

A REMEMBRANCE OF GOOD TIMES

by **FRED LINER**

I remember those wonderful trips we took when I was a child to see my aunt Roxie Cowan (Hyatt) in Webster, NC. It was in the late 1950's and through the 1970's. Aunt Roxie, Aunt Mildred Cowan (Webster Postmaster), and Aunt Alna Hyatt would all be there.

I can recall as far back as when I was 8 years old on through the teenage years. We would travel from Charlotte to Waynesville to visit my uncle Charlie Woodard (remember Charlie's Restaurant, now DuVal's) then on to Sylva and Webster. In those days it took longer that it does now because of the roads.

The most harrowing part of the trip was the journey over the bridge in Webster. When Aunt Roxie's house was in sight, the last little distance involved a trek over that bridge (and I use the term loosely) before turning into her driveway. At that time was a one lane bridge and worst of all (especially for a child) it had no side railings. I hoped and prayed each time we went over that bridge that my father could navigate a straight line and traverse us safely to the other side. Such relief when we reached the other side with jubilation untold at my father's driving skills.

The real joy however lay in those visits to Aunt Roxie's home. I couldn't wait for that wonderful food cooked on a wood stove (especially those biscuits). When she lived in that house she used a root cellar for food storage and she cooked on a wood stove, I believe that is because that is how she grew up. It wasn't until she moved from that house to her then modern home on the hill on the other side of the river that she started using an electric stove. At least that's how I remember it.

I shall always remember those unique times. Let's go back to her old house for a moment. We used to sleep on the second floor attic bedroom. The bathroom was down stairs so what I recall as being called a slop pot was kept in the room with a tightly fitting lid. We always made sure to use that before bed because there was a picture hanging in the hallway at the head of the stairs of someone (I don't remember who it was) and their eye's would follow you at night (or so it seemed). Surely something terrible would happen if you passed that picture at night. Somehow we survived and when daylight shown we would head for that great country breakfast and then on to the front porch to take flight in the porch swing overlooking the river.

I still go by there to reminisce those old times. It's not so harrowing now. The bridge is now two lanes and has side rails (I don't know if I could cross it without those).