

The Locke Family Newsletter

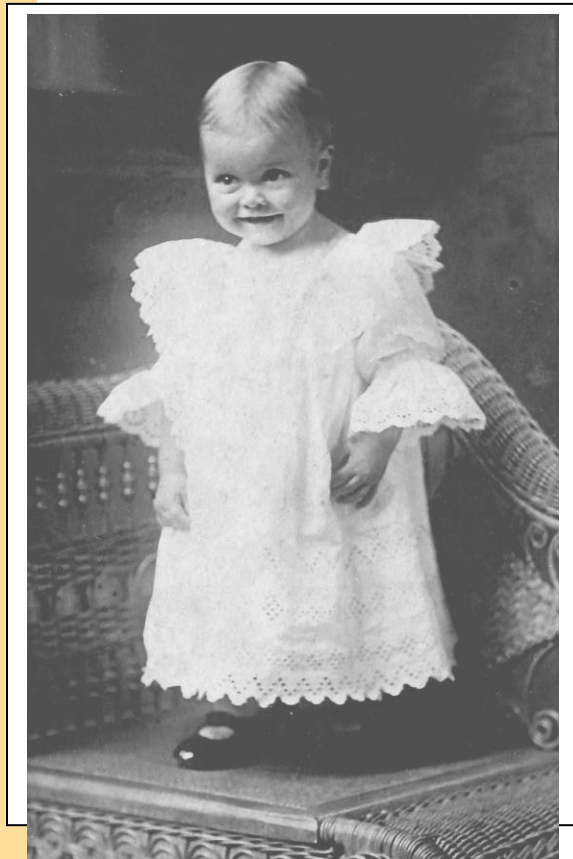
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An Amazing Discovery... Mae Helms Howell at 9 Months!

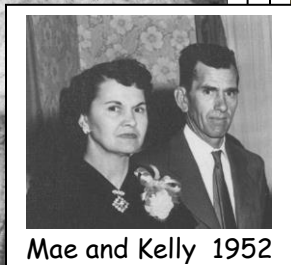
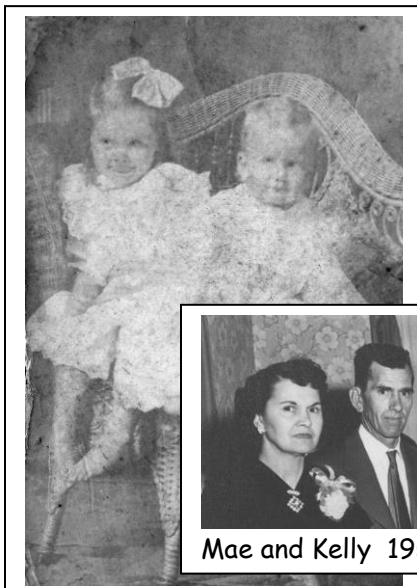


You can imagine my elation when I opened an envelope from my cousin, Gladys Hucks Howell, and found two incredible photographs. Both were originals affixed to cardboard, and the one of a little child in a white gown was labeled, "Mae Helms, nine months" on the back. The other, in a much more fragile condition, was simply labeled, Mae Helms and Kelly Helms. Gladys had found these rare images among items left by Mae when she passed in 1986.

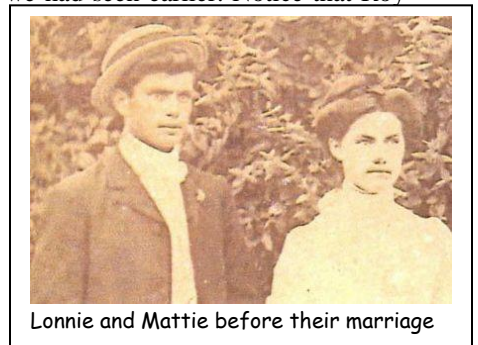
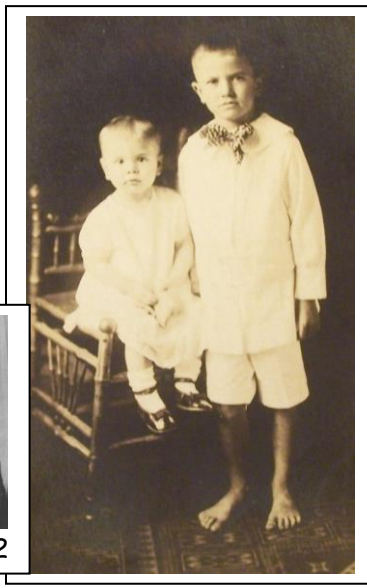
Mae Elizabeth Helms was born on May 25, 1904, to Martha Hope "Mattie" Locke Helms, and Lonnie Wilson Helms, near Waxhaw, North Carolina. Just one year earlier, Mattie and Lon had a stillborn son, and now, little Mae was their pride and joy. Two years later, Kelly Wade Helms was born on April 9, also near Waxhaw. The second photograph shows a four year old Mae, with her tongue curled on her upper lip, and a two year old Kelly, with blonde hair. I tried to repair the image on this photo to make the faces more clear, but there wasn't a lot remaining to work with after so many years.

In those days, farm families would not have owned a Victorian wicker settee like the one shown in both photos, and they might not have owned the white gown that Mae was wearing or that Kelly was wearing for the sitting. The photo studio would have provided everything to make the final result as classy as possible.

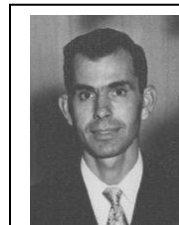
A few years ago, the late Fulman Locke, Jr., found a similar photo showing a ten year old Roy Walton Helms, born on October 2, 1908, with his two year old brother, Buddy, in a very similar setting. The quality had improved over the years, but there was the Victorian wicker and the white gown that we had seen earlier. Notice that Roy was barefoot in the photo, and was dressed much more casually.



