



## Gloria Parsons' Tribute to her Aunt Lois



**A**unt Lois was a major part of my young life and she is responsible, in part, for who I am today.

Aunt Lois often picked me up for special events or to attend events at Eastern Nazarene College Church. Sometimes I had a Saturday night sleepover with Aunt Lois and then I went to church with her on Sunday. I knew the song "Jesus Loves Me" from my own

Sunday School, but I know I learned the song "This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine" from those visits. Aunt Lois sang in the choir, so I usually sat with another family. After church we remained behind because Aunt Lois counted the money from the church offering.

Aunt Lois, it seemed, had many apartments in Malden; or at least in my mind she did. Whenever she got a new apartment Dad helped her paint the walls. Maybe we helped her move in, - I don't remember. What I do remember is Dad making a smiley face or writing our names in paint before he applied an even coat on the wall.

When we visited, we often asked Aunt Lois for the crayons. They were in a tin and most of the time we colored on her napkins. We colored in the dots and the fleur de lis making each napkin more beautiful than the last. I wonder how many napkins we used! Aunt Lois had coasters, maple leaf ones, and the veining was raised. We liked to do rubbings with those and I can remember asking for those leaves when we visited. I'm sure we shared all our creations with her. Aunt Lois had an awesome rocking chair, A Boston Rocker, I believe. I think my siblings and I took turns rocking on it; we probably sometimes fought over it. We enjoyed looking at her latest afghan, as she was an avid knitter.

We shared almost every Thanksgiving dinner at Aunt Lois'. My job was to stuff the dates with 1/2 walnuts and roll them in confectionary sugar. Many times Aunt Lois had her friends,

Bill and Esther McMackin, over for the holiday. Bill was a jokester and lived to tease as I remember it. One of the things they did was to hide pennies for us to find then tell us if were "hot" or "cold." We got to keep the pennies when we found them.

When Aunt Lois bought her new home in Ipswich, Dad assisted with the furnace and built a low shed out back. He helped with painting and other jobs as well. In exchange, Aunt Lois helped Mom, cared for us, and helped with the housework. We like it best when we visited Aunt Lois. She had a TV and we didn't own one. We watched Shirley Temple and caught up with Lassie, Rin-Tin-Tin and whatever else we could watch. Yes - we even watched Lawrence Welk!

Aunt Lois was a sun worshipper and liked to sun herself in the backyard. Sometimes we would find her there when we arrived. I guess we must have spoiled her solitude at those times, but I never remember her complaining. When we were not glued to her TV, we were playing Rook or exploring. The mud banks and the wharf across the street - the river in general - would keep our interest for hours, - not to mention the sunsets or the geese flying overhead. I even got poison sumac in Aunt Lois' back yard.

To this day, it brings back memories of Aunt Lois when we drive down the old Route One. As a child, I would look up at the trees on top of a certain hill as the branches arched over the highway and realize that we were almost there. Next we would go through some marshy areas and then we would catch sight of the water tower.

Bob and I often walk the beach on Plum Island and we always glance over to where she used to live.

"Aunt Lois, you were a huge part of my life and we missed you immensely when you moved to Vermont. Thank you for all that you have been for me."

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Three pairs of eyes watched from the car . . . He had lost sight of the mission.

Jesus wants to remind us of the mission again this year. . .

Love others.

Care for them.

Invest in community . . . or invest in the creation of one.

This will only happens if there is a real change in our lives. Something is going to have to be different. We will need to get over ourselves. We will

need to look outside of ourselves. The Bible talks about this kind of transition as heart surgery - the replacement of a stone heart with a living heart that beats for God and others.

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## Sharon Gardner's Tribute to her Aunt Lois

When I was little, Aunt Lois used to do some of the laundry. She would come in with baskets of clean clothes and take away baskets of dirty clothes. When Ellen and I



spent a weekend at her house in Ipswich, we would beg her to sleep with us on the fold-out double-bed. She would agree and we would go to sleep; Ellen and I sleeping on either side of Aunt Lois. Every morning, without fail, Ellen and I would wake up to see only each other. Aunt Lois would be sleeping peacefully in her own bed in another room.

During these weekends, sometimes a mouse would get caught in one of Aunt Lois' mousetraps. She always insisted that we have a funeral for the mouse, - complete with words and a burial.

