
BACK IN TIME: THE ORIGIN OF BIG D'S ORIGINS

Meet the Parents

George John-Jacob Donnelly

Born: 1942, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Profession: Short-order cook at “The Griddle King” , a roadside diner famous for its “4-minute breakfast blitz.”

Personality: Humble, quick-witted, always wore an apron that read “*Cookin’ Loud, Chewin’ Proud.*”

Signature Move: Could fry two eggs, flip three pancakes, and plate a ham steak, all while carrying a conversation and refilling coffee cups without spilling a drop.

He was the kind of man who’d whistle while flipping hash browns, greet regulars with a wink, and say things like:

“If you’re not hungry now, just wait until I’m done talkin’.”

Marybell Weatherpot Donnelly

Born: 1944, Lafayette, Louisiana

Profession: At-home writer of heartfelt short stories, local magazine essays, and secret romance novellas under the pen name *E.W. Lacy*

Special Skill: Pie baker supreme. Known across the county for her flaky crusts and fresh fillings, blackberries, peaches, plums, pears, grown in the garden behind their cozy one-story house.

Personality: Regal but rooted. The kind of woman who always wore pearls while pulling a pie from the oven, could correct your grammar and your posture in one breath, and loved her son more fiercely than sugar loved butter.

“A pie’s only as good as the hands that make it. Same goes for people.”

How They Met

It was 1966.

George was working the early morning shift at The Griddle King. He was behind on orders, covered in flour, grease, and coffee splashes when **Marybell walked in**, holding a leather-bound journal and wearing a sundress with sunflowers.

She was there to interview the owner for a local magazine story: “*Legends of Louisiana Breakfasts.*”

George, thinking she was a health inspector, panicked and cooked the **fastest, most flawless breakfast platter** he had ever made, eggs soft, bacon crisp, pancakes golden, ham steak seared to perfection.

Marybell didn’t say a word. She took a bite. Then another.

And finally smiled.

“You may not be a poet, Mr. Jacob... but your food just wrote a sonnet on my tongue.”

They were married a year later.

Big D is Born

Darrell “Big D” Donnelly Jacob came into the world in 1982, in the back room of their home, the smell of cherry pie filling the house as Marybell had just pulled one from the oven.

George cut the umbilical cord with a paring knife.

Marybell held her newborn and whispered:

“He’s gonna have a big heart... and a bigger appetite.”

They were right.

Big D grew up barefoot in the backyard garden, stealing warm blackberries off the vine, waking to the sound of sizzling bacon, and falling asleep to the scratch of Marybell’s pen on paper.

The Influence

- George taught Big D **speed, rhythm, and flavor**, the joy of cooking with *sound and instinct*.
- Marybell taught him **patience, warmth, and presentation**, the art of making food with *feeling and story*.

From George, he got the sizzle.

From Marybell, the soul.

Big D’s castle today? Lined with framed pages of his mom’s recipes and his dad’s old order tickets, stained with butter.

Timeline Snapshot

- **1966** – George & Marybell meet at The Griddle King
 - **1967** – They marry in a backyard garden ceremony
 - **1982** – Big D is born, nicknamed “Darrell the Morsel”
 - **1990s** – Big D learns both skillet and storytelling
 - **2000s** – Big D becomes a food critic
 - **2025** – Big D takes “The Bite That Changed Everything”
 - **2025** – *Hey Hey!* begins
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