Mae and Kelly 1952



Lonnie and Mattie before their marriage



Buddy 1952



Roy Helms

The Family of Zollicoffer "Zollie" Locke



From left: Franklin Pierce "Frank", Uncle Juts, Mary Agnes Locke Vineyard, "Zollie", Judson, Vinnie holding Aubrie, Jim, and John Hollis Bankhead Locke. Photo made in 1912

In the February, 2012, *Locke Family Newsletter*, we followed the life of **Adoniram Judson Locke**, son of **Jesse McCullough Locke**, and how that life was entwined with that of his niece, **Mary Agnes Locke**. To quickly recap, Mary Agnes, daughter of **James Henry Locke**, also a son of Jesse, had a son out of wedlock in 1873, and married **Charles Vineyard** three years later. It was discussed that the boy's father was a **Greenfield**, but rumors swirled that an affair between **Mary Agnes**, age 23, and her 45 year old uncle **Adoniram Judson** resulted in the birth. At the time, he was a bachelor farmer who had survived the *Civil War*.

Charles Vineyard died shortly after he married Mary, and she and her son moved into Uncle Adoniram's house near *Green Pond*, in *Bibb County, Alabama*. At that time, the boy was renamed **Felix Kirk Zollicoffer Locke**, after a mortally wounded Confederate general that Adoniram had tried to save during the *Battle of Mill Spring, Kentucky*. Mary and "Uncle Juts", as **Zollie** would call Adoniram, raised the boy, and continued to live with his family until both of them died in very old age. **Zollie** would marry **Luvina "Vennie" Daily** in 1899, and they would have six children before **Zollie's** premature death in 1917.



John and sister Aubrie



John and sister Lillie 1932



John Hollis Bankhead Locke

From here on, we will follow the family of the third son, **John Hollis Bankhead Locke**, and his wife, **Mildred Louise Burdett**, who were married in January, 1944. They had five children: **John, Jr.** in 1945, **Roger Dale** in 1947, **Linda Gail** in 1948, **Richard "Ricky" Crawford** in 1949, and **Janice Louise** in 1951.



Grannie Luvina "Vennie" with Linda, and with John, Jr.

John Hollis Bankhead Locke, Jr.

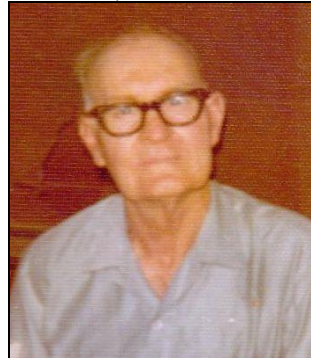


Linda, Roger, Janice, John, Ricky.

John and Roger

Ricky

Roger



John H. B., Sr.

John H. B., Sr.

Ernest and Aubrie Locke Hyde

Roger, Vietnam Vet

John Jr., married Janice Townsend in 1967, Janice married Howard E. Marchant in 1968, Roger married Wanda Reed in 1969, Linda married Ralph Eugene Miller in 1971, and Ricky married Karen.



Janice Locke and friend, Janet Smith

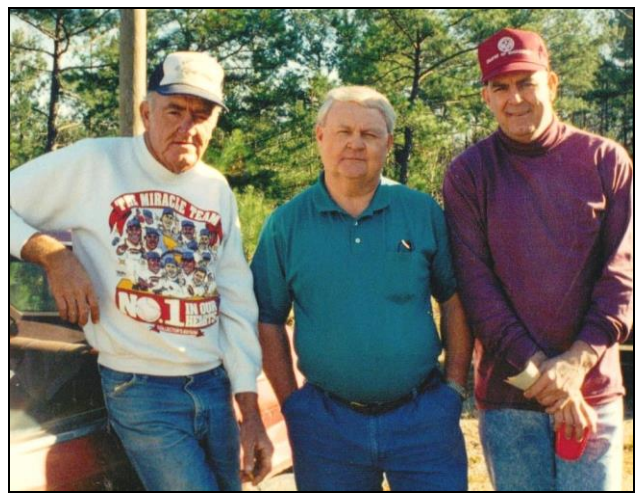
Howard and Janice 1967 Wedding

Janice with girls, Amy, Christy, Heidi

Rick and Karen



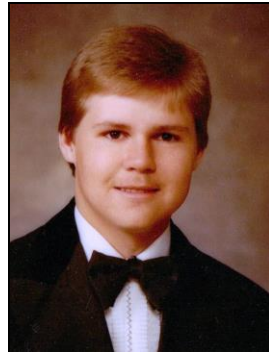
Linda Gail, Grandma Mildred Locke, and Janice



