**Arbuckle Stories **

****Chapter 11

**“The Autumn Leaves”**

**Memories of Carrie Botts Arbuckle, Emily Arbuckle Sydenstricker,**

**Anna Davies Arbuckle, Mattie W. Arbuckle, Emily Massey Arbuckle,**

**N.S. Arbuckle, Elizabeth Price McLaughlin, and Emily Arbuckle Becker.**

**By Jim Arbuckle**

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Fall is one of the most beautiful times of the year. When I was younger, spring, summer and winter were my favorite seasons, but as I grew older, I seem to appreciate fall the most. Perhaps as I grew older, I began to recall many family members and as I thought about them - it seemed that many of the fond memories I had of them were in the fall of the year.

I’d like to share a few of those memories and then some pictures of these loved ones under **Photos** “The Autumn Leaves.”

Then a condensed video of an autumn horseback ride under **Video** “The Autumn Leaves.”

Good memories are made with people! And sometimes they are family members. Here are some family memories that not only made my autumns special, but shaped my life as well. **“The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Note: Other than Carrie and Mattie Arbuckle, these people below - their parents or grandparents were born in the Belle Vue house.**

**Carrie Arbuckle**

Carrie Arbuckle was my grandmother. She was born a Botts in Mexico, MO on March 7, 1894. She was the wife of Alex W. Arbuckle III, who was a grandson of Alexander Welch Arbuckle.

I believe Carrie was destined to be a farmer’s wife. She once told me that she just never had the interest of being an educator as were most of her sisters and brothers. And while I have many memories of my grandmother, many were in the fall of the year.

I never liked butchering season as I had to help my granddad and Lockhart. Not often, but one time I help Nana in the kitchen with the hams and sausage, but the best part was when Nana made pumpkin pies and pig foot jelly, and an array of other delicious seasonal dishes.

The garden at Belle Vue seemed to have a bumper crop each year, especially with corn and tomatoes. Even in dry seasons, water was hauled from a spring by barrels on a trailer to water the dry garden. And dry or not, there always seemed to be more than enough sweet corn as September approached.

“Jimmy,” my grandmother would say. “We must pick as much of the sweet corn as we can before it becomes hard!” My granddad always planted a row of corn every week or ten days, so it all would not mature at once, and many years I remember picking sweet corn after school. Nana never liked it when I suggested that I take several bushels of corn home to my horse. “This corn is for us, Jimmy”, she would say with a laugh. But one year, there was so much sweet corn, that my granddad allowed me to take several sacks home to my horse.

Corn and sausage does not sound like any pleasant autumn memory, and at the time it was more work and fatigue than a pleasant memory. But as the years go by, these so called gardening occurrences are pleasant memories, and times that would be welcomed again.

I have many other memories of my grandmother Carrie, but these were a few during autumn.

**To view pictures of Carrie Arbuckle – Go to PHOTOS and click on “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Anna Davies Arbuckle**

Anna Davies Arbuckle was a cousin and the great granddaughter of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. Anna was the granddaughter of John Davis and Elizabeth Van Leer Arbuckle and daughter of Hale Houston and Lula McLaughlin Arbuckle. Anna was born on July 5, 1906.

Miss Anna, as called by many was both my Sunday school and an early elementary school teacher. I vaguely remember my early Sunday school time with Anna, but my early elementary day memories are clear and a plenty.

With school starting in the fall, Anna was determined to teach her children about the autumn season. She took us on several occasions to the big maple tree at the rear fence line of Maxwelton School and told us about the Pilgrims. And at least on two other occasions, she led a field trip up in the woods behind my house where we picked and examined autumn leaves. Anna told us as West Virginians it was important that we be able to identify and know the majority of the trees that grew in the state. At that time I may have known an oak from a maple, but most of my knowledge of other leaf indemnification came from Anna Arbuckle. This was one phase of school that I enjoyed, so it did not take me long to see various leaves and call them either - maple, white oak, walnut, hickory, ash or red oak.

