

It has been forty years since Grandma Frei died, yet her spirit and presence are with me and have been all these years. Grandma is a creative force behind me. I know she would like the fact that I take pictures and write poetry and travel. I think that she would have traveled with me or gone with ~~travel~~ groups because she always wanted to travel. She love her trip to Yellowstone. That was her spirit--learning, appreciating, and wanting to experience. When I went on the Reber trip to Switzerland, I thought that if Grandma Frei and Grandpa Graf would have been alive, they would have been on That trip.

How do I describe Grandma? To me she was beautiful. I think her beauty came from the love and affection she had for all of us. I could always count on a hug and a kiss from her. She loved her family plus all her brothers and their families. She had a pet name for all of us. Mine was Linda, Dennis was Denafer, and Phyllis was Philly. I remember her scrapbook. She cut out newspaper articles about her family and her brothers' family about any thing they did. Grandma was interested in every one. She was always good to Mandy and every one who came to the post office. I can't remember her losing her temper. She was sensitive and caring. One time I went up to see her, and she was crying. She'd just read about a woman who abused her baby and killed^x. She was really upset and couldn't understand how someone could hurt any one. She was affectionate to every one.

Grandma was a comfort to me. When I was about nine years old, I was afraid the world was going to come to an end because Aunt Rosina said her patriarchal blessing told her she would live to see the second coming of Christ, and she was old, so I figured we were pretty close to the last days. Grandma told me not to worry because no one knew what a day was to the Lord. It could be 6000 years, she told me. I was also worried about where I would go when I died since mom and dad weren't married in the temple at that time. I knew Dad would go with his family and Mom with hers, and there I'd be alone. Grandma told me that God loved children and that he loved me and that he would let me choose which family I would go with. She took away my fears. When I think of Grandma, I think of warmth and love and security.

What do I remember about Grandma? I remember her aproned warmth

and her in her kitchen. She fixed cracked wheat cereal for Grandpa for breakfast and served it with real cream. Phyllis and I had Cherios, and she would let us have a little thick cream which made the Cherios clump like a honey-comb. Like Grandma, that cream was my favorite part. I remember the morning family prayers when we all knelt by our chairs while Grandpa said the blessing. During World War II he always asked during the prayer to keep "our boys" safe. Grandma had three boys in the war. Her kitchen was warm, safe, and secure. She loved cooking, food, and every thing it took to prepare it. She was like the Little Red Hen. I remember her out in the pea patch picking peas with her apron over her dress and her big hat on. (I never did see grandma in pants.) Then she would shell the peas holding the pods in her apron. She used real cream and butter to cook the peas. (I still love peas.) I remember her apricot pies with a little sugar sprinkled on top. I remember helping to core apples with this apple corer she had. We stuck the apple on the end and turned a handle which turned the apples which peeled them for apple-sauce. She taught me how to cut up a chicken. Grandma didn't ~~go~~ to a grocery store for a packaged chicken. She caught the chicken, cut off its head with an ax, and then ^{dipped} the chicken in a bucket of hot water. I'd help her pluck the feathers off and watched her burn off the fine hairs left on the chicken. Sometimes when she cut open the chicken, we would find unlaidd eggs which I for some reason always found exciting. She'd save the bigger eggs to make noodles. She said she liked the wings and the neck best to eat, but it was probably so the rest of the family could have the legs and breast. She was unselfish. My favorite treat was her pecan roll which she hid somewhere in the cellar and then would bring out to give us a piece. She used fresh pecans and dipped the center in thick carmel. She also made ice cream by carmelizing the sugar and mixing it with junket and milk. She would freeze the trays of ice cream and then take them out and beat the chunks of ice cream with thick fresh cream. She loved fresh fruit and told me the bird-pecked peaches were the sweetest. I always wondered how the birds knew.

She was the most organized woman I know. She cooked breakfast, cleaned the house, washed and ironed, put out the first mail, had lunch, took a short nap, put out the second mail, and was always available when someone wanted his mail or to mail a package. She

was a fine musician. She sang with Grandpa Frei, accompanied Grandpa Graf when he sang, and played the piano in church and Sunday School. I thought she could do any thing. She loved music and encouraged me to play the piano. She let me use her piano to practice (which must have been awful for her) before we got ours. Then she'd ask me to play for Uncle Orval or Aunt Orilla when they visited. She was so proud of me.

Grandma loved literature. She had all kinds of books around when I was little. I loved the stories she read to me and the pictures in the book. My favorite was LITTLE BROWN COCOA. She brought me books for gifts and gave me AMERICAN GIRL MAGAZINE for Christmas one year. She always asked me about school, and when she found out I was a good speller, she told me she was too. She encouraged me to be a good student. When I was older, we would read the same books. She gave me the Irving Stone series about Lincoln, Jackson, and Fremont after she finished reading them. Then we would talk about them and share our "book" experiences." I think she helped instill in me my love for literature and reading. She would be so pleased to know I am an English teacher.

I remember Grandma Frei and Grandpa Graf picking strawberries in Hurricane. (I found a dollar in the patch--which I will never forget.) I remember the time she got an ugly Tick embedded in her back. I remember the little ring she gave me for my birthday, her out in her rose garden and on the step calling to me and Phyllis to come in. I remember her in the morning waking me and Phyllis almost singing, "Philly, time to get up. I will never forget some advice she gave me. She told me one time, "Always give a Christmas gift even if it costs only fifty cents." I remember her giving me an egg to take to the store to trade for candy.

She was a smart, well-educated woman. She was way ahead of her time. She was^a business woman who ran the post office and had her own money. She was thrifty, yet giving. She was her own person. She voted Republican and Grandpa, Democrat. Grandpa said, "A lot of good it did for them to vote. They just canceled each other out." She was a "modern woman" who took care of her house, ran a business, was active in church and the community, and took care of her family. It seemed to me that she did every thing with ease; it never seemed too much for her.

Grandpa Frei told me one time that she was a really beautiful girl. He said she was a fine horsewoman, really intelligent, and well-educated. She was interested in every thing. I think it was Grandma's observation of the world--her love of Tamarcks and blossoms in the spring or a golden sunset--the joy in her face when she saw each one of us and her warmth that I remember most. She has been my inspiration. I appreciate and treasure her legacy of culture, affection, and love.

Jutta