Roger, Johnnie, and Ricky Locke



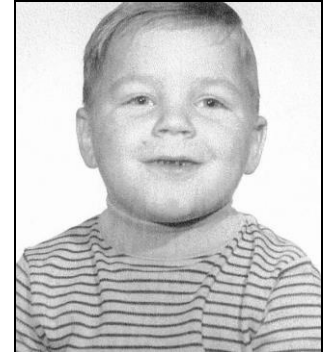
John, Jan, and Shane Locke



Shane Locke



Lisa Miller



Gene Miller



Amy Marchant



Heidi Marchant



Rachel Miller



Mitchell Miller



Mitch with wife Lisa, Alyssa & Zach



Amy & Michael McDonald with Joshua and Makayla



Heidi and Dennis Odom with Haley & Nathan



Edward, Kelsey, Casey and Christy Ard

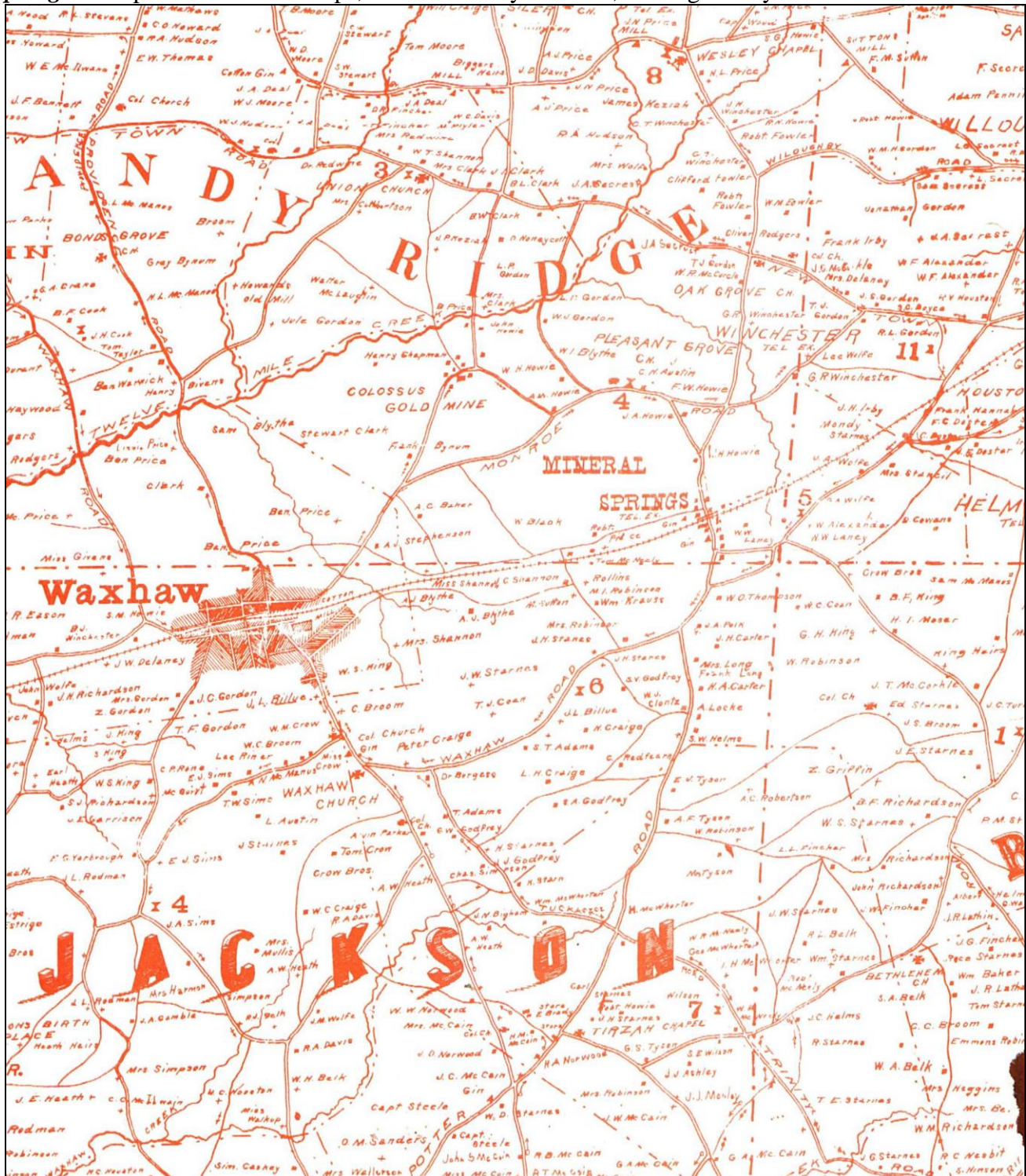


Janice and Howard with Daughters & Grandchildren

“Uncle Juts” passed in 1916 at the age of 85, and was buried at Mt. Carmel Cemetery in West Blocton, Alabama. Twenty five years later, Mary Agnes Locke passed at age 91, and was buried beside him. John Hollis Bankhead Locke died in 1981 at the age of 74. Mildred Locke passed in 1994 at age 73. Many secrets passed with all of them, but the people who survived them make an amazing family.

1920 Map of Waxhaw, North Carolina

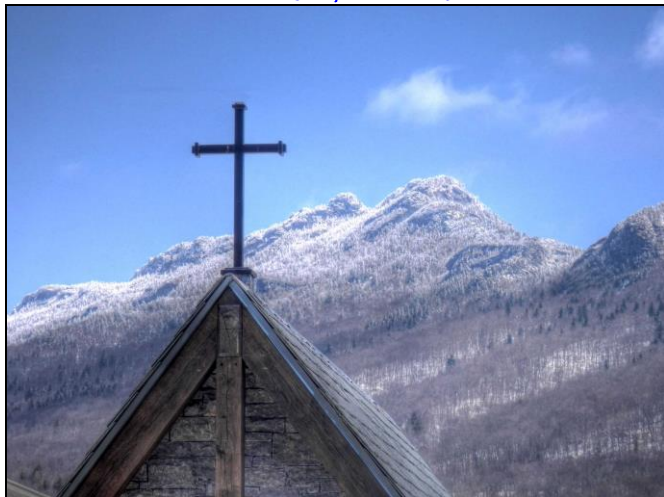
Sometime around 1920, this very detailed map of the western part of *Union County, North Carolina* was drawn by hand. Each homestead was shown, as well as early telephone districts. Creeks, railroads, churches, burial grounds, and historic sites were clearly visible. **Absalom Lewis Locke**, my great grandfather, appears alongside **S.W. Helms**, my grandparents, on **Potter Road** just south of **Mineral Springs**. Compared to modern maps, this one is very accurate, although many roads have been built.



Mountain Photographs by Vann Helms

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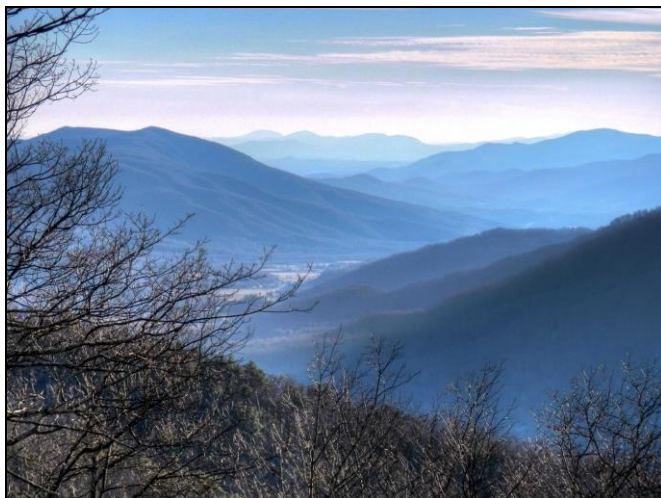
St. Bernadette's Catholic Chapel near Grandfather Mountain



