the car was all set and let's go.. He got in the car and I opened the door on my side to get in and promptly went down into the cesspool right up to my knees! Chris came around the car and said "Where the hell are you?" When he saw I appeared to be sitting on the ground while hollering at him to help me, he made one big mistake. He said he hoped that I hadn't gotten my new coat all dirty!! Needless to say, that did it! He was more concerned about the coat than he was about me! Not one of my better days!

→ the oldest
Kid

One day Rose came to take me out. On the way home, we were in Bloomingdale where there was a new Shop-Rite super market just opened. Since the specials they were having were worth stopping for, we decided to stop to do some shopping. Rose parked at the curb and she got out. So did I and my foot went into a deep hole! It was left by the telephone company when they were putting in new poles. Rose came around the car and asked the familiar question, "Where the hell are you, Mom?" Of course we were furious that I did hurt my foot in that hole, but we did go to the store to get their specials. Couldn't miss out on those bargains!

My thoughts on losing Chris have changed as time goes by. I realize we, as adults, are all responsible for ourselves. However, sometimes when our mates do foolish things, we try to advise, scold or whatever. The result when they ignore your help is a guilt feeling when we lose them. Also advice on taking care of themselves is taken lightly in some cases or considered nagging. So when that person passes away, we feel guilty. It seems to be something everyone experiences when they first lose a mate. I have decided after much thought that I did all I could for Chris and I feel relieved. It allows me to be happy in my new life on my own.

As my granddaughter Dena says, "Well, here I sit on October 25, 1963 in my backyard. It is about 80 degrees and everything is as dry as a bone. I've raked the front and the driveway so that it looks presentable, but the back is now loaded with heaps of leaves. I sit looking at the old picnic table and benches that Chris made which are very dilapidated and should probably be chopped up and probably will be, but I find I'm nostalgic about it. Why? Well, today we seem to have eliminated a stumbling block to selling our property to a business group. I'm nostalgic because I don't really want to leave Oakland where I've lived twenty years. That's two thirds of my married life. However, if we don't sell it soon, we won't know how we'll live here much longer. Taxes are forcing the issue along with large heating bills and Chris's inability to earn large salaries anymore. The last is due not to aversion to work, but rather a result of the operation that Chris had to have. So I will try to be objective. It is in my nature to make the best of things, so I'll no doubt adjust to Florida in good time. Dorothy and Ed and their family will be in the same state, hopefully within visiting distance. I just know I'll be able to put up with flowers all year, a milder climate, a trip to the ocean in winter, a smaller house, a newer car and just plain relaxing in a more relaxed type of area. I have had a wealth of both happiness and troubles in my landmark house. It has been wonderful living in our old home which is one of the ten oldest in our town. I love the main part, possibly a little too much. If I could, I would keep my lovely living room and cart it along with me. Dreamer! It is a comfort to know that one of the buyers has informed me that the main section will probably remain intact. We also expressed a desire for a copy of the old photo of

of the house as it was years ago. It was a gift of Mrs. Annie Bush to me and I couldn't part with it and won't. As I look around me, I see the mountains and know that I will never forget them. They are so beautiful in spring, all green, in summer too, in winter all white with snow and in fall a blaze of colors resembling a beautiful tapestry. So many changes have come about here at our end of the road. Ahlers little old house came down to be replaced by an Esso station. Next up the road is Ahlers Jeep salesroom and lot. That's also different as it always was just an unimproved property before all these changes. We changed an old garage building fourteen years ago into a snack bar and had Tony Nash as our tenant for thirteen years. I look down the yard behind the snack bar and remember picnics with Grandma Haidinger and so many other people. The girls playing baseball against the men cheating like crazy. I see Jack, Mick and Norma playing horseshoes alongside of the old shed. Again, I see the tables under the trees full of people eating a huge meal. Eddie, Hodge, Barbara among many others. I remember an Arizona Indian named Jerry Peralta visiting with us here. I see, again, our daughters in their bridal finery leaving to go to the church and recall odd events that turned out to be pretty funny. Also the numerous times Norma officiated as bridesmaid and the lovely gowns she wore. Also, I recall Mickey all dolled up as a nervous bridegroom and his very younger brother, Jack as his best man. Then later Jack as bridegroom and a nervous orwalso. I recall a certain majorette leaving here every Saturday during football season looking so straight and capable and making me so proud. Or a certain football player, one day so happy and then another day dejected, which are all part of the game. I remember the wonderful free feeling after having paid our mortgage in full. Then the horrors of being over \$5000.00 in debt to a hospital, doctors and nurses not long after. There was the purchase of a new roof and later a heating plant being installed. Many laughs and curses during the latter as one fat worker seemed to always get the narrow places to work in. Also the problems of trying to get through stone and thick walls and wood. I shouldn't forget showers for brides and new mothers held in our living room. Or our 25th wedding anniversary party which was a total surprise. It was given by all our children. Also, our Christmases with our big family and other just plain get togethers. Or the kids who used to be welcome here all the time. A boy from Detroit especially who used it as a second home. A romance we helped along and how these are still friends with us. Rose's friends Myrtle, Shirley and Harriett. Mickey's pals, Joe Eilert, Joe Hoffman among many others. Our friends Harry and Catherine, coming to a pork dinner, home raised at that! Ike, Mike and Mildred the pigs. I have so many wonderful memories that I guess I'll be able to bear it with them to look back on. All I can say is, if my house could talk, what stories of fun, sorrow and all the rest it could tell. It's the best way I can think of to say Adieu to my home in Oakland.

