
PLAIN BROWN RAPPER

News for the Tandy & Grace Brown Family

July/August, 1998

VIVIAN'S MEMORIES

The positive response from family members after reading Vivian's memories has been wonderful. Both Vivian and I appreciate hearing from everyone and having you add your memories. I'm posting some of them today. Leah graciously decided to write a few memories from her teen years. As I listened to them on the tape, I laughed out loud, they are so funny. Hope I can make them seem as funny in print.

As a result of Vivian's contribution, our readership has taken another gain and we are up to 39.

LEAH'S ESCAPADES

Leah is the seventh child in our family. She was born in 1922 and is the older of the middle group and the youngest of the older children. She had the best of both worlds. Leah remembers a time when there was a lot going on in the family and by the time she was a teenager there were 15 children. The Browns lived at 1717 Alexander across the street from Holliday Park. The park played a major roll in our growing up. It was three blocks square and had a wonderful lake named "Lake Minnehaha" after the Indian Maiden. In the '30's and '40's there was a lagoon that circled the park. It ran along the West side of the park, in an easterly direction along the North side of the park and entered the lake beside the bandstand. There were several bridges crossing the lagoon and when winter came, the water would freeze and the boys (Frank, Leonard, Charles and Dick) would pull Pat and I around the whole circle on a sled. What a wonderful time that was.

The Holy Rollers (religious group) baptized their congregation in the lake and the Gypsies used to camp in the park. When those events happened, mother would keep us in our own yard. At night, the park was pretty

scary, the trees and bushes and our wild imaginations made it very frightening.

During the summer, the City Band played concerts in the park. We were so proud because Roy, Frank, Leah, Dick, Dolfe and who knows who else played in those concerts. Charles, Nancy and Dick had a "pop stand" on the corner of 18th and Alexander. They sold pop and candy all summer long. I can remember they had a little building that was about 6' X 8' with a door in the back and a counter in front. They had a roof on top and a cover that came down to lock up at night. It was painted green with a red roof, just like the house, (Don't you wonder if Dad was color blind?) It was tempting to have all those little candy bars around. Butterfingers are still my all time favorite and I can remember those little 2 cent ones, they were great. Sometimes Pat and I would filch a couple and sneak off. However, if we got caught, it was not a pretty scene, not only would mother scold us, but Nancy, Charles and Dick yelled at us too. Couldn't have been too bad however, because our chocolate addiction took over on occasion.

Leah tells us: "so many things have come to mind and its hard to say which is most important with out going into endless details. Memories of when June, Betty and I were in Christian Endeavor." (The First Presbyterian Church in Cheyenne had several youth groups. The Christian Endeavor was one for teens.) "We always thought we had to be the most beautiful girls there. We used an old coal oil lamp and a curling iron to curl our hair. So many times we went to Christian Endeavor with frizzed, smelly, burned hair, but we thought we were really glamorous. Mother never allowed us to wear makeup and lipstick. Mother thought we were much to young for that and besides, in her day, the only women who wore makeup were the 'chippies' in town. So we would wait until we got across the park, out of her sight and then we would put on our makeup. We must have been quite the clowns at Christian Endeavor, but we thought we were beautiful. Before we ever came home we hurried and wiped off all

the makeup. We thought we were fooling mother, but, being a mother and grandmother myself, I know we never fooled her.

After June and Betty left for college; Frank, Leonard and I went to Christian Endeavor. We were told never to walk through the park at night because there might be some one who would get us. You know how kids are, we always thought we knew more than our parents and we would start through the park. As we would walk through Frank would say, look up in that tree, see that bear? He'll probably come down and eat us. Needless to say, we would only get part way through the park before Frank had us and himself so frightened that we would run for dear life to get home.

Frank was great to go places with because he had such a wild imagination about all these vicious animals and people that were going to get us.

One night, Betty and I went against mother's wishes and decided to go through the park. As we approached the old bandstand, there was a person coming from the other direction. Well, we knew this man was going to get us. We went around to the other side of the bandstand and guess what, this fellow was there, he had his coat pulled up around his head. We ran to the back side of the bandstand and there he was again. By then we were like two scared rabbits and off across the park in the opposite direction we ran. This man kept yelling 'girls, girls, its me!' and we knew we were doomed. As we ran back towards town, this man kept yelling at us. When we got about three blocks away from the park, we called mother and mother proceeded to call the police. She told them there was a man trying to chase us girls. About then Dad called from the railroad and said, 'did the girls get home O.K.?' Poor dad, he was in the dog house for months because he had scared his own daughters. Mother had called the police and its a good thing dad was at work because they would have thrown him in jail for frightening her dear little daughters.

