

# Doris Lorine Debrick Rodewald



I was born Doris Lorine Debrick on November 13, 1926, and I'm 94 years old. I'm sure I was born at home because that was before they had hospitals in Paola. My older brother, Arnold, and my younger brother, Roland, were also born at home. Our home where we grew up is where Arnold lives now, on top of the hill with the old barn.

Both of my parents were born and raised in this area. My mom was Wilhelmeina Rika Cahman, and she was called Minnie. She was born on October 14, 1902 to John and Rika Berg Cahman. My mother's folks owned our home place before my parents did, and my mother actually grew up not far from there; just south and across the road from where Harry and Gay Stubbs live, on the road now named Somerset. My mom's cousin, Henry Berg, lived there after my mom's family. The area was called Fontana at that time because it was Fontana post office that

delivered our mail, but it is now Paola.

My dad was Edward Theodore Debrick, and he was called Ed. My dad was born in 1897 and grew up west across the river, in the area just south of Trinity Lutheran Church. Instead of following the curve north to go to church, keep going straight and that's the area where he lived. It's the first road south after you cross the bridge and then jog back east, then south, well, I'm not exactly sure where they did live, but you can't go over that bridge anymore.

I have no idea how my parents met, but probably at church since they both went to the same church. Martin Debrick, my dad's brother, married my mom's sister, Margaret Cahman, so we were double cousins. Uncle Mart and Aunt Maggie lived up north of New Lancaster for years, below the hill on the west side of New Lancaster Road, I believe.

My parents got married at my grandma's house at 403 East Wea in Paola. They were married on December 26, 1923. I have pictures of the inside of the house with all the wedding decorations. After they were married, my dad worked as a farmer and then they moved to Paola in 1948, after we kids left home. Then he worked for a generator plant near the railroad tracks and a block west. And that's when Arnold bought the farm and Rollie and I got cash money.

All of my grandparents came to America from Germany. My parents could speak German but we didn't speak German at home at all, except when my maternal grandma, Grandma Cahman, came out to visit a few weeks at a time. It was kind of looked down on to speak German because of the war, so I never really learned it. I could understand some of the words. We did have a German Bible that we used some in our religion classes. Some of my classmates knew German; especially the twins, Damon and Dema Oberheide.

They could really speak German. When we'd read the German Bible, Dema would sit next to me and help me. We used to have German Bible reading in school; I think they used to have German confirmation class and sing German hymns. There were German church services once a month but I never used to get much out of it. It was probably in the 50's that they stopped that.

My mom's parents were John and Rika Berg Cahman. John Cahman's parents were John and Eidena Kahman who came to America in 1867. My grandma, Rika Berg, came from Hanover, Germany and arrived in America on April 22, 1882 when she was 20 years old. My mom died September 24, 2003.

My dad's parents were Gustave Debrick and Alvina Augusta Monthey. In Germany the name was spelled Debrich. The Debrick's came from Germany to America between 1851 and 1865. In the area where my dad grew up, there was a little Debrick Cemetery and a Debrick public school house, too. It was there when I was little. Elmer Flake used to take care of that cemetery. My dad died June 1, 1985.

Dad was a farmer and I remember during the harvest time we'd always be busy. Dad grew oats, wheat and corn. They'd cut the oats and wheat and put it into shocks. When I was old enough, I would help with this. Fred and John Kettler, two brothers, owned the threshing machine and all the farmers around would get their oats and wheat cut and the thresher would separate out the grain. They'd go from farm to farm and do this. Minnie Kettler (Raymond Kettler's Mom) only had boys so my mom and I would help Minnie with feeding the crew. I'd help my mom when they would come to our house. We'd make beef, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and green beans; whatever you would raise yourself. You wouldn't believe how many potatoes we'd have to peel! And we'd bake bread and pies, probably apple and since we had our own milk, we'd make cream pies. I don't remember how many guys there would be. We'd set up something outdoors, some kind of stand, kind of a washing station, so the men could clean up outdoors before they would eat. I think maybe we even put up a mirror in a tree somewhere so they could comb their hair.

We'd sometimes go on Saturday evening to get groceries in Paola. We'd stop at Grandma's house. Uncle Martin and Aunt Maggie lived a block south of the old high school, which is now the fire station and lots of times we'd stop at their house and I'd stay and play with Hazel while Mom went to visit with Grandma. In later years I remember Uncle Martin and Aunt Maggie moved in with Grandma to help her and take care of her. Later, they rented out some of the upper bedrooms to local girls. I never knew my Grandfather; he died in 1928 so I was too little to remember him.

