

*be still*

by: Alli Reichert

*Alli Reichert  
2019  
Baltimore, MD*

*Be Still is a collection of photographs of my own and of my family's  
archive. This book is a reflection of memories that myself and other  
family members have collected about my grandparents.*

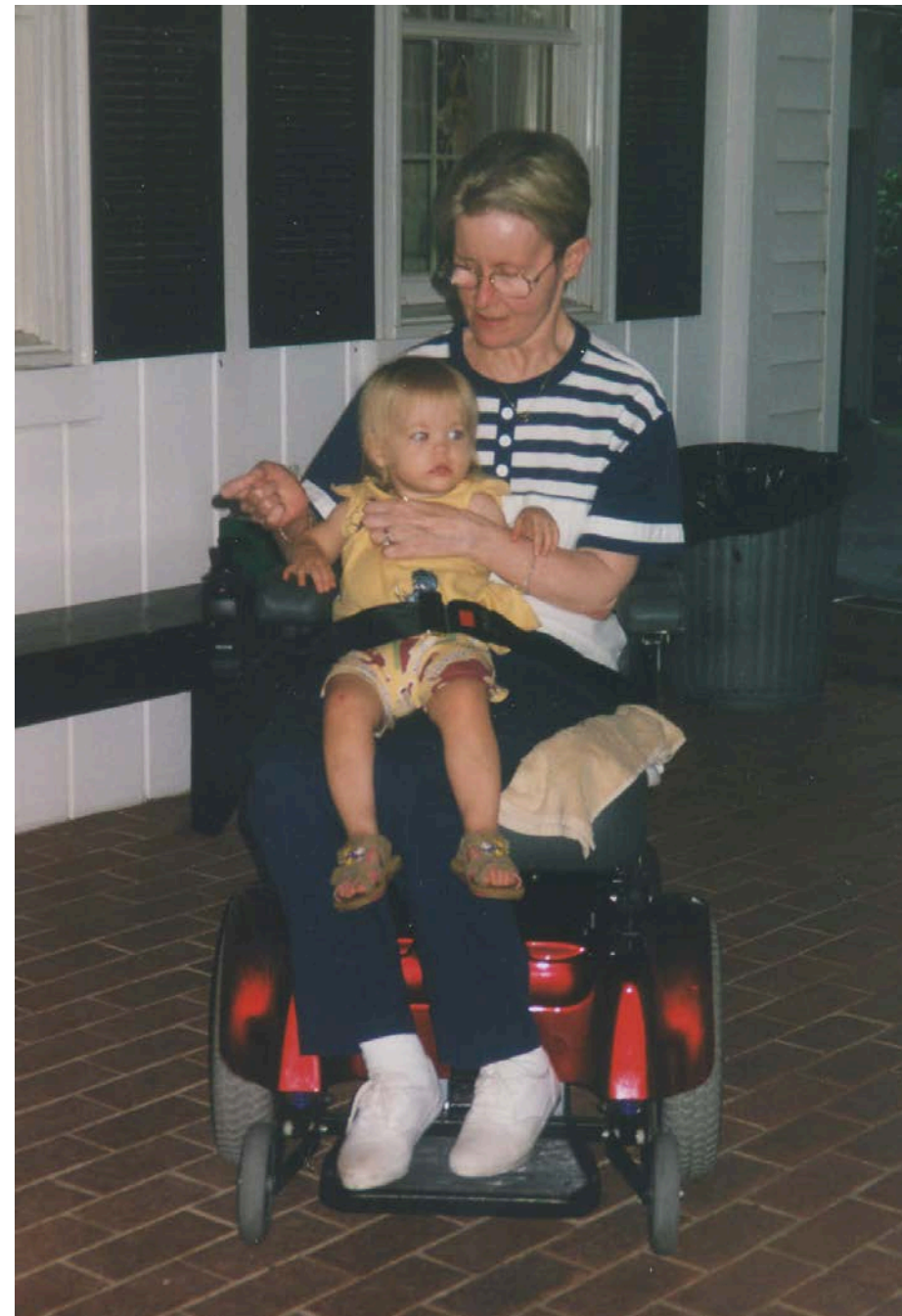
*Letters provided in order by: Ann Heil, Leea Walton, Bud Heil, Marie  
Beard, George and Teresa Schreiner, John Reichert, Kathleen Cordner,  
and Mary Ellen Lisitsa*

