

# Shucking Beans

Byrnesville, Barnesboro, Northern Cambria, Cambria County, Pennsylvania

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tuesday, january 20, 2009

## Shucking Beans



Grandma Byrnes's House.

My grandmother, Pauline Elizabeth Schrot Byrnes (1894-1972), with my grandfather raised 5 boys in the home pictured here. The house is on James Street in Byrnesville, in Susquehanna Township, Cambria County Pennsylvania.

The first born boy came in 1926 so Pauline and Ed raised the boys right through the Depression.



Edward R. Byrnes Family about 1933.

The garden my grandfather kept across the street next to Paul's house was large enough to keep the family in vegetables, especially green beans and corn.

There were onions, radishes, and carrots; rhubarb and potatoes. There were black berries, raspberries, and huckleberries up in the hills behind the house. There were apple trees back there too.

The most was made of this produce during the spring, summer, and fall months. Eating corn on the cob in the summer was a fine tradition and my uncles always wanted to bet with me to see who could eat the most number of ears.

The picture on the right does not do my grandmother justice but the photograph is one of my favorites. The boy in the chair on the left is my dad Edward J. Byrnes, next to him may be James Patrick Byrnes (1930-1955), then comes Raymond Thomas "Tom" Byrnes (1927-1986) with the glasses.

The man sitting on the chair to the right in the photo is my grandfather Edward Raymond Byrnes (1893-1966). Between my grandfather and grandmother must be David John Byrnes the youngest of the family while Herman Jerome 'Jerry' Byrnes is not in the picture.

I wasn't old enough to know by Uncle Jim before he died, I wish I was. One of his friends, James Woods, said that he was really good looking and that all the girls were after him when he was a young man. Here is the whole family except for Uncle David, everyone has a basin and everyone is shucking beans. James Patrick Byrnes looks to be about 3 years old in the photo so maybe the photograph was taken around 1933.

My grandmother loved Petunias and those are the flowers in the flower boxes on the porch. My grandfather built the flower boxes. The porch is skirted with wooden lattice and there is an access door there for carrying cases of Grape Nehi and Orange Crush soda to the cellar. The access door was used for transporting the soda when my brother, my sisters, and I visited my grandparents. I used to trim the hedge in front of the house as I am sure did my uncles and grandfather. You can't see it in this picture but the steps up to the porch were on the right. On the left side of the porch was lattice that reached to the porch roof. On this grew flowering vines, I believe Honey Suckle, the bees loved the flowers and luckily the flowers seemed to keep to the sunny outside of the porch and vines.

The left most window, maybe the second window too belonged to the master bedroom, the right most was Uncle Dave's bedroom. On the right side of the living room were a set of steep steps leading upstairs. A long hallway led to the other side of the house, doors led to bedrooms on both sides of the hallway. My grandmother always kept a Holy Water vessel attached to the wall at the top of the steps for blessing oneself with the Sign of the Cross before going down the steep steps. I remember that about half way down the hallway the floor used to make a loud creaking sound.

Uncle Jerry's boyhood bedroom was upstairs on the back side of the house. A window from that bedroom looked out on the



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front yard and on the parking lot and structure of the Byrnes Hotel. I remember being tucked in up in the bedroom one Easter, I was fairly young and thought for sure I saw the outline of the Easter Bunny's ears against the headlights of a car in the hotel parking lot. I can still see that silhouette in my mind's eye. It was when I stayed over in Uncle David's bedroom that I could hear the partying going on across the street down on the roofed patio belonging to Paul Byrnes.

One time there was a surprise birthday party down at Paul's for my Uncle Jerry. Uncle Jerry was presented with an engine block as a birthday gift. I assume this was an engine he needed to get a car running. This is something I can certainly identify with at a certain time of my life. For many years my buddy John Brock and I would go to a large junk yard on a regular basis for any parts we might need to keep our cars running.

I remember a nice lawn at this house, granddad had a push mower, I don't remember a power mower. The flower beds were all lined with ovals or circles of bricks at angles, buried half-way, and painted white. An example of this method of providing a flower bed border can be seen here.

Posted by Edward Byrnes at 15:08 | No comments

Last modified on 2009-03-11 11:17

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