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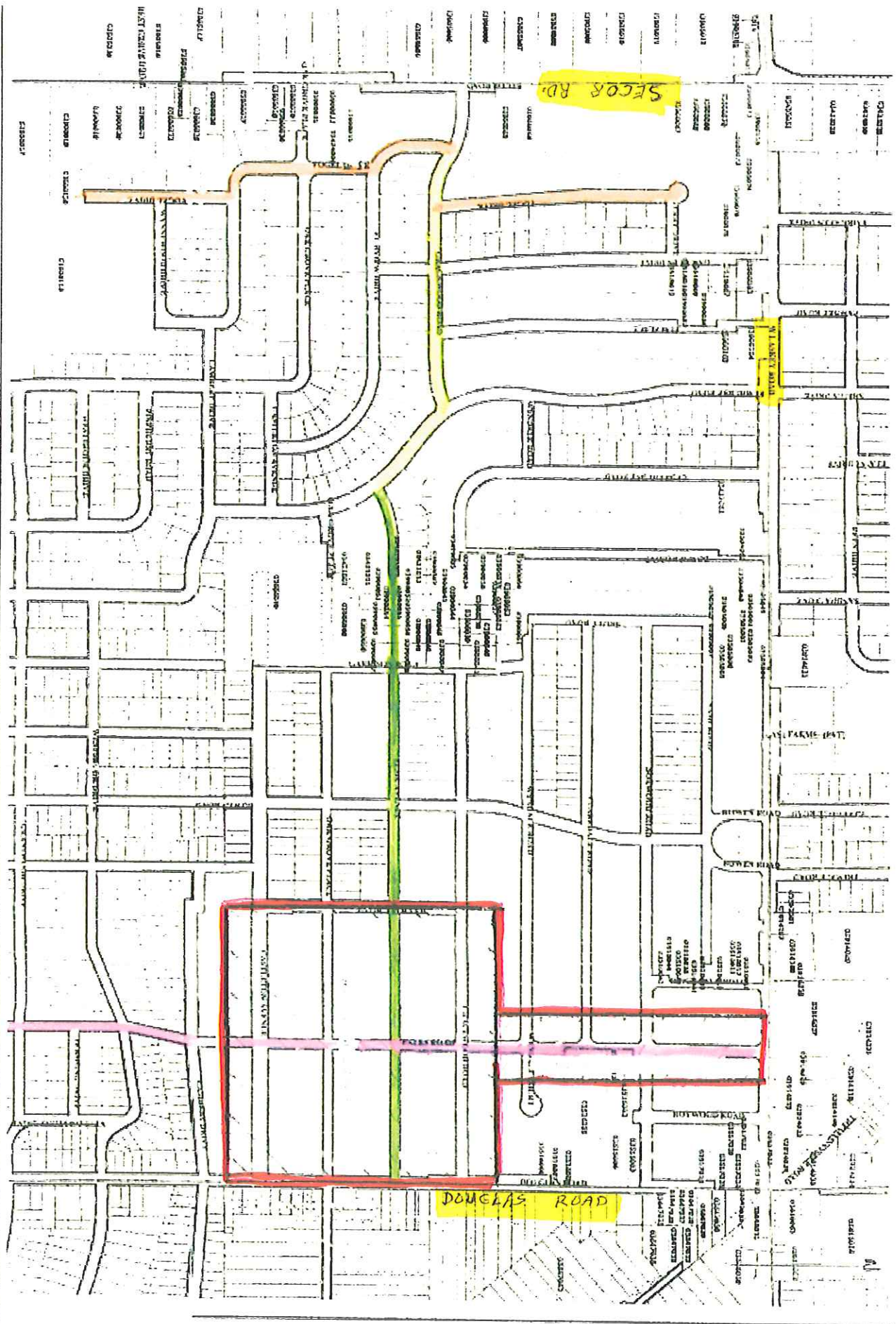




*This is the area of Alsace-Lorraine, France where the George Jacob Knerr family of eight immigrated from. As you read the genealogy and follow the birth places of many of the early ancestors you will see these towns and villages named. This area is part of the Black Forest. The website where I found this is listed at the bottom of this page. That same website gives the names of many of the immigrants from that area who came to America and Canada. The Knoerr, Knerr surname is listed along with the given names of some of those who came. The research in Pirmasens is ongoing even today, as local researchers continue to find and document the past as well as the present. Church records, civil records, and political records are being studied to bring to light more information.*

~ Darla Knerr Kizer, Editor





Map of Property once owned by Mary Cumiskey and Thomas Cumiskey that is located in NW Toledo.



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Dienstag, 14 April 2009

Boats and equipment

Knarr

30 qm Centre Board Crs.