I’m not sure if Miss Anna enjoyed teaching me! She paddled me on more than one occasion! And once was with the second grade paddle. When a first grader did something that really infuriated Anna, then the larger second grade wood was used on one’s behind. I was once paddled for chewing tobacco during recess and for giving a girl a kiss before class began. When I once rode my pony to school and left him tied all day in the hot sun, Miss Anna was so upset that she told me that Arbuckle’s were great horseman, and that my horse manners were not deserving to be called an Arbuckle. But with all our ups and downs, Anna and I became good friends and that may have begun on a fall day in the early 1960’s.

Maxwelton School had been closed, and all of its children would soon attend school in Lewisburg. I was mowing the school lot with my old Allis Chalmers G tractor. And on this hot fall day I saw Anna’s car parked at the front of the school house. I walked to her room and found the door locked. I peaked in the window and could not see her at her desk. I walked to the north side of the building and found the kitchen door open. As I walked in, I saw Anna standing in the kitchen crying. She did not see me as I came in the door.

I walked over to her and said, “What’s wrong Miss Anna? Why are you crying?”

I think it embarrassed her, but she was so heart broken that all she said was, “Jimmy, I am sorry and did not mean for you to see me crying.”

Asking her once again what was wrong; she said that her heart was broken because of the closing of her beloved school. She began to cry once again and said, “All of my children are gone.”

I did not really know what to say to her at my age, so all I could do was touch her arm and say, “It will be okay Miss Anna.” She went on to say that it was very kind of me to check on her and that she appreciated my compassion.

From that day on my cousin Anna and I were good friends. At the time, she was living in Mrs. Profit’s house in Maxwelton. I was mowing the back yard for Mrs. Profit and enjoyed talking to Anna before or after I mowed. After she left the Profit house, she moved in her father’s house and I continued to stop and see her. Anna was no longer my teacher but a friend. She would laugh over how I once acted as her student, and made it clear that she did not enjoy tanning my hide, but did it to help me. And she was correct, it did help me.

Anna died on September 26, 1994 at age 88 and is buried at Clifton Presbyterian Church.

**To view a photo of Anna Davies Arbuckle, go to PHOTOS and click on – “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Emily Creigh Arbuckle Sydenstricker**

Emily was born on August 22, 1880 at Belle Vue farm. She was the granddaughter of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. And she was the daughter of Alexander W. II and Elizabeth Creigh Arbuckle. Emily was my aunt and my grandfather Alex’s older sister. She was a godly Christian lady and pillar of the community.

I remember helping her pick early fall apples in her orchard, but most of all I remember the many stories that she told me over the years. And many of the stories took place in the fall of the year.

It was the fall of the year when she began school in 1886 under Miss Janie Riddle in the Belle Vue house. A few fall’s later she walked to the Maxwelton School house to further her education. My granddad Alex was born in the fall of 1887, and September 1900, Emily attended the opening of Clifton Presbyterian Church. The church land was given by Andrew Matthews McLaughlin and Aunt Emily remembered watching the building being erected by the direction of her cousin John Davis Arbuckle.

Aunt Emily called the fall of 1909 the best and worst time of her life. During that time, she was named dean of Greenbrier College. Emily also had feelings for a man named John Sydensticker, but John went on to marry Blanch Ferrier.

In the fall of 1917, Aunt Emily and Clifton Church were sad to see Reverend Lineweaver leave after nine years, but happy to welcome new pastor, JB Massey.

The autumn of 1919, she became the governess of the Caldwell children, saying that her position at Greenbrier College had become too tiring.

The fall of 1921, Emily’s nephew Thomas Alex Arbuckle was born and John Sydenstricker asked Emily to Thanksgiving dinner. Emily however declined saying it had only been a few months since his wife Blanch passed away, feeling it was too soon and that people may talk. John also became president of the state fair. But by the fall of 1923, Emily and John were married.

The autumn of 1925, saw Reverend JB Massey leave Clifton and Dr. Preston Profit named the new pastor. The family was mourning the loss of Alexander W. Arbuckle II, and John Sydenstricker was suffering from a poor hay crop and bad cattle market.

The late fall of 1930 was very stressful as the bank foreclosed on Waveland, the home and farm of Emily and John Sydensticker.

The autumn of 1931 saw banks in a freeze and Emily returning to teaching to help make ends meet. In 1933, John and Emily spent their first autumn in their new home on Arbuckle Lane, which she called “our house.”

