

The Lucke Family Newsletter

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♥ Congratulations ♥

♥ **Denise** and **Anthony Riccio** are the proud parents of Ryan Joseph born on September 17th. Denise is Mary Agnes and John Dorney's daughter, Agnes Wilson's granddaughter, **#2 Frank's** great-granddaughter.

♥ **Casey Galligan** and **Allison Hayhurst** were married on May 8th, at St Joseph's Church in Bronxville NY. They are living in Bronxville. Casey is Pat & Dan's son, **#3 Leo's** grandson.

The 31

We continue the stories of the children of **The Thirteen**. There were 31 of us. In this issue we feature **Dorothy (Dottie) Lucke Gucker** the only child of **#7 Charles (Carlie)**.



Starring Mom Gucker!

Dorothy Lucke was born on March 11, 1917 in Brooklyn, NY to Charlie Lucke and Mary Dorothea Broncheska. Dottie's mother died when Dottie was still in diapers. She moved in with Grandma Lucke and her thirteen aunts and uncles. Can you imagine going from being an only child to a home with 13 kids? Yikes! Mom went to school at Bishop McDonnell High School then held several secretarial positions at major corporations in Manhattan.

Mom has seven children: Steve, whose father died in the war, and six others with her late husband, Francis (Frank) C. Gucker. Mom and Frank were married in 1950 in Brooklyn. They moved to a very Catholic neighborhood in West Hempstead on Long Island about two years later. Mom and Pop belonged to St Thomas the Apostle church and sent their kids to school there. For a time Mom had a live-in maid, then later a housekeeper who came twice a week. All those kids were a handful and Pop worked long days, so it was great to have the help. Pop would leave home in the morning at 7am and come home at 7pm, commuting to New York City where he worked at Gucker and Goldstein, a lace importing business.

In 1965, we moved to Bridgewater, New Jersey. Pop died on May 19, 1970 leaving Mom with six children, ages 9 to 19, still at home. Just when you think that life can't get any tougher, the house caught on fire. Theresa and a bunch of her friends were having a pajama party, when they smelled smoke coming from the basement. They really saved the day because they were able to wake everyone and get everyone out before the explosion. That was a nightmare and so were the following months. The neighbors wouldn't give Mom a variance to put a mobile home in the back yard while the house was being rebuilt, so we had to stay at the Bridgewater Holiday Inn for about two months. Imagine, two connecting hotel rooms and five kids for months.

On Saturday afternoons Mom and Pop had a routine of making a round of gin-&-tonics or martinis. On one of those afternoons, Mom must have exceeded her martini quota because all of a sudden she starting running through the house with a knife in her hand giggling and making noises like an Indian on the warpath. What a sight! All of us kids were watching TV and there she came, knife in hand, making Indian noises! You never saw so many eyeballs pop at one time!

I remember Mom decorating the house. She was very talented at making drapes and slipcovers for the sofas and chairs, painting, wallpapering; you name it, she could do it. Mom did more with a single can of gold leaf spray paint than Martha Stewart with her whole palate of paint colors!

While in New Jersey, Mom worked as a Shaklee distributor; after Pop died, she worked for the Bridgewater Police Department. We all thought it was a good idea for her to work at the local police department - with seven kids, you never know when you might need a favor!! Mom stayed in Bridgewater until all the kids were out of high school except Theresa who moved with Mom to Seminole, Florida in 1978.

In Florida Mom tried her hand at being a land baroness, but buying high and selling low, didn't work too well. Mom then worked in the retail clothing business at Ivey's which was later bought by Dillard's, then at Gayfers department store. She retired last year at 82!! What a work ethic, my kind of employee!

With so many children, Mom didn't have the opportunity to travel much in the earlier days. We rented beach cottages in the Hamptons for many summers and Mom took us to Maryland once, too. She visited San Francisco and Georgia and took a cruise somewhere. More recently she took the big trip to England to visit Carl and Annette.

