

Be Happy. Don't Worry

14 March by Harry Zirkelbach 2016

Stars and Sun date 34359

My sister and I had the happiest of childhoods.

But so did the neighbor children.

There was always a game to play, a task to do, studying to complete, food on the table, day after day, during the years the world would forever call the Great Depression.

Children were sheltered from "ugly" by their parents.

There were simply fewer "nice" things of the 1920s.

Somehow the essentials for comfort, survival were provided.

Whole summers would pass with the children walking day after day three sunny months, bare foot, excepting the walk into town for Sunday Mass, all four in Sunday-best. Same as neighbors. Some scars; never a stubbed toe.

There was no Luck involved. Unlike today's Third World where the whole family is under military attack, peril, death a reality, Depression families, unable to find a share of the world's riches no matter their labor, still somehow, daily managed to go to sleep in a clean bed, safe community, worries confined to the parents bedroom. Children continued to dream of tomorrow's fun and game with family and neighbors.

Following the 1932 election any young child should have been marked forever by the emotional pledges of the new, forever smiling invalid President, filled with vigor, promises, plans to restore a business world in these United States. That hinted employment, a meaningful job for dads. It is not impossible that those children looked forward to their first vote after 21, likely as Democrat.

Imagine my surprise when age 22, registered to vote in Michigan in 1944, in the Navy, then that first vote, absentee, for that same man who so impressed our family twelve years earlier. Felt rewarded when Michigan carried for the President, by the small margin that included my first vote.

And not that many years later become aware that my vote was historic for another reason; I would be in that select gathering, those who had done something never to be repeated, first vote for a candidate running for a fourth term.

Then within the same year, spring 1945, studying at the Mine Disposal School, at the Navy Yard Washington D.C., there would be no change in our training schedule when President Franklin Roosevelt died, in Georgia, April 12, 1945, was given that State funeral in our town, the Nations Capital.

None in our base was not permitted to "go ashore"
any of those days.

This leads me to this remembrance.

I have shared the worries of all men;
worry has never broken my skin, prevented my being happy.
I believe that was always apparent to my family, fiends.

I can say this with a smile.

I am the product of a wonderful family's struggle
during five years of The Great Depression, 1930 to 1936
(when dad returned to his profession, Machinist),
without being depressed then or later.