

Laverne Matthew Bramhill

By June Bramhill Coleman

Laverne Bramhill was born Sept 17th, 1925 delivered by Dr. Ridell who had arrived at the farmhouse by horse. His was a welcomed visit to the farmhouse on the N.E. corner farm of the 2nd of Minto and “lower Harriston road” (Whites Road). Dad recalls Dr. Ridell years later coming to the farmhouse with horse and cutter. Clendon and Violet’s fifth child grew to be a thick haired, golden and curly blonde boy who despised school, but loved the hard work of the farm and picked up his father’s love for business.

Laverne loved music, too. He was influenced by a relative on his mom’s side of the family. Clayton Bridge played a guitar Hawaiian style. Laverne, however, learned to play western style and it was said that at times he would rather play his guitar in a corner in the house than eat. All our growing up days we were delighted and amazed how Dad remembered so many lengthy songs and ditties too. His father had an incessant habit of whistling tunes and Dad would periodically break out with a tune and words that we had never heard before---some memory from his growing up days. Dad remembers when company came to the Bramhill farm. They would often be relatives and of course everybody had to share their beds. On such occasions he actually did sleep at the “foot of the bed” as each vivid memory in one such song describes:

Have you ever slept at the foot of the bed when the weather was a whist-el-in’ cold,
When the wind came a howlin’ around the house and the moon was yellor as gold?
You give your good warm mattress up to Aunt Liz and Uncle Fred.
When the kinfolk come on a winter’s night, you were heading for the foot of the bed.

I could always wait till the old folks ate and eat the leavings with grace.
The teacher would keep me after school and still have a smile on my face.
I could wear all the big kids worn out clothes and let sis have my sled.
But it really got my nanny goat when I was headin’ for the foot of the bed.

I’ve traveled this whole world over and back—this land of the brave and free.
And I’m not a kiddin’ when I’m atellin’ you it’s left its mark on me.
I always seem to be down at the foot when I should be forging ahead,
And I don’t think ‘twas caused from a solitary thing, but, sleeping at the foot of the bed.

Horse and buggy in summer or horse and cutter in winter, as Dad recalls, was the main mode of transportation in this area when he was a boy. There were people who took great pride in their horses as some do cars these days. His Uncle Tommy had a reputation of purchasing wild horses. He took a team to town one day, set the reins down to enter the Feed Mill to do his business and the horses took off like a shot. He found them back home at the gateway waiting for him. His first recollection of a vehicle was while at the farmhouse they heard this terribly loud noise coming from the Harriston direction on Whites Road. The noise was partly due to the fact that the roads were made of planks laying crosswise on the roadway. The ruckus could be heard so far off that the household had enough time to run down the lane, turn left down the road to the Harriston road corner in order to watch this contraption go by. He remembers people saying that having these vehicles on the road would never come to pass because they created such a disturbance. When the Bramhills did get their first car it was only driven in the summer. Because there were no plows to clear roads in winter they continued on with

horse and cutter after the vehicle was put up on blocks in the garage for the winter. This was to preserve the tires. There were a few important laws regarding these vehicles. Number one, you had to stop well back from the road when you came to a corner. Then you had to get out of the vehicle and walk to the corner to look both ways to see that there were no horses and buggies coming, get back in and carry on. However, it was not all that important to have a license. Dad drove the truck around to make deliveries for the Feed Mill when he was 14. It mattered to no one.

The telephone was another interesting new device in the home. All the neighbours shared the same line and the way to call them was to have their certain ring memorized. Of course you did the ringing yourself with the little black crank on the right side of the phone. Long long short, short long short or short short long. Now you were not to listen in or respond to the phone unless it was your ring but curiosity would get the best of some and eavesdroppers could pick up the phone and no one could tell who it might be. But, Dad said, you could always tell if someone was listening in on your conversation. If you needed help from the operator, you cranked one long ring and she would respond to help. The operator of course could hear all the conversations, if she chose to. If you needed the line and it was being used, you had to interrupt the conversation of the other two neighbours. If you were in the middle of a sentence, he said he would quickly hang up before you got scolded for talking too long.

