Childhood friends are the ones who you thought you would know forever.
It never dawns on you growing up that there might come a day when you will never see or hear from them again. In fact, that notion seems ridiculous to your young mind.
And although there comes a day when you may see each other infrequently or maybe even not at all, they are still considered your “best friend.”
I had several groups of best friends growing up. While at my grandparents, there were about six other kids who lived on Nobles Road in Monticello.
We all lived next door to one another. It seemed like a domino effect, each house going down the road, was filled with a kid or two.
Every weekend morning was spent riding bikes down that loose gravel road. In fact, I can remember waiting under my carport until I saw one of them on the road. All it took was one, and the rest would follow.
We taped baseball cards on our bike wheels. We set up lemonade stands even though it was a dead end street with no traffic. We played sandlot baseball together. We dared each other to approach the Chow dog that lived up the road. And sometimes we would just lay on the cool grass of our yards (usually mine) and drink soda pops.
When it got dark, we would return home to have supper and get a bath. Then we would start calling each other on the telephone to see what television show was worth watching.
During summer holidays, we would all eat hot dogs and have a fireworks show in the middle of the street. At Christmas time, we would show off our presents to each other.
We were just a group of kids who spent our days together. We told everybody we were best friends, and we made big plans to move to the “big city” together when we were older.
My husband Jason and I paid a visit to Nobles Road during a trip recently. There are no more kids on bikes going up and down the road. I didn’t see any children sprawled out in their front yard with a drink. No baseball game could he heard in the distance.
Aside from seeing a few of their family names on a couple of mailboxes, there was no sign that we ever existed.
I heard that two of my old friends moved into their grandmother’s house in Prentiss after she passed away.
One girl was named Most Beautiful at her college. Her sister joined the softball team at another university.
Another girl got married and moved into her husband’s family home.
And there was one girl no one ever heard from again. In fact, the house she lived in wasn’t even there anymore.
I haven’t spoken to any of my old friends since I was about 13. We all moved off and lost touch.

I have had several groups of friends in my life. But there is something about your childhood friends you never forget.
Maybe it's the innocence that comes with it. Maybe its the fact that it seemed like all the memories were happy ones. Maybe it was because at the time we all just didn't know any better.
I have about three friends I made in high school who I still keep contact with in my adult years. One was the maid of honor in my wedding. One paid a visit to meet my new family. And the other now drives the first car I ever bought for myself after I sold it to her recently.
I always know their phone numbers in case I ever need them. At times, I wish I had the numbers for my old friends from Nobles Road.
And then it dawned on me a few days ago when our son James was talking about his friends at school.
Maybe it's not the actual people I miss so much. Maybe it's the time and place that weigh on me.
I can never return to the carefree attitude I had on Nobles Road. The house that I called home for several years has another family living inside. The kids I played with all those years are no longer there. My Maw Maw and Paw Paw are both gone. The sandlot is now overgrown with grass.
Now it's just another road in another town.
But to me, at one time, it was the happiest place on earth. It was everything about it that made it that way. It was the people, the road, the house, even the smell in the air.
And it's like that for all us when we look back at where we spent those younger years.
That last time Jason and I drove down that road, I was happy to show him where certain kids lived or where we played. I smiled the whole time.
And as we drove off toward the new highway that had just been built nearby, I couldn't help but look in the rearview mirror. Maybe I was hoping to see a kid pop up on a bike. I didn't see one though.
But for a moment, I thought I heard that familiar flap of a baseball card.