We may have gone to Drexel some for shopping. Dad did some banking in Drexel before they moved to town. My mom had cousins in the areas south and east of Drexel; around Amoret and Butler. I never



Arnold, Doris and Rollie

skated there, but Drexel had a roller rink, and I used to watch people skate. It used to be where the Food Fair grocery store is now, but was a different building.

I used to go to Dr. Marsh in Drexel. Herman used to go there a lot, and Dr. Marsh finally told him he couldn't help him anymore. Dr. Lowe in Paola was the doctor who took out my tonsils. They gave you ether back then to put you to sleep. They told me I went to sleep with my eyes open. I was always sickly and catching colds, and the doctor said if I had my tonsils out it would help, and it did. I have hardly caught a cold since. I was probably about 9 years old at the time. I remember years ago, the doctor's office was up this long flight of stairs, and I never could figure out why you'd have a doctor's office up this long flight of stairs; when you're sick, you wouldn't feel like climbing up those stairs. It doesn't make sense to me. The building isn't there anymore; it used to be near the Paola courthouse. The dentist office, too, used to be upstairs; it used to be on the southwest corner of the square on the south side; on Silver Street. I hated to go to the dentist.

Hazel and Francis were my closest cousins – we were double cousins. Hazel was my age. Francis was a girl, and she was a year older than Arnold. Theodore (Ted) was their older brother and he had already moved to California. Hazel married a McCammon and that's the mother of Jim McCammon from La Cygne.

One time at our house, Arnold was upstairs, sitting on the windowsill and our cousin, Francis, came in and swung open the door, and I think the door kinda hit him. The window was up and the screen didn't hold him (if there even *was* a screen), and down he went on that brick sidewalk. I know my mom was in bed; she spent a lot of time in bed in the afternoons or whenever, just resting up, and she heard Arnold fall. Dad told Arnold to go tell Mom that he was alright. So Arnold went in and told her, "Mom, I'm alright." She knew something had happened. Maybe you should get Arnold's version of that story! He was lucky he didn't break any bones, falling from that distance and landing on a brick sidewalk. He's probably had worse things happen to him since then.

Another time I remember, Rollie was running down the hill on the road and was going to duck down underneath the barbed wire fence, but he didn't duck low enough, and it caught him right across the face. He bled like a stuck pig and they had to take him to Dr. Lowe, and he had to have stitches. It probably left a scar for the rest of his life.



Winter "sledding" You can see the upstairs window where

I went to the Mobley schoolhouse for my first year of school. It was a half mile west of our place; and my first grade school teacher was Helen Boyer. I have a picture of her somewhere. She lived in Paola but during the school week, she'd board at our house. I don't remember why; whether it was because it was winter, or she didn't drive, or why. For first grade I could walk a half mile to school; after that, we had to walk 3 miles to Block school. Sometimes people would stop

and give us a ride. Well, you know, you wouldn't mind riding with people you didn't know driving on the road, rather than making the walk. Sometimes it wouldn't be that far of a ride because people never came down our dirt road. Doc and Dolly were our team of horses, and they'd pull you out if your car got stuck. My mom told me that she rode a horse to school; it was a white horse, and it would always buck when she got to a certain corner because it didn't want to go any further. Then she had to kick or whip it to make it keep going. Arnold rode a horse when he first went to Block school; they had a stable for horses to be tied up to, probably on the south edge of the cemetery. Girl, that's been long time ago! I barely remember what I did yesterday, let alone that many years ago! I used to want to be a schoolteacher in first grade but I changed my mind. Girls always wore dresses back then; we might have had some pants when it was really cold in the wintertime. I know we had long underwear.

In the morning, my mom would always holler up the stairs, "Arnold, Doris and Rollie." I'd answer, "Yeah." And then, in the winter, I'd take my clothes and get dressed downstairs behind the stove. Then we'd go out and milk the cows. We'd all three do it, depending on how many cows we had to milk at the time; we probably had 6 or 8. I just remember Mom and I had to do all the milking during harvest. Then, after us kids left, my dad got a milking machine! I don't know if it was electric or battery operated. It must have been battery operated. School didn't start until 9 a.m. because we didn't have electricity and it would be dark before then in the winter. The teacher had to build up the fire for one thing, to get the rooms warm.