Dad has memories of the farmhouse. Life was simple and the work hard. Even though Violet never had a fridge, or not even an icebox at the farm (leftover perishables were kept in the rafters in the cellar). The Bramhills ran an ice business during the Great Depression to keep a bit of cash about to buy groceries and other basics in town. The only running water was that you filled up the pail with the hand pump and you ran with it. He remembers waking up in the morning and seeing your own breath. If you wanted to see out the windows you breathed hard on the pane and then rubbed in circles with the back of the fist to get the layers of frost melted. The heat from the big old cookstove is what kept the place warm in the day. His grandmother lived with them at the farm and I am told that she shared a bed with Dad's sister, Bernice. Grandma Elizabeth arose one winter morning saying that she did not feel well. She became unconscious and died later in the day. Dr. Ridell said it was a stroke. I don't know how Dad felt about his Grandma having died but one thing was for sure, this 10 year old boy leapt for joy that he got to stay home from school and help his father with the ice business that cold January day (Mon. Jan. 27, 1936). Roy was just a little boy - 3 or 4 - much too young, the older ones thought, to understand what was happening. But, he was found crying with his hands over his face. He said, "I didn't want Gammy to die."

The ice business kept those living in Palmerston who owned an icebox supplied with ice for the summer. There was a large pond on the farm that would freeze two feet thick in the winter. An icehouse was built with two simple wooden walls. Sawdust was poured down between the wall for insulation. When it came time to cut up the ice to store it in the ice house they would hitch the horse up to a metal devise that would be dragged across the pond to gouge out markings for the saw. Then the ice had to be sawn by hand. It was very hard work. There were 2 ½, 3 and 4 foot blocks cut out and then manually hoisted up onto the sleigh with two tongs stabbed at each end of the block. These large blocks were dragged to the ice house and stored side by side and then covered with saw dust before the next layer of blocks would go on top of the first layer and so on till the ice house was filled. When summer rolled around the ice would be hauled out, the sawdust washed off and sawed into three different sizes – 25-cent pieces, 30-cent pieces and 40-cent pieces. Delivery days were Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

They moved off the farm in 1946 and moved to town where, in 1939 they had started a Feed Mill. Dad loved working here as a teenager. Family members said there were times that he would work around the clock if it were needed. When they sold this business in 1946 to Phil Rundle, Dad decided that he was going to jump the train and go to see what he could find for work in the West. He boarded with guitar on his back and led the passengers in some singsongs to pass the time. It was harvest time. He drove truck and combine back to Texas making \$7 a day and he was thrilled with big money like this. He loved it, but he remembers the trip home. He was never so homesick in all his life as the last few miles of the way. He thought he would never get there.

Dad's next job was joining his best friend, Bob McEachern in Bridgeport at a Feed Mill there. Bob and Dad had a very bad accident turning the car end over end. Both crawled out without a scratch. Dad's mother made a comment to dad that perhaps he should give attention to matters of eternity. From there he worked for the Kitchener Transit in 1948 driving a city bus. A scary incident happened here when he struck a lady pedestrian with the bus, but received no consequences as it was discovered that she purposely stepped out in front of the bus in a suicide attempt. It was while he was driving the bus that a man by the name of Don Haymaker invited my Dad to the First Baptist Church on John St. in Waterloo. He went 2 or 3 times to hear Hugh Horner preach in June of '49 and one Sunday evening received the Lord Jesus Christ as his own Saviour from sin and its consequences of hell. He was too bashful to go talk to the preacher or do this in church so he went home and knelt by his bedside and talked to the Lord there. His life then headed in a completely different direction. He met Shirley Embree at Banfield United Missionary Church in Toronto, and married her on April 8th of 1950. June was born in Jan 7, 1951 in Palmerston General Hospital. Dad decided that he would go to Emmanuel Bible College and enrolled for the fall of 1951.

