

Grandma's Fingerprint

Grandma's Fingerprint

Love a child. Change a life.

Ann Griffiths



© 2011 by Ann Griffiths. All rights reserved.
Expanded Version 2014.

Published by Redemption Press, PO Box 427, Enumclaw, WA 98022.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without the prior permission of the copyright holder, except as provided by USA copyright law.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are taken from *King James Version* of the Bible.

ISBN 13: 978-1-63232-928-8

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2010913350

Tribute to

—My grandma—

Your life is forever intertwined with mine.

Dedicated to

—My grandchildren—

For all that you are and all that you will be.

Contents

With Gratitude	ix
Introduction	xi
1. My Dearest Victoria	1
2. The Big Black Car	5
3. Better to Have Loved.	11
4. Light in the Darkness	21
5. Mystery Man at the Well.	27
6. Where There's a Will, There's a Way	31
7. Grandma's Brass Bed.	37
8. The Good and Bad of Change.	43
Personal Reflection	48
9. Secret Vow of a Child	49
10. The Unspoken Cost	55
11. A Voice Wrapped in Love	59
12. Girls Don't Play Drums.	65
13. Maybe I <i>Can</i> Write	69
Personal Reflection	72

14. Silence Runs Deep	73
15. Call in the Night	79
16. The Reluctant Return	85
17. The Lost Is Found	91
Personal Reflection	96
18. At the Movies	97
19. New Horizons to Discover	101
20. Cross-Border Encounter	107
21. With Grandma's Blessing	113
22. The Missing Link	121
Personal Reflection	126
23. Modern-Day Miracles	127
24. A Lesson in Grace	133
25. Hope in Life's Desert	137
26. An Unpredictable Maze	145
27. Restless but Grounded	155
Personal Reflection	159
28. A Deadly Intruder	161
29. Tables Turned Upside Down and Backwards	165
30. Commitment at a Price	171
Personal Reflection	174
31. Responsibility Is a Two-Edged Sword	175
32. That's My Girl	181
33. Generation Upon Generation	189
Personal Reflection	192

With Gratitude

Thank you to my husband, Jim. Your undying love and belief that this book “must be written” spurred me on.

Thank you to my children, Sarah and James, and my son-in-law, Sherman Hu. Your unconditional love and consistent words like, “Way to go, Mom,” and, “You can do it,” never ceased to strengthen my resolve.

Thank you to my grandchildren, Victoria, Anthony, Calista, and Lucas. You bless my life every day, more than you ever will know. Your lives are a growing testament of God’s faithfulness through generations.

Thank you to my sister and brothers. Whether we walk life together or follow our own unique roads, we are family and are there for each other.

Thank you to my friend and ministry partner, Donna Inglis. When the writing touched an area of my life that was difficult to face, you stayed right there with me as I worked through to the other side of the struggle.

Thank you to my editor coach, Barbara Kois. You believed in me and in the message of this book. Your wisdom, expertise, and dedication to excellence helped me to breathe easier.

Introduction

WE EACH COME into this world with generations of family history attached to our names. And we each go out of this world having added a chapter or two to our family's legacy.

As I grew from a girl into a young woman, that concept never entered my mind. But when I became a mother, my heritage, and particularly the role that my maternal grandmother played in my life, took on new meaning. Then as I watched my grandma interact with my children, the span of physical years that separated them evaporated, and a timeless connection remained.

Now as a grandma myself, I am overwhelmed at the difference my grandma made in my life. Without her, I would not be the woman I am today. And I realize that my role as a grandma is more important than I ever could imagine.

As you follow the journey that my grandma and I traveled together, it is my hope that if you are a grandma or a grandma-to-be, you will be encouraged in the vital role you play. If you have or have had a grandma, regardless of your relationship with her, may this story of resilience, sorrow, triumph, and loss inspire you

to see yourself (and her, if she still is living) as someone who can make a memorable and positive difference in the lives of the next generation.

This book is a tribute to my grandma and a legacy for my family. But it also was written to inspire all grandmas and grandmas-to-be. I did not write it for me; although, it turned out to be a healing salve on the buried wounds that I unknowingly carried, which may be why I wrote a few pages and then threw what I'd written into the closet so many times over the years. It was both one of the most difficult undertakings and one of the most rewarding experiences of my life to date.

Grandma's Fingerprint is a story about relationships. It is a story about struggle, triumph, and enduring love. And it is a story that speaks of the faithfulness of God in both the highs and lows of life and the grace of God throughout generations.

Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Moves

1886	April 23	Born: Hurlbert (Bert) Lloyd Imerson (my step-grandpa) in Vancouver, British Columbia, BC
1895	March 30	Born: James Kinkaid (my grandpa) in Aberdeen, Scotland
1899	July 10	Born: Nancy Mabel Webb (my grandma) in Bishop Stortford, Hertfordshire, England
1926	April 28	Born: Trevor Patrick Davies Worrall (my dad)
1928	April 13	Grandma left England for Canada.
1928	April 22	Grandma arrived in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

- 1928 April 28 Married: Nancy Mabel Webb to James Kinkaid in Stratford, Ontario, Canada
- 1928 May 12 Grandma and Grandpa Kinkaid arrived in Vancouver, BC.
Lived at 1450 - 36th Avenue East, South Vancouver, BC.
- 1929 March Grandma and Grandpa Kinkaid moved to 1559 - 26th Avenue East, Vancouver, BC.
- 1929 November 4 Born: Doreen Mabel Kinkaid (my mom) in Vancouver, BC
- 1934 January 31 Died: James Kinkaid in Vancouver, BC (my grandpa)
- 1935 November 26 Born: Hurlbert (Herbie) Hoover (Grandpa Imerson's grandson)
- 1941 December 3 Married: Nancy Mabel Webb Kinkaid to Hurlbert (Bert) Lloyd Imerson, in Vancouver, BC
- 1942 March 20 Grandma and Grandpa Imerson and Doreen moved to R.R. 2 Berry Road, Langley Prairie, BC.
- 1942 Fall Herbie came to live with Grandma and Grandpa Imerson.
- 1944 January 17 Grandma and Grandpa Imerson, Doreen, and Herbie moved to Lakeview Farm, Westholme, Vancouver Island, BC.
- 1944 August 24 Grandma and Grandpa, Doreen, and Herbie moved to 1730 Holland Avenue R.R. 3, Victoria, BC.

