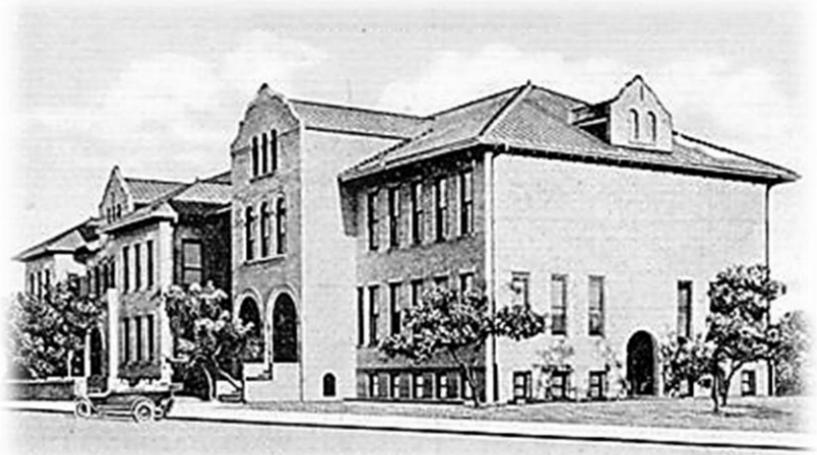


## 2

Attending Eagle Pass Public School in the 1920's was a time in Pito's young life that she would always look back on with fond memories. She had many friends in school; some of which she would stay in touch with through adulthood. The year 1928; when she was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade; was a highlight that she didn't fully recognize as anything very special at the time. It was an experience that others would find quite fascinating when she would speak of it.

As for Arthur, he had finished the 9<sup>th</sup> grade two years earlier and was no longer attending school. He was devoting all his time to working the Hopedale farm and would study in his father's library to keep up with his book learning whenever he got a break to do so. Henrietta would help him with his studies but she would soon be leaving home to attend college where she would earn a degree in teaching.

The Eagle Pass Public School building, a two story brick and stucco structure, was located across the street from the town plaza. Only grammar school was compulsory in those days and continuing through the 11<sup>th</sup> grade would earn a student a high school diploma.



Mrs. Loudon was the Principal and English teacher. She wore horn rimmed round glasses and had a displeased look about her with her slightly downturned mouth. The younger Mrs. Kennedy taught History and health education. She was pleasant and soft spoken, yet strict. Miss Williams taught Arithmetic and Miss Sutton was the Literature teacher.

There were twenty students in Pito's class. The most popular boy was David. It was he and Pito who put the class book together. They called it the 'Eaglet'. In addition to being the most popular boy, David was very studious and his ambition was to become a lawyer. And, of course, Pito was the artist of the class who wanted to visit Paris.

Rebecca, with her bluish green eyes, was the most popular girl; liked by everyone. Often caught chewing gum, she was a regular flapper and sometimes called the vamp of the class. Her big strong brother, Richard had a talent for letter printing. He was also good at hitting home runs.

Pleas was the most handsome boy with his jet-black hair combed back and un-parted. He was the captain of the baseball team. He would grow up to become a prominent citizen of San Antonio.

Lenox was sort of a slow poke. He told stale jokes and liked to have a good time. He was known as a ladies man as he would flirt with the girls whenever he could.



one of Pito's drawings from the 'Eaglet'

The prettiest girl was Adalyne with her dreamy eyes and high cheeks; she loved to dance. And Ophelia was the smartest student of the class; studying was her hobby.

Edith, a rather plump little lass, was a bright student. She would pass almost every pop test. Magdalena was also a bright student who made good grades in almost everything. She was a quiet girl, like the wise old owl who never seemed to speak a word, and known for her politeness. Another smart student was little Ruby Mae; she gave up her pretty curls and bobbed her hair, which was the style of the day.

Edna had a golden voice and loved to sing. She was also good in arithmetic. Irene was another smart student, but also liked to act smart. She had an artistic style of writing that many admired.

Mary with her short white hair was a sweet girl. She didn't care much of how she dressed and sometimes seemed untidy. The teacher once asked her why the world could not come to an end. Mary's answer was "because it's round".

