

May 15, 2002

Dear Uncle Mitchell,

Thought you might enjoy having a copy of Shannon's biography of Dad. This is a project of the Fourth Grade at her school. She worked very hard on it and learned a lot about her grandfather. She also learned a little about you folks!

The final version of her book was bound with a hard cover. She did a great job! I thought this version would travel through the mail a little easier.

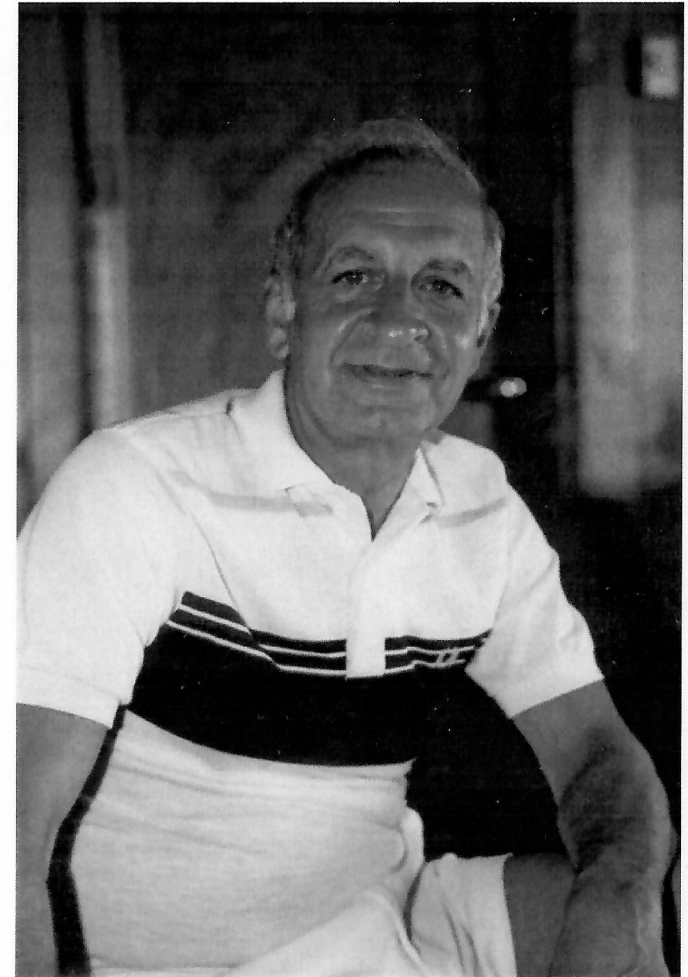
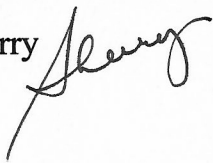
I hope you both enjoy reading it.

I hope you and your families are doing well. We are doing better, but missing David every day.

Much love to you all.  
Hope to see you soon!

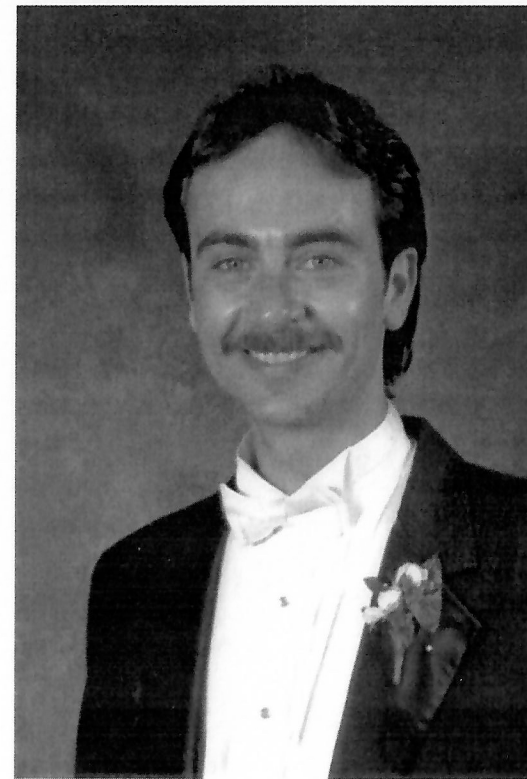
Love,

Sherry



**Going Through The Life of  
Alexander John Mickel**

**By  
Shannon M. Parrish**



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**Written by Shannon M. Parrish as a 4th Grader at**  
**Centennial Lane Elementary School,**  
**Ellicott City, Maryland**

