

My Grandparents--Dahliadel Nurseries

Warren W. Maytrott (1890-1969), Alice Aileen Craig (1898-1976)



Let me tell you about MY GRANDPARENTS!

When I was almost 4 years old, my family moved to Florida, but that is another exciting story! What I remember is having to grow up 1000 miles away from my wonderful grandparents in New Jersey that we only got to see about twice a year. In the winter season, they would come see us at Christmas for a week or two, and we went to New Jersey to see them for about 2 weeks in the summer at their home that we called Dahliadel!

When Grandma and Grandpa came to town, it was an exciting time. We not only had special company (Grandma, Grandpa, Great Grandma, Aunt Elsie, and Uncle Buster in those early years!), but it was Christmas, so they brought Christmas presents!! They always spoiled us, and we loved them for it! Then, in summer, we had the special treat of going to New Jersey for two weeks. In the early years, Dad drove us to New Jersey; in later years, we took the train—Dad LOVED trains, and so did we! Since we lived in Florida, where the summers were hot and humid, and our house was NOT air conditioned in those days, we really appreciated the cooler climate of New Jersey for two weeks. But what we really appreciated, was getting to spend some time with Grandma and Grandpa (and Uncle Buster and Aunt Rene, Aunt Elsie, and Uncle Bill when he came into the family in 1957!)

Dahliadel was a GREAT playground for me as a child. My good friend Beverly Parsons lived next door to Grandma and Grandpa. She had an extra bicycle, so we rode bikes, caught small fish in Bear Creek across the street, played tennis, and took soft drinks to the men working in the fields. We even

got to work, as children, for Dahliadel, picking up pots for 5 cents per crate—BIG money for kids of that day. See the picture of Beverly and me taken in 1954!



Then, before I knew it, a decade passed, and I found myself spending my summers when I was in college, working in the fields of Dahliadel. Where I had once been a child delivering cold drinks to the “men in the fields,” then I became one of the “men in the fields.” Please see the picture above. That’s ME under the straw hat!

Now, years later in my retirement years, I find myself leaving a small cooler by the street on garbage and trash days for the workers who really appreciate a cold drink!! To sum it up, in the 1950s I learned to deliver cold drinks to the “men in the fields”; in the 60s I became a “man in the field;” and now, in MY 70s, I am still doing what my grandparents taught me to do as a child! Three scriptures come to mind, two of which are quoted (in red) from the Lord Jesus Himself:

Proverbs 22: 6 “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Matthew 10:42 “And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Matthew 25: 40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ ”

The time that I spent with Grandma and Grandpa during my childhood and the years of my youth were very important to me, enabling me to really get to know them both, to know and appreciate their values.

Warren and Aileen Maytrott

Grandpa's parents (my great grandparents) were John and Emma Maytrott, who moved to Vineland just prior to Grandpa's birth in 1890. (BTW, my own parents were also John and Emma!) Grandpa's parents established a grape vineyard and a business selling unfermented grape juice. It may be interesting to note that they were active in the Vineland Methodist Church, as was the Welsh (grape juice!) family. My grandfather, Warren Maytrott, decided to convert his father's grape juice business into dahlias. Under his care, Dahliadel Nurseries grew to national and international fame and acclaim for over 50 years from 1917 to 1968. During these years, Warren was a founding member and leader in the ADS (American Dahlia Society). He was very active in local politics and civic organizations, especially Rotary International.

Of course, never forget that behind most successful men, there is a woman who makes him look good and contributes to his success! I speak of my OWN Martha, and the wives of so many men that I know! Warren Maytrott was blessed to have the support in his personal and professional life by our grandmother, Aileen (Craig) Maytrott, who came from Vermont. She was a successful business major in school, applying her skills to run the office and keep the books of Dahliadel, as well as personal and household work. Aileen was hostess for everything that happened at Dahliadel. Her workday started early, meeting the bus at 5 a.m. to pick up one of Dahliadel's field workers.

Grandma and Grandpa both worked very hard at what they did, and they were the best. When it came to hospitality, strangers were treated like friends, and friends were treated like family! Everyone was welcome!!

