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# *This Old House*

## By Imogene Barger



This old house sits crumbling down and alone in a pasture without even a driveway leading to its door. Its doors, windows and front porch are long gone. But — it remembers — better days — when curtains were hanging at the windows and bouncing bettys, pink roses and lilacs bloomed around its door. When its walls were carefully papered and painted and its floors were kept white by scrubbing with the wash water or perhaps covered with a linoleum that was used until all the bright colors were gone in spite of careful waxing each week with a mixture of coal oil and paraffin.

It remembers — pictures on the walls, flowers on the table and the smell of fresh baked bread covered with home churned butter.

This old house has been home to many, both saint and sinner and it remembers many things. The good and the bad, the happy and the sad. Its walls still hear the echoes of the laughter and tears of the children that ran through its now empty rooms.

It remembers — the joy at the birth of a healthy baby with only a midwife or a country doctor or perhaps just a neighbor woman in attendance. It remembers — the pain of death, whether it be a child or someone that had lived their allotted three score and ten years and it remembers the voices of family and friends that came to congratulate or console.

It remembers — the prayers of the good and the not so good and can still hear the voices of the neighborhood women as they caught up on the local news when they met to quilt or can.

It remembers — when the furniture was pushed back, the rugs were rolled up and its wall rang to the music of guitar and fiddle. It can still hear the waltz and two-step tempos and the square dance callers voice sing-singing "Ladies bow, gents pow-wow, if that ain't hugging, show me how." It can still see the men slip quietly out its side door during these dances for a refreshing sip of homebrew or home made wine.

This old house sits lonely and alone, soon to be just a pile of rubble. AND — there is no one to care. Its memories will soon be dead and gone like the people that made it live through the years. It's sad — it wants to tell its stories. But — no one has time to listen. ■

*IMOGENE BARGER's works have appeared often in WESTVIEW. A history buff, she enjoys researching subjects about Lookeba, her home territory.*

*Author's Note: The house that was the inspiration for "This Old House" is still standing ¼ west and ¼ mile south of the Highway 281 intersection west of Lookeba.*