

## Mirror, Mirror on the wall, tell me your story!



I was created along with the cabinet below me from old wood from a black walnut tree on property in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. My owner's dad, Jim Davis, chopped down the tree over 30 years ago, milled the lumber, and shipped 2 boards from the tree to her in Texas. He said "it would make a mighty fine mantle for a fireplace."

The boards that formed me were stored for over 30 years in a garage, an attic, and a basement in Texas and Georgia, and only now have been transformed into a precious keepsake generating wonderful memories. My owner, Grace, played under the ole black walnut tree as a kid in Galax, Virginia.

I am honored to hang above the custom-made cabinet as both of us were created and built by Scotty Erwin, a cabinetmaker in the north Georgia Mountains, whose Appalachian ancestors were also wood craftsmen.

The handmade pottery sink holds a special position on the cabinet. My owner's beloved potter, Gorky Gonzalez, Sr., in Guanajuato, Mexico, created the bowl. As most of Grace's friends know by now, that's another "heirloom" story.

Grace and her good friend, Peggy Morris Morecraft, spent the 1969 Christmas holiday in Guanajuato when they were young and single! Peggy had heard of a potter named Gorky Gonzalez, so they set out to find him. They showed up at an address given to them by shop owners in Guanajuato to find Sr. Gonzalez opening the gate to his home and workshop to them. He was in his early years of making and painting pottery using the old "majolica" technique in Mexico and a painting style he mastered in Japan.

He offered for them to take what pieces they wanted - most were on the ground in the area he fired the pottery. He introduced them to his wife, originally from Japan, and invited them into his magnificent kitchen etched with his handmade tiles. Peggy and Grace left his home with 2 boxes of pottery, hand carrying them on a bus back to Monterrey, Mexico.

For years, most of the pottery remained in a cabinet, with Peggy's boxed in her basement in Illinois, but they never forgot the kind, handsome potter from Guanajuato! A few years ago, Grace searched online to see if he were still in Guanajuato and found his webpage. She emailed him to say how much she treasures his "early work." He responded.

Julio learned that his son, Gorky, Jr., now manages the pottery business and would be at a trade show in Atlanta! Grace and Julio met him and now have a wonderful friendship with him and Laura, his wife. Indeed, the friendship grew, and so did the pottery collection!

And to think that the journey started years ago with a tree milled by Jim Davis and the good fortune of Grace meeting Gorky, Sr.! The cabinet and I now hold a very special place in the home and heart of my owner as we draw memories of 2 great men from Grace's past who worked with their hands, creating masterpieces from honest labor and a love for family and history!

