

Life in Downtown State College by Helen Breon Volz

It's a pleasure to share Helen's impressive story which is being sent to you in response to your recent request or because a friend of yours, who enjoyed it, thought you might enjoy it as well.



As you may already know this work was created with the support of many members of the State College High School, Class of 1954 and Helen's husband of 57 years, Carl Volz. Many of the members of that uncommonly active alumni group lived the history that Helen has documented and continue to live it today.

While Helen's treatise speaks for itself it cannot do so without being seen and that accounts for this somewhat unique suggested means of distribution. Because of the format in which it has existed there has been no convenient way to pass it along from one interested person to another. Thought has been given to publishing it in the local paper or one of several State College magazines but we hope to inspire a more personal, more focused distribution system in which everyone who receives Helen's story becomes a distributor themselves. *Life In* has recently been converted from 29 picture files to a single doc file (word processor file) that can be forwarded by email with the simple tap of the FORWARD key and the addition of the email address for the person you want the file to go to. Other benefits of working with a word processor file include:

By simply selecting (highlighting) the entire document one can enlarge the type as much as needed for easy reading. -----By selecting the entire document one can have the text-to-speech feature that exists in most computers read the whole thing aloud.-----Because the file is editable recipients could insert personal reflections at the beginning, the end or within any page.----- For those whose printer may be "on the fritz" the email could be sent to friend or family member for printing or to Staples or any other printer operation to have the document printed.----- As a document file it can be accessed on any PC or Mac, iPad or Tablet, iPhone or Android Smartphone, etc.----- As a document file it would be easy to select, copy and paste the whole thing or selected parts.-----NOTE: This file has purposely been produced as a 24Mb file because most popular email providers cap allowable email sizes at 25Mb. Among those are AOL, Gmail and Yahoo, all of which have been tested and worked well with *Life In*. If you should encounter a size rejection when forwarding the file to a friend the problem can easily be overcome by sending the file through one of the many free programs available on the internet. A simple, reliable one is MailBigFile.

All of the above suggested procedures will be second nature actions for recipients who have spent too many hours at a keyboard. For those who might require a little help we recommend finding a fifteen year old with ten minutes to spare, or even a ten year old with fifteen minutes to spare.

On occasion someone will be forwarding *Life In* to a friend known to have excellent computer skills and therefore he or she will be tempted to not include this introduction. Please consider the possibility that the recipient may, in turn, be forwarding the work to others with more limited skills.

Whether passing this email along by cutting and pasting it into a personal email or by Forwarding it as is, please show a CC (carbon copy) to cxv@emotiveaudio.com. In that way we will add that email address to a distribution list that may someday be used to share interesting remarks and recollections, some already in, regarding this shared history.

Clearly this undertaking would have been consigned to the undertaker long ago without the planning and hard work done by Joan Brower, Grace Strong and Carl Volz. We thank them on Helen's behalf . . . and ours.

Life in Downtown State College
By Helen Breon Volz

In 1949, the summer after I finished seventh grade, my family moved downtown to 212 E. College Ave., the building which now houses the Shoe Box and Kranich's jewelers. My father owned the building at that time and it housed his business, The Penn State Photo Shop. Initially I didn't want to leave our lovely, quiet Locust Lane neighborhood and the friends who lived in that part of town. It helped though that I already knew a girl in my grade, Ellen "Herky" Burns, whose house was next door to the photo shop building. Her parents had moved to State College when she was nine months old and she had lived at 206 E. College for about 10 years before I moved into 212.

