

Days of Yesterdays, Esmont Community Center

Stories of the elders as told to Laura Piedmont, R.N. and Susan Hastings, R.N.

Copyright 2009 JABA, Charlottesville

Transcribed for Friends of Esmont web use with added photos, by Douglas H. Bush

Spring Water and Good Advice

by Dorothy Harris



I was the seventh child of 12 and lived in Esmont most of my life. I had a good childhood. My parents were excellent. I truly loved them. My dad was a deacon, and my mother was a teacher and a preacher. Their advice was: always put God first and things will fall in place; try to love everyone; and always be there if someone is in need. There were hard things too: weathering the cold of winter and making ends meet. We had a big garden and people would help one another.

I remember going to the spring to get water. Daddy taught us to tell drinkable water from not. There was a spring for washing and a spring for drinking. If you were going to drink it, it should have run-off, come off a hill and have "spring keepers" (a kind of fish) in it. We'd fetch the water with a dipper so it wouldn't be too muddy. We set the butter in the cool spring too, to keep it fresh. We'd churn it, then pack it in a metal can with a tight lid.

I also remember how excited we were when we got electric lights. And what fun we had picking berries for cobbler.

My advice to my children: love to laugh and be joyful; be honest, even if it hurts; and love music!