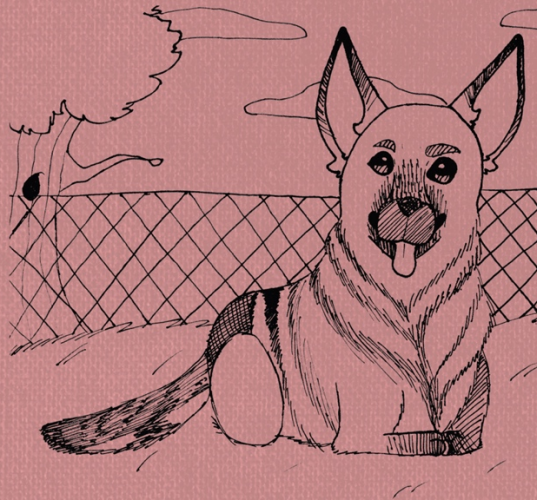




Grannie Annie

Historical Family Stories

Written and Illustrated by Young People



from
*The Grannie Annie
Family Story Celebration*

Vol. 15



Grannie Annie, Vol. 15

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The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration
Written and Illustrated by Young People

Saint Louis, Missouri

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Welcome to the 2019/2020 Grannie Annie celebration of family stories! Students in U.S. grades 4 through 8, and homeschooled or international students 9 through 14 years of age, are invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story from their family's history. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills. Students are encouraged to illustrate their story and then share their work with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie.

The works of twenty-three young authors and five young artists, chosen to represent the submissions received this year, are included in this fifteenth annual volume of *Grannie Annie*. This year's stories are available in both PDF and paperback editions, and will also be published on The Grannie Annie's website and shared through social media.

The Grannie Annie mission — to inspire young people to discover, write, illustrate, and share historical family stories — springs from a belief in the transformative power of “story.” The simple, genuine family stories in this book can help us connect with people in today's world and with people from times past. In unexplainable ways, these stories foster feelings of unity with people whose lives may seem very different from our own. Quietly, surely, the world moves one step closer to peace.

Published by The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration, P.O. Box 11343, Saint Louis, Missouri 63105.

The Grannie Annie welcomes — and desires to receive and publish — family stories from students of every race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, and creed.

Because the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 15*, were captured from the oral tradition, they represent a unique blend of history, legend, and opinion. Accuracy — historical or otherwise — is not guaranteed, and the views represented are not necessarily those of the authors, directors, or publishers.

Cover illustration by Katie Richardson.

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Your tax-deductible donation will enable more young people to take part in The Grannie Annie, and will make the remarkable *Grannie Annie* published stories more widely available. Please mail your donation to the address at the top of this section or visit the donation page of The Grannie Annie's website: TheGrannieAnnie.org/DonatetoTheGrannieAnnie.html

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In memory of
Ann Guirrerri Cutler,
whose passion for saving family stories
inspired The Grannie Annie
1944–2007

* * *

Dedicated to the loving eagerness
of my eight grandchildren —
Matthew, Emma, Scout, Leo,
Benjy, Ajzeyya, Ethan, Calvin —
and to the stories
they will choose to live

Honored by donor Anne Perkins

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* The time setting of each story is noted in parentheses here and also on the story pages. A notation of "c." (circa) indicates that the year is approximate.

Story Settings Map, International

Numbers on map are story numbers.



Story Settings Map, United States

Numbers on map are story numbers.



A Word from Grannie Annie

Some Native American nations so valued their histories that they designated a tribal storykeeper. My mother filled that role in our family for decades, and before that, our family storykeeper was Mom's mother, my grandmother Randazzo.

Gramma Randazzo lived with us when I was a child. She didn't speak English well; however, at an early age I learned to say "Tell me a story about the Old Country" or "Tell me again the story about the baker's daughter who had dough under her fingernails." Then she would begin, in her broken English that made the stories even more fascinating to me. She told me stories about the olive groves on the family estate in Italy, about Grampa Randazzo's brothers and all their escapades, and about the family's early years as immigrants in Brooklyn. Mom carried on the tradition with her own repertoire of stories — about teaching in a one-room school, about blizzards and floods on the farm, and about rolling up the rug and inviting the neighbors over to dance.

I was fascinated by their tales and still am. I have written down many of their stories, saved them in keepsake books so they won't be lost. They're a treasure to read now, just as I had hoped, but I find I saved more than the stories themselves. Listening had been a way to be close to Gramma Randazzo. When I read Gramma's stories now, I remember sitting near her, hearing the stories from Gramma herself. When I read Mom's stories now, I remember aunts and uncles and cousins gathering around the kitchen table to listen. By sharing their stories, Gramma and Mom created a sense of family, a sense of closeness and security, that will stay with me forever.

Ann Guirrerri Cutler, The Original Grannie Annie, April 2006

What Are Your Stories of the 2020 Pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic is probably the most far-reaching event on our planet since World War II. It has united the world against a common unseen enemy; yet ironically it has isolated many of us in our own homes. Have you been recording your thoughts, feelings, and observations about this unique time in history? Preserving your experience of today's challenges and celebrations will be a priceless gift for future generations — and may someday inspire a Grannie Annie story!

Note to Parents and Educators

Many stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 15*, relate to “home”: traveling far from home to explore an uncharted land; walking home, nearly 2,000 miles, after being released as a prisoner of war; fleeing from home, where your freedom (or your life) is threatened; unexpectedly spotting a familiar face from home when you’re thousands of miles away.

What *is* “home”? Can a place be “home” without your family? What if you’re a teenager alone on the streets?

Family members in *Volume 15* must face questions like these: How shall I use my money and my power? Shall I sacrifice my dream in order to help others? Shall I stand up for someone who is being mistreated, even if it might cost me my life?

Volume 15 also includes fun — stories of pets, joyful surprises, and a spur-of-the-moment children’s backyard invention that has entertained millions.

The twenty-three stories in this volume represent the 403 stories submitted to The Grannie Annie this year. The stories take place in twelve U.S. states and ten countries on four continents — over a span of nearly 200 years. The stories entertain, educate, and inspire us, reminding us of the resilience of the human spirit. Our volunteer readers chose these stories with you and your family in mind, yet you may want to preview the stories before sharing them with young or sensitive readers.

We’re so pleased that you’ve joined us! We encourage you to discover and preserve some stories from your *own* family’s history. And we hope that you’ll join us again next year for The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration.

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton, Directors of The Grannie Annie

Listening is an act of love.

—Dave Isay, StoryCorps

Grannie Annie, Vol. 15

1. The Original Mountain Man

early 1800s;¹ land that is now Wyoming, USA

It was 1803, and a mountain man² named John Colter saw an advertisement by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in the town of Maysville, Kentucky. Lewis and Clark were looking for a healthy unmarried man who was a good hunter and a handy worker in the woods. They needed someone to explore land west of the Mississippi River. John signed up for the job immediately for five dollars a month. For several years John traveled with Lewis and Clark, mapping out rivers and meeting members of many Native American tribes.

In 1806 the men met two fur trappers from Illinois who wanted to explore what is now known as Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. The fur trappers agreed to join the men. As they were exploring Yellowstone, they were attacked by a Native American tribe called the Blackfeet. One of the fur trappers was hit by an arrow, so in revenge he shot and killed that Native American with his rifle.

The fur trappers sprinted away, and John was then surrounded by a tribe of furious warriors. These warriors told John that they were going to hunt him. John was stripped naked and was led a few hundred feet away for a head start. The Blackfeet told John to run as fast as he could — and he did. John swept across the prairie and began to outrun the Blackfeet. John hurried towards the river, swam underneath the river, came up under a pile of loose logs, and hid there.

The Blackfeet spent the night looking for John and then finally gave up. John was miles away from his original fort, but he went back still naked, surviving the journey by eating edible weeds.

John spent the next few years exploring mountains in the Tetons and Yellowstone. He decided to return to the East in 1810, swearing to never cross a Native American tribe again.

Brock Mitchell Roberts, distant cousin of John Colter; Missouri, USA

1. The setting of each story is noted below its title. In cases where the exact year isn't known, "c." (circa) indicates that the year given is approximate.

2. A mountain man was an explorer who lived in the wilderness, usually in the Rocky Mountains between 1810 and 1840, helping to open the American West to settlers.

2. The Walk Back Home

1865; from Elmira, New York, to Pink Hill, North Carolina, USA

Confederate soldiers who were captured by the Union Army¹ during the U.S. Civil War were often housed in prisons. One of the most famous was Elmira Prison in New York. Elmira Prison was a horrible, horrible place. Basically it was an open pen that housed thousands of captured soldiers. Rations were scarce because of the war and because the captors did not exactly care about their prisoners. Elmira was originally designed to hold 4,000 prisoners, but soon it became overloaded with 12,100 Confederate soldiers. There were rows and rows of tents filled with skinny — almost skeleton-like — prisoners. The harsh cold winters sucked the life out of the prisoners.

Blaney Blizzard, my great-great-great-grandpa, was one of the 9,130 prisoners to survive out of the 12,100 who entered Elmira. He was born January 24, 1842, and died August 15, 1914. When the war ended in 1865, both the North and the South had to release their prisoners, and Blaney was one of the thousands who made it.

When he was released, Blaney thought that he'd be put on a train, but he found out he had to walk all the way home from New York to Pink Hill, North Carolina. It took him two weeks to get home. While on his journey, he stole a wood wedge and used it to survive. He would chop wood to keep warm on the chilly summer nights. His family worried if he would make it back.

As Blaney made his way through three states, he hid in the wilderness and foraged for food. As he slowly made his way back home, the weather warmed, so he didn't have to face the cold. What he *did* have to battle was the unbearable southern humidity.

Blaney's heart ached for home, and he was determined to return home to his family. After two long weeks he finally reached Pink Hill, extremely malnourished, covered in bug bites, and suffering from sunburn. His family was relieved to see him alive.

Now I know where my name and my family stubbornness came from!

Blaney Blizzard; North Carolina, USA

1. In the U.S. Civil War, the Union Army fought for the United States, or "the North." The Confederate States Army fought for the Confederacy, a group of Southern states that had formed a new country.

3. The Reunion

c. 1895, Lviv Oblast, Ukraine; 1910, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Before World War I, my great-great-grandparents Mary and Theodore lived in a small village in Ukraine. Theodore's father was a wealthy landowner and lived in a large stone house with glass windows. Mary's mother was a seamstress, and every day Mary swept their dirt-floored home.

When Mary was six years old, she went with her mother to Theodore's house. Theodore's parents were sending him to a military high school, and Mary's mother sewed the uniforms he would wear at school. Mary thought how handsome Theodore looked in the uniform. It was 1895, and people thought that war was about to start between Ukraine's neighbors Russia and Poland.

Mary's family knew that war was coming. The army was taking some crops from farmers, and they were starting to draft people into the army. Mary's parents scraped together enough money to send Mary and her sister to America. It was hard to see them go, but Mary's parents knew their children would have more opportunities in America.

Mary and her sister walked all the way to Hamburg, Germany, where they boarded a ship to America. The trip took twenty-nine days by sailing ship. On the ship Mary got very seasick and she thought she couldn't make it, so she was very happy when the ship landed at Ellis Island, New York.

When the ship docked, Mary and her sister thought they had landed in a war zone, because they heard loud explosions nearby. They were kids and were scared as they walked off the ship to be processed so they could enter the United States. They calmed down when someone told them that it was the Fourth of July and the loud noises were fireworks.

Mary and her sister lived in an apartment with other people who had come to America from Ukraine. Mary worked as a maid in a tall building downtown. The girls stayed in New York for one year. Then they took a train to Chicago, where more people from Ukraine were living. Mary worked in a factory that made porcelain bowls.