But, no matter how scared we were, it didn't stop us from going through the park. That was always such a challenge.

Another thing I remember so vividly was getting in old tires and rolling down the big hill on the north side of our house. How in the world we kept from getting killed as we rolled down the hill, across the street and into the park among the trees. But we all did it. I'm sure the neighbors thought, 'there are those darn Brown kids, just like monkeys,' as we climbed in those trees in the vacant lot across the street. We thought that was the greatest thing we could do, get up in those trees and

climb around. I'm sure mother wondered how we ever kept from breaking a bone, but you know, the only one that ever broke a bone was Roy when he climbed up on the new Airport Building and fell off. It seems like God was with us and had his hand on our shoulder all the time.

We used to build a circus ring in the garage. We had tight ropes that we tried to walk. All kinds of antics that I'm sure other kids did, but we thought we were the only ones that could do all these great things.

Frank would be asked to go milk the cow. Well, as Frank walked by the dining room table he would see a paper or magazine and he would have to stop and read it. Mother would scream and yell, "Frank, get out there and milk that cow before it gets dark." He would say, "yeah, I'm going, I'm going." A little while later she was still telling him to get out there and milk that cow before it gets dark. Well, it got dark and mother would send Leonard and I out with him to hold the lantern. Well Frank would dicker around and about half the time the cow would kick the bucket or hit Frank with that hard tail. By the time we finished it was late and mother would be frantic. This went on every night and you would think mother would have wised up to the fact, you just didn't push Frank.

To this day, Frank is one of the greatest brothers we could ask for. He is the most thoughtful person and does every thing he can to please everyone.

One time we had a pig that we raised from a piglet. He grew up and when it came time to butcher the pig, none of us kids would eat the meat, so, Dad had to go to Brevity's Grocery and trade that pig for another one us kids would eat.

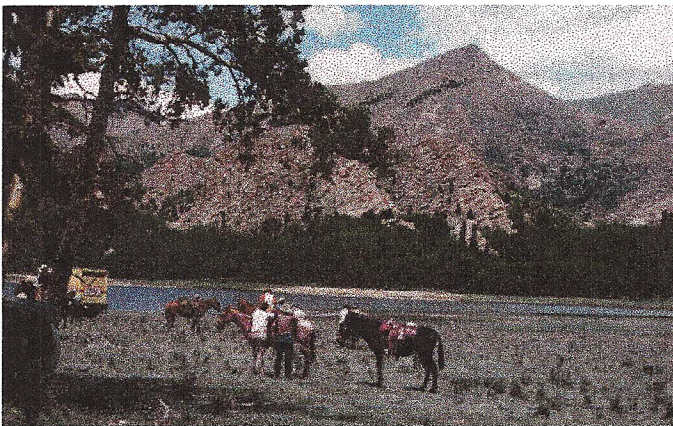
There were lots of great memories from when we lived in the country. We roamed the prairies, picked up rocks, picked wild flower and had a lot of silly antics going on. Mother had a goat she decided to breed and she got a billy. He was the smelliest, orneriest old goat that ever lived. I can remember one time when Dad was ready to go to work and mother told him to put the Billy Goat up. Well, the goat got the best of Dad and he had to climb a pole to get away from him, but the goat rubbed up against him real good. Dad went on to work and as he was headed down the road to Sidney in the caboose, some of the me said 'what is that awful smell, what is that?' Well, Dad knew right away what it was, it was that billy goat smell, but he just said, 'we just picked up a load of hides in that one car and its smelling.'" Those guys must not have ever known what

really happened because Dad came home just laughing about it.

Dad was a great one for jokes. On April Fools Day he couldn't wait to get down in the kitchen to fix breakfast. And no matter how hard we tried, we could never get down there fast enough to fool him. His way to punish was not to spank, he would just tap you on the shoulder and say, 'O.K. Mary Jane, you better shape up or I'm going to jerk a knot in your tail.'

It is my hope this will bring back some memories and some of the rest of you will come up with some things that are so funny. And I know that the younger members of the family will enjoy hearing from everybody"

PIKES PEAK RANGE RIDE



Set in the beautiful Rocky Mountains, is Pikes Peak, the climb to the top is breath taking and, as I mentioned last issue, they make great donuts. In Colorado Springs there is a beautiful sculpture representing the Range Ride. The second figure in the sculpture, the cowboy on the mule was crafted using Charles for the model. It is a wonderful piece of art and quite a tribute to these Range Riders.

