



# SWOPE NEWS

## EXTRA OBITUARY

### Isabel Passed Away August 18 2011

A.E. Swope  
1870-1955

Kate Swope  
1870-1939



Mayme  
1890-1953

Ralph  
1892-1948

Elnora  
1894-1997

Laura  
1900-1991

Kathryn  
1903-1981

Alice  
1905-1985

Isabel  
1908-2011

Year 2011

No 3 December

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With the passing of Isabel all of A. E. Swope's family is gone. Over the last several years Isabel has written several articles for the Swope News. In this special addition I am showing several of her writings.

Plans right now are for cremation, and burial next Saturday in Atlanta next to Guy

#### REMINISCES (2001)

As the last survivor of the original Swope family, I thought some of you might be interested if I reminisce about living in the old homestead. As you know, there were originally seven of us. By the time I was knee high to a duck, Sister Mayme had married Bob Henry & moved to a farm 10 or 12 miles away. Being alone one day, I saddled a mule & rode to see my big sister. I didn't think I'd ever make it!

Brother Ralph worked at the Swope Jewelry Store in Terre Haute. He owned a motorcycle with a sidecar & would take us younger kids riding when he came home. Once when Dad was driving an old mule out of the barn lot, Ralph blew his horn -OOGA! It scared the poor mule so bad he lit out, dragging poor Dad behind him, yelling "Whoa, you fool mule, whoa"! Mom was watching, laughing so hard tears ran down her face!

Sister Laura was secretary to the head of the Y.M.C.A in Evansville & often stayed in town. Later she married her fiancé, Jason McCutchan, when he returned from service in W. War I.

That left Elnora, Kathryn, Alice & me. Elnora taught 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grades at McCutchanville School. She was my teacher for those grades. At home she helped Mom with the cleaning, canning, laundry, churning & just about anything that had to be done. Later she too married a returning soldier, Ivan France, who had done time in

France. "France in France" the papers had printed at the time.

Kathryn liked to help Dad. She drove a team of horses for all kinds of jobs. Once cutting hay, she ran over a bumblebees nest. She was stung pretty badly. Her face was so swollen Dad didn't recognize her when he came in & said politely "How do you do?"

That left Alice & me. Oh, we had tasks too, carrying wood & coal for the stoves, washing & drying dishes, knocking potato bugs into kerosene cans, chopping thistles from crops - little stuff! When we got older, we got to herd cows from the road while riding horses & carry water to the men in the fields. That was fun!

We still had plenty of time to "play house" under our apple trees. Rooms were divided with sticks & furniture was made with bricks & boards. We cut out paper dolls from the Sears catalog & dressed them with clothes from the same source.

We never had indoor plumbing or electricity. When nature called, we ran down the path to the two-holer—ran because we had to pass under an old catalpa tree that harbored big, ugly green worms (fishermen's delight) that we were afraid would fall on us.

Mom washed clothes by hand, using a scrubbing board ( I forget what you called them), then put them in the boiler on the stove, then through two tubs of rinse with a hand turned wringer between the two. All the water we hauled from the well on the porch. We kids hung the clean

clothes outside on the lines. Mother insisted they look nice, matching lengths & colors. They smelled so good when we took them down.

That was on Monday. Tuesdays were ironing days. Irons with removable handles were heated on the kitchen stove. There were times of cleaning house, canning, gardening, picking fruits & vegetables. I remember especially climbing the several cherry trees in our orchard & competing with each other as to who could fill her bucket first.

We used coal oil lamps (kerosene) at night. When we got Aladdin lamps when I was in high school I thought they were wonderful as they gave a soft white light instead of the glaring yellow!

We walked to school (no buses), sometimes with the Hornby girls who lived down the road. In the winter, if there was enough snow, Dad or Mr. Hornby would take us in a sleigh. To get to High School in Evansville, we had to catch the “traction” that ran from Princeton. That too a long walk!

We carried our lunches to school, sometimes the boys thought it was fun to put something extra in our lunch boxes—a frog, a grasshopper, or even a small snake! We didn’t think it was so funny! We had out-door-toilets & drinking water from an outdoor pump. We probably all used the same tin cup!

There’s so much more I could tell, but I can hear you say “Enough already!” Though we didn’t have modern conveniences, we had family, we had love, & we were happy!

Anna Isabel Swope August 2001

Isabel McKeeby

August 16, 2002

Dear Paul,

Thanks so very much for the slide show shown at the Swope reunion. I know we (Don & I) will enjoy it. I’ll have no way of showing it. Amy though will probably like to see it (granddaughter) as she seems interested in family & its history.

Right now Don is recuperating from a hernia operation two days ago. He’s still rather sore. Sara Mac stays home from school to be with him. She’s gone back to teaching a Special Ed class even though she had retired. Her school started last week.

FtLauderdale School doesn’t start until later as Gyanne said she’d go down to be with her grandson Ben a week before he goes back to school.

I see that you have moved. I hope you are enjoying your new home. Is it to be home for a new wife? Don’t blush! Anyway, best wishes!