Robert Laverne (Bob) was born in Kitchener January 22, 1953. Dad graduated in 1954. There was an urgent need for someone in Petrolia so Mom and Dad went there to pastor. Dawna Shirley was born in Petrolia on December 9, 1955. Dad pastored for a short time and decided that this calling is not where he belonged and moved to Hamilton where he went back into business in '56. He operated two White Rose gas stations. Leonard and Peter were born here June 19, 1959 and March 15, 1961 respectively. In '62 we moved to Palmerston and lived on the corner of King and Queen St until '65 when we moved to the first farm going west from Palmerston in order to have more land to build up the Seed Business which his father Clendon had started. In 1975 Mom and Dad built a new house on the business property.

Bob married Gwen MacDonald from Sarnia on June 1, 1975.

June married Carl Coleman from New Dundee on June 30, 1978.

Leonard married Dianne Dunlop in July of 1980 and divorced in spring of 2000.

Dawna married Bryan Snyder on August 23, 1989. Leonard took over the Seed Business in 1989.

Peter remains unmarried (as of June 2000)

Dad is retired and finds himself helping with fieldwork in the summers and hiking off to Florida for the winter. They are presently living in a farmhouse on the second of Minto, third farm, north side, west of the upper Harriston road. (Hwy 89). Laverne and Shirley just celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary - Spring 2000.

Their children;

June Beverly

Robert Laverne

Dawna Shirley

Philip Leonard

Peter Vaughn

June Bramhill Coleman

By June Bramhill Coleman

June Bramhill married Carl Coleman on June 30, 1978 at the Palmerston Missionary Church. They farmed in New Dundee until the fall of 1984 when they sold it and moved to Plattsville for 7 years.

Carl drove truck for awhile and then started a computer business out of the home. After moving to the neighbouring town of New Hamburg he decided to take some training as an instructor for a networking company called Novell (based in Provo, Utah). After considerable moving around during the training and outset of his teaching they have settled down in Newry, Ontario. He has been teaching with Novell, travelling to Halifax to teach with the National



Defense, University of Manitoba, Toronto, London and Kitchener private networking schools and many States as a contract Instructor of Novell courses. Carl has recently taken a position working directly for Novell's headquarters in Utah and receiving his instructions at his home in Newry, Ontario. His responsibilities are supporting the computer systems at The Ministry of Finance in Oshawa, The Health and Sciences Buildings in London and CBC in Toronto plus helping members of the Ontario Support team when teamwork is required.

June's interest for the last 12 years has been home educating and since all have reached independence in their pursuits, she is preparing for a change in lifestyle by preparing the home for hospitality.

Robert (Bob) Laverne Bramhill

By Katrina Bramhill

Bob was born January 22, 1953, in Kitchener, Ontario. He married Gwen MacDonald of Sarnia, Ontario. Bob and Gwen and their seven children presently live in Gorrie, Ontario.

Bob spent his first nine years in Hamilton, Ontario. The family then moved to Palmerston where Bob finished public school and attended Norwell Secondary School. After graduation, he went on to study at Emmanuel Bible College and Wilfred Laurier University in Kitchener.

Bob and Gwen met at College and were married on June 1, 1974. They lived in Kitchener for the first year of marriage. Their next home was in Strathroy, Ontario, where Bob served as youth pastor at Bethel Baptist Church.

In December of 1979, Bob and Gwen moved with their two small children to Listowel, and two years later, to Palmerston. Bob began his own business and continued in sales for the next eight years. Two more children were born while they lived in Palmerston. Through a miraculous series of events in 1987, Bob and Gwen realised that God was calling them into full-time ministry at Gorrie Bible Fellowship.

The family moved to the Gorrie area in early 1988. Bob continues to pastor at the Gorrie Bible Fellowship. Since moving to Gorrie, three more precious children have been added to the Bramhill family. Some of the Bramhill's interests include music, sports, gardening, and singing together as a family.