One day in 1910, Mary was walking down a street in Chicago and saw a familiar face. Mary and Theodore stared at each other for a minute, then greeted each other with joy. They talked about home and their families. Theodore had come to America three years before, crossing the Atlantic Ocean in only fifteen days on a steamship. He had worked for two years in a coal mine in Pennsylvania before taking a train to Chicago, and now he worked in a steel mill.

Mary and Theodore talked all afternoon, and the next day they met and talked some more. After several months, they got married, and after a few more years they bought a two-flat¹ in Cicero, a suburb of Chicago, where they raised their

family. Theodore lived to the age of 103, and Mary to 98 — long enough to see three children, five grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren enter the world!

August Hromadka; Missouri, USA

1. A two-flat is a two-story building with an apartment unit on each floor. Two-flats were especially common in Chicago.

4. Guarding the Holy Shabbos

1906; Kishinev, Russia;¹ New York, New York, USA

Why would a sixteen-year-old have to sleep on a park bench?!

My great-great-grandfather Rabbi Shalom Yachnes was born in the year 1890 in Kishinev, Russia. He was a very happy boy. He was a typical boy until something happened that changed his life forever.

In the year 1906 there was a terrible pogrom² that killed most of his eleven siblings. His mother also was killed. Also, his beloved father, Avraham Abba, was wounded. Avraham was wondering what to do. He decided that the best place for his son was America.

“Shalom!” Avraham loudly called. “Come here.”

“Coming,” Shalom replied. He went to his father.

“Shalom, I am sending you to America.”

Shalom gaped in surprise at the shocking news. “But Totty (father), I don’t even know how to speak English!”

“It’s all right. G-d³ is with you. I’m sending you to Aunt Rosa’s nice comfortable house.”

“Okay,” Shalom reluctantly agreed.

The days flew by. It was time for Shalom to say goodbye to his father, and he had mixed feelings. He was going to miss his father, but he knew that Aunt Rosa was excitedly awaiting him, so he said a tearful goodbye to his father and climbed aboard the ship.

As the ship was rocking about, Shalom thought about what was awaiting him in America. After about three rough, nauseating weeks, people on the ship could see land ahead. After the ship docked, young Shalom took his one suitcase and went to Aunt Rosa’s house.

He trudged up the steps and knocked on the door. Aunt Rosa opened the door and exclaimed, “Hello!”

“Hello,” Shalom responded.

“Come on in,” Aunt Rosa said. Shalom collapsed onto a chair. “Shalom,” she said, “America is a lot like Kishinev, except here in America we work on Shabbos.”⁴

Shalom stood up and said, “If so, I will not stay here.” Shalom’s bag was still in the door when he stood up and walked briskly out the door, not knowing where to go.

Shalom went to lie down on a park bench. He fell asleep.

When he woke up, a Jewish man named Mr. Tobak, with a long white beard, was at his side.

“What is the matter?” Mr. Tobak asked. Shalom told him. “I see,” said Mr. Tobak, stroking his beard. “I will teach you chazzanus (the art of cantoring). I will also teach you shechita (how to slaughter animals for kosher meat), so you will never have to work on Shabbos.”⁵

My great-great-grandfather merited that he had a large family who are religious and shomer Shabbos (keep the Sabbath).⁶ I am proud of my great-great-grandfather for keeping all the mitzvos (commandments) and Shabbos, and always having trust in G-d.

Laylay Weinberg; New York, USA

1. The city that was Kishinev, Russia, is now Chişinău, the capital and largest city of Moldova.
2. A pogrom is an organized persecution or massacre (often led by the authorities) of a minority group. In this case, the pogrom was against Jews.
3. This incomplete spelling is a show of respect.
4. *Shabbos* means “the Jewish Sabbath,” a day of rest on which most work is forbidden by Jewish law.
5. Animals are not slaughtered on Shabbos, and cantoring does not involve the kinds of work that are forbidden on Shabbos.
6. Shalom’s having a large family who observed Shabbos was viewed as G-d’s reward for Shalom’s own Shabbos observance.

5. The Sugar Baroness of The Hill

1920s; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

This is a story of the Consolino family, as told by their granddaughter Jean Hutchinson. Their story had never been written down before now. It is a story of women's rights, immigration rights, survival, power, crime, and ultimately, the American Dream.

The 1920s, known as "The Roaring '20s," was a decade of change and tragedy in America. Women had just gotten the right to vote in 1920. That same year, prohibition of alcohol also became law. However, people still drank alcohol. The Great Depression would be coming very soon.

The Consolino family came to America and lived on the Italian "Hill"¹ in St. Louis, Missouri. They owned a dry-goods² store located where the famous Italian restaurant Zia's is today. My great-great-grandparents ran the store with their nine children. They lived on the second floor, above the store.

They soon started getting threats from the local crime group known as the Black Hand. The Black Hand threatened to kidnap the children unless the family paid them money. The Black Hand bombed the family's store twice, to prove they were serious. One of the bombs was so powerful that it knocked all of the children out of their beds!

Domenico Consolino died during this time. Jean believes one of the bombs might have hurt him. This left his wife, Domenica, to run the store and raise her nine children.

One of the goods the Consolinos sold was sugar. They sold *lots* of sugar! Why? Sugar was the main ingredient in making alcohol on The Hill. The Consolinos sold so much sugar that they had to hide all of it in the tunnels under the streets! This made the family a huge target for the Black Hand. The Black Hand would soon become known as the Mafia.

Jean thinks there might have been a meeting between Domenica Consolino and the Mafia. They must have allowed her to sell the sugar because she was a widow and had nine kids to take care of. She probably paid them money for protection. Then the family made a lot of money! Domenica Consolino became known as "the Sugar Baroness of The Hill."

The Sugar Baroness was a very powerful businesswoman. She used her power and money to help the community. During the Great Depression, many people had no jobs and little food. Domenica would give her neighbors store credit to buy food, even though she probably knew they would never be able to pay her back.

Domenica also gave a lot of her money to her church, St. Ambrose. When the church burned down, Domenica donated a lot of her money to help rebuild it. She gave so much that the church had "Domenico and Domenica Consolino" carved into the Italian marble on the back wall of the new building.

The Sugar Baroness of the Italian Hill is still remembered for selling sugar for moonshine during Prohibition, as well as for her generosity. Now you know the real story — and my powerful great-great-grandmother who made this all possible.

Sophia Sikes; Missouri, USA

1. The Hill is an area of St. Louis that was settled by immigrants, primarily from northern Italy.
2. A dry-goods store generally sells fabric, sewing supplies, clothing, and various small items — not hardware or groceries.

6. A Brave Girl

c. 1930; Cumberland Gap, Tennessee, USA

My great-great-grandma Nancy Young was a little girl who lived in Tennessee near the mountains during the time of the Great Depression. There was a coal mine close to her house. There she and her five siblings played a lot by taking turns riding down the tracks in the mine cart.

One day as Nancy got off the cart, her dress got underneath the cart. One of her siblings got into the cart and started the ride. But Nancy's head got run over when her sibling went down the cart tracks. You can imagine the pain Nancy was feeling, so her dad took her to the hospital.

While they were there, one black man got into a fight with a few white guys who didn't like black people. Nancy's dad didn't like the way they were treating the black guy, so he stood up for him. The white guys eventually hanged and killed my great-great-great-grandfather because he was standing up for the black guy.

At that time, only men had jobs and the women would take care of the children, so when Nancy's father died, her family didn't have a lot of money. Her mom couldn't afford to take care of the children, so she put them up for adoption. When Nancy's mom picked her up from the hospital, Nancy found out that her father was dead and all her siblings were gone. She was put up for adoption too after she went home.

Since the cart had run over Nancy's face, it was harder for her to get adopted, since she didn't look like the other kids there. When she was older, she was still at the orphanage. People went to get her and took her home to do work. When she was done, she had to go back to the orphanage because the people didn't adopt her — they just had her at their homes to do some work. On Christmas all Nancy would get was an orange, because no one would get her something expensive — or even a little wooden toy.

Nancy left the orphanage when she turned eighteen, and she got married shortly after. Nancy and her husband had three kids, and for years looked for her family from the past. Finally Nancy found one of her sisters, and two or three years later she found one of her brothers. After many more years she found her mom.

Years later, when my nana was young, she and Nancy (*her* nana) would sit, and Nancy would tell my nana about her life when she was little. Most people were very nice to her and were happy when she told stories. My great-great-grandma Nancy Young lived through the Great Depression and had a rough start as a kid, but she led a very happy life as a grown-up.

Elena R. Webb; Ohio, USA

7. The Birthday Wish

1937; Hodgen, Oklahoma, USA

Kids in 2020 might look forward to a hoverboard or a video game for their birthday. Some might even wish for a fancy new iPhone. This was not the case for Anna June.

It was June 25th in 1937, and Anna June was anxiously awaiting her seventh birthday, which was four days away. It was a hot afternoon in Oklahoma, and Anna June was making bread with her grandma. As she rolled the dough, she wondered about what she might want for her birthday.

Life in Oklahoma in 1937 was much different from the lives of kids today. 1930 had been just the beginning of the Great Depression. Most people in the country were very poor, and work was hard to find. People had to live on what they could grow or save.

Anna June thought long and hard about what she wanted, and she finally came up with the perfect idea: She wanted a store-bought can of pork and beans and a loaf of store-bought bread. As she and her grandmother were getting ready to put their bread in the oven, Anna June said to her grandma, “Have you ever had any food from the store before?”

“Like what, Anna June?” said Grandma.

“Well, have you ever had a can of pork and beans or a loaf of bread from the store?”

“No, but it would be nice” was all Grandma said.

When it was approaching June 26th, Anna June’s grandma had worked long and hard to reach the goal of \$1.50 so she could afford Anna June’s birthday presents. On June 28th, Anna June had the biggest smile, and she couldn’t wait to get her presents.

She woke up the next morning and she realized that it was her birthday. She sprinted out into her kitchen, and there sitting on the table were a can of pork and beans and a loaf of bread all nice and wrapped up in the plastic bag with a nice clip to hold it together. Anna June couldn’t believe her eyes. She screamed, “*This is the best birthday ever!*”

Her grandma walked into the kitchen, and she saw Anna June shedding tears of joy! Anna June asked her grandma to help her open the can and eat it all.

Ben Oetjen, great-grandson of Anna June; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Ava Hamilton; Missouri, USA



8. Fred's Decision

c. 1937; St. Charles, Missouri, USA

"Mommy, why don't we have any food?" a small child asked his mother outside Progress Mercantile, a local grocery store owned by Herman Frederick's family. It was late December of 1937, when crisp winter air flooded down the streets of St. Charles, Missouri, causing citizens to shudder.

A hungry crowd had gathered outside the store's windows. Gazing out through the glass, seventeen-year-old Herman Frederick, who went by "Fred," hated seeing so many people without anything to eat.

"Whatcha thinking?" questioned Margaret, Fred's twin sister.

"These people are so hungry. I can't just watch them starve out there while I have all this food in here, right? We should give them something, but Pa would be furious," he replied.

Margaret thought for a moment and finally told him, "Fred. You were voted 'most likely to succeed,' you have almost all of your necessary college funds, and you're just going to give that up to these . . . beggars?"

Fred had never thought of the people as "beggars." He simply considered them valued customers. He sighed, "But — "

"No 'buts,' Frederick. Do you want to go to college or not?!" Margaret's face turned redder as she spoke, her voice getting sterner.

"Yes! Yes, I want to go to college! But these people are going to starve if we don't do anything!" Fred exclaimed, hostility in his words.

"If you do anything, I'm not part of this. And this 'Great Depression' people are talking about is affecting the entire country! How in the world do you plan to save everyone in the country?!" She turned her back dramatically, expressing that she was completely serious.