Alvin was a curly haired farm boy. He, Henry, and John hung out together. John was chubby and quite funny. The three were known as the lazy birds of the class. Perhaps school was somewhat absurd to them.

Fred loved to play football and was the captain of the school team. Kicking the ball was not his best talent and it would sometimes embarrass him.

Finally there was Raynor and Clara Mae. Raynor was a timid boy who liked to climb trees. He would later join the military in 1941 and serve the country for 30 years.



Clara Mae wore glasses that gave her a serious look. She was known for fussing at times but everyone adored her. She was a good and loyal friend.

The school day began with the raising of the flag and reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.....

*I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the  
United States of America  
and to the Republic for which it stands,  
one nation, indivisible,  
with liberty and justice for all*

The classrooms had double wooden desks that faced a blackboard and the teacher. The desks had ink wells and pencil holders for each student and a storage area for books and papers under the hinged top.

At mid-day the students had a lunch break. They would sometimes spend it at the town plaza with the escort of a teacher.

School was out in the early afternoon and the students returned home to do their chores and any assigned studies to prepare for the next day of classes.



In May of 1927 Charles Lindbergh made the famous flight across the Atlantic in the “Spirit of St. Louis”. He then toured the U.S. and several Latin American countries. While in Mexico City he met Anne Morrow; the daughter of the U.S. Ambassador there; and soon after, he and Anne became engaged.

While on a trip to Mexico to visit Anne in November 1928 Lindbergh landed in Eagle Pass for a stop over and to re-fuel. He was flying a Curtiss Falcon biplane that was called the “Lindbergh Special”.



The school children were brought out to the grass field to see the famous aviator and his airplane. Raynor, Pito, and Clara Mae were standing together in the front of the crowd. While Lindbergh was shaking hands with the children he accidentally stepped on Pito's foot and kindly apologized. Clara Mae faced Pito and exclaimed.....

*You ought to be proud that he stepped on your foot!*

Lindbergh motioned to Raynor, who was the son of an acquaintance, and verbalized for him to.....

*Bring a friend and we'll go up for a flight around Eagle Pass*

To Clara Mae's surprise, Raynor grabbed Pito's hand to join in the adventure. They were given flight goggles and seated in the rear cockpit where Lindbergh secured them with the safety belt.....

*Ready? Let's go flying!*

The crowd was cleared from the area as Lindbergh climbed into the pilot's seat and prepared to start the engine.....

*Clear prop!*

As the engine rumbled to life Pito could feel the rush of air from the spinning propeller and the smell of aviation fuel; the excitement becoming more intense as the biplane, vibrating and swaying, began to move forward.

As the “Lindbergh Special” rolled down the grass field it picked up speed and then it very gracefully lifted up into the air. Pito and Raynor gleefully shouted with a sense of disbelief as they slowly gained altitude.....

*We're flying, we're flying!*



For Pito and Raynor it was amazing to see Eagle Pass from the air. After circling the town the biplane landed gently on the grass field and rolled to a stop. Clara Mae was a little disappointed but happily greeted her friends when they were back on the ground.

The flight was only a few minutes but would be a life-long memory; the highlight of 1928.....

*I flew with Charles Lindbergh when I was in  
the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Eagle Pass*



In a school project about Texas and Eagle Pass history, Pito wrote about Lindbergh and the impact he had on the young generation of the day. She also related what a great honor it was for “Lindy” to visit the little city of Eagle Pass.....

Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh has received the Roosevelt Medal for the year 1928 for distinguished service in one of ten fields. Charles Lindbergh has been chosen for this honor for his achievements in the field of aviation and character which have made him a powerful influence toward courageous, clean, and intelligent living. To a generation hearing on all sides that money is the standard of success and that the way to achievement and fame lies through aggressive self-seeking and publicity, Charles Lindbergh, living cleanly, scorning publicity, putting aside offers of untold wealth, came and achieved such a triumph as no young man in the world's history ever achieved before.

The great hero "Lindy" came to our little city of Eagle Pass in 1928, making his visit one of the greatest or perhaps the greatest honor Eagle Pass has ever had. He was very pleased in the way he was welcomed by the people of this little city.