



# Marjorie Philpott

Marjorie Pryor was born on September 19, 1926 in a small town now known as Cottlesville. She was the youngest of nine children born to Jonathan and Annie (nee King) Pryor. She had five brothers and three sisters. Having spent all of her life living in Cottlesville she is quite familiar with the changes that have taken place. Growing up in Marjorie's day is quite different than the children growing up today. There were times when things got difficult and there were times that the simplest things meant so much more. In this piece of writing Marjorie shares a little about what it was like living in Cottlesville.

As a young girl Marjorie attended the United School located in the town. Each day rain or shine she would leave the house with her brothers and her sisters at 9:00am to arrive in time for school to start at 9:30am. The walk to school generally took about 15 minutes this feeling like a lot longer if it was a cold day. The day began with three classes each being an hour long. 12:30pm to 2:00pm was considered a lunch break. With an hour and a half time slot this ensured the children had a sufficient time to eat between walking home from school and walking back. Marjorie and her siblings would reach home around 12:45pm giving them plenty of time. Classes resumed at 2:00pm and ended at 4:00pm. In this time the children were instructed in two classes. Each day of the week was much the same in the classroom varying with the different levels that the children were at. The first classes to be taught each morning were math and history. These were then followed by geography, literature, and health. Marjorie cannot recall the sequence of the three remaining classes. When she began school the highest level of education to receive was that of a sixth grader. By the time she had completed this level the school was offering up to a grade eleven education. She began grade seven but finding that her friends did not have the same interest and also being needed at home Marjorie decided not to go on with her education.

At the age of 21 Marjorie married Ronald Philpott and they together had 12 children, four boys and eight girls. Their first child, Peggy, was born with some sort of sickness. There were no doctors in the area and the nearest one was in Twillingate a couple of hours away by boat. Regrettably she died eight days after she was born of unknown causes.

A little later in their marriage Marjorie and Ronald bought a bigger house for their family. However, when they bought the house it was on Exploits Island. They moved it over to this area the way a lot of things were moved back then, by the ocean. With the help of Pierce Anstey and his boat the house was brought over to Cottlesville and then with the use of a tracker it was able to be moved to where it presently stands in Luke's Arm. This was not uncommon to see in those days.

Like most of the population in Cottlesville, fishing was the main source of income during the summer and in the winter most families depended on the lumber woods. Both of these jobs caused the provider of the family to be away quite often. While Ronald was fishing on the Labrador Marjorie stayed at home with their eleven children. Sometimes these trips lasted anywhere from a month to a month and a half. Each night Marjorie would allow one child to stay up late with her during those lonely months. For each child she would prepare a special treat for the night that they were entitled to stay up. Johnny can recall one night when it was his turn that she had prepared a batch of sugar candy for him and her to share. Phyllis remembers her special treat being spaghetti. In the winter when he was in the lumber woods he would be gone anywhere from a month to three months. This was quite common for this area. This had to be done to provide the family's needs. Most families had a garden to grow their own produce. Marjorie used to grow potatoes, turnips, cabbage, and carrots. She recalls one time when she was a little girl her father harvested 80 barrels of potatoes. Some of these were sold to buy other necessities while most were kept for the family during the winter months. Necessities that were bought out of a family's earnings included milk (\$0.18 a can), flour (\$2.50 for 100lbs), and sugar (\$1.50 for 50lbs). Sometimes for a treat Marjorie purchased a can of vegetable soup for the children (\$0.18 a can). These were the prices around the time when Marjorie first got married.

One year Ronald found four or five sheep. Not knowing who owned them he spread the word of his findings and the owners came to claim their belongings. All the sheep were claimed except one. So Ronald decided to keep the sheep and he called him Leonard. Leonard followed Ronald everywhere he went. One day when Ronald was in the woods getting some wood for the winter Leonard had followed him. With the horse tied to a tree Ronald went on his way to gather his wood. Soon Leonard came up behind him and was very excited. So he turned to see what was wrong with the sheep and but Leonard started running away. Ronald decided to follow Leonard to see if anything was wrong. When he got to the horse the horse was down on the ground and was choking on his reins. Ronald went over to the horse and was able to save him. Leonard became a hero in the Philpott family that day and for a short time was almost considered a pet. However, one day the children came home from school to learn that Daddy had killed Leonard. Marjorie prepared the meal for her family and so life went on.

Her vegetable garden has always been of some importance to her. She spent a great deal of time in her garden. She enjoyed planting the vegetables and watching them grow, harvesting them and preparing them for her family. This was one of her ways of providing for her family where she could. The children would notice how much she enjoyed her time in her garden. One year when Phyllis, their third child, was around five or six she found the eye of a potato and decided she wanted to plant it. She wanted to be able to do it all by herself. At her young age she thought it would be great to start her own garden so she dug a hole in some sawdust and planted the eye. So proud of her accomplishment she ran and told her mother about it. Marjorie did not want her daughter to be disappointed so she told her that potatoes do not grow in sawdust. Disappointed Phyllis did not bother to dig it up or replant it. So the potato was forgotten about. A short time later Phyllis returned to the spot where she buried the eye and saw that it had grown four inches above ground. She was so excited to tell her mother. Marjorie encouraged her daughter to wait until the right time to harvest the potato. When they pulled up the potato it was a little larger than average. Phyllis was so proud. Like mother like daughter.

Berry picking was something that families were able to do together and it gave the children a sense of helping provide for the family. Flat Island was a main spot for families to go to pick partridge berries. Ronald was always able to fill his bucket and he was known for this. When he used to come in people would talk about how he always had his buckets full. One year as Johnny recalls he was unable to fill his buckets. So he asked one of the children to put her sweater in the bottom of the bucket and they then put their berries on top. When they came in off the island no one was there to look at their berries so the joke was on them.

As long as Marjorie can remember Cottlesville has always had a school provided for children along with a church for those interested. There were also three stores located in Cottlesville at one point in time. These were independently owned by Arthur King, Lou Eveleigh, and Lewis King. When Lou Eveleigh left Cottlesville Edgar Anstey took over his store. There have been many different stores since this with various owners.

Marjorie Philpott has always had a passion for her church and she takes great pride in still being able to be a part of it. She always tried to teach her children through the church and she is proud to see this carried on through her children.

Roads were not common during these times as most "roads" were paths worn down by people and animals walking over them so often. Marjorie referred to these roads as cowpaths. Walking was the most common way to go about the town if a boat was not used. The punt was the type of boat owned by most people in the area. During the winter transportation was usually accomplished by sled dogs.

Luxury items were very few in Marjorie's day. Furnaces were not used by most because of the expense. Families relied mostly on wood stoves. Bathrooms also came later with outhouses being the facility used by a majority of families. However, indoor bathrooms were available long before the town's water and sewer system. This was able to be done with the help of wells. The postal service was available ever since she can remember however not as conveniently as it is today. The post office was located in Summerford. If someone from the town walked to Summerford they would pick up the mail for Cottlesville and drop it all off at Eli Anstey's. His wife, Mariah, would then sort the mail and make it available to the people of Cottlesville. If there was a parcel waiting for someone that person would have to go to Summerford to claim it. Mariah Anstey owned the first post office in Cottlesville. Marjorie is able to recall some of the post masters in Cottlesville since this. They can also be found in the Cottlesville book.

Garbage collection is another thing that did not take place in the past. Marjorie recalls that if things weren't burned they were thrown around trees. Damson trees were quite popular back then. The tin cans were thought to decompose leaving the iron in the ground as a nutrient for the trees.

Her decision to stay in Cottlesville was solely made because she married so young. Her brothers and sisters decisions were for the most part also based on marriage. Her oldest sister Nina married Edgar Head and they raised their children in Comfort Cove where he worked as a fish collector for the local fish plant. Her oldest brother Robert married Belle Downton from Stanhope and they resided in Cottlesville where he was head over a passenger boat called the Rover. He died in 2006 at the age of 93. Wallace married Ruby Burt from Little Burnt Bay. When her mother died they moved in with her father so help him out. Raymond died at the age of nineteen when he was diagnosed with meningitis. Harvey married Edith Squires from Eastport and they moved to Gander where he worked with Newfoundland Power. He was also a member of the navy and was a survivor of the Second World War. He was killed tragically in 1968 by electrocution. Elmo stayed in Cottlesville and lived in the area that they were brought up in. After having meningitis at the age of three he was left deaf and dumb. He died of natural causes at the age of seventy six. Rowena went away to Deer Lake to find work. There she met and married Cleo Dinney and they moved to the states to work. They did not have any children. She died in 2003 at the age of 88.

Many of her friends left to find work and in doing so married and started their families away.

As for her children some of them have stayed in Cottlesville to raise their families while others have gone away for various reasons and settled elsewhere. As mentioned before Peggy died eight days after she was born. Johnny met and married Eileen Stryde and settled in Cottlesville to raise their three children. After many years of going away to work on the lake boats he got his bus licence and is currently a bus driver for the local school district. Phyllis met and married Victor Cassell and they settled in Cottlesville to raise their five children. Victor was a teacher at G. Shaw Collegiate and he retired in 1998. Neil met and married Norma Hull and they settled in Norma's home town of Twillingate to raise their two children. Neil worked in the fish plant for a short time and then joined one of the local fishermen on their boat. Norma was a school teacher at Twillingate Island Elementary she is now retired. Loretta received a clerk/typist certificate and went to Toronto to find work. She is currently working as a receptionist at a company in Ontario. Gwendolyn met and married Oscar Parsons. He decided to go into the ministry. In the ministry they settled in various communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 1991 at the age of 37 Gwendolyn was pregnant with their second child and in her last trimester had an aneurysm. Mother and baby did not make it. Marion met and married Fred Anstey and they stayed in Cottlesville raised their two children. Fred is a fisherman with his father's business. David met and married Donna Farr they lived a short while in Cottlesville with their two children but later moved to Ontario. Vivian married Harold Burt and together they settled in Ontario to raise their three children. Jackie received her clerk/typist certificate in Lewisporte. She later married Newman Anstey and they settled in Cottlesville to raise their three children. Newman works as a fishery officer with the provincial government. Jackie was a receptionist at

Breakwater Fisheries then went on to receive her bus licence and is currently a bus driver for the local school district. Josephine along with her twin sister received her clerk/typist certificate. She is currently working in Ontario. Dwayne studied Electrical Instrumentation at the Marine Institute in St. John's. He later met and married Michelle Sacrey. He is currently working with the White Rose Oil Field. They are live in Gander where they are raising their two children.

In July of last year (2006) Marjorie sadly lost her husband of 58 years due to natural causes. He died at the age of 81 and was buried in the local cemetery.

Marjorie has seen many milestones over the years, those in her own life as well as those in the community. She was born here, raised here, raised her children here, and has seen some of her grandchild raised here. She has seen people and businesses come and go. Also she has seen the town's resources grow such as the water and sewer system and the roads. There were many hard times when it came to money and being able to provide for the family as well many times when the littlest thing was able to make so much difference. Cottlesville has always been Marjorie's home and she plans to stay to see as many more changes as she is able.