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# MY EARLY MEMORIES

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**By Ernestine Frances Macklin**

## A Trip To The Brewery

As was often true in the 1930's Depression Era, families lived together. So it was with our family. Grandma Ernestine Bertha Frey, Uncle Arthur and Aunt Edna Mae Frey and my parents, Raymond and Freda Macklin, lived together at 307 W. Kaskaskia Street, Paola, Kansas. My sister, Norma, and I were born here. One of my earliest memories was of the "brewery". Uncle Arthur made beer (home brew). He did not sell it so it was not illegal. As a young child, I was not allowed to go back to this room, but I was always intrigued by the dank odor of the malt. One day, Uncle Arthur took me back to this mysterious room. What a sight this was with the beer going through hoses from the large stone jar into bottles which were on a platform that circled around while the caps were clamped on. That trip to the "brewery" was an exciting adventure for me. However, when Mother saw us, she said, "Arthur, do you think you should take this child back here?" Uncle Arthur replied, "Freda, she likes it!"

## Well, It's Saturday Night

Saturday night always meant music. Uncle Arthur would get out his guitar and play the popular songs of the day, along with Country and Western classics. Sometimes, Aunt Erna



Arthur Frey (center with Guitar) performing at Kansas Day.

would join him with the mandolin. They were highly accomplished with this style of music, and sometimes sang



Arthur & Erna on a typical musical Saturday evening

along, whether it was a rhythmic dance tune or a soulful ballad. Hearing these wonderful Saturday Night performances are among my favorite memories.

Arthur and Erna were approached by a Topeka radio station to perform professionally. However, the two of them were very private people and they did not wish to perform publicly. Later in life, however, Arthur began to do some public performances with a group at bluegrass festivals.

On one special occasion, commemorating Kansas Day (January 29, 1877), he performed at the Paola school which Teresa attended. Mother had a framed photo on the piano of Arthur in western attire with the other musicians. Joan has this photo which is included in this story.

## Historic Neighbors



While living at 307 W. Kaskaskia as a young child, I remember some very special neighbors. Nellie Frazier, who was the Miami County Treasurer for many years, was present at my birth at home, or shortly thereafter, gave me my first bath. I admired Nellie's beautiful rose garden, but I was not allowed to pick any flowers. On my wedding day, she invited me to choose a bouquet of roses, which were displayed at the front of the church.

Nellie had a gentleman friend, Raymond "Sub" Davis who worked for the railroad. Sub faithfully visited Nellie every Saturday and Sunday afternoon and evening. We would see them sitting in the porch swing on warm summer evenings. To my knowledge, Nellie and Sub never married, but they appeared to be very faithful, lifelong friends.

Henry Brazeal Frazier ("Dad Frazier") as we knew him was Nellie's father-in-law who had served in the Civil War. I remember Dad Frazier putting on his Union blue uniform and marching in Paola's Memorial Day and Independence Day (4th of July) parades. As a young child when I visited him, he would let me choose big, soft sugar cookies from a jar. Dad Frazier was born in Jefferson County, Missouri in 1847 and he died in 1943 at the age of 96 and is buried at the Paola Cemetery.



Robert Frye, Dad Frazier, Fred Rentz

## Women's Work

Yes, there was such a designation during our growing up years. Two examples come to mind. I remember Aunt Edna Mae getting up at 5:00 am and building a fire in the wood burning cook stove. She would hang Uncle Arthur's socks on the oven door handle and place his work shoes on the floor in front of the stove. When they were nice and warm, she took them into the bedroom where Arthur was getting dressed.

## Take Me Out To The Ballgame

Baseball, on all levels, was a big deal in the 30's, 40's, and 50's. I remember Dad and Uncle Clarence discussing the merits of Dizzy and Daffy Dean and the other great players of the day. On a local level, we had the Paola Cub's. These

