

I, Kathryn Irene Buckwalter, was born January 19, 1932 in Upper Leacock Township in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania the fourth child and third daughter of Freeland Neff and Florence Huber Buckwalter. At the farmhouse it was a cold snowy day as it was most birthdays all my life.

My early memories are few. I remember riding in Grandpa Huber's old car which I suppose was his Willy's which he had many years. A Sunday morning at Stumptown Church somehow I became separated from Mother and I became very anxious. I do recall going to Sunday School there and my teacher Fannie Herr. The S.S. paper "Beams of Light" was important.

I started school when I was over 6 and 1/2 years old at Stormstown (one-roomed) School near the Stoltzfus Quarry walking there with sister Marian and the Stoltzfus and Horst neighbors. Mr. Duffy was my first grade teacher; Miss Geisler was my teacher for second grade. There were 8 grades in the school and some of the grades had small classes. I remember older students going to the Glick farm with a pail to bring drinking water to the school. There were outdoor toilets and sometimes we played "ooly-over" the toilet with a ball. We also played prisoner's base.

For third grade I went to Leola to the Upper Leacock Elementary School so that Ellen, Marian and I would all be at the same school. There Miss Eshelman was my teacher. I needed to get used to a larger class of students, perhaps 20. I continued in this school building for junior and senior high. There was no school bus service from our neighborhood so we went by car driven by Pop or one of us when we were old enough to drive. Sometimes when it was not suitable for Pop to pick us up, we walked the 1 and 9/10 miles home where there were always chores waiting for us to do.

On our 50-acre farm there were many things for us to do. In the outdoors there was hop-scotch, a rope swing on the tree, paw-paw tree to climb, creek to wade, playing on the barn floor, and an express wagon. Indoors there were board games, attics to explore, and a few books to read. I remember going on Saturday afternoon to the neighbors, Horst's, to play with Minerva. A neighbor, Ruth Kling, and I would ride bike together Sunday afternoons sometimes for many miles. Probably we were 11 - 13 years old. I have fond memories of sledding when there was snow. Sometimes

we sled down the “hill” between the barn and milkhouse or we would go down the big hill on the back road.

In the summer we had a big garden and I helped to plant onions, then pulled weeds and helped with harvesting vegetables. We shelled peas, cleaned beans and husked corn in our screened back porch. In the fields I picked up potatoes, topped and suckered tobacco, rode horses to pick up hay and to put the hay in the mow in the barn with a hay hook. To cultivate the garden I lead the horse down the rows while Pop guided the harrow. Needless to say, I had to beware of my toes. I remember helping put the washed clothes through the ringer and hanging them on the line. Then the washer was emptied bucket by bucket and the soiled water dumped outside.

There were also barn chores. I learned to milk a Guernsey cow(one of 18) by hand when I was perhaps 11 yrs. old. Other cows we had were Holsteins. Calves needed to be fed by hand teaching them to drink milk from a pail. The cats were also there looking for a handout. When we got a milking machine we learned how to put milkers on the cows and take them off. The milk was carried to the milk house in a bucket, poured into a strainer which was over a milk can. When the milk can was full it was put into a cooler which was in the milk house. All of these buckets, strainers, and milkers needed to be washed daily which was a job I learned to do. Marian and I would shell corn in the manual corn sheller. One would put the field corn on the cob in the chute and the other one would turn the handle to remove the kernels from the cob. The corn was used to feed the chickens.

Neighbor men and sons helped each other with hay making, wheat threshing, and silo filling. That was a big day when it took place on our farm. Mother had to cook a big meal for all the men. I suppose I needed to help unless I was out riding the horse for hay making. The last two horses we had were Bob and Scott. They were very gentle and I liked to ride them when needed for a farm chore. I do not remember when we did get a tractor but in time I did learn to drive it.

In the morning before I went to school, when Marian had a job, I helped milk the cows, cleaned the milk buckets, etc., packed my lunch and finally ate breakfast and changed clothes before zipping off to school. In the summertime I also feed the chickens but Mother did that when I went to school.

The farm house had running water in the kitchen and washhouse but we did not have a bathroom. We took “sponge” baths in our bedrooms with small tubs of

water once a week maybe sometimes more. The outhouse was a cold place in winter and so dark at night! We had a (pipeless) coal furnace-just one big register and it was great to stand on that to get warm. There was a big wooden rack that mother would stand around the register to dry clothes when it was too cold to hang them outside. There was a cook stove in the kitchen that we cooked on in the winter. (Also, there was an electric cook stove for summer). Wood or coal was burned for cooking and kept the kitchen warm. Behind the stove was a water tank that was somehow connected to the stove so we could have hot water. I remember when telephone lines were run on the back road to our farm (also to the Horst farm). We were on a party line which meant that we shared the line with some neighbors. Each party had a different ring. Amish neighbors would come in to use the phone for perhaps a doctor or to order something.