In the fall of 1937, John and Emily had a telephone installed. They enjoyed shows like Orson Wells over the radio. John Sydenstricker was not feeling well in the fall of 1939, and World War II was declared, but Emily and John enjoyed listening to Glenn Miller on the radio and seeing “The Wizard of Oz” at the picture show.

The fall of 1946, Emily saw her nephew, Thomas Alex marry Louise Sharp, and the autumn of 1951, Celia Arbuckle was born to Emily’s cousin Hale and Gerri. Emily later packed her bags and headed to New York City to help her brother Lock care for his wife Gladys during her illness.

Emily enjoyed the dedication of Old Stone Presbyterian Church’s new Sunday school building in the fall of 1952.

In October of 1954, Richard Powell was named the new pastor of Clifton Church, but the autumn of 1958 brought great sadness as Emily’s sister Julia McLaughlin passed away in Lewisburg.

As in most autumns in the 1960’s, Emily ate Thanksgiving dinner with her nephew Andrew McLaughlin and family. The beautiful fall colors of 1963 were hampered when the country mourned the assignation of President John F Kennedy.

At age 88, Emily and her cousin Anna visited the shut-ins of the community in the fall of 1968. The fall of 1969 was special as the Alabama Arbuckle’s and the Becker’s came from Birmingham to visit Emily.

The autumn of 1970 was sad, as long time Clifton member Claire Profit passed away, and the fall of 1971 was also sad, when Emily’s cousin Mary Arbuckle died. Emily however spent the fall of 1972 and 1973 with her brother Lock in his home along the gulf in St. Petersburg, FL.

As the autumn leaves shown in 1975, so did 95 year old Emily as she celebrated Clifton Presbyterian Church’s 75th anniversary.

Emily saw the autumn leaves for the last time in the fall of 1979. In her October 1979 diary, she writes.

*“A young man whose wife has left him came to see me and I prayed with him and asked that he read*

*I Corinthians 4. How I pray he will heed those words”.*

In essence this was the character and being of Emily Arbuckle Sydenstricker.

Emily passed away in May 13, 1980 - three months shy of the 100th birthday.

**To view a picture of Emily Sydenstricker, go to PHOTOS and click on – “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**For more on Emily Arbuckle Sydenstricker, go to Chapter 10 – “Blessed Are the Children”**

**Mattie W. Arbuckle**

Mattie Arbuckle was born, Mattie Winlock Harrison in Kentucky on April 14, 1920. She was the wife of John (Jack) Davies Arbuckle. Jack was a great grandson of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. He was the grandson of John Davis and Elizabeth Van Leer Arbuckle, and the son of Hale Houston and Lula McLaughlin Arbuckle.

Jack met Mattie while studying the ministry at Louisville Theological Seminary.

Mattie was a true Arbuckle in every sense of the word. I feel as though no lady married to an Arbuckle knew or was more interested in the Arbuckle history and family than Mattie.

When I was a small boy, I did not know Mattie as she lived in Green Bank, WV where Jack was pastor at the local Presbyterian Church. But in the late 1950’s, Jack moved back to Lewisburg where he built a brick house near John Davis and Hale Houston’s old home. During this time Jack was the moderator of the Greenbrier Presbyterian and Mattie and my mother Louise Arbuckle became good friends. Jack and Mattie’s two daughters, Carolyn and Margaret were students at King College in Bristol, TN. By the mid 1960’s, Mattie and my mother were very close friends and since Jack was away many evenings with his Presbyterian position, it was a perfect time for Mattie to visit my mother and share the evening meal with us. My brother Davis and I was always happy to see her dark green 1951 Chrysler car parked in the driveway when we got off the school bus.

Mattie was an easy woman to like, and it did not take Davis and me long to become fond of her loving and interesting disposition. We always enjoyed her humorous and interesting stories of family and friends. Mattie used to laugh when I would ask her how she knew so much about Arbuckle history when she grew up in Kentucky. “There are more Arbuckle’s in Kentucky than here,” Mattie would say with a laugh.