Mom flew up to New Jersey to visit Paul a few years ago. Paul, being a good son, came in to greet Mom and help get her

luggage. They waited and waited. Unfortunately, Paul had to move his car (for fear of being towed). Just after he left, Mom's suitcase appeared. Mom went to grab the bag, but it got stuck on the carousel, then came loose and Mom went flying. This must have been quite comical to see, but unfortunately for Mom, she really got hurt. She calls this event 'the beginning of the end'.

True to the prolific Lucke blood, Mom's family has kept the pace. Not only have her kids matured (ages 38-58), but they have children of their own, too. Mom is now mother to seven, grandmother to fourteen, step-grandmother to two, and step-great-grandmother to two. Here's the list:

- Stephen (Steve) Gucker lives in New York with wife Anne and children Jennifer, Matthew, Charlie, and Luke
- Dorothy (Dar) Watkins lives in Florida with husband Glenn (Skip). Children Craig, Kim (husband James, children - Connor and Devin) and Stephanie (fiancé Jan) are grown and gone.
- Paul Gucker lives in New Jersey with wife Barbara. Children Kristin and David are grown and gone.
- Joseph (Joe) Gucker lives in North Carolina with wife Kathy and children Corey and Kaleigh.
- James (Jim) Gucker lives in North Carolina with wife Brigitta and children Danielle and Eric.
- Carl Gucker lives in England with wife Annette.
- Theresa Hanson lives in Atlanta, Georgia with husband Steve and children Kyle, Cole and Connor.

Mom also has remained close with the children of Frank's sister (Louise Simmons), Margaret and Liz.

-Dar

Mom used to get all the kids together, throw us in the old station wagon and drive off to Jones Beach for the day. She would bring one of the old bedspreads from the attic bedroom. She boiled about 2 dozen hotdogs and put them into this huge hot thermos bottle. It seemed like we never ran out. They were always there when you wanted one! Mom would also bring a large

basket of hard-boiled eggs and another thermos of lemonade. We always had enough! We would set up the blanket and an umbrella and then all the kids raced for the water! We would just play and eat, play and eat, play and eat until it was time to go home! I don't remember the rides home; we were all sound asleep while Mom sat in the traffic on the Long Island Expressway. Thanks Mom. Those were great times and are now my favorite memory!

Then there is a "not-so-good" memory! As a young stud, I owned a beautiful vintage 1964 Pontiac GTO. It was in great shape; not a scratch on it! I had to park it on the driveway close to the garage - right where Mom parked her car. She backed into it, not once, not twice, not even three times! FIVE TIMES she backed into it! And of course, not in the same spot. I had dents on all four sides and two on one side. I'm over it now - I think! I love you Mom!

-Joe

Digging through some old pictures that Mom had given me, to help stir some old memories of outstanding moments, I found it quite difficult. Growing up in a sea of siblings, it is hard to separate any "Mom moments". It's no wonder, since we were always a family together, in particular the summer vacations at the shore.

I remember the Hamptons, wading in the shallows playing motor boat with a piece of tubing, blowing through it to mimic the sound while floating on the raft. I also remember the outings at Jones Beach, eating hard-boiled eggs for lunch, barely distinguishing the difference between the sand and salt.

When we moved to New Jersey we started to holiday at Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, pitching a tent for all of us on the beach. We always picked hurricane time to go. I remember once that we had to hold on to the tent to keep it from blowing away in the winds. The thunder storms were very spectacular, crashing and banging overhead as the storms rolled in from the sea. At these times Mom would always have her rosary beads in hand, repeating the Lord's Prayer until we all were safe from the storm. The real attraction was catching and eating

fresh Maryland crab; we used chicken legs to tempt them to the surface.

In later years, we went to Chenago Valley in Upstate New York for our camping trips. It was far away from the shore, but, not from the thunderstorms! Mom still had her rosary beads; no trip would be complete without them.

When I was in high school, one of my math teachers was a member of our church. She told me how she admired my family. She would look for us every week, watching how well dressed and behaved we all were, thinking that we were like the VonTrapps from *The Sound of Music*. When I recall this story now, it makes me very proud to think how good my parents were to raise a large family with strong family values to be admired by all.