Knowing that Margaret needed space, Fred went to the back of the store and started pacing. "I can listen to Pa and Margaret by going to college, or I can save the lives of these people," he thought out loud. "I guess it makes more sense to save these people, no matter the cost," Fred decided after a while, still unsure if it was the right decision.

He quickly jotted down a letter to his dad, apologizing for not going to college. He grabbed a small basket from the floor next to him and stuffed an assortment of grains into it. To avoid his sister, Fred had to sneak out the back entrance and dash past the side windows. Four people immediately spotted him coming around the corner holding a basket of bread, and sprinted in his direction, a look of gratitude on their faces.

"Everyone, please make a line, and I will be giving whoever I can something to eat."

The crowd did as he asked, and Fred slowly made his way down the line, giving people food along the way. After he was done, he looked back to the shop and saw Margaret glaring at him through the window. He shrugged and told himself, “Fred, you did the right thing.”

Allison Winkeler, great-great-granddaughter of Fred; Missouri, USA

9. The Lucky Escape

1939–1940; Brno, Czechoslovakia;¹ Rotterdam, The Netherlands

My great-grandmother Ruthie Small was a little girl in 1939. She was living in Czechoslovakia in a wonderful home, and life was good. One day her family got home to find their windows, mirrors, and chandeliers shattered! Ruthie's father went to synagogue that evening, and the windows there were shattered as well. That night became known as *Kristallnacht*,² and was the start of the Holocaust.

After that, Ruthie was scared of being beaten and was not allowed to go outside. She had to wear a yellow star on her clothing to show that she was a Jew. If she went outside without it, she risked being killed.

One day Ruthie's father was captured by a Nazi soldier. Ruthie's mother had a Nazi friend before the Holocaust had started. After Ruthie's father was captured, Ruthie's mother asked the friend to help get Ruthie's father out in exchange for ownership of their successful family business. The Nazi man said it would be difficult, but he would try. He warned that if he got Ruthie's father out, they must leave right away.

A few days after her father was captured, a Nazi burst through their door. Ruthie and her sister were home alone. The soldier yelled, "Where's the money?" Ruthie said she didn't know. He threatened to find it himself and shoved her aside. He began searching their home, wrecking everything. Ruthie's mom was clever — she had hidden the money in the bar of the curtains so nobody would find it. That soldier left upset, with no money.

Two months passed, and Ruthie's father was still not home. The family didn't have hope for his return.

The next day Ruthie's father escaped and came running home with bruises all over his face. Their family was so happy that he was finally home! After they hugged, Ruthie's mother said that they had to leave immediately. While the family rushed to leave, Ruthie's mom pulled her aside and gave her the money and jewelry from the curtain bars. She told Ruthie to hide those things under her shirt. Ruthie's mother said that since Ruthie was the youngest, the soldiers wouldn't check her, even if the family was stopped. Ruthie was not so sure the plan would work.

Ruthie's parents decided to leave for Holland.³ When they approached the border, the officers there searched everyone in Ruthie's family except her. To this day she doesn't know why they didn't search her, and she often wonders what would have happened to her family if they had.

After Ruthie's family arrived in Holland, they took a ship called *The Vendome* to America. The journey was dangerous, because the Nazis had put explosives in the water. If anyone tried to escape, their ship would explode! Luckily, the captain knew the exact path to take to avoid the explosives. Ruthie and her family made it to America safely and survived the Holocaust.

My great-grandmother still has her yellow star as a reminder of this scary time. She has it hanging on her wall to show everyone that she was lucky enough to escape the war.

Judah Weitzman; New York, USA

1. Today Brno is located in the Czech Republic, also known as “Czechia.”
2. *Kristallnacht*, known in English as “Night of Broken Glass,” happened throughout Germany and in parts of some other countries on November 9 and 10 in 1939.
3. “Holland” is an informal name for The Netherlands.

10. Railroad

1940s; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

As a kid in Philadelphia in the 1920s and 1930s, my great-grandma Ruth Hilger looked for adventure. She loved to climb, so she climbed all the trees and lampposts she could find. One day a police officer saw her on a lamppost and made her get down. He told her to never climb lampposts again.

But she kept climbing.

Ruth was in high school when World War II started. Boys and men were leaving to go to war, and there weren't enough people to work in jobs that men usually did. One day Ruth's neighbor asked her to work at the railroad. Ruth was excited. When she told her father, he said, "No young lady would work at the railroad."

This made Ruth so mad that she shouted, "I ain't no lady — and I'm going!" She ran out the door before she could get into big trouble.

First Ruth worked as a switch tender in a tower. After she had worked on her first Friday, her boss said, "We'll see you tomorrow."

Ruth thought, "Working on a Saturday?" But she realized that the railroad was always open. She didn't mind, because she was using her money to pay for college.

Ruth felt really bored while working in the tower. She saw men working as brakemen on the top of train cars. They would jump down off the top of a train, run across the freight yard, and jump onto another train to keep the trains moving. That was the job that Ruth wanted — climbing and jumping and running. Her bosses wouldn't give her that job, but they needed someone to work manual switches in the yard. The men weren't sure if a woman could do it. Ruth said, "Let me try."

On her first day in the new job, she learned how to use an oil switching lamp to signal the trains. Between trains, she did schoolwork. Ruth found new adventures working in the freight yard. If she had to get to the other end of the freight yard, she would jump onto a slower train and catch a ride.

One day a train with a heavy load was coming. Ruth was signaling the train to keep moving, but the train was slowing down. Another train was coming the other way on the tracks! Ruth had to run to pull switches. As she came back across the tracks, an electric train sped by about ten feet behind her on the wrong track. Ruth didn't even hear it. She could have been turned to mush!

Most people didn't expect to see a woman working on the railroad. One night Ruth was talking to a man who had snuck onto a train. After a while he said, "Oh my gosh! You're a woman!?" Another day a photographer asked if he could take

Ruth's picture throwing a switch. Ruth's picture ended up being on a poster as "Molly Pitcher,"¹ showing the work that women were doing on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Magdalene Gilbertson; Ohio, USA

1. "Molly Pitcher" was a nickname given to a woman said to have fought in the American Revolutionary War. The name came to be applied to women who contribute to society in non-traditional ways.

11. A Child's Nightmare

1944; Wiener Neustadt, Austria

It was 1944. I had just turned five and was full of energy, my mind full of interesting thoughts. . . . I had drawn my new favorite drawing — a boy walking through a lively market. Then my mom walked into my room and told me to get into bed. I lifted up the covers and curled in bed, admiring the quilt blanket my mother had sewn for me long ago. I closed my eyes and listened to my mother singing my favorite lullaby, my mind and body slowly relaxing and finally falling asleep.

What I dreamt after that was amazing: I was on the street outside my apartment . . . when I suddenly shot up into the air and was over the whole city. I was flying! I glided over the city, wind brushing against my face, my shirt waving in the wind. Then I saw something — far off in the distance. They were just specks getting closer and closer.

I woke up with sirens blasting through the city. They were getting louder and louder — my ears felt like they were about to burst. The door opened, and my mom ran in. She grabbed my hand, and we headed for the street. Hundreds of people were running through the street — some crying, some screaming — but they all headed the same way, toward where the bomb shelter was.

Suddenly I felt my hand slip from my mother's hand, and everything was silent. I looked up in the sky and saw three gray planes flying over my head. Then they dropped cylinder shapes from the bottom. All at once, parts of the city blasted into flames. I expected to hear screaming, but I heard nothing. As I looked around, I saw nothing — no adults, no kids, no living thing. All I saw was the planes bombing the city, the houses blasting into flame, and complete havoc.

But I just stood. I couldn't move. I was stuck, watching as the flames grew and grew, getting closer and closer. But I was frozen in place. Everything felt eerie — it was so unusual that there was no sound. I just stood there, my head spinning.

And then I snapped out of it. I quickly ran into my house, into my room — and hid under my nice quilt blanket lying on my bed.

Only then did I notice that I was scared. I could feel the sweat dripping from my neck down my shirt, giving chills throughout my body. I huddled up and hugged my knees, shaking like crazy. I closed my eyes and slowly rocked myself to sleep.

This story is about my grandfather, who grew up in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, during World War II. After this incident my grandfather was severely traumatized — he could not speak anymore. Eventually he learned to speak again, but to this day he still stutters.

Many years later, after immigrating to the United States, he met one of the U.S. Air Force pilots who had bombed his city.

Milan Oosthuizen; Colorado, USA

12. The Pawfect Dog Walker

1944; Newark, New Jersey, USA

Many things are different today from the way they were in 1944, when my great-uncle Harold was a child. No one had a smartphone, or even a cell phone, and kids usually walked themselves to school. But my great-uncle Harold was not a usual kid — he was walked to school every day by his faithful dog, Rex.

In many ways Rex was a typical family dog. He loved barking at — and chasing — cats and squirrels. Rex loved fetch and tug-of-war and was very cuddly. And like any lawful family pet, Rex always protected his family at all costs. He also always enjoyed walking by himself around the neighborhood.

Rex was a six-year-old German shepherd when Harold started kindergarten at the local public school. My great-uncle and his family lived on top of the family's butcher shop. My great-grandmother and great-grandfather worked day and night at the butcher shop and relied on Rex to help with one very important daily activity: walking Harold to and from school.

In the morning Harold woke up, brushed his teeth, ate breakfast, and then walked the long three blocks to the public school with a friend — his dog. Rex would wait at the school's front yard until he saw Harold enter the school building — and only after Harold was safely inside would the German shepherd, instead of taking a leisurely stroll, walk straight back home three blocks away.

Walking Harold to school every day, and then back home, may not seem like a spectacular feat, but what happened at the *end* of the school day was nothing short of miraculous. On the first day of school every September, my great-grandmother would tell Rex when it was time to leave the house to pick Harold up, and from that day on, Rex knew when school was ending and when he needed to leave the house to get Harold. At the end of the school day, when it was time to pick my great-uncle up from school, this intelligent dog left the house through his little doggy door and walked back to the school. All the kids loved Rex and would pet him all the time. Rex made sure Harold always walked on the inside of the sidewalk, while Rex walked on the outside.

Rex was such a loyal family member and a great friend because when you're the butcher's dog you get only the best meat scraps.

Matis Kahn; New York, USA

Illustrator: Sophia Fernandez; Missouri, USA



13. A New Beginning

1945; Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

It was Indiana — late spring, 1945. My grandma Shirley was five years old when her life changed forever. It's a story too often told: A couple starts their life dreaming of forever. Unfortunately this dream turned into a nightmare. Times were hard, and Grandma's parents began to argue. These arguments grew into horrible fights. Great-grandfather left, leaving great-grandmother to care for six children. Seeing no other options, she took the children to an orphanage. Grandma was sent to an Indianapolis orphans' home. One might think an experience such as this would harden the soul of a young child, but to this day Grandma is full of love and joy.

Grandma smiles. "It looked like a castle with iron black fencing and an extravagant playground." Grandma had never seen anything so wonderful. "All of the adults were so welcoming. The long white staircase was so beautiful to see!" She tells how it was so big that it divided the room. Girls could use one side, and there was a separate side for the boys.

Grandma was given colorful new clothing. She didn't even mind that she had to share clothes, especially when it came her turn to wear the blue-and-white-checked knee-length dress. She had never seen anything quite so pretty. Grandma fell in love with the people and life at the orphanage.

Grandma's eyes light up when she talks about the entertainment! She had never had games, or kids her own age, to play with. Here she could play board games any time she wished and run free on the playground. But by far the movie night was Grandma's favorite. To this day Peter Pan brings a smile to her face and a twinkle to her eye. Grandma insists that Peter Pan was not as we know him today. Grandma remembers Peter Pan as a girl, six feet tall, with extraordinary green high heels!