There was not much that Mattie missed. Her nephew, Houston Arbuckle and a boy named Junior Yates were good friends, and also rode our bus. They used to laugh and have friendly tussles sometimes on the bus, and Mattie laughed one evening when I told her that Houston and Junior had another friendly tussle on the way home.

The one thing that I loved about Mattie was her unselfishness to listen to Davis and my accounts of TV shows. Mattie used to sit for an hour and listen to every detail that happened on Gomer Pyle, The Virginian, Green Acres and many other TV shows of the day. It had to be boring and I would have been uninterested if I was her, but not Mattie. She patiently listened, laughed and commented to every detail. As I said, Mattie was an easy person to like.

After a few evenings of our TV accounts, she told us that Jack loved to watch the TV show, Gunsmoke. Telling her that we liked Gunsmoke too, we were excited when she asked us to come down some Saturday night and watch Gunsmoke with Jack. Davis was excited because Gunsmoke did not come on until 10 pm and that meant staying out late. My excitement was that Jack would give me a chew of tobacco. Jack’s brother Fil would always give me a chew, so I assumed the same from Jack. “No honey,” Mattie laughed. “Daddy (Jack) will not allow you to chew, but you can come down some night and watch Gunsmoke with him.”

But the thing that I admired about Mattie the most was her devotion and interest to her husband Jack. Devotion is sometimes easy when you are married, but interest usually fades with time. But Mattie was a woman that was always engulfed in Jack’s interests, whether work or family history. She was always by his side, and today, I am still impressed by Mattie’s love and devotion to her husband and the Arbuckle family.

The strange part was Davis and I knew Mattie several years before we saw her two daughters Carolyn and Margaret. They were both away at college during that time. I was not only amazed that that they both looked like Jack and Mattie, but that both had red hair.

I always enjoyed visiting Mattie and Jack They both taught me so much about God and family. Jack once told me that the older you become the more your memory will be keen on childhood happenings rather than current. “I can still recall things vividly when I was young,” Jack once said. “But new people and happenings now are sometimes difficult for me to recall.”

Jack Davies Arbuckle was born November 19, 1912 and passed away on April 12, 1991. Both he and Mattie are buried at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Mattie passed away on June 12, 2001, and their daughters are Carolyn Winlock Arbuckle and Margaret Arbuckle Watts.

**For a picture of Mattie and Jack Arbuckle, go to PHOTOS, click on – “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Emily Massey Arbuckle**

There were several Emily Arbuckle’s in our family, and all were truly wonderful and gracious women.

The second Emily Arbuckle I fondly remember was Emily Massey Arbuckle. Known to most of the community as “Miss Emily,” she was born in 1914, and was the great granddaughter of Alexander Welch and Julia Belle Arbuckle. She was the granddaughter of John Davis and Elizabeth Van Leer Arbuckle and the youngest daughter of Dr. Julian and Anna McLaughlin Arbuckle.

When I was a boy and many years afterwards, Emily was probably the most popular figure to children and young people in Clifton Presbyterian Church and the Maxwelton area. During the fall, Emily used to take her Clifton children, known as “Little Workers,” to her big brick home, north of the church and tell us stories and sing songs under the autumn leaves in her front yard. And on a few of those autumn afternoons, she would lead us down the hill to the cave behind her house and tell and read us Bible stories.

Emily was probably known and remembered most for her children’s Christmas program at Clifton Church. During the fall, Emily was making shepherds, Wise Men, angels and an array of other costumes. And on the Sunday night before Christmas, the church sanctuary would come alive as Emily’s children were suddenly either Joseph, Mary, shepherds or Wise Men. And all performed in Emily’s hand made costumes and designed hand made scenery. Then afterwards, we could all drive and see the huge lighted star on her house. And to most, it was known as “Emily’s star.”

Emily and two of her sister’s were known as “the girls on the corner.” I remember one Christmas season when I was a young boy, we stopped at Emily’s and her sister Margaret and Mary joined Emily in telling me stories of the shepherds, Wise Men and baby Jesus, as we sat in a dark room that was lighted by their big Christmas tree. For many years afterwards and still today, I do not think of Christmas without being reminded of Miss Emily, Margaret and Mary Arbuckle.