*This book is typeset in Avenir Book Oblique*

*I'm not sure if I believe in the afterlife,*



*but for you, I hope there is one*



*This is their house.*

*It's been around for over a hundred years. It's one of the two houses I grew up in. Now that they're gone, the house has changed a lot.*

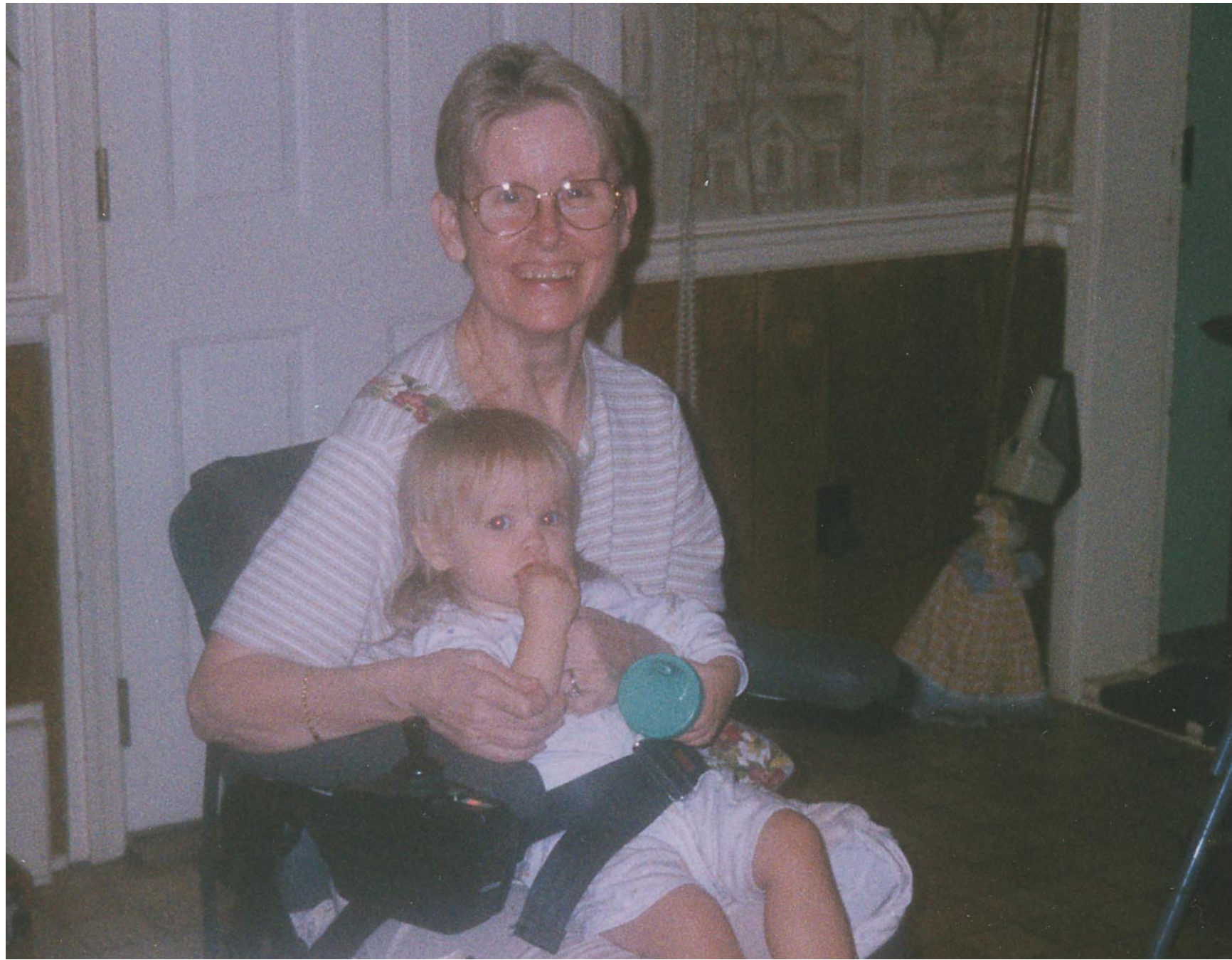
*At its heart, it's still their house and I will always remember the itchy carpet in the living room, and the cigarette smell on the porch, Darby's hair everywhere, and looking out of Mom-Mom's bedside window at the small farm next door.*