CS 28

Einzelbauten

Equipment

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Disinfection

Anti-Fouling System

Nannidiesel

Restauration

Seenotsender McMurdo

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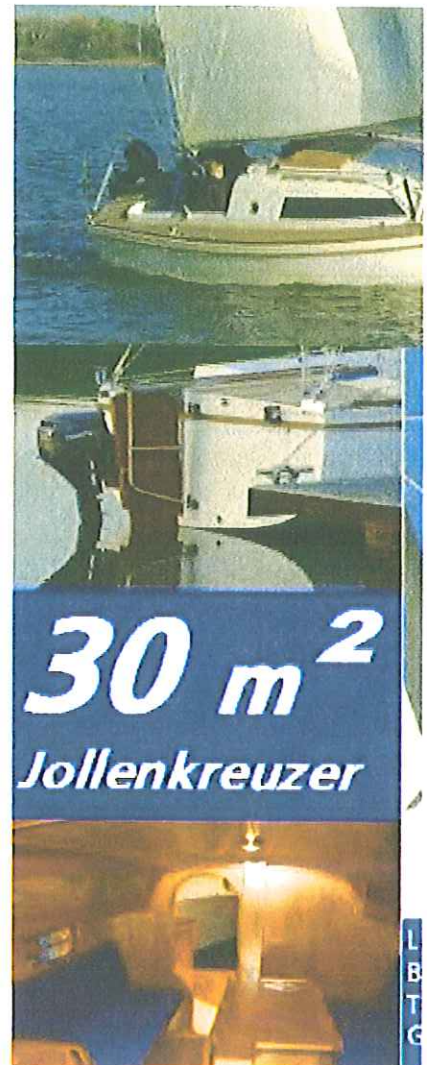
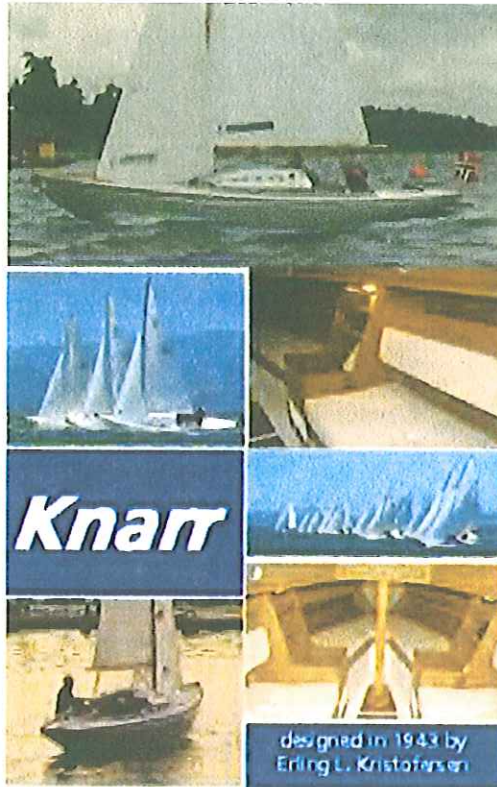
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## Hello and welcome



# Knarr

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **knarr** is a type of Norse merchant ship famously used by the Vikings. The knarr (also known as **knorr** or **knörr**) is of the same clinker-built method used to construct longships, karves, and faerings.

The Knarr is the Norse term for ships that were built for Atlantic voyages. They were cargo ships with a length of about 54 feet (16m), a beam of 15 feet (4.5m), and a hull capable of carrying up to 24 tons.<sup>[1]</sup> It was primarily used to transport trading goods like walrus ivory, wool, timber, wheat, furs and pelts, armour, slaves, honey, and weapons. It was also used to supply food, drink, and weapons and armour to warriors and traders along their journeys across the Baltic, the Mediterranean and other seas. Knarrers routinely crossed the North Atlantic carrying livestock and stores to Norse settlements in Iceland and Greenland as well as trading goods to trading posts in the British Isles, Continental Europe and possibly the Middle East.



Model of a Knarr

## History of the Knarr

The only knarr found to be well preserved was in a shallow channel in Roskilde Fjord in Denmark of 1962 along with two warships, a Baltic trader, and a ferryboat. Archaeologists believe that the ships were placed there to block the channel against enemy raiders. Today, all five ships, known as the Skuldelev ships, are being restored at the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde.

The knarr might have been in use in colonizing Iceland, Greenland, and Newfoundland. It was possibly the same kind of sailing vessel that the first European colonists used to sail to North America.

## Notes

- <sup>^</sup> The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings By Peter Hayes Sawyer (<http://books.google.com/books?id=AXzrQvv51tEC&dq>) ISBN 0198205260 ISBN 9780198205265

## External links

- The historical journey from Norway to Greenland in a replica Viking ship (<http://www.maritimewood.com/building-a-viking-ship-01.html>)
- Roskilde Viking Ship Museum (<http://www.vikingskibsmuseet.dk/>)

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knarr>"  
Categories: Ship types | Viking Age

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# Knarr

A **knarr** is a type of Norse merchant ship famously used by the Vikings. The knarr (also known as **knorr** or **knörr**) is of the same clinker-built method used to construct longships, karves and faerings.

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## Design

The hull frame of a knarr is shorter and wider, and is broader in the beam and has a deeper draught than the Norse longships used by raiding parties, and it has a heavier mass than a Viking longship. The knarr is a square rigged, single masted trading vessel that relies solely on its single square sail for propulsion at sea. It is usually a half-decked and typically features the traditional built-up castle at the stern and a carved stern and sternposts. The square sail rig and lack of a keel gave the knarr a poor performance to windward. Also they were less reliant than longships on oars as a means of propulsion and more on the use of sails.

There was a legacy associated with each boat. According to the sagas, when Leif Ericson traveled to North America, he purchased Bjarni Herjolfssons's ship - the self-same vessel which had taken Bjarni west from Greenland to North America when he was blown off-course. It is speculated that the keel from the vessels would be kept generation after generation, and that the ship would be re-built around it, such was the mythology surrounding a particular seaworthy vessel. Alternatively, reusing a perfectly sound keep

from a ship would save the shipbuilders time, money and energy.

The knarr had some influence on the design of the cog, used in the Baltic Sea by the Hanseatic League, although this is an altogether different design.

*Taken from Wikipedia.org., the free encyclopedia maintained by the Wikimedia Foundation.*

## HISTORICAL STORIES

Charlotte Knerr lived with her husband Frank Eddy (Oede) along the canal where the long boats plied back and forth between Peking Mill and points south and west. Frank was born in Baden, Germany in 1823 but chose to come to America armed with his Shoemaker pride and the old wooden trunk carrying all of his personal possessions. This is now preserved by his great-grandson Jim Babcock. The journey over the Atlantic took six weeks which wasn't too unusual for a sailing vessel of those days. The shoemaker shop was found on Farnsworth Rd., just a block east of the canal and not more than two and a half blocks from their small stucco home. A son Frank, a daughter Mary Ann and a third child Joe, was their family. Their real property was valued at \$800 in 1860, while their personal estate was \$100 at their death.

