(Written text and photographs provided by Floyd C. Nelson and William John Krause II). Floyd C. Nelson, Jr. (Sonny) was born on January 27, 1935, in Tampico, Montana, and was the son of Floyd Ernest and Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson. Floyd C. Nelson Jr. was baptized into the Lutheran faith and then was confirmed in the First Lutheran Church of Glasgow, Montana, in 1950. Sonny attended elementary school at the Tampico School and graduated from Glasgow High School in 1953. Sonny was a 10-year member of the Tampico Boys 4-H club and was a member of Future Farmers of America (FFA) while in high school. Sonny won numerous honors at the Valley County Fair for his swine and beef projects. Floyd C. Nelson was awarded a trip to the National 4-H Congress in Chicago, Illinois, for his achievements in 4-H. Sonny also won a state award in 4-H for a project on electricity.

Floyd C. Nelson, Jr. (Sonny) married Deanna O’Neil on June 9, 1956. Deanna O’Neil was born in Glasgow, Montana, and was the daughter of Mike and Annie Lillian O’Neal. Deanna attended schools in Tampico and Great Falls Montana and graduated from Glasgow High School, Glasgow, Montana, in 1956. Deanna worked for 27 years as office manager in the Glasgow Fish and Game Office.

Floyd C. and Deanna (O’Neil) Nelson, Jr. had four daughters: Jackee Nelson born on January 15, 1957, in Glasgow, Montana; Sally Nelson born on May 2, 1962, in Glasgow, Montana; Gina Nelson born on August 3, 1963, in Glasgow, Montana; and Theresa Nelson born on September 21, 1968, in Glasgow, Montana. Sonny and his brother Donny farmed and ranched the original property of their parents near Tampico Montana, and that of his grandparents in the Buggy Creek Community about three miles away. Floyd C. Nelson retired from farming and moved to a home in Glasgow, Montana.

Remembrances of Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) with regard to a story about his grandfather, Nels Christ Nelson, at the Buggy Creek Homestead.

Sonny recalled that his grandfather, Nels Christ Nelson, was well educated for the time and had a distinct penmanship when writing letters. He wrote with a fancy European style with large swirls and open letters to the alphabet. Sonny remembered seeing or hearing about a letter his grandfather wrote to his daughter, Anne Mathilda (Nelson) Stull, just prior to his death in 1927. In his letter to his daughter Nels wrote telling her not to worry about the future at the Buggy Creek homestead following his death (Nels knew he was dying at the time he penned this letter) as her brother, Floyd Ernest Nelson, was coming back from working in the copper mines at Anaconda, Montana, to help run the homestead and help raise the younger members of the family (Pete, Max, Hazel and Lorraine Nelson).
Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) being held by his grandmother, Anna (Olson) Stensland. Tampico, Montana. Date: 1935.

Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) photographed with his sister, Beverly Ann Nelson, at the Tampico homestead in 1941.

Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) photographed with his sister, Beverly Ann Nelson, at their Highland Community homestead residence near Tampico, Montana, with their maternal grandparents, Elias and Anna (Olson) Stensland. Date: 1944.

Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) photographed with his sister, Beverly Ann Nelson, at the Highland Community homestead residence near Tampico, Montana. Date: 1944.
A photograph after the wedding of Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) and Deanna O'Neil on June 9, 1956. Pictured from left to right are: Mr. & Mrs. O'Neil, Floyd Ernest Nelson, Beverly Ann (Nelson) Pederson holding William Pederson, Deanna (O'Neil) Nelson, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny), Bertha (Stensland) Nelson, and Elias Stensland.


Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) relaxing at his home in Glasgow, Montana. Date: June, 1986.
A photograph of the Floyd C. and Deanna (O’Neil) Nelson, Jr. family taken in 1970. From left to right are: Sally Nelson, Deanna (O’Neil) Nelson, Theresa Nelson (sitting), Jackee Nelson (standing), Floyd C. Nelson (Sonny), and Gina Nelson.

Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) (right) photographed with William John Krause (Johnny) at Sonny’s residence in Glasgow, Montana. Date: late 1980s.

Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) (right) photographed with two of his cousins, William John Krause II (center) and Dennis Lyle Krause, in Tampico, Montana. Date: 2000.
A newspaper article announcing that Floyd C. Nelson (Sonny) had been chosen as a delegate to represent Montana at the National 4-H Congress. Source thought to be Great Falls Tribune published in 1967. (Courtesy of Gina (Nelson) Reyling).

A 1968 newspaper article announcing that the Tampico 4-H Club was founded in 1928. Shown are Floyd C. Nelson (Sonny) and his mother, Bertha (Stensland) Nelson. Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana. (Courtesy of Gina (Nelson) Reyling).

Conformation class of 1950 from the First Lutheran Church in Glasgow, Montana. Floyd C. Nelson (Sonny) is shown in the back row first person from the right. (Courtesy of Dennis Lyle Krause).
The brand used by Floyd C. and Deanna (O’Neil) Nelson of Glasgow, Montana. The brand was hung on the corral in front of the grandstand at the Glasgow Fairgrounds, Glasgow, Montana. June, 2010.