Grandma loves to share her experience, but like all things her time at the orphanage had to come to an end. The day came for Grandma to find a new home. She was excited, but her soon-to-be new parents were even more thrilled to be getting such a smart, beautiful little girl.

The day before the adoption Grandma received a horrible haircut, and she feared her new parents may not want this odd-looking child. Grandma's first memory of her time with her parents involves their trip to buy new shoes for her — and her throwing up in their car. Grandma quickly realized that her new parents would love her no matter how she looked or what she did — puke and all!

Grandma often wonders what would have happened if she had never been given up for adoption, but she never doubts that being sent to the orphanage was one of the best things to happen in her life. She smiles wide and offers the best advice to anyone who will listen: Sometimes the toughest trials of life are the best opportunities for a new beginning.

Olivia Young; Missouri, USA

14. Freedom

c. 1945; from Henan Province to Xiamen, Fujian Province, People's Republic of China, and Changhua, Formosa¹

I still remember that dreadful day — the day when I ran miles and miles across China. I was still sleeping when Mama shook me awake. “They’re coming,” she said. “The Communists are coming.”

I gasped. I knew what that meant. My family and I were part of the Kuomintang, which meant that we were against the rule of Communism and believed in free rights. My family lived in Henan, a Chinese province. We knew there was a civil war between Kuomintang and the Communists. My parents had prepared to flee when the time came. The time never came. The Communists killed my Baba in battle, leaving me fatherless. We then decided to send my younger brother, Yu Quan Sun, to my grandmother's house to be safe, since he was not old enough to take the long journey.

I was very scared of what was to come. Mama and I were the only ones going. Our family — one of the few families we knew that believed in freedom — was shamed and poor. We started our journey from Henan to Xiamen on a horse, but when we ran out of food we had to eat the horse. Mama always told me she was full and would give me whatever food she had, but I soon came to realize that Mama was soon going to die if she didn't eat. Day by day we trudged along forests and rivers, eating what we could. Days became weeks, and weeks became months. I started to lose hope.

When we finally made it to Xiamen, there were Communists trying to find escapees. I thanked the skies that we got across — safe onto the boat. On the boat Mama said, “Yu Hsueh Gang, things will not always be hard, and they will definitely not always be easy, but you must stay strong, my boy.” Ten-year-old me just did not understand. I tried hard to be happy without my brother, Quan Sun.

Then one day I woke up to the beautiful coast of Formosa, now called Taiwan. I saw the dancing wind like nymphs playing in the water. I wished Quan Sun and Baba could be here to see. The breeze seemed to lift my worries. Hand in hand with Mama, I stepped out of the boat. I felt strong, I felt brave, I felt like me.

Who am I? I am a Taiwanese survivor of Communist rule. But more important, I am someone who has fought for my freedom. I am Yu Hsueh Gang.

David Jen, grandson of Yu Hsueh Gang; New Jersey, USA

1. Formosa is now called “Taiwan.”

15. Bull's Eye

c.1952; Dayton, Tennessee, USA

One summer day in the early 1950s, in my hometown of Dayton, Tennessee, my brother Ronnie and I were in our front yard. I had four other brothers, but I was closest in age to Ronnie. I was six, and he was seven. The two of us played together all the time.

On this day we made a makeshift bow, three arrows, and a small target that we nailed to a tree. We found sticks and sharpened them with a knife to make the arrows. I shot first and then ran to get the arrows for Ronnie.

Ronnie's turn was next. When I thought he was finished, I ran to get his arrows. But I looked back and saw he still had one arrow. He had it nocked and ready to shoot. He let go and the arrow zoomed toward the target. A gust of wind blew it off course, and the arrow sailed right at me and lodged in my left eye. I was shocked. The arrow fell out, and I slapped my hand to my face.

"Ronnie, you shot my eye out!" I tried to open my eye — but it hurt like fire. The pain faded away, but I couldn't see out of my left eye. I rushed into the house and shakily took my hand off my face.

I found my mom in the kitchen. "Ronnie shot me in the eye!" I yelled.

Mom tried to keep me calm while she called my dad at work and he came home to help. My parents took me to the eye doctor right away. I wondered if I would ever see out of my left eye again.

The doctors performed surgery to save my eye, but the nerves were dead. I made several trips back to the doctor, but there was no hope. I was blind in that eye.

I adjusted to having only one eye, and I played sports. I played every sport! My friends at school didn't abandon me, though occasionally they would laugh and make fun of my eye. For some reason I always thought, "I'm special. I have one eye, and they don't."

If you're not used to seeing out of two eyes and instead have only one, you adjust. As I got older, there were other activities I tried, and I didn't think about not having two eyes. For example, I rode motorcycles. I had a fear of flying, so I took flying lessons. After a while I even got my pilot's license, though I am not allowed to fly a commercial plane because of my disability.

I never let my one eye get in the way of what I wanted to do. And now, over sixty years later, I've forgiven my brother and am grateful for all the things I've done with only one eye.

Benny Bierman, grandson of the narrator; Missouri, USA

16. The Back Seat

c. 1958; Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

It was 1958, I was eleven, and my family was preparing for our one and only family vacation for the year. Our destination was Washington, DC, but we had to drive down through Arkansas, across the south, and then up to DC.

In Arkansas we always stay at the home of Harold, my dad's cousin. It was a long drive, but we were excited to finish our journey for the day. Finally we arrived! Harold's house was a beautiful brick with a black door and a tall chimney. My dad hadn't seen his cousin since he was a little boy, and he was stoked to see him!

Harold told us, "I need to take this boy that works at the house home. You can tag along if you would like."

The boy who got into the back of the rusty station wagon was a young black boy. I got in the back seat with him, and my dad sat in front with Harold.

We started driving. Then Harold asked me to come sit in front with them.¹

I said, "No, I'm okay."

He asked again.

I replied, "No, really, I have more room back here."

Harold pulled the station wagon over and talked to my dad in a quiet voice so that I could not hear. I was so scared that my heart was beating as fast as a cheetah. I was starting to get worried. I really wanted to know what they were saying.

My dad stared me in the eyes and said, "Son, come sit in front with us."

Without another word I went up front with my dad and Harold.

We dropped the little boy off at his house, and then we drove back to the beautiful brick house. This time I sat in the back seat the whole time, and they did not say anything. I wondered why Harold wanted me to come sit in front with them only on the way there and not on the way back.

Later that day my dad came over to me and whispered, "Son, the reason Harold had you come and sit in the front seat was because he did not want a white boy and a black boy sitting together."

I was so mad! I could not believe it.

My dad continued, "I know it was not right, but I did not want to get in a fight or anything like that."

From that day on, I never forgot that moment.

The lesson my grandpa (the narrator of the story) learned from that experience was to never be a racist and to never treat black people as Harold did.

Beckett Anderson; Missouri, USA

1. At this time most cars had bench-style front seats, which could seat three people comfortably.

17. Sliding Away in the Early '60s

c. 1960; Syracuse, New York, USA

One excellent and fresh summer day in 1960 Syracuse, New York, ten-year-old John, his brother Lewis, friend Robbie, and three others were looking for something to do. They decided that backyard camping sounded fun.

Before the boys could camp, they needed a tent. John realized that they could save some cash if they just made a tent from some plastic tarp. John and Lewis knew they could get tarp from their dad, who worked in painting and construction. Their dad agreed, and soon they had their tarp.

The tarp was dirty and covered with dried paint, so the boys had to clean it. They took the tarp and laid it out on a slowly sloping hill to clean it. Then they ran a long hose down the dirty tarp and turned the water on. The rushing water swooped all the paint and debris off the now-beautiful tarp.

The shiny tarp called to Lewis. He got butterflies in his stomach as he flew down the tarp. After that, his nerves were gone, and he was filled with excitement. The boys knew they had just discovered something awesome. Amazed and worried, a nearby neighbor saw the commotion and called the news.

The news sent a cameraman to take some pictures, because no one had ever heard of this activity before. The cameraman instructed the boys to all slide at once while he waited at the bottom. The kids told him that was a bad idea. That cameraman had no idea how fast the boys could go.

All at once, the group slid down the slippery tarp, and someone slammed right into the cameraman, and the camera went flying into the air. What goes up must come down — this time, onto John's head. Luckily he wasn't knocked unconscious, but boy was he dizzy!

The cameraman did a successful retake, and the clip made it onto the local news. John's neighbor Robbie gave it a name and introduced the world's first "slip n slide."

Hunter Beckmann, grandson of John; Missouri, USA

18. Ridge on the Bridge

1960; Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia¹

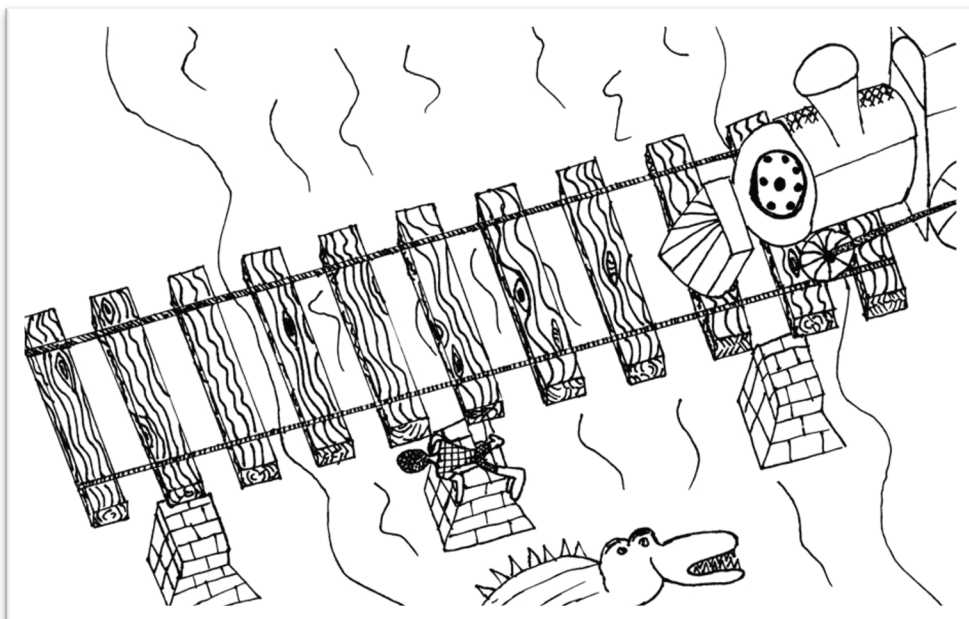
In the spring of 1960, in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia (modern-day Zambia), my *sabba* (my grandfather) had a near-death experience. At age nine he was invited to spend the day fishing at the Kafue River with his best friend Rico and Rico's family. Above the river a narrow train bridge connected neighboring countries, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia. Deciding that if they crossed the bridge they could brag to their friends that they had visited a different country, my sabba and Rico climbed up the narrow train tracks.

Balancing twenty feet above hippo- and crocodile-infested water, my sabba and Rico froze in terror as they heard the thundering of an approaching train. The sound of the whistle reverberated off the metal-truss bridge, making them uncertain as to which direction the sound was coming from — and worse, in which direction the train was headed.

Rico's mother, shouting for the boys to run off the tracks, was heard above the blare of the train. Ahead of my sabba by around forty feet, Rico managed to beat the train, racing off the metal rails. Rico's mother shrieked, and the train roared as it neared my sabba.

Seeing the train advancing toward him, my sabba had a decision to make. With wild animals swimming in the river below, jumping off the tracks and into the water was not an option. The train took up nearly all the width of the slim tracks, so wedging himself up against the rail was also not an option.

My sabba was forced to climb down a few feet onto the ledge of one of the cement pillars that held the bridge. Forced to crouch down in a ball on an eighteen-inch-wide ridge, my sabba held on with all his might. Looking down, my sabba saw the wild animals teeming below.