The parents of Charlotte Knerr Eddy were born in Germany. (The report here that she was born in Bryan, Ohio is incorrect. All of their children were born in Germany). Since she was one of many children whom I remember well as my grandmother's cousins and Aunts, whom we would entertain or visit on many occasions, I found a source of many stories here. However, the parents escape me though I'm closer now than I was when I began. (This statement appears a little strange.)

Mary Fisher who was my grandmother's aunt and lived next door, seemed more like my grandmother's sister since they were more of an age and interest. It seemed they always spoke German when I came near just so I wouldn't know of what they were speaking. This is something Nell King and she would do also, speak German when they didn't want me to understand them. Through Roy Fisher's widow, Helen, it was learned that Chalotte's parents were both buried in the Maumee Cemetery. (Now called Riverside Cemetery. Ed.)

This cemetery is located along the (Maumee) river's edge a few short miles south of Maumee where the waters frequently wash over the road. Whenever the winter ices break up, the big (ice) flows come over the road making it impassible even with today's road crews. An iron fence encompasses the site which now, as then, keep the ice flows out and the tombstones in. This is what happened according to a story told by Mrs. Claud Knerr. His grandfather Henry, (father of Lou) asked Claud to take him to see his parents grave. They were located at the north end of the cemetery but there were no markers upon them. The ice and waters had washed them all into a pile in one corner and they lay there in a heap. It is my wish to visit there as soon as the winter snows melt and then determine names and other pertinent dates. (The Editor and Norma Fretz-Moon have been to this cemetery and can verify this story.)

Roy Fisher remembers yet his mother, Mary Fisher tell about her father's funeral when she was but a young girl. In fact she always cried when telling about it again. It was a bitter cold day with the frost just releasing the black, mucky swamp to whomever might trespass. What could be called roads were impassible. They stood in mud up to their knees while the men tried to drive the horses pulling the hearse forward. The poor horses could not make it to the grave site being mired axle deep in sticky black stuff. It took the

pall bearers and other available men all they could do to push pull and shove until the land gave up the casket only to receive it again as its final resting place. What a vivid picture in a young girl's mind.

George and Mary Fisher and their three sons lived in Waterville and I got to know them and their children. George Fisher was naturalized on March 25, 1873, fourteen years after he arrived in this country. Both he and his two sisters came here when he was but eight years old. His parents did not come. Possibly because they could only afford to send the children and wanting a better life for them in a new land, where military service, would not be exacted of them. Each of the children went to a different home. He was reared by a Shumaker family who lived in the nearby county. When I asked my Dad what he did for a living, Dad said he fished and hunted asparagus. But, I know him to be a sexton to the Waterville cemetery (Wakeman Cemetery. Ed.)

Mom remembers Mary Fisher telling her they were so poor she took to milking the neighbor's cows at night so as to get some fresh milk for her children. At that time they lived on German Avenue or Dutch Road, as we used to call it, just north of Town. Then they bought a house on the River Road next to my grand parents house that he built on the corner of South and River Road.

George Fisher was born in Germany, November 25, 1851 and died May 28, 1935. Mary Knerr Fisher was born June 25, 1851 and died April 23, 1934. Peter Fisher was their oldest child. I remember him as the Constable in town. He used to help the small children cross the street to school; a gruff, unsmiling man of large build. He was married to Lillian Baumberger. They had one son, Norman of some fame around our house because of the language he used and so clearly too, as a tiny boy.

Another son of George was Clarence who had Clarence (Buxx) and Geraldine. Another son, Roy, was born November 12, 1883 and died March 18, 1967. They have a son, Roydon. Of her three sons Mary Fisher used to say in her faulty English, "They manured early".

In a yellowed clipping from a Swanton newspaper found in Mary Fisher's bible was an account about a second Knerr reunion held on Joe Shumaker's farm. Among the many present were the Will Witte's, the Geo. Fisher's, the Jake Knarr and children; Louisa, Julia, Emma, Chris, Cora, Francis. I have yet to see the clipping and read all the names.

Charlotte Eddy died giving birth to twins when only 34 years of age. My grandmother also told me about her father, Frank Eddy, being called to serve in the Union troops during the civil war. However, having three children to raise he felt he couldn't so was able to buy a release from that obligation for \$50.00.

Frank Eddy, my grandmother's brother lived in Toledo, was a floor walker for a haberdashery and had one son, Melvin.

Joe Eddy, another brother of my grandmother lived in W. Jefferson, ran a country store and had one son, Roy.

- - Of the brother's and sister's of Charlotte there were: Henry who begot Nell King, Frank, Nettie Lahr, Dolly, Will, Lou.

- - Christ (Christian Knerr), who married an Indian (according to Dad) and lived in Perrysburg Twp. He didn't associate much. His issue (children) were Cora, Julia and Francis.

- - Mary who married George Fisher (above)  
- - Lizzie Curtiss who came to live with Mary Fisher and had one son Dick who didn't amount to very much.

- - Jake (Jacob Knerr) had a farm on Heatherdowns. He married an Utz (<sup>ALLISON</sup> Cumiskey, Ed) who had a son out of wedlock named John whom he raised. His two spinster daughters Emma and Louise remained on the homestead while subdivisions bloomed around (them) never selling out. They both died there of malnutrition.

- - Dorothy who married Joe Shumaker. Their children were Charlie, Jake or Holcott, Will, Kate Fleming, Mary Dixon, Sadie Howard, Frank. Mary became a widow early and lived with Kate until she married a Fleming. Jake lived in Phily but came here to care for Charlie after Lenore died and he was failing. Will had two boys and one girl. The Howards had two children, Margaret and Merrill. Frank, a butcher in Wauseon has a son Elmer of Pittsburg who has three daughters.

~ ~ Compiled by: "Midge" (Mrs. David P.) Campbell  
25 John St., Waterville, OH 43566 - Nov. 1978

## MY ADVENTURE SEARCHING FOR ANCESTORS

My search began about eight years ago when a cousin, on my Mother's side of the Knerr family, located me in Ocala, Fl. I knew I had relatives in Florida, mainly in Sarasota, but had never met them. (Ed. She forgot about meeting me when I spent the summer in Toledo as a guest of my Aunt Jean Merz.) One day I received this very long letter from her. I called her and we talked by phone, and later she visited me in my home, and we got acquainted and she has visited me every year since. What good friends we have become! Since she never had a sister I have become one to her.