Mother's parents (Elam and Mary Huber) lived in Witmer in a double farmhouse. The farmer and wife lived in the other half. I stayed with my grandparents overnight on special occasions. I liked to walk on the sidewalk and especially toward the railroad tracks where I could see the trains go by. Grandma wove baskets and when I was old enough wanted to learn. I did make one small basket. Grandma had cancer and died when I was almost 12 yrs. So that ended the weaving lessons, but the desire stayed with me. A few years later Grandpap married Fannie Wenger.

Our family went to Stumptown Church and as I wrote before, I do remember going to Sunday School there. When I was about 8 yrs. old, services were started near our farm by Mennonites in a building vacated by the Brethren. It was called

Carpenter's. After much discussion, our family started to attend services there. I remember Ellen being my Sunday teacher. There were several Wenger families attending there so besides Ruth Kling, my friends were Ruth, Bertha, and Anna Ruth Wenger. We attended a mid-week prayer meeting, but there were no activities for youth. After our move to Bareville, we did go to Groffdale sometimes.

My parents sold the farm in 1948. By then Leon was married to Miriam Bair and held a job at B.Z. Mellingers. Ellen was married to John Mumma and they moved to E-town area. My parents bought property in the east end of Bareville from Lester Hoover. There was an apartment where Leon and Miriam lived. The house had just one bath which had to be shared. They started a roadside market there. I painted the "BUCKWALTER'S MARKET" sign for the small building we had. In the acreage behind the barn a large garden was planted. Hens were in the barn to provide eggs to sell.

Every year we were invited to Uncle Isaac Buckwalter's for Thanksgiving dinner at Watson Ave. in Lancaster. Aunt Mabel would cook a delicious dinner for us. Isaac was my father's only sibling and since my mother's one sibling died in early childhood, I had just one uncle and aunt. I had three Buckwalter cousins, Dick, Bonnie(Thelma) and Jack(John). I remember at least two times staying with Aunt Mable overnight and we would go to Media Heights for swimming one day and another day to see a movie. That was different. Uncle Isaac was with Lancaster news papers for 50 years and later Jack followed his footprints.

In high school I took the commercial course, probably because that is what Ellen and Marian did. I did not like shorthand and did fail that at the end of school. I am glad I learned to type. Sometimes I wonder what my future would have been if I would have taken the academic course. I went with the senior class on our class trip to Washington, D.C. . We stayed in a hotel 2 nights and did lots of sightseeing. Mr. Ressel (principal) and I think Miss Kendig (English teacher) were our chaperons. I graduated May 28, 1950. That summer I helped with the roadside stand selling vegetables and fruit. In September I took a general office job at New Holland Company in the Cost Accounting Dept.

My social life was "going on" during this time. John and I started dating in December of 1948, right before Christmas. Marian and Earl took me with them to a Sunday eve. service at Mellinger's. After the service John asked to take me home. I remember going Christmas caroling with him and the Mellinger's Youth. We had dates, at first just Sunday evenings, when we would go to church as was the dating custom of that time. After dating awhile, we also dated Saturday eve. (I think I needed my Mother's okay.) Often we would go to the Vine St. Mennonite Church in Lancaster where there were Sat. Eve. Services. Sometimes we 'double-dated' with friends. Always there were refreshments served. We never ate "out".

Many times John would invite me to go with him to activities of Mellinger's MYF. When he began the Mellinger's MYF male quartet with Harold Rohrer, Paul Landis and Clyde Witmer, many invitations came to them to sing in a variety of places. And later they sang at many weddings.

In May, 1950 one outstanding invite for the quartet came from Don Jacobs (and Anna Ruth) who asked the quartet to go on a weekend trip to Northern Pa. The girlfriends, Erma Sensenig, Ann Hershey, and I, were also invited. (Clyde was not dating). We went to the Steam Valley area in Tioga Co., north of Trout Run. Saturday afternoon we visited homes in that community inviting them to a Sunday morning service at the closed Steam Valley Church and also told about a VBS that would be held in the summer. That evening we drove west into Bradford County

and into Sullivan Co. That was our first time at Shunk (?!) Our motel (or was it cabins?) was at Steam Valley--2 rooms, guys with Don and us girls with Anna Ruth. There was also a restaurant there. Wow! we got to eat "out". On Sunday morning a lady with her 5 children came to the service. Even to this day I remember Don telling the Bible story of Joseph. Sorry to say, the church at Steam Valley never was opened. However, my love for the mountains and countryside evolved.