December 2019

A favorite memory I have every holiday season is of Bob celebrating with family. Our dinner tradition every year was to serve roasted turkey at Thanksgiving and Christmas. For Bob, there could be nothing better, for the turkey drumsticks were his favorite part of the celebration. No one else in the family competed for them, so he would have one for dinner and one for lunch the next day. I can still see the smile on his face when the platter was passed around. To this day, I always place a drumstick on the turkey platter, and pause a moment to smile.



*This is my Mom-Mom: she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis before I was born. MS left her bedridden until she passed. She couldn't leave the house so my memory of her is tied to the house. I loved to brush her hair with a weird handled brush she had. I always had some question to ask about the medical equipment that was around her.*

One of my favorite memories of my Aunt Mary Ellen & Uncle Bob Reichert is at Christmas Time. They lived in an old farmhouse that his mom grew up in. It had a huge kitchen, well it seemed huge to my child's mind. Every year at Christmas, they would take a section of the kitchen and set up their train village. So much time and effort went into setting it up. I consider it a talent to have the attention to detail that is needed. I was always amazed at the tiniest details, such as the snow on the ground that sparkled in the light & the lights in the tiny buildings throughout the town. I used to imagine what could be happening in the little make-believe town. I always loved this time of year but especially looked forward to see the village that to this day no one has surpassed.

Leea Walton





Dec. 4, 2019

It was probably 1966. Ann and I were not yet married when Bob got rid of his black Chevy convertible and replaced it with a copper colored Mustang convertible. He was so excited with his new flashy sports car. In due time, Bob and Mary Ellen and Ann and I took the Mustang out to put it through its paces. Bob was sure that the stretch of Harford Rd called "Seven Sisters" (7 tight curves in a row) would be a good challenge. We all had lots of hair then and it was snapping in the wind around our joyous faces. Bob took us through those tight curves at a speed just strong enough to keep us swaying side to side and showing how well the Mustang could hold the road. It performed beautifully. Bob was very proud and pleased to share his new car and expertise behind the wheel. It was an exhilarating trip that remains a fond memory of Bob and Mary Ellen (and the Mustang).

