

Alice June Slager 1930

By Graysen Hoffman

My grandma, Alice June Slager, was born in her mom and dad's little brick house in Maywood, Illinois on June 24th, 1930. Her parents were Peter and Alice Slager. Her Mom and Dad were born in 1845 and her Dad was in the Navy in World War I. Her dad owned a bakery in Chicago, IL and had a little restaurant. In the restaurant they served eggs, rolls and coffee for breakfast. She did not work in the bakery because she was too young. Most of her jobs were at home.

She grew up in Chicago and Indiana. She lived in Chicago until she turned twelve. Then they moved to Indiana. She went to Brown School in Chicago and graduated from high school in Indiana. She remembers getting hit on the hands with a ruler in first grade for chewing gum. She always won spelling bee's. She really likes Spelling and English. She was the best at it. She hated math and was terrible at it.

One of her household chores was milking the cow. One day her dad said, "June, will you milk the cow today?" After that she had to do it every day. Her dad sold milk to make extra money during the depression. My Grandma said that not very long after she started milking the cow, the cow's milk dried up because she didn't do a very good job. So they killed the cow and ate it. Her other chores were peeling potatoes, grocery shopping, setting the table, doing dishes, and making beds.

Some of her favorite hobbies were: scrapbooking, roller skating, walking the streets of Chicago and going to the Brookfield Zoo. She loved watching movie stars like Shirley Temple, Jane Withers and Diana Dervin. On Saturdays they would get to see a double feature. She remembers seeing King Kong and The Wizard of Oz when she was nine years old. My Grandma June was a kid during the depression. Everyone was very poor and if they found a penny on the ground, they thought they were rich. For Christmas she got nuts, peppermint sticks, oranges, apples, and chocolate drops. She told me that they were lucky to have a Christmas tree during the depression and that they had bubble lights on their tree. The stockings they hung were brown socks that they wore up to their thighs. They got new ones every Christmas. During the Depression, her family rented a farmhouse from Al Capone in Downers Grove. She remembers that her Mom use to sew their clothes and she made blankets out of old coats.

One of her favorite memories is sneaking into the giant pickle crock on her back porch with her best friend. Her Mom made the pickles with vinegar and dill. She would reach way down inside and pull one out and bite into it. She said they were so juicy on hot days.

My grandma had three sisters and one brother. She was right next to the youngest. Roosevelt was the president her whole childhood, but she remembers Truman too. She got to drive her first car when she was fifteen or sixteen years old, but she never owned her own car. Her Dad's car broke down on a country road so her Dad told her to drive it while he pushed. She drove it right into a ditch. It was a Ford car.

She met her husband {who we call Papa Jellybeans} after he came home from the army when the war was over. He just came into a restaurant and sat down next to her. She knew instantly that they would be married. Their first date was going to church together. She knew that he was going to ask her to marry him because she found the ring in his pocket when she was

looking for something else. But she didn't tell him that she knew. A few days later he asked her and she said yes.

She was eighteen when she married my Papa Jellybeans. They got married in their church in DeMott, Indiana. She wore her sister's white gown and got a new veil. Papa Jellybeans wore a dark suite because men didn't wear fancy suites back then. It was a big wedding with about two hundred people that came. They ate roast beef, mashed potatoes, and veggies. It was sixty one years ago!

After they got married, they lived in Hebron, Indiana and rented a two story house. It cost them thirty dollars a month and Papa Jellybeans made thirty dollars a week. Canned food only cost ten or fifteen cents back then and nobody paid with credit cards.

They had their first baby when she was twenty one. They had eight kids all together, six boys and two girls. Her happiest day ever was when her kids were born and her wedding day. My Dad was her last kid. She had him when she was forty five. He was their big surprise but, she says that she is so glad he came because if they hadn't had him, then I wouldn't be here!