

## THE PRE-TEEN YEARS (approximately 1949-1958)

### The Partyline

One of the advantages of building our new house near the main (gravel) road is that it would be easier to tie on to the telephone line, whenever a phone became available. (There were already a maximum of phones on the line. I'm not sure, 13 or 16 phones on the line.)

Mama had been planning on getting a phone as she had Daddy build a "hole" in the hall wall to hold it...and a phone book. I now have that lovely oak crank phone in my home. I had to promise Daddy that I wouldn't convert it to a dial phone before he'd let me have it!

Other than privacy and comfort (you had to stand up to reach the mouthpiece), the new phone had all the conveniences of our ultra-modern phones. One of the conveniences was the answering machine—the neighbors were more than willing to tell your caller where you'd gone and when you'd be back, even if you hadn't asked them to. ("I saw Pearl headed to town about a half hour ago.") Another convenience was call waiting—"Hey, would you all hurry up! You've been on for over an hour and I need to call..." We also utilized the conference call—As teenagers my neighbor and best friend, Janet, and I double dated with boys who were also best friends. Usually Jack called Janet and when I heard her ring (3 longs, 1 short) I'd also pick up, and we'd all make plans for our next date.

by Carmen Jones

