

Random Thoughts

Alvin Clinton "Buddy" Walker, Jr.

Alvin Clinton Walker

- My dad called my mother "Sweet Pea."
- Us kids really thought this was funny.
- My dad loved to fish and hunt. When Mac and I got out of school, late in the afternoon, he would come looking for us to come carry the bag, (croaker sack) to put the mullet in. We would hide or run off; this was hard work for 8-12 year-old kids as we would bog up to our knees in the stinking muck. Plus, when we got home, we had to scale them not 1 time, not 2 times, but maybe 3 times to satisfy dad.
- Then along came Dean, daddy's fishing pal. When he was 13 or 14 years old he could spread (throw) a cast net better than daddy. None of us ever got into hunting.

Eunice Hamilton Walker

- My mother was not a good housekeeper, but she made up for it in the cooking and laundry department.
- About the laundry, she made her own lye soap. She boiled our dungarees and beat them with a sawed-off mop handle. She would rub them on a wash board until all the dirt was out.
- I asked my mother one time why they called our neighbor "Tater Pie" Strickland and her reply was I guess he likes "tater pies." Makes sense.
- She made the best chocolate cake in the world, plain and simple. This reminds me of our neighbor and friend that lived across the road from us for so many years...
- I also remember my mother looking out the window of our house and saying, "here comes Harry Hurst." He was walking toward the house clapping his hands and singing, I'll Fly Away Ole Glory, I'll Fly Away etc. My mother really enjoyed Harry.

Estelle Walker Coker Collins

- She was famous for her butterscotch and coconut cakes. Most people preferred the butterscotch, but my favorite was always the coconut cake. It was to die for, 6 layers in each cake.
- She would start early in the morning to make 4-5 cakes. If you walked into her kitchen while she was preparing the cakes, what a zoo. Eggs, flour, etc. everywhere, kitchen table, counter top. But what a beautiful piece of art when completed. She had help from her friend Wessie Kearns.

Grandpa J. J. P. Hamilton

- He was a "County Commissioner" for many years in Indian River County.
- He loved a good cigar and a nip. Maybe that is where I got my nipping from. I do like to have a nip ever now and then.
- My grandpa loved "off the wall" automobiles. I remember a maroon Hudson, but most of all, I remember the first Dodge, with big ole "fish tail" fenders, light green with "push button" gears.
- We would look down Old Dixie Highway and see traffic backed up for miles and miles and J.J.P. leading the pack. Some people would say "here comes J.J.P., the slowest driver I ever knew."

Catheads (Biscuits)

- I remember my mother and Aunt Edna (Armstrong Hamilton) making biscuits when we were young. My mother's biscuits were crusty on the top and bottom and Aunt Edna's were soft on the top and bottom. Two different textures, but one no better than the other.

Pentecostal Church

- On Wednesday and Sunday nights I would walk a block or so to the Pentecostal Church to hear the Gospel Singing. The singers were Cornelia Stevens, Wessie Kearns, Estelle Coker Collins and others. They would get into rhythm by clapping their hands and stomping their feet and singing "Prayer Bells of Heaven" and many other gospel songs. No music instruments required.

Guther Collins

- Guther Collins was our neighbor across the road. He grew watermelons and the names I remember was Cannon Ball, Congos and Charleston Grey. Mac and I would go out into the field with him, spread sodium over the land to help the melons grow faster. When they were ready for market we would go to the fields, gather the watermelons, and take them to Broward McCuller's shed. Every now and then we would accidently drop one and enjoy the "heart" of the melon. Most of the melons were sold to trucks right from the shed. Sometimes we would ride up and down the streets of Gifford hollering watermelons, watermelons, watermelons, while riding on the back of his old black Dodge truck.

Sally Walker Fendley

- Aunt Sally, my dad's sister, would cut our hair. I remember her using hair clippers that were not electric. They pulled our hair as well as cutting it. She made us shirts from "flour sacks" or feed bags. She would make a pattern from old newspapers and would sew the shirts on an old Singer sewing machine. She could make that treadle Singer Sewing Machine go as fast as an electric one.

Willie Mae Sheffield Hamilton

- Granny, granny, granny, don't call me granny (grannies delivered babies) per my step grandma Willie Mae. She was like a real grandma to me. I would stay at her and grandpa's place when he had "County Commissioner's" duties to do. When grandpa would go to Tallahassee on county business, grandma would run the grocery store and I would stay with her. Aunt Lydia Mathis (Hamilton) would call on Saturday for her grocery order and we would deliver it to her on Saturday night. Upon returning home she would lock the door, look under the bed before turning in for the night. She would also look behind all the doors.
- We would go to grandpa and grandmas for Christmas Dinner. Grandma was the best cook in the world. We could always find a baked cold "sweet potato" pie on the kitchen table. (The purpose for this, I do not know).

- Grandma had a stroke later in life. Preacher Miller came to see her and he made the remark that he would like to make a braided rug out of my grandpa's collection of ties that was hanging on the hangers. (there were approximately 200-300 of them) My grandma looked at him and said "Do you want Mr. Hamilton to have a stroke too"?

More To Come

By: Buddy Walker

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