

Marie Leibel nee  
Deml  
German Immigrant  
Beaverbrae  
November of 1950



The story of my coming to Canada starts in Germany 1950. I, Marie Leibel (nee Deml) was 10 years old. In Germany I was called Mariele. Here they could not say that so they called me Marie.

My mother, Maria Deml (nee Meier) was widowed . My father, Andrew Deml, was killed in the Second World War. His brother Anton had immigrated to Canada on April 15th 1930. He was 29 yrs. old. His reason was to avoid going to war. He came to be a farm hand.

It was after WWII in 1949 that Anton decided to write from Canada and check on what had happened to his family so he wrote to my mother. Anton still was a bachelor. Thier fondness for each other grew through their correspondence and in time he proposed. Mother decided to accept his offer of marriage and sponsorship . We came to Canada in November 1950 and my mother, Maria married Anton in December. The wedding was small. It took place in St. Mary's Catholic Church at Macklin Saskatchewan.

My mother, Maria Deml, age 44 yrs. was very hesitant to leave her beloved Germany behind. At the time conditions for a widow with a child were not very promising. She thought for the good of her health and her child going to Canada was a good thing.

The good part about leaving at my age 10 was we visited almost all the relatives in Germany. I got to travel on trains. Saw important cities and got some new clothes.

The bad part was that there were many tears when the good bye came. I really found it hard to say goodbye to the School Sisters of Notre Dame that taught me. The friends I had to leave behind, also the neighbors that were very caring during all the difficulties mother went through during the war time.

My memories of the trip.

We lived in Kronwinkel, by Landshut, Bayern. My aunt, Anna Zaglauer accompanied us on the train. It was November, cold and rainy. The train

took us to Bremerhaven. Mother saw the ship, Beaverbrae. "Oh" she said, "that is so big that will never sink."

We went on board where the smell was not pleasant. We figured it was just painted. It could have been disinfectant.

The dining room area was huge. We lined up for food and slept in bunks. I had the top one. The farewell was again very difficult for mother. The singing 'Auf Wiedersehen' or something like that with some instruments playing in the distance was quite emotional for her but I was 10 years old so I didn't get it.

Days later there was ocean all around us and seagulls everywhere. I met some girls. The women and children had the centre of the ship. It didn't take too many days the ship began to sway. Some evenings there was a picture show. It was the first time that I saw a movie. There was the most beautiful skater in the show. She had a short dress on and could do so many awesome things. From that day on I have always loved figure skating. I believe that skater might have been Barbara Ann Scott.

Some evenings there were church services. The ship encountered rough seas. Everyone was nauseated and vomiting, some worse than others. There were days when it seemed no one was around. The weather was very ugly, rain and wind. I remember the waves were higher than the ship, like mountains gone wild.

Some days later the sun was shining and those that were able went on deck. Soon there was land visible. When the Beaverbrae entered the St. Lawrence Seaway it was sunny. Everyone was excited and scared.

The landing process was slow. I for one needed a bathroom badly. The language barrier was apparent right away. We didn't know the difference between English and French. The sign language made for a washroom was very evident. I used it and saw my first flush toilet.

The line up at the customs was very slow. Mother was very clever to observe who would be faster and not as strict. We were guided to our proper train for Winnipeg by someone who could speak German. The trip took forever. After all, we were in Canada.

Mother saw all those evergreens, she said, "We can make a lot of wood to heat the house." I remember the never-ending forests and rock. It was also winter.

We arrived at Winnipeg but it was a weekend so CPR trains did not run. We were guided to a hotel. There was running water and a bathtub.

Mother heard bells; she thought there must be a church somewhere but instead it was the train bell.

On to Saskatoon was the next journey. We were given a German paper, called The Northwestern Courier (later it was called "Der Kurier") Anton met us at the train. He traveled with us to Macklin. This was our home to be. It was midnight when we arrived.

Anton had his friends prepared a meal for us. We were not hungry. We were tired, cold and afraid. The friends of Anton spoke German but not our German. They were Russian German and quite loud.