Ellen and I used to wait for aunt Lois at the Malden Church. She counted the money in the collection plate every week. Once I asked Aunt Lois in a very serious tone if she was al-

lowed to count the collection money because she sang so well (Aunt Lois was a choir member) or if she got to count it because she was so pretty, or if it was because she worked in a bank. Aunt Lois laughed and laughed. I can't remember her ever giving me an answer.

Aunt Lois had rubber leaves that she used to let us trace. Those leaves were a favorite!

At that time she had no phone in the house in Ipswich. The occasional phone call to her would come via the house next door. The neighbors would kindly come over to tell her that she had a phone call and she would go next door to talk.

We used to always watch "The Lawrence Welk Show" with Aunt Lois on Saturday nights. That's how I know the "Lennon Sisters!"

*Dear Folks,*

*I am regretting that I didn't at least say thank you for all the work and effort you put into the party and also for thanking everybody for coming. But I will say a big "THANK YOU" now.*

*Love you all,*

*Lois*

## Dan's Holiday Message Continues

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Ezekiel 36:26 (NIV) -- I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

A new heart will beat in sync with the heart of God. It will love what God loves. And what God loves is . . . you . . . and me . . . and **all** of us.

I. L. Peretz tells a story that helps me understand:

Early every Friday morning, at the time of the Penitential Prayers, the Rabbi of Nemi-rov would vanish. He was nowhere to be seen, and he

was certainly not at home. His door stood open; whoever wished could go in and out; no one would steal from the rabbi. But not a living creature was within.

Where could the rabbi be? In heaven, no doubt. That is what the people thought.

But once a Foreigner came, and he laughed. "Where can the rabbi be," the people asked? "That's not my business," said the Foreigner, shrugging. Yet all the while he was scheming to find out.

That same night, right after the evening prayers, the Foreigner steals into the rabbi's room, slides under the rabbi's bed, and waits. He'll watch

all night and discover where the rabbi vanishes and what he does during the Penitential Prayers.

At dawn he hears the call to prayers. The rabbi has already been awake for a long time. Finally the rabbi arises. First he does what befits a Jew. Then he goes to the

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## Gardner Siblings Remember Their Oldest Sister, Ruth

In our last issue, Uncle Clayton remembered a time when his sister, Aunt Ruth, was trying to read a book near the heating register while he was taking a bath. Here are some more recollections of Ruth Amy Metcalf that some of her siblings have sent to us.

Aunt Beulah, the youngest of the Original Gang of Ten, writes:

“This is a remembrance of Ruth Amy. Since Ruth was the oldest of ten children and I was the youngest, she had left home before I was old enough to be aware of things going on. Therefore, I don’t have many childhood memories. I do recall, however, an occasion when Ruth had come home for awhile. She was starting to do some house cleaning but got sidetracked to reading a book. She was an avid reader. Clayton’s story in the previous newsletter about reading a book beside the warm heat register underscores that she was an avid reader.

Ruth attended Eastern Nazarene College and was influential in starting the East Charleston Nazarene Church. Also, because Ruth attended ENC, I believe Elinor and I were influenced to attend the college also. I recall Ruth visiting home after she left and listening to her interesting stories. I remember sitting in the living room with the family and talking about the different experiences we had. Ruth, Earl and Papa seemed to have the most stories to tell.

I respected Ruth’s spiritual life and her closeness to God. She was always ready to tell how God had blessed her and had given her salvation. Not only did she tell about her conversion, but she lived it on a daily basis.”

Aunt Lois recently wrote a short note to the newsletter and in it she talks about Ruth.

“I don’t know too much about Ruth. She grew up a lot faster than Elizabeth and I did. The only thing I heard about Ruth was this. It must have been the first time she went to Sunday School. There they passed the offering plate to accept offerings and when it finally came to her, she said: “No thanks, I have plenty at home.”

The story in the last issue about Clayton taking a bath in the living room by the stove brings to mind another story. One time, when Elizabeth was taking her bath, she got too close to the stove and got the imprint of the register on her backside!

I enjoyed the newsletter a lot. I always look forward to reading it.