*in the NADY
Eddie
my husband
Hodge & Norma
& my sister
Jerry dated
my friend
Mrs. Bush
WON the
SS. Neashie
+ ANKER)*

Of course Catherine is my good friend, but at times she does some funny things to me. We went to Disney World and were at the Village where all the shops and restaurants are. When we were ready to go home, we went out to the parking lot and Catherine got into her car, started it and began to back out. I guess she didn't realize that I was standing waiting for her to unlock the door so I could get in. I knocked on the window and she stopped and looked at me and asked what was the matter. I told her that I came with her and I intended to go home with her as well. A few years ago, I went to Isreal, Egypt, Jordan, Greece and Italy. It was a two week tour with a group from the three Church's Of Christ. I met some very nice people whom I still often see. We had a good send-off at Kennedy Airport in New York. Rose and Bob and Norma and Artall came to see me off and met the people I was traveling with. Catherine was with us and there-in lies my little story of "A Shot In The Dark?" We landed in Jordan and were put up in a nice but very old fashioned hotel. Catherine wasn't feeling too well and so went right to bed. I soon followed because the eleven and a half hour flight and the different time had me very tired. Sometime during the night, Catherine got up and went into the bathroom. I didn't know this as I was asleep at the time. Suddenly, I was awakened by what sounded like a shot. As we were in a land which was militarized, this wasn't so difficult to understand. I called to Catherine who answered in a faint voice. Realizing she wasn't in her bed, I said "Where are you?" "Here in the bathroom" was her answer. What had happened was that she had gone into the bathroom for a drink. She was half asleep and she hit the glass shelf above the porcelaine sink with her china mug and it broke. It sounded just like a shot! We had a good laugh about it the next morning, but it did scare me half to death at the time. While on this same trip, we went to a place called "The Red Rose City". In order to get to the city itself, it is necessary to go through a chasm on a very narrow road. We were on horseback and had either very old or young horse handlers who led us there. As it happened, the handler that I had was an old Arab who didn't understand any English. So when the horse I was on started to gallop along at quite a fast pace, I asked him to make the horse go slower. He smiled, shrugged his shoulders and said nothing. Finally I said "Tell him to WHOA!" He said with a grin - "WHOA??" I shook my head yes. This happened a few times but of course I survived. We arrived at the city and I couldn't get my right leg off the darn horse! So Mike Price, a young minister with our group, helped a very embarrassed lady down. But it was fun and on the way back it was better. Still on horseback but better! Kathy, who was in our group, couldn't get her handler to make the horse slow down and so arrived back with a sore rear. However, it was all worth it. We walked all around and our guide explained all about the city carved out of red stone. I have a book which explains about the Romans being responsible for the loss of gold, etc as they took their caravans through and then plundered the city on the way. I had seen a show on television which was put on by National Geographic about this city. I was fascinated at having the chance to be there and experience it in person.

And now a few words about my children.