For two summers 1949-50 I taught Summer Bible School at Palo Alto at Pottsville. It was held at a children's home. One year we stayed at the home of Lester Hoover (pastor) and the other summer at the bookstore, second floor, in Pottsville. In 1950 and into 1951 John traveled by train each Sunday morning to teach Sunday School at Fox Street Church in New York City. Then our Sunday evening dates started later than usual as I waited for his return from NYC.

John and I were married October 13, 1951 at my home in Bareville by Bishop Mahlon Witmer with family and a few friends in attendance. Uncle Irvin Kreider made a few remarks. John's quartet sang; Dick Winey substituted for John. Our reception was held at Witmer Fire Hall for about 150 guests. Later that day we left on our honeymoon, first going to New York City and then headed to Niagara Falls. We were traveling for a week, spending less than \$100. We took some food along to eat in our cabin/motel for our evening meal.

We lived with John's parents until our home was ready at Gordonville where John planned to work for Jake Herr on the poultry farm. Not until March did we move into a second floor apartment in a house owned by Jake. It was comfortable though we had to carry our drinking water from the first floor laundry room. Of course, in the summer the second floor was hot. John helped care for the broilers in the big chicken houses.

Our first child, Jean Yvonne, was born June 19, 1952. She was about a month early for my due date was July 11. She weighed just 5 lb.4oz., but gained weight early on. Her hair grew very slowly and around a year old the curly ringlets starting growing. My next pregnancy came soon and I went into labor at 7 months. Our son did not survive. We named him, Glenn and there was a graveside service in Mellinger's Cemetery. I was not able to attend. John's Mother cared for Jean until I was able to lift her.

About a year later we moved from the 2nd floor apartment to half a double house on the other side of Gordonville. John continued to work for Jake Herr and bought a motorized bike to ride to the chicken houses to work. In the other side of the house a handicapped young woman lived who we made friends with. The Gordonville Fire Hall was back of our house and John soon was volunteer there. Our dog, Susie, was a constant companion of Jean. Our son, John Harold, was born April 19, 1955.

We continued to worship at Mellinger's. We related to MYF group which now had young adults as members. On two occasions we traveled to Northern Pa. with a group to the Elkland area in Tioga Co. Saturday afternoon we handed out "The Way" throughout town and in the evening had a gospel service. The response was slim. We stayed in homes overnight. On our return home on Sunday we attended the Morris Run Mennonite church.

With this experience we felt called to move to an area where we could be involved in a church plant. Since we had experiences in Northern Pa., we looked into the needs at Morris Run Church. The mountains and rural country were also a draw to us. In a trip north we found a property that we could rent, so we moved there in July 1956. We loaded our belongings on Ralph Graham's truck and unloaded them 170 miles north at Cedar Ledge near Canton along Rt. 14 in the southwest corner of Bradford County. At this moving Jean was 4 years old and Johnny was 16 months. We started driving over the mountain to Morris Run and became involved in the Church and community.

We had a large flock of laying hens and sold eggs. John did some work for GLF (mill and farm store) just across the road from us. Needing more income John took a job at the valve factory in Canton. The railroad track crossed the road right below us and the train traveled daily. In the fall when it was dry, the sparks from the engine would ignite the grass across the road. We put the fires out many times. After a year there, the homeowners wanted to again live in the house so we again searched for a place to live.

In our search we found a house for sale that the owner agreed to rent to us. It was along Rt. 414 east of Canton near West Leroy. So we moved again in July, 1957. John was laid off at the valve factory so he drove beyond Ogdensburg to work on the farm for Dave Weaver. Long days! He did find some work nearby--John put electrical wiring into a new house that Jim Wilcox had built, a short way up the road. Jean started kindergarten attending in the afternoon. A neighbor boy also went, so we took turns taking them at noon and then they would come home on the school bus. We would pick up Mable Brown and take her to church with us. Because we wanted

to be closer to Canton, we were active in looking for property to purchase. In August, 1958 we moved again! We became home owners of a farmette north of Canton, a good stone's throw off Rt. 14. After moving 3 times in 3 years, it was good to have our own place and stay put for 40 years!

We did some remodeling on the house, painted, papered, etc. John was again working at the Valve. We had a chicken house with 1000 layer hens. So while John was at work, I gathered the eggs. Also, washed and graded them. Neighbors started buying from us and I delivered some downtown. The rest we shipped to New York City. We plowed and planted a big garden. I did lots of canning and freezing. We had beautiful Autumn scenery. Winters were cold and snowy. Our driveway drifted during the snow storms so John "built" a snow plow for the Farmall A. Temperatures would go as low as minus 20 degrees.