**I dedicate this book to my Uncle David Mickel.**  
**He will always be a special person in my life.**  
**Shannon Parrish**

# Alexander John Mickel

The Early Years  
Birth to 18 Years Old



**Baby Alex**



**Alex as a Handsome Young Man**

This is a biography about a great man, my grandfather. It all happened one afternoon (November 4, 1923) when Nahia Fakhouri Mickel and Abe Radwan Mickel gave birth to their second son, and later my grandfather, Alexander John Mickel. They were very happy!

My grandfather's parents came to America in 1923, from Kfier, Lebanon, before my grandfather was born. In fact, my grandfather crossed the ocean inside his mother. At the time, my grandfather's mother did not speak English.

He has three siblings. Alex's older brother's name is Mitchell, his younger sister's name is Gloria and his youngest brother's name is Freddy.



**The House Alex Mickel Grew Up In**

They lived as a happy family in Williamson, West Virginia, in a big gray house on the corner of 6th Avenue. They all grew up with large family.

My grandfather's grandmother, aunt and uncle lived with them because they also moved from Lebanon to have a better life and more opportunities for their family. Large families living together were very normal in those days. Everybody took care of each other.

The schoolyard is at the top of their street and he could be at school before the morning bell stopped ringing.



**Alex & His Family – All Grown Up**



**Alex Playing with his Friends at the  
Williamson Swimming Pool**



**Alex Doing Yard Chores at Home**

My grandfather's favorite subjects in school were English, history and reading, because he was good at them. Out of school, Alex liked to play football and tennis, and enjoyed swimming, too. From Grades 1 through 6, Alex went to Main Grade Elementary School. (Back then, when Alex was little, there was no middle school).

One of his favorite memories during this time was playing with his friend, Jimmy Matheny. Alex and Jimmy created their own fun. For example, they tied string to two cans and used the cans as "walkie-talkies."

When Alex was promoted to the 7th grade, he moved on to Williamson High School. While there, one of his favorite memories was being in the play "Pride and Prejudice."

When he was not at school, he was working at his father's downtown store, which was then called "The Sweet Shop". Later the name was changed to "Mickel's Confectionery." He made ice cream sodas and banana splits for many customers. He was known then as a "soda jerk." His sister and younger brother also worked in the family store.

His friends came to see him at the store and they had lots of fun. For a while the family store had the only popcorn-popping machine in town.



**Teenage Alex on the Front Porch of His Home  
16 West Sixth Avenue  
Williamson, W. Va.**

Alex always loved to be by the water and go to the beach to swim with his friends. However, they lived in the mountains of West Virginia and spent more time in the community pool than the beach. He and his friends spent lots of time there swimming and diving off the diving board into the pool. He was very social and liked to be out with his friends a lot.

When he was a young teenager, he and his friend, Jimmy Matheny, liked to switch their clothes. Alex would give his sweater to Jimmy and Jimmy would give Alex his sweater. They thought this was fun. Alex was widely known as being a great dresser.

Alex graduated from Williamson High School in 1941 when he was 18 years old. Williamson was a very small town and had only one High School. Because the town was small, Alex knew everybody in school and almost everybody in town.

After he graduated from High School, he went to work full-time in his Dad's store. He always liked working with people because he was friendly and liked to talk to them. The store was a good place to be.



**Alex Strolling Downtown on His Way to Work at  
"Mickel's Confectionary"  
Williamson, W. Va.**

**Alexander John Mickel**

The Middle Years  
18 to 45 Years Old



**Alex in the Army Air Force - 1943**



Alex worked for his father until he went into the Army Air Force in 1943 and went to World War II in England. After he returned from World War II, he went to Marshall College in Huntington, West Virginia and studied Business Administration.

In the middle of college, Alex fell so much in love with Nadine Lackey that he wanted to marry her and she wanted to marry him. He was 26 and she was 20. On June 4, 1950, Nadine and Alex got married in Cedar Grove, West Virginia. They made their home together in Huntington, West Virginia.



