

Margaret Frazier Dew Aldridge was born in the Dew family home place on what is now Colonial Road and grew up in that house where her sister the late Sue Dew Dupree resided and her brother-in-law Bob Dupree still resides. Her parents were Kerg Staton Dew and Lucille Elizabeth Frazier Dew. She was baptized in St. Ignatius Church in Old Sparta by the Rev. Frederick Leroy Beard in 1954 and confirmed also in April of 1954 by Bishop Edwin A. Penick.

“My Daddy was a farmer,” Margaret says “and we had a large family. Mother had 9 children and raised 8, losing one to drowning. When I was born, I was just ‘Baby Girl Dew.’ Mace Edmondson, who worked in the Register of Deeds Office, had to get me a birth certificate later. Our house was a one-story wood house then, built in the 1800s. It was remodeled in the early 40s from a one story frame house to a two story house.”

“We bought our clothes at W.S. Clark and Belk Tyler. We didn’t get a lot of clothes so we had to take very good care of them.”

“This is how we started going to St. Ignatius,” she relates. “My Daddy’s brother was married to my Aunt Matt. He died and she eventually remarried, to a Bridgers who ran a general store in Old Sparta.” Margaret explained that, in its heyday, the crossroads at Old Sparta had a store on every corner.

“We went down to that store almost every weekend,” Margaret continues, “and Aunt Matt was the one who introduced us to St. Ignatius which was just up the road.”

Five of the Dew children attended Sunday School and Church at St. Ignatius – Betty Lou, Margaret, Billy, Sue and Ben. “That would have been in the early 50s,” Margaret says. “I remember Treadwell Davison, Grayson Clary and Leroy Beard as ministers.. The ministers came out once a month for communion and other times the lay readers came for Morning Prayer. Some of the lay readers were Don (Dinksie) Gilliam, Gilly Nicholson, Hyman Philips and Bud Shook.

“The lay readers and ministers used to pick up most of the children, although some of the children who lived in Old Sparta walked to church,” Margaret remembers.

Chapman, Burnette, Edmondson, Denny, Shelton, Eagles and Britt were some of the other families who attended St. Ignatius.

“Every summer Gilly Nicholson would get a large truck, put all the kids in the back and take us to White Lake for the day. That was a big event for us. Back then they had bath houses and no air conditioning. We’d get all wet and dirty, then you had to take a shower in a public bath house and dress for the ride home.”

Mace Edmondson, a long time resident of Tarboro who was Register of Deeds, was another dedicated Episcopal mission person who taught Sunday School during those years at St. Ignatius. “She was with us every Sunday,” Margaret added.

“Miss Emily Putnam played the organ and Judy Edmondson took lessons from her. We used to sing *My Faith Looks Up to Thee* almost every Sunday.”

“For perfect attendance we received a wreath pin and each year that you had perfect attendance you received a bar to add to your wreath pin. That was part of our Christmas program.”

“Sometimes, we went to Saint Anne’s (also a mission church, located on Howard Avenue at McNair Road) when they were having a special program,” she adds.

“I went to St. Ignatius until I graduated from Tarboro High School,” Margaret continues. “We were the last kids from this township to go to school in Tarboro. We rode the school bus and had to walk to the fork in the road to get on the bus. The kids who lived inside the Town limits had to walk to school.”

Margaret went to work for Edgecombe Bank and Trust right after she graduated. “I had worked a long time on the farm, but only during the summer,” she recalls. “My Daddy drove me to work or I rode with a girl who worked at Marrow Pitt.”

Margaret began attending Calvary in the 60s.

“Mayo Little was one of my favorites,” she says. “When Ed (her son) was little, I went to the 11 o’clock service. Now I go to the early service. A year or so ago Mayo was at the early service and I sat right behind him. I was glad to see him again.”

“I always went to the midnight service on Christmas Eve. That was quite a service. We had wall to wall people then. It was at midnight – standing room only and everybody taking communion. It would be about 2 a.m. when it was over. At that time, it was the only midnight service in Tarboro to my knowledge.”

Another of Margaret’s favorite services is the Easter Churchyard service.

“My youngest brother still attends church in the building which was St. Ignatius. I’m not sure what denomination it is today.”