In 1963 John was employed at the Canton GLF(Grange League Federation) as Installation and Repair Man. He did electrical work, plumbing, refrigeration, and worked on dairy and barn equipment. He attended many GLF workshops to learn more. That same year on July 15 Kay Marie was born at Troy Hospital. Jean and Johnny were delighted with a little sister.

There were heartaches that year. Johnny had many headaches and started seeing double. We were referred to a specialist at Guthrie Clinic (Robert Packer Hospital) in Sayre, Pa. On October 13 we were told that Johnnie had a brain tumor and needed surgery which took place two days later; the tumor was malignant. I went most days to see him. Neighbors or a friend kindly provided transportation for either John or I so we could be together with Johnny in the evening. We were so grateful for John's Mother who came to stay with Jean and Kay. We brought Johnny home in December after two more surgeries. I had a busy winter and spring caring for Johnny and Baby Kay. After being told there was nothing more to do to help Johnnie, we took him to Troy Hospital when it was more than I could do to care for him. At this time he had pneumonia; he took his last breath early

May 20. The kindnesses of friends and neighbors were outstanding. We had to learn to trust the Lord and know He makes no mistakes.

There were many adjustments to make, but life must go on. We continued our involvement at Morris Run in Sunday School, Youth Meetings, Summer B.S. and other church life. We became close to our neighbors especially, Lynn and Sharon May and Elwin and Beulah Roberts. We enjoyed going to State Parks for hiking, picnics, and swimming.

We enjoyed having family and friends visit us. On occasion we drove the 3-4 hours to visit in Lancaster Co. The children enjoyed spending a night or two with grandparents or cousins. However, it was always a big decision who to visit on our trips there. Neighbor Lynn May was so good at caring for our chicken chores while we were away.

We became very close to those who attended Morris Run Mennonite Church: Melvin and Erma Kauffmans (4 children), Norma Garber, Dave and Esther Weaver (8 children), Bob and Renie Miller (5 children), Ralph and Lois Bender (6 children), Ed and Anna Wiand (5 children). Many others we learned to enjoy from the town of Morris Run and surrounding areas. We drove many, many miles to go to church, visit friends, and for shopping.

In 1965 Will, 7 years old, became part of our family, first as a foster child and then by adoption at age ten. Our family dynamics changed. Will was a very active youngster with many things to learn.

Jean graduated from Canton High School in 1970 and in the fall became a student at Eastern Mennonite College to become a teacher which was her desire since she went to kindergarten. In 1974 she was employed to teach at Kraybill's Mennonite School near Mount Joy. Will graduated in 1976 and got a job working at a Box and Paper Co. in Elmira, N.Y. Kay graduated in 1981 and went to Messiah College for two years. Her first job was at Plain and Fancy Bake Shop near Bird-in-Hand.

In 1977 we sold the laying hens. So in 1981 when our nest was empty, I took a job with the Bradford-Tioga Head Start Program as Family Service Aide with the Canton Center; working there 8 yrs. I learned to know many young families in town and learned a little about how the low income people function. Also during my Head Start employment I helped Barb Palmer and Edna Landon start the Canton Food Pantry and was a provider there for 10 years. I then worked part-time for the New Life Bookstore for about 8 years; Mertie Shedden was the owner.

After Agway John took a job with a Veal Co. working mostly in the office. When he retired at 65 yr. he studied for a real estate license and worked at that for about 3 yrs.

Seeing the empty church in Canton started conversation among some Mennonites about planting a church. So in the early 80's a group gathered and then bought the

Canton United Methodist Church. It was so good to attend a church 3 miles from home after driving 18 miles for many years. I remember that George and Marie Myers were enthusiastic about the new group. Melvin Kauffman was our bishop and Doug Graybill came from Wheelerville Church to be our Pastor. It was good to have persons attending from Canton and the area.

Will married Tina Burdick in 1979 in Horseheads, N.Y. June 25, 1988 Jean was married to Jim Dillner at the Worship Center. Kay married Silvanus Martin at the New Hollande Mennonite Church on October 22, 1988. Sadly Will divorced Tina in Jan. 1988.

In the late 80's baskets became very popular and I again remembered my desire to sometime weave baskets as I remembered my Grandma Huber made baskets. I bought a kit and remembered a few things I learned when I was a child at Grandma's. After a few kits, I took a class (8weeks) on basket weaving at Wellsboro by the Williamsport Community College. How I enjoyed it! I started making many different designs; gave them as gifts and friends bought them. I went to some crafts sales at Canton to sell baskets. After leaving my job at Head Start and then the Bookstore, I started to weave one or two baskets each week. Peterson's Gift Shop near Troy took my baskets on consignment and sold many for me.