Love, Isabel

**ISABEL ANNE McKEEBY (2003)**

My niece, Lois France with her friend Pat, was here a few days ago. Among the things she said was that you wanted to hear (*many of us want to hear*) from some of us “old

timers” about our memories of early teachers, classmates etc. So I’ll comply.

As I started school in 1914, age 6 (ooh – along time ago!) the new school (*McCutchanville School*) wasn’t quite finished, so we met in the church. I remember the sand table and the little red chairs. In January the school house was completed and we moved in.

It consisted of two class rooms divided by a hall, and a large auditorium used for all kinds of programs and community meetings. Underneath was the furnace and a large recreation room where we played games and practiced drills.

My first grade teacher was Miss Margaret McCutchan whose hands were always fluttering, whether from habit or from Parkinson I don’t know. The students with me were Ruth Hornby, Ruth Webb (killed by lightning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade) Sam Moffett, Clarence Cooksey, Delbert Deisinger and Clarence Seib. The last three came from a village down by the church (I don’t remember its name). They rode in the “school bus” – a horse drawn wagon with seats running along the sides. Occasionally I rode that bus to visit overnight my sister Mayme and husband Robert Henry who lived on a farm down there.

We walked to school joined sometimes by Ruth and Geneva Hornby. Other kids who Joined less often were Martha and Oscar Riggs and Billy and Olivia Effinger because I guess they lived farther away.

My 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher was my sister Elnora Swope. Her future mother in-law was the janitor and kept the rooms clean. I often stayed after school to dust the erasers and clean the black boards. Some time during those grades we were joined by Isabelle Schlenker and another Isabelle. One thing remaining in my mind of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade was having to “play see-saw” holding hands with the boy across the aisle. “Zeke” was a tall gangly boy who smelled like he came fresh from the smelliest part of a barn! I hated it! In spite of that Elnora was a good teacher and got us ready for the next grade.

We had no indoor plumbing or running water. Two outdoor out houses, one for girls and one for boys, met our needs, even in winter when we ran back and forth. Water came from a pump with a tin cup hanging on the side. We didn’t worry much about sanitation!

The games we played were base ball, rabbit, hidden go seek or board, and in the wooded area behind the school “witch”. If you were caught you became a witch and stayed that way until rescued, hopefully by a favorite boy friend!

Miss Florence Ensle came once a week to teach us songs and drills. The drills we performed later for parents at PTA etc. We had all kinds of drills – flag, dumb bells, wands (broom handles!). Being the shortest kid in the class I was always stuck at the head of the line. If I made a mistake, so did everyone who copied me.

In 1918 the terrible flue epidemic hit us. The stage of the auditorium was set up with temporary Beds. I remember lying in one with chills and fever. I just couldn’t get warm!

The one casualty was Willis Moffett. I believe he was older than me.

Miss Lida Henry was our teacher through grades 5 – 8. She was an excellent teacher and prepared us for the dreaded 8<sup>th</sup> grade county exam. All the community gossiped about her and “boy friend” Asa coots. It was rumored they’d marry when both their parents died, but they didn’t. She finally took him in to care for when he was old and unable to care for himself.

During those years a boy, Clay Stinson, joined one of the classes. He was always getting into trouble. Older kids I remember were Alice and Kathryn Swope, Geneva and Lucille Hornby and Clifford -?-.

To go to high school we had to take a “traction” – an electric car that ran from Princeton ( or above) to Evansville. Again we had to walk a long way to catch it and a long way back. I often waited for Dad in his County Assessors office in the Court House to ride home with him – a long wait in a cigar smelling office!

Four long years in Central High School for a shy country girl -! It was terrifying – it was fun!

Isabel Anne Swope McKeeby

#### **GERMANO (2004)**

I’ve tried to get different ones of my family to write Paul for the Swope News Letter but can’t seem to get them interested. I think they’d have a lot of interesting things to tell.

Don has retired from his office but keeps an office at home and works from there. They’ve taken a lot of interesting trips.

Amy (granddaughter) still teaches. Her husband, an interior decorator, has a client in Poland. He’s made several trips there.

Gyanne and Charlie are both retired but plan a trip to Ireland in the fall.

Kelly (Gyanne’s daughter) Rick and Sarah, their daughter, have a lovely home near Orlando. He’s sort of a real estate salesman – sells malls to corporations etc. Their daughter Sarah is a talented ballerina – goes to interstate competitions and wins a lot of trophies. (Age 12)

That’s my family in a nut shell!

Anna Isabel Swope Germano McKeeby

#### **HIGH SCHOOL MEMORIES (2004)**

I thought I’d tell you about some of my high school classes because they might have been a little different from yours. The first I’ll mention is Mr. Cooper’s biology class. While I didn’t care much for dissecting frogs and their smell, I really hated it when Mr. Cooper insisted that in order to pass his course, we had to let a live snake pass through our hands! Ugh! I can still feel the slimy thing! If it enjoyed my hands, I didn’t. Nor did it endear me to Mr. Cooper!

