

A Mary F. Walker Kearl Mini-History
Written December 2005

Even though Cyril has written his, "Mine and Out" history, I'd like to tell you my recollections of the changes that have occurred during the past 83 years. I may not remember all the changes or in the proper order, but here goes.

I was raised in the 1920's and 1930's. I graduated from high school in 1939 and college in 1943. There is always change, but there have been major changes in the last 80 years.

The reason I was prompted to write about the changes are my thoughts on this day, December 17, 2005. I am in Phoenix, AZ to attend the baptism of my oldest great grandchild, Jordan Burnett. I am staying at the Residence Inn by Marriott. As I was showering and dressing, I remember my first experience in staying overnight with my parents in a cabin (motel) along the highway. Perhaps it was in Kansas, I really don't recall exactly where. It was a small cabin with a stove to heat it. We had our own bedding. I believe it had a bathroom of sorts, but it was pretty primitive by today's standards. There were no changes for several years. You must know that this was during the depression and no one had much money. A person was lucky to have a roof over their head and to be able to drive somewhere. Now I am talking about the common folks. Perhaps it was different for the rich.

My parents had a Ford Model T car in their early months and years of marriage. No one did much traveling but if you did, you took your own food and bedding, towels and dishes – no paper plates or disposable silverware. We've come a long ways from then. In this residence Inn, there are beds with their own linens, a nice bath-hot and cold water. There is a kitchenette—electric stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishes, dishwasher—all the comforts of home. Other hotels or motels would not have anything but beds, bath, etc. In some hotels, such things as shampoos, shower caps, special connections for lap top computers, TV (some with DVD and VCR players), telephones, etc. Some also have food, water, etc that you pay extra for. That is one thing that has drastically changed.

We had a radio in our living room. The family sat around at night listening to favorite programs. TV didn't become available for purchase until the mid 1940's. My parents got one as a gift when my father sold his insurance agency. In my married life, we purchased our first TV in 1952. There were not many programs to even watch, but it was a wonder. I recall at 5:30PM there was a show called Buffalo Bob and Howdy Doody. Our children watched it. I could fix dinner without any interruption from one of the children because they were too busy watching the show. It was wonderful! My, how different TV is now in 2005. No one wants black & white, most have colored TV and more than one set in their homes. (We purchased our first color TV as a family Christmas present in 1967.) Now it is becoming quite popular to have small portable DVD and VCR players in the family vehicle so children can watch as the family travels.

Speaking of traveling, laws require now that no one can be without a seat belt. Babies and children must be belted into specially designed car seats until, I believe, 5 years of

age. Then everyone is fastened in place with a seat belt. When my parents had their Model T care, I suspect the top speed was probably 35 or 40 miles per hour. But in 2005, cars can go over 100 miles per hour. In many states, 75 or 80 miles per hour are allowed legally. Usually, 65 miles per hour is allowed in normal interstate driving in congested traffic. Cars have changed considerably also. They are quite luxurious and comfortable. They are heated in cold weather and air conditioned in hot weather. I remember when I learned to drive, it was on a stick shift transmission. We had to put signal turns or slow downs or stops with our hands out the window. Now of course we have controls inside the car to show left, or right turns and automatic red lights to come on when we slow down or stop. There are all styles of motorized vehicles such as motor homes that are outfitted for living and traveling, trailers that you attach and haul behind your car for short stays.

That is the end.