My grandchildren - Will and Tina had two children, Brianne born April 15, 1980 and Jeremy born August 23, 1984. Jean and Jim's children are Jessica, Jan. 9, 1991 and Jonathan, Sept. 27, 1993. Kay and Silvanus have 2 daughters, Kamarie born Oct. 22, 1993 and Rosena born Jan. 29 1996. It was so interesting to watch them grow up.

Because we wanted to be near our daughters as we grew older (and also it was good to be near the grandchildren: Will's had already grown up), in 1999 we began considering moving to Lancaster Co. After looking at many houses, in May we found one we liked in Leola (Forest Hill Development). Moved there in August. Our farmette did not sell until September. There were many adjustments to be made as we settled back in THE county.

Silvanus used his boss's truck to move us; loaded up on a Friday in Bradford County and unloaded with lots of help on Pleasant Valley Dr. In Leola on Saturday. John was not feeling well and helped very little. When the job was finished, Fannie talked John into going to the ER (Lancaster Osteopathic) to get checked out. There he was diagnosed as having had a heart attack and was admitted to the hospital. Several days later he had a stent implanted and was hospitalized for a few more days. I had

an accident and totaled the car one day while I was on the way to visit John at the hospital. Had just a couple scrapes from the air bag.

When John returned home we began "settling in". We liked our house and also the community. Late fall we enjoyed a couple days at Ocean City, Maryland. The wind was cold as we walked the boardwalk. The year 1999 left us without a hitch and we welcomed the year 2000 without difficulty.

It was good to be near daughters and their families. However, we were much further away from Will and his family which was something I always regretted.

Always thought we could be connected by phone or e-mail but in later years that did not work. I feel sad because of our inability to continue a close relationship with them.

One big decision we had was where to worship, which church do we want to go to.

We visited many in the next few months. I felt that Mellinger Mennonite was too large but John could have settled in there. In May 2000 we visited Witmer Heights MC, a small congregation near Smoketown. We became members there in 2001.

In January 2000 I began volunteering at the Ten Thousand Villages Store at Ephrata. This was on my "list of things to do" because I had helped at their Christmas store at the Arnot Mall in Big Flats, N.Y. and became interested in this idea of selling the crafts from other countries. Enjoyed the work with the many different products, unpacking the orders shipped to the store, working with customers, working the cash register (until it became too technical for me) and relating to the many different staff persons. (John and I would go together to Ephrata as John volunteered at the Ephrata Furniture Reuzit Store). Then after 14 years I began to wonder about other volunteer jobs that I possibly could do.

About that time the Conestoga Valley Christian Community Services (sponsored by the Ministerium) began operating a Clothing and Food Bank. We checked it out at an Open House. In time I read about the need of volunteers. Since I had experience with a food pantry, I arranged to try volunteering at the Food Bank. At this writing, I have been working weekly 3-5 hrs. for almost 3 years. I help clients get their food and help keep the shelves stocked from which they choose the food items needed.

John and both enjoy working outdoors with lawn, flower beds, shrubs, etc. Our riding mower came with us from Canton so John likes that job. The big oak tree in the back yard gives us great shade but also gives us much work in the fall when leaves need to be cleaned up. Our small garden was discontinued when too much shade hindered good production. Fresh vegetables are readily available in the Leola area where there are several farm stands selling produce.

How we enjoyed the times when we would go north to visit friends and also to see Will when he moved to Wellsboro area. Our overnight stays were with different friends in different areas. Our stays at the Carriage House at the Mt. Zion Retreat Center (Roaring Branch) brought back memories of our involvement there. How I enjoyed seeing the mountains! A most memorable time was a week's long visit in 2014 when we visited friends and drove country roads to bring back memories. On most visits we stopped to see ex-neighbor Sharon May and see the changes in our old neighborhood. Most notably, the Robert's dairy barn had been destroyed by fire and a natural gas well drilled in the field above the house.

John continues in good health. I fought high blood pressure for a couple years. One Saturday morning, July, 2015, I experienced a bout with atrial fibrillation and was hospitalized. I left the hospital with a pacemaker implanted because of bradycardia (slow heart rate). Medication keeps my blood pressure under control.

At this time of writing, age has brought a slower pace to life. We are constantly thankful to God that our health enables us to stay in our home on Pleasant Valley Dr. Even with this slower pace life is fulfilling and enjoyable.