Then there was Miss Joslin’s speech class. Why I enrolled it I don’t know. Maybe I thought it would do me some good - & it did! There was a little platform in front of

the class that when called on we had to get on. Being naturally shy, I hated to get on that platform. Once we had to recite a poem we’d memorized, then we had to make up talks sometimes on an assigned topic, sometimes one of our own choice.

At first the length of time for our talks was maybe a minute or two, then as the year progressed so did the time for our talks. I was always glad if I was saved by the bell! But you know, that was the most useful class I ever had because it taught me not to be afraid of an audience. It came in handy later as I became president of various organizations & even here at Sparks Inn where I’ve given several book reviews & gave talks on the First Ladies of the White House (from a book I’d borrowed) & later some of Paul Harvey’s “The Rest of the Story.”

I took French for four years with Mademoiselle Naye as teacher. She was a pretty blond from Nice, Franc & smells so-o-o good! I loved the language & made excellent grades. I learned to read books in French, but I’ve forgotten most of it, unfortunately. But I’m pleased when I run across a word of phrase in some book I’m reading & find I can translate it!

There was Mr. Watson’s social studies class. We were all assigned a living senator’s name & discussed the issues of the day. Newspapers were our texts. I was Senator Borah from Idaho. As Senator Borah, I think I enjoyed listening to the others as they’d get into hot debates rather than participating.

There were of course other classes more or less routine, but the last I’ll mention was journalism. There we learned to write for our school’s weekly. I loved to see the articles I’d written put in print, & I covered all kinds of stories from human interest to sports events. But the most fascinating event I was pleased to cover came in my senior year. A friend & I were assigned to go to the little historic town of New Harmony on the Wabash to write a feature article on its environs & history. What a lovely day we had! We learned that it had been founded by a “goat load of knowledge” from Europe, men & women from all professions with a few skilled workers. We were guided happily from one historic building where they had conducted their business to another, always enjoying the shade of the beautiful rain trees that I’d never seen before. Of course we enjoyed the cuisine of one of their favorite restaurants.

Since the initial purpose of the founders was to establish a more or less communistic society in which everyone shared alike in the work as well as the profits, it was doomed for failure. After all, they were only human. I don’t know (if I ever know) how long it lasted, but I remember the happy day we spent there. I wonder what it’s like today. Maybe some of you can find out!

Thanks for reading my memories. And may God richly bless each of you.

Anne G. McKeeby

## McKeeby

25 June 2004

I realize it will soon be time for another Family Reunion and another Swope Newsletter. I hope you have a successful reunion with many people attending. Tell everyone hello for me.

I want to thank everyone who sent me cards or letters for my birthday. I appreciate every one! I did have a lovely birthday – so many remembrances - and my family treated me royally!

Anne (Isabel) McKeeby

### TRIBUTE to F.D.R.

October 2004



Gyanne and Charley took me recently to Warm Springs, Georgia, where I renewed my admiration for the President who meant so much to me. Of course, he had his enemies and of course, he made mistakes, but what president doesn't? There in that fairly new museum which houses his simple home when visiting Warm Springs, I could almost feel his presence. There were no elaborate or expensive

furnishings as one might expect in the home of a president, just simple and utilitarian things as might be found in any home of the time. The only item which showed expense was the specially designed car which he was able to drive. I was touched by the case of hundreds of canes, no doubt given him by well wishers. We all came away with a renewed admiration for a great president. Why isn't his face among those on Mt. Rushmore?

Back in the '30's at the time of the Big Depression, many banks failed and many people lost all they had. There were many suicides of people who had lost everything. But President Roosevelt restored order closing banks and initiating many programs that helped financially strapped people. Guy and I were among those. Fresh out of college in 1930, I had been able to get a measly job as a high school teacher in a one horse town in Ohio at the princely sum of \$100 a month. From that I paid room and board, clothes, and transportation back home at Christmas and years end. I endured it for four long years!

Meanwhile, Guy could find only temporary teaching jobs. No longer willing to wait, we married in '34, no jobs, no prospects. Then came Roosevelt's first big help for us in initiating Adult Education Classes. Guy got a job in one. What a blessing it was! We were able to move into an apartment in Evansville in what used to be the old Cook home (of Cook's beer fame). I walked with him of evenings and listened as he taught.

A few months later, Guy applied for and received another of Roosevelt's jobs as Educational Advisor at a CCC Camp in Worthington, Indiana. They boys in the camp were mostly from the poverty stricken homes of

Kentucky. I believe their parents received \$20 a month for their sons' services, clearing and building roads, parks and bridges, cutting trees etc. While the boys, besides room and board, got a small salary for expenses. Guy was the only civilian on the staff. The others were army officers. It was a great life for us and our two children, Don who was born in '39 and Gyanne was 4.

When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Roosevelt declared war on Japan and all the CCC officers scattered to various army camps. Guy applied for and got a job as a Red Cross Administrator at Buckingham Air Field in Ft Myers, Florida. After he served two months training, we moved to Florida. It was a whole new and exciting life for us, even in the midst of war.