ROSE - Rose was the first one to graduate from Oakland Grammar school from our family. I was very proud of her and she was one of the prettiest girls in the class. I had made her a pink taffeta dress with a square neckline that was trimmed in black velvet ribbon. Uncle Fred had Rose come to a studio in Paterson and had her pictures taken. Rose was always a big help to me and if I never said so, I am saying so now. There were three of her girlfriends who came often to the house. Myrtle, Shirley and Harriett. Harriett and Rose are friends to this day. But unfortunately, Myrtle, married and mother of little boys, died of a heart attack. Shirley passed away of sugar diabetes. Harriett had a good many misfortunes in her life. When Rose and Bob were getting married, we had the reception in our local community building. The day before, I prepared the refreshments, one of which was cole slaw. I had to go out to the store for some things and asked Myrtle and Harriett to help Rose cut up the cabbage for the slaw. They did it all right in great big chunks as they gabbed. Well, I made them chop it all up fine. But everything turned out okay and Rose had a nice wedding and she was a beautiful bride. She and Bob gave us three grandsons.

CHRIS - Dot and Chris also had a lovely wedding. Their wedding reception was at the Oakland Chalet. They had a very nice sitdown dinner. Dot looked pretty and so did her sisters Rene, Flo and Helen. Renee's daughter Bunny was a pretty flower girl. Dot and Chris presented us with two very nice grandchildren. When Mickey was born I went every morning to help out for awhile. Candy needed to know we all loved her and she became sulky one morning and didn't want to get dressed. Finally, I found her in her room putting two socks on one foot. We had a good laugh over that and Candy decided to get dressed. When Mickey was a young newspaper delivery boy, he saved up his money to buy a special gift for me. It was a little antique miniature wash bowl and pitcher which was in Mrs. Prosky's antique shop. I really treasured that gift and I still have it. This little gift had said so much. We didn't always see eye to eye on things but who does? But I care a great deal. I remember worrying that Mickey would get hit by a car while riding his bicycle to work on the farm in Wayne. But I'll bet he never knew it as I never said.

NORMA - Norma showed, or so it seemed, to be capable of being advanced a whole grade in the lower grades. However, later I wasn't so sure it was the right decision as later in high school she was the youngest in her class. Her father always felt that she could do more than she really could. It was, she once said, rather an effort to live up to his expectations of her. We never realized that Norma had a nice singing voice until she surprised us at her class night when she sang with Herman Walders. They sang "Too Young". Later she and Dot~~ie~~ were in stage plays put on by the G.Y.O. She spent many years singing with the Sweet Adelines. When I spent time with Norma, I went to the Sweet Adelines rehearsals and did enjoy that. All those voices blending so well and no music to accompany them. The Sweet Adelines also put on lovely shows. Something comes to mind about when Norma and Arthur got married. Shortly before leaving for the church, I was still sewing seed pearls on the wedding gown which was made by Norma. It was a lovely wedding and the reception was at the Robin Hood Inn.

DOT - Dot is the daughter that I least could understand when she was growing up as we were not always of the same mind. I remember when we had the luncheonette and one day Dot had touched the coffee pots on the burner and two spun around and somehow they never even broke. Dot and Ed lived in Davenport, Iowa and Ed got his chiropractic education there. It was rough going. They had Dena who was born in Kansas and Dot was going to have another baby. We were visiting with them and when we were to go home, we suggested that Dot come and have the baby in New Jersey. She felt she'd rather not but changed her mind later on so we went back and got her. Dena came also. Dennis was born in Saddle Brook Hospital in New Jersey. Before Ed got his practice, they went through rough times. I remember how some patients in Mississippi paid with vegetables. Little did any of us think that eventually Evelyn would also be living in Mississippi about three quarters of an hour from where Dot lives. I was very proud when Dot was a majorette for Pompton Lakes High School and I used to go and see her as she led the other majorettes. Dot and Ed gave us four grandchildren, one who they named Dena who is now a reporter.

JACK - Jack was sometimes very quite and a little withdrawn. One winter when we had a real bad snow storm and the snow was piled really high, Jack and Dad shoveled it away. There was a real sharp wind and because Jack had had his head down, it effected his neck. He had to spend hours under a heat lamp and so missed weeks of school. Later, while in the Air Force, it was discovered that he had a bad foot, either from a time he hurt it or as the Air Force doctor had said, was born with it. I don't ever remember seeing it or for that matter don't remember him walking badly because of it. He was restricted until he was discharged. I believe that this accounts for moodiness at times. He played football and I guess that I didn't miss many games as I was always asked to go along. I didn't understand the game but went and enjoyed it. Jack and Judy married and gave us three grandchildren and later divorced. Jack later married Eileen. After several years of marriage, they had a baby girl and I added another grandchild to my growing list. They settled in Boynton Beach, Florida where they have a nice home and both work very hard. *Later, Jack became a Supervisor at Lantana Fla. shipyard until he got lung Cancer and*

