

Letter from Sarah Margaret

We were sitting outside on furniture that Milton got from a restaurant that had closed down – but not the tables and benches from the Little Moo; they went inside, replacing the concrete tables that had been there before the Twin Pigs became the Dairy Queen.

It was in the summer and out front on DeKalb kids and cops went back and forth and swallows darted through clouds of insects that swirled around the street lights.

I don't know who was working. I don't think Milton's children were old enough yet to be running the place. Maybe Milton himself was in residence, lumbering over like a graceful bear after the crowd had died down to tell me a politically incorrect joke because he knew that I was always a good audience.

Outside there would have been at least our party which consisted of Brenda, Yancie, and me, plus Frank and Margaret and probably Randy. Depending on the year, maybe Griff and Ellen were present. Both of them are dead now. So is Frank, but we stopped going before he passed on so that is different.

(Ellen slept during the day then at night came to the Dairy Queen and afterwards, between midnight and 6:00 AM, painted coats-of-arms for people all over the country. Sometimes we walked with her to her car - I think it was a Renault - to see Blossom, who waited with the other dog in the back seat, delicately eat tissue paper. Griff dined, as he called it, on nearly raw hamburger patties and french fries which he doubled then carefully dipped in mayonnaise. He had been a gunnery officer on a battleship late in WWII and almost got a Phd in history at Columbia before moving back from New York to live near his mother. A huge portrait of her hung in his living room.)

I don't why Frank brought the letter from Sarah Margaret. Granted, he did bring things – odds and ends from the jewelry store that his family once owned, a ledger from the laundry that his family also operated before they lost most of their money, a scrapbook of postcards that his insane father assembled in the 1930's when he and another relative, also possibly insane, took a road trip to California. There was one more trip to California, this time in 1938 with Frank's pregnant mother. Frank liked to say that he had been to California once, although he didn't see much from inside his mother.

I think Sarah Margaret was his mother's cousin. She lived near Ashville. Here is the letter.

Dear Franklin and Margaret,

Thought I would write you a few lines.

I'm invited to a bridal shower for Jill Pruett, Doris' granddaughter.

I talked to Lillian last night and she said Grandpa Hyndman was a Shoemaker.

Lillian said all my mother and her mother knew to do was to go to church.

Martha and Winfred Groves is out of town. They are celebrated their anniversary.

Suzanne is cleaning up my house getting ready for Danny. She took the curtains down and washed everything on the beds. I have 3 bedrooms.

Suzanne brought me 2 hot dogs up last night. She will be going to the church tonight. She is going to have hamburgers tonight and chicken tomorrow night.

They had a dinner for her pastor Sunday. It was his birthday. She brought me a hot dog and all kinds of sweets.

Richard's daughter has 2 jobs. He has gone to feed the cattle.

The girl that cooks for one of his friends sent steak, potatoes, corn and broccoli and carrots over here Sunday night. He eat supper with him. His wife left him.

My Blue Cross and Blue Shield won't pay for my medicine. I guess it's because I smoke.

My right leg has been giving me a fit. Dr. Dean gave me a salve to go on it.

Lillian had her mouth operated on. She can't wear her lower teeth.

Doug's insurance didn't pay for Suzanne's hand. She works every day. You can see yourself in her floors.

We put in 3 pumps. They worked here all day last Sat. Suzanne bought the pipe. They hooked me on to Ronnie. I've got more water pressure than I ever had.

It's about time for the mail, so I guess I had better close. Tell Franklin to write me.

Love,

Sarah Margaret