We always took our lunch to school. Instead of special lunch boxes the way kids have now, we took our lunch in an old tin syrup can with a metal lid and handle. I just remember taking peanut butter and jelly sandwiches because we didn't have electricity and refrigerators to keep your food cold. And we probably took apples because we had apple trees. And we had one tree with great big fruit; we had apples and pears, and we had a cellar where you had to lift the door off the dining room floor and the cellar was underneath the kitchen. It was always my job to go down into the cellar to bring up food. Some of the time, I remember, a lot of it spoiled. Some stuff just kept better than others. I don't think we had pressure cookers back then.

At Block school, we had two rooms; 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> was one teacher; Arthur Scheer. And the other was A. P. Walters for 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. He lived in the teacherage, where the teacherage house is still but it's a different building. A.P. Walters also had to be the organist for the church services; it was a job requirement. He was a pretty strict teacher, too. Sometimes some of the boys were a little ornery. He would tell you to go out to get a stick and if you got a little one, you had to sit on it in the corner. And if you got a big one, you had to hold it. That was the upper grades. I don't know if he actually did or not, but it was said that he would use his belt on the boys, too.

In the upper grades, the girls had to sweep the floor during the lunch hour. They were oiled, wooden floors back then. And the boys had to carry in the wood for the furnaces and carry in well water in buckets for the drinking fountain. We didn't have electricity back then, and that's why we didn't start school until 9 a.m. We went to school from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. We had some kind of kerosene lamps and the teacher took care of that part.



In the morning, we would be seated and when the teacher arrived, we would stand up and say good morning. We had a chalk board at the front of the class. We had different classes, and there was Arithmetic, Spelling, English. Each class would have to go forward to receive instruction on the front bench. And during that time, the other classes would be back behind us at their desks working on their lessons. All the grades were together for Religion instruction.

For Confirmation, during 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the classes would go over to the church and meet at the room behind the altar for instruction. It was like when we would go up for communion, we'd go up in a line to receive bread and when the area was filled up, then pastor would bring the wine around as we would stand there. We didn't have the kneeler then. It worked out pretty good that way.

I was born on November 13, 1926, baptized on December 5, 1926, and confirmed April 6, 1941. My Confirmation verse was John 15:5, "He that abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." My sponsors were John Cahman, my mother's brother and Emma Brocker, my dad's sister. We had our questioning up front at church in front of the congregation on Sunday. And so you know, if you didn't know your question, you'd hear it from your folks. It was so different today than it was then because we had religion every day in school. And the last two years, the confirmation class had an hour of instruction with the pastor every day. I think now they have it on the Friday evening before confirmation Sunday. I have gone to their questioning some years. We had to know everything in the small catechism by heart, but today they don't. We had to know the whole thing; the Petitions, the Articles, the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed and everything it means. We had to be ready to be questioned about ALL the small catechism. It was very nerve-racking, because if you didn't know the answer to the question Pastor asked, the next person in line had to answer. We had to sit up front. Even before when we had the rite of confirmation, two years before you were going to be confirmed, you sat up front, the gals on the south side on a little bench on the first row and the boys were on the other side of the aisle. There was eight in my confirmation class of 1941. There were two boys in my class, Norman Kettler and Damon Oberheide, and six girls: Dema Oberheide, Vera Kaiser, Katherine Monthey, Dorothy Kettler, and Alice Holtz. At church they have pictures of all the confirmation classes. I remember having church in the first church building. It seems like more people went to church in those days than they do today. The congregation was bigger. People seem to have more excuses not to go to church today. I'm thankful the boys still go to church. It makes mamma happy!

They always had men teachers when I was in school. We're really fortunate now to have several organists in our church services. Back then, the older grade teacher had to play the organ. My mom played the

organ at First Lutheran some, before she was married. I suppose we used to have homework, I don't really remember. I have a book that my teacher, Helen Boyer, gave me when I won the spelling contest in 1934.

At the end of the school year, we would have a school picnic when everyone would bring a basket dinner and big freezers of ice cream. We'd have the picnic down in the grove with benches and sometimes we would have an outdoor church service there, too.

I attended school in Block through the eighth grade and then I went to Paola High School until I graduated in 1945. Because of the war, the school buses stopped running so my mom arranged for me to live with a family in Paola at 510 East Peoria. I did babysitting for them. Back then, we would always come home from school to eat lunch. On Saturdays I would do house cleaning at Dr. Numbers' house. He was the local dentist and lived at 401 East Peoria which was close to where I lived so I didn't have far to go. I got 35 cents per hour for scrubbing the kitchen and bathroom floors and dusting. I probably worked 3 hours or so, from 8 to lunchtime.