As for that famous "explosion": Theresa and her friends made such a ruckus at the front door trying to escape, that they woke up Mom, who had to plow through the crowd to open the door. When Mom tried to go back to her room to phone the fire department, she hit a brick wall of smoke and had to turn back. From the front door she yelled and yelled "FIRE!" to wake the rest of us.

Mom had her airport accident in Newark in 1993. She failed to use her usual charms and wisdom, to get help removing her overweight baggage from the carousel. Instead, she tried to do it herself. She wound up doing some back flips, to everyone's amazement!!

When Mom traveled to England in September 1997, she had to walk a lot. England is a country not designed for convenient parking, or even for cars, so a trip out would involve a lot of walking. After visiting places like London, Sandringham (one of the Queen's residences), Ely Cathedral, Cambridge, Norwich, and several others, Mom declared that she was grateful for all the exercise!!

-Carl

Camping at Chenago...sitting by the campfire, Mom would sing "*The Big Baboon by the Light of the Moon*". Lots of warm fuzzies there! Mom packed us up and hauled us up there year after year. I don't know how she did it - I do know it took a lot of energy! Thanks...energy well spent!

I especially remember Mom during the two big tragedies in my life: the day Pop died and the fire at 713 Talamini Road. Mom was so strong; she just kept on going and doing what had to be done to keep the family on track.

One of my fondest memories of all is when I drove down from Gainesville to Largo one Mother's Day. We went to Indian Rocks Beach, sunbathed and talked all day. We went to dinner and then to see "*Terms of Endearment*." Mom handed me tissue after tissue during the movie. That was a great day that I will always cherish. Thanks for the memories, Mom. I love you!

-Theresa

My fondest memories and admiration of Aunt Dot are as a wife and mother. When I was going through the last few years of raising two teenagers, she had taken on a different role, as an independent person living alone in Florida with all those years of raising her kids behind her.

We had a wonderful time together in the early 1980s when I spent some time with her in Largo, soon after she moved into her mobile home. She had fixed everything so nicely and made a cozy place for herself. We went to Indian Rocks beach, visited Theresa up in Gainesville where she was going to nursing school, went to Epcot which was just opening, ate out, met her friends and went to a psychic fair!! But more importantly we got to talk and spend time together. We've kept in touch of course, seen each other at family weddings, sent birthday cards, - but I do miss her and wish there weren't the separation of miles between us. I think about her often and am thankful that she has been - and is - part of my life.

My Aunt Dot (on her 80th birthday)

You were a Lucke little girl who had no sibs,
So you made up for it by having seven kids.
There were times when I was one of them;
you took me in like a mother hen. (Liz too!)
My phobia of tunnels, with which I'm still living,

comes from getting stuck in the Holland going to Brooklyn for Thanksgiving.

Time spent in West Hempstead in my formative years,

when all my cousins were sweet little dears.
(Steve was big and liked Elvis) Baby Joe would fall asleep on my lap in the living room chair.

Dar changed clothes five times a day and once when we went for her graduation party, she had run away!

I made friends with Ethel and had a crush on The Swengros' Tommy,
and had my first exposure to a super mommy.

Octavia helped a little and you schlepped all the kids to Jones Beach on a summer day.

At night you didn't go to bed,
you stayed up late hanging wallpaper instead!

The Basic H years on Talamini, you sold Shaklee and the people next door had that awful pet monkey. My cousins grew up in that house, Jim lost his baby fat, grew tall and handsome, Carl tinkered with stuff, machines and wire, Uncle Frank died, Paul went to the prom, Theresa had a party and there was a fire.

As in any life there are good times and bad,
I really admire the strength that you had.

You've kept on going like the Energizer Bunny

except you are rarely in a hurry down in Florida where it is nice and sunny.

Happy Birthday! I love you a lot,
you're one great broad, you're my Aunt Dot!!