Dahliadel in the Mountains, Dahlias in Living Color

In 1968, Dahliadel in Vineland, NJ was sold to A.L. Freedlander, a wealthy philanthropist who moved the entire business to Waynesville, near Asheville, NC, renaming it "Dahliadel in the Mountains." It broke my heart to see the end of my beloved "Dahliadel." It never occurred to me to visit Dahliadel in its new home, or to imagine how dahlias might look with mountains in the background!

Perhaps this was because I had never seen the glory and majestic colors of Dahliadel in bloom. It is well-known that dahlias bloom mostly in September and October, until the first freeze of the year. It is also well-known that Florida's climate is not conducive to dahlias. As a student in my younger days and as a teacher in the years of my career, I always had to be back

home in Florida for school in September and October. However, in my retirement, we found some beautiful dahlias in the mountains of North Carolina. Please see the pictures included at the end of this paper.

Meanwhile, I spent my career as a math teacher. In 1993 I discovered the importance of color in teaching math, using COLORED CHALK instead of white chalk on a black or green board. This simple transition revolutionized my teaching, enabling me to show similarities and contrasts of concepts, to liven up an otherwise dull math explanation, to make it much easier for students to understand and follow my work on the board. I LOVED COLOR! Yes, I had discovered COLOR, but I still had NOT discovered the magnificent color of DAHLIAS until more than a decade later. Near the end of my career, I finally saw dahlias in bloom and fell in love with them. Now, my website is "MathInLivingColor.com," with both math and dahlias in living color! Is there a genetic connection between my passion for color and Grandma and Grandpa's passion for color in dahlias? Hmmm . . .

Come to think of it at Christmas time for many years, my sister Janet and my brother Jim used to compete in decorating their yards with COLORED LIGHTS with about 45,000 to 50,000 or more bulbs. Math in Living Color, Christmas lights, dahlias! We ALL loved COLOR! More genetics here??

Here is one last thought about color. It is exciting to think about the "colors of heaven!" I've heard that the Lord has a few more that He hasn't shown us yet!!

In 2010, Martha and I had been retired for 3 years, and for the past few years, we had been vacationing in the mountains. We visited Maggie Valley and many other interesting places in North Carolina, but in all those years since 1968, we had never visited Dahliadel in the Mountains. We were visiting Waynesville, when suddenly we realized that THIS was where Dahliadel had moved. For the next few months we searched for information about Dahliadel in the Mountains, inquiring about who remembered it and what may have happened to it. Actually, we were about 35 years too late, but we did have an interesting search, and we did find some beautiful DAHLIAS, in the MOUNTAINS of North Carolina. We wrote a paper about our search, posted at this link: [Dahliadel in the Mountains](#).

In conclusion, we were blessed to have some wonderful grandparents. We inherited so much from them genetically, and they taught us so much by their own examples, about hard work and hospitality--how to treat and serve other people. Most importantly, they really loved us!!

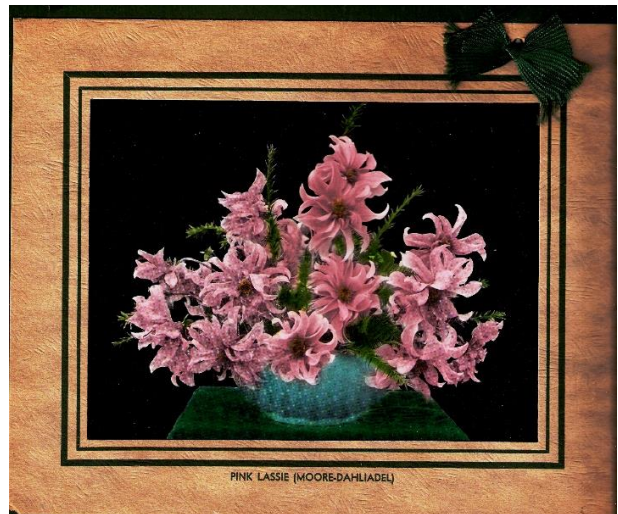
Dahliadel Originals



Dahliadel, Atlantic City Show (Circa 1930)



Original Dahliadel Arrangements



Leatherwood Dahlias in North Carolina (Circa 2015)



Loaded and ready for market in Asheville!



Jessica



Dorothy R



Bert Pitt



Kidd's Climax



Lady Darlene



Barbershop



Just Married



Leatherwood Dahlias



**Dahliadel in the Mountains
Circa 1970**

[Return to homepage](#)

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