

Topic: My grandmother experience making a family in the U.S.

Abstract: My grandmother was a hard worker that had 12 children raised them all to her full advantage. They traveled often to move to make money. Everyone she worked with all came from the same place. She has grown so much. She became a U.S. citizen during the times were so rough.

They always traded room and board for labor. How she lived in a house that was condemn and there house was haunted.

Keywords: Travel, how she became a citizen, haunted house, living conditions

The Houses

Grandpa was born in Torono Quilo Mexico on April 25 1917 As he grew older he was a Bracero in 1945 so he went to the capital of Mexico to have legal documentation to be able to be employed in the United States. He was given a legal contract to work. He earned 12.00 a week for his work. Two years later he married my grandma she was born April 14, 1927 in Zacatecas Mexico. They married in Mexico my grandma wanted to follow her love of her life so he crossed her threw the Rio Grande in 1947. To this day my grandma still can't read or write English. She had so much faith in God that has guided her and the family to succeed so far.

She got employment right away. There was so much work available and so much agriculture work such as oranges grape fruits. Each bucket they would fill up was only worth

6cents. She said it didn't matter my grandpa was able to be fully dressed for less than 12.00 an outfit. She was able to buy grocery for the week for less than 6.00. Some stores were so racial that she was kicked out of the stores because was colored.

During the winter grandma worked for women named Carmen More she would wash clothes clean the house. The lady was American and she had a small house behind her house that was used for her workers she did speak a little Spanish to communicate. She worked for this lady for two years then she got pregnant with her first daughter so she could no longer work her husband stayed employed. She stayed in Texas for ten years she had four children over the time she was there.

In 1953 President Eisenhower had a law passed for the migrant workers that they were able to become citizens if they had a child born in the united states. My grandparents became legal citizens.

Grandpa was migrant farm workers so they needed to be moved to a new location so they ended up in Macfarland, California in 1955. My grandpa and grandma owned their own truck called a woody so that's how they were able to travel when it was needed .In the valley there was so much work they picked cotton oranges raspberries. They lived in a house they rented. The rent was 25.00 a month. Each time they had to migrate the owners knew them so they would just let them pay the rent in advance so they always had a home to come back to. At this time they were making 90 cents an hour. They stood in the valley for two months while the agriculture was growing then they would migrant to Oregon were the crops were growing they would stay there and they would. So by 1960 my grandma already had 4 more kids. So she had a total of 8 kids. None of the children were enrolled in school because they always had to migrate

from town to town. After each child was born she would wait a month and she would be back to the fields working because they need to support the household.

In 1961 they migrated to Gilroy, CA. Where she lived at the time they didn't have to pay rent to the owner of the house. They had an agreement that they had to work around the house to pay the rent. The man made them Prune trees and do irrigating around the ranch. Grandma and the family had lived there for 7 years. When they first got to Gilroy they were making a 1.00 an hour working in the fields. When they would pick garlic they made 50 cents a barrel. They also worked hoeing sugar beet. Soon after that they got an increase to 3.00 an hour.

All the children ranged in different ages from 15-2 years old. Grandma made the children work in the fields picking prunes and strawberries. No one would even question why the children were working in the fields. The children knew what hard labor was before they were even enrolled in school. The kids would use the money they made to buy clothes. So the kids were now enrolled in school. Other kids would always ask them why their hands were so bruised up they would say they had to work. Grandma would always provide for the kids first and she always put herself last. Grandma ended up having two more kids so far she has 10 kids.

In 1965 they moved to another ranch they had the same agreement with the landlord that they can live on the property long as grandpa worked for him. During that year the house blew up. One day the butane exploded the tank was next to the house standing up. So it exploded on the roof and that day grandma and my tia were home because my tia was young I think 14 years old and she had just taken her appendix's out. My grandma and my tia was standing outside waiting for my grandma's friend to pick her up to give her a ride to take my tia to her doctor's appointment for a checkup. As the house just blew up in front of their very own eyes. As the rest of them are coming home from school in the school bus they were on the road to home and

could see the thick black smoke in the air my tia's and tios were like 5 and 6 years old. They all looked at each other and said that's our house it burnt down. They were so sad they started off with nothing and the little they did have just burnt to the ground and they had nothing at all.

