

Carrollton postman, believed deceased in '66, alive in Northeast, Gulf

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By Charlie Baglan

FRANKFORT, KY – Carrollton, Kentucky resident, Enos Hal Baglan, believed to have died in 1966, has allegedly been seen alive and in apparent good health in the Caribbean and on the coast of Maine.

Two separate photographs from 2006 and 2007 find the former assistant postmaster enjoying the good life far from the small river town he called home from the end of WWII until losing his battle with cancer in February of 1966. When first spotted, two summers ago, at a quaint seafood establishment in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, the incident was chalked up to simple mistaken identity. A year later, when the same shiny head and quick wit were seen aboard a cruise ship near Mexico's Yucatan, the incident could not be ignored. Amos, as friends knew him, is now sporting a mustache and glasses and looks surprisingly young despite being 91. Baglan was born December 22, 1916.

If you do not know this fellow, you surely know the feeling when we realize the impossible has become the inevitable - we have become our parents. Somewhere between being the chip and growing up to be independent, we become the old block. For most of us, we never saw it coming.

If you're under 60, you may be better acquainted with the name rather than the man. Two Baglan families called Carrollton home from the 1950s through 1970s with children attending Saint John's Elementary, Carroll County Middle and High Schools. Only two of the eight Baglan kids bore children after moving elsewhere, so the name is rare. For now, a sister, Amy, is left locally to hold down the clan.

I am the only son of Enos Baglan and I now live in Frankfort. I look at pictures of Daddy, then I look in the mirror. "Yep, that's him." I say, but looks can be deceiving. No one bumps into me in Carrollton when I visit and calls me Enos. When I go into the post office, the counter help doesn't act as if they've seen a ghost. So why do I, or anyone in my shoes, stop cold when shuffling through recent photos to see a parent's mug appear out of nowhere?

When did I get my daddy's hands? When did my hair get *that* thin? And of all the places he could show up, why on my vacations? Why not at Gypsy Grill or back at the Savings & Loan Association on Court Street? These days, when someone says, "Mr. Baglan," I turn expecting to see Daddy. But Mr. Baglan had no comments for whoever snapped these photographs. He didn't, unless you decipher the look in his eyes. As if a deer in headlights - him staring at me and me at him thinking - "Gee, 40 years and we still have these funny ears."

Facial features, senses of humor, mannerisms, voices, chuckles, we see carbon copies of moms and dads in every schoolyard. After all, parents set the example, but so do other family members, teachers and friends. Curious though how I didn't become my scout leader, my guitar instructor, Carol Shelton or E.P. Gentry. Or did I or did we all? We are all products of our environment. In my small childhood corner of it on Sycamore Street, enough people that daddy influenced or who influenced him stayed behind to influence me. But what if they hadn't? Is there more in the soup than blue eyes and a less-than-chiseled chin?

Early childhood development professionals say half of who we are is shaped by age five. Lucky for me he lived that long. Like father like son, that merry mailman rubbed off on me in a few ways during our brief time together. Just think of how much kids and parents are alike who have had the benefit of whole lives with each other.

Death to cancer doesn't stop paths from colliding. Being apart since Johnson was President doesn't let the apple roll far from the tree.

Still, I wonder what he was doing on my summer get-a-ways, with my fiancé, putting his meals on my credit card and wearing my new shirt. There's a practical answer, he was having fun. After a war in the Pacific and another with radiation, he deserved a break.

Daddy is invited for Christmas and wherever travels lead in the New Year. Unfortunately, this father and son reunion will be short-lived. At 46, I am his age when first diagnosed. There are no pictures of him to look like at 50, in retirement with grand kids or in old age. He died at 49, 42 years ago. Still, when I look up from the bathroom sink is it him or is it me? Either way is better than seeing someone I don't recognize or someone I resent.

When separated from a parent at an early age, you spend your life wondering. Are we alike? Would they be proud? What I know of this brother of "Nick the Cleaner" lies in the stories told me and what I surmise from family albums. The toddler being held by the strong man is now the man. To me, this father of three and friend to every dog on his mail route is a living legend. It's mighty hard to live up to one of those.

With no kids of my own, I suppose I'll never re-surface in a stray photograph unless being honest and humble can cast an image through a lens. These qualities give us our best chance of living on after genetics have thrown in the towel. And even then, who is left behind to authenticate?

Enos Baglan was a passenger on that boat in Cozumel and it was he enjoying warm hushpuppies that cool night in New England. Unfortunately, my realization came too late. The trip was over, pictures developed and any chance to chat was gone. What I don't know is if they were chance encounters or just some of his practical jokes. Is it mistaken identity or more of a mistake to dismiss it? Was it me growing older, remembering and resembling my pappy? Actually, I know who I saw. I would recognize him anywhere. Pictures don't lie. And if they do, then it was Tom Selleck. But when it happens to you, enjoy it while it lasts. A glimpse here and a snapshot there all add up to that 'one more day' you always wish you had.

XXX



Enos Baglan with son Charles 1961



**Enos Baglan 2007
Pam Hancock, fiancée of son Charles**



Enos Baglan 2006



Enos Baglan and son Charles 1962