I remember we were supposed to have our high school graduation at the old stadium in Wallace Park, but it rained so we had to have it in the high school auditorium and that's where the Paola fire station is now.

Before I graduated high school, though, my mom and dad took me to Ottawa, I think in the courthouse, to take the civil service test. And I guess I did pretty good, I can't remember much about it except that I must have passed! I don't remember if I was nervous, but I always was the nervous type, like when I had to give a book report at school. I figured I'd get a job in Kansas City, but it ended up being in Washington, D.C. I'm surprised my mom let me go. My classmates were surprised that I would go all the way to Washington. At my class reunions, my classmates always said I was the most bashful person, they couldn't imagine me going that far away from home. Three days after graduation I was at work in Washington. I was brave maybe, but I sure was nervous. I took the train from Kansas City's Union Station to go out to Washington. I was probably scared to death to talk to anybody, I don't know anymore. But you know people were different back then than they are today. They were more trusting, than I would be today.

My mom made my living arrangements in D.C. for me. My dad was a church elder and the church had a directory that listed all the LCMS churches in every city of the United States. I just figured they must have seen Trinity Lutheran Church and liked it, since it was the name of our church. They called the minister there, and he knew of a church member who rented rooms. Later on I found out that there was another Trinity Lutheran Church in D.C., but it was farther northwest.

I got off the train in D.C. and had to call the minister at Trinity Lutheran Church, which was four blocks west of the train station, to tell him that I had arrived. I was to live in a boarding house at 2020 Summit. The minister told me what streetcar I needed to get on and then when to change to a bus to go the rest of the way. I probably could have walked it except that I had two suitcases. This woman rented out rooms in her home to working girls only, no men. The house had a great big flight of stairs you had to go up to get to the front door and then I had a room upstairs. So I had lots of steps to climb, carrying those suitcases! Breakfast was included and it was always hot or cold cereal, and she would always put a dish of prunes on the table. I wasn't a coffee drinker at that age, so I must have drank milk or hot tea.

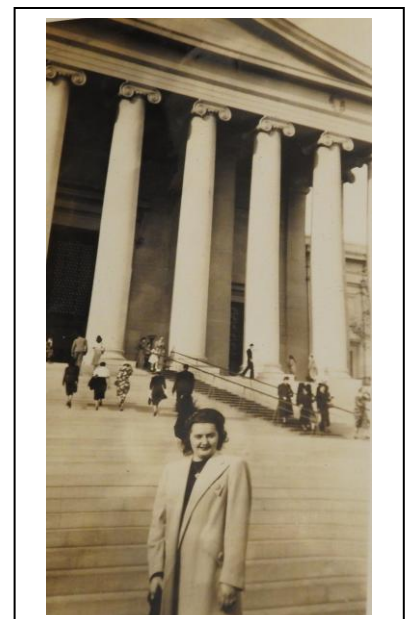


Doris in her D.C. apartment

The first place I worked in Washington, D.C. was in the General Services Administration, which is part of the Treasury Department, and I did general clerical work on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor in the Retirement Division. They had operators on the elevators to run them. We had a cafeteria there and I wasn't used to buying my lunch. Sometimes they would have specials, but pretty much offered the same thing day after day. Back then I probably ate the cheapest thing on the menu. We didn't have much growing up, and we always believed a penny saved was a penny earned. General Services Administration eventually had to downsize, and that's why I got transferred to Federal Trade Commission. I enjoyed working there at the FTC, too, but there were lawyers that worked upstairs who would come downstairs and they would make you embarrassed sometimes.

During the 8 years I lived in Washington, D.C., I attended Trinity Lutheran Church and that's where I met my two good friends, Kay Kautz and Margaret Pennycamp. We were all in the choir together and they encouraged me to audition for the National Lutheran Chorus. I would never have sang in it except for my friends, Kay and Margaret. Our choir director directed the National Lutheran Chorus practice and that was held at the other Trinity Lutheran Church. I don't know why I threw that bulletin away, but I don't have it anymore. I know we sang "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." It was a choir of all the Lutheran churches in the D.C. area, so it was a really big choir. It was a great experience for me, being only 18 years old. In school, you had to be 7 years old before September 1 in order to start school, so I was already older than a lot of my classmates because my birthday is in November. But it worked out for me, because if I hadn't been 18, I couldn't have gotten a government job, so it worked out okay.