Her name is Darla Knerr Kizer and she has been involved in the genealogy of our great-great grandparents, Jacob and Catherine (Allion) Knerr. They each came to America from Germany around 1851, met here and were married in Lucas County.

Last summer we spent hours at the Toledo Public Library, which has a great genealogy department, with the staff being so accommodating. Also, I have found information on the family at Perrysburg Way Library, Waterville Library and the Library at Swanton, Ohio. Darla would spend 3 to 3 ½ days with me all summer and we traveled from library to library and cemetery to cemetery. Most of our ancestors are buried on the Knerr (Knarr) family plots at the Wakeman Cemetery in Waterville. Then we discovered some at Ft. Meigs in Perrysburg. Darla was almost ready to publish the book when I threw a monkey wrench into her search. So...on we went, back to the libraries and cemeteries. This took us out to Toledo Memorial, Ottawa Hills, Mt. Carmel, Calvary and Riverside in Maumee.

One day Darla decided that our great-grandparents monuments were in need of cleaning. So, the next day, armed with soap, scrub brushes (Ed. Tooth brushes) and water, we spent the afternoon scrubbing their monuments. I hope they looked down and said "thank you" and asked the Lord to bless these two great-granddaughters. I only wished I had a picture of that to show my children!

In 1947, my father, Irvin Ercy Fretz, passed away and my mother was in need of an attorney to help her settle the estate. Actually the "estate" was a house with a mortgage. But, with an underage sister, she had to put so much into escrow. She said she was going to seek out her cousins who were attorney's. The one she contacted took care of advising her according to what the law said. Unfortunately, being in my early twenties, I never inquired of my Mom as to how these two attorney's came into the Knerr family.

~ Norma R. Moon, Grand Rapids, OH  
Printed in "Bend of the River" 2006



## Finding Famous Relatives

My cousin, Darla Knerr Kizer, whom I only learned I had about four years ago, has been visiting me in Toledo from Sarasota, Fl., we have been on a quest to learn of our ancestors. Darla is the “expert” on genealogy and I refer to myself as her “navigator” and “helper”.

Our parents, my mother and her father, were brother and sister coming from the Jacob and Catherine (Allion) Knerr family. Our grandfather is Henry George Knerr who lived in Maumee, Lucas Co., Ohio. Most of our relatives are buried in Wakeman Cemetery in Waterville, Ohio. Our adventure has led us there and to Toledo Memorial, Ottawa Hills, Ft. Meigs, Riverview in Maumee, Mt. Calvary, and Mt. Carmel in Toledo. We were also at Clay Township Cemetery in Genoa, Ohio. Last year she had me scrubbing down moss covered monuments of our great-grandparents, Jacob and Catherine Knerr. Or we went to others and trimmed weeds and cleaned mud from others. Some had been washed away during the flooding of the Maumee River through the years at Riverview and Ft. Meigs.

She was almost ready to publish the family genealogy book when I told her about other names that came into the Knerr family through marriage. This will be our quest this coming summer so she can give the go-ahead to the publishers. We, also, located the Lutheran Church in Maumee where our great-grandparents attended and worshipped, and where the two great Aunts contributed to two later additions. Neither married and they resided at the old homestead on Heatherdowns, Key and Michigan Streets.

When a parcel of some acreage of the Jacob Knerr farm, which the Aunts inherited from their father, was sold to a developer, the City of Maumee was to have named a street after the Knerr family, the original owners, as requested in the deed. But, the name was, and still is, spelled incorrectly. It is spelled “Kneer” today and has never been corrected. Also, standing on a parcel of the property is a Credit Union Bank, and on the pie shaped lot across the street from it is where my grandparents, Henry and Catherine (Cumiskey) Knerr inherited their share, is a hot dog restaurant, apartments and etc.

In 1947, when my father, Irvin Ercy Fretz, passed away, my mother was in need of an attorney to help her settle the estate (which was only a house with a mortgage). But with an under age sister, Mother had to put so much into escrow. One day she said that she was going to seek out her cousins who were attorneys. She did and one of them took care of the problems for her. He, also, told her that to tell her children, that even if they only owned a car, that they should each have wills. Unfortunately, being in my early twenties, I never questioned my Mom as to how these two attorneys came into the Knerr family.

My Mother, Mary Theresa (Knerr) Fretz had mentioned years ago that she had two cousins who were attorneys and a judge by the names of J. Irvin O’Conner and Judge Thomas J. O’Conner. Thomas being the most notable, but that does not mean that Irvin did not contribute to the Toledo area. Thomas James was born on October 25, 1891 and died October 30, 1954. His body lies buried in Calvary Cemetery along with his brother, J. Irvin O’Conner.

Thomas James was a "Whose Who" in Toledo and Ohio. A graduate of St. Francis de Sales High School he earned his law degree at St. Johns College. He was a prosecuting attorney and unopposed candidate for reelection to Judge of the Common Pleas Court for the Democratic Party. A lifelong resident of Toledo, he married Miss Josephine Francis Gfell of Toledo and had two children, a daughter, Florence Marie and a son, Thomas James, Jr. They resided at 1530 Potomac Dr., living two blocks from the Carlton Finkbiners. In 1915 he entered the employ of Joseph L. Shelton as a bookkeeper, then advanced to the position of Secretary. Later becoming secretary/treasurer of the Skeldon-Ryan Construction Co.

