



ALLYCE'S ATTIC

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My grandparents' house had the most marvelous attic. It was on the same level as the upstairs bedrooms, on the left just beyond the staircase. My grandfather was a master carpenter-turned building contractor and that house was a testament to his workmanship. The attic could have become a bedroom with very little modification. It was finished off with hardwood floors and the most wonderful little round

window in the center of the front wall. But it was what was in the attic that made it magical.

There were trunks with old fashioned clothes - really old clothes like high button shoes and dresses that swept the floor. There were hats with feathers and men's suits made of heavy wool fabrics. My grandmother and I would rummage around in the trunks and try things on and play make-believe and discuss and laugh and I have vague memories of old letters and papers and photographs.

It was a neat attic, so there was none of the clutter you might expect to find and I'm not completely sure what it held besides the trunks. There were dark corners, as there are in most attics, and I don't remember going into them.

Sadly, most of it went with the house when my grandparents died. The pictures must have been saved because I have lots of old photos - and I have the memories. The attic is now in my mind which is nowhere near as neat and tidy a place as the one in my grandparents' house. Like most attics, it's messy, filled with all sorts of "stuff", some of it interesting, some of it funny, some of it mundane, some of it tucked into dark corners.

Bandera's also a bit like an attic. Interesting, old fashioned, funny, sometimes dark and a great place to play make-believe, a great place to write about.

At risk of wringing the metaphor dry, this column will be like an attic, too. A little of this and a little of that and sometimes it'll be funny and sometimes not. Hopefully, it'll be interesting and you'll want to come back and visit. We might even take a peek into a few dark corners.