In the fall of 1973, I had won a horse race with my quarter mare, Poor Lady Gin. Emily had heard and told my mother and asked that I come up and see her. I went up that autumn season with my trophy and Emily was excited and congratulated me on winning the race. I enjoyed her telling me about her days of riding and showing horses, mainly in Marlinton. She told me about her horse, Suits Me, and how her father, Dr. Julian Arbuckle traveled to see his patients on horseback. She told me about JB Massey, one of Clifton’s earlier pastors and how he rode a horse and was described as handsome in his black suit on his black horse.

After out talk, Emily said, “Jimmy, I am glad that you love horses.” Later we walked out back where she showed and told me all about her brother, Julian’s barn and horses.

And it is difficult not to think of the autumn season without thinking of Emily’s nephew’s Frank and Wood McCue, who were always on the football sideline at the University of Virginia or Greenbrier East High School respectfully. And Davis McCue, who not only gave me a hand shake whenever he saw me, but a big warm hug as well.

Emily Massey Arbuckle sadly passed away in January 2000, and is buried at Clifton Presbyterian Church.

**To view a picture of Emily M Arbuckle, go to PHOTOS and click on – “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**N.S. Arbuckle**

N. Stuart Arbuckle was born in 1881 and was a grandson of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. He was a son of John Davis and Elizabeth Van Leer Arbuckle.

Known to most of the family as simply, “Cousin Stuart,” he was a farmer, horseman and founder of Arbuckle Insurance Agency in Lewisburg. During his younger days, he raced harness horses and later was an out rider before each harness race at the State Fair of West Virginia.

Cousin Stuart was a lot like my granddad Alex. He spoke his mind and was not bashful in telling you how he felt. When Cousin Stuart was mad or upset and yelled “Oh Thunder!” no heavenly thunderstorm could match his vocal intensity.

One night when I was very small, my parents and I were visiting Cousin Stuart and Mabel. It was at their home at Maplewood Dairy, now Maplewood Farm. Anyway, I really burnt my hand on either a radiator or a stove. I was screaming and crying in rage from the pain as my mother was trying to hold and sooth my painful little hand. “Come here boy!” Cousin Stuart said. “Stop you’re crying and let me put this on your hand.” He had some kind of butter or salve and as I continued to cry, he coated my little burnt paw.

Cousin Stuart would get up every morning before he went to the office and ride one of his horses. He once took me in the big red barn and showed me his horses. When I told my mother that one of his horses was named Dinah, mother told me that was because Cousin Stuart was fond of actress, Dinah Shore,

My horse was pinto, and one day, I rode my brown and white horse to Maplewood for Cousin Stuart to see. I was disappointed when Cousin Stuart said, “A pinto! That’s not a horse! A solid color horse is a horse!” Cousin Stuart may have had a point, but I rode and still ride a pinto horse today.

Cousin Stuart Arbuckle sadly died in November 1967, and I remember attending his funeral at Clifton Presbyterian Church.

**To view a portrait of N.S. Arbuckle, go to PHOTOS and click on “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Elizabeth Price McLaughlin**

Elizabeth Price McLaughlin was born in 1902. She was the great granddaughter of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. She was the granddaughter of Alexander W. II and Elizabeth Creigh Arbuckle and the daughter of Lee and Julia Arbuckle McLaughlin. Her brothers and sister were Andrew, Preston, Alexander and Lynn.

To most, Elizabeth Price McLaughlin was known simply as “Price.” Many of her aunts and uncles referred to her as Elizabeth Price, but most of her brothers, sister, friends and younger generation family members called her, Price. Whatever, she was a funny and interesting woman and I always enjoyed being around her.

I was probably around 10 years old with my first memories of her. Although Price was raised on the McLaughlin farm in Hillsboro, WV, and taught school for many years in Pocahontas County, I did not remember or see her until after she moved to Florida. As a boy, we would go to Florida after Christmas, and Price was one of the relatives we would visit. My first memory of Price was her big dress hats, sun tan and gold bracelets. And the first time I saw her, I asked if she was a gypsy. As the family laughed and said no, Price’s laugh was not as humorous. I cannot remember if Price said anything to me about my silly comment, but I still remember her mean stare, as if to say, “Stupid little boy!” But as I grew older, Price and I became good friends.

