

## Summer Memories

I have been trying to recall if we “ate local” during our summers on the Pamlico River located at the edge of civilization in North Carolina. The community was so isolated, folks still spoke with faintly Elizabethan accents. We called them "hoi toiders" because if they said it was a high tide outside, it came out as hoi toid outsoid with their old English brogue, and it was irresistibly entertaining to our children's ears.

I do remember we had a local gardener who sold us Kentucky Wonders, the best green beans I ever had before or since. And I'm sure we took our own tomatoes and corn from our town garden. Did we have an egg lady? Not sure.

The one thing I am very clear on is that we bought certain staples from the four families that anchored the community, the Moores, the Sawyers, the Daniels, and the Guthries, who were of course all intermarried, and each family ran a general store. So the Guthrie daughter who married the Daniels son went to work in the Daniels store, and so on.

Daddy liked to spread our business between all the stores, so that meant we got our soft drinks from the Sawyers and our canned goods from the Daniels and our milk from the Moores and our ice and snacks and motor boat gas from the Guthries.

Moore's Store was the only one in walking distance, so we bought our ice cream cones and RC Colas there on our morning snack expeditions. Miss Annie Moore, the matriarch, ran the store. She was a large lady and always wore an apron over her worn-thin, faded cotton print dress. She had not seen a brassiere in years, so one could only speculate that those large bosoms had to be heaved from under the apron strings in the dressing process.

Because air conditioning had not gotten as far as the river in those days, there was always an electric fan going overhead. But on the very hottest days, the fan just moved the sweltering air around, so we all held our breath that the drop of sweat perpetually hanging on Miss Annie's nose was not going to drop on the cone she was dipping for us.

Over the years, we got to know the families well, and toward the end of his career, my father because a district court judge in the district that included Beaufort County, the far reaches of which encompassed the Pamlico community. One day he said he looked up and the whole of Pamlico Beach was sitting in his courtroom.

As he looked at the docket, he saw that the Daniels were suing the Guthries for being in on an embezzlement scheme, and of course everyone had taken sides. It seemed that the Guthrie girl was accused of stealing from the till in her in-law's store. Daddy thought it just wouldn't do for the community to be split like that. So he called them all back into his chambers and told them they had to work out a resolution outside the justice system and sent them on their way.

"I'll tell you what's the truth Mr. Charles," said Virginia Sawyer the next summer when we dropped in for our soft drink supply, "there will be a star in your crown when you get to heaven for settling that feud."