



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

[Change Banner Image](#)**154,944**  
SparkPoints[Info](#)[Photos](#)[Feed](#)[Blogs](#)[Awards](#)[More](#) 

## My 46 Year Old Christmas Tree

Friday, December 25, 2015

Christmas 1969 was bleak. Our baby was 3 months old. DH had left for Vietnam a few weeks after she was born. In those days you weren't allowed to stay in base housing once he was deployed so we sent most of our stuff into storage, loaded the rest into a U-Haul, and drove 300 miles to my parents' house with a colicky newborn in the back seat.

As the holidays approached, my mood was dark. It was probably partly post-partum depression, but since my husband was out in a jungle with people trying to kill him, depression seemed like an appropriate emotion to me.

I wasn't exactly the Grinch, but I didn't want anything to do with Christmas myself.

My Dad decided we should buy a tree, our first artificial tree. Their new house had "radiant" electric heat from the ceiling and no amount of water could keep a real tree in decent shape.

So off we went to Sears where he bought a 6 foot scotch pine that looked very much like the type he used to buy off the lot. I remember that it cost \$30. We decorated it with the ornaments from my childhood. I took pictures and sent them to DH, trying to look happy and hopeful for the future, but I wasn't. I was sad and angry and miserable.

Fortunately, my worst nightmares never materialized. DH came home and we had 2 more children. Our 6 grandchildren are 14 - 21.

Over the years the tree has been set up in 6 different houses in 4 states. I read that artificial trees last an average of 10 years, but this one is approaching a half century and still looks the same as it did when we bought it.

It has seen happy times and sad ones. My Dad died just before Christmas in 1997. Although the grief fades over time, there is still a shadow for me as the holiday approaches.

However, there's one other Christmas memory that brings me hope and peace.

Christmas 1962 was difficult for me. I had been sent to live in a small town in PA with my grandmother while my parents sorted out Dad's job situation and where we would live. Not only wouldn't we have a tree. We didn't even have a house.

Grandma didn't decorate for Christmas. She lived in an apartment heated only by a coal stove. I remember that we had ice on the INSIDE of the windows. How she cooked such delicious food on and in that stove is amazing to me.

She didn't speak much English either, but now I credit that time with her for my ability to communicate in Slovak when we travel to Eastern Europe and reconnect with the land and family she left behind in 1900.

[Add a Blog Entry](#)

See Today's Featured Member Blog Posts

### More Blogs by BROOKLYN\_BORN

[Now I can add one more event to my "Anniversary Dates" to forget - 6/7/2021](#)

[Avoiding Our Wedding Anniversary - 6/4/2021](#)

[Multitasking for Safety – Plus Remembrance and Reflection - 6/1/2021](#)

[Taps Across America – The National Moment of Remembrance - Monday 5/31/21 3PM - 5/30/2021](#)

[View All >](#)

It's the kind of silver lining that Dad always looked for. Just before Christmas Dad brought me a present - a bell that played Silent Night. He bought it from a guy on the street for \$2.

I still have it, but I don't wait for Christmas to display it. It hangs in my house all year long as a reminder of the past and hope for the future. Strangely sometimes the bell plays all by itself. DH the engineer explains that the change in temperature/humidity in the room affects the mechanism. I have a different thought - Hi Dad!



[Edit Blog Entry](#) | [Delete Blog Entry](#)

Share This Post With Others

[Report Inappropriate Blog](#)

## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**MARYJEANSL**

That is a beautiful story - and such a lovely memory of your dad. It really tugged at my heart, perhaps because, although I am very proud of my dad and of his long service to our country, I don't have many happy memories of him, mostly just of his disciplining me, or sometimes one of my siblings.

1978 days ago



**LIVEDAILY**

I really like how you have the bell displayed year round, and like you, I would say "Hi Dad!" too!! In our family we would play a game while we were driving. We called it "Pa-diddle". The first person to spy a "one eyed monster" (a motorcycle with it's headlight on, or a car with just one headlight) shouted out Padiddle! and everyone else had to blow that person a kiss! Both my folks are gone now, but I still play Padiddle with them while I'm driving!



1988 days ago



**CD4114015**

Love these memories as I LOVE all your blogs...you don't blog nearly enough for me...but understand! LOVE family histories....John and I are HISTORY NUTS...well, he taught me....but this was amazing!

Happy New year to a WONDERFUL friend! Oh, and we LOVE old things too....our home is FULL



of them!

1992 days ago



**MEADSBAY**

Thank you so much for sharing this true story about the normal ups and downs of life.



