



Faye Blanche Whitmer Adams, late 90s/early 2000s

BLANCHE FAYE WHITMER

July 7, 1925 - September 27, 2008



Historical Profile

Blanche Faye (and her twin sister Fern) was born on 07 July 1925, in Alpine, Arizona to her father Angus Van Meter Whitmer (46 years old) and his mother Jennie (41 years old) as the fourteenth of 17 children. She and her sister were the youngest children of Angus and Jennie to survive the infant years. Her older siblings Don (Angus), Ralph, Cecil, Harold, Rex (Chuck), Genevieve, Ethel, Afton, Lawrence, Mary, and Von (Vaughn) were 22, 20, 17, 16, 15, 12, 11, 8, 7, 4 and 2 years old when she was born. One brother Lealand Claude died of whooping cough on 8 August 1906, before Faye was born. Another brother Ray V, who had been born in 1915, died of pneumonia on 3 May 1917, also before Faye was born.

According to David Keith Whitmer the Whitmer children were raised, “in the lousy rugged and amazingly beautiful White Mountains of Alpine, Arizona where the mountains reach 8,000 feet in the sky of neverland. Alpine is now a resort but in the early 1900s it was a very small place where farmers

raised their cattle, vegetables and did whatever it took to feed their families. The Whitmer children knew the Blue well, a place where the cattle grazed in the winter. All the children were raised riding horses. It was a place where everyone had to work and work hard. Seventeen children were born here. Four died.”

When Faye was 3 years old in 1928 twin sisters Bertha and Blanche would be born but not survive the birth. These were the last of his siblings to be born to her parents. Faye’s family were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and according to her twin sister Fern’s account, “Church and religion was our whole life. We all got up and went to Church. I don’t know if I learned a lot. My parents were so busy I wasn’t given much time. Church and Sunday School on Sunday, Relief Society and Mutual on Tuesdays, Primary Wednesdays. Dances on the weekends. Family prayer sometimes around my parent’s bed.”

Faye took a beauty course in Phoenix, Arizona as a teenager with the financial support of her older sister Ethel and her parents. She ran away at fifteen,

one month before she graduated from beauty school to marry a man seven years older. Raymond Lewis Adams, 22, married Faye in Wickenburg Arizona on 30 May 1941. Later that year they would learn with the rest of America that the Japanese Air Force had attacked Pearl Harbor which would ultimately bring the United States into World War II.

Faye's older brother Von would join the military and fight in this war, which would become the most destructive conflict in recorded history. Von specifically served as a radio operator in a three-man crew on Zero Transportation Planes. He flew the Burma hump from India to China where they were dropping supplies to the Chinese. It was an incredibly dangerous assignment. More than 1,000 men and 600 planes were lost over the 530-mile stretch of rugged terrain. It was dubbed the "Skyway to Hell" and the "Aluminum Trail" for the number of planes that didn't make it. Von survived however after serving 45 months.

Fourteen months after their wedding on 25 July 1942, Faye and Raymond Adams welcomed their first son, John Raymond into the world. Two years later on 15 August 1944 their daughter Lorraine Faye was born while the family was living in Phoenix, Arizona. The following year, Faye and her family would listen intently to reports of an atomic bomb being dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima with devastating results, ultimately bringing the war to an end. The following year on 17 October 1946, another daughter Charlotte Joan would be born into the growing family. Another two years and their son Donald Louis would be born on 4 September 1948. Then 4 more years would pass before their last child William Robert would be born into the family on 22 July 1952 two weeks after Faye's 27th birthday.

The next decade marked an era of conflict as the Cold War set in across the world. Capitalist and Communist ideologies began to divide the world as

countries overturned their traditional governments in favor of one or the other. The result was one conflict after another beginning with the Korean War (1950), and the Vietnam conflict stretching from 1955-1975. In 1955, when Faye was 30 years old, her father Angus Van Whitmer passed away at the age of 76. Faye's mother Jennie would live until 1967 when she would also pass away at the age of 83.

This was a time of great change in culture, in technology, and in global events. Martin Luther King would lead the nation in a civil rights movement. United States astronauts would land on the moon in 1969 when Faye was 44 years old. Beginning in 1970 Faye would begin to see her siblings also begin to pass, starting with her sister Genevieve in 1970 at the age of 61, and her brother Angus in 1977 at the age of 74.

Sadly, in 1981, Faye's oldest son passed away at the age of 38. The following year her older brother Ralph would pass away at the age of 77 followed the next year in 1983 by her brother Cecil at the age of 75. Then in 1984 Faye lost Raymond, her beloved husband of 42 years, when he passed away in Lake Montezuma, Arizona at the age of 65. Then in 1985 Faye's sister Ethel passed away, being 71 at the time. In 1987 her brother Chuck would die at the age of 76. Then in 1990 her brother Harold passed away at the age of 81. Two years later in 1992 her brother Von, just older than her, passed away at the age of 69. Then in 2000 as the century turned Faye's brother Lawrence passed away.

One year later on 9/11 the nation watched in horror as one plane, and then another crashed into the iconic twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. These two planes were part of an elaborate terrorist attack which also brought down planes in Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania and took the lives of over 3000 civilians. These events initiated a new era of security protocols which changed many aspects of day to day life for traveling Americans.

When Faye was 79, a massive hurricane named Katrina hit parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama causing excessive damage and destruction. Thousands of people were left homeless and nearly 2000 died. Americans rallied during this time in support to help those impacted by the hurricane raising money and aid for those in need and taking displaced families into their homes.

In her final days in August of 2008 Faye received word that her twin sister Fern would pass and sister Maryaway, as America began to sink into a recession caused by the collapse of an economic housing bubble. Shortly thereafter on 27 September 2008 at the age of 83, Faye passed away joining her Raymond in eternity. She was survived by her children Lorraine, Charlotte, Donald, and William.

