

Share a Smile

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FROM THE HEART

Patchwork of Our Lives

Sharing Aunt Doris' most cherished quilt brought us closer.

BY ROSE PADRICK
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While visiting my husband's relatives years ago, I admired his Aunt Doris' collection of hand-stitched quilts. A particularly beautiful one stood out from the rest.

Auntie explained that every piece of this quilt was cut from a favorite outfit and represented an important moment in her life. "The blue gingham is from a blouse I wore to the very first picture show I ever saw," she said. Then she giggled. "I let my beau hold my hand in the dark for the longest time.

"The yellow was a summer dress I wore to the carnival. The Ferris wheel seemed to go up forever. I was so scared! I closed my eyes, but my friend was strong and brave and held me till we got back to earth."

Her stories went on. She was allowing me to see a very intimate part of her life. When it was time to leave, she presented me with her cherished quilt.

On the ride home, I discovered, very carefully, that the quilt's filler is actually a blue woolen blanket



EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM



Rose Padrick tells grandson Hayden about the stories contained in Aunt Doris' (right) beloved quilt.

from World War II marked “U.S. Army Issue.” That’s when my husband confided his own piece of Aunt Doris’ story: She’d had a forbidden romance with a man who became a war hero.

I began retelling this story to my preteen grandchildren but with some trepidation. Maybe children raised in the age of video games wouldn’t be interested in an old lady’s ramblings about an old blanket, but I wanted to pass along this piece of family history.

My 12-year-old granddaughter loved the romance of it, after I explained why old clothes were used to make bed coverings. This opened the door to describing how mothers passed along their knowledge of cooking, gardening and sewing to ensure that their daughters were well-armed to face life’s demands.

In turn, my granddaughter explained how modern mothers pass on knowledge of computers,

college and financial planning to ensure their daughters’ success.

The homecoming parties and parades for soldiers enthralled the boys. My description of how the whole country came together in the war effort was met with pride. In turn, they explained that the Internet now unites the whole world, so loved ones don’t have to wait so long without word of a soldier’s health. At this, I felt a catch in my throat.

Surprised by how much my grandchildren had to teach me, I thought of the days when

multiple generations of families lived under one roof. Sharing knowledge and history must have been a daily occurrence. Maybe grandparents taught old-country culture to grandchildren, and grandchildren shared school lessons with their grandparents.

Multigenerational homes may be rarer now, but my grandsons’ talk of the Internet uniting the world showed me that technology could bring not only soldiers and their families together, but also different generations.

We can use new ways to foster the love that grandparents and grandchildren have always shared. As long as we continue to teach and learn from each other, we can build closeness despite time and distance that may separate us. It can be anything—computers, cooking, gardening, art, maybe even a young lady’s story told in an old bed covering—that brings you closer to those you love. ■

“I wanted to pass along this piece of family history.”

—ROSE PADRICK



Share Your Country Memories

Remember your little one’s first trip to the rodeo? Helping Grandpa on the farm during planting season? Going on family walks in the woods? Send your special country moment to submissions@countrywomanmagazine.com—it may appear in *Country Woman*!