CHRISTMAS 1972

OUR CHRISTMAS WISH FOR EVERYONE IS A
PEACEFUL AND JOYOUS CHRISTMAS
AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Dear Friends,

We have enjoyed all your cards and letters. I'm sorry that we haven't kept in touch over the past five years. It seems that I left so many things to be done at the last minute that something had to give--and it turned out that I just didn't get our cards done. I realize that not everyone enjoys this type of Christmas newsletter, but this seems to be the only way I can write to everyone and not let another Christmas go by without greetings from the Nelsons.

We hope this finds you all in good health. The older we get, the more we realize that the gift of good health is a very precious thing.

Sonny is still very busy ranching and farming with his father. We have been artificially inseminating our cows to some of the new "exotic" breeds of cattle--Simmental, Limousin, Maine-Anjou and Chianina--and have been pleased with the results. We have also inseminated some of our horses. Sonny has the added responsibility of nutrition, recordkeeping, various association meetings, talking to buyers, etc. It seems funny, but even the farmer-rancher is involved in public relations! We have entered a Simmental heifer in the National Sale in Denver on 1-13-73, so will be in the "mile-high" city for the sale, the Denver Stock Show, and some shopping (I hope!). This should be a nice winter vacation for a few days, and Sonny will also keep another appointment at the University Medical Center for his asthma-hay fever.

After 10 year's of employment at the Fish and Game office, I "retired" in August, 1967 to stay home as a farmer's wife. Two year's of "slopping the hogs" was enough for me, and I then went to work in the District Office of the State Department of Public Welfare. In October of 1971, this office was transferred to the Social Service Agency, a new federally-funded project dealing with providing social services to the public (regardless of income) upon request. The Project covers a five-county area of northeastern Montana, and as of November, 1972 we had 54 employees--Director of Services, Program Consultant, Research staff, Social Workers III, II & I, Social Service Aides, Homemaker Supervisors, Homemakers, and clerical staff. My position was Secretary to the Director of Services. It was a very interesting, challenging, and demanding job. As of December 1, 1972, I returned to my previous employment as Secretary for the Fish and Game office in Glasgow. It seems odd to be back at the Fish and Game after five years, but I'm getting back into the swing of things. However, if the weather for the first week of December was any indication, maybe I shouldn't have made the change!
Our biggest news (for those who haven't heard from us the last five years) is the addition of another blonde, blue-eyed daughter to our family during my "retirement"--Theresa Ann, born September 21, 1968. She is small-boned, very active and talkative, and the only one who inherited some natural curl from my mother (although you can't tell it from our picture). She is thoroughly enjoyed by all, and I believe she'd do anything for a laugh! Her specialties are dancing and reciting her "shocking" Chinese poem. I thought we'd better have our family picture taken so that you all could see what our "newest" 4-year-old addition looks like!

Jackee is now 15 years old and a Sophomore. On her 13th birthday she informed me she was a "teen-ager" and I only hope we have the stamina to go through this stage three more times!!! She is quite the young lady, and is kept busy with studies, head B-Squad cheerleader, ball games, meetings, 4-H, and BOYS! (And I thought I was busy when I was that age!) She is a big help to me around the house.

Sally is 10 years old and in the 4th grade. She is small-boned and is just 1/2" taller than Gina. She enjoys school, 4-H, and especially the summer months spent riding horses at Grandpa Floyds.

Our other blondie, Gina, is 9 years old and in the 3rd grade, and is as busy as Sally. She and Sally wear the same size clothes, but Gina is bigger-boned. (I can't even get by with hand-me-downs between these two.) Generally they are the best of friends, but they do have their differences and then words like "fatty" and "skinny" soar forth, or they argue about who has the most fun--blondes or brunettes! Of course, they try to get Theresa on their side, and she generally sides with the one who has the most to offer at the moment. They especially enjoy the visits from cousins Barbee and Billy from Billings, and their friend from Texas, Mary.

My folks, Mike and Annie, and Uncle Harry moved into Terry from the farm in the spring of 1971. Sally and Gina spent a very enjoyable week with them in August 1971, but I think my folks spent the better part of the week at the swimming pool! We had a short summer visit in 1972, and the kids were disappointed they couldn't stay longer. Unfortunately, Mom has been sick this fall and Dad still isn't feeling too well, so they haven't been up to visit us for some time.

We see Sonny's folks, Bertha and Floyd, quite often. Jackee, Sally and Gina have been spending most of their summers with them. Jackee helps Bertha and rides horseback for her Dad during the breeding season. Sally and Gina have their horses up there and can't wait until school gets out so they can go riding. They also do some riding for their Dad, entertain themselves riding Don's three-wheel Honda, and halter breaking, leading, washing and curry-combing their calves.

Our past summer was much nicer than 1971--at least this year we had enough rain to keep things nice and green. Didn't hurt the crops any, either. I'm not sure just what our winter is going to be like, but on December 1 we had 9 inches of snow and then a week of very, very cold weather. It was 20 to 40 degrees below zero all week, and minus 52 degrees at our house on December 8. The weather has moderated somewhat now--thank goodness--and it actually got over 20 above zero on December 16.

May we never forget the reason for celebrating Christmas, and we only wish the world situation was more peaceful. May God bless you all!

The Nelson Family

Continuation of a Christmas Letter written by Deanna (O'Neil) Nelson, Jr. in 1972 to family and friends. (Courtesy of the Valley County Historical Society, Glasgow, Montana.)