Rushing by him, the train swayed in the wind, almost knocking him over the edge. For the ten scariest seconds of his life, as the cargo train blasted forward, my sabba held on. Surging forward, the train lurched past him, my sabba swaying and bending in the rushing wind.

When it was quiet again, my sabba unfolded his body and climbed off the ridge back onto the train tracks. He slowly made his way off the tracks to the waiting crowd below.

Benjamin Nathan Mark; New York, USA

Illustrator: Carissa Mitchell; Missouri, USA

1. In 1960, Northern Rhodesia was a protectorate of the United Kingdom. In 1964 it became the independent republic of Zambia.

19. The Border of Berlin

1971, 1990; East Berlin, East Germany

I crossed over to East Berlin to talk with theology professor Heinrich Fink. He was a nice man who claimed to be both a Communist and a Christian. That's what interested me. He and I had a long, enjoyable conversation, and I learned a lot.

Then I went back to Checkpoint Charlie, the famous border between East Berlin and West Berlin. When I put my passport on the table, I was immediately surrounded by guards and taken into a room. Once there, I was questioned threateningly. I had to take everything out of my pockets, sit down, and answer every question they asked. They went through my date book, and asked me why I was in Berlin, what I was doing, and how long I had been there.

Through the window I could see the Checkpoint Charlie guard station — maybe forty yards away. I could even see the silhouettes of the American soldiers there, but it seemed a world away. In 1971 the United States did not have a diplomatic relationship with Communist East Germany. The guards could have put me in jail, and I wouldn't have had any recourse. Fortunately, after about an hour, they let me go.

I can remember breathing hard, stumbling through the no man's land as I left Checkpoint Charlie with the aching feeling in my legs that you get after you've been really afraid.

I thought a lot about that experience afterwards, but I still couldn't explain why the guards had singled me out and treated me so harshly.

After the Berlin Wall¹ came down, I went back to East Germany in 1990 to visit some people, including the man I had talked with in 1971, Heinrich Fink. He was no longer a professor, but the president of the university. I knocked on his door and introduced myself. Heinrich Fink remembered me and even invited me to dinner. We had an enjoyable evening together.

I returned to the States, and about two months later I saw a *Time* magazine article entitled "The Four Most Dangerous Stasi Agents in East Germany." The Stasi were the East German secret police. I looked at that article, and there was a picture of Heinrich Fink — the man whom I had talked with in 1971, and whom I had visited nineteen years later in 1990. No one had known he was a Stasi member. The article said that for twenty years he had been informing on pastors, theologians, and scholars in East Germany. When the university found out, Heinrich Fink was immediately fired.

I realized that it was probably Heinrich Fink who had called the border guards and told them about my visit. That's why I had gotten roughed up at the border. Heinrich Fink had probably suspected that I was a member of the CIA,² so he told the guards to go through my materials, find out who I really was, and intimidate me.

Many years later a German friend of mine was put in charge of the Stasi files. It turns out that I had a file. The only instance recorded is the time I visited with Heinrich Fink.

Adeline Edwards, granddaughter of the narrator; New Jersey, USA

1. The Berlin Wall was a concrete barrier that separated West Berlin from East Berlin and from East Germany, which surrounded Berlin. The wall was constructed in 1961 and was taken down in 1989, when East Germany and West Germany were reunited into one country — Germany.
2. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) of the United States government gathers information related to the country's national security.

20. Crossed Paths

c. 1980; Giza, Egypt

Here's the story of how my grandma emotionally connected with a young child that she didn't know — who barely even spoke her language! — in another country.

About forty years ago, my grandma Lyn was staying in Egypt by herself for a while for her work. Of course, she was wearing her necklace of a cross that she always wore and still has to this day. The necklace was given to her by her best friend Carolista. In Egypt, Islam was — and still is — the official religion. Christians there were persecuted, and they lived in fear.

Near the end of her trip, my grandma Lyn decided to go to visit the pyramids of Giza before she flew out of Egypt. She was wearing her special necklace and carrying some loose Egyptian pounds and U.S. one-dollar bills. (She never liked to take her wallet with her on a solo trip.) Additionally, she decided not to go on a tour bus or with a group of tourists, so she could have a tranquil visit.

On her arrival, she saw the area where all of the tourists were dropped off to see the pyramids. Around this place young kids were begging for money. Why? Sadly, it has long been common for poor Egyptian children to beg the tourists for money near the pyramids. Obviously my grandma felt horrible for these children, but she thought she could give them money on her way out.

Grandma Lyn then started the quarter-mile walk to the Great Pyramid. Suddenly, out of nowhere, she heard the sound of footsteps. She turned around slowly to see if *something*, or *someone*, was following her.

It was a young thin boy, who was about seven. My grandma thought he was just wanting money, so she kept walking to the pyramid. When she arrived, she saw that the boy had followed her all the way there. She stopped and pulled out some money to give to him. She never would have expected what happened next. The child violently shook his head *no* to the offer, but pointed at something — her necklace.

He pointed at her necklace with a cross on it and said, "Same. We're the same." She looked closer at his hand that he pointed at her and saw a cross, just like hers, tattooed onto the skin between his thumb and forefinger. She was moved to tears.

This incredible story is important to me because it shows that no matter where we come from or how different we are, our religious beliefs bring us together to show that we all are more similar than we think. That little boy who practiced Christianity in a country where it was dangerous to be Christian followed my grandma all that way because he saw that they both were similar even though they led very different lives.

This event changed my grandma Lyn's life, because she has never forgotten this boy and still tears up at the story to this day.

Carolista Walsh; North Carolina, USA

21. From Lincoln to Cadillac

1984; Headland, Alabama, USA

It was 1984 in Headland, Alabama. Flowers were sprouting from the ground, and the air was warm with the joy of spring. Headland is a small town in southern Alabama, surrounded by flat fields as far as the eye can see. It has a population of about 3,000. Modest wood-frame houses sit between towering pecan trees. Headland has a town square, and within a few blocks are shops, several churches, and most of the population.

In one of these little houses lived the Van Dykes, a family that was friends with my grandfather. The two families were close — so close that my mother and grandfather trusted the Van Dykes to care for a baby goat that they were bottle-feeding, while my mother and her family visited Washington, DC.

The Van Dykes' youngest son, Jason, fell in love with June Bug, the baby goat, and then he desperately wanted his own pet goat. He talked his father into buying two nanny goats, and since they didn't have a pen yet, my mother's family returned the favor of goat-sitting.

By the time the Van Dykes' pen was built, the goats had multiplied to seven. A set of triplets and a set of twins had been welcomed earlier that year by the two nanny goats.

The weekend before Easter, Mr. Van Dyke drove up to my mother's house in his truck with a trailer in tow. He started loading up the goats with my grandfather's help. The cry of a scared baby goat sounds like a human child screaming. My mother was in her room, sobbing. After Mr. Van Dyke and the goats were gone, my grandfather comforted my mother by saying that the goats would be back in no time and that the Van Dykes did not know what they were getting into.

At the Van Dykes', the goats had a small pen, about the size of a bedroom. It was nothing compared to the acres of land the goats had enjoyed at my mother's home. The nanny goats were unfazed by the new fence surrounding them. Jumping it with ease, they destroyed several neighbors' gardens. The Headland Police received three separate complaints about the Van Dykes' hungry goats.

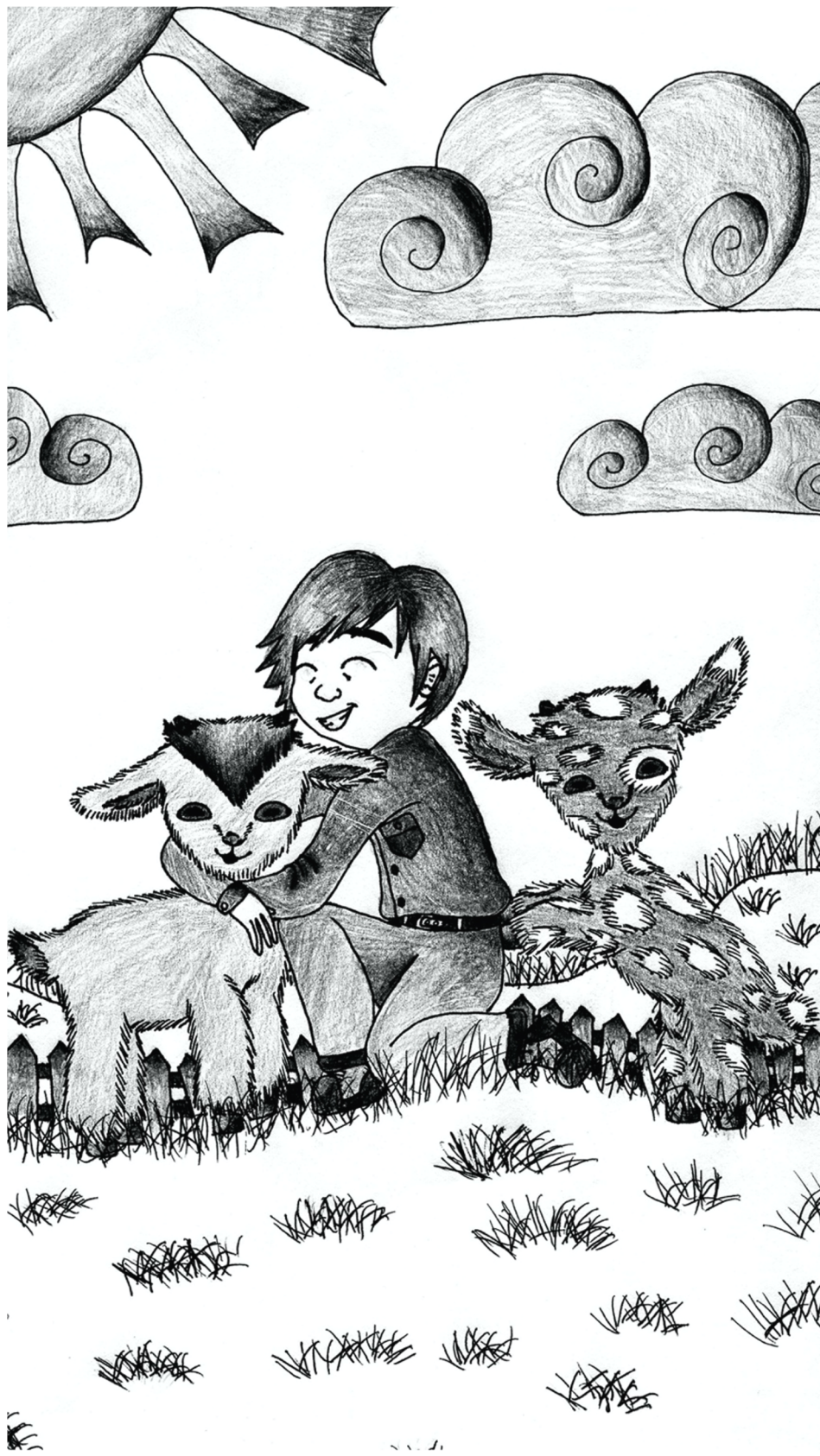
Behind the Van Dykes' house was the First United Methodist Church of Headland. The pair of nanny goats escaped for the fourth time on Easter Sunday. When Mr. Van Dyke came out of the church, he found the mischievous goats. They had spent the morning jumping from Lincoln to Cadillac and from Cadillac to Lincoln in the church parking lot.

That afternoon, Mr. Van Dyke took the goats back to my mother's house, where they would live happily for the rest of their lives.

Along with getting his goat, Mr. Van Dyke had gotten angry neighbors and more than he had bargained for.