**“Here comes Mac and all the little Macs”.**

- RINGER'S DRUG STORE

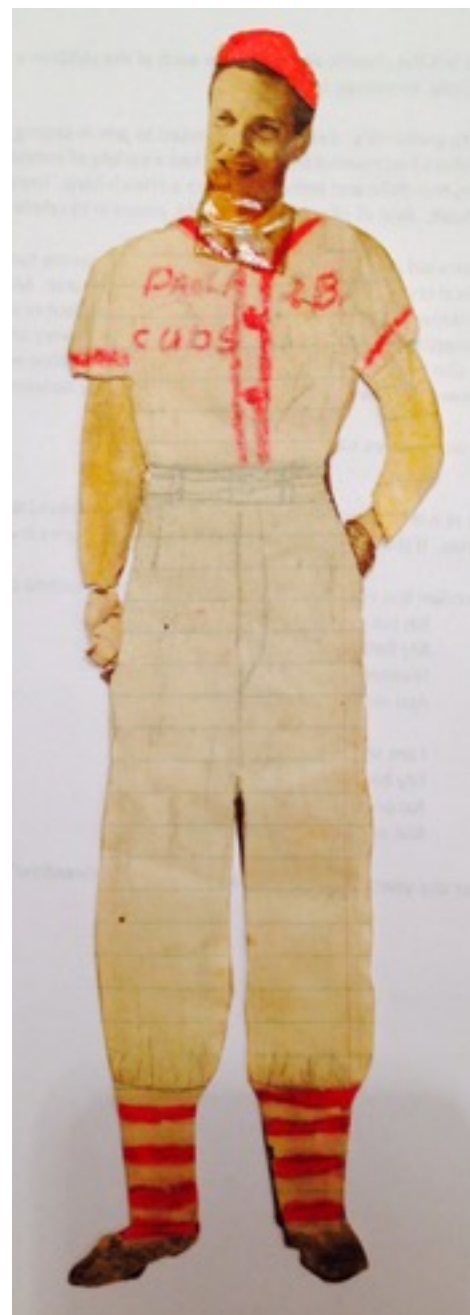
were young men who played baseball during the summer for love of the game, and we young girls had our favorite heroes. Norma liked Jack Rhea and I remember Dennis Peckman, who I think played

third base. Dad would take us out to Wallace Park stadium where we enthusiastically cheered for the home team. After the game, Dad sometimes took us to Ringers' Drug Store for a treat. The man behind the soda counter said, “Here comes Mac and all of the little Macs”. The soda guy would make a milk shake and pour it into three small glasses. As we sat upon the counter stools and enjoyed our shared milk shake, all seemed well with the world.

## Baseball Catalog Heroes

Norma and I were serious about our baseball heroes. There was no television, but we had radio broadcasts and the “Kansas City Star” newspaper reports of the games. We had our favorite teams and our favorite players. We took the realism a step further. Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck catalogs featured several pages of men in long underwear. These were perfect for dressing our baseball heroes.

Norma's team was the St. Louis Cardinals and my team was the Brooklyn Dodgers. We drew and colored the appropriate uniforms on our guys, red for the Cardinals and blue for the Dodgers. Our heated discussions of the abilities and possibilities of our respective teams led to physical blows on one occasion. Mother scolded us for our unladylike behavior. Grandma Frey, who was an observer, just slapped her thighs and thought it was hilarious, saying, “Freda, this is how kids solve their problems”.



We created figures for our favorite local baseball team heroes.

## Family Adventures

Our family never took any long trips while we were young children. However, we looked forward, with great anticipation, to the two road trips we took from time to time: a visit to Aunt Erna and Uncle Clarence's home in Independence, Missouri, and a visit to Uncle Stanley, Aunt Edna and our cousin Sandy's home in Topeka, Kansas. We usually got all dressed up and took these trips on Saturday afternoon. However, Mother would never go anywhere on Saturday until the house was cleaned. Joan loved getting dressed up and wearing her good shoes, usually a pair of black patent Mary Janes. On one such occasion, Joan got ready early, and while Mother scrubbed the kitchen floor, Joan flared out her skirt, danced around in her Sunday shoes and sang, "Pop, pop, pop! Beer Nooo!" She knew Dad always stopped in Martin City to get gas for the car and soda pop for us kids. When we arrived in Independence, Dad and Uncle Clarence would always enjoy a beer.



Joanie, Norma, Lee, Sandy, and Ernestine (abt 1948).

## A Very Special Arrival

For a number of years there were only we three girls. However, this was about to change in a big way. On March 20, 1947, our baby brother Lee, arrived. He was Dad's pride and joy, and, from the very beginning, took the world by storm. He walked at only eight months, and, within the next few years climbed on anything in sight, including the house roof and the pear tree. Mother was unable to climb the tree. However, our neighbor, Mrs. Hanshew, the mother of seven children, fearlessly climbed up and rescued him. This was only the beginning of a lifetime of adventures, but through it all, Lee has remained a strong, dependable, joyful person.



Ernestine and little brother Lee on the back porch.