

December 28, 1952

This would be called a dull Sunday by some lively souls. Such a quiet day on the calendar is welcomed by yours truly.

The only rush job the whole day was to get the breakfast dishes washed and in the cupboard before the last bell for church shook the rickety bell tower.

The morning's sermon was much in keeping with my thinking. I was glad the speaker is not as bias as some ministers for he is broadminded and does not say his particular brand of religion is the only right route to Heaven. There are many routes and no one has yet found the perfect one.

Our Sunday dinner was simple and easy to fix. Food was the least of anyone's desire--plates of candy and nuts tempt any pangs of hunger.

The Sunday newspapers had little news and the reading material was mostly a resume of the year's happenings--some we would like to forget. It didn't take long to digest them.

The weather made indoors a happy place to meditate. We visited the folks for an hour; but conversation soon lagged and we came home to sleep in our chairs. The lights were out for over an hour and we sat and complained of the kerosene smell of the lamps; recalling how, as children, we studied by just such light.

When the electricity flowed our way again, I began to crochet some lace for pillow cases and Chet finished another of a hundred murder mysteries. Haysel returned from a show.

Very exciting isn't it? But there will be many Sundays like this. Just beginning is our winter.

December 29, 1952

Christmas for 1952 is over for sure. Today the sale catalogues came. I should do my next years holiday shopping before February 28.

The holiday spirit doesn't linger long after the wonderful day. Our tree was bared of its glamour and burned with the holiday wrappings and all the trimmings were neatly boxed and preserved in the attic for the next year.

The only memories now left is the full tummies, the chatter of the occasion and the dish of picked over candy. We are still trying to unburden the refrigerator of the leftovers; and I, the cook, searching for recipes to further glamorize the tidbits.

With Santa Claus and Jingle Bells and Silent Night comes the canker sores from indulging too deeply into the "sweets" business. The only food enjoying a day by day popularity is the shelled peanut; and we have all had our share--they are cheap treats--the

two pounds lasting all these days. Somehow the hard candy took a back seat this year--too many boxed fancy chocolates.

The weather shows no indication of holiday spirit; unless one considers its extreme dampness. The rain has not let up and the wind whistles around the eaves. The family has settled down to hours of reading and gone is the rush of preparing for the Christmas festivities. I hardly know what to do with myself; the weeks of sewing and gift wrapping kept activities at a high pitch.

I am sorry the great holiday is over. Comes now the income tax, the worst of the winter's weather, and the darning of a month's collection of socks.

Half of the village population has either gone on winter vacation, to visit relatives, or just plain stay at home. We seldom see a soul venture down the street.

December 30, 1952

The brainstorm for this daily "daze" diary was really begun in 1936. Then I kept about eight days and gave up from boredom. In cleaning out some old papers from the attic I ran across the first page of the original and that is how this whole mess got started again.

I am very glad the year is done and I have met my challenge to keep it going until the end of 1952. Never again will I attempt such a grinding job. The actual typing was but a small job--thinking of a subject with enough appeal, was the "stinker".

As far as improving upon the typing ability, I don't think I have gained; but do believe it has helped my spelling and word power. It will be much better reading ten years from now--mellowing with age as does a "nutty" fruit cake.

I could not end this series of tales without mentioning my good friend "Heirwick" the little skunk, who disappeared in October but came home again in December and pit-patted on our back porch every night. His worst fault was to go to the neighbors and hunt mice or rats--one neighbor didn't appreciate his visits and caught him in a trap. The Winbergs and the Hays's agreed he should be found a new home where no harm could befall such an innocent creature. "Heirwick" now lives on a farm with every attention a skunk likes. A happy ending to a "stinker" of a tale.

Now if this were Haysel's diary, it would be very juicy reading for the romanticist; but my life runs along in more or less scheduled fashion and the romance has hardened into a plaster cast of "Picture of Family Life".

An appropriate title for this year's series would be "My Daze". In backtracking some of the episodes sound very "Corny" and much like I must have been in a daze.

Everyone is glad the diary is one day from being done.

Note:

She says that in 10 years her diary will mellow like a nutty fruit cake. In 54 years it has mellowed indeed, but more like a fine wine. And it most certainly has never been a whine. Instead it's made a few moments of almost every day of 2006 a pleasant interlude. Her can-do attitude, her devotion to her family and her community, her enjoyment of every aspect of her busy and varied life made for compelling reading for me. The trip to Ohio in June, the story of Heirwick and other family events, and her comments about many other aspects of life - all of this and more - has made the job of copying and editing this unique journal a pleasure. She was one of a kind.

- Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

And, in 2008, as it has appeared on the web site of Groundwaters, I feel the same as cousin Virginia about Aunt Marjorie and the account she kept. It has been an honor to read this memoir of her/our family in 1952 in Yachats, Oregon, and to receive such insights about her character and life at the time. She was a joy to remember, and she truly blessed us with her efforts. Her diary is yet an inspiration; it is evidence of the value of such an endeavor. I hope others will be encouraged to do something similar for their own families.

Thank you to Virginia Vandehey for bringing Marjorie's work to light through email in 2006 for family members, and to our cousins Helen Winberg and Haysel Pankey (Chet and Marjorie's daughters) for allowing me to publish excerpts of it in Groundwaters magazine and the full manuscript on this site. (Thank you, too, to my husband Sonny, for creating www.groundwaters.org and for all his assistance)!

Marjorie Hays wrote much more than this one-year diary. And, we hope to further include some of her other material on this site in the near future... - Judy Hays-Eberts, Marjorie's niece and founder of Groundwaters.

December 31, 1952

The final page of "My Daze" is reserved for the summary of the year. Sad is the ending of another year designating that I am getting old much too fast.

1952 has treated me very kindly with a variety of happenings; some that I could have lived without; but none the less important to balance life.

The wonderful trip to Ohio will be lived for years in memories; and the little jaunt North to the Olympic peninsula has many compensations to look back upon. The sicknesses we would rather not remember; but must be taken with the happier moments.

There are grooves in my brain where I have scratched to dig up some ideas for this diary. Many of the day's writings could be improved but I did not intend for this to be professional; so why spoil its amateur standing?

At the end of the year, I usually take inventory around the house and throw out all that is junk. It is surprising how much clutter we gather in twelve months; thinking that it is of some value. Perhaps there are some pages of this almanac that are junk, too.

Thusly I end a year's rambling thoughts and opinions; cram them into a box and when they are yellowed and musty may some day review such brain wanderings as a source of a good laugh or the makings of a good fire. Time will tell!

The End.