

## Memories of my Grandpa and a Shepherd's Crook

It is Christmas Eve of the year 2011. I'm alone, that is if I ever feel that I am alone. All is silent as I return from a Stone Arabia church whose beginnings were nearly three hundred years ago. Doubtless some of my ancestors were there in its beginning. The organ music and voices are faded away from this candlelight service. Yet the voices of those who came back over the generations for over 2000 years yet mingle with all of those since. I was reminded that I made the candle holders being used nearly 50 years ago. Could it really be that long ago? There are so many faces that have left us in that time. My mind drifts back even farther than that when I belonged to a country church at Marshville where my mother was brought up. Then to the St Johns Lutheran Church in Canajoharie where my father's people belonged. Each one of these churches put forth the same Christian message. A message that long ago there was a Christ child born.

Tonight the same Christmas songs were sung as when I was a young boy. The pastor gathered a few very young people together in front of the congregation to speak to there. We hope will carry the word to those generations which will follow ours. It is not difficult to recall the Christmas entertainments we had over 70 years ago at Marshville. I go upstairs now and find a handmade shepherd's crook Grandfather made for me to use in one of those plays of long ago. On it is my initials and grandpa's and the date 1940. I was 10 years old. Thanks Grandpa for making something I still reassure and for being the wonderful grandfather you were.

Skip Barshied

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