

My Children's stories.

When Bob was two he had very straight black hair. It was very hard to keep combed nicely. In those times we used to give each other Toni home permanents so I thought one for Bob would make his hair more manageable. The other children got a big kick out of this procedure on their little brother. Sad to say though it really didn't help much. When he was in his teens he got a brush cut and that solved the problem.

People were always exclaiming over Bob's beautiful dimples. One day when he was in his two's he said to me, "Mama what are my dimples?" I said, "Well you look in the mirror and smile at yourself and you will see your dimples." He climbed up on the chair and looked in the mirror and said, "I'm never going to smile again."

still
2 yrs.

I used to keep a cookie jar on the counter in the kitchen. One day I had set up the ironing board in the kitchen and was doing some of the ironing. Bob went passed a couple of times and helped himself to a cookie. I said I thought that was enough for now. In a while he came back ~~with~~ with his hand over his eyes and got another cookie. I guess he figured if he couldn't see me I couldn't see him. I thought that was pretty ingenious so let him have the cookie!

As the time Janet was ten
on Halloween they were having a big
do for the children in the town park
in Amherstburg. They had put up
a teepee of sticks and were having a
big bonfire with hot cider and
doughnuts and games. Well of course
the kids all went instead of going
house to house. They had been gone
a couple of hours when they came home
and Janet came in and said, "Guess what
Dad, I caught a greased pig." He said
"Oh yeah I'm sure you did." She said
"No really Dad I did." Just then a
man came in behind her carrying
the little pig! Dad says, "Well
I guess you did catch one didn't you."
We thought we would sell the pig
for \$10. and give it to Janet but it
seemed there were no takers. We
had a small shed by the garage so
we decided to keep the pig and
feed it for the winter and then sell
it in the spring. That is what we
did. In the spring we were able
to sell it for \$40. so we split the
money with Janet. We kept half to
cover the cost of the feed.

One time my Mother was visiting us when Janet was five and we decided to walk downtown to the Post office to get the mail. Somehow going into the post office Janet caught the first finger of her right hand in the door and broke the end off. It was just hanging on by a piece of skin. I took her over to the wicket thinking of getting some help but the girl said "I don't bring her in here." I went outside and of course Janet was howling and I was carrying her. I remember Mr Shuttleworth from the hardware store was just driving by in his pickup truck. He stopped and said "Can I help you?" I said "O yes could you drive us to the Dr's office. This was about 5 blocks away. He did and the Dr. was in which was lucky. I sat Janet on the table, she was still crying. He put a needle in it to freeze it, that's when my knees gave out and I had to sit down but she was alright then. She watched while he sewed the end back on her finger and then he bandaged it up. He said bring her back in 4 days.

When we came back the Dr. took off the bandage and he said, "My this stinks". She had been playing with her mittens on and got it wet so she had infection in it.

The Dr. said well you'll have to keep it out in the air. Soak it in warm salt water for 5 minutes then hold it up in the air to dry for 5 minutes then come 3 times a day then come and see ^{me} in 4 more days. This procedure we did faithfully and then went back to see the Dr. again. When we got there Janet walked in to the office and held up her finger to him and she said "It don't stink now." He scowled and said, "yes it will be alright now."

Our vacations at the cabin in Muskoka was always fun. One summer when Bob was twelve he decided he would like to catch and bring home some chipmunks to raise. We always enjoyed the chipmunks feeding them peanuts. Grandma Kennedy would put a couple of peanuts in her apron pocket and go out and sit on the porch. In a few minutes a chipmunk would venture up beside her and gradually work his way closer until finally he would go halfway inside the pocket and get the peanuts. He would stuff one inside each cheek then scamper away.

One day Shirley was sunning herself in her bathing suit and she took some peanuts in her hand and was trying to

entice a chipmunk. She didn't have much luck so finally she tucked the peanuts inside the top of her bathing suit and laid back and fell asleep. She was rudely awakened by a chipmunk scratching to get the peanuts out. She was not too impressed!

Bob thought the gravel pit would be a good place to find a chipmunk nest so he and Dad fixed up a box and off they went to the gravel pit. There were holes in the walls of the gravel pit so Bob put his arm in and felt around and came out with three babies. He put them carefully in the box and came back to the cabin. Dad told him he was lucky the marna hadn't been at home or he might have been severely bitten. He was too excited to be aware of the danger. He got food for the babies and we brought them home. We discovered as they grew older they were not chipmunks they were baby red squirrels!

When we got home Dad built a large cage for the squirrels that had screen all around. He also fitted it up with a wheel which they had a great time climbing around on. Bob collected lots of nuts to feed those squirrels. He had a friend Paul Duckworth who was really intrigued with the squirrels too so I think Bob sold him one for \$2. The other two he kept all winter and we all enjoyed those squirrels. In the spring one morning Bob went out to feed the squirrels and they had chewed a hole in their cage and escaped.

At the cabin there was no inside facilities for the first few years. We had no electricity so used coal oil lamps for lighting. At night it was the custom for the girls to all go together out to the outside "john" for the last time before we went to bed. One night Janet was inside and the rest of us were outside talking and waiting. All of a sudden we heard this loud crashing in the brush and woods behind the john. We all took off running for the safety of the cabin. Poor Janet was left to her own devices but I think put on a burst of speed and was not too far behind us. We were very poor protectors.