John Irvin O'Connor, was also a Toledo attorney and former city law director, who never married. A native of Toledo, he practiced law here since his graduation from Old St. Johns College in 1915. He served as city law director in the administration of former Mayor Addison O. Thacher. He was a former president of the Toledo Bar Association and partner in the law firm of Hayway and O'Connor for 15 years. He was a member of the De la Salle Society and Blessed Sacrament Church. He was a past exalted ruler of the Elks and served in the army during World War I. He died on November 8, 1968, at the age of 75 years, and was the brother of the late Common Pleas Court Judge Thomas J. O'Connor, who died in 1964. Both men enjoyed the game of golf and followed baseball. J. Irvin's residence when he died was The Plaza Hotel. He died at the William Roche Memorial Hospital following an illness of five years duration. Both men are buried in Calvary Cemetery. They are the sons of Timothy and Mary (Dawson) O'Connor.

~ Norma Rae (Fretz) Moon  
2004

(Editor: Reproduced from "Bend of The River" magazine published by the Waterville Historical Society of Waterville, Ohio.)

## Tribute to Grandma

Many of you know Katherine Walton as a wife, mother, sister, aunt, and friend. To four of us here today, we know her as Grandma and a woman who gave us many fond memories and taught us many life lessons. These are but a few.

Grandma was a very skillful seamstress and could work wonders with her hands, a needle, and thread. There was not a majorette uniform, prom dress, or baseball uniform that she couldn't make, alter, or mend to perfection. And for (Shannon and I) or (Alissa and I), Grandma spent endless hours hand-crafting enough Barbie doll clothing to outfit an entire city of Barbies. What more could two little girls want but endless co-ordinating outfits to dress up their Barbies.

Grandma was always frugile with not only her money but her possessions as well. She would stash money in suitcases and even use her sewing skills to stitch it into the seams of her handmade curtains. But, as frugile as she was, she never hesitated to slip a green bill into the hand of one of her grandchildren for any variety of reasons or "just because". She taught us generosity.

Grandma loved to be on the golf course with Grandpa. She played a good game of golf but probably what she is more well-known for than her golf game, is her relentless search and retrieval of golf balls. She had to have collected thousands of golf balls over the years on various golf courses. Her grandsons certainly benefited from her collection of golf balls. She taught us persistence.

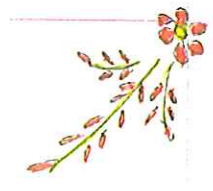
Grandma loved her trinkets and collectibles and whenever it was time to clean out a closet, most of us benefited from her inability to throw anything away. She saw a purpose for everything, including those used golf balls, miniature shampoos and soaps collected from various hotels, and her singing, dancing Santa's, which she so loved. She taught us what might seem like something unwanted to one person, might be a treasure and useful to another.

Grandma loved to attend the sporting events her grandchildren participated in: cheerleading, baseball, softball, basketball, football. She supported our love for sports and taught us dedication, as she would sit in the rain to watch and be proud of her grand children.

And finally, for as long as I can remember, opening Christmas gifts in our family occurs the same way each year. Everyone sits in a large circle with piles of endless gifts in front of each person and we all feel the thrill and excitement of just wanting to tear open each one. But, one by one, we take turns around the circle opening one gift at a time. We used to tease Grandma that the reason we did this was because she bought and wrapped her Christmas gifts so early that she needed to watch each one of us open each gift in order for her to remember what she had purchased. However, the reality of this tradition is that Grandma taught us to slow life down a bit and take the time to notice, appreciate, and share with each other, one gift at a time.

Thank you Grandma for all of the gifts you have given and will continue to give through us.





**A GENEALOGISTS PRAYER**

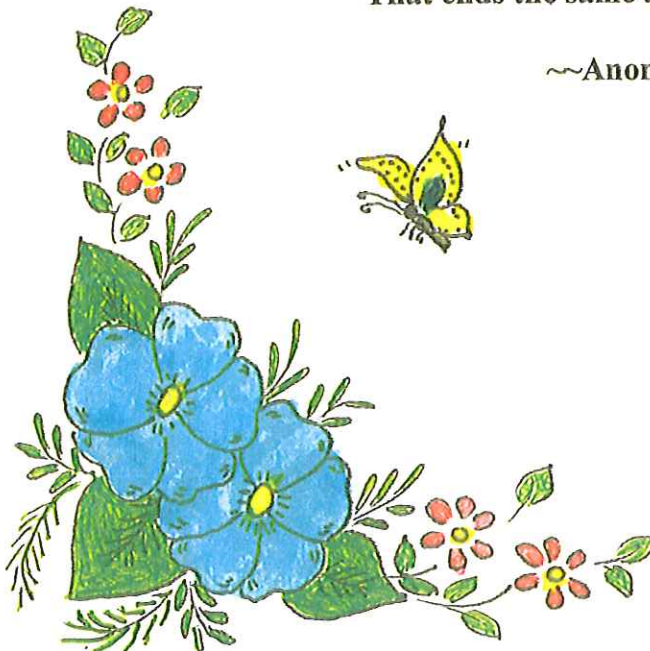
**Lord, help me dig into the past,  
And sift the sands of time,  
That I might find the roots that made  
This family tree of mine.**

**Lord, help me trace the ancient roads,  
On which my father's trod,  
And led them through so many lands,  
To find our present sod.**

**Lord, help me find an ancient book,  
Or dusty manuscript,  
That's safely hidden now away,  
In some forgotten crypt.**

**Lord, help it bridge the gap that haunts  
My soul, when I can't find  
The missing link between some name  
That ends the same as mine.**

~Anonymous





## WHAT GRAVESTONES CAN TELL YOU

No matter what secrets our ancestors took to their graves, they often leave others behind in unlikely places. The cemeteries where your ancestors were laid to rest are often filled with clues to their lives, long after their deaths.

If you are visiting the cemetery early in your research, you can learn a great deal of value. Gravestones can confirm relationships of family members whose names are listed together in granite. You'll know relatives names before you spend unnecessary dollars searching in public records offices.

Not only can a headstone tell you who is buried on a plot, but it can contain the dates of birth and death for those interred there. The cemetery records office has more extensive details regarding the deceased. Information varies by cemetery, but you might learn the cause of death and other facts for which vital statistics offices generally charge.

