

Talking to Cousins at the Family Reunion as we Reminisced about our Childhood.

"I remember when we all cleaned the manure out of the barn," my cousin Brian told me. A memory shared every reunion.

I remember when we swam at Promise's pond," I said.

"We called it Mailey's pond, remember? They owned the land," my cousin Larry said.

"I remember I was there with my girlfriend," Larry said. "She was a looker."

"I drove up the bank and broke the tie rod in the car," Larry's younger brother, Dwaine added.

"I remember when the Hutterite girls came to swim," I said.

"They swam in their clothes," Larry said.

"I remember Uncle Bob brought the boat there to water ski," I said.

Third cousins remember our previous reunions; ten, seven and five years ago.

"I remember when we were wild kids who ran free with our cousins," Breanna said, as she looked around at the twenty children under ten years old playing with each other.

"I remember you as a child, so cute, loving to ride on the wagon when your grandpa drove the horses," I said.

"I remember you were happy all the time," I said to both Randi and Breanna.

"Now, they are older and help me with cooking and buying groceries for the reunion," their mother, Amanda said.

"I noticed your Grandpa has a broken rib, but he still rode on the wagon while your Mom drove the horses," I said to Breanna.

"Could you tell my husband, Larry, what you are going to do for the summer?" I said to Randi, another of Amanda's girls.

"I am helping to guide long-horn sheep hunters on horses in the backcountry," Randi said.

I remember my aunts organizing and visiting with everyone, interested in our stories at previous reunions.

Now, only two left: Aunt Gloria was trying to convey a message, but the words were out of order and Aunt Rose was sitting next to her wondering what happened to her older sister.

At the reunion this year Aunt Gloria gave me a picture of my great uncle and a plaque of his remembrance at Vimy in WW1. Her daughters, Denise and Monique told me she wanted me to have it because of the work I had done in family history. I was happy my work had been acknowledged. But alas, these items were in my possession for only two hours. When Aunt Gloria talked to John, she gave it to him because his father had gone to war in WW2.

She explained later she wanted me to have a picture of my mother.

Memory is so fragile.

I remember taking pictures, writing stories and sharing genealogy with others.

I remember giving, Larry and Roxy, who hosted the reunion of 2008, a self-published picture book with stories of the reunion.

At this reunion in 2024, my cousin brought out and shared this book I had done many years before.

Memories of children playing games Dwaine organized and silly aprons Dwaine wore when barbecuing sausage for breakfast.

This keeps me inspired to keep the memories alive.