

Our Mailbox

Our mailbox was not originally at the end of driveway. When I was a little boy, the mailbox was at intersection of two gravel roads that ran by our farm. The east-west road connected on the east to old Highway 101, which ran through Dayton, on the it connected to Uncle Louie's and then Albertville. Dayton was the nearest town. We were in Dayton parish. We all graduated from the Catholic grade school. We considered Dayton, our hometown. The north-south road connected Rogers on the south to Elk River north.

Corbin's mailbox was there next to ours. That was also the crossing that the Elk River High School bus came past. I remember Uncle John getting picked there for high school. Uncle Norman and Cousin Melvin both met the high school bus the crossing, when they helped Pa years earlier.

The intersection was less than a quarter mile to the west of our driveway. That seemed like a great distance to a four-year-old boy, that had just woken up from his nap. Mom would send me to get the mail after my nap, if Pa had not gotten it already. He was often too busy for that.

Donald Corbin always drove to pick up their mail. Sometimes, but rarely, I could get a ride from Donald. About once a week the road grader would come by. Because the road grader made two passes, if I missed him on the first pass, I could often catch him on his second pass.

The huge machine was an attraction of course, but mostly I loved the feel of the cool, moist, smooth, surface on my bare feet.

The first time I followed too closely, so Mom scolded me.

When the grader came the next week, I promised I would stay behind the grader the length of our red dairy barn.

That worked for Ma.

I could follow the road grader as far as Corbin's driveway to the east, and as far as the intersection to the west.

Tom.