It's common to find stillborn babies or infants who died just hours after birth buried on family plots. The cemetery office will know for certain who, if anyone, has paid for perpetual care for a gravesite, indicating a close relationship. It might surprise you if the person turns out to be someone other than a family member.

The office can also tell you who is not buried in a certain plot. Occasionally families will inscribe relatives' names on a tombstone with the assumption that those family members will be buried there in time. If the office has no record of someone whose name is engraved on a stone, it might be an indication that the deceased died in another state, as in the case of a widow, remarried.

The reverse is also true. Sometimes graves contain individuals whose names do not appear on the stone. One family was surprised to discover that a complete stranger had been buried in a family grave, and they were sure the cemetery record keeper had made an error. An elderly uncle remembered the great-great-aunt buried there and was able to tell younger family members that the woman had never divorced her wayward husband because of fear of scandal. In her later years she had developed a close attachment to another man. Although they were never able to marry, they found a way to spend eternity together.

Don't assume simply because a name is carved in stone that the person is buried beneath it. Always ask either at the records office or by telephone the name of the people buried in a plot.

Inaccuracies can still occur even on headstones. In one instance a family found that the year of birth for the deceased was incorrect by a year. The mistake had never been corrected, presumably due to the family's grief at the time of death.

**Other carvings can reveal insights into the family. Witticisms on a headstone might indicate a sense of humor while sentimental verses hint at great affection. In some cases a large monument might indicate wealth while the absence of any headstone might be a sign of poverty.**

**A family who learned that eleven ancestors were buried in a family plot expected to find names and dates carved on a sizable headstone. Instead, they were disappointed to find a bare plot of land with no stone at all. The deceased father had been an unskilled French-Canadian immigrant laborer with twelve children. While he had lived to be one hundred and four years old, ten of his children died before him, either from disease or an accident. With so many funerals in so short a period of time, headstones were too costly.**

**Other searchers have better luck. A grave marker at a site can tell you the presence of an ancestor who fought in the Civil War or Revolutionary War. Whatever you uncover, it's inspiring to know that even the grave doesn't silence our ancestors.**

**~Karen Frisch**



## YOUR NAME

You got it from your father, 'Twas the best he had to give,  
And right gladly he bestowed it. It's yours, the while you live.  
You may lose the watch he gave you -- and another you may claim.  
But remember, when you're tempted, to be careful of his name.  
It was fair the day you got it, and a worthy name to bear,  
When he took it from his father, there was no dishonor there.  
Through the years he proudly wore it, to his father he was true.  
And that name was clean and spotless when he passed it on to you.  
Oh, there's much that he has given that he values not at all.  
He has watched you break your playthings in the days when you  
were small.  
You have lost the knife he gave you and you've scattered many a game.  
But you'll never hurt your father if you're careful with his name.  
It is yours to wear forever, yours to wear the while you live.  
Your's, perhaps, some distant morning, to another boy to give.  
And you'll smile as did your father -- with a smile that all can share --  
If a clean name and a good name you are giving him to wear.

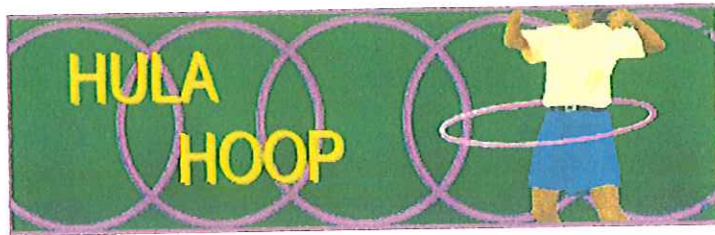
~~ Edgar A. Guest

## How Do Mothers Love?

Some day when my children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates a  
mother, I will tell them.  
I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom and what time you would be  
home.  
I loved you enough to insist that you save your money and buy a bike for yourself even  
though we could afford to buy one for you.  
I loved you enough to be silent and let you discover that your new best friend was a creep.  
I loved you enough to make you take a Milky Way back to the drugstore (with a bite out  
of it) and tell the clerk, "I stole this yesterday and I want to pay for it."  
I loved you enough to stand over you for two hours while you cleaned your room, a job  
that would have taken me 15 minutes.  
I loved you enough to let you see the anger, disappointment and tears in my eyes.  
Children must learn that their parents aren't perfect.  
I loved you enough to let you assume the responsibility for your actions even when the  
penalties were so harsh they almost broke my heart.  
But, most of all, I loved you enough to say NO when I knew you would hate me for it.  
Those were the most difficult battles of all. I'm glad I won them, because in the  
end you won something, too.

~~ Author Unknown

*\*The above two were taken from an Ann Landers column dated May 20, 1978. They were on our refrigerator for years.*



### Richard Knerr & "Spud" Melin

Many popular products for children, like Silly Putty® and the Snuggli®, owe their success to entrepreneurship as much as invention. The same is true of the hula hoop, "the granddaddy of American fads."

Children around the world have always played with hoops, by rolling and throwing them or twirling them around the waist and limbs. For adults, hoop twirling has at times been recommended as a weight-loss measure (ancient Greece) and, ironically, denounced as a source of sprains, pains and even heart attacks (14th-century England). These hoops were once made of vines or other plants, wood, or metal.



The conversion of the toy hoop into 20th-century Americana came thanks to Richard Knerr and Arthur "Spud" Melin, founders of the Wham-O Company. In 1957, an Australian visiting California told them offhand that in his home country, children twirled bamboo hoops around their waists in gym class. Knerr and Melin saw how popular such a toy would be; and soon they were winning rave reviews from schoolkids for the hollow plastic prototype they had created.