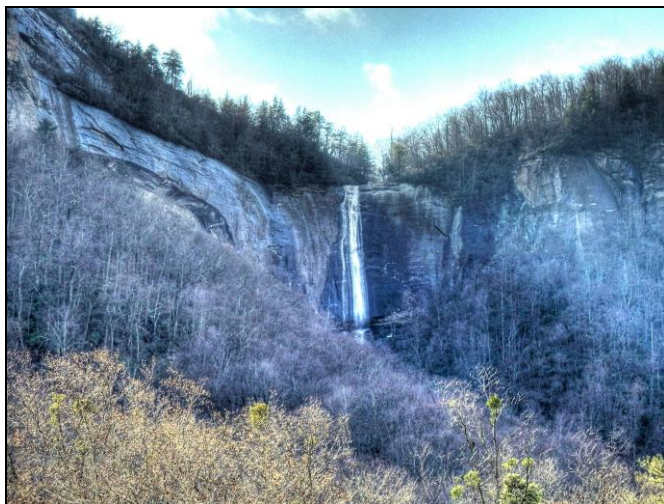
Church of Christ near Sugar Mountain Ski Resort in Banner Elk



Vann Helms at Sugar Mountain Village March 28, 2013



View to Southwest from West Rim of Linville Gorge February, 2013



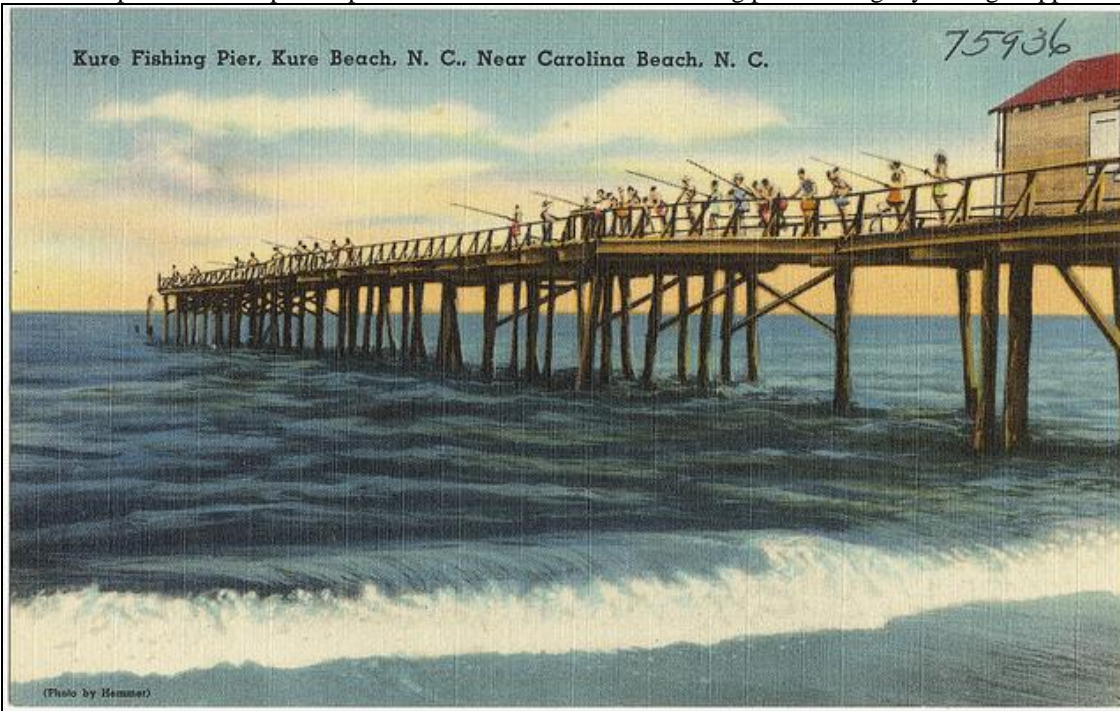
Hickory Nut Falls in Winter Chimney Rock State Park



The Biltmore Estate in Winter Asheville, North Carolina

Memories of Kure Beach and Carolina Beach

Much of my early childhood was spent on the coast of North Carolina southeast of Wilmington near the mouth of the Cape Fear River. These postcards and photos preserve the memories of a time long past. I thought you might appreciate them.

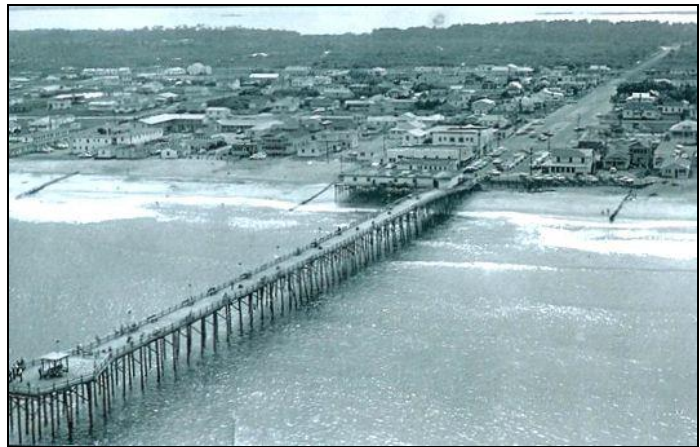


This photo was made from atop the water tower around 1947. My grandma's two story house is visible on the upper right side of the road just before the curve. *The Blue Anchor Apartments* is just beyond her house. She also owned the vacant lot on this side of her house. The large building at the top center, right on the ocean, is the *Ethyl-Dow Bromine* plant with steel corrals extending into the surf. It's closure after the War opened up these houses for new owners.

