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Thanksgiving Traditions - Trudy

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Trudy Byington
Hyrum, Utah
November 2018

“Thanksgiving Traditions”
Holiday Custom

Informant:

Trudy Byington is a mother of 3 daughters and 1 son. She is a grandmother to 11 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Trudy is also a sister to two younger brothers. She grew up in Nibley, Utah and graduated Sky View High School. Trudy has been married to the love of her life for 50 years this coming December. She works as the head cafeteria worker at South Cache Middle School and will soon be retiring. Trudy was raised on a dairy farm as was expected to be out helping milk the cattle every morning before school and every night before dinner.

Context:

Trudy has spent Thanksgiving at her Grandparents houses in Millville, Utah and Kaysville, Utah for most of her childhood. Every year she would switch off spending the holiday with her dads parents or her moms parents. Trudy would spend the holiday with not only her immediate family, but her extended family as well. Only as her family got bigger would the location change. Trudy told me this story in her kitchen on Thanksgiving Day.

Text:

Every year for Thanksgiving I would go to either my dads parents house or my moms parents house depending on who we went to the year before. If we were at Grandma J’s there would be about 25 people. If we were at Grandma S’s there would be 30 - 40 people that would come. We would have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner; turkey, mashed potatoes, corn, the usual stuff and depending on whose house we were at, the guys would do the dishes after dinner. Everything we ate for dinner was homemade; the rolls, jam, jellies, and even the butter. We would always drink water and were not allowed to have soda pop. Grandma S would make homemade dipped candies that had a cream filling then dipped in chocolate. She taught me and my brothers to make them when we got older. We would only eat Thanksgiving dinner on grandma's best china

and her set of silverware made from real silver. Grandma thought it was important that we eat on these things because we are celebrating. At Grandma J's we would have a checkers tournament and grandma would always try to beat grandpa but she never could. We would play different card games like Poker or Pinochle to pass the time. On Thanksgiving we got to stay inside and watch the Wizard of Oz instead of going out to help milk the cows. I have tried to keep all my traditions that I grew up with the same but when you get married things change. The food has stayed the same but we have also added to it and I use my best china for dinner, never paper cups or paper plates. Some food we added are 10 pounds of ass (miniature pecan pies) and a crab dip my daughter in-law makes and refuses to give me the recipe. The homemade candies got new flavors like raspberry, blueberry, and orange and we started dipping them in white and dark chocolate instead on just milk chocolate. We also drink soda and not just water. My favorite thing about Thanksgiving though was having all my family together.

Texture:

Trudy was having a hard time remembering what her family had done over Thanksgiving. So much has changed from when she was a little girl. It could be that these traditions seem normal for her and so she doesn't see them as traditions but as normal life. She I was conducting the interview, Trudy was teaching her middle daughter how to make yams. It was Thanksgiving at her house while we were doing the interview. Trudy had many emotions going on throughout the interviewing process. She was worried that the Thanksgiving turkey would not be done in time for dinner at 2 o'clock. She was also trying to make sure that everything else was ready to put in the oven or getting ready to put in her serving dishes. Even though she was concerned about everything else she was glad to take a moment and remember her past family traditions and how much they mean to her.

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