The next year, the hula hoop, whose name came from the Hawaiian dance its users seemed to imitate, was marketed nationwide. Americans kids and adults alike were hooked: Wham-O sold 25 million hula hoops in two months. Almost 100 million international orders followed. Wham-O could hardly patent an ancient item, but did reinvent, manufacture and market the hula hoop for the modern world---for example, by using Marlex, a lightweight but durable plastic then recently invented by Phillips Petroleum. By the end of 1958, after \$45 million in profits, the craze was dying down. But Richard Knerr was ready with another bombshell: that year he had discovered the "Frisbie."

Today, the hula hoop still has its young fans, though eclipsed by faster-paced pastimes like inline skating. Nevertheless, the hula hoop is an outstanding example of entrepreneurial insight and modern manufacturing combined for sensational success.

Above photos of Rhythmic Hula Hoop contestants Martha and Bill  
courtesy of Amy L. Edwards

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# OBITUARIES

## DEATHS ELSEWHERE

### Toy company's co-founder sold Hula Hoop and Frisbee

#### Richard Knerr

Richard Knerr, 82, co-founder of the toy company that popularized the Hula Hoop, Frisbee and other fads that became classics, died Monday at a hospital after suffering a stroke earlier in the day at his Arcadia, Calif., home.

Knerr started Wham-O in 1948 with his childhood friend, Arthur "Spud" Melin. They got their start in business peddling slingshots. They named their enterprise Wham-O after the sound a slingshot made when it hit its target.

They branched into other sporting goods, including boomerangs and crossbows, then added toys that often bore such playful names as the Superball, Slip 'N Slide and Silly String.

When a friend told them in 1958 about a large ring used for exercise in Australia, they devised their own version and called it the Hula Hoop.

Around the same time, they bought the rights to a plastic flying disc invented by Walter "Fred" Morrison, who called it the Pluto Platter. Wham-O bought the rights and renamed it the Frisbee.

# SARASOTA Herald-Tribune

DIANE H. MCFARLIN, Publisher

MICHAEL K. CONNELLY, Executive Editor

THOMAS LEE TRYON, Opinion Editor

## A legacy of fun

*Richard Knerr made a swiveling, spinning, Slip 'N Sliding mark*

**C**alifornian Richard Knerr, who died Monday at 82, left the world a more fun place than he found it.

He left it with, among other amusements, Hula Hoops, Frisbees, Superballs, Slip 'N Slides and Silly String.

In 1948, Knerr co-founded Wham-O Inc., with a close boyhood friend, Arthur "Spud" Melin. Melin died in 2002.

Knerr and Melin deserve equal credit for inventing and marketing toys in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s that provided people (and Frisbee-chasing dogs) with endless entertainment — not to mention exercise.

Some parents, though, might not have fully appreciated the joys of Silly String. As Los Angeles Times reporter Valerie Nelson noted in a fine obituary of Knerr on Thursday, Silly String — a plastic string shot from an aerosol can — "was much harder to get out of hair than advertised."

Wham-O Inc. was named for the first toy invented by Knerr and Melin — a slingshot.

The name came from the sound made when a projectile hit the target.

Their company hit the target in 1958 with the Hula Hoop, a circular ring of hollow plastic that kids swiveled around their hips. Almost immediately after the Hula Hoop was introduced, as many as 20,000 of them a day rolled off the assembly line. Within four months, 25 million were sold around the world.

Also in 1958, Wham-O released the Frisbee. By the early 1960s, young people were tossing the colorful, spinning disks in parks and on college campuses. More than 100 million Frisbees were sold in 30 years, the Times reported.

Knerr and Melin started in business by trying to train and sell falcons. To teach the birds to dive at prey, they lobbed meatballs with a homemade slingshot.

When a customer said he would buy the slingshot rather than a falcon, the world changed.

# *My Shop Was Called "The Stitching Post"*

Courtesy of Norma Fretz Moon

**M**ost of my high school years were spent in the sewing class at Whitney Vocational High School. Mrs. Elizabeth Von Hoff was the teacher. One half of the school year was spent learning to knit, crochet, tatte and the basics of pattern construction. She often told us, "If you don't like to rip, then you don't belong in this class."

The second semester we went to the industrial section of the course where Mrs. Peckman was our teacher. Huge machines and cutting tables were in her department. The class made the rain slicks for Toledo Public Schools, including all the uniforms that different classes wore.

Ours were blue with an applique on the collar—peach for food service and white for cosmetology. Those in office practice and retail sales didn't wear uniforms.

We were given two uniforms and had to wear a fresh one every day.

The things we made in sewing class were sold in the retail shop so everything had to be perfect before Mrs. Von Hoff let it go.

Miss Wooden was the principal and was very strict. If you were caught looking out the window at the boys over in Macomber, you got a reprimand. And there were no boys at our dances.