This *Kure Beach-Carolina Beach* retrospective was prepared in memory of my grandparents, **Lonnie and Mattie Locke Helms**, who ran a rooming house and three cottages there from 1946 until her death in 1965. In wintertime, they lived in Charlotte. I spent innumerable weekends at that house until we moved to Florida in early 1958, as did most of my aunts, uncles, and cousins. The house and two cottages were torn down in the late 1960's to make way for a two story motel.



Pier Square before Hurricane Hazel in 1953



The newly completed Pier in 1955



The Bluefish were running in 1954



The mackerel were running in 1956



Beach store next to the Pier



On the new Pier in 1956...

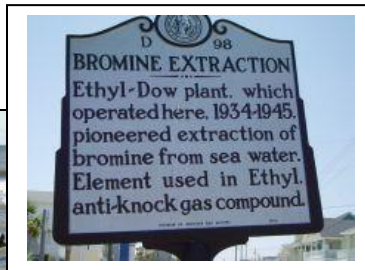
This is **Kure Beach Pier, 1960**. You can see the miniature golf place on the northwest corner of the main intersection. The water tower is gone now, as are many of the cottages you see here. **Uncle Furman Locke and Aunt Sue's** house was just out of the picture on the left. I remember walking from Grandma's to the pier along the beach road. What a sleepy little town it was then, and the "Beach Water" was undrinkable. We had it so good in those days and didn't know it at the time.



Remember "The Rocks" down by Fort Fisher with all the green moss? I can still smell the salt water odor that was there. Turns out that these are the only natural rocks on the Atlantic shore south of Cape Cod. And boy were they slick!



This Kure Beach Pier card would have been from the late 1940's just after Grandma and Grandpa moved down there. Hurricane Hazel tore up the pier and the pier house in '54. Kure Beach Pier, built first in 1923, was the first ocean fishing pier built along the Atlantic Coast. The town was incorporated in 1947. The next pier had steps down to a lower pier where boats could tie up just past the rollers. It was destroyed around 1957. Every time, the pier was rebuilt even longer.



"New Cottage" in 1960



House in 1963

Same view in 2002

A WW II chemical plant was located up the beach from Grandma's. The plant extracted Bromine from seawater that was used to make hi-test aviation fuel during the war. A poisonous holding pond was still there in the early 1960's. In the old days, these steel "corrals" were much higher, and you could play hide and seek around them, as long as you didn't cut your feet. Also, people used to catch a lot of Sheepshead fish inside those enclosed structures. It was always a pretty scary place that we were told to stay away from. This picture was made just before the state removed all of the iron in the 1980's.



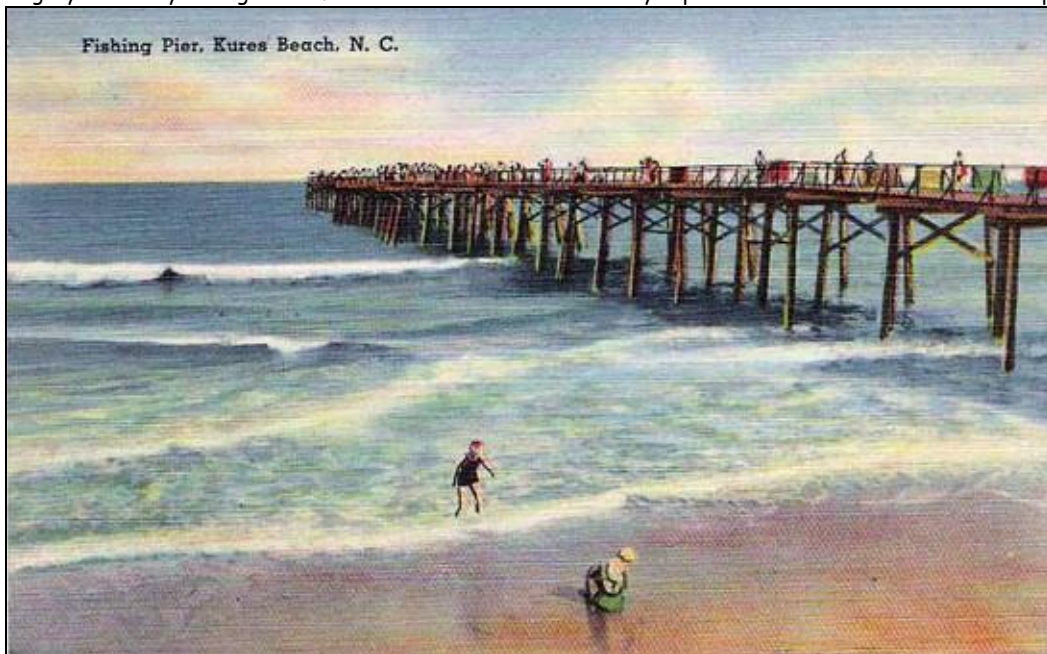
This is a fairly recent photo of Kure Beach. Notice how congested the town is now. The beach road is still there, but also a new water tower, and many multi-story condos and beach houses. The pier is very long now, but the fishing is still very good. Helms' Cottages was just up the road from the old house with the red roof. The "New" cottage was torn down about five years ago to make way for a large two story house. "Cheeks" store building across the road is still there, as are a few of the old shingled houses near the ocean. The natural area is a buffer along the Cape Fear River owned by the U.S. government.



Looking south toward the fishing pier in 2002. The yellow cottage, built by my father and his brothers, was torn down in 2009.



The small grey two story belonged to Mrs. Peters. The wooden two story replaced the old "Blue Anchor". 2002 photo.



Notice the name "Kures Beach" at the top of this vintage card.