I lived in the boarding house for about 3 years and then I moved in with Kay in her apartment in 1948. Before I moved in, though, we took a trip to Canada together to see if we were compatible enough to live together. She was a little older than I was, so she probably had more sense than I had. It's funny, but I don't remember where she worked. Sometimes we would meet for supper downtown. I don't remember where Margaret Pennycamp worked either. She was originally from Kansas. Her dad was a parochial schoolteacher in KC somewhere. Kay was from Olean, New York, which is about 50 miles from Buffalo. In addition to the Canada trip, Kay and I also traveled to Yellowstone National Park and on west, as far as Salt Lake City, Utah. I have write-ups about these trips and photo albums. Kay and I lived together until I came back home in 1953 but we remained pen pals after that until she died. Neither she nor Margaret ever married.



The only piece of furniture I bought in Washington was the radio/record player console, and I still have it. It has a radio on the top right side, and just below it is a drawer you pull out with a record player. I still have all my record albums, probably no one likes this music now, but it was our kind of music back then. Some of the records I have now were my Mom's. I kept them after she gave up her place. Some of my favorite record albums include The William Tell Overture, Osker Hammerstein's Eleanor Stever and Nelson Eddy's "New Moon," Al Goodman and his Orchestra "Rose Marie, I Love You," Al Goodman's "The Chocolate Soldier." Most of these Herman and I got from Firestone in Osawatomie. There's a lot of good music there. I enjoyed playing albums when I lived in the apartment in D.C. Kay had a baby grand piano in



her apartment when I lived with her. I never played piano much, but I bought the piano that's here in my living room. I got it in Ottawa at the music store. I thought maybe I would play it, but I never did. My mom played the organ.

That old sewing machine I have here has been to California and back. Duane and one of his buddies, flew out and drove back with a U-Haul and brought back a bunch of furniture. It was items from Elsie's stuff that her sister Caroline, Herman's sister had. Herman had one brother and 5 sisters in his family. They were Henry, Anna, Elsie, Dora, Caroline, Edna who died of polio as a child, and then Herman. Anyway, Elsie lived in California with Caroline for a number of years. When they returned from California they lived in the apartments across from the Paola Country Club. Then when Elsie died, Caroline got some money and she bought a house in Paola on the

street north of Wea, I think Piankishaw. Then when Caroline died, they had a sale and Duane bought the cedar chest for me. I still have Dad's big trunk in the back bedroom. I have no idea where that trunk came from. I used to know the story behind that trunk; they surely had it in Paola but I can't recall where they had it in the house.

My visit home at Christmas in 1952 changed everything. My dad and Herman were friends and played pool together on Saturday nights. My dad mentioned to Herman that I was coming home for Christmas. I think my parents set me up to be with Herman because there was a special singing group that was coming to our church to perform, and my folks and I went to it and of course Herman happened to be there, and he asked me if he could take me home. That was the start of us going together during my Christmas vacation. When I went back to Washington, we wrote to each other for the next year and a half. I came home in May of 1953 and we became engaged. We were married on September 27, 1953. Herman had saved all of my letters but after he died in 1996, I threw my so-called "love letters" away; they went to the burning pile. I just didn't want anyone to read my letters! I keep a lot of things, I know, but I thought I'm getting older; I don't want people reading my personal stuff after I'm gone.



Herman farmed and he was head of the REA (Rural Electric) in this area. Sometimes I went with him to Mound City for meetings. But after we got married, we lived here and had Kansas City Power and Light and since we weren't on REA, he couldn't work for REA anymore. He also was a Huey Seed Corn dealer. Huey was headquartered in Illinois and since Herman needed to travel there for a meeting, we decided to take our honeymoon there.

Herman bought the filling station where the shop is and the little house next to it where I live now. He bought it all from Johnny Cupp who used to live on the property where Mike England lives now, probably a different house, though. Cupp also owned the house just east of the shop where the Gilpatricks live. Herman ran the filling station until new tanks and pumps were required but it was too expensive to put those in, so we didn't do that and stopped selling gas. It was hard to get used to having to go to town to get gas. We lived in the little house next to the filling station, and we put in a bathroom and added on a couple times.