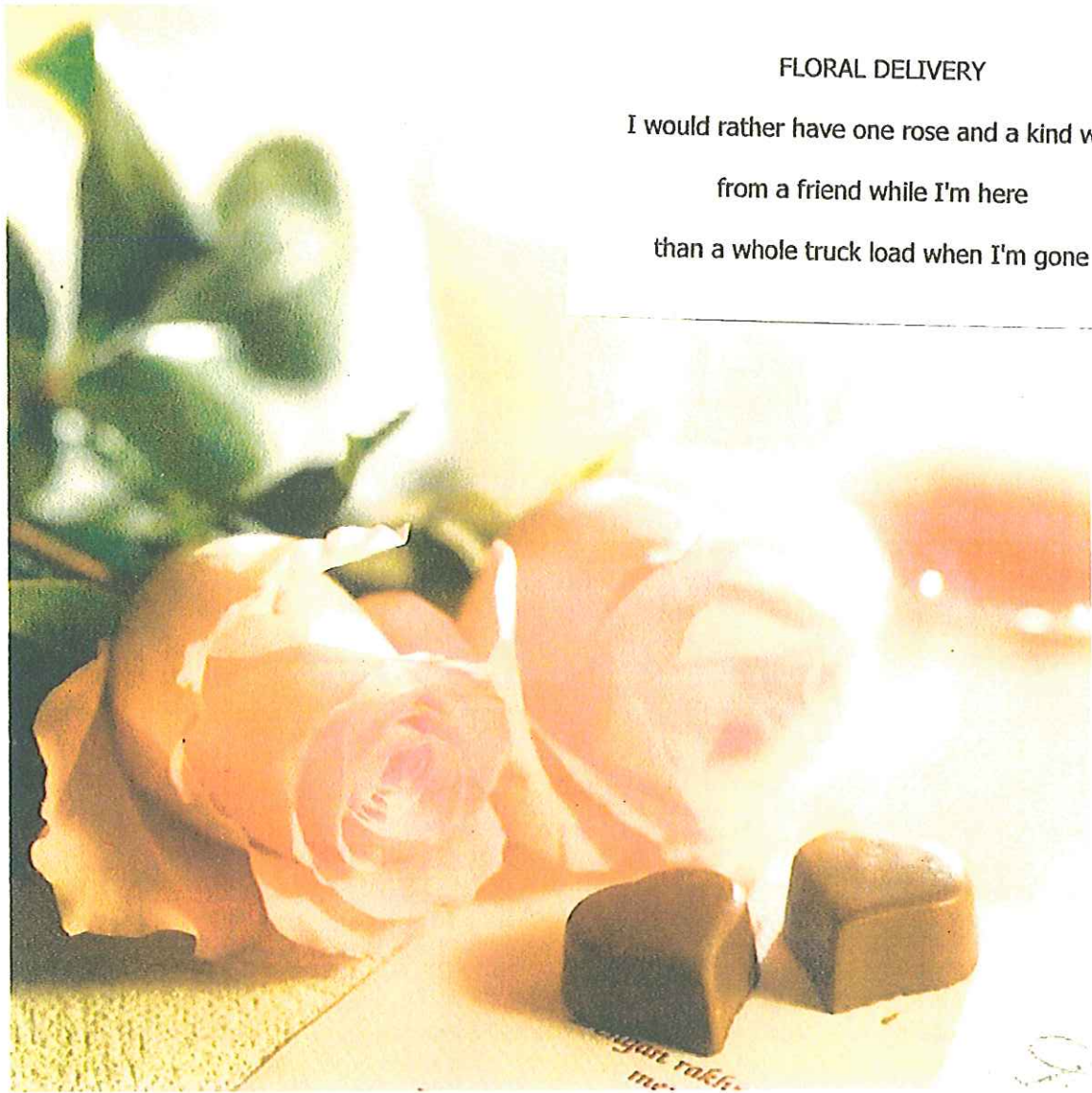
We were the last class to have a yearbook because of the paper shortage caused by World War II. Because of my intense sewing regimen, I was able to open my own shop—"The Stitching Post" in Willison, Ohio. And I still do alterations in my home.

Our English teacher was Miss Gailey, and Florence Wells found jobs for us when we were in our junior year. Of course we wore white gloves to all interviews.

All the training, including how to properly make a bed with hospital corners, iron pillow cases and men's handkerchiefs came in handy during my married years. ■



*Mary Theresa (Knerr) Fretz dressed for Halloween Trick or Treat night.*



FLORAL DELIVERY

I would rather have one rose and a kind word  
from a friend while I'm here  
than a whole truck load when I'm gone .

Happiness keeps you Sweet,  
Trials keep you Strong,  
Sorrows keep you Human,  
Failures keep you Humble,  
Success keeps you Glowing,  
But Only God Keeps You Going!

## OLD AGE ~ A GIFT

*I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. Oh, not my body! I sometimes despair over my body, the wrinkles, the baggy eyes, and the sagging butt. And often I am taken aback by that old person that lives in my mirror (who looks like my mother/father), but I don't agonize over those things for long.*

*I would never trade my amazing friends, my wonderful life, my loving family for less gray hair or a flatter belly. As I've aged, I've become more kind to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend.*

*I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making my bed, or for buying that silly cement Gecko that I didn't need, but looks so avante garde on my patio. I am entitled to a treat, to be messy, to be extravagant.*

*I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging.*

*Whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 A.M. and sleep until noon?*

*I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 60's and 70's, and if I, at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love.....I will.*

*I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set. They, too, will get old.*

*I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten. And I eventually remember the important things.*

*Sure, over the years my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet gets hit by a car? But broken hearts are what gives us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.*

*I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning gray, and to have my youthful laughs forever etched into deep grooves on my face. So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.*

*As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You care less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong.*

*So, to answer your question, I like being old. It has set me free. I like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here, I will not waste time lamenting what could have been, or worrying about what will be. And I shall eat dessert every single day. (If I feel like it)*

**MAY OUR FRIENDSHIP NEVER COME APART ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART!**

**MAY YOU ALWAYS HAVE A RAINBOW OF SMILES ON YOUR FACE AND IN YOUR HEART FOREVER AND EVER!**

~~Anonymous



## CITY OF THE SILENT

*Once they walked among us, laughing yelling, whispering, keeping watch.  
We knew them. We spoke to them. We took them by the hand. We loved them.*

*They were our friends, our families, our heroes.*

*Now, in the crumbled earth, they are our memories, remaining in this world  
If not visible to it.*

*They wait for us along their shaded avenues;  
Secluded as only urban dwellers can know seclusion among the many,*

*Within the perplexing grids laid out by those in whose care  
The remembrance of their history -- of their existence --we have  
Entrusted our dead.*

*As we walk among the temples, towers and stone blocks which are their witness*

*In this time after their time, a rushing wind may stir their voices.  
The voices come not from the grave, but from within our own, quick  
Flesh-encased bones.*

*The murmurs we hear are the murmurs of those we have lost,  
Made part of us.*

*~ Anonymous*

**Dear Lord,**

So far today, am I doing all right.



I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or self-indulgent. I have not whined, complained, cursed, or eaten any chocolate. I have charged nothing on my credit card.

But I will be getting out of bed in a minute, and I think that I will really need your help then.

**I thank you for being you!**