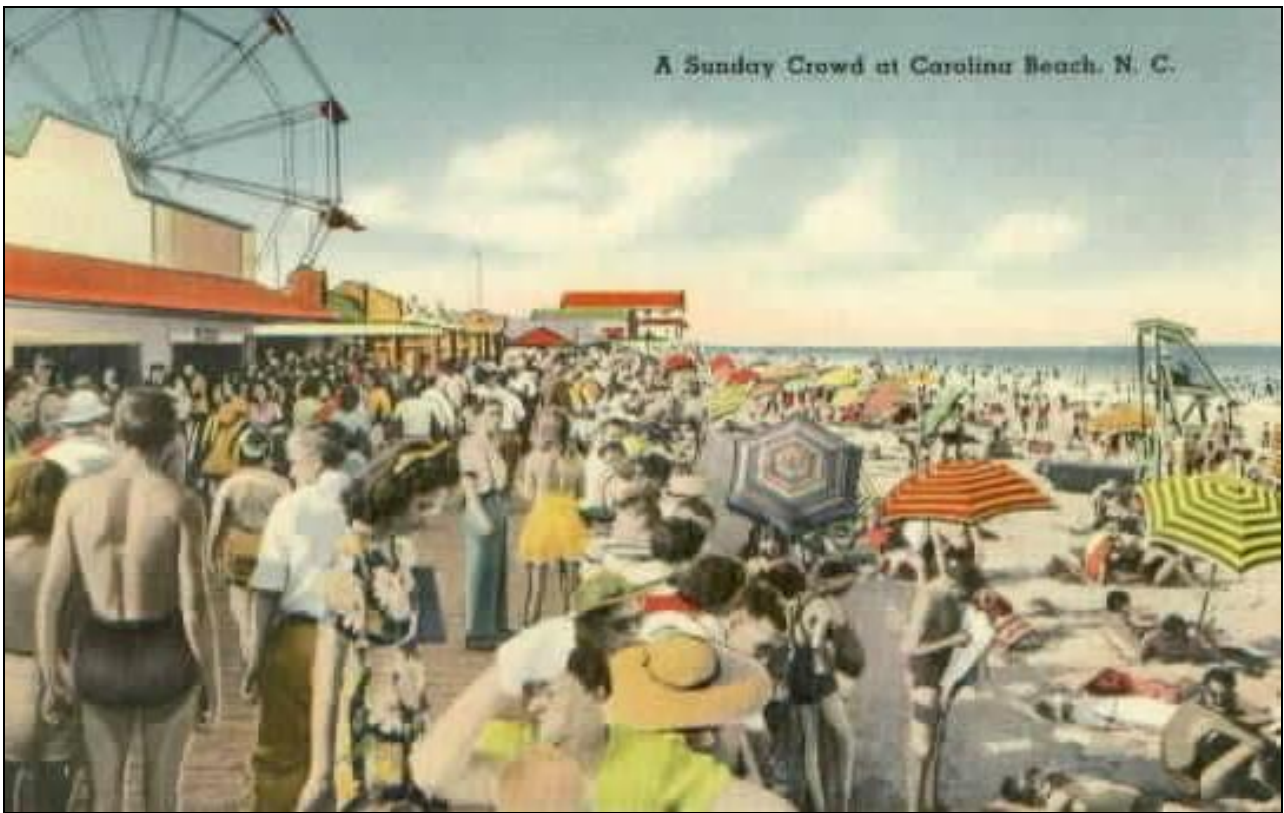
This is the motel that was built where Grandma's big house once stood. The photo to the left is the south wall, and the other photo is the north wall. The wall murals add a nice touch. Grandma was an artist and would have approved of the undersea fantasies.



Another 1950's view of Carolina Beach. Notice the "Hotel Bame" sign on the far right. Kure and Carolina Beach were three miles apart.



This card is from around 1947, just after Grandma moved to the beach in 1946. She got that property for almost nothing because the Benzine plant had just closed, and the nearby houses were empty. Also, the ground was contaminated with the pollution from the Intake plant, and many people got cancer over the years. The land where the chemical plant stood was the last to be sold for houses in the early 2000's. I wonder if those people know what sits just underneath the surface of the sand?



This was also in the late 1940's. You can see the Boardwalk and the amusement arcades. This period was the heyday for Carolina Beach. Remember the old high rise "Breakers Hotel" between Carolina and Kure Beach? It was torn up by Hurricane Hazel. The umbrellas in the picture remind me of the one canvas umbrella that Grandma had. Seems like it was green and yellow, but that was a long time ago. Remember the outside shower under the stairs? It was the only place to take a shower at the house. Nothing inside. You never took your clothes off to get a shower. There was no privacy outside. Grandma had a big wash tub on the back porch that served as a bathtub for the children. At least the outside shower had hot water, and the floor was always sandy from the beach sand.





This card is from the late 1950's. When I see this picture, I remember all the times we rode that Merry-Go-Round and that Ferris wheel. We always rode the little boats, but we weren't big enough to ride the Bumper Cars, or the Rocket with the bullet shaped cylinder at each end. There was always the "Hammer" thing, and I can still hear the bell ring when some strong guy would slam the big hammer down on the lever. Cotton Candy was popular, as were candied apples. Seems like a big Nehi was also popular.



