

## An Emergence from Yesterday

The winter sun came through the south kitchen window. Its rays rested on a bulging envelope that was laid there last evening. Within that envelope were eight handmade Christmas thank you cards. Those sun rays could not have found a happier or more appropriate place to alight. With those sun rays came remembrances of other Christmases long ago, when a boy's life existed in a different day and age. The cards were an expression from the heart which cannot be passed from one person to another by the most expensive bought cards or gifts. They are an assurance that all of the common wonderful traits of yesterday have not disappeared in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Many years ago in a little country school at Marshville this one time boy and the other students did the same thing. We made strings of popcorn and chains from colored paper.

Handmade cards were made to take home for Valentine's Day, mother's day and Christmas. Special friends were made aware of special feelings. For those of us who did not have brothers or sisters the kids at school were our extended families. When a family moved away a big gap in the school family occurred. Doubtless even in the big school now the same disappointments take place. We come from an era with no television, no computers and a host of other inventions that most young people think they cannot survive without. Does any of that bygone era still survive? I'm glad to say that my Amish friends have proven to me that it does. Some people only see danger when the Amish kids walk along the roads to school. Doubtless that danger does exist but what I see are smiling boys and girls with their lunch boxes as if they are emerging from long ago.

They smile and wave a friendly greeting even when it is cold and rainy. It is evident that something which some of us consider sacred still survives. When you get to your little country school ring the bell that begins the school day. For some of us who went to country schools long ago that bell is a continuation of the ones we rang when we were young. I hope those bells will continue to ring out loud and clear for a long, long time.

Skip Barshied

Stone Arabia

Christmas 2011