Dawna Shirley Snyder (nee Bramhill)

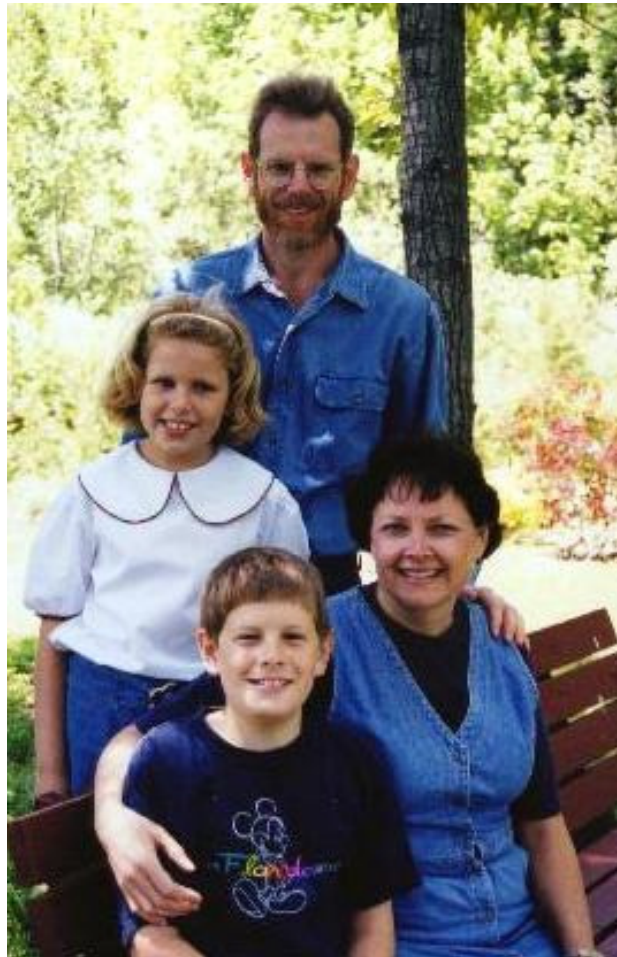
By Katrina Bramhill

Dawna Bramhill was born December 9, 1955, in Petrolia, Ontario. She married Bryan Snyder of London, Ontario. Bryan and Dawna and their two children reside in London, Ontario.

Dawna's father, Laverne was pastoring a church when she was born. She began school at Vincent Massey in Hamilton. The family then moved to Palmerston, Ontario, and she attend Palmerston Public School for grades two through eight. Dawna attended Norwell District Secondary School for five years, then took one year at Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener. It was there that she made the decision to become a nurse. After studying nursing for two years at Guelph Conestoga College, she graduated in 1978. Because of limited job prospects in Ontario, Dawna left with a friend to find nursing work in Asheville, North Carolina. After working there for two and a half years, she came home in 1981 and got a job at Victoria Hospital in London, Ontario.

Dawna met Bryan Robert Snyder, and they were married on August 23, 1986. Bryan was born in Hamilton, Ontario, on November 3, 1954. After high school Bryan moved to London, Ontario, where he attended Fanshawe College for two years completing a business program. Later he returned to take a carpentry course, and later obtained his real estate licence. After selling real estate for one year, Bryan moved into real estate development. He has operated his own construction and real estate development company since 1976.

Both Bryan and Dawna are actively involved in their church. Other interests include motorcycles, camping, and travelling.



Philip Leonard Bramhill

By Katrina Bramhill

Leonard was born June 19, 1959, at Hamilton General Hospital. He and his children now reside in Palmerston, Ontario, where he owns and manages the Bramhill Seed Plant.

Leonard went to kindergarten at Palmerston Public School in 1964. In 1965 the family moved to a farm on the outskirts of town, and he attended Wallace Public School. Leonard took his high school education at Norwell District Secondary School.

On July 5, 1980, Leonard married Dianne Dunlop of Listowel. He now owns and manages Bramhill Quality Line Seeds in Palmerston, which he took over from his father, Laverne.



Peter Vaughn Bramhill

By Katrina Bramhill

Peter was born March 15, 1961, in Hamilton, Ontario. The family moved to Palmerston while he was quite young and he went to Wallace Public School. Peter then attended Norwell Secondary School. After graduation from high school, Peter attended Sir Wilfred Laurier University in Kitchener. During his studies there, he became a part of the School's basketball team.

Later, Peter acquired his teacher's degree at the University of Waterloo. Peter now resides in Kitchener, Ontario, and has a job with Bell Mobility.