That friendship began when Price would come and spend the falls with our Aunt Emily Sydenstricker. Price was now retired from teaching, so she and her sister Lynn began to spend more time in Greenbrier County. Price was not as easy person to know as her sister Lynn; but once I got to know her, she was not only a fun person, but I soon learned things about her that I did not know.

Since I had only seen her while in Florida, I thought she grew up in Florida, and thought West Virginia was probably new and foreign to her. “Land sakes, boy!” Price said with a laugh. “What are you talking about? I was born in Hillsboro and know as much about Pocahontas and Greenbrier County as anyone. I went to Marshall College! Where did you get such a fool idea?”

I suppose childhood assumptions gave me this idea, but Price soon set me straight that she was a West Virginian, then, now and always. The next thing I learned and enjoyed about Price was how much she loved to talk. My first impression was that she was a quiet person, but I was wrong. She loved to talk, and many nights after we had talked for over two hours and it was time to leave, she would laugh and say, “You don’t need to go! Sit down and tell me something! I want to tell you another story about Marlinton.”

Price loved to tell me about life when she grew up and taught school in Pocahontas County. When she learned that I once dated a girl named Pam Hoover from Marlinton, she was not only excited and interested, but knew some of the girl’s relatives and neighbors. Price was never married, but after hearing of my Pocahontas girlfriend, she laughed and told me that she had more than a few Pocahontas County bows herself.

As a teenage boy, I used to deliver a lot of farm equipment, and much of it was in Pocahontas County. And when Price would hear that I had just delivered a tractor to Hillsboro, she would laugh and say, “Why didn’t you take me with you? I’m not too old to climb up in that big old truck.” Whether I drove the truck to Beard, Clover Lick or Stony Bottom – Price usually knew the people and taught some of them in school.

One autumn in the 1970, my parents were spending a weekend at The Homestead in Hot Springs, VA and Price told Davis and I to come over to Aunt Emily’s and eat our evening meals. When we arrived on Friday night, Price had prepared enough food for an army. We all four ate in the kitchen, and soon after the meal, Aunt Emily excused herself to the living room. I was full as a tick, but Price was loading more food on my plate.

“Eat up, boy,” she said. “I cooked all of this for you and there is plenty more.” Telling her that I was full and could not eat another bite, Price laughed and said, “Jimmy, you have not eaten enough to keep a flea alive! Don’t you know it is impolite to not eat all that is cooked for you?” Not wanting to hurt her feelings, I sat back down and ate some more, which was way too much. So on Saturday night, I was not looking forward to supper, but for some lucky reason, Price was not as persistent, so I did not have to eat as much. But that night before, I ate more than any time in my life.

There are many other funny stories and times I had while visiting Price at Aunt Emily’s. She loved to watch “The Lawrence Welk Show” and “To Tell the Truth,” and on many fall evenings I had to stay and watch them with her. I never wanted to really watch as I had other places to go, but today, I would trade all of those other places if I could watch those TV shows with Price again.

Price never liked nor could tolerate the cold weather, so every October as the autumn leaves began to fall; Price packed her bags and returned to the Sunshine State.

The last time I saw Elizabeth Price McLaughlin was in the autumn of 1987, while in Florida. She died in the 1990’s and is buried at Clifton Presbyterian Church.

**To view a picture of Price McLaughlin, go to PHOTOS and click on – “The Autumn Leaves.”**

**Emily Arbuckle Becker**

Emily Arbuckle Becker was born in the 19 teens in Birmingham, Al. She was a great granddaughter of Alexander Welch and Julia Bell Arbuckle. Emily was a granddaughter of Alexander W. II and Elizabeth Creigh Arbuckle, and the daughter of Charles C. and Julia Neville Arbuckle.

Emily grew up and spent her entire life in Birmingham, AL, where she married Dutch Becker in the 1940’s.

As a young boy, I knew her younger brother Charlie Jr. (CC) and his family before I knew Emily. That was because my dad and CC were close, so we had exchanged a few family visits. Emily had been to West Virginia to visit, but I just did not remember or was not around. I knew who she was and remember once when she called my grandmother in the 1960’s to tell about the marches and riots in Birmingham. My grandmother Carrie thought that family was important, so she had showed me Emily’s picture several times in the old photo album that graced the Confederate coffee table in the parlor at Belle Vue.