Sara Naylor; Alabama, USA

Illustrator: Erica M. Kalista; Missouri, USA



22. A Day in Whale's Tale

1992; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

You may have thought some of your ancestors had it hard, but I bet it is nothing compared to what my mom went through. My mom was homeless on the streets of Pittsburgh as a teenager. You can't imagine what she went through before that. This is her story.

I walk down the street and count my earnings — \$23.78. Another day of being homeless is not another day you want to live — at least not in Whale's Tale in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. I am a homeless teenager in Pittsburgh. My money might not even be enough to get dinner. When you're homeless, every day is a struggle, a fight for survival.

My friend Crosby's parents should be picking me up soon though. They had let me live with them for a bit, but they couldn't keep me. They said they would try to find a charity for me. I miss living with them. Every day with them I had a place to live. I wish I still had a home.

I see a car coming down the road. I think it's Crosby. I wave and run over, but I realize it's the wrong car, and a person spits at my feet. Hunger claws at my stomach. I almost want to yell after them. This is my life. It isn't fun being homeless.

I see Crosby's parents driving down the street. I wave. Crosby waves back, and I get in the car. I ask where we are going.

"It's a surprise," says Crosby's mom.

I can't wait to know where I'm going. I'm afraid I might be disappointed, so I try guessing a bit. "Is it a charity?"

"Not quite," whispers Crosby's mom.

My friend and I talk in the back while the parents drive.

As we arrive, I see a sign saying HOMELESS CENTER FOR TEENS, and I know for once I have a place to stay. That's a feeling I haven't had before. It feels nice to have a home.

Clive Besen; Colorado, USA

23. The 78th Floor

2001; New York, New York, USA

It was a beautiful Tuesday in September. Everyone woke up for work. My cousin Ari Schonbrun worked at Cantor Fitzgerald in the World Trade Center. When he was leaving for work, his wife stopped him and told him to stay and help fill out his son's school assignment. It took twenty minutes, and Ari was so nervous that he would be late for work.

Those twenty minutes saved Ari's life, because if he had been at work on time, he would have been in his office at Cantor Fitzgerald at the top of the World Trade Center. Because Ari was late for work, he was only on the 78th floor when the plane hit the first tower.¹

Ari was changing elevators, and smoke and fire were everywhere! He saw a woman who was one of his co-workers, and she was badly burned. Ari helped her down all of the stairs, which were very smoky. The ambulance came and she was put in it. Ari was about to go back into the building to help other co-workers, but the woman said to the ambulance driver, "This man is coming with us. We are not leaving without him!" The woman convinced Ari to go with her, so Ari went with the woman. If he had gone back into the building, it would have fallen with him inside. So that day, Ari's life was saved two times.

Out of the 662 people in the Cantor Fitzgerald office, Ari Schonbrun was one of only four people to survive. Those experiences changed his life and the life of everyone else who heard Ari's story. Because of his experiences, he changed his priorities and made sure to put family first. Now Ari goes around telling his story to others to inspire them to enjoy every day of life.

Jake Bench; New York, USA

1. On September 11 (9/11) of 2001, terrorists crashed a passenger airliner into each of the 110-story Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. In less than two hours both of the towers collapsed.

Illustrators of *Volume 15*

- 7. Ava Hamilton; Missouri, USA — “The Birthday Wish”
- 12. Katie Richardson; Missouri, USA — “The Pawfect Dog Walker” (cover)
- 12. Sophia Fernandez; Missouri, USA — “The Pawfect Dog Walker” (story)
- 18. Carissa Mitchell; Missouri, USA — “Ridge on the Bridge”
- 21. Erica M. Kalista; Missouri, USA — “From Lincoln to Cadillac”

Invitation to Participate

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration invites you to discover, write, and submit a story from your family’s history. Your story can be humorous, tragic, inspirational — it can be about *anything* that happened in your family before you were born. The annual submission deadline is February 1. Complete details, including the guidelines and required submission form, are available on The Grannie Annie’s website: TheGrannieAnnie.org/SubmitStories.html

Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2020 and Their Story Titles

Bina Sarah Aaronson — “The Dreadful Trip to Virginia”
Mo Akerman — “Baseball Zaidy”
George Albert — “The Carnegie Fire”
Alexander Albrecht — “Mom and Dad’s Engagement”
Eliot Allen — “Water Ways”
Eveline Allen — “My First Ancestor to America”
Yael Aminov — “The Special White Suit”
Beckett Anderson — “The Back Seat”
Dylan Asher — “Hungarian Border Patrol”
Maayan Asher — “The Great Escape”
Miriam Devorah Atlas — “Salute to My Great-Grandfather”
Rebecca Avila — “Losing the Battle But Not the War”
Sara Baalhaness — “The Blizzard That Caused a Lot of Issues”
Rivka B. Babayev — “The USSR”
Megan Bader — “Fresca, the Escape Artist”
Chase Baker — “Bike Wreck”
Temima Balakhaneh — “Stranger Danger”
Devora Balsam — “I’m Still on the Bus!”
Jalyn Baysden — “The Miraculous Story of a Blonde American Girl”
Maya Beale — “How I Got My Name”
Rivki Becker — “The Frightening Guard”
Hunter Beckmann — “Sliding Away in the Early ’60s”
Rebecca Bell — “Family, Farm, and Fishing”
Jake Bench — “The 78th Floor”
Yaffa Bensoussan — “Money with Care”
Cole Bergkoetter — “Beginners’ Luck”
Jon Bernt — “Trapping Along the Cedar River”
Clive Besen — “A Day in Whale’s Tale”
Benny Bierman — “Bull’s Eye”
Hannah Bishop — “My Grandpa’s Life”
Palmer Bishop — “The Great Bean Escape”
CJ Blackwelder — “The Water Boy”
Nicklaus Blair — “The Lost Adventure of My Mom”
Wesley Blair — “Hurricane Waves and Piers Don’t Mix”
Jamie Blass — “From Morocco to America”
Blaney Blizzard — “The Walk Back Home”
Tzvi Bodlander — “The Boras, Sweden, Jewish Community”

Jasper Bolster — “The WWII Hitchhiker”
Skye Borchers — “Stray Cats”
Hannah Borukhov — “Shampoo Switcheroo”
Kaden Bradley — “The Magical Buffalo”
Leora Braun — “The Running Chicken”
Madison Brennan — “My Grandpa’s Life Aboard the USS *Dennis J. Buckley* During World War II”
Zach Brown — “Donald’s Experience of the Great Depression”
Michael Buckley — “A Slithery Situation”
Brenden J. Burnell — “Banana Bike Bash”
Aria Burnett — “The Life My Granny Lived”
Addison Burroughs — “The Family Tradition”
Asher Calm — “Finding a Lost Dog”
Eli Capdeboscq — “The Ozark Incident”
Gabriella J. Caraglia — “Marge and Joe’s Blind Date”
Nick Carapella — “The Cold Catastrophe”
Lilly Anne Cardenas — “The Jam-Packed Journey”
Cash Carroll — “The Story of John Alfred Wilson”
Abi Carstarphen — “Father’s Famous Food”
Seth Chapell — “Train Wreck”
Azriel Chasser — “Bombs Away!”
Galila Tamar Chein — “The Miracles of Keeping Shabbos”
Hailey Cioc — “Moving to the United States”
Jamison Clampitt — “The Tumbling Trampoline”
Elias Clark — “Bill Clark Homes”
Adam Jonah Cohen — “The Sinking of a Ship”
Tova Cohen — “Making Someone More Frum”
Ethan Coleman — “Enough to Kill a Horse”
Sydney Collins — “Adventure on the Rapids”
Makayla Conklin — “Moving for Someone Special”
Caleb Conwell — “Unsafe Jumping”
Avery Coram — “To Thailand from America with Love”
Anna Corrigan — “Devious Dan and the Doublemint Gum”
Bronson Crawford — “The Wedding in Aisle 5”
Maryn Crawford — “Is It a Deal?”
Demetri A. Crooks — “Climb Every Mountain”
Sarah Dalcamo — “Puerto Rico to America”
Ryker Dare — “Larry’s Adventure in the Army”
Thayer Davis — “Great-Grandma Ethel’s Big Hunt”
Carter Dean — “A Life-Changing Phone Call”
Josie Dees — “Praying for Safety”

Rylan Dickens — “The First to Graduate”
Satori Dionne — “Little Ashlee”
Kara Dobrzynski — “The Day the President Died”
Benjamin M. Donaldson — “Who Shot First?”
Lily Donaldson — “Little Levi”
Maizy Donley — “Footprints”
Chloe Donnelly — “The New Family Tramp”
Caleb Dotson — “Far and Wide”
Chase Dressel — “The Third Time Is a Charm”
Carter Dunlap — “The Chainsaw Incident”
Claire Eash — “Crazy Camping”
Sam Edery — “Hot Fudge”
Adeline Edwards — “The Border of Berlin”
Olivia Edwards — “Buddy, the Beagle”
Noah Ehrenhaus — “Left at a Museum”
Elana Engelsohn — “A Blackout Wedding”
Ayala Epstein — “A Hurricane to Remember”
Shira Erlbaum — “The Big Escape”
Ryan Evans — “What Is That?”
Axel Evenson — “Profit Golf”
Emma Fader — “The World War Love Story”
Collins Fanning — “Point Counterpoint”
Georgia Leign Fanning — “Dad vs. Bee”
Elisheva Farokhpour — “The Winemaker”
Quentin Farquharson — “If My Great-Grandfather Went to My School”
Rivka Faskowitz — “Bubble Trouble”
Molly Fasulo — “My Parents’ Fun Adventure to San Antonio”
Ava Faulkner — “Journey to America”
Olivia Ferraro — “Army National Guard”
Jackson Figueras — “Garage Chaos”
Gaby Firnhaber — “The Story of My Parents”
Elizabeth Folkl — “Lights, Camera, Action”
Lily Foy — “The Knee Mishap”
Gracie Francis — “Money Can’t Buy True Love”
Yosefa Frankel — “A Life of Tragedy”
Reagan Friedman — “The Chaos”
Aviva Fuzaylov — “Saved from War”
Avigail Gabay — “The Cutie Pie”
Tzviki Gaerman — “The Bus Ride of Freedom”
Jonah Galanti — “What a Day for Faye”

Devora Ganz — “The Miracle”
Sarah Ganz — “Skipping the Holocaust”
Grace Ellen Gardner — “Margo and the Lumberjacks”
Heidi Gardner — “You Said How Many Grandkids?”
Carter Garren — “The Dirt Bike and the Bull”
Jeff Gast II — “Two Boys, One Adventure”
Brady Gates — “Escaping Germany”
Alliah Gebhardt — “The Great Big Oak Tree”
Christian Gebrial — “The Dream”
Magdalene Gilbertson — “Railroad”
Madeline Gilmore — “Broken Bones”
Sophia Gilmore — “Jake, the Cow”
Aurora Glenn — “The Chili Disaster”
Nick Golden — “Going Solo on Mount Evans”
Penina Goller — “Gloria's Escape”
Ally Good — “The Longest Love Story”
Avigail Sara Gottesman — “The Real Cinderella”
Aharon Graber — “The Hilarious Trip to Orlando”
Leah Gray — “In the Navy”
Avigail Grossman — “A Hair's-Breadth from Death”
Eliana Gruenbaum — “Getting Out of Germany”
Erin Grunfeld — “Traveling to America”
Ella Grysman — “A Journey Towards Perspective”
Liles Gurganus — “My Connection to WWII”
Haelee Gustavison — “The Bad Decision”
Avi Hackel — “My Grandfather, the Spy”
Gwenith Hall — “The Boy Who Changed Kelley's Island Forever”
Sara Rivka Hall — “Robert in the Wall”
Mary-Grace Hamlett — “The Wrath of King Kong: King of Squirrels”
Owen Hancock — “Two Sides of a Storm”
Bella Hanuka — “Transatlantic Love”
Hailey Harrison — “Working at Disney”
Savannah Harrison — “The Shots Heard 'Round the House”
David Hassan — “Morocco”
Kevin Healy — “The Hunsicker Family History”
Samuel Hearon-Isler — “Trading a Finger for a Family”
Ari Hecht — “So Much Water, No Soda”
Ahni Helmer — “Trash Can”
Hannah Henderson — “The Living Dead”
Chloe Henning — “Heart Attack”