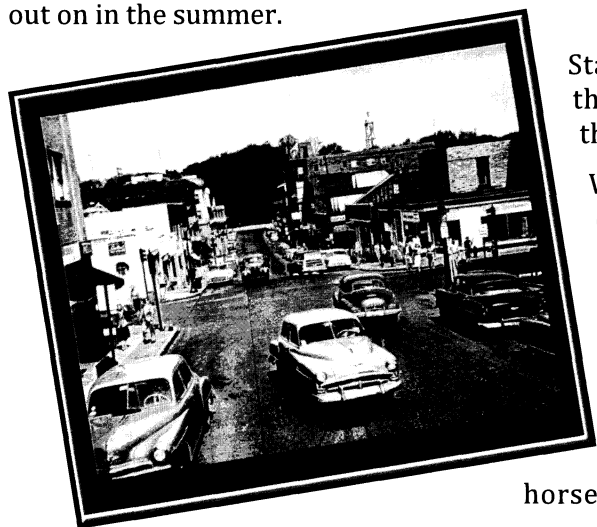
She has added some things to my memories as has Joan Hawbaker Brower who was another inner city girl, living in a second floor apartment on Allen St. for a time. Within a short time I developed other friendships with girls in the east end of town. My closest friend, Peggy Leuschner, lived on High St. near Beaver Ave.

I expect there were several reasons why my parents sold our home. The first was probably a shortage of money. Taxes were going up and up on the Photo Shop Building. Along with my older brothers they had just bought our cottage in Canada and were looking forward to spending summers there. My father was then 61 and my mother was 57 so they may have also wanted to live on one floor and have no yard to keep up. In the Locust Lane house our laundry was in the basement and Mother had a three story house to manage. There were three bedrooms that were not really needed, although the guest room was used when my brother Bill and his family visited. At times Mother rented that room to fraternity boys for their girlfriends who came to town for what was then called "House Party Weekends". Imagine renting a separate room for your girlfriend! How quaint!



The second floor above the Penn State Photo Shop had four apartments, two in the front that had a bedroom/living room and bathroom and two in the rear that each had a kitchen, living room, bedroom and bathroom. The two in the front were turned into a large living/dining room with a bath to the far left as you face the building and the other bath turned into a small kitchen on the far right. The left rear one was left pretty much as it had been except the kitchen appliances and plumbing had been removed. My grandmother slept in the bedroom. I slept in the former kitchen and had the living room as a sitting/study area. After my grandmother died at 90 in 1957 I moved into her bedroom. The right rear apartment was opened up to make a large bedroom/bathroom for my parents and the kitchen became a laundry. There was

also a small screened-in porch off the laundry that my mother used to hang out clothes and that we sat out on in the summer.



State College was dry except for beer and was a safe town in those days. I never had any fear if I had to walk home alone through the business district from evening school activities.

While a number of the buildings in downtown State College, except for a few destroyed in fires, are the same there is little resemblance to the town of my teenage years. When we first moved to the apartment there was even a livery stable in Calder Alley near where the Tavern now is located. Joan Hawbaker Brower boarded her horse there at one time. Herk remembers that a man named "Dave" managed the stable. She described him as having long, stringy, oily hair and a weatherworn face. She said she was terrified of him. He had a horse drawn cart and delivered groceries for the East End Market.

A good bit further east on College, on the campus side, about where Eastview Terrace is now located, was Windcrest. It was a development of what we called trailers although they had no wheels. They were khaki colored (left over from an army base maybe) and housed the influx of veterans, many of whom were married and going to school on the GI Bill. My Girl Scout leader, Jean Gross, lived there when I was in 6th grade. In an interesting side note when I was in 7th grade she and her husband moved to 163 W. Hamilton Ave where they rented a second floor apartment. I didn't know it then but it was the house of my husband to be. Bud's father was a graduate student then and the Volz family of six lived on the first floor and rented out the second to make ends meet. Our troop was very excited when Mrs. Gross told us that Bill Leonard lived diagonally across the street! We frequently looked out the front window trying to catch a glimpse of him.

The Tavern was right next door to our building but it was much smaller than it is now. My bedroom overlooked the kitchen and I still remember the smell of their spaghetti sauce cooking when I had the window open that first summer. Where the tavern now extends to College Ave. there was a record shop called The Music Room. Another memory of that first summer is of hearing Frankie Laine's version of "That Lucky Old Sun" playing over and over.