1992 days ago





**HOLLYM48**

What a beautiful story. So full of hope and love and memories from years past. Thanks for sharing this and I love the bell. I hope you enjoy the end of the year and all of the best to you as we bring a new one!  
1992 days ago



**NUMD97**

Sweet memories. I am glad that the tree and the bell remind you of happy times.

Hope that your Christmas was filled with joy, spent with the people that you love the most.  
1993 days ago



**SUBMOM2**

What a beautiful post...thanks for sharing these memories. We had a bell very much like yours when I was a kid. It used to play Jingle Bells, and I just loved it. It eventually stopped playing and then one year it fell apart. I'm glad your bell and the fond story behind it are still here!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
1993 days ago



**MJZHERE**

Beautiful! Thank you for sharing.  
1993 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**

Those are wonderful family stories about Christmas. I love that bell ringing on its own.



1993 days ago



**CHERYLHURT**

Loved this blog, very heartwarming!  
1994 days ago



**DR1939**

Your father was a wise and thoughtful man.  
1994 days ago



**MCJULIEO**

Precious memories... thank you for sharing them!  
1994 days ago



**GINIEMIE**

Hi Dad is what I'd say too. My daddy died in 1996. Our first artificial tree was the one we bought when we were married. Steve and I could not put a real tree in the apartment and we had a three week old baby. I don't know what happened to that tree, we of course no longer have it. When we bought our house in 1972 we bought a real blue spruce with balled roots so we could plant it in our new yard.... We did that several times, after a fiasco with a cut tree in Miami years later we went back to artificial trees.

Life is full of the good, the bad, the ugly and the beautiful! Some Christmases are sweeter than others but they all give us memories.

May you be blessed with many more, and may your bell keep ringing sounds of joy.

Joyeux Noel. 🎄🔔



1994 days ago



**ALEXSGIRL1**

Merry Christmas  
1994 days ago



**DOVESEYES**

Thankyou this is lovely.  
1994 days ago



**PHOENIX1949**

Wonderful blog on so many levels. Merry Christmas.  
1994 days ago





**WUMPASTAR**

I'm very emotional, I teared up reading your blog (good tears I believe). Merry Christmas and



thanks for sharing 🎄  
1994 days ago



**EISSA7**

Absolutely, the bell rings when your Dad visits!! Wonderful!  
1994 days ago



**KRISZTA11**

Thank you for sharing the beautiful story of the tree and your family.



1994 days ago



**PHEBESS**

What a lovely memory of your dad - and that he occasionally rings the bell for you!!!!  
1994 days ago



**LYNDALOVES2HIKE**

What a lovely blog - I enjoyed sharing your memories and I agree with your theory about why the bell rings - Merry Christmas!!  
1994 days ago



**A\_NEW\_JAN**

Christmas is a difficult time for many of us for all sorts of reasons. I love the story of your 40 year old tree & the little bell from your Dad. Thank you for sharing this.  
Merry Christmas!  
1994 days ago



**TERI-RIFIC**



1994 days ago



**GARDENCHRIS**

what a sweet memory , Merry Christmas to you!  
1994 days ago



**BBEAGAN**

That's lovely!  
1994 days ago



**PICKIE98**

THank you.  
1994 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**

What a lovely retrospective on Christmasses through good times and bad! **THANK YOU!** and Merry

Christmas! 🎁  
1994 days ago

May that tree last another 50 years, and the bell even longer!



**KEERAKYRAM**


That was a wonderful story.  
1994 days ago



**HELEN\_BRU**

Always enjoy reading your posts. Both my parents were Slovak and we went back and forth in the 30's only to settle finally in Canada and made it our home. Still have relatives back there.



Merry Christmas!   
1994 days ago



**WATERMELLEN**  
What a wonderful Christmas story: thank you!!  
1994 days ago



**CD8113065**  
What a simply wonderful story. Thank you ever so much for sharing. Wishing you a memorable and joyful holiday season.  
1994 days ago



**CD15520036**  
A beautiful and touching story of your family history.  
1994 days ago



**SWEDE\_SU**  
thank you for sharing such lovely happysadbittersweet memories - wishing you and yours a very merry and peaceful christmas.  
1994 days ago



### Add Your Comment to the Blog Post

Leave encouragement, a question, or anything else relevant to this post. All blog comments must abide by SparkPeople's [Community Guidelines](#).

Subscribe to this blog

ADD AN EMOTICON

SPELL CHECK

Post Comment

Disclaimer: Weight loss results will vary from person to person. No individual result should be seen as a typical result of following the SparkPeople program.