**A Happy Wedding Day**

Two years after they were married, Alex and Nadine had their first child, Sheryl Alexis Mickel on December 31, 1952. (Sherry is my mother). On December 1, 1954, Sherry got an early birthday present, a baby sister named Sandra Anita Mickel. Sherry loved to play with her younger sister, Sandy, and to boss her around.

The girls were named for Alexander. My mother's middle name is Alexis and my aunt's first name is Sandra (Alexis & Sandra).



**Sherry & Sandy Mickel**

They moved to Williamson, West Virginia, where Alex and Nadine had a wholesale business and where they could be closer to his family.

On April 12, 1961, Alex and Nadine had their third child and only son, whose name was David Radwan Mickel. The girls loved David and played with him all the time. He was like a doll to them. He was so cute, everyone said he was too pretty to be a boy. When David was born, Sherry was 9 and Sandy was 7 years old.



**David Mickel**

After David was born, Alex, Nadine and their children moved to Richmond, Virginia from Williamson, West Virginia. Alex worked as the manager of two stores, and later as a salesman for a tobacco company. Nadine worked in the office of a flooring company.

Alex and Nadine bought a lovely house in Richmond from Lakeside Methodist Church.



**7312 Hermitage Road – Richmond, Virginia**



**Alex & Nadine All Dressed Up!**

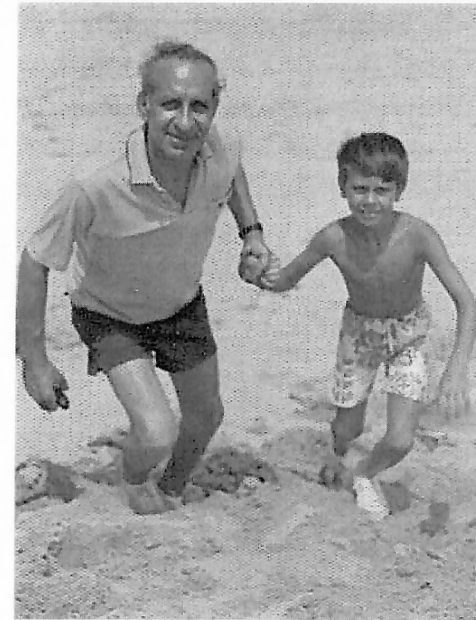
The children brought great joy to Alex and Nadine. Most of their activities were things they did as a family. They visited with other family members, went to the pool, played tennis, and played at the beach each summer. Alex especially enjoyed taking David to "Kelly's" for burgers because they both loved to snack.



**Sherry, Sandy & David  
Posing for Another Picture!**

Alex worked very hard at his job and supported his family. He enjoyed playing with his children and watching them grow up. Sherry was always on the go. Sandy was always watching David, and David was always there.

All of their children had fun at school and took care of each other. Being a strong family was important to them, especially to Alex and Nadine.



**Alex & David  
Fun in the Sun at Nags Head, NC**



**Alex, Grandma Mickel, Siblings & Their Spouses!**

**Alexander John Mickel**

The Later Years  
45 Years Old to Today



**Alex & Nadine Out Dancing in Baltimore!**

When Alex was 45, his oldest child, Sherry, (my mother) was a junior in High School. His second child, my Aunt Sandy was in Jr. High School and his son David was in Elementary School. They spent a lot of time at school events for their children.

When he was 47, Sherry, (my mother) attended Mary Washington College. Three years later, Sandy, went to nursing school at J. Sergeant Reynolds College. David was still at home and in school.

He and his wife, Nadine worked very hard during these years to take care of their family. Alex's jobs were mostly in retail store management and sales.

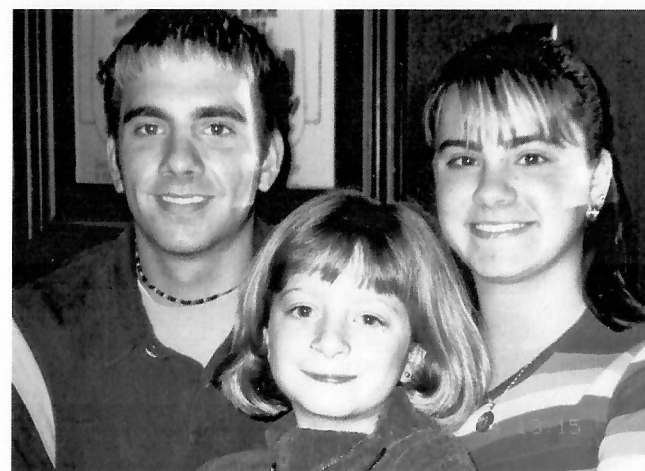


**Children & Their Spouses!**

All of Alex's children got married. Sherry married John Parrish, (my father). Sandy married Kim Ruder. David married Dottie Kappert. Sandy and Kim have two children, Jessica and Grant.