Dad used to say that we had the most beautiful front lawn in town and the state paid for it. The view from our front windows was beautiful. We were directly opposite what is now Henderson Building, but then was the Home Ec Building. There was green grass for over half the year and the trees that gracefully arched over the walk going past the building were beautiful in any season—pale green budding leaves in the spring, lush green in the summer, bright colors in the fall and often covered with snow in the winter. We also had a perfect viewing stand for any parades that came up College Avenue—the 4th of July parade, the homecoming parade, the Halloween parade and one year a Christmas parade with balloons designed to imitate the Macy's one in New York. It fell woefully short, but nevertheless attracted a crowd.

A note on the building of the Tavern in 1948: My family belonged to St. Paul's Methodist Church. There was a faction of the church who believed that The Tavern was not the required distance from the church in order to sell beer. My Dad, a beer drinker, was very supportive of the Tavern owners converting an old bakery into a restaurant. I remember he said they would be playing only classical music, nothing raucous. He spoke disparagingly about a church member who came out with a tape measure to check the distance. My father's support started a long lasting relationship between the two businesses. At least one night a week mother would make the side dishes and Dad would bring home one of our favorites from the Tavern—spaghetti, chicken croquettes or huge deep fried butterfly shrimp.

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We could also watch the parade of people in town for the Saturday Penn State football games, played in New Beaver Field which no longer exists. It was located in the vicinity of the present Keller building, near the lion

shrine. This was in the day that adults dressed for football games. Men wore slacks and jackets with ties and women wore skirts and sweaters or suits that were often accessorized with a fur neckpiece. It was exciting to look out and see people uniting with old friends and getting ready for the short walk up to the game.

College Ave. was a two way street in those days and had beautiful shade trees lining it. When the asphalt wore thin you could see the bricks of the original street.

Now I'll take you on a little tour of downtown: Leave our building and turn right, I've already told you about the music store where part of the Tavern is now located. After the Music Room moved to the Glennland building the space was rented by Moyer Jewelers for a time. Herk remembers that earlier there was a house there where the Hetrick family lived and for a time the Skaggs family lived there. Bobby Skaggs was in our grade Go across the alley where the memorial bricks and the statue of the pigs are now located and you'll come to a large building that was then the Storch Motor Company. They were a DeSoto and Plymouth dealer. They also had indoor parking spaces that people who lived downtown could rent. We rented a space there for a time. After I learned to drive I thought nothing of driving Dad's car up the very dimly lit ramp (I remember a single light bulb hanging from the ceiling) and walking the half block home. When the car dealership moved this became the Music Mart, owned by Olin Butt. Later it was Appalachian Outdoor House. Now I think it is a store that sells athletic clothing.

Above Storch's was the IOOF (International Order of Odd Fellows) Hall. No one I knew was an Odd Fellow, but nevertheless I spent a fair amount of time there. It was a large room with wooden floors and a small stage with high backed chairs on it at the front. My mother and Mrs. Antes belonged to the OES (Order of the Eastern Star), a Masonic group for women that met in the hall and Grace and I attended many an Eastern Star potluck there with them.

The Odd Fellows Hall was also used by a woman named Ruby Davis to give dancing lessons. Many of my friends and I were in one of her weekly classes when we were preschoolers. I'm sure the guys in my High School Class remember her husband, Arthur (also known as "Syph") who taught sex ed. to them. I guess Ruby's dance classes would fall into what might be called Modern dance. It was certainly not ballet or tap. We learned relaxation and to move gracefully. We had a spring recital on campus in a small enclosed garden that no longer exists. I remember wearing soft soled black leather shoes held on with elastic straps across the top. For the recital I was one of the "sunbeams" and wore a gauzy yellow outfit.