Maclain Hercules — “Forgive, But Never Forget”
Anna Herweck — “The Project”
Bridget Herweck — “Ronald Reagan and Spilled Milk”
Jack Hirtz — “The Broken-Down Blast”
Temima Hochster — “The Special Doll”
Carter Hoffman — “The Life and Adventures of the Stringfields”
Abigail Hohner — “Talk Show Makeover”
Itai Holtzman — “My Grandfather, the Superspy”
Hannah Hood — “The Most Unforgettable Night”
Charlie Hoppenjans — “Two Dogs and a Cramped Car”
Adina Horowitz — “Life Book”
Caroline Howard — “A Flight to Remember”
Zissi Howitt — “My Great-Grandparents’ Engagement”
August Hromadka — “The Reunion”
Milana Hunt — “A Dash of Love and 50 Years Later”
Natalia Hunt — “My Grampa’s Trip to Rome”
John J. Illengwarth — “Patches”
Katherine Iott — “One Extra Life!”
Avigail Ismailov — “Life Under the Mountains”
Justin Jachna — “The Year Away”
Sienna Jackman — “The Hidden Blessing”
Georgia Jaffe — “Hurricane Diane”
Annalynn Janes — “A Player for the Chiefs”
Aneesha Rani Jayaram — “Heroic at Heart”
Aditi S. Jayaraman — “How the TV Burnt the Milk”
David Jen — “Freedom”
Nolan Jenkins — “Seven-Fingered Dad”
Aiden Jerome — “Those Aren’t the Brakes!”
Haley Jett — “Swimming into New Opportunities”
Emily Johnston — “The Great Journey of World War II”
Eric Jorgensen — “The Broken Toe”
Racheli Jungreis — “The Full Chimney”
Matis Kahn — “The Pawfect Dog Walker”
Gabriel Kahrhoff — “Muffin Is a Problem”
Olivia Kaiser — “The Business”
Sarah Kalatizadeh — “The Big Scary Mouse”
Penina Kaniel — “Spying for Nazis”
Henry Kauffman — “The Eruption of Mt. St. Helens”
Blake Kaufman — “Am I a Man or a Mouse?”
Olivia Kaufman — “Thank Goodness for Old Rusty Water Pipes!”

Connor Kendrick — “The Four-Year-Old Crash”
Mia Kendrick — “Infant Survives Heart Surgery”
Myles Kendrick — “The Glioblastoma Tumor”
Chloe Kirkpatrick — “A 24-Hour Frog Collection”
Sarah Kleiner — “The Exploding Bridge”
Lylabelle Kleman — “Why You Should Not Share Your Jolly Rancher”
Ryan Knop — “A Trip to Remember”
Batsheva Kohanov — “Photographer”
Annabelle Kreitner — “My Family’s Candy Store”
Brody Kuszyk — “Ready to Nuke”
Suyesh Lamsal — “My Grandpa’s Eleven-Day Journey to Kathmandu”
Rena Langer — “Twins!!”
Berit Larson — “Caring Is Key”
Jessa Lee — “Top Secret”
Rena Lefkovich — “Life in Satmar”
Owen Legters — “Change Is Hard”
Sophie Leicht — “The Dive”
Adina Lesser — “Stopped by a Soldier”
Tova Lesser — “The Cinnamons’ Bookstore”
Emalee Leth — “A Shocking Day”
Claire Lewis — “Meeting Thurgood Marshall”
Haynes Lewis — “A Man for All Seasons”
Samantha Liszewski — “Boom!”
Todd Lockhart — “Ice Cold Pepsi”
Asher Lowry — “A Girl, a Go-Cart, and God’s Hand”
Addison Luedde — “The Ride of My Life”
Tyler Luscomb — “The Night at the Dam”
Benjamin Nathan Mark — “Ridge on the Bridge”
Jimmy Martin — “The American Hero”
Judah Maryles — “Twin Brothers”
Chana Malka Mason — “A Precious Child”
Sarah Matayev — “Tug of War”
Madalynn Maughon — “Cars”
Cole Mazzarella — “Biking on a Bridge”
Sean Ryan McCallister — “Life in Japan”
Lucas McCloskey — “The Miracle”
Gavin McConnell — “Leaving”
Kyle McDonald — “The Haunted Theater”
Bryson McGee — “Blizzard Hero”
Ethan McGilvery — “Swept Away”

Hana McGuire — “Beaver, the Beagle”
Zeke McGuire — “Aftermath of WWII”
Connor McInnis — “Why Hard Work Pays Off”
Taylor McIntyre — “Indian Hill”
Yonah Meir — “My Savta’s Army Career”
Charlie Mentle — “The Three Curve Balls”
Quinn Meyer — “Life in the ’40s”
Samantha R. Meyers — “Milkshakes at Night”
Tehila Michaelov — “Hit by a Car”
Davis Miller — “The Indian”
George A. Miller — “The Red Dress”
Goldie Millman — “I Quit”
Jasia Minski — “Kidnapped and War”
Claire Mizelle — “The Unfought War”
Ashley Molitor — “The Little Tiny Needle”
Zoe Moore — “A Dance by Chance”
Jarrett Mooring — “Uncle Chuck”
Elias Moran — “Cookout Craze”
Yali Morgenbesser — “Building Up to Eretz Yisroel”
Isaac Morrin — “Cold Feet”
Lexis Morrow — “The (Almost) Tragic Accident”
Gavin Mossbarger — “The Horse Ride”
Makky Mozie — “The Calamity of Christmas”
Zina Mozie — “The End Justifies the Means”
Evelyn Mueller — “The Birthday Catastrophe”
Henry Mulvaney — “Immigration from Ireland”
Rachel Murdakhayev — “My Great-Grandma’s Story”
Tehila Chaya Muskat — “Schoolsick”
Bianca Nagel — “The Way to America”
Sara Naylor — “From Lincoln to Cadillac”
Ilana Nenner — “Dad’s Disappointing Trip Back from Florida”
Olivia Newman — “Grease Lightning”
Cody Lee Nobles — “The Peacemaker”
Rachel Norris — “The Misadventures of Bob and Corkey”
Bracha Novick — “One’s Eyes Are the Pathway to the Brain”
Mia Alicia O’Hare — “The Attack of 9/11”
Katlyn A. Oakley — “A Perilous Profession”
Mason Odelehr — “Special Things”
Ben Oetjen — “The Birthday Wish”
Jamie Olsen — “Climbing the Alps”

Wali Omer — “My Dad’s Immigration”
Milan Oosthuizen — “A Child’s Nightmare”
Amelia Opphile — “The Price of Freedom”
Liel Orenstein — “Faiga’s Great Escape”
Ava Ortolani — “Underwater Mission”
Lena Overton — “Get Off the Dock!”
Addi Owen — “The Show-Off”
C. P. — “The Bike Accident”
Tommy Paul — “Hospital Leak”
Izzy Elisabeth Pedalino-Churchwell — “Finding Your Passion”
Riley Pederson — “Trouble Indoors”
Parker Pelc — “Skateboard Perseverance”
Eddie Pelikan — “The Donkey and the Boys”
Maddy Pense — “One Day’s Miracle”
Mitchell Perry — “The Move”
Shira Peskin — “A Safari Adventure!”
Jocelyn Peterson — “Howard Heuston Park”
Avunker Pieris — “The Escapades of Our Devoted Family Dog”
Lilly Pifer — “The Dream Kitten”
Ella Pinsonneault — “Baby Frog Saves My Mom!”
Ella Pinsonneault — “Labor on the Highway”
Jacob Pope — “Jack’s Draft”
Summer Pullen — “Tess’s Exciting Sacrifice”
Michael O. Purcell — “Shocking News”
Kate Quarles — “A Day of Devastation”
Ahuva Rabiei — “My Dad Delivering a Baby”
Benji Rackley — “Under the House She Goes”
Max Rademeyer — “Almost Losing a Finger”
Annika Railsback — “Fish Tree”
Jonathan Rasor — “Skating in a Winter Wonderland”
Leah Rephael — “The Hero”
Shana Richter — “The Lost Yiddishkeit”
Brock Mitchell Roberts — “The Original Mountain Man”
Ansley E. Robinson — “Man vs. Mother Nature”
Jackson Rocco — “Building the Twin Towers”
Ana Rodebaugh — “Easy on the Butter”
Andrew Rogers — Untitled
Peyton Rolisan — “A Military Call”
Kara Rosemann — “A Breakdown Mishap”
Maayan E. Rosenberg — “Raizel the Brave”

Bailey Rosenstock — “The Mystery of the Shark Bite”
Bashie Rosenthal — “Melted Makeup”
Judith Rosner — “Always Believe in Yourself”
Rena Rubin — “The Great Escape”
Ezra Rydzinski — “Life in Auschwitz”
Sawyer Ryley — “Firewood”
Kimberlyn Sanders-Fritz — “Lester’s Trap”
Callie Sanderson — “Sanderson Family Farm”
Leighton Saums — “The Great Blizzard of 1978”
Thomas Schell — “America”
Aliza Schlager — “One-on-One with a Bully”
Jack Schulte — “The Big Blow-Up”
Faige Schwartz — “A Babysitting Disaster”
Jenny Schwartz — “Mets World Series”
Sienna Schweiger — “Car Crash”
Malkie Segelman — “The One-Hundred-Dollar Bill”
Dilara Şentürk — “The World Tour”
Dilek Şentürk — “A New World”
Alana Shafran — “The Shocking Message from the Principal”
Raizelle Shapiro — “The Anonymous Helper”
Thomas Shelton — “Air Raid”
Miriam Ahuva Shochet — “Commercial Gone Wrong”
Sophia Sikes — “The Sugar Baroness of The Hill”
Isaac Silbiger — “Bit by a Monkey”
Shira Silver — “A Cow to Eat”
Charlie Skeel — “Black Hole or Blue Hole”
Ryan Skiadan — “Fallen Friend”
Gracie Skoultchi — “Don't Run with Sticks”
Jack A. Smith — “Diverted”
Francesca Soares — “Ghost Encounter”
Chaya Hadar Sofiev — “The Move from Russia to Israel”
Mikayla Solverud — “Oh, No, Not My Pants!”
Wilma Spencer — “Sink or Float”
Rachel Sperling — “The Changing of the Lines”
Liliana Sprich — “Training”
Simon Steinberg — “Ice Hockey”
Vivian Stombaugh — “He Fell Off, But They Saved Him”
Luke Stuckel — “Fire!”
Caleb Studley — “A Miracle”
Kaylee B. Sugg — “Grandma’s Old Tech Stories”

Isabelle Sumrell — “Sunny Boy”
Jack Sutton — “The Day My Grandma Got Chased by a Turkey”
Emma Tannenbaum — “My Great-Uncle’s Sad Story”
Liza Taylor — “Three Famous People in Three Days”
Teddie Lee Taylor, Jr. — “The Typing Mix-Up”
Eamon Joel Temme — “The Black Car”
Amelia-Grace Thal — “Rising Water”
Beatrice C. Thomas — “My Grandpa’s Life During the Great Depression”
Elsie Thomas — “Around the World”
Joey Thornhill — “The One That Didn’t Get Away”
Isabella Toschlog — “The Fire Is Not in the Fireplace This Christmas Eve”
Perri Tratner — “The Hidden Jewels”
Lauren Troendle — “Stranger Danger”
Maya Lynn Louise Twenter — “The Hospital Incident”
Owen Vielehr — “WWI”
Alexander Vitali — “Arctic Weather Training”
Tammi Vo — “Voyage to Freedom”
Audrey Voss — “The Suit of Opportunity”
Carolista Walsh — “Crossed Paths”
Anne Watts — “Curbside Inequality”
Elena R. Webb — “A Brave Girl”
Lewis Wedberg — “The Old Oliver”
Laylay Weinberg — “Guarding the Holy Shabbos”
Jeremy Weissman — “World War II”
Judah Weitzman — “The Lucky Escape”
Sarah Wentz — “The Love They Never Regretted”
Daniel Westervelt — “Finding a Parakeet”
Max Westhoff — “Family”
William N. Wilder III — “Groceries and Cell Phones”
Brodi Willnerd — “The Great Army Dog Chase”
Gregory Wilson — “The Unexpected Hot Rod”
Aiden W. Windsor — “The Not-So-Silent Toot”
Allison Winkeler — “Fred’s Decision”
Gali Wischnitzer — “Match Made at the Well”
Connor Woelfel — “My Family’s Journey to Happy Lives in the United States”
Zavyer Wolf — “George”
Bella Wright — “Still Growing”
Landon Thomas Wright — “A Lifetime of Soccer”
Meital Yaghoubi — “Surprise to Be!”
Rachel Yakubov — “The Nice Lady”

Suri Yelizarov — “Pogroms”

Norah Yost — “Breakfast with Grandpa Pete”

Olivia Young — “A New Beginning”

Avigail Yusupova — “The Sudden Death!”