But in December of 1967, while in Birmingham with my family visiting CC and family, I met Emily when she had us over for a Sunday dinner. As Emily prepared the dinner, I enjoyed talking to her son, who is my cousin John Becker and his father, Dutch. Dutch was from Dallas and a great Cowboy fan, so we all had a big time discussing and watching pro football before and after dinner.

So for the years after that, I knew and really enjoyed “Emily from Birmingham” as we referred to her as. She not only sent me Christmas cards after I was married, but we exchanged letters and phone calls several times a year.

In 1983, Emily heard that WVU was going to play Kentucky in Birmingham’s All American Bowl, and called and told us that we were coming and that we could stay with her. Dutch had passed on, so she said that she had plenty of room and said, “You all come on down and I’m not going to take no as an answer.”

My wife Gail and I drove down and Emily met us on the outskirts of the city and led us to her home. Arbuckle’s may have had hospitality, but no red carpet welcome and stay compared to Emily’s southern hospitality. She fed us, drove us everywhere and as soon as we were back, Emily was saying, “Now where do you all want to go?” Emily was in her 70’s at the time, but drove as fast as a teenager. She daily drove her grandchildren Kurt, Kevin and Kari Becker around, so it was only natural that she was given the name, “Hot Wheels Granny.” My granddad Alex was also visiting her during that time, and I still remember the good time and kindness she gave to him.

It was an unusual cold night for the bowl game, and we had just returned from where WVU had just beaten Kentucky in the bowl game at Legion Field. And I discovered that my T top roof of my 81’ Camaro Z28 had been was stolen!

We were scheduled to leave the next morning, so she alerted her son, John, who was able to contact a T top dealer that night, and by mid morning, my sports car had a roof again. I will always be grateful for John for his quick action, and only grew closer to my cousin Emily Becker.

During 1995, my wife was very ill and near death, and no family member called, wrote and gave me as much moral support as Emily Arbuckle Becker. My wife passed away in June 1995, and during the autumn leaves of that year, Emily called and told me that I was coming down to see her. I took her up on her offer, and spent a nice fall week with Emily, John and his family. Emily was in her late 70’s at the time, but still driving everywhere and still as fast as a teenager. She was now talking on a cell phone as she drove. One afternoon as she drove me to a farm John had purchased outside the city, I heard a phone ringing. Asking her if that was her phone, Emily who was driving 70 MPH laughed and said, “Heck yes! The darn thing is in the trunk!” Pulling over along the busy highway, she jumped out before I could even think, retrieved her phone from the trunk of the car and began dialing John as she pulled out on the highway again. “Hey John,” she said. “We are on our way and will be there soon.”

We continued to exchange letters, cards and phone calls. She and John drove up from Alabama in July of 1998, for my mother Louise Arbuckle’s funeral. Sadly that was the last time that I saw her before her death in 2003. Like her parents Charlie and Julia, brother CC - plus her husband Dutch - Emily is buried in Birmingham, AL.

**To view a picture of Emily Arbuckle Becker, go to PHOTOS and click on “The Autumn Leaves.”**

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*“I hope you enjoyed some autumn account of family members.**For a condensed version of my fall horseback ride, click on* ***Video,*** *and scroll down to “The Autumn Leaves.” Or go directly to YOU TUBE, type in Arbuckle Belle Vue and scroll down to “The Autumn Leaves.”*

*Come with me in Chapter 12, as my granddad Alex tells me how he met my grandmother Carrie.*

**BELLE VUE – THE AUTUMN LEAVES**

Written by………………….. Jim Arbuckle in 2003

Website by…………………. Jim Arbuckle

Pictures by…………………. Sandy Beasley, Arbuckle Family Album & Clifton Presbyterian Church Directory.

**THE AUTUMN LEAVES Video 1995**

Video by…………………….Signature Video

Cameras by………………… Dave Ramsey, Matt & Lori Rush

Music by…………………… North Atlantic Philharmonic

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