We listened with pride and confidence as Roosevelt led us through the terrible days of WW. II. We were living on the army base in a "two wide trailer" surrounded by other army officers and their families, when I heard on the radio on April 12, 1945 the sad death of Pres. Roosevelt in Warm Springs. I remember listening about the funeral train bearing his body back to Washington, tears running down my cheeks. A great President, a great man, had left us. He had done much for the country—and for us!

Aunt Isabel McKeeby

### LIVING IN FLORIDA (2005)

As I told you in the last Swope News, my family and I lived in Florida during the four years of World War II. Leaving Indiana with my children, ages 3 and 7, was quite traumatic. Guy had already taken his position at Buckingham Air Field in Ft Meyers, so Cooksey drove us down in our old 39 Chevy. I remember we had to stop at Ft. McPherson, Atlanta, to get much needed gas stamps.

When we reached Florida, I tried to explain to the children the changing scenery. "That's Spanish moss", I said pointing to the grey bearded stuff draped over the limbs. "I know all about it", three year old don piped proudly, "my doctor told me all about it when I was born!"

We lived happily for a while in an old two story house with Mango trees in the back and a coconut tree in front. Since it leaned, Gyanne and Don had fun trying to climb it, but they couldn't get very far up.

One day Don came running in from playing. "Mommy" he exclaimed, "I almost caught the prettiest snake, but it got away." Eventually the "pretty snake" was caught and killed, a deadly Coral Snake!

We experienced our one and only hurricane. It was before hurricanes were given names. Guy had to stay at the fort on duty. Schools were dismissed, so Gyanne came home, already in the rain. Following directions, we filled our bath tub with water, and got out candles. Wind screeched and rain drove in parallel sheets, trees groaned and bent (our neighbors tree fell), power went out. During the night, there was a knock at the door. It was the lady and her baby who lived in the garage apartment in back of us. "I thought we were going to be blown away", she said tearfully. "Can we stay with you?"

So the two of us sat up, watched and listened through the night while our children slept peacefully in their beds. Next morning we waded in water assessing the damage. A few trees were down and there was debris everywhere. But we were safe and dry.

Since teachers were in demand, I volunteered. I was assigned to a three room school out in the country, I took Don with me and believe it or not, he sat quietly enjoying the company of the little pretty blond girl who sat in front of him. Once I ask a little boy why he wasn't working on his numbers like the rest of the class. "I hain't got nary no pencil," he explained. So much for teaching grammar!

We three teachers ate our lunches (brought from home) sitting in the yard watching children play. We pulled grapefruit from the trees around us. They were sweet and delicious.

One year I was Gyanne's room mother. For a special occasion I wanted to serve orange juice and cookies(home made of course). We had no electric juicer, so I squeezed dozens of oranges by hand! I proudly served orange juice and cookies to some 25 or 30 students, and Gyanne was pleased!

Though gas was rationed, we managed to visit most of the tourist attractions still open during the four years and enjoyed an occasional visit to the Ft. Myers beach. Once Don waded out over his head but, Gyanne pulled him up by the hair, thus avoiding a near tragedy.

When our landlord decided to sell our house, we moved on to the base in a "two wide". We shared bath room facilities with other army personnel, but we got used to it. After all, we could smell the orange blossoms from near by trees!

We had the same privileges as army personnel, so we shopped at the PX, ate at the base, and Guy and I attended dances and other functions. Gyanne remembers a magicians show where she was asked to pull a white rabbit out of a hat!

It was all new and exciting and in spite of the war, it was the most enjoyable years of my life!

Anna Isabel Swope McKee

### AUNT ISABEL

Dear Readers of the Swope News Letter,

I think my son intends to tell you about the lovely surprise birthday party they gave me. It was truly great and I was truly surprised!

I would like to thank all of you who sent me birthday cards. I appreciated every one.

I'll not send memoirs, but I'll send an original poem I wrote years ago. You didn't know I wrote poetry or at least rhymes? Well, I did way back then. Maybe your kids will enjoy this one.

Anne Isabel McKeeby

### A DAY WITH MOTHER GOOSE

Old Mother Goose feeling lonely one day  
Called all her children to come out to play.  
Humpty Dumpty was the first to arrive

He'd had a great fall and was barely alive  
Little Jack Horner wouldn't budge from a corner;  
He looked a disgrace with pie on his face  
Mary, usually contrary, said, "Quit being dumb,  
Come out quickly, and Ill give you a plum."

To get the plum and show he was quick  
Jack jumped over a candle stick!

Little Boy Blue held hands with Bo Peep,  
All they talked of was his cows and her sheep.  
He'd left his horn where he'd fallen asleep,  
So his cows now were lost as well as her sheep.

Georgie Porgy was having great fun  
Kissing the Girls and making them run.  
Old Mother Hubbard, her mind in a fog,  
Whistled in vain for her poor old dog.

Shed worked in the cupboard to fin him a bone.  
But finding none there had come on alone.

Jack and Jill still limping for a fall  
Crouched in a corner and had no fear at all.  
Peter the Pumpkin eater and old Jack Sprat  
Brought there two wives, both ridiculously fat.

