

Photos find a happy ending

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Next Christmas, 10 oval photographs that a passer-by found in a box by the side of a road will hang where they belong, on a tree in the home of Elodia Little.

She had not known the photos were lost during a recent move until her son, Ken Little, saw an article and photos in Neighborhood Times last week. "I said to myself, 'Damn if that doesn't look like the old man,' " he said.

The story told of Eloise Leng's discovery of the box of Christmas decorations containing a miniature Christmas tree and gold-framed photos. Concerned that the photos represented special memories, Eloise hoped the article would help return them to their rightful owners.

Mrs. Little said she would not have realized the pictures were missing until Christmas. By then they would have been gone for good, as were most of her other photos of "the early years." Those were destroyed several years ago when a burst water pipe flooded her home.

"These photos were the only ones I was able to salvage," she said.

The photos of a sailor and his girlfriend were of Elodia and her husband-to-be Bruce Little. One was taken the day he asked her to marry him, the other when he presented her with an engagement ring. The year was 1944. The place was Miami, where they met while Bruce was stationed with the Coast Guard in Key West.

The photo of Bruce and his first son, Ken, was taken when the baby was just weeks old. As the years passed, there would be two more children, eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Bruce left the Coast Guard after the end of World War II. "We tried to stay in Miami, but we couldn't find a place to rent that would take children. At that time, it was no children, no pets, no service people," Elodia explained. Her sister lived in St. Petersburg, so they moved their new family here and stayed.

Bruce found a job in plumbing construction and several years later opened his own company, Bruce Little Co., Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors.

Some familiar buildings in Pinellas County were built with his company's efforts: the Florida Power Corp. administration building, The Pier and the Science Center of Pinellas County. Bruce Little died at age 70 in a 1992 car accident.

"We had a good life. It is just so wonderful that someone cared enough to save these pictures," said Elodia as she hugged Eloise in thanks.

Illustration

COLOR PHOTO, Photo courtesy of the Little family; COLOR PHOTO; BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO, Photo courtesy of the Little family; BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO, V. JANE WINDSOR, (3); COLOR PHOTO, V. JANE WINDSOR, (2); Caption: The Little family (ran NEIGHBORHOOD TIMES); An ornament containing a photo of Bruce Little holding son Ken, taken when Ken was just weeks old (ran NEIGHBORHOOD TIMES); The Little family (ran SE, LA); An ornament

containing a photo of Bruce Little holding son Ken, taken when Ken was just weeks old (ran SE); Bruce and Elodia Little's photo in an ornament (ran SE); Ken Little, Eloise Leng and Elodia Little (ran SE, LA); Ken Little, Eloise Leng and Elodia Little (ran WEST); Bruce and Elodia Little's photo in an ornament (ran WEST)

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