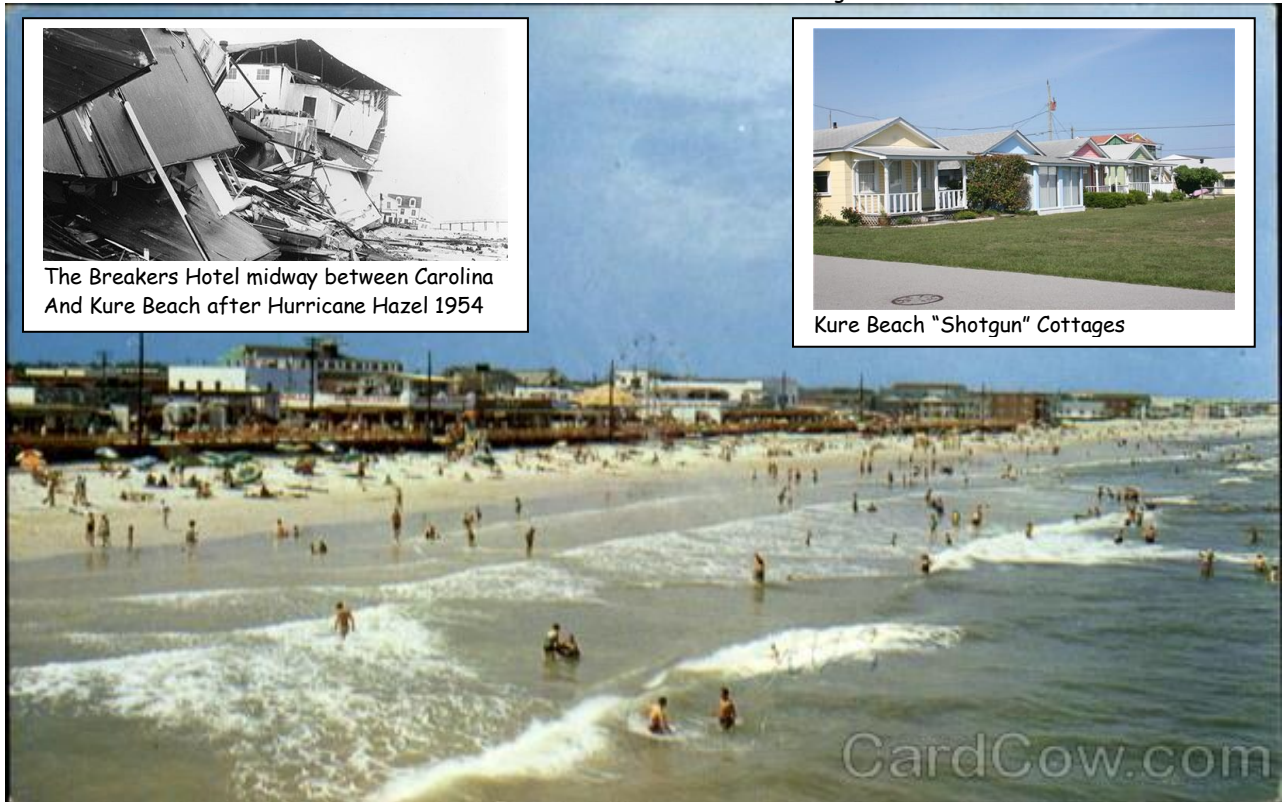
I remember seeing the lights of Carolina Beach from the second floor window at Grandma's house or from the upstairs screened porch at the Blue Anchor next door. The thing I always looked forward to as a little boy was going to Carolina Beach at night to ride the rides. The colored flashing lights always fascinated me, as did all the people.



This is the earliest card from Carolina Beach that I found. Judging from the cars, this had to be the late 1920's, before the Depression. I see that miniature golf was popular. With all the parked cars, you have to wonder where all of the people are. On the beach?



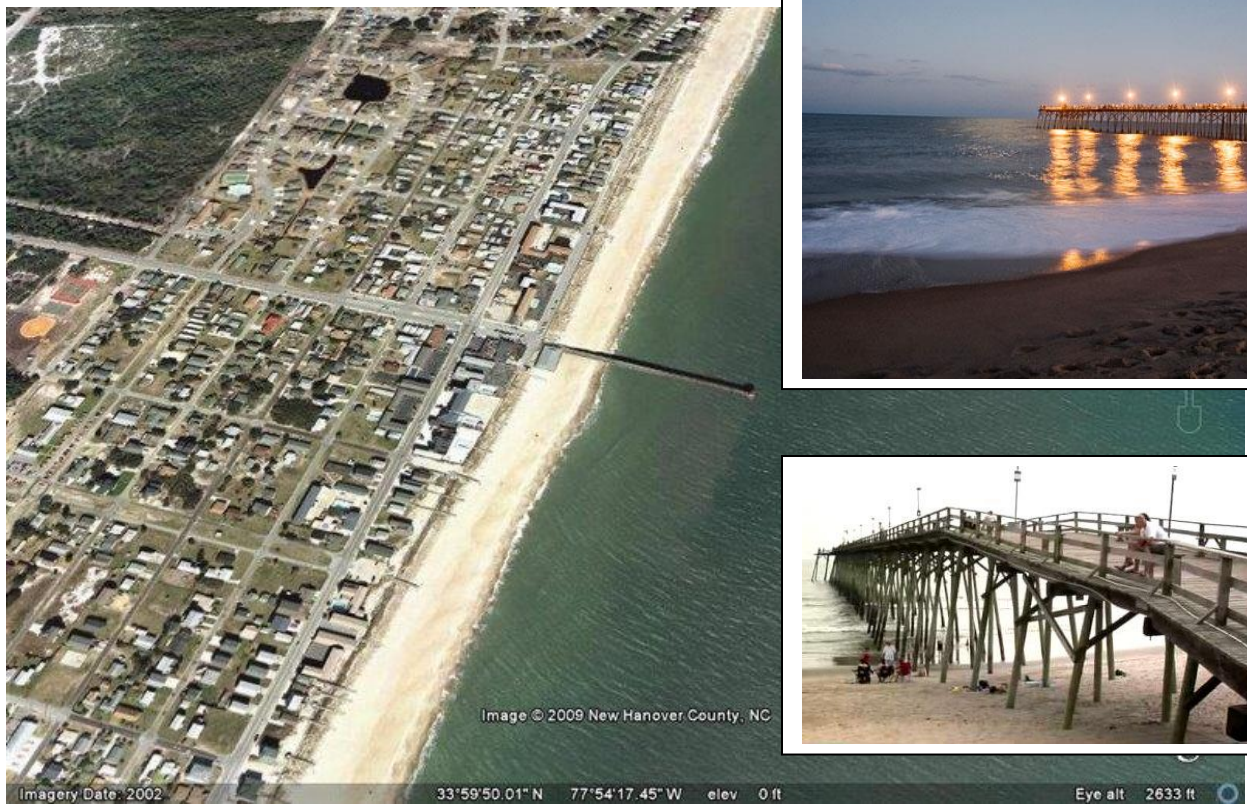
This was late 1940's after the War. These are some great cars!