It was always great fun when the blueberries were ripe while we were at the cabin. We used to take our pails and put on our blueberry picking hats and head down to the fields where the berries were good. Some years the picking was really good and sometimes not too good. One year it was really good and we picked so many. They wouldn't keep until time to go home so I earned 25 qts! I think the children were tired of blueberries that year. Of course the mosquitoes and deer flies and horse flies and the heat made the picking hard but the berries were the sweetest!

We had an old washing machine at the cabin. It had a wooden tub but we would fill it with water when we got to the cabin and the wood would swell up so it would be good to use for washing the clothes. ~~The~~ As there was no electricity the motor power was pushing the handle back and forth and this turned the paddles inside. We took numbers as motor number 1 and motor No 2 and so on and by each taking turns the washing was soon done and no one was too tired. The clothes were so sweet smelling hung on the line to dry. That was in the 1950's. There was not the luxury of the laundromats that we have today.

At that time we had a little dog who we called Bambi. He was a Heiny variety that we got from the humane society and his ears stuck up so he looked like a little deer. Bambi enjoyed the trips to the cabin. We would get the car all packed up to go and Bambi would jump right in and lay up on the highest pile. I guess this gave him a feeling of being king of all he surveyed. He also liked to go for a boat ride at the cabin. He would ~~pright~~ pright up on the front of the boat and sit there for the whole ride. Kay liked to dress Bambi in her dolls clothes and take him for a ride in her doll buggy. He was very patient and let her dress him up. Hats were the thing. He would wear it but if someone laughed at him he would scratch it off. That was enough. Kay also liked to roller skate. This was a few years later. He would

have his leash on and she would have her skates on and let him pull her. He wasn't very big so probably didn't do much pulling but it looked good. Bambi also liked to sit on the swing and swing with Kay.

One of the other pets we had was George a budgie. Dad's sister had a budgie who she claimed could talk so we got George and tried to teach him to talk. We didn't succeed but George got really tame. He liked to ride around on your finger and then he got so he would ride around on Bambi's back. Now Bambi had an underslung lower jaw. He used to lay down and sleep on the floor and Bambi would fly down and hop around and pick Bambi's teeth. We were always amazed that the dog would put up with that!

In our first years going to the cabin Grandma's Grandpa Kennedy used to come with us for the holiday. Actually it was their cabin they had Mr Hammond build it for them in 1942 and we bought it from Grandma in 1960 the year after Grandpa passed away. On these trips Grandpa was in his 80's and Grandma didn't think he should be going in swimming in the river so she used to hide his bathing suit so he couldn't go in.

When Janet was seventeen she had saved up \$300. and wanted to buy a car. She had been an Echo carrier. She went to all the neighbours and homes in our end of Amherstburg and built herself an Echo route. When she was sixteen she accepted the position of organist at our church and so she was able to save up some money. Her Dad said alright he would go with her and she could buy a car. They went to Windsor and she wanted a small car that would be economical on gas.

She saw a blue Austin A-40 Somerset saloon and this was the one she wanted and it cost \$300. Her Dad had misgivings because it had quite a few miles on it but the car was purchased and she was very happy.

The girls had a great time in that car. They would go to Windsor to a show. When they would come out after the show and get in the car it wouldn't start so they would get out and push it and then it would start and they would jump in and be on their way home. This just added to the occasion I guess. Dad would be upset because this would mean another trip to the garage and another new starter. I think he put in three altogether.

I remember one occasion especially was imprinted on my memory. The girls had taken off for London to see a basket ball game. They went along 401. Around about noon Dad got a call from Janet. The girls were in London at the game but

The Austin had stalled alongside the road just before Tilbury. It had been raining and a passing car had splashed up muddy water on their windshield. They had pulled off the road to clear the windshield and the car had stalled and they hadn't been able to get it started again. They had hitched a ride with some kids from school and gone on to London to the game.

Dad says to me, "Mather we'll have to go and pick up that car. Its car. It be left on the road. Needs another trip to the garage."

We took off in the station wagon and drove along 401 until we came to the car. Dad said, "Mather you get in the car and steer and I'll push you back to Windsor and we'll take it to a garage there."

That's a ride I shall never forget! Fifty miles an hour being pushed along 401 in that little car and no control over anything.

Finally we reached the garage and Dad slowed down and I rolled into the gas station and stopped.

I thought if anyone speaks to me I'll break into a thousand pieces. We left the car to be fixed and came on home. I did get over it.

One day Janet was coming home in the austin and just as she turned on our street the brakes failed. She was going very slowly and felt by the time she got home and turned in our driveway the car would just roll to a stop. It didn't and her Dad's car was sitting in the driveway. Panic! She couldn't hit her Dad's car so she turned off and ran into a tree. That stopped her.

Finally this car had had too many trips to the garage and I've forgotten what the last breakdown was but Dad decided well the old car should be good for something so he would have a boat trailer made out of it. Well horrors! it had no frame so was no good even for that. It was hauled to the back of the garage and there it sat in the field for a time.

One day I was sitting out in the back yard and I could smell a smell like something had died. I decided to see if I could follow the smell and see what it was. I walked around and finally tracked it back to the austin. I got down on my hands and knees and looked under it and behold! there was a skunk looking at me with a dead rooster in his mouth. I backed very gently away from there thankful to get away. After that the austin was taken to the dump.