Sorry you couldn’t get to Ruth’s funeral. Your flowers were beautiful. They had the visiting hours in Lyndonville Friday night. The casket was open there; but the next day, at our church, the casket was closed. You probably know that Dan Whitney officiated at the service. We came back to the church for refreshments after the service at the cemetery.

Love you, Lois”.



Ruth Amy Metcalf in a contemplative mood.

*“Ruth was always ready  
to tell how God had  
blessed her and had given  
her salvation”*



## Rev. John and Mrs. Doris Scott Pass Away

The Gardner Newsletter has the sad duty to report that both Reverend John and Mrs. Doris Scott have passed away. Rev. John Scott was the pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in East Charleston, Vermont from 1953 to 1955. See The Gardner Newsletter, Volume 6, Issue 24. Stephen Scott, one of the Scott's four sons, reported the news to the newsletter in an e-mail dated October 9, 2007. It is recorded here in its entirety.

"I am not sure if this is the correct address to respond to; but, if not, I trust you can forward it to the appropriate family member.

My name is Steve Scott, the son of Rev. John and Doris Scott. I just wanted to pass the news to whoever knows and to whoever sends the newsletter faithfully to them that both Mom and Dad have passed away this year – within a span of six months of each other. Doris passed away due to cancer on March 4, 2007 and John just passed away on September 17, 2007. Please inform anyone who may have known them of their passing.

I am the third son of four and was only weeks old when Mom and Dad moved to East Charleston. I have heard much about their friendships over the years and so I wanted to let everyone know of their deaths.

Thank you to each who was a part of John's and Doris' life."

Steve Scott

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about their friendships over  
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## Baby Geth by Teresa Vasko

As a kindergarten child, I saved my pennies to buy a doll from a mail order catalogue for \$3.99.

After waiting for what seemed like months, the doll arrived. Naming the doll became a family project. We settled on "Geth" as the doll's name. G for Glenn; E for Elizabeth; I for Teresa; H for Homer.

I was so excited to take my doll to kindergarten and show her off. I still remember the day I climbed onto the bus with my new doll. Charlie Lang (not of the Gardner-Lang connection), the bus driver, asked me my doll's name.

I said, "Geth."

He said, "Susie?"

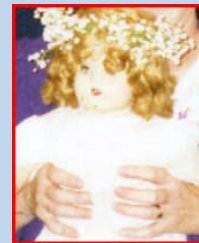
"No," I replied, "Geth!"

"Amy?," he guessed.

"NO!", frustratedly I answered. "GETH!!"

And he kept right on guessing.

Some of you may remember seeing the doll at Uncle Clayton's and Aunt Gerry's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary party. I dressed her in the flower girl dress I wore at their wedding.



**Baby Geth**



## Dan's Holiday Message Continues

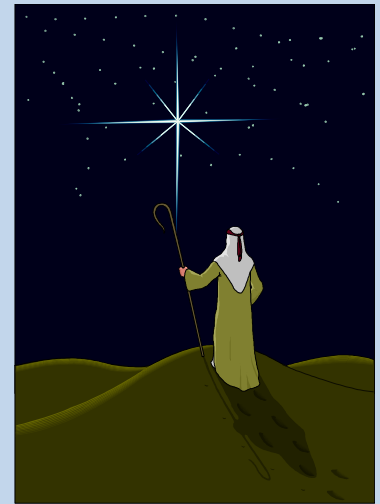
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clothes closet and takes out a bundle of peasant clothes: linen trousers, high boots, a coat, a big felt hat, and a long wide leather belt studded with brass nails. The rabbi gets dressed. From his coat pocket dangles the end of a heavy peasant rope. The rabbi goes out, and the Foreigner follows him.

On the way the rabbi stops in the kitchen, bends down,

takes an ax from under the bed, puts it in his belt, and leaves the house. The Foreigner trembles but continues to follow. The rabbi hugs the sides of the streets, keeping to the shade of the houses. He glides from house to house, and the Foreigner follows after him. The Foreigner hears the sound of his heartbeats mingling with the sound of the rabbi's heavy steps. But he keeps on going and follows the rabbi to the outskirts of the town.