So the family had nowhere to go they ended up staying in a barn for like a month. The owners of the house that blew up ended up giving my grandma another house. In 1969 my grandma had 12 kids at this time.

My grandma made sure the most important things for all her kids where to have faith in the lord. She said with him anything is possible. My grandma made sure all her children were dressed she learned to sew at a really young age. That's a skill she never let go. She would always be sewing all the kids had their clothes made from her. She was smart enough to make the kids clothes out of the potatoes sacks she was able to make them everything from pants to clothes to underclothes. My grandma was famous for sewing she made the Matzahine tribes there outfits to dance. All the kids danced with them for 3 years. They really enjoyed it.

In 1969 all the children went back to Durango Mexico. There houses were made out of Rocks the inside of the house was all dirt. My grandma wanted to show the children that they would have a better life in the U.S. when they went back to her homeland they had no electricity. No running water in her town. When they needed to shower they would have to walk to the lake and fill up the buckets of water and bring it back. When they needed to iron their clothes they would put the iron on the stove to heat it up. When they needed to wash clothes they had to walk down to the river and wash their clothes with a stone. when they came back to California the kids worked hard because they didn't want to have to live like them. They wanted to have all the things they didn't have in Mexico.

So in 1970 my grandma rented a house in Gilroy on Marcellio the rent was 40.00 a month. All the children were working already and each of the kids were making anywhere from 1,500 -2,500 a week. This house they lived in was haunted. Each of the 12 children and grandchildren has a story to tell about the house. The house was so old they believe it was a 104 years old. This house was a hotel before. During the 1800'S. At night time you could hear horses come up in stage coaches and you could hear the door open and the brake screech. You could hear someone get off walk and hear the front door open and hear the man walk in the house and up the stairs. The house had no installation in the house lattice was holding the house together you could see outside through the cracks and you could feel the wind come through. The house was really big the whole family lived in it. So two of my tias lived in one room and every night they would hear someone shoveling outside their window. They get up to looked and no one was out there they would lay back down. So one day grandpa was going to cook some BAR- B- QUA and they started to dig a whole the same palace they heard at night time and they found the little girl's bones with a knife going threw her ribs. The uncles called the police to come out to the house and they tried to pick up the bones and they had just fallen apart. They had a priest come out to the house and the kids asked him why does the dog keep barking at the tree. The priest said that the house used to be a slave house and it used to hang people in the trees. So the dog would just see the bodies hanging in the tree. All the time the kids would walk by one of the rooms and see a lady sitting on the bed with all black and a veil covering her face staring out the window. She was there every day. Other times at night the kids could hear people playing poker in the kitchen you could hear the change hitting the table. My grandma one day walked outside on the porch and there was a doll on the step so she picked it up and one side was an African girl when she turned it over it was a Caucasian girl my grandma thought it was the

ugliest doll so she threw it away. The next morning it was back on the steps. So my grandma said she tore the doll apart and threw it away later on that day the doll was put back together and the doll was on the kitchen table. my mom said one day she wanted to see what was in the attic because nobody has ever been up there so she gets a chair her and her brothers so she stands on the chair moves the board to the attic and all of a sudden the board falls on her hands and she's dangling from the top as she felt someone was standing on her hands. One of my cousins he was like at 5 years old at the time and he would see a little boy and he would wake him up in the middle of the night. The little boy would turn the light on so he could get up. My cousin said this little boy was wearing a mask and my tia told my cousin to ask the little boy how did he get there?? So my little cousin asked the little boy and he said that the little boy told him that before the house was built that the witches would have a 5 point star. And the little boy said he was one of the little kids that got stuck there. My grandparents lived in this house for more than twenty years.

As I see my grandma she has inspired me to do what I want to do anything is possible. All her children have succeeded to have good jobs nice families. All the kids all know how hard it was growing up struggling. On March 14, 2000 my grandma was sworn in as a U.S. Citizen. To see how far she's came as a migrant farm worker to a citizen is such a powerful thing. To this day are family is so close and proud of where they come from. My family has so much pride where they come from.