The all mad fun of Poor Old Kind Cole  
Who had no brown, just a pipe and a bowl.  
He shouted for a disk that was fit for a king,  
A pie of blackbirds, that would taste good and sing.

Little Miss Muffet with a scowl on her face  
Kept yelling that spiders crawled all over the place

The Old Woman who lived in a shoe  
Brought all her children, she had quite a few!

They all ran wild like let our of a zoo  
Poor Old Lady didn't know what to do!

Poor Mother Goose at the end of the day  
Cried shed never again call her children to play!

Anne Germano McKeeby

### EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

by Aunt Isabel (Anne Germano McKeeby) (2006)

Some weeks ago, my granddaughter Amy asked me to write about my early life for her daughter Lily and their little girl's club.

Thought a few of you might be interested. So with a few changes, here are the memories of a very old lady.

I started school in 1914 in the church we attended because the schoolhouse being built wasn't quite finished. I remember having a sand table to play in and little red chairs to sit in on.

The school building was finished in January. We thought it was lovely. It was red brick with two big rooms separated by a wide hall where we hung our wraps. There was also a large auditorium where we played games, did exercises and had music lessons, because the piano was in there. A music teacher came once a week to let us sing and learn new songs.

We carried our lunches in special made lunch boxes and weather permitting, sat outside to enjoy. We drank water from a tin cup from a pump outside. When nature called we

used outside toilets, one for girls and one for boys. It wasn't so nice in the winter!

My favorite teacher was my sister Elnora who taught me in the second and third grades. Though usually I walked to and from school, I'd sometimes stay after school to help her clean the blackboards and erasers, put things in order, and rode home with her in a horse drawn buggy. She kept them across the street with her future in-laws.

My favorite subject was reading because I liked the stories. My least favorite was arithmetic, although when I went to high school, I liked Algebra and Geometry because they were like solving puzzles.

I loved reading "The Little Colonel" series about a little Kentucky girl. The author, Annie F. Bacon was from our home town and one summer she was to speak at a reunion. I wanted to hear her and looked forward to it. But when she came, I had whooping cough! I was so disappointed- of course I couldn't go.

At recess we played ball or "Rabbit"; if the one who was "it" hit you with the ball, you became a rabbit and were out. There was a grove of trees in back of the school house where we enjoyed playing "Witch". If the witch caught you, you "turned to stone" and had to stand by a tree until rescued by another player touching you. Of course that player ran the risk of being caught too.

In the winter if there was enough snow on the ground, my Dad would take me and my sisters and the neighbor kids to school in a horse drawn sleigh. We loved that!

At recess, we chose up sides and each side built a fort of snow balls. It was fun trying to knock each other's fort down by throwing snowballs at it.

There were only seven in my class all through the eight grades: four boys and three girls, until we went to the big Central High School in Evansville.

We country kids had to take a county-wide exam in order to go to high school. Of course we were scared, but Miss Lida, our teacher in grades 6 through 8, had prepared us well and we all passed beautifully.

I remember the long walk from our house, up the lane, around the road past the Hornby's and the Rigg's to the trolley that took us to town. Then of course we had to take the same route home. I guess it was good exercise!

We had good times and sad times. One very sad time was when one of the girls in our class, Ruth Webb, was killed by lightning. She had gotten off the trolley and found it storming. She ran to a tree for protection, but it was struck by lightning and she was instantly killed. I remember Ruth Hornby and I and her two classmates spent the night at her parents' home during the "wake". That was my first close-up encounter with death.

I guess the good times were almost all the time. We laughed and played. We enjoyed each other's company. I wish all children could have as good a time growing up as I had. Sadly that's not true!

Isabel

### **FROM ANNE ISABEL:(2007)**

I enjoyed being raised on the Swope farm. We had plenty of kittens to play with. My 2 older sisters, Kathryn and Alice and I would dress them up in doll clothes and ride them around in an old baby buggy.

I remember the first outside task I was given. I had to go through a large potato patch with a stick and knock off the bugs in a can of kerosene.

Later, we were given sharp blades with long handles to strip leaves off cane stalks. They were then taken to be ground up so the juice could go into good old country sorghum. We always had biscuits and sorghum for breakfast.

A fun task was riding horseback to take water or snacks to the men working in the wheat or hay fields. We rode horseback a lot.

There was a big woods behind the barn where as young girls we had picnics or wiener roasts. We had occasional hay rides with favorite boy friends. It was fun growing up in the country.

Isabel

### **FROM ANNE ISABEL (2007)**

#### **CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

I wish you again a Happy Holiday  
With holly and mistletoe-a time to play  
A time for all to relax and celebrate  
Perhaps a tree or two to decorate  
Gifts galore from the man in red  
And thoughts of Him who died in our stead.  
So once again I think of all of you,  
Wishing you health and happiness  
the whole year through.