EVELYN - Well, here I am writing about my last child. Evelyn always had a wanderlust and often decided to leave us. When still not of school age, she often took her doll carriage and decided to go to school anyway. One day when I was not able to find her, I went the way the kids went to school and sure enough there she was just about two blocks away from the school with her doll carriage. I ran up and got her just as a lady was about to help her across the street. I grabbed her with one hand and the doll carriage with the other and we really got home fast! Another time she went all the way to my mother's home in Haledon and caused several very anxious hours. Mother had no phone and didn't know what to do as she had an ulcerated leg and couldn't walk hardly. So she sat crying while trying to figure out what to do. Finally after searching everywhere, a friend of ours named Bud came and suggested that she might be at my Mom's home and took Rose and drove over there and that was where they found her. She still has the wanderlust at times I believe. Through Evelyn I met a very nice man, Bob Hoelzle ^{a Marine} who taught me much about history and other subjects. It was a shame that he had to suffer so much with illness. They were married five years when he passed away. Evelyn later married another wonderful man, Ed, and is now living the life of happy retirement in Mississippi. Evelyn has interested me in several areas, one of which is doll house miniatures. We seem to be of the same mind very often.

To sum it up, I must add that I feel very much blessed having had so many experiences, some pleasant and some sad. I'm sorry that Chris passed away at the age of fifty seven and didn't live to see all of the grandchildren and now great grandchildren and enjoy this wonderful family. I'm glad I am here and able to enjoy everyone. God has blessed us and one regret, however, is that Bob Grant is no longer with us. I feel badly at times about the divorces but glad that everyone is happy now.

NATURE'S GIFT - by Dena Haidinger

Today is a rather cloudy day but warm and humid. I am in a mood to do not one single solitary thing and so have decided to do just that. I am, instead, taking a day off to admire the beauties of nature. Did you ever hear a robin's call? Do you recognize the sound of different birds? We have a scrub pine tree right outside our kitchen window. A robin has decided on this tree for an excellent location for her home and raising her children. I was sitting very quietly here on the patio and suddenly noticed a robin not far from me. As I watched, the robin went a few hops further away although it seemed to be keeping an eye on me. Presently another robin joined the first and also spread out away from the tree at a different angle. I went in the house for a few minutes and as I was coming back out I suddenly saw a robin fly into the pine tree. It looked cautiously about then and then disappeared into the branches. As soon as I resumed my seat again, the robin flew away. I got up and looked, as by this time my curiosity had gotten the better of me. Sure enough, there far in among the branches, practically hidden from human eyes, was the nest. I took my chair and went out on the lawn as I certainly didn't like the idea of keeping Mrs. Robin from her home and family. I keep marveling every season at all the birds that I notice and I always love to see them come back. The sound of birds in the trees is especially musical. Even when at 4:30 in the morning they often wake me with their chatter, I can't get really put out about it. It would seem that all of the bird population must arise at that particular time of the morning. Or else they have a lot of business to dispose of before daylight. I think my world would be a great deal less enjoyable without the sound of birds. But how many times don't we take all of nature's beauty for granted. We should all take a few moments off to enjoy these pleasures which are ours to enjoy and all for free. Nature is wonderful.

This is a little poem that I enjoyed and would like to share with you.

ENJOY!!

PRESCRIPTION FOR A LAUGH Author Unknown

Just a line to say I'm living
That I'm not among the dead.
Though I'm getting more forgetful,
And more mixed up in the head.
For, sometimes can't remember
When I stand at foot of stair
If I must go up for something
Or if I've just come down from there.
And before the Fridg so often
My poor mind is filled with doubt.
Have I just put food away, or
Have I come to take some out?
And there's times when it's darkout
With my nightcap on my head,
I don't know if I'm retiring
Or just got up from bed.
So, if it's my turn to write you,
There's no need to get sore.
I may think that I have written
And don't want to be a bore.
So remember that I love you
And wish that you were here,
But now it's nearly mail time
So I must say "Good-bye Dear".
There I stood beside the mailbox,
With face so very red.
For instead of mailing you my letter,
I had opened it instead!!