Charles has graciously submitted this article and pictures for us to enjoy: This year is the 50th Anniversary of the Annual Pikes Peak Ride for the Colorado Springs Range Riders. Brother Charles will be making his 41st ride with the horse and mule riders. His son, Ron, will also be on the ride for his 20th time. Ken, Charles' oldest has been on two of the rides.

Other family members who were guests of Charles on the ride include: Dick, who was on the 1972 ride when we crossed over the Continental Divide at a 12,000 foot elevation at Tincup Pass and Cottonwood Pass. The

picture below shows Charles on "Marilyn" the mule and Dick on his horse.

A few years later, in the late 70's and early 80's,



Willis Shriver was a guest and the rides were held on the traditional Pikes Peak Route for 4 of those years, then one time in the "Lost Park" area Northwest of Colorado Springs and one time in the "Sangre De Cristo" mountains Southwest of Colorado Springs. The picture

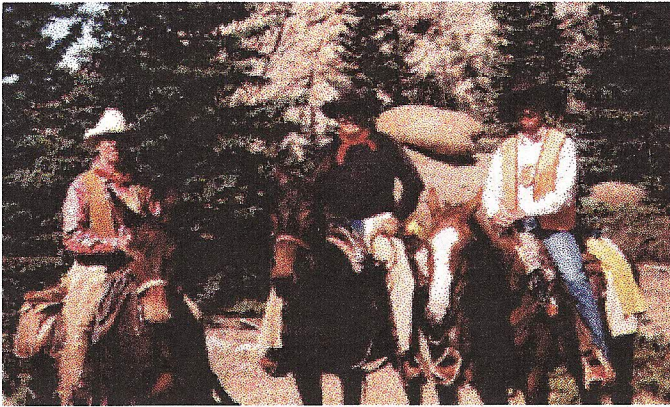


above shows Willis with his Horse "Big Red" and Charles with "Marilyn."

In 1993, brother Mike was a guest when the ride was again made around the South slopes of Pikes Peak. Mike rode a big mule owned by a friend of Charles and Charles rode his mule "Barney."

The pictures show some of the beautiful country the Range Riders were fortunate to be able to see these last 50 years. I will celebrate my 45th year as a member this year, and I am happy my health has allowed me to make most of the rides.

AND FROM MIKE: In 1993 Charles invited me to join him on the 45th Annual Pikes Peak Range Ride. He arranged for a mule, a big strong one, tack and all the



trimmings. Willis Shriver loaned me a pair of chaps and some saddle bats, and I was off. Things started great. The mule, named "Buck," seemed friendly and kind, the weather was beautiful, and the kickoff pancake breakfast was delicious. We paraded out of town, then loaded up the steeds and drove to the starting place west of Colorado Springs. I felt pretty "cowboy" — after all, I owned a horse for a while in Casper and had ridden in several parades with the Cheyenne Frontier Days Committee — so I was confident that this ride would be a piece of cake. And that's how it started. Unfortunately, the next morning I discovered what all the fuss about saddle sores is — they make you wish you could ride standing up. Fortunately, I had some home remedies that took the bite out and after a couple of days, my hide was tough as leather. The country we traveled was rugged and beautiful. Traveling up and down the steep trails I quickly learned the value of having a sure footed mule. Throughout the trip I was treated like Royalty, although I was expected to join the other "first-timers" with several servant type duties. To this day I have not figured out if the special treatment was because I was Charles' brother or "Captain" Ron's uncle. Several old timers asked about Willis Shriver who had made the ride several times, and about the other brother that only rode once. Dick asked me not to mention who that other brother is. The ride was one of the highlights of my life and I hope to make it again some day.

The picture above is of Charles, Mike and "Captain" Ron, Charles' son.

BIRTHDAYS

ANNA, JULY 19TH

CHARLES, JULY 27TH

There isn't much news this month. Summer is here and I'm sure everyone is very busy. I have finally received an answer from the Cherokee Heritage Society and they didn't have any help for me. They suggested I contact the Tennessee Historical Society and that will be my next letter. Many have told me to go there in person, trying to do research within the Indian Nations by letter is next to impossible. Hopefully, we can try that next.

As far as I know, everyone is currently in good health and looking forward to a busy summer. Please let me know if there are any updates.

I would love to hear from Frank so he can rebut the stories about him — how about it Frank, can you send me some good stuff?

Thanks to Leah, Charles and Mike for their contributions this month. Hope you enjoyed their articles.

Only one new e-mail address, Gregg Smith:
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Until September.