Bud Heil





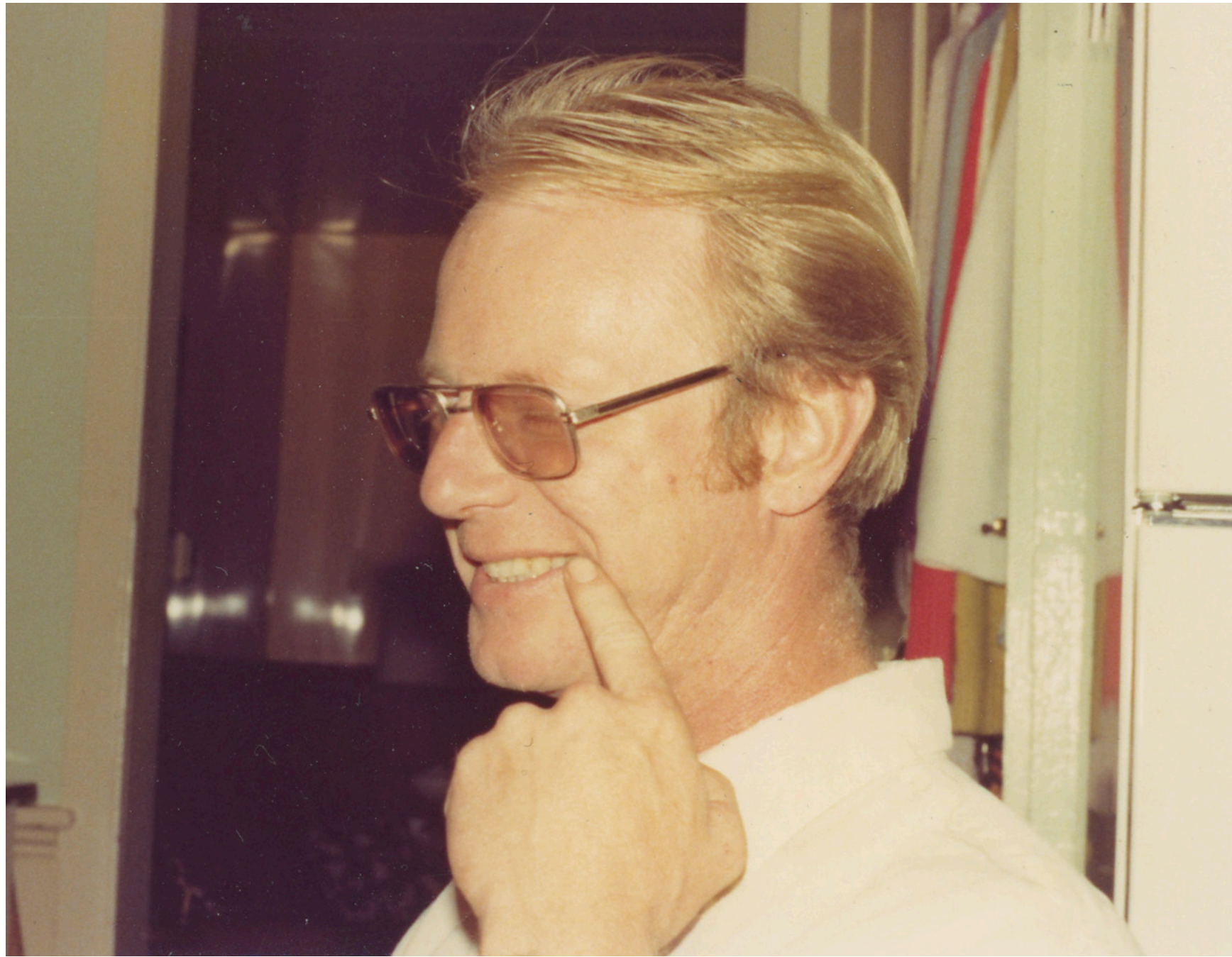
December 2019

So many memories of Bob flood back when I sit and think of the many years that have gone by. However, the one that visits me most often and endears me the most, is of his daily visits from next door. The back door would open and he would appear in the kitchen and say hi - and how are you doing. He would glance at the cookie jar and then pick out a cookie. He would stroll through the kitchen and maybe slip downstairs to the candy dish. A few chocolate covered peanuts would cap off his visit.

If there was time and I sat down, he would too, to catch up on any family news or such. Before long he would say - See you later - and I would. After dark, I would look out my dining room window and see him in his kitchen, sitting at the table. What a wonderful feeling, to know he was right there.

Aunt Marie (Pe Pe)





Tractor rides were always my favorite, no matter what season. My favorite tractor was the big red one, it made a tremendous sputter when it started and was so noisy that we had to shout to talk. It was fun when Pop would take all of the family on a tractor wagon ride, towing everyone except me. I was the special one to sit on Pop's lap.





### Bob & Mary Ellen

When I think of Bob and Mary Ellen Reichert, I think of how every marriage should be.

Mary Ellen for as long as I knew her, needing assistance due to her MS. Mr. Bob did everything to make sure she was at every event and never once did I hear a complaint or even a grumble. He wanted her to be a part of everything and to live as normal of a life as possible.

When not with Mary Ellen, he could be found with his friend, Chuck at the 7-11 getting a coffee. Whenever you ran into him, you felt like that seeing you was a highlight of his day; everybody was special.

I miss talking about life and politics with him. I miss hanging out with both of them in the farmhouse kitchen.

George and Teresa

Back in the 70's and 80's my parents had a really close group of friends they would do everything together with. All of them had kids around the same time and we all grew up together from the time I can remember we were always over each other's houses every weekend, all the grown ups were smoking and playing cards and all the kids were running around playing our hearts out. I remember the car rides to and from each other's houses, full of smoke, of course with the windows up and disco music playing very loud. Couple times a week my parents would meet all their friends at the Flamingo Pit for a long night of disco dancing. My parents were quite the dancers, I had seen them in action at weddings and even in the kitchen of our house during weekend parties. During the summer time my parents would have a huge party and invite every one they knew. It would be up to 200 people at these parties and there was always a card softball game and five weeks. At the end of each party a person would end up in the bathtub that was set up outside for drinks and full of ice. I'm lucky to still live in the house that holds so many memories of growing up.