-Margaret



Early 1960's
Back: Frank, Cousin Margaret, Dottie
Front: Jim, Carl, Joe



Chesapeake Bay 1968
Carl, Jim, Theresa



Dottie with her children (from left: Joe, Jim, Theresa, Carl, Dar, Paul & Steve) at Carl's wedding, December 2, 1994

The Guckers

- Dorothy Lucke** born 11-Mar-1917, Brooklyn, NY, Bapt 24-Mar-1917, Blessed Sacrament, Brooklyn, married **Frank C Gucker Jr**, b. 31-Dec-1915, Brooklyn, NY, Bapt 27-Feb-1916, St Gregory's, Brooklyn, died 19-May-1971, Bridgewater, NJ, buried: Immaculate Conception, Somerville NJ.
- **Stephen Charles Gucker** b. 30-Jun-1941, Brooklyn, NY, Bapt St Gregory's, Brooklyn NY, m. 19-Apr-1970, at Our Lady of Lourdes, Malverne NY, **Anne Dietershagen**, b. 25-Jul-1945.
Jennifer Gucker b. 26-Jan-1973, West Hempstead NY.
Matthew Gucker b. 12-Jul-1975, West Hempstead NY.
Charles Gucker b. 15-Jan-1977, West Hempstead NY.
Luke Casper Gucker b. 11-Jun-1981, West Hempstead NY.
 - **Dorothy Frances Gucker** b. 13-May-1951, Brooklyn, NY, Bapt Holy Cross, Brooklyn NY, m. 4-Jul-1981, in Seminole FL, **Glenn Gary Watkins**, b. 12-Sep-1951, Detroit MI.
Craig David Watkins b. 2-Feb-1970, Bridgewater NJ.
Kimberly Eileen Watkins b. 23-Oct-1973. m., in St Petersburg FL, **James Hill**, b. 20-Jul-1965
Connor Hill b. 10-Jan-1998, Clearwater FL
Devin Hill b. 10-Jan-1998, Clearwater FL
Stephanie Alyce Watkins b. 5-Nov-1976.
 - **Paul James Gucker** b. 17-Jul-1953, Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre, NY, Bapt St Thomas, West Hempstead NY, m. (1) 2-Aug-1975, at St John's, Peapack NJ, divorced, **Judy Anne Panaccione** b. 11-Dec-1953, m. (2) 22-May-1999, at The Presbyterian Church, Pluckemin NJ, **Barbara Starr**, b. 25-Sept.
Kristen Gucker b. 1-Nov-1977, Bound Brook NJ.
David Frank Gucker b. 21-May-1980, Bound Brook NJ.
 - **Joseph Vincent Gucker** b. 5-Nov-1954, Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre, NY, m. 10-Aug-1985, at Immaculate Conception, Somerville NJ, **Kathleen Ann Kane**, b. 6-Nov-1960.
Corey Joseph Gucker b. 18-Jul-1987.
Kaleigh Theresa Gucker b. 9-Nov-1989.
 - **James Barton Gucker** b. 29-May-1957, Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre NY, m. 25-Aug-1985, at Seton Hall, South Orange NJ, **Brigitta Suzanna Maria VanDillen**, b. 6-Sep-1957.
Danielle Sherye Gucker b. 29-Apr-1987.
Erik Frank Gucker b. 14-Jan-1990.
 - **Carl Thomas Gucker** b. 3-Mar-1959, Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre NY, Bapt St Thomas, West Hempstead, m. 2-Dec-1994, in Immaculate Conception, Clinton NJ, **Annette Nordmeyer**, b. 27-Feb-1958, England.
 - **Theresa Louise Gucker** b. 11-Apr-1961, Mercy Hospital, Rockville Centre NY, Bapt St Thomas, West Hempstead NY, m. 23-Apr-1988, at Duke University, Durham NC, **Steven Michael Hanson**, b. 5-Feb-1956.
Kyle Benjamin Hanson b. 6-Oct-1989.
Connor James Hanson b. 24-Aug-1995, Kennesaw, Georgia.
Cole Barton Hanson b. 1-Jul-1997, Kenneshaw, Georgia.