Anne G. McKeeby

### **"MEMORIES" BY ANNE ISABEL**

You say I'm 100. Say it isn't so- Why just yesterday,  
I was a girl, starting school- A little scared, you know.  
So much to learn, So much distraction, New friends to  
make,  
Learn to read, multiply and subtraction.  
Why just yesterday, I was a happy bride.  
The church was filled with family and friends,  
And most of all a handsome groom at my side.  
I recall a honeymoon where the Walbash River wends.  
Just yesterday I held a sweet little babe.  
We named her Gyanne, it seemed just right  
To show she belonged to Mommy Anne and Daddy Guy.  
A winsome child, lovely and talented and bright.  
"Beets" and "Barsa" were her pals, don't ask me why.  
Now she's a talented artist, selling many of her works  
Still finding time to spend hours at her church.  
Just yesterday, we had a precious little boy,  
We called him Don, I thought a pretty name  
An old battered teddy bear his favorite toy.  
When a student, many honors he won, winning him fame.  
Now he's a lawyer, retired doing mediations

Being more successful than anyone's anticipation.  
 Just yesterday, in Worthington, a town not far away  
 In a CCC Camp with many Kentucky young men,  
 Who came to work for just a little pay.  
 GG was their teacher, teaching crafts and being their friend.  
 Just yesterday, I heard our president, the great FDR  
 Speak of the "Day of Infamy, Pearl Harbor and going to  
 war"  
 Then yesterday we left to live in the Sunshine State.  
 Guy was head of the Red Cross, not a bad fate.  
 My lovely kids and I had lots of fun  
 Seeing the sights and living in the sun.  
 Just yesterday we heard the last shots had been fired.  
 We went to College Park, staying until we retired.  
 Just yesterday my heart broke when my dear Guy left me.  
 Leaving me alone with only my memory.  
 Five lonely years and then there was Bill  
 Offering marriage, my lonely heart to fill.  
 Both retired, we traveled here and there  
 Seeing sights and, making friends, having fun most  
 everywhere.  
 Now he too is gone- he didn't choose to leave me.  
 Alone again, I chose to live in an Assisted Living Facility.  
 My children grown, married to ones they love-  
 Charlie's Gyanne's mate, Don's is Sara Mac-  
 With so many hobbies and talents it's hard to keep track.  
 You say I'm 100- still can't believe it's so.  
 All I can wonder is "Where did time go?"  
 So much to remember, both good times and bad.  
 But as I think back, I'm really not sad.  
 All through those years, God's been good to me.  
 I thank Him each day for my wonderful family.  
 I cherish their love they show in so many ways.  
 And I love everyone more than mere words can say.  
 So daughter and son, grandkids and guests,  
 And I don't forget their wonderful mates:  
 I thank you family, thank you friends.  
 I'm sure you're glad this finally ends.  
 God Bless you all! I love you!  
*Celebrating her 100th Birthday on April 18, 2008*

Dear Swope Relatives:

Don and Gyanne have asked me to write about my 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. They, together with their spouses, Charlie and Sara Mac, went all out to make my 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration very special for me.

Beginning Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, my actual birthday, they had arranged for a lovely tea at noon. It was the first tea I had ever had in my 100 years, and it was very special for me.

In the evening there was a supper for the immediate family at Don and Sara Mac's home with banners, delicious food, a lovely birthday cake, and gifts. There, I was presented a special photograph album, with each family, my children and grandchildren, preparing their own separate pages of memories for me.

Saturday, Gyanne and Charlie's daughter, Cindy, and her husband, Gregg, and their two boys, Josh, and Ben, who had come all the way from Ft. Lauderdale, took me out for a nice lunch. Afterward, they stayed and played with me my favorite card game, **Skipbo**, which was even more fun because of the enthusiasm of the boys.

Saturday night was a big event, with all the immediate family gathering in a private dining room at a wonderful local restaurant for dinner. There were 19 of us, including four grandchildren and six great grandchildren, coming from all over Georgia and Florida. (My great grandson, Josh had even come all the way from New York, where he is studying at Pharmacy College, and had exams the following week). Of course the private dining room was festive, and beautifully decorated. I was so honored, I felt very humbled. During the meal, Charlie, (who does voice-overs on radio and television) with his talented voice, read several of the poems I had written. We all enjoyed the evening.

Sunday was another big day! There was a reception given by the family for me in the big Memorial Hall at Sparks Inn where I reside. Everyone was invited, family and friends. Over 100 people came out to honor me and wish me a Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. In addition to my immediate family, Ross and Mae were there, representing the Indiana and Swope contingency, old friends and neighbors from Florida, a bus load of former church friends from College Park, fellow residents of Sparks Inn, and even some former students.

The Hall was beautifully decorated, made special with flowers, dozens of roses (gifts from former students, friends, and well-wishers), and a table of memorabilia, with photographs of me, alone, as well as with family and friends, going all the way back to my childhood and forward until now.

There was finger food, punch, and still another birthday cake. Everyone seemed to enjoy the celebration and helped me to have a very special reception and 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. I also got a lot of compliments on my lovely family, of which I am very proud.