Anton had a small house. At that time there was no running water. There was a horrible outdoor toilet and it was 30 below F.

The clothes we brought were not for this winter. Friends gave us appropriate clothes.

It took about two weeks before I was introduced to school. I knew no English.

I was very lucky to be introduced to a teacher that spoke German. She was Josepha Dewald. In Germany I was in grade 5. Mrs. Dewald taught grade 4. Therefore I was set back a grade. At first I was to translate common grammar phrases from German to English. Then I was translate words.

She started me on the English reader 'Dick and Jane'.

I soon found friends. I also learned how to skate. I loved that. Eventually I got Barbara Ann Scot skates. Our neighbors spoke some German, the Russian-German. I had to take a lot of teasing. I did wear a kerchief. I tried to take it off when mother didn't see me.

By spring I was able to write an exam and I was quite pleased with myself.

In the meantime mother got jobs. She worked for the local doctor as a cleaning lady and at the local hotel as a laundry lady. The jobs paid poorly but she had her own money.

Anton worked as laborer for the town of Macklin. He had horses to pull his wagon to gravel streets, take out garbage. He did this until he got cancer in 1959.

I graduated from Macklin High School in 1959. Then I started my three year nurses training at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Humboldt, Saskatchewan. These were years to grow up in many ways. I had to adjust to be without my parents who were my everything up until then.

Anton passed away in 1960.

I graduated in 1962.

I returned to Macklin to work at St. Joseph Hospital.

I met my husband, Ted, while he was a patient. We got married on July 1, 1964. We lived in a little house in the Village of Denzil. He was a farmer. We farmed grain and had cattle.

In 1965 our son John was born. I tried to keep working, but it had some drawback. Macklin was 14 miles from Denzil. At that time I did not drive. In 1966 our daughter, Anita, was born and I got my drivers license.

Life went on in the farming community. One was involved in CWL, curling and skating,.

In 1970 our daughter, Chrissy was born. In 1971 our son, Andrew, was born . He was a preemie that weighed a mere 2lbs 2oz. He has grown up after many difficult times and become a successful young man.

My love for nursing took me back to work off and on. In 1976 we decided to build a house at the farm. SE 28- 37-26 Wof the 3rd

Mother was quite lonely at Macklin. She purchased a trailer and moved it on our farm site.

In 1977, on Christmas Day our daughter, Lisa Marie was born. Our house was quite large but the family of 7 filled it up. We raised chickens, milked a cow and had a garden. There was lots to do.

In 1978, on Holy Thursday, my mothers trailer caught fire. She was OK, but it caused her to loose all her belongings. She stayed with us until she found a place to rent in Denzil. She stayed there until her health failed her in 2000.

In the mean time all our kids completed school and moved on. My mother stayed with us until she passed away in 2003 at the age of 97. Our son John, is married to Ella from Romania. They live in Calgary, Alta. He is a computer tech and Ella works at a Private French School. Anita,

is married to Norbert Oborowsky, they live on the farm at Cactus Lake. They have two boys, Adam and Lee and one daughter, Tori Lynn. Chrissy is married to Darrell Ozeroff. They farm at Langham. Chrissy is a R.N. and works at Saskatoon City Hospital. They have a daughter Brooke and a son Tyson. Andrew is married to Leanne. He is a mechanical engineer. Leanne works with Alberta Foods. They live on an acreage by Leduc, Alta. Lisa Marie is married to Mitchel Ross. He works at the IGA with his parents at Provost, Alberta. Lisa works at Body Beautiful as an ethtetician at Provost, Alberta.

Here we are in 2007. Ted and I still farm. I love the spring and fall. I drive the grain truck at harvest time. I am the "gopher on the place".

I treasure my German language. Thanks to my mom's longevity I was able to keep the German. I also have many German videos that helped out with the grammar.

I am very proud to be a Canadian. It gave me possibilities I might not have received in Germany at the time.