Continuing east, next door was the People's Furniture Store. It later became Warner's Restaurant. (Wasn't John Warner in our class?) After that a Dutch Pantry occupied this location. I think it is about where Mr. Charles is now located. Underneath that building was "Cook the Butcher" as the trucks said, owned by Don Cook. I only remember being in there one time. It was after the war and he had received his first large shipment of meat He held an open house. I remember it was cold and the floors were covered with sawdust. Huge sides of beef and pork were hanging from the ceiling. I imagine the butcher shop was taking orders from people for their first good cut of meat in years. There were refreshments including a



punch bowl carved out of a block of ice. When Cook retired this same shop was operated by Jerry Slagle for a number of years before he built his own building on North Barnard St.

Herk remembers a large house with a hedge around it on the corner of College and McAllister. Except for the Methodist Church on the corner of McAllister St. and College Ave. and the Reformed Church (now UCC) on the corner of Locust Lane and College, there were mostly private homes going east on the South side of College Ave. They continued pretty much to where the town ended, near the electric plant on the corner of High St. and College Ave

St. Paul's Methodist church had a gymnasium and this is where we went on Saturday nights for Canteen. We danced to 78 RPM records or the H.S. dance band, the Modernaires. For a time John and Betty Jane Dittmar were chaperones. Later our daughter was in a dance class that Betty Jane taught in her home studio. Now our granddaughter is in a musical theatre class taught by Betty Jane and John's daughter, Heidi Dittmar Biever in the same home. I think later someone named Fran Hartzell was a chaperone at canteen. Before moving to the Methodist Gym canteen was held in the Episcopal Parish House across from the football field.

When I was young that first block of Locust Lane was called Miles St. Locust lane did not go across Beaver Ave, but there was a walkway of about one block that my mother and I used when we walked to the Methodist church from our house on Locust Lane. Over the years College Ave was widened. By the time I was in junior High and used to walk down to High St. to visit my friend Peggy in the evenings, the front porches of the houses along College Ave. came right up to the sidewalk and people in their living rooms were only a porch width away.

I'm sure that you remember that if we continued further out of town, going east we would reach the Penn State horse barn. Marilyn Doan remembers going there frequently with Joanne Bedenk and I remember spending time there with Leslie Shultz. There was also the Coliseum Roller Rink with its bumpy floor and graffiti covered rest rooms and the ever freezing Evergreens Pool where we could swim for a dime unless it was closed due to a polio scare.

When I left our apartment and turned to the left, or West on College Ave. I came first to the large old house where my friend Ellen, nicknamed Herk, lived. It was wonderful to have a friend right next door to me when we moved downtown. I had known her before, but our friendship really started when I moved in next door. Her house was located where the University Book Center is now (formerly Keeler's). We often played together and sometimes slept over at each other's houses.

I had old evening gowns that had belonged to my sister in law and she had a box of costume jewelry from her older sisters. Those were props enough to start us on many flights of fancy. Sometimes we played records and were dancers—I remember especially dancing to "On the Boardwalk at Atlantic City" and "You Make Me Feel So Young", which I think was on the flip side. Other times we were the wives of movie stars shopping for clothing or jewelry. Our husbands tended to be cowboy stars; since those were the male stars we had the most exposure to during the Saturday afternoon movies at the Nittany Theatre. I remember especially being Mrs. Roy Rogers and Mrs. Sunset Carson.

We walked to school together most days, even after she moved about a block and a half away to an apartment over the People's Bank Building—now First National Bank of PA. Often while walking to school we munched on doughnuts from Sally Stark's shop on Pugh Street, near Calder Alley.

Herk and I were friends throughout high school, but saw each other only occasionally in college, even though we both went to Penn State. For awhile we wrote at Christmas, but then that stopped. We reconnected at our 50th High School reunion in 2004 and had many laughs. Now we stay in touch by email.

After Herk moved away from the house on College Ave., another person from our High School class moved there. Tom Crandell was from the northern part of Pennsylvania. He was athletic and seemed to quickly become part of the "in" crowd. Since I wasn't part of the "popular" group I was a bit intimidated and didn't have much contact with him, although he was always pleasant enough. After high school, or maybe he was in the service in between, he worked at Levine's men's shop which was about where Woodring's Flower Shop is now located. Everyone was surprised when the wife of one of the higher ups in HRB,

now Raytheon, who worked across the street at Danks, left her husband to marry Tom. They moved to Colorado soon after.

