

**Margaret Ann-Black- Musbach**  
**6th child of William and Mary Lousia Black**  
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As I was thinking about what I would like to share as some Memories I decided to write about our Florida trips and Winters, When Daddy had his heart attacks and needed to go to a warmer climate during the winter month. They started going to Florida after the 2nd World War in the late 40's.

The first year they went was after Georgia Kay was well enough to go. She had a ruptured appendix in January of 1945 and was a very sick little girl. They were gone about 3 months. Going with them was Grandma Vansyckle and Georgia. They hauled a 27 foot house trailer pulled by a 194- Chevie car. It took 5 days to travel,[ because the roads were not the express of today]

They would pull off and Mamma would fix lunch in the trailer. They stayed at gas stations or any place they could pull off the road for the night. There were very few trailer parks as we know them today. They found a trailer park on the Gulf of Mexico side of Florida on an Island called Anna Marie off the coast near Bradenton, Florida. They also spent some of the first winter at Avon Park. Which is in central Florida. I guess Daddy wanted to see if he liked it better in central Florida or on the water. Apparently he liked the Gulf the best for that is where they return in the winter from then on. Mackie and I stayed at home with Ada and Bun that first winter.

The next winter we went in the month of November and didn't come home until the month of April. They took all of us younger children. Mackie, Georgia Kaye and I. We went to school on the Island. That first year we enjoyed a lot of new things swimming in the Gulf [Which most Florida Crackers thought we were nuts, water was too cold for them] and traveling some on the weekends, Because we had to go to school we couldn't do a lot of things that just vacationers could do.

It is also important to understand that this trailer had one bedroom in it and no bathroom or showers. We all had to use the park facilities and use the pot at night which Daddy carried to the public restroom every morning. Sleeping arrangement was also very crowded. Georgia and I slept on a pull out couch with Mackie on a board across the foot on the stands either side of couch on which and air mattress was placed. He said it leaked and was generally sleeping on the board by morning. Poor Mac.

That winter was our first Christmas without snow. Mamma tried to make a tree by tying Austrian Pine bows to the stove pipe in the corner of the trailer which we definitely didn't need for heat. It sure was strange but we made the best of it.

In Florida was my first taste of separation of black people and white people. In Florida it was still the time when on buses the black people sat the back and the white in front. Black people had separate restrooms and were not allowed to enter the same

entrance as the white people of public buildings. I found this very Strange and felt it so unfair as in Michigan this was not taking place.

Mother worked that winter at the hotel of the trailer park where we stayed it was strange to have her work for someone else other than our own market.

That spring on our way home we were going by way of Winchester, KY as the Carter's lived there [Scottish friends of Daddy's]

On the way, just before we got to Burea KY we were in a car accident. Momma was driving and Georgia was sitting on Daddy's lap. Mackie and I were in the back seat. We were coming down out of the mountains on a one way bridge. We had almost reached the other side, when a car driven By a man who had been drinking hit us head on and pushed back into the trailer half way across the bridge. Daddy braced his feet so hold Georgia from going through the windshield and re-injured his back. The rest of us just had minor injuries. We had to spend a few extra days in Kentucky until they could get the trailer ready to travel again. Mackie and I had a great time at the Carters. They lived on a beautiful horse farm. What a wonderful treat to be staying in this beautiful, "Southern Home."

The outcome of this accident was Daddy was never able to be without a very heavy brace on his back that was very uncomfortable. It was decided that because of the accident Daddy should have a law suit against the driver of the car that hit us. Due to the fact that the accident was in Kentucky and we were living in Michigan and the driver of the other car from South Carolina it would be necessary to go to South Carolina in order to place a damage suit against this man. Mom and Daddy and our Lawyer went there for the jury court. While the case was in process Daddy's lawyer ask him if he would show the Jury the brace he would have to wear the rest of his life. In the process of unfastening his pants and getting his shirt out of the way he lost hold of his pants and they dropped to the floor. The one arm judge and his lawyer rushed to his assistance. When the case was over and Daddy had won the judge told him, Bill you won your suit but you Damm near lost your pants. This was a family story and joke for many years.

The next two winters Georgia and I were the ones who traveled with the folks to Florida. We had a lot of fun but I hated going to school down there as we were damn Yankees at that time. Some of the interesting things that I remember while in Florida was when we would go to Tampa and meet the Banana boats we would buy big stalks of bananas and then hang them from a tree next to the trailer so everyone in the park enjoyed them I think Daddy paid 1.00 each.

One winter we went to Tarpon Springs going out on a sponge boat watching the sponge divers collect sponges to sell. We always had all the fresh oranges and grapefruit. One of our friends, the Anderson had a grove which we enjoyed.

We also went up Tampa to the Florida State Fair which was a real treat. Agriculture in the States was a lot different from Michigan. They had a great parade with many floats.

The last winter I spent in Florida, Mary Lou and Dick had moved to Virginia we came

home by the way to visit. We brought an elderly woman home with us who lived in East Lansing and didn't drive anymore. When we came through the mountains she would hang on for dear life to one of Georgia dolls. My dad sure did tease her about that.

So by the time I was going into high school the last winter Daddy was alive I begged to stay in Michigan. It was better for school but I missed my folks and especially Georgia Kaye.

The last winter Mom and Dad went to Florida, they only took Georgia Kaye and that following summer Daddy died of a heart attack in August.

Before Daddy died that summer when he came home from Florida he said Margaret Ann we have all these ponies out here and nobody is riding them, I think we could make some extra spending money if you would start a pony ring. What fun we had we used the small pasture behind the little house. We rigged up a corral where only people who were riding were aloud. Before a month was over we had a small petting ZOO also. We were able to buy a swing set and picnic table for people to use while they were waiting. It didn't take long before the word was out and we were giving riding lessons as well. Families stood in line for their turns. When Daddy died there was an article in the State Journal saying Mr. Pony Man is dead. Children just loved Daddy he had a special way to make anyone feel important.

I remember all the tricks he would play on people and then they would find a way to get even. Uncle Dave, the Gilmour boys were always after each other. As a kid I always looked forward to family gatherings as we never knew what to expect.

I hope you have enjoyed a little time reading some of my growing up memories.