We owned the general store for a time; I'd hate to think what it would cost to buy that place now. We used it mostly for storage. The boys used to like to play pool and Herman bought them a pool table and put it in the general store and that's where they played. I think Duane had the pool table when he lived in Louisburg, east of 69 highway. Now he lives in an earth home west of Louisburg. He used to have several roommates, but now he lives alone.

I think Duane was one of the first ones born at the hospital in Paola. He was born on February 25, 1956. The nurse who was there when Duane was delivered lived just north of New Lancaster area on the west side, past where Jackson's used to live. Dr. Brown delivered Duane. I just remember the night Duane was born, lying in bed at home and realizing my water had broke, and Herman said, "It's time to go!"

Duane was around 2 years old when Darrel came along on March 14, 1958. The guys used to play pitch on a card table out at the shop; they even had a television out there before we had one at home. So I called Herman at the shop on the telephone and told him I think it's time to go. Herman dropped me off at the hospital and then took Duane down to my folks' house at 510 W. Wea, and before he got back, I had Darrel. So I was very fortunate. I never had to be in the labor room either time.

When we named the boys I never imagined there were so many ways to spell their names. My friend, Kay, who I lived with during my last years in DC, she had a brother named Darrel and he was a smart man, a professor of religion of some sort, and that's where I got the name Darrel. His wife actually came from somewhere in Missouri and she was a Lutheran school teacher. Kay's older brother, he was an artistic guy who lived in New York City. We named Duane, I guess because we liked it. Herman called us his three D's. At one time I would have liked to have had a daughter, but it worked out better this way. If we had had a girl, we would have had to build another room. This way, Duane and Darrel shared a bedroom. Also, when they were older, they would come home and help Herman work the shop. It really takes more than one man to run the place. Before the boys were old enough, and Herman would have to go on a service call, I would have to stay at the shop. I remember one night we got a call at 3 a.m. to fix a flat. It seemed like forever before he got back home, and I worried about him. I was relieved when he returned home.

We used to have a couple gardens; we called them, his, hers and mine. One in back, and one on the east and one on the west. We grew all sorts of vegetables and fruit and berries. We froze berries and sold some. One lady used to buy all the berries we could pick. Strawberries, blackberries, raspberries. We tried blueberries but we didn't have any luck with them.

We raised chickens and would butcher 10 or more at a time. I never could cut the heads off; Herman would do that. Herman and I would both scald and pick the feathers off. We never used the feathers for anything, but we probably did years ago at home when we had geese. I don't think you had to kill them; you could just take off some of the feathers for pillows. I was always glad when the chicken butchering was over with. But it was kinda nice having your own eggs.

The first year we were married was my first time to go pheasant hunting. We went to Oberlin where Herman had relatives so we had a place to stay. When the boys were old enough to go, we would go for a weekend, leaving just after school was out, and get there with just enough time for a little shut eye before we had to get up and go out. And usually we'd go to church there in Oberlin. Then we'd return home late Sunday night. We stayed in Reinhard's old house, and all they had was bedsprings, so we would bring our own bedding; it was like bringing everything but the kitchen sink! They had electricity and we took a little camp stove to cook on. I'd go out and walk with them while they hunted. Lots of times I would stay in the car while they walked through the field, and I would watch and then tell the guys where they birds were. We took one little hunting dog with us years ago.

Sometimes we would go hunting out at Linn, Kansas where we had family, but I never went out with them; I would stay and visit with the women relatives.

I usually didn't go with them when they deer hunted but I may have gone here, locally, if they went to the pasture south of Maxine's. I used to hunt for rocks; that was more my thing. I would find the holey rocks and bring them home. I got my exercise going around that way. The guys used to go on coyote drives years ago. They'd come home with coyotes but I forget how much they were worth. Maybe \$2 per ear. I've got pictures of the coyotes on the backend of the guys' pickup bed.

We had a big pond in back with a lot of catfish. It got dry and the fish died and what a stinking mess that was! Herman's Aunt Adie Roetter would come to visit and she would spend all her time out there fishing. I still hear from her grandson; he lives in Texas someplace, I think.

Herman used to say about travel, "I haven't seen everything there is to see along Middle Creek yet." And I guess I've seen enough of this old world. Even though I haven't seen everything there is to see along Middle Creek either!

I didn't drive until the boys were in school. But after I got my license, we had a carpool with the Gerken's and Reinart Minden's boy.

I never voted in D.C., and the first time I voted was after I was married here in Miami County.