Ari Zarzhevsky — “Roza’s Journey”

Ari Zvrndorfer — “A Baseball Journey”

Praise for The Grannie Annie

As a writing instructor, I encourage my students to enter various contests throughout the year. They have submitted stories to The Grannie Annie every year for many years. Thank you for the writing prompt and for reading their submissions. I have enjoyed the remarkable stories that many students have uncovered.

—Janine Edwards, Instructor; New Jersey, USA

The Grannie Annie is a writing opportunity with meaning and purpose. As students discover and share their family's stories, they come to realize the power of their pen to connect members of their family, stir the imagination, and touch hearts.

—Martha Stegmaier, Grannie Annie Board member and volunteer extraordinaire; Missouri, USA

Thank you for this great honor to be included in The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. I took my daughters to South Korea this past summer to meet extended relatives like my grandmother, who is from North Korea. It is very special that the story of her family can be memorialized in this way so that Esther and her sisters can appreciate their heritage.

—Sandra Sohn, Parent; Ohio, USA

My family has really loved the whole Grannie Annie process — the interview, the research, the editing, and of course the honor of having our family's story selected for publication. It's been such a pivotal writing experience for Aidan, who has just finished fifth grade.

—Mindy McCoy, Parent; Missouri, USA

Participating in The Grannie Annie offers my students a wonderful opportunity to learn about their families' history by interviewing a family member, and an authentic audience for their writing.

—Kathy Lewis, Teacher; Missouri, USA

Thanks for such a great opportunity to write powerful stories and to showcase our work!

—Carol Fitzsimmons, Teacher; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie has brought all 51 children in my language arts classes closer to their families — and to each other. When they discuss their stories, they notice similarities between their own stories and their classmates' stories. The Grannie Annie is a valuable program that has provided my students and me with a powerful learning opportunity.

—Elie Bashevkin, Teacher; New York, USA

Perhaps the greatest value of the Grannie Annie stories is something not written in the book. When a child interviews an older relative, the child gets to know a person he or she may have taken for granted. The relative gets to tell a story that might have been lost. A bond is created or strengthened. A story is recorded for posterity. New memories are woven, and — just maybe — a writer is born.

—Lulu Delacre, Author/illustrator of *Salsa Stories*

My daughter, Sophia Rose, contacted my mother in Germany after her language arts teacher suggested that she write a story about my mother in World War II. The two had a wonderful e-mail and phone correspondence over a couple of weeks. When I saw the final draft of my daughter's writing, I read a story my mother had never told me. My daughter created a new memory of my mother's life through her writing. What an amazing gift The Grannie Annie gave our family!

—Petra Swidler, Parent; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie gives students and their parents a chance to reflect on the varied experiences that weave together their family's identity. Many people have brokenness in their family history, and by identifying and writing about hard experiences, our children learn to see the strength and restoration of our loved ones. We're grateful to The Grannie Annie for providing an opportunity to publicly show honor and respect to our family members who have persevered.

—Christan Perona, Parent; Missouri, USA

Because of The Grannie Annie, I have been motivated to continue writing and am now working on my first novel!

—Aaron Schnoor, Author, *Grannie Annie, Vols. 5, 6, and 7*; Grannie Annie Selection Committee 2014 – 2017, and 2019; North Carolina, USA

When young people participate in The Grannie Annie and discover, and then reflect upon, their family's stories and the family stories of others, the experience can create in each of these young authors an enhanced sense of appreciation, understanding, and "connection." Thank you to The Grannie Annie for giving our communities young people who will see our diversity as an asset rather than a deficit, will recognize the sameness even in our differences, and will bring to our world a bit more compassion.

—Dr. Phil Hunsberger, Senior Partner, Educational Equity Consultants

This is my daughter's first time submitting her writing outside her school. It's very encouraging to her. She loves reading and writing. I believe this experience will have a great impact on her.

—Daniel Liu, Parent; New Jersey, USA

Year after year, my fifth-grade students are eager and excited to submit their work to The Grannie Annie. The experience of submitting a manuscript — with the hope of publishing — gives newfound meaning to their learning. The students stand taller when they become cognizant that the world is benefiting from their contribution.

—Rebecca Friedman, Teacher; Maryland, USA

When I showed my student his illustration in the book, the whole class gave him an ovation. Thanks so very much for providing him with this opportunity to succeed.

—Clayvon Wesley, Teacher; Missouri, USA

Thank you for starting such a heartwarming project where *all* the kids are winners, whether their stories are published or not.

—G-g Metzger, Teacher; Texas, USA

Publication of our daughter's story is special to us for so many reasons. . . . Both my mother and grandmother passed away a few years ago. Growing up, I heard this story countless times from my grandmother. It's wonderful seeing that story told through my daughter's words.

—Andrea Rominger, Parent; Alabama, USA

Orion's writing a family story was extremely important to his grandmother, who had a serious illness. When he called her to tell her that his story was going to be published, she was as happy as anyone had seen her in months. She read the story to anyone who would listen. I can't even begin to tell you the positive impact that this has had on our family.

—Andrew Jones, Parent; Pennsylvania, USA

The Grannie Annie provides the perfect opportunity for students to start asking questions about their families' past — not just the facts, but the stories. Then as they write, students begin to understand how *telling a story* differs from *writing a biography of facts*.

—Mark Futrell, Teacher; North Carolina, USA

I would like to thank you for giving Yifu such an encouragement, and working diligently to publish his first article! Our families in China are very happy to hear about this. It is an amazing experience to me that I witness that a part of my family heritage is being connected from my father to my son through the event you support! Thank you!

—Yuxing Feng, Parent; Missouri, USA

This book should be on the bookshelves in all elementary and junior high schools.

—The Reading Tub™, www.TheReadingTub.com

The Grannie Annie challenged my students to go beyond their comfort zone, to write for a broader audience, and to see that learning goes beyond the four walls of a classroom.

—Ann-Marie Harris, Teacher; Maryland, USA

My students were so excited to write their family stories! Since the stories were written during our immigration unit, the students had even more reason to ask their families questions. The stories really enriched our classroom discussions and helped the students to connect to the concepts being taught.

—Amy Del Coro, Teacher; New Jersey, USA

Since my mother died recently, I have been cleaning out her house and going through her things and wondering, "Who made this quilt? Who's in this old photo?" Trying to remember the family stories that she told me has really driven home the need to preserve family history. It is so wonderful that The Grannie Annie encourages this continuity of memories.

—Beverly Miller, Teacher; Alabama, USA

The Grannie Annie is a good start for kids to get published. And I love the way The Grannie Annie helps people understand their family history. It also helps children get closer to their families.

—Andrew Malphurs, Author of the *Grannie Annie, Vol. 5*, story "Grandpa's Saddle"; Georgia, USA

Since first becoming involved with The Grannie Annie, we look forward every year to the truly unique and heartwarming stories each student brings to the classroom.

—Brian Billings and Laura Amburgey, Teachers; Ohio, USA

Although most students in our Eastern European village live next door to family members from earlier generations, The Grannie Annie prompted them to talk with their grandparents in new ways — and to discover the customs and challenges of times past. In addition, stories from the Grannie Annie books have given my students a glimpse of the world outside their village, where differences may abound but the underlying human condition remains the same.

—Martin Ellinger-Locke, Peace Corps volunteer in Glodeni, Moldova

Stories connect people in families and communities, giving them a common language and understanding of the present as well as the past. Through The Grannie Annie, generations connect as students take time to listen to the stories of their older relatives — and learn from them. Then, as the students write and share their stories, the connections multiply.

—Amy Glaser Gage; Children’s author, writing teacher, and consultant to The Grannie Annie

When kids learn details about what life was like decades ago, the past comes alive for them. History becomes real — and they want to know more! The Grannie Annie provides an opportunity for kids to be inspired by their own family’s history.

—Florrie Binford Kichler, Patria Press, www.patria-press.com

The Grannie Annie is all about connection. As it hearkens back to the original Grannie Annie, it continues her tradition of oral storytelling to link generations and cultures. Grannie Annie family stories written by young people illuminate a long span of history, often revealing family values honed from adversity or triumph and tempered by humor and love.

—Janet Grace Riehl, Author of *Sightlines: A Family Love Story in Poetry & Music*

The Grannie Annie is remarkable in its goals and in its approach. Recording and sharing the stories of preceding generations goes to the heart of education — it teaches us who we are as family members, citizens, and members of human civilization.

—Matthew Lary, Co-author of *Victory Through Valor: A Collection of World War II Memoirs*

My son “harvested” several stories from my father, including one that appeared in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 1*. My father has since passed away, and I am forever grateful that my son recorded these stories before it was too late. I doubt he would have done so if it had not been for The Grannie Annie.

—Karen Metcalf, Parent; Tennessee, USA

Our son’s *oma* is overwhelmed that her “story” is in print in *Grannie Annie*. . . . Every family member and family friend has a signed copy.

—Karie Millard, Parent; Indiana, USA

Taking time away from your technology-filled life to join in The Grannie Annie is like trading fast food for Sunday dinner at Grandma’s.

—Debra K. Shatoff, Ed.D., Family therapist and author of *In-Home Child Care: A Step-by-Step Guide to Quality, Affordable Care*

Teachers and parents, if you want to motivate students to love writing, ask them to write for The Grannie Annie.

—Bonnie M. Davis, Ph.D., Author of *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You: Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies*



The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Young People Learning and Sharing Family Stories

The Grannie Annie invites students everywhere to discover and share stories from their family's history, and publishes collections of their work. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills.

As a writing instructor, I encourage my students to enter various contests throughout the year. They have submitted stories to The Grannie Annie every year for many years. Thank you for the writing prompt and for reading their submissions. I have enjoyed the remarkable stories that many students have uncovered.

— Janine Edwards, Instructor; New Jersey

The Grannie Annie is a writing opportunity with meaning and purpose. As students discover and share their family's stories, they come to realize the power of their pen to connect members of their family, stir the imagination, and touch hearts.

— Martha Stegmaier, Grannie Annie Board member
and volunteer extraordinaire; Missouri

