

THE KITE by Rick Henderson

As the wind whips around today, it takes me back to a windy March day in Porterdale in the 1950's. My mother was on the 2nd shift and my dad was on the 1st. Mother had gone to work and dad and I were home. It was during one of those times we were short on money but not on love. I was bugging him about buying me a kite. Finally he said that we could build one and he went about telling me how he built kites and flew them when he was a youngster. I then went about bugging him on let's build a kite and show me how. He then sit me at the kitchen table as he went about getting the materials. He got some old newspaper that he kept around to wrap the water pipes with, it was the entertainment/tv guide to the newspaper because I remember it was green and came in the Saturday paper. Then he went about going outside to get some branches off a bush that was just starting to turn green. He then made some paste out of flour and water. Well we went about making a kite. He laid the stick frame out over a couple of sheets of newspaper, now he did most of the work and then would let me glue a piece here and there and slowly it became a kite, I was amazed. Then he went to the rag box he kept for washing the car and checking the oil etc...and took out an old t-shirt and cut it in shreds and tied them end to end to make a tail for the kite. Finally he went to the kitchen closet and pulled out some green and red twine that was on a big spool that he got from the mill to use to tie this or that. He made small holes in the kite at the head the middle and bottom of the kite and tied one piece of string at the head and tail and then put the roll of twine end into the middle hole and tied it around the frame and tied the one piece of string to it. He called it the lead string that would help steady the kite, I pretended I knew what he was talking about and then we looked at the finished product. A beautiful green kite with green and red twine. He then said, "Lets go fly it" and out the door we went to the little park at the end of Hazel and Ivey street that was a hill that over looked the railroad track and yellow river. He took the kite and went into the wind and up it flew, then he had me come over and together we let the kite out on that spool of twine. A couple of times he had to take it from me when a gust of wind would send the kite spiraling down and get it back under control. We flew that kite for a long time and kept letting it get higher and higher. Soon other kids came out to watch and he would let them

take a turn. Finally it was beginning to get dark and he said it was time to set the kite free. I asked what he meant by that. He then took out a Carter pen knife and cut the twine. We all watched as the wind took the kite traveling away over the woods and up and up and finally at a great distance we saw it go down into the trees. I have tried to make kites over the years and been successful a couple of times, but I could never make one as good as that green kite with the green and red twine.