



Mr. and Mrs. Herman Darrah and her father

Mary Darrah to celebrate 100 years

Mrs. Mary Riggs Darrah remembers the first automobile she ever saw. She thinks back to watching the first man step foot on the moon. And, she can tell of living in the Indian Territory, known now as Oklahoma.

Today, Thursday, March 27, "Granny Darrah" as she is affectionately known marks her 100th birthday with a spirit that some half her age could envy.

A reception will be held in her honor at her home, directly across from the Coal City Grocery from 4 to 7 p.m.

Darrah, a native of Talladega County, married her husband, Herman, a miner, when she was but 16-years-old. She then marks off the years with places the couple moved to and the six babies that she had.

Though she has been in the hospital over the last year and has not fully recuperated from a broken

hip, Darrah does not focus on her problems other than to apologize for not being able to hear every word. Instead, she concentrates on the things she has seen change.

Her mother carded wool and cotton to make stockings for Darrah to wear and sheets for her to sleep on.

"When I got my first pair of nylon hose, I thought they were the greatest things in the world. And, I kept them wrapping in tissue paper so they wouldn't run," she smiles.

Every piece of food she put in her mouth as a child came from the neighboring fields or hogpen. She can recall vividly when her father was taking wheat to be ground at the mill into flour. He could not quite fill the bag, and cornmeal was thrown in. That night at dinner, Darrah's father, a religious man, thanked the Lord for everything except that little bit of meal he had to use.

The first car that drove by caused a stir, because as Darrah remembers it, it had wheels like a wagon and was "roaring like you never heard."

After spending time rearing her children—Robert Darrah, Viola Darrah, Lenora Donahoo and Catherine Alberts—Darrah spent time raising beautiful flowers that enticed drivers to stop and admire.

She also kept busy, until recently, with crocheting, tatting, and knitting. And, that is the secret, as she explains it, for long life—keeping busy.

She regrets seeing children go the extra mile to "not mind" their parents. "It breaks my heart to hear the children talk back to adults. My kids minded me."

Darrah is proud of each of her 13 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

What is her...



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