- 1945 December 15 Grandma and Grandpa, Doreen, and Herbie moved to 1603 Pacific Highway, R.R. 4, New Westminster, BC (temporary).
- 1946 February 19 Grandma and Grandpa, Doreen, and Herbie moved to 217 Clow and Hjorth Roads R.R. 3, New Westminster, BC.
The address later changed to 10239 Clow Road, North Surrey, BC.
The address then changed to 10239 - 156 Street, Surrey, BC.
- 1946 December 19 Born: James (Jim) Reginald Griffiths (my husband-to-be)
- 1947 May 12 Died: Bert Imerson in New Westminster, BC (my step-grandpa)
- 1949 January 29 Married: Doreen Kinkaid to Trevor Worrall (my parents)
- 1950 May 2 Born: Ann Doreen Mabel Worrall (me)
- 1951 August 27 Born: Patricia Flora Lynn Worrall (my sister)
- 1952 June 23 Herbie moved back to Willow River, BC.
- 1954 November 20 Born: Hurlbert (Bert) Trevor Davies Worrall (my brother)
- 1957 April 3 Born: Ian James Worrall (my brother)
- 1958 May 9 Born: Trevor Wesley Peters (my brother)
- 1959 May 28 Born: Keith Roy Thomas Worrall (my brother)
- 1961 May 28 Mom and Dad moved our family from Grandma's.

- 1963 August 16 Born: Michael Eric Vern Worrall (my brother)
- 1964 September 26 Born: David Arthur William Worrall (my brother)
- 1971 June 19 Married: Ann Worrall to Jim Griffiths in Surrey, BC
- 1974 September 22 Born: Sarah Ann Griffiths (our daughter)
- 1976 March 9 Born: James Samuel Griffiths (our son)
- 1981 January 15 Grandma, Jim, Ann, Sarah, and James moved to 9734 and 9736 - 137A Street, Surrey, BC.
- 1985 August 13 Died: Grandma Imerson at Surrey Memorial Hospital, Surrey, BC

CHAPTER I

My Dearest Victoria

YOU ARE TOO young to understand what these pages are saying or to imagine why I'm writing them. For now, you're content to sit on my lap in a room filled with family portraits—photos of ancestors I've known and others whose names are mysteries, whose life stories have been lost to the past. We snuggle together as you rest your head on my chest and I stroke your straight, dark hair.

But though you like to be cuddled and loved, you are not one to sit still for long. With in-born curiosity, you point your finger toward the woman in the photo beside us. "Who's that, Grandma?" you ask in your not-quite-three-year-old voice.

"That's your great-great grandma," I reply with pride. "That's Grandma's Grandma."

The photo holds a significant place of honor in our home. It stands alone on a finely polished, wooden end table with a lamp to guide our eyes toward it. No other ornaments or pictures compete for our attention.

As you stare at the photo, a puzzled smile crosses your face, and I see you trying to comprehend what I've said. Then, in typical

toddler fashion, you go on to the next question that demands release from your inquisitive mind. For now, our chats are simple—but intimate.

When you are older, our conversations will be more complex. We'll sit together and talk about the deeper questions that your young mind cannot now conceive. And I'll tell you stories that probably will lack detail because of the passing of time. So I'm writing these words while the memories are fresh. I want you to meet the smiling woman in the photo and hear the stories as I remember them today. I want you to feel the warmth of a grandma's love as I share with you the exceptional woman whose life is forever intertwined with mine.

As I look at my grandma's portrait, I realize that for all the memories I have of a "perfect" grandma, she was not perfect. She had knots and imperfections. And though it may be hard for you to imagine that I too have knots and imperfections, don't be disappointed or disillusioned when, one day, you discover them.

Life is much like a tapestry that is knotted and rough on one side and beautiful and clean on the other. There are smooth patches filled with peace and joy. There are rough spots with turmoil and sadness. Life and people are not always what we'd like them to be. Sometimes they fail. Sometimes we fail.

Remember that the knots and flaws are just as important as the joys and accomplishments that we are privileged to experience. Throughout our lives, they all weave us into the individuals we become—unique and beautiful tapestries that God sees as perfect. But it's only as we surrender the knots and imperfections of ourselves and others into the hands of a loving, forgiving, and sovereign God that true brilliance and beauty come alive.

As you read these pages, you'll walk the life journey that my grandma and I traveled together. And though it focuses on the two of us, you'll meet five generations, one of which you are a part.

Each generation adds a different color to the tapestry. Each one leaves a fingerprint on the next generation.

In future years, I will be a portrait on your wall of ancestors. And you will search for words to describe the relationship that you and I, as Grandma and Granddaughter, shared over the years.

May you come to know my grandma and see how her life mingled with mine to help mold me into the grandma I am for you today. May you see the thread of a grandma's unwavering spirit—as it was, as it is, and as it passes from generation to generation to generation. And may you, and others who read this book, be inspired and encouraged by the heart of a grandma's life and love and the difference it made.

One day, when you sit with a child on your lap, may you marvel at what God has done in the lives of those who left a mark on your life. And may the child on your lap be drawn to the beautiful tapestry that is you.

Love,
Grandma