

Aunt Bella

COLLECTOR: Gertie Fowler

CONTRIBUTOR: Nancy Flynn

Gertie Fowler:

Today is January 27th, 2010 and today I'm in Forteau with Nancy Flynn and Nancy is gonna share some memories with me today of ahh... about her mother.... the ones she has of her mother. So Nanc would you like to share some memories with me from your mothers ah... from your growing up and things.

Nancy Flynn:

Sure, not a problem

Gertie Fowler:

Okay.

Nancy Flynn:

My mom is Isabella Lilly Barney, who married Wilfred George Flynn. Ah... a very loving and kind woman that gave her...her heart to people. She loved to ah...she loved to make people happy, she loved to give...she loved to give all that she had to make someone happy. I have lots and lots of my mom. She had eight children and she loved every one of us dearly. There wasn't one she loved any more then the other.

Gertie Fowler:

No. So what did you have now, how many girls?

Nancy Flynn:

There was fivethere's eight of us living. She did have nine children, but eight of us living, there's five boys and three girls.

Gertie Fowler:

Hmmm....hmmm.

Nancy Flynn:

And the age difference between the oldest and the youngest is twenty three years. So my mom was in her forties when ah....both myself and my youngest brother were born.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay.

Nancy Flynn:

Ah...my mom loved to cook, clean. She was a very clean lady ah...

Gertie Fowler:

Was she?

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah, she loved to ah... have everything so neat and tidy, even though there were times when, you know...that wasn't possible because there was no automatic washer and there was no electric mixer and ah... (laughs). She was just an awesome lady.

Gertie Fowler:

So she baked a lot did she Nanc?

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah she baked...well, yes. We always had company where dad had the store. There was always people from other communities coming usually meal time and mom had...mom always had something cooked and she also ah...use to cook for her sister. Her sister was a little....not a little sick but a lot sick, I guess. Ah... she would always cook a meal and send down to her, almost everyday.

Gertie Fowler:

Do you have any memories now, of things that she taught you how to do and ?

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah, she ...my memories of my mom that she taught me to do was ah... to bake is one, and ah.. to be kind to other people.

Gertie Fowler;

Okay.

Nancy Flynn:

That's my biggest, biggest memories of when I was nine, she ah.that's when she started to teach me how to mix bread. She would always put the ingredients together and then she'd let me mix it and ah, by the age of eleven, I was totally mixing bread on my own.

Gertie Fowler:

Yes, maid.

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah. And ah... I'm still mixing bread.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Nancy Flynn:

Ah... oh my.

Gertie Fowler:

So what ah..like with the business and things now with Stelman, when did she, you know, how did she play a role in the business with Aunt Bella's bakery and things?

Nancy Flynn:

First when Stelman started it, his business, it was just a take out and ah... I wasn't, I was gone that...the first couple of years that Stelman started his business. But I do know that mom use to go in and ah.. make all of his gravies and his hot dog buns and his hamburger buns. There was no potato peelers then, so all the potatoes were peeled by hand and sliced for fries and she would take home all the cup towels and clean them. So everyday, you know she would go in and deal with whatever had to be done and then when ah... later in life, when Stelman's business started to expand, he started the bakery and ah... he couldn't think of a name to choose for the bakery and then all of a sudden he said, "Oh my, my mother", he said, "she put so much time, she gave me so much of her time and ah... so we'll call it Aunt Bella's bakery, so it's about twenty or twenty five years."

Gertie Fowler;

Yes, maid.

Nancy Flynn:

It's still Aunt Bella's bakery and ah..

Gertie Fowler:

Hopefully it'll always be...

Nancy Flynn:

Hopefully, it'll always be Aunt Bella's bakery.

Gertie Fowler:

Yeah.

Nancy Flynn:

My mom was very kind and ah...you know if she knew somebody was in need of something and she had it. She would take the last ...for example a can of milk or when we didn't have can milk, we had cows, she'd give the last bottle of milk or the last can of milk away. If she knew somebody was in need.

Gertie Fowler:

Is that right?

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah.

Gertie Fowler:

Hmm. So how long did your mother live, now Nancy? How old was she when she

Nancy Flynn:

Mom was eighty eight years old.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay. So she lived a nice life and that.

Nancy Flynn:

She worked really, really hard, you know. She had ..she worked hard but she had ah... she had lots of love from ...her children loved her dearly. Ah...she worked really, really hard because first when mom got married, dad was fishing. So she use to split all the fish, salt it and dry it and then ah.... do all of her house work besides. All of her own in the house work. And ah...then dad went from fishing to having his own grocery store and ah... the grocery store was in their house. Shortly after M. Organ's Limited came to Red Bay and then he set up store in West St. Modeste and Forteau and dad became like the manager, I guess. And then we use to have all the groceries in the basement of our house so, mom would have to take the groceries down to the store and so she worked really, really hard to help dad and had nine children besides.

Gertie Fowler:

Yes, maid.

Nancy Flynn:

Yeah.

Gertie Fowler:

So anything else now, you'd like to ah..share with me. You were telling me, after your mother passed away, you did something special with her clothes, so would you like to share that with me.

Nancy Flynn:

Sure, ah.... after mom passed away ah...she loved dresses. All of her life she loved dresses and in mom's time there wasn't a lot of money, so there wasn'tthere wasn't often she got a new dress. But she did love dresses. So over the years we would never throw, unless the clothes... the dress was torn or dirty, you know. But we kept all mom's dresses and for the longest time, we didn't know what we were going to do with them. So one day I went for a walk and I was sitting on the beach and I said I wonder, I just want to do something special with her dresses. So an idea came in my mind, even though I couldn't make quilts, my sister could. So I went back to Maggie's and "Maggie", I said, "what do you think, what should we do?" "And" I said, "Is there anyway, we can take mom's dresses and cut them, cut the material and make a quilt." "And" she said,

“Nancy, we won’t cut them up in pieces, I can make them as if they’re little tiny dresses and put them together and make a quilt.”

So we started out and some of the dresses, well all of the dresses that’s on the quilt has, they all have special memories. You know, one dress is the one she wore to my wedding, another dress is the dress that she wore weekdays when she was doing her housework with a full apron; and the full apron is a neck string and down around the waist. The other dress has a short apron, like a cut off apron that she wore on Sundays, so she would ah... it would be different.

Gertie Fowler:

It would be dressed up? Okay.

Nancy Flynn:

It would be dressed up, yeah. And there’s other dresses, the one she used for the lodge in ah...the one that she liked to use when she went out in the evening time to go visit a friend for a chat or ..but anyway, the quilt now, is my daughters quilt so when she’s gone, when she leaves home to go off to college or do whatever in life, it will be a quilt that when she wraps it around her, she can feel the warmth of my mother.

Gertie Fowler:

Okay, that’s nice. Well I like to thank you Nanc for your memories, they were beautiful.

Nancy Flynn:

You’re welcome.