

A Brief History of Wanda Frei's Early Life

I was born May 3, 1916 to Josephine Tobler and John Henry Graf. Neola, my older sister, died when she was one month lacking two years. Marvin was next, then Verle known as Si, then myself, Beulah, Marion, Glendon, and Elaine. Grandma (Barbara) was the mid-wife. I am not sure but think Dr. Woodbury and the McGregors were doctors for Mom for all except Elaine. Dr. Reichman was her doctor. We were all born in the old home across from the church except Elaine. She was born in the home that still stands. It was adobe and then stucco. She was the only one with brown eyes.

Dad taught school up to Gunlock, Springdale, Washington, Santa Clara, and the Indian Reservation. I was named after Wanda Bowler from Gunlock. When Dad taught the Indians, Mom, Dad, Marvin, and Verle lived in the house this side of the church. Mom was always such a worrier about everything. The Indians had glaucoma quite bad. Mom kept us inside, so Dad told me. I was the baby in the cradle. Mom went to check on me, and some Indian women had their hands up against the window looking in. She was so frightened. Our stay there didn't last too long.

I remember crossing the creek about ten times going to Gunlock. There were always cows around. Verle would say, "See the tow." I'd say "cow." I remember playing with Wanda Bowler, and all the hair on top of my head came out. Mom was afraid it wouldn't come back in. Maybe that's why I haven't much hair now.

Dad taught school in Santa Clara. The home as I remember had three rooms: kitchen, bedroom. We had a little black stove with four holes on the top and an oven. Wood floors on Saturday, Wednesday mop them and put straw down to keep them clean for Sunday. We had a bag(big?) carpet in the front room. When the wind blew, it would puff sort of like a balloon. The walls were white, white wash, so they called it. There were hooks on the walls where we hung clothes. Course we didn't have many. We had a trundle bed which folded down and slid under the other bed. We had our bath Saturday night and had to heat the water on the stove in pans. The stove had what they called a reservoir on the side which held water. It got a little warm. I remember as we got older, they would put blankets or sheets around chairs to make it more private.

I remember Grandpa Tobler taking me on one knee and LaVon on the other. He died when I was two and a half years old. I remember sitting out on the old porch on the east side of the house watching people go to pay respects out under a big cotton wood tree out front. Also the flu was so bad seems Mother told me they couldn't hold the funeral inside.

I was told some of Dad's students from Gunlock signed a petition to get him back there to teach. Dad started teaching with only three years of high school but took correspondence

and summer school. Dad was especially friendly and considerate of others.

We didn't have much money when we built the home that still stands. Dad took a loan out. It cost \$12 a month. Sometimes he had to let a payment be behind and try to pick it up later. He taught us to pay for things, not charge.

Helen Moody Reichman was my teacher in first grade.

Ruth Winsor and Ida Jolley 2nd

Clara Graf 3rd

Florence Miles 5-6th

Claude Frei 7-8th

Dad taught school in Washington. When I was in second grade, we moved over after Christmas. We lived in Willard Nisson's home across the street from the school. Vilate and Antone Nelson lived in two rooms also. It was after we came from Washington, Dad decided to build. We went to Springdale to get lumber for our home with a team and wagon. Dad took each one of us up. Verle and I, being two and a half years apart, seemed to get along pretty good, and Dad took the two of us. I remember stopping to drink water from the river. I asked Dad who didn't put the salt in the water. Dad never let me forget that.

We had a field way up out of Ivins. The family would go up and spend the day doing whatever we could to help Dad. I remember how hot that red sand was on our bare feet and the grass burrs. We had to go barefoot in the summer. I guess that's why I hate to go barefoot to this day. Si had ingrown toenails. They would buy him shoes. If they hurt his feet, I had to wear them. I didn't mind his black Sunday oxfords but sure hated the high ankle top shoes. I remember one pear pointed toes. I went along kicking everything I could to try to wear them out. I had three dresses, two every day and one Sunday. We had to change after school to keep our clothes nice. When we had to go to high school, Marvin being the oldest, went through without having to stay out. Dad would haul wood to pay for tuition. Verle stayed out a year and worked the next year. I stayed out and worked. I worked in homes. At first I got 3 dollars a week and then five. And I really thought I was rich when a fellow from Overton offered me ten dollars a week. I worked three weeks and came home with thirty dollars. I waved hair and got 10 to 25 cents a head. One Saturday for a Christmas dance I waved twenty-five heads and got three dollars. Gee, that was good. Beulah had to help mother with work while I did hair. I always had a crush on Landon. Quite a few times when he'd come to pick me up, he would have to wait for me to comb out somebody's hair. Oh, yes, I waved and combed it out after it was dry.

Mother sent Aunt Beulah to help Aunt Cecilia when she had a nervous breakdown and sent me to help Aunt Rhoda and Aunt Rosina Reber. Some Saturdays I went to both places. I was taught to be a better housekeeper than I am now. We had to clean house on Saturday, almost like regular house cleaning only airing out clothes from closets and bedding. We had to dust that mantle twice a day. I hated to do that. I said when I build, I am not going to build such a big mantle. Sure wish it was bigger than it is.