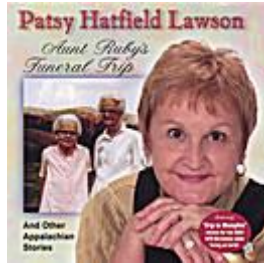


# Mp3 Patsy Hatfield Lawson - Aunt Ruby's Funeral Trip



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Growing up in the Appalachian Mountains of East Tennessee gave me a wealth of stories about my small world. One story, "Trip to Memphis" was chosen by NPR for a 2004 Christmas Eve Program called, "Going Home to Appalachia". 5 MP3 Songs SPOKEN WORD: Audiobook, SPOKEN WORD: Comedy

Details: I grew up on a 65 acre tobacco farm with chickens, cows, ducks, pigs, and one horse. Nearby lived 12 of my 16 aunts and uncles who were authentic mountain people with a lot of traditions and values to teach me. In doing so they gave me much laughter and wisdom wonderfully mingled together like the quilts Mama made each winter season. In my small county lived a mysterious race known as the Melungeons. The mystery was how they came to live in the small communities of many Appalachian regions and whether they were mixture of many races or one unique race. Recent DNA studies show the former to be the case, but how they came to Appalachia is still not explained. They were, in fact, Native American, African American, Anglo, Mediterranean, and a mixture of four or more races. My story, "The Melungeon Gift" is a tribute to a Melungeon farm hand named Lidgie. These aunts and uncles told stories each evening on the front porches of their houses. I was the listener who absorbed the characters, the humor and the values within these stories. Later, after I left my mountains for school and work, I could still hear their voices in so many of life's circumstances. In my story, "Trip to Memphis" I share the lessons I was taught about fear and having to leave the only home I had known as a young adult. I have also captured their laughter and sadness and applied the values of independence and survival to an urban setting very removed from my rural background. That humor can be found in each of my stories along with teachings from my mountain upbringing.

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