

Change in My Lifetime

Original story and memories by Beverly Wright

Picture-book adaptation prepared by Geny



Bev was born in Missouri in 1940.

When she was little, the world seemed smaller—and life moved more slowly.

Some homes were warmed by a potbellied stove. Water might be carried from a cistern. At her uncle's house, kerosene lanterns pushed back the dark.

But the stars were just as bright as they are tonight.



Bev's mother made her five school outfits—one for every weekday.

The telephone was a large wooden box on the wall. Several families shared the same party line.

There were no pocket phones, no text messages, and no video calls.

News traveled by voices, letters, newspapers, and radio.

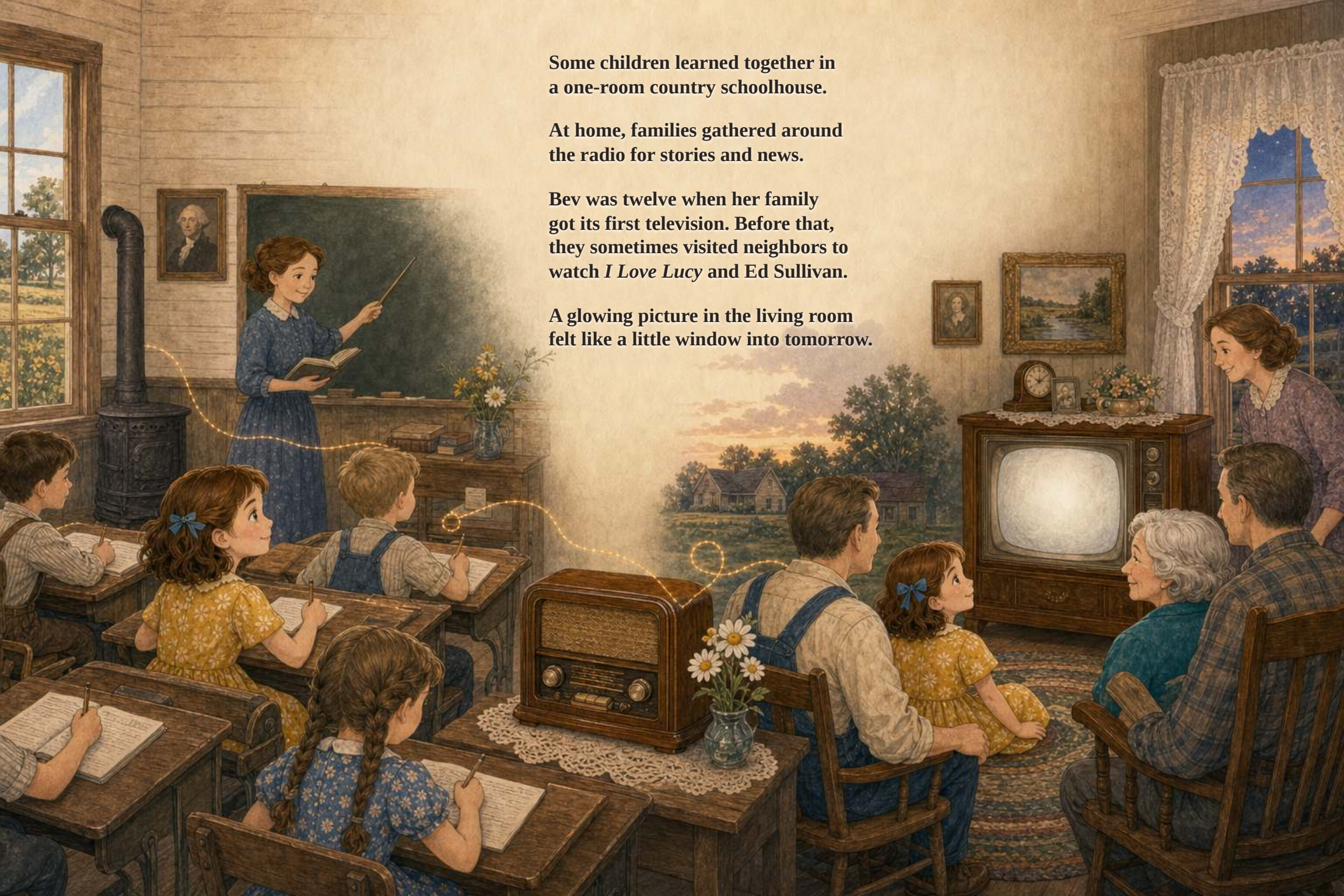


Some children learned together in
a one-room country schoolhouse.

At home, families gathered around
the radio for stories and news.

Bev was twelve when her family
got its first television. Before that,
they sometimes visited neighbors to
watch *I Love Lucy* and Ed Sullivan.

A glowing picture in the living room
felt like a little window into tomorrow.



Bev never forgot the first time her father sat her on Rex, the big strawberry-roan workhorse.

She carried water to threshing crews on her pony. Her father also had one small tractor.

Years later, Bev watched her great-grandchildren climb into tractors and combines bigger than a room.

The horses had not changed. The work had.



Bev learned to type words onto paper with a typewriter. The first computers she saw were so enormous they filled whole rooms.

Then one day, words she typed came magically from a printer across the room.

Years passed. Computers shrank from rooms, to desks, to laps, to hands.

And the world seemed to speed up.



When Bev was a girl, a trip to the moon belonged in science-fiction stories.

Then she watched people really walk there.

Airplanes crossed oceans. Highways crossed the country. Messages crossed the world in a blink.

Yesterday's impossible had become today's ordinary.

What might tomorrow bring?



An elderly woman with short, curly grey hair, wearing a teal sweater and a blue floral skirt, stands on a stone wall, looking out over the Grand Canyon. The scene is framed by a colorful, quilted border. Four circular vignettes are integrated into the border: top-left shows a dense forest of tall redwood trees; top-right shows a coastal scene with a sea turtle swimming in the water; bottom-left shows a person in a small boat on a river in a lush jungle with a toucan; bottom-right shows the interior of a large, ornate Gothic cathedral with high vaulted ceilings and stained glass windows.

**The changing world carried Bev far from Missouri
—to mountains, oceans, forests, cities, and
countries she had once known only from maps.**

**She saw the Grand Canyon, redwood trees,
the Amazon, Australia, Europe, and more.**

**Every place gave her a memory.
Every memory became part of home.**

Some changes made life easier. Some made
it harder. Newer did not always mean better.

But through all the changing years,
Bev kept finding the same good things:

family gathered close,
the beauty of trees and wind,
the pleasure of learning,
and gratitude for the world God made.

One lifetime can stretch from lantern
light to moon landings—from a wall
telephone to a world held in your hand.



Your Turn

Someday, a child may ask what changed during *your* lifetime.

Look closely. Ask questions. Save your stories.

The world is changing—and you are part of its history.

Adapted from “Change in My Lifetime” by Beverly Wright, reflecting on life from 1940 through 2022.

This edition focuses on everyday changes young readers can picture while preserving the original reflection: change moves quickly, progress is complicated, and every generation has a story worth remembering.

BeverlyWright.me · Prepared August 30, 2026