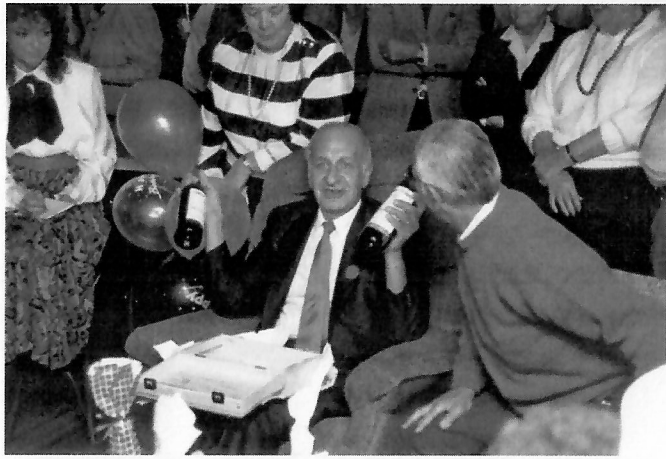


**Sherry, Nadine, Sandy & David**



**The grandchildren!  
Jessica & Grant Ruder & Shannon Parrish**

Taking pictures is my grandfather's hobby. He has many albums and we all love to sit and look at them. These pictures help us remember the fun we have when we get together. Most of the pictures are of his grand children. We all call Alex, "Beeboo."



**Alex's First Retirement Party in 1988**

At this time, May 2002, Alex is working 15 hours a week in the Men's Department of Dillard's Department Store in Richmond, Virginia. He plans on retiring in December of 2002. He is semi-retired now.

When he fully retires he plans to stay home, relax and spend time with wife, Nadine, of 52 years (my grandmother). I hope they will visit me more often then. Alex plans to stay in his home because it is paid for and has been remodeled.

He was very sick a few years ago but is now feeling better now. He eats well, thanks to my grandmother, and gets plenty of rest. He also goes to a cardiac rehabilitation program three times a week with my grandmother for safe exercise and enjoys visiting all his friends there.

Two years ago my grandparents celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary! There was a wonderful celebration! Their family and friends came from all over to be a part of the party. He was especially happy that his family came from West Virginia for the celebration.

My family is usually very happy but last year something very sad happened. His son, my Uncle David, died from a brain tumor when he was 39 years old. Our family, especially my grandparents, loved him very much and helped to take care of him when he was sick. We had a lot of fun with him and miss him.

Alex is an active member of The Church of the Epiphany Episcopal Church. He is an usher and helps out a lot. For the past few years my grandparents have sponsored several families from Sudan in Africa. They came to America just like my grandfather's family did, to have a better life. I am glad my family is helping them to get started in America.

Being in this family is wonderful, especially because of my grandparents! Alex Mickel is a very friendly and warm man who always greets me with a big hug and a kiss. He takes time to play with me and find out what I am doing in school. We always have fun being together. I am so glad that he is my grandfather, and I love him very much.

Shannon Parrish

*About the author:*

*Hi,  
My name is Shannon  
Parrish. This is my  
second book.*

*I am a ten-year-old  
girl and I attend  
Centennial Lane  
Elementary School. I  
am in Miss Beyer's 4<sup>th</sup>  
grade class.*

*I live in Ellicott City,  
MD and my favorite  
things to do are  
dancing and singing  
and being with my  
family.*



*Summary:*

*This story you are  
about to read is about a  
great man, my  
grandfather, Alexander  
John Mickel.*

*He will be 80 years old  
this year. This story  
tells about the three  
different stage of his  
life.*

*I hope you enjoy it.*

*Shannon Parrish  
May 2002*