

## Beezie



My great-grandmother on my maternal grandmother's side is a person I will always remember, love and strive to follow. Her real name is Louise Harris King, but through the mispronunciation of a young child, is now lovingly called Beezie by her relatives. She was, and still is, a sweet marvelous woman.

Beezie had the appearance of being frail because she was very thin, wrinkled and slight. She may have been 88 at the period of time I remember her, but she took excellent care of herself and her lovely house. She faithfully brushed her thin, white hair that came just past her shoulders. And every morning and after her afternoon nap, she would put it into that lovely bun. And every evening, she would brush it out and tie it back with a hair ribbon. Although her blue eyes could not see well, she got around better than some people with perfect sight. And she could see many things that other people didn't, such as hurt feelings and unhappy hearts.

While some people think of their grandma doing a certain thing, or always doing this or that, I think of my great-grandma always doing. She was always busy, going here, going there, doing this, doing that. Her energy never ran out and at around 90 years of age, she was as energetic as a young mother. Working hard was a thing of the future, present, and past. She had been a young wife and mother during the Depression and knew how to garden, can, cook and bake wonderfully. I remember how there were always tins and tins of homemade cookies in her pantry--no store-bought cookies for us! She was sweet, motherly and full of creativity. I remember the time when she was staying at our house, and during her nap, she thought up a Mary and Martha skit that we could all be in. We acted it out under her guidance that evening. What a woman!

Hard-working, energetic, sweet, motherly people are usually hospitable and Beezie was no different. My grandparents, mom and aunt would visit Beezie and Gramps (my great-grandfather) often when my mom and aunt were little. My mom went to college in Wilmington, Delaware, which was where Beezie and Gramps lived, so she stayed with them often, since her parents lived in South Florida. While she was in college, my mother met my father and he was one of the many drop-ins Beezie welcomed. Aunt Julie stayed with Beezie for several years after Gramps died. When my family lived in Virginia, we would visit Beezie for Christmas. My dad felt called to be a pastor and when we moved out of our house and didn't know quite where we were going: Beezie opened her home to us for the month of December. She took care of us. Her cooking was good. Her four bedroom house accommodated us nicely, and it was a wonderful, memory-making time.

Beezie got the Shingles in October, 1996, and her health went downhill. She moved in with my grandparents and Aunt Julie bought her house. My grandparents hire a live-in nurse to watch Beezie during the day when they are at work. Her memory is failing and it is depressing to visit her and watch her sleep all day or ask if she is eating breakfast or lunch. She was a strong, busy, energetic, motherly person, and it's hard to see her so changed. I prefer to reflect on my memories: brushing her hair, playing teenagers with her, taking naps with her, helping her cook dinner. I like to remember her the way she was. My great-grandmother on my maternal grandmother's side is a person I will always remember, love and strive to follow. Because to me, Beezie is a synonym for love.