After the boys were grown, I used to visit Annie Marquis and Nellie Nichols here in New Lancaster, but after they died, I would visit Ada and Vere Hurt. I still use the crocheted throw that Ada gave to me.



One invention I valued most is electricity, for one thing. So many things are run by electricity. We used to have to light the lantern so you could hang it in the barn so you could see where the cows were at to milk them. The phone was a good thing, too. We used to have the telephone hanging on the wall. The Block telephone exchange was there north of the church on the east side of the road; Norman Kettler's aunt and uncle worked the switchboard. Our home phone number was two long rings and a short ring. You were only

supposed to answer it if it was your ring, but a lot of people would answer and eavesdrop. It seemed like then we could ring Paola. The more people that would pick up the phone, the harder it was to hear. It was kind of disgusting; I'd wish people would hang up so I could hear better when I'd call my mom in Paola.

I think I kinda got used to being alone at home when Herman had to be in the hospital for so long. I visited him every day. Although he died at home, during the time he was in the hospital, I had to drive up every day for a month when he had treatments. That was before we had two lane highways, and it was easier then.

Up until this last year, I didn't mind growing older a bit but I'm beginning to feel it now. If it wasn't for this one knee . . . but, it can't be too bad if I can walk a mile a day! Just grin and bear it. Sometimes it's a little bit worse if I sit around too much.

I attribute my good health to having my tonsils out; before that I was always catching cold all the time; I can't say that I've had a cold since then. Every winter night I put Vicks just at the base of my nose. I believe in it anyway. The one thing about getting old, you have to go to the bathroom more often.

At this point I don't like to cook anymore, but Duane still likes to come over and eat with me at noon.

My sister-in-law, Arnold's wife, and I both had the same name. Before I married, my name was Doris Lorine Debrick and after she married Arnold, her name was Doris Lorene Debrick, but she always went by Lorene. The only difference was my name was spelled with an "i." I think it used to be more common for people to go by their middle names.

Living during the COVID-19 pandemic has had its challenges. Oh, you stay home, you don't go using gas; I buy a gallon of milk and freeze it in Gatorade bottles. It's a little bit cheaper buying milk by the gallon. A penny saved is a penny earned! You don't have to worry about it spoiling before using it that way. I guess I'm a spendthrift. I don't plan on taking a vaccination even if it is free; I've never had a flu shot either. Although they say, I guess if you have a side effect from the vaccine, it's really doing its business. I'll let someone else have my shot. I figure if I eat properly and take my vitamins, calcium, I think it helps. I'm a firm believer in that calcium. The only thing I've ever broken was my ankle; I was very fortunate that a doctor lived across the street from us in D.C. and he drove me to the place where he put on a cast. I broke

it while riding a rental bicycle and trying to hop up on the curb. The other two I was riding with did that and I thought I would be able to do that too. I never owned a bike when I was young. My cousin Hazel owned a bike in Paola. It's no fun pedaling on a dirt road. I've often wondered how many miles I've walked in my lifetime. I wish I'd had a pedometer, but we didn't have them back then.

We should be getting smarter with all this high technology; if you can use it. Things could be worse, I always try to console myself.

I read my prayers and devotions before I go to bed each night and then when I get in bed, I say my prayers for particular people, especially the sick or poor in health. And I always pray for Margo, too.



As for the future, we have to leave it in the good Lord's hands. All things work together for good for those who love God. That's a good thing to live by. When you think about things not going right, eventually it's going to work out. Everything is in His hands. God is in control. He allows certain things to happen that we don't like, but he's using it for a purpose, I guess. That's one reason I'm happy I'm at this age; I feel sorry for people who have to live on, I feel like the world isn't getting any better.

This memoire was recorded by Doris' friend and neighbor, Ruth Gaffney.



Doris picking "Contender's"  
August 17, 2020

And now a note from Ruth: Doris and I met in 2007 and became fast friends. We enjoyed spending time together and shared many of the same interests including gardening, various handcrafts and a love for Jesus Christ, our Savior. We spend every Tuesday evening together and have for years; and it was during the winter of the COVID-19 Pandemic that this project was begun. All I can say about Doris is, to know her is to love her! She has been a true friend and I thank God for the time He's given us together. I'd like to share a little bit about our experience of the Miami County Fair now since it was something Doris really enjoys doing.