A small wood stands behind the town. The rabbi enters the wood. He takes thirty or forty steps and stops by a small tree. The Foreigner, overcome with amazement, watches the rabbi take the ax out of his belt and strike the tree. He hears the tree creak and fall. The rabbi chops the tree into logs and the logs into sticks. Then he makes a bundle of the wood and ties it with the rope in his pocket. He puts the bundle of wood on his back,



*"As the rabbi put the wood into the oven he recited the first portion of the Penitential Prayers."*

shoves the ax back into his belt, and returns to the town.

He stops at a back street beside a small broken-down shack and knocks at the window.

"Who is there?" asks a frightened voice. The Foreigner recognizes it as the

voice of a sick Jewish woman.

"I," answers the rabbi in the accent of a peasant.

"Who is I?"

Again the rabbi answers in Russian. "Vassil."

"Who is Vassil, and what do you want?"

"I have wood." And, not waiting for the woman's reply, he goes into the house.

The Foreigner steals in after him. In the gray light of the early morning he sees a poor room with broken, mis-

erable furnishings. A sick woman, wrapped in rags, lies on the bed. She complains bitterly, "How can I buy wood? Where will a poor widow get money?"

"Don't worry, I'll trust you. I'll kindle the fire," answers the rabbi.

As the rabbi put the wood into the oven he recited the first portion of the Penitential Prayers.

The Foreigner who saw all of this became a disciple of the rabbi. And ever after, when another disciple tells how the Rabbi of Nemirov ascends to heaven at the time of the Penitential Prayers, the Foreigner does not laugh. He only adds quietly, "If not higher."

Christians sometimes fixate on the belief that Jesus came to suffer on a cross to die for their sins. This year, I pray we will value His life as much as his death. In life, he

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## Cynthia Vasko Weds Will Clark

**C**ynthia Vasko of Lyndonville, VT and Will Clark of San Antonio, both graduated from Princeton University in 1999. Knowing that, one might assume that they met there. But if they did, they don't remember it.

After graduation, they each headed independently for California. For Cynthia the attraction was the wine industry. Will was drawn by the dot-com boom.

They met at a party hosted by a mutual friend in San Francisco in 1999. Over the next few years, their paths crossed several times, and they even dated briefly in 2001. Then after reconnecting at the fifth reunion of their class in 2004, they began dating seriously.

So, on a trip to Europe in August 2006, Will picked a romantic spot to propose: on the Charles Bridge in Prague.

They were married on July 7, 2007, at The Depot Hotel in Sonoma, California. The wedding was officiated by their friend Rob Waring, a commissioner of civil marriages in California.

Cynthia is the daughter of John and Teresa Vasko of Lyndonville. She graduated from Lyndon Institute in 1995.

Will, the son of Bill and Rosemary Clark of San Antonio, graduated from Alamo Heights High School, also in 1995.

The bride wore an ivory satin dress with aubergine-colored lace insets in the skirt. She made the dress herself. She learned to sew from her mother and other women in Lyndonville, she said, and she got a lot of help with this project from another sewing friend in California.

The bride's mother crocheted white and lavender roses to decorate the setting.

The couple's brothers were their attendants. John Vasko Jr. was man of honor, and Andrew Clark was best man. A reception followed at the hotel.

Cynthia works for Pacific Gas & Electric in energy procurement; Will does software programming at Cisco Systems.

They live in San Leandro in a house they bought that satisfied two principal criteria: it has a wonderful kitchen, because Cynthia loves to cook, and it has two-car garage to hold their cars and motorcycles (one apiece of each). "Both of his are faster than both of mine," she said.



Mr. and Mrs. Will Clark

## Dan's Holiday Message Continues

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is a model for us, inciting us to rebellion. "Rise above selfishness! Forsake trivial comforts! Make a difference in the world! Swim upstream! Strike out from Normandy until the whole world knows that love conquers evil, light outshines the darkness, mercy triumphs over harsh judgment!

This holiday season, I am grateful that when Jesus moves into my neighborhood, he doesn't come carrying a big stick. In fact, it looks to me like he has a sack on his back full of invitations. One of them has my name on it. One of them has yours. He reaches a hand out to me to see if I'll take what he has to offer.

When I open the envelope, I read, "Come, follow me. You're included. We'll make a difference in the world, you and me together. This will make your life important, meaningful, rich."

I smile. I don't know about you, but I couldn't ask for a better present.



**SEE YOU IN 2008!**