John Reichert  
(son)





Pop:

when you're pop was dating mom mom and he got the mustang he would take me into Baltimore and we would ride around with top down and spent many hours riding and talking about life. We also go to friendship airport when they had an observation pad to watch the airplanes.

When pop was suffering from the cancer Mary Ellen and I would go for a ride on Saturday to get him out and he turned us on to Pringle Creamery for ice cream. We enjoyed many rides and loved being with him.

When Pop was near the end we were talking about when he was gone that i needed a sign that he was in heaven with the entire family to send me dimes so i knew he was with us down here. I have received many dimes as have Mary Ellen.



Here is mom moms:

One of my many memories of my sister are when she started working at her first job downtown and everyday wore spike heels to take the bus. I was amazed she could do that. Also my sister spoke very little and i was always talking. Couldn't get use to silence.

She loved to dance and often went dancing with Bob, Chuck and Char. They were so fun to watch.

When she was attacked by the MS it was so devastating that she would not be able to dance again.

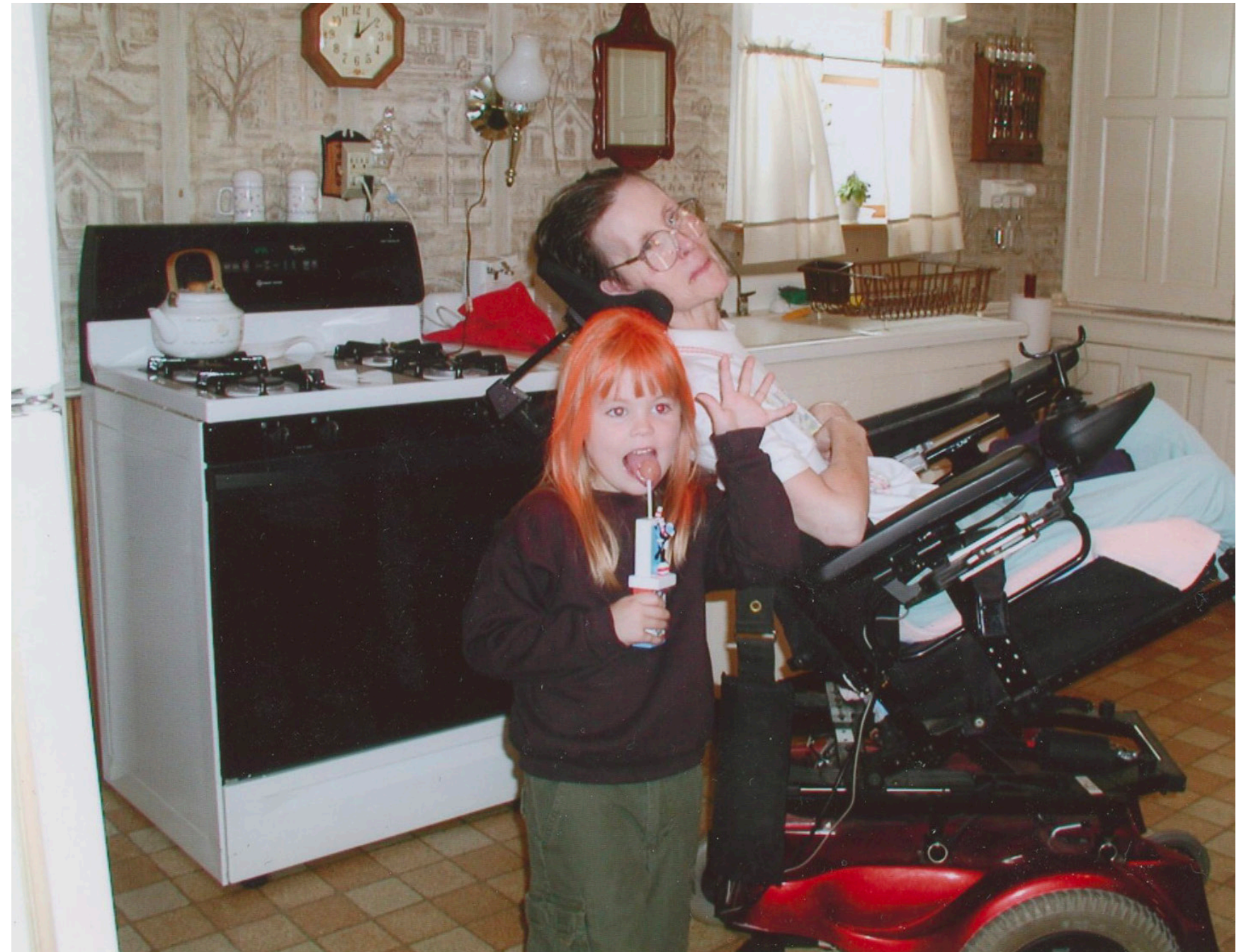
My sister was very independent and to see the toll on her life.