Next door to Herk's house was the East End Market, a grocery store owned by Larry Guiser and Dean Fetterolf. My Mother phoned in orders and they delivered them upstairs to our apartment. On the corner of Pugh and College was the Gentzel appliance store. I remember seeing electric fans for sale in the window and I think they carried Norge refrigerators, etc. In 1957 The Gentzel Building burned down taking this whole corner area.

Continuing down Pugh toward Beaver there was a small ice cream shop which sold Breyer's ice cream and was owned by Harry Morrell. The first Moyer jewelry shop was also there. There was a dry cleaning place owned by some people named Kline and then Sally Stark's donut shop right next to Calder Alley. Across the street the Rathskeller was already there. On the west side of this part of Pugh Street was the Dux Club, a bowling alley, where we went for high school bowling classes and on dates. Nothing was automatic. In bowling classes we stepped on a lever that brought metal posts up from the floor, set a pin on each post and then quickly jumped up out of the way before someone threw the ball down the alley.

On the Northwest corner of Beaver and Pugh was a space where Harry Morrell moved his ice cream business after the Gentzel Building fire. Harry expanded his menu to include sandwiches. Joanie Brower thinks that someone named Capparelli may also have been involved with this business at one time.

Across Calder Alley on the east side was the house of Dr. Nannie Glenn, M.D. I remember seeing her walking along Pugh Street—a little old lady always in black with high shoes and a pink nose. She was often muttering to herself. There was still a shingle out in front of her house and friends and I speculated on what might happen if someone new to the town actually stopped in for an appointment. When I was in high school she died and her house was knocked down. My father said he heard her attic was full of gin bottles.

On the north east corner of Pugh St. and Beaver Ave. the Glennland Building still stands. There was a large beautifully tiled swimming pool in lowest level with entry from Pugh St. For many years Penn State rented it for men's swimming classes and in the summer swimming lessons were given for children. I took lessons there for several summers. I think my teacher was a Mrs. Jeffries. Jane Gutterson's father, Bill, also taught some of the classes. Later my dermatologist's office was there and I could see the original tile in her office.

WMAJ started broadcasting from their studio in the basement of the Glennland building in October of 1945. Some years later they moved to the first floor and you could stand outside and look through the windows to see our local broadcast personalities in action. At times this included Jim and Jane and the Western Vagabonds, a four person Country-Western group, consisting of Jim, Jane, Smoky and Peewee.

If instead of turning up Pugh St. we crossed Pugh Street and continued west on College, what is now Spats was the Campus Restaurant where my dad and many other local businessmen, including Bill Smith, who owned a tailor shop and dry cleaning establishment on Beaver Ave.; real estate developer and Joanie's dad, J. Alvin Hawbaker; oil and lumber company owner, Iry Mohnkern and John Taylor, a local lawyer met for breakfast. Next was The Children's Shop, started by my mother and later sold to the Edmiston's. As a child I loved to see their windows full of dolls near Christmas and they stayed in business long enough that our daughter also remembers this. This part of the building was Pennshire men's clothing for a time after the Edmiston's retired and now is The Family Clothesline Factory Outlet, a place to buy Penn State wear.

A gift shop called at various times the Old Main Art Shop or the Treasure House came next. It was owned at one time by and Mr. and Mrs. Drake. It is now The Apple Tree. Next door was a small dress and women's underwear shop owned by a Mrs. Leitzinger. When I was in eighth grade I bought my first "grown-up" dressy dress there. It was an iridescent dark green taffeta. It wasn't a formal, but in those days girls wore good dresses to parties and on special occasions or to church. The Old Main Frame Shop is now located there. Chop Stick Express is now next door, but I can't remember what it was in earlier days.

