



**"The ocean stirs the heart, inspires the imagination and brings eternal joy to the soul." – Wyland**



Susan's grandmother, Rose Ebenbach



1878 tin-type photo of Sue's grandmother, Rose Ebenbach's father, Edward Keplar, as a little boy in a Wildwood Photo studio.

**Editor Note:** This is the oldest Wildwood photo to be published in *The Sun* in the past 10 years.



Susan's Nan and Poppy, Wildwood 1921



Jane with her family on the Wildwood beach. Summer of 2012



Quigley and Sayer families on the Wildwood beach 1964

## Oh Those Wildwood Days

SUBMITTED BY SUSAN QUIGLEY BEASLEY

I would like to dedicate this story to my parents, John and Jane Quigley.



Susan's mom Jane & her father, "Poppy" Wildwood 1930

That wonderful song conjures up all the feelings that I have related to family and all the years I was lucky enough to have fabulous Wildwood summers. It stirs those memories deep in my soul. It's more than just a song; it's the smell of salt air and the touch of warm velvety sand between my toes. It's the salty taste as I dive into the brisk ocean water each time I have the pleasure to do so; its residue drying on my skin. Crabs spread out on newspaper on the kitchen table with old bay seasoning wafting in the air. "Wildwood Days" is more than a song, it's my legacy; one that's been shared for at least the last seven generations in my family.

As I look through photos I share with you I feel blessed to have them. They are happy times and a glimpse into the past. The oldest photo I can find is made of tin from the 1870's. My great, great grandmother stands holding my great grandfather in the tin photo taken in Wildwood, the beach in the background. Every generation after that has a photo to share the memories of all their Wildwood Days. In 1921, my grandparents courted (as they say) in Wildwood. Postcards and photos of times shared under the sun and sand depict such fabulous times. All I have to do is look at them to be transported back to all my fabulous memories.

When I was small it was sand castles, digging for sand crabs and jumping the waves, sitting under the beach umbrella and being slathered with 'ski and sea',

having my mom and dad, grandparents and sister to share in the memories. I can recall the boardwalk at night, the ding, ding, ding of the games people tried to win for the person they loved, the smell of Mack's Pizza, Taylor Pork Roll frying, the rides on Hunt's Pier, and the beautiful Merry-Go-Round and trying to catch that ring.

As I got older, my Wildwood days were shared with school friends and my boyfriend, who is now my husband of 41 years. Lying on the beach, I tried hopelessly to tan this freckled Irish skin. I remember the sound of the banner planes flying low over the ocean and the exciting anticipation about something great going on that night. My Wildwood days were the Fudgy Wudgy man and the newspaper callers "Get your Philadelphia Daily News!", beach umbrellas, transistor radios, beach towels, and those memorable peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with a crunch of sand were my Wildwood days.

As the years passed I was lucky enough to share all of those wonderful things with my children and now my Grandchildren. Last summer was the last time I could share those times with my Mom. She was 90 this year when she passed and I am ever so thankful she had one more of those "Wildwood Days" summers. With the fireworks, beach and boardwalk, and her family, my mom shared those days with us. The last beach photo of my mom is one surrounded by her family, another happy memory for us to savor. She spent part of every day on the balcony of the condo we rented overlooking the beach and the boardwalk. I will always remember the eternal smile on her face. I'm sure she was remembering her days as a child jumping the ocean waves with her dad and the times she and my dad danced the night away at the Starlight Ballroom. My parents shared those memories with us. I can almost see my dad swinging my mom under his legs now. That smile, oh how lucky I was that I could see it; a smile that was not only with her mouth but in her eyes as she filled all her senses with the look, sounds, smell and feel of those fabulous "Wildwood Days."