My sister was a friend as well as sister. She helped me immensely throughout my life.

About a month ago Mary Ellen stopped at a grocery store on her way from work after saying to my sister to say she needed a sign that she was with her. After coming out of the store she got to her car and when she got closer she heard a kitten crying. another person helped her to get the kitten out and she crawled into her coat. Well we still have her with us.

I miss her every day.....





*I don't have any memories of mom-mom when she could do any activity. I remember her when she was gifted a bird, Bob. From her bed she would call to him, "Bobby!", and he would happily chirp. I would excitedly bring Bob into the bedroom on my finger and visit with her and tell her about the day I had.*





I remember going on a Searchlight trip once, I was probably about 6. Seeing the towers of light going up into the clouds was magical. That night I also got ice cream, which made it even better.

## Memories of Uncle Bob

When I think of my Uncle Bob, I also think of the Christmas eve parties @ his house. Toward the end of his life though my favorite memory that comes to mind is going for car rides & going to get ice cream. I also loved making or grabbing dinner & taking up to his house to eat. I miss those trips for ice cream & just hanging out with him.

♡ Mary Ellen

## Memories of Mems

When I think about my Aunt/Godmother, I always remember the determination she had even when she couldn't move anymore. She was my hero and always made me work harder & push through the pain. I use to love when I was small & she would drive us to the Mall. But have to say my favorite memory is every Christmas eve @ her house listening to Neil Diamond. And every year I hear Feliz Navidad, I know that is her from heaven saying hello.

♡ Mary Ellen

*Pop had been diagnosed with cancer when I was in seventh or eighth grade and he fought hard. After Pop died, I learned that all he would talk about at his chemo treatments were me and Mom-Mom. He really loved us. I really didnt realize it at the time.*



*I always wonder what my life would be like if they were still here.  
How would they feel about my career choice? I know they would  
love me*

*Yet I still have doubts in my mind.*

## Reflections of Ann, Bud and Marie -

Mary Ellen was a very important part of our family. First of all, she was the love of Bob's life. When they married, they didn't move away; instead, they lived on the hill, in the farmhouse, with Aunt Cassie. We all loved that they remained on the hill, with the family, anticipating that someday, maybe a little Reichert, would join us. Sure enough, before their first anniversary, John was born. We all were thrilled, at the top of the list, Grandmother Catherine, to share each and every day with her son, daughter-in-law and grandson.

So Mary Ellen was "niece" to Marie & Bill, and "cousin" to Bud and me. It was wonderful to have her join our very small family.

Nothing rocked our family more than to notice less than 20 years later, that Mary Ellen was changing physically, as the disease, M.S., began to manifest itself. But her character attributes never wavered, in our opinion. Mary Ellen maintained strength and resolve, to continue her life's work to the fullest, as long as her body would cooperate. She continued to work at the office and then at home, for years, as she was so valued there by her boss and colleagues. She embraced being a grandmother to Allison, to the fullest.

It was truly life's blessing to her. Never once did we hear Mary Ellen say, "why me?". Instead, we benefitted from her strong resolve to live life to its fullest. We were a part of a family that looked to each other for support and love, to carry on in life's journey, as best we could. Mary Ellen would like that.



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