The Breakers Hotel midway between Carolina And Kure Beach after Hurricane Hazel 1954

Kure Beach "Shotgun" Cottages

This was a wonderful card from the late 1950's. All of the amusement rides and arcades were gone when I was last there in 2002. The Boardwalk was also in bad shape. Condos and townhouses lined the beach. There were still a lot of restaurants, but Carolina Beach had lost the magic that made it one of the most exciting resorts along the Atlantic Coast. The next photos are recent. There have been a lot of changes since Grandma passed in '65. We wouldn't know the place today.



This Google Earth photo of Kure Beach is already ten years old. The other two photos are recent.

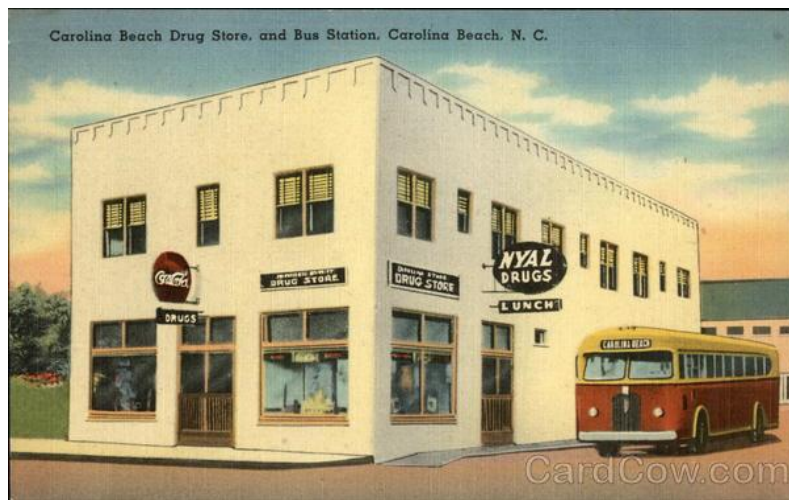


Carolina Beach has a new fishing pier, and the beach is more crowded than ever. We never saw African Americans in the 50's. Now the crowds are very mixed. Finally!



The Boardwalk and Amusement area had fallen into disrepair until 2009 when a new mayor made its rebirth a major community project. Slowly, the area is regaining some of the magic that it had lost over the years. Families have returned and the buildings are once again occupied. It still needs more rides and restaurants, but things are getting better. The Carousel is back and so is the Ferris Wheel.





The old Nyal Drug Store was the main bus stop in Carolina Beach for years. Now, the historic building houses a real estate office (Above right). I'm sure that Grandma and Grandpa stopped here many times on their way to Wilmington to catch the Greyhound to Charlotte. Remember, neither of them drove a car. That's my family in 1955. Eddie's holding the kitten.



Beach House in 1951



Mattie in 1947



Buck, Margaret, Betty Butch and Susan in 1955



Eddie, Vann, Lon, 1957



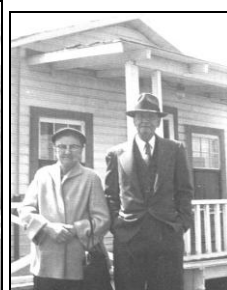
Mattie in 1956



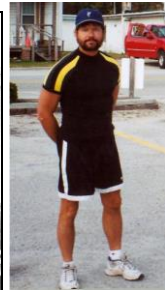
Mae Helms Howell in 1955



Vann, Nancy, Mama



Mattie and Lon in 1959



Vann visits in 2002

The Family of Burnice Harris of Mobile, Alabama

Owen Thompson, the grandfather of **Burnice Harris**, was the son of **Benjamin Locke** and an African-American worker in the Locke household. Burnice's great-great grandfather was **Jesse Culp Locke**, son of **Jesse McCullough Locke** and **Mary Agnes Hunter**. Even though Owen was not raised as a Locke, his white half-brother, **Robert Locke**, stayed close with him his entire life. As a small boy, Burnice had the pleasure of getting to know his grandfather, and he also heard the many stories about Owen Thompson's past.

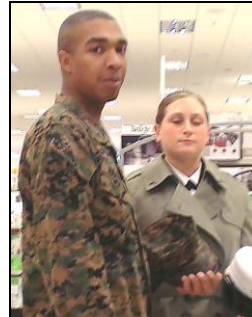
Today, Burnice and his wife **Shirley** live in Mobile, Alabama, where they raised five children. Their daughter, **Dr. Crystal Harris-Cordell**, lives in Tampa, Florida, where she is a pathologist at the **University Of South Florida Hospital**. She and her husband, **Donovan Cordell**, have a new baby girl, **Sofia**, born last August. Next year, **Dr. Cordell** and her family will transfer to **Houston, Texas**, where she will be on staff at **Baptist Hospital**. His oldest son, **SSTG Godric Harris**, is a career United States Air Force officer. He is married to **Emily**, and they have a daughter, **Angel**. Burnice's son **PFC Justin Locke Harris** enlisted in the Marine Corp last fall. He married **Amanda McClantoc**, also in the Marines, last December. Justin is stationed at **Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri**, and Amanda is stationed at **Camp Lejeune, North Carolina**. Burnice and Shirley have a set of twins, **Alexander** and **Alonzo**, who were born in 1988. Today they are both in college at the **University Of South Alabama** in Mobile, studying Engineering. Here are some photos that Burnie recently sent to me.



Shirley, Burnice, Justin, & Twins



Pfc. Justin, Burnice, Shirley, Amanda



Justin and Amanda



Sofia Cordell

The Locke Reunion on August 10th, 2013

Don't forget to mark your calendars for our next *Locke Reunion* that will be held east of *Chester, South Carolina*, at *Landsford Canal State Park* on *Saturday, August 10th*, from 10 a.m. 'til ???.

Our original Locke ancestors in South Carolina owned farms just ten miles from here. We have reserved the large picnic pavilion in the park, so the event will go forward, rain or shine. I'm hoping that Jerry Locke will be able to bring his large tent, because we will need the extra space when we sit down to eat. I'll be making my famous fresh peach and blackberry cobblers again this year. Those, alone, are worth the trip, so I have been told. Perhaps we can convince Donna Brotherton Fox to provide the entertainment this year. Tell all of your family now!