Doris and I loved entering items in the Miami County Fair together and did so many years until the pandemic of 2020. It remains to be seen if the Fair will be open in 2021. Our annual fair ritual was the

same every year. As soon as they were available, we would pick up the Fair booklet and item tags at the Kansas State Extension Office and the planning would begin! We would gather together whatever we had made during the year, and decide which categories we'd enter.

On Tuesday night of the fair, we would prepare our entries, making sure each item had the necessary fair identification tag securely attached and position everything ready to be packed in the car first thing Wednesday morning. I would arrive at Doris' on Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. sharp and together we would load up Doris' entries. Between the two of us, my 2001 Honda CR-V would be entirely filled with our entries! Doris has a green thumb like no other, and she entered many beautiful, large house plants.

We'd then drive slowly to Paola, careful not to shift our load. We'd arrive at the Fairgrounds by 8 a.m., and we were almost always able to park right where we could easily unload, thank goodness. First, we'd unload the Floriculture entries which consisted mostly of Doris' entries of flowers, plants and various arrangements. Some flowers she entered were cleome, marigold, zinnias and others that were currently blooming in July. Plant varieties she entered included angel-winged and regular begonias, regular and ponytail ferns, coleus, aloe vera, cactus, philodendron, pepperomia, and hanging baskets of wandering jew and spider plant. I'm sure that I'm missing some because Doris grew a lot of different plants! Various arrangements included entries in categories of: arrangement in kitchen container, arrangement for luncheon table, patio arrangement, arrangement using driftwood, dried material arrangement, all foliage arrangement, and wildflowers of 5 or more varieties. Doris liked to grow straw flowers, statice, cockscomb and celosia which she used in her dried arrangements. She would also dry okra pods and statice, and paint them different colors to be used in the dried arrangements.

Then we would unload our Horticulture entries, which, between us, most of the time consisted of tomatoes, beets, green beans, cucumbers, okra, peppers, zucchini, garlic, onions, mint, dill, rosemary, sage, parsley, oregano, basil and thyme. We knew some of the time we were competing against each other, but it was always fun to see which produce entry would win out over another!

Next, we would unload our antiques, which we would usually have quite a few. We loved going to garage and estate sales all year long, always searching for items to enter in the fair. After that, we would unload our handcrafted items in the various departments, such as Clothing, Crafts, Crocheting and Knitting, Art, and Fiber and Fabric. Doris entered many beautiful items she made such as baby quilts, crochet doilies, hand-embroidered items. She was always sure to enter an item in the “item made by any individual over 75” category, and truly, she probably was the most senior participant in the fair!

After we unloaded and entered all of our fair items, we’d hit the road for home unless we needed to stop by Wal-Mart or Price Chopper to shop. Judging of entries was completed later in the afternoon.

We’d wait until Friday evening to return to the fair. Sometimes we would go in to Paola for a bite to eat before heading to the Fairgrounds to see how we’d done and to enjoy all the different entries including 4-H. We made it a point to arrive before 7 p.m. and we almost always got a front parking area spot. We were sure blessed with that! We had to hang around then because fair entries aren’t released until 9 p.m. That close parking spot sure made loading up a lot easier! After we’d load up our stuff, we always headed to Sonic where Doris would treat Ruth to a chocolate malt. Doris was adventurous and would try different flavors; she enjoyed strawberry, pineapple, chocolate; she wasn’t picky and liked them all. Sonic always had half-price malts and shakes after 8 pm so we each enjoyed a big one! We’d sit in Sonic to visit and drink our shakes, and one year we saw two people ride up to Sonic on their horses and place an order. I wish I’d have had my camera to get a picture of that! We’d head for home and unload then. It was a fun night, and we’d head for bed around 11 p.m.

Many years we each would earn over \$100 in fair premiums. Blue ribbons were worth \$4, red ribbons worth \$3, and white ribbons worth \$2. If you didn’t get anything, sometimes they would put on a yellow ribbon for “participation.” We didn’t want an old yellow ribbon, we really wanted the money! Sometimes we would earn a “Grand Champion” purple ribbon, or a “Reserve Grand Champion” lavender ribbon, which we liked, but it wasn’t worth any additional premium money, just \$4, like a blue. Some years we drove in to Paola on Saturday morning to collect our premium check together; other times Doris would drive in to get them; it just depended on our schedules. In recent years, they offered to mail them to you if you provided a self-addressed, stamped envelope, but if you wanted a printout summary of your entries, you had to go in person on Saturday or later that week go in to the Kansas State Extension office to pick it up.