

Patsy Johnston Vernon

Where did the time go? It had to be only yesterday, that we were young and so anxious to find all that life had to offer.

Actually, most of the past 50 years has been very good to me. I have been blessed with good health and a wonderful loving family. I married my high school sweetheart, Dean Vernon (class of 1954), in October 1957. We immediately left Tucumcari looking for greener pastures. We lived in Grants, New Mexico, for seven months. The pastures were sure not green there. I hated that place. We then moved to Lubbock, Texas. Dean worked for the Santa Fe Railroad and attended Lubbock Barber College. I checked groceries at Piggly Wiggly. Our first child, Dean Vernon Jr. was born there in 1958.

In 1959 we moved to Carlsbad, New Mexico. I guess the pastures were greener in Carlsbad, since I am still here. Dean started Barbering and I became a stay at home Mom. In 1960 we added child number two, a daughter, Kristie Lynette. Thinking that our family was complete, we were quite surprised when almost ten years later in 1969, we were blessed with child number three, daughter, Sonja Jo.

I have had various jobs over the years. Besides checking groceries, I have worked as a Bookkeeper, and did Civil Service and Military testing for the U.S. Commerce Dept. My most rewarding job was being a wife and mother. My life has always been centered round Dean, our children and their activities.

Family vacations were always important, usually ending up at some amusement park. We have traveled to many places in the U.S. and in Germany and Austria in Europe. I love to travel and hope one day to visit Scotland and Ireland.

I have had a lot of hobbies over the years. I love gardening, arts and crafts, reading, studying Bible eschatology and prophecy, but genealogy is my passion. I have had this hobby for well over 40 years. I love to search for records in musty old Court Houses, National Archives and traipsing through old cemeteries. I have traced Dean's family back to 1066 in Normandy, France, to William the Conqueror and the Battle of Hastings. History was never my favorite subject in school, but when you connect family to historic events it becomes more interesting. I got my first computer in 1985 to help organize all of my family files. What a blessing when the Internet came along. I could now get information almost instantly instead of having to wait weeks for it to come in the mail. Research in Scotland and Ireland is next on my agenda.

Dean barbered for 45 years. He owned and operated the Carlsbad Barber Shop. He loved his work and all the people that he met. He retired in 2004 due to failing health. He was a diabetic and was diagnosed with Binswanger's disease, NPH and dementia. The next two years were spent in doctor's offices, hospitals and finally with hospice. Dean passed away on May 12, 2006. I miss him dearly as does all of his family. He was my anchor for almost 49 years.

Our children are:

Dean C. Vernon Jr. age 48 is employed as a Telecommunication Specialist at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. He and his wife Brigitte have three children, Stephanie Dobson, Deana Rogers and Joana Wells.

Kristie Lynette Merkel, age 46 is a Registered Nurse and she is married to Ed Merkel. Children: Amber Willier and Joseph Robinson.

Sonja Jo Chatfield, age 37 attended Pacific Travel School and worked in the Airline industry until she became a stay at home Mom. She is married to Randy Chatfield. Their children are Bradley Davis, Brennan Davis, Ashlyn Chatfield and twins Lane & Lanndan Chatfield.

We have ten grandchildren, which includes a set of twin boys. We have ten great grandchildren, which also include a set of twin boys.

God has truly blessed my family and me over the past 50 years. As for my plans for the future, simply take one day at a time and enjoy every minute of it.