Continuing east was the Behrer hardware store, owned by Charlie Kropp, whose daughter, Minajo, was in our high school class. I think Behrer was the name of his father in law, who had originally owned the store. They had a complete line of hardware as well as dishes and small appliances. The entrance was up a ramp that was between two show windows. The floors were old fashioned oiled wood. I remember

that my parents bought some Fiesta ware dishes there when we moved to the apartment. These weren't the original reddish/orange, blue and gold colors, but a later version that were light green, dark green and gray. They blended well with our dining room/living room decor. The area was painted dark green with a light green built in corner cabinet and a dark and light green leafy wall paper pattern on the wall of the dining room part. This was an example of my Dad's eye for design and color.

After the hardware store closed Bill McMullen opened a floral shop there. He did the flowers for my wedding. He also carried gifts and Christmas decorations. At Christmas when our daughter was about two, he had an inflating snowman outside, the first we'd had in State College. When we were down town she loved to look at it. Now the ramp that once led into the store has been replaced with steps and Barefoot and Mama Mia are located there.

Continuing west on College Ave. I think the next store was what was then called a dry goods store and now would be called a fabric store. It was mostly devoted to fabrics and other sewing needs. It was owned by Eli Egolf and after he retired his son, Tom, took over. This may be the place where PNC bank now has a large office.

Also in this vicinity there was a Clearfield Furs store for a time. Furs were in style in those days. And I still have the mink neckpiece with its beady glass eyes and little clip under the mouth that was my mother's fashion statement.

Next came Hoy's pharmacy a small local drugstore owned by Pete Hoy. It was Pete who convinced my dad to try a new contraceptive gel or cream that resulted in my conception and my birth when my mother was 44 and my father 48. After Pete left the drugstore business (I assume from retirement, not from his failure in providing my mother with adequate "protection"), it was bought by a Mr. Griggs. This small pharmacy was the one my family used even though we eventually had a Rea and Derrick and a large new Mc Lanahan's.

In addition to the usual drugstore things, they carried lovely writing paper and also Russell Stover candy. This was quite a novelty to us, because my mother's maiden name had been Stover. I loved to look in their windows close to Valentine's Day. They always had a whole window of heart-shaped boxes covered with all colors of taffeta and satin—everything from pastels to bright reds and plaids. Some were decorated with roses, others with huge bows. I think this is now a sporting goods store.

Above the drug store was the office of the Drs. Glenn. They were the step sons of Dr. Nannie Glenn. Dr. Grover Glenn was our doctor until I was in fifth grade. Dr. Billy Glenn who was his brother or half brother was an ENT. When my dad had a sore throat he would go to Billy and have him "paint" his throat. Once in awhile I saw Dr. Glenn in the office, but most of my contacts with him were when he made his home visits. His nurse/receptionist's name was June Miller and on her desk she had a goldfish bowl. Now I'd had my share of goldfish as a child—bring them home put them in a bowl, feed them, have them die and flush them down the toilet. But June's goldfish were nothing like the plain ones I'd had. They were exotic—with fantails, and one of them was black.

After the war my brother Bill's close friend, Bill Welch, returned to State College and he became our doctor. My first contact with him was when my parents were called to bring me home from church camp with measles and he visited our house. His first office was on a second floor on Allen St. He later moved to the first floor of a house on West College Ave.

A bit farther along was Schlow's Quality Shop, a women's clothing store. Schlow's was one of the few stores that was on two floors. I bought my first formal there—a taffeta and net strapless number that was a sort of coral color and had some embroidery and rhinestones on the top of the front. It also had a "stole" made of matching net that went around my shoulders and snapped on each side. I couldn't afford to buy a new formal for the next year, so I tried to dye the coral one black. While it didn't turn out jet black as I had hoped, I did wear it. The taffeta underskirt and the embroidery were black, but the net was more of a brown. At least the color was even.

When I was in college knit suits were in style and I brought a rose boucle one at