As you might expect, we were all worn out by the end of all of the three days of celebrations. I felt bushed, but honored, humbled, and very thankful for my wonderful family, my friends, and a blessed 100 years!  
 Anne (Isabelle Swope Germano) Mckeeby

### **TOUGH TIMES** (2008)

"Tough times never last. Tough people do" was the theme recently of the "Hour of Power" preacher in the beautiful Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. Bill and I attended it one Sunday years ago. It's been one of my favorites ever since.

America is experiencing tough times again. Will we be tough enough to pull through? I lived through the Depression of the 30's. Many then living didn't. Having lost everything in worldly goods, they gave up the one precious gift they had...life! My father, A.E. Swope was one of the

tough ones. he lost all he had in bank holdings, but he still had family, his home, his farm. He pulled through.

Fresh out of college, I sent resumes out, hoping to get a teaching job close by. No responses. Desperate, I finally took a job in a little "one horse town" in Fulton, Ohio. It wasn't anything like I had dreamed of. It consisted of a wooden building that housed grades 1 through 11, the high school had two rooms! But it was a job! I was paid a handsome \$100 a month from which I had to pay room and board, transportation, clothes and any other incidentals I needed. I boarded with the post mistress who worked across the street.

I walked to school only a few blocks away. Evenings I spent preparing lessons and listening to Rudy Valle, Fibber Magee and Molly and Amos and Andy. They don't make them that good anymore!

With only two rooms for high school, I had the History, English and Latin. Beginning Latin I could handle, but Caesar I had to study. Fortunately I had a "pony" so I could keep ahead of the assignments.

The other room and grades were taught by men. The first reminded me of Ichabod Crane. He lasted a year. The second wasn't much better. The third and final was a family man I could respect. To make things more interesting, one time I coached a play using students and a few local people as the cast. We performed in the local Masonic Hall.

Since there was no recreation in town, I dated a few local men even though I was unofficially engaged to G.G. One even offered me a diamond ring, a reject from a failed engagement!

Once I accidentally dropped one of Guy's letters to me. I didn't realize it until at school, I found a rather endearing portion of his letter written on the blackboard! Embarrassed, I had everyone go to the board for some assignment or other. It was erased!

I had a girl friend my age, but since she was engaged I didn't get to be with her as much as I'd like. When we could, we walked the few blocks out of town beyond the railroad where we enjoyed pure country air and the delightful sounds of frogs and crickets.

I stuck it out for four long years, but I'd had enough. I quit my job, and though Guy had had only temporary jobs, we decided to marry anyway. We married on faith and love!! But then to the rescue came the great FDR. But that's another story!

Anne Isabelle

### **FROM ISABEL MCKEEBY**

On April 18 of this year, I'll be observing my 101st birthday- notice I said "observing"- not celebrating. I told my family I wanted no fanfare, but I know we'll have a few family get-to-gethers. When people ask me to what I owe my longevity, I usually say, "God's been good to me and I have a wonderful family." I think growing up in the country and having to walk so far both to grade school and high school had something to do with it too.

I'm looking forward to Gyanne' and daughter Cindy being here, Cindy just for the weekend, but Gyanne can visit a while longer. Charlie will come a little later. Of course I'll be with Don and Sara Mac and I'm sure Amy and Brian's families can be here too.

So keep me in your prayers.

And God bless you all.

Anne (Isabel) McKeeby

### **FROM GEORGIA (2009)**

Maybe some of you might be interested in my life in an Assisted Living Facility (Retirement Home). I have lived here at Sparks Inn, Union City, GA for 15 years. Our rent (which is exorbitant) includes 3 meals a day (some not very appetizing). The staff for the most part are kind and helpful. We're offered programs such as Bible Study, Exercise Classes and various games and programs.

After arriving here in 1994, I wanted to be useful and active so I was soon giving a series of talks in the meeting room on Paul Harvey's "The Rest of the Story". Following that I did a weekly talk on "First Ladies of the White House". I also did several book reviews. All were well attended and well received. When I realized it was taking a toll on my voice and eyes, I quit.

I also was a volunteer at the front desk greeting people and giving information. In 1999 I was voted "Ms Sparks Inn" in a contest involving about a dozen nominated residents.

Statistics say that one out of three people over 65 will fall. I'm one of the three. Last fall I fell one night cutting my hand on the sharp edge of my lunch tray. It bled profusely. Don was called. He took me to the hospital where it was stitched up with 13 stitches. It still pains me sometimes and I can't fully open my fingers. So many residents fall that I call this "the house of fallen women". Sadly we see residents carried out on stretchers never to return. After observing several such incidents, my tablemate exclaimed, "People are dying who have never died before." She wondered why I laughed.

Though the nights usually pass without incident, I've experienced several unpleasant episodes. One night as I got out of bed, I stepped in about an inch of water! My room is across the hall from the kitchen, where someone had left water running from one of the faucets. The water had soaked my rug and gotten into my closet, ruining the box containing my shoes and pocket books. That and the carpet were finally replaced.

I've also had nightly uninvited guests. My next door neighbor (who has Alzheimer's) likes to walk the halls at night. She'd forget where her room was and often opened my door waking me up. Another Alzheimer patient came to my room late at night dressed in only a T shirt and underpants and wanted me to follow her to the hall.

Don and Sara Mac live about 15 minutes away from me, so he takes care of my pharmacy and other needs. He and Sara Mac often take me out to eat or to their home for a

lovely home cooked meal. I get letters and phone calls from Gyanne and Charlie and sometimes the grandchildren.

In April I observed my 101st birthday with a small family affair. Sara Mac, Don, Gyanne and Charlie, grandchildren Cindy, Brian and family, and Amy and family were here to celebrate several get togethers. When people ask me to what I credit my long life, I always say "God has been good to me, and I have a wonderful, caring family!"

God bless you all!

Anne Isabel

### **FROM ISABEL (2010)**

I promised Don I'd write about maybe not my best Christmas, but one of the most interesting. Mother had promised Alice and me (being the youngest, ages 5 and 7) that if we'd hide behind the dining room door maybe we'd see Santa Claus. So we waited thrilled with anticipation. Sure enough, soon we heard the jingle of bells and a hearty "HO-HO-HO!" Then cautiously as if afraid he was being observed, in crept the red clad, bearded figure, a big bag presumably presents on his back. He began pulling gifts out of his bag and placing them under the tree. "Oh great- is that a doll- yes- and some books" (always a treasure) "a few other things"- then he didn't forget- some oranges and nuts which we didn't often have. His task ended, with another "HO-HO-HO" he slipped away leaving his two small observers thrilled and anxious to see what he'd brought.

We didn't know it at the time of course, but found out later that Santa had been played by one of Mother's brothers, my Uncle Walter, a Principal of one of the Evansville schools, taking time out from a busy work load to thrill a couple of his sister's kids. It was probably as much of an interesting experience for him as it was for her two fascinated observers- a night we'd always remember.

Merry Christmas and love to you all,

Anne Isabel

(I wish you a Merry Christmas, too.)

Isabel

### **From Gyanne Germano Smith:**

*When Mother was in the hospital recovering from pneumonia, she dictated 12 pages of her memories to me. Here is an excerpt which she titled herself, written exactly as she dictated:*

#### **"This Is My Life"**

*(by Anne Isabel Germano McKeeby)*

"My first job as a child was getting coal from the coal shed and taking it inside to the stove for Mother's cooking. There were 6 in my class at school: 3 boys and 3 girls. Our teacher was a disciplinarian. One time she sent me out in the hall for whispering. Sometimes on the way home from school, we'd pick asparagus. We'd often go to the grape vine orchard and eat our fill.

My Mother was a kind, thoughtful person. She worked hard, canned fruit and vegetables, worked in the

garden: hoeing, spading. She was always taking in strangers who had no home. Once she took in a man and when she went to make up the bed, it was full of bedbugs. She took the bed down piece by piece and burned it up in a fire in the yard.

The rain on our tin roof sounded so good. We had no heat upstairs. Alice, Kathryn and I slept together. When one wanted to turn over, she'd say "Spoon" and we'd all turn.

Mother made quilts. She was more of a hard worker outside than inside. "Not much on cakes and pies." One meal I always enjoyed was beef hash.

Dad made sorghum syrup from sugar cane down in the woods.

Mayme was my oldest sister. She was like a second Mother to me.

Ralph, my only brother owned the gas station/store in McCuthanville.

Elnora was very hard working. She made butter with an old fashioned churn. I remember her beating the dust out of rugs outside and putting them back down, stretching them on fresh straw. She cleaned the gas chimneys every morning. They were all smoked up. There was a bush of gooseberries in the garden. Elnora made pies that were sold at the Windmill Restaurant during the war (WWII). Elnora was the hardest worker. She did everything.

Laura wasn't around much when I was little. She was a secretary at the YMCA. She fixed dinners at her house for us. She was a good cook.

Kathryn was always fun to be around. She laughed a lot, joked. She was the "boy" Dad always wanted. She, Alice and I shared a room and bed. I always thought I was a "Tag-A-Long". She and Alice chummed together. Alice and I became closer later. She went to Ohio State with me one year. I went to Evansville College for one year, then went to Ohio State and graduated from there. (about 1930).

Ohio State is where I met my husband Guy (Germano). He looked so handsome with his black hair and dancing brown eyes, whirling the girls around on the dance floor. I dated him a long time. Of all the boys I could have chosen, I chose the Italian boy from far away. Our marriage was June, 1934. The church was full of flowers and friends. Alice was my Maid Of Honor. At the rehearsal, I was excited and silly and the preacher tried to calm me down, saying "This is the serious part". After the service, all the guests came to our home for a nice breakfast. Then we left for our honeymoon. Cooksey drove us to New Harmony where we had a cabin on the Walbash River. We enjoyed rowing on the river to a knoll where we would read Shakespeare to each other. We lived our first year in Evansville in a 2 room apartment that was in an old house once owned by the Cooks of Cooks Brewery"

*There was a lot more but to write it all would fill the Swope Newsletter! Not bad for a soon to be 103 year old, huh?*