



I was third of five children born to Harold and Etha Wacker at 1005 Maurer Street, Wilton, Iowa on March 21, 1925. My brother, Harold Jr. and wife Jeanine now live in this house. Our younger brother, Steve, and family live in Lincoln, Nebraska. Anita lives here and Maurine lives in Medford, Oregon.

I remember growing up in the greatest town in the world! Wilton Junction, Iowa!!

My grandparents, Peter and Alvena Wacker, lived in the house south of us. Each year for our birthday we got to spend the day at their house. Grandma Wacker would walk with us to Gussie's Candy Kitchen and buy us a treat of our choice on our special day. My treat was always the Happy Thought. Today, Jack and I brought our granddaughter, Elizabeth, to the Candy Kitchen for her special treat. We sat in the same booth as we did when Grandma Wacker treated me... over 70 years ago! I still enjoy their ice cream to this day.

I was a waitress at Gussie's in 1940 and 1941. Gus Nopoulos was the owner and he thought we worked so hard that before we went home from work he would make and serve us an egg malted for a special treat. Erna Beinke worked there, too, and she was so special.

Memorial Day was always top priority to us. We marched down to the cemetery as a family in the annual parade to honor those who fought for our freedom. Ms.

Glenna Mae Wacker Van Atta

Age 78

Born March 21, 1925 in Wilton, Iowa

Frances Kelley was in charge of this annual event and she made sure all went well and on schedule. To this day I march to the cemetery, weather permitting, with my grandchildren to pay my respect to our fallen comrades.

My sister, Anita, and I picked strawberries for Carl Sterner, Judge and Ida Crispin, and Chris Christiansen. I also detassled corn for Pioneer Hi-bred Seed Corn of Durant, Iowa for extra spending money. We baby-sat and mowed yards with the old push mower for 25¢ a yard, using this money for school supplies.

Oh, yes, I remember when Howard 'Baldy' Adams came to town and he and his friend, Gibby, set up a roller skating rink at the corner of W. 5th and Liberty Street. We all bought our own roller skates with the money we were paid for playing in the band concert on Saturday nights. We enjoyed roller skating, tap dancing, baton twirling, ice skating, and just having fun, as well as working as we grew up.

In 1942, I was a junior at Wilton Public School. We did not have a Jr.-Sr. Prom nor a banquet as our country was at war (WWII). I remember the practice black outs we experienced here in Wilton Jct., the rationing of tires, gas, shoes, sugar, etc. If we could scrounge up a dime to go to the movies we watched the news reels and caught up on the war news. There were no TVs and very few radios here in the early '40s.

We girls were forbidden to go to Knudsen's Hall in Stockton where they held dances with real live music but somehow we found our way over there and danced the night away doing the popular dance, the jitterbug, to the music

of Tom Owens and his orchestra. We were amused as we watched others dance the "Stockton Stomp" clicking their heels and dancing up a storm! Luckily mom and dad didn't know about this activity until their later years as this was known as a rowdy place. But we were so busy jitterbugging that we thought it was a great place to be.

After graduating from Wilton High School I enrolled in nurses training as a Cadet Nurse at Mercy Hospital in Iowa City in 1943. I was with the 1st class of Cadet Nurses there sponsored by the U.S. Government, being trained for nursing duty for WWII. I graduated as an RN in 1946. By then the war had ended, so I was returned home. I remember Mom proudly displayed three stars in the window on a red, white and blue card furnished by the U.S. Government, which signified a home with three daughters serving in the U.S. Military.

I was employed by Doc Whetstine at his office in downtown Wilton Jct. off and on for over 20 years. I really enjoyed working for Doc. When he retired and left Wilton to accept a position in Tucson, Arizona it made me wonder how anyone could raise a family without him ... Wilton's family Doctor!

I met Jack Van Atta who was the high school math teacher here and it was love at first sight for him. My sister, Anita, was the school secretary and introduced me to him. Soon I fell in love and we were married on August 17, 1947 at St. Paul Lutheran Church at Bennett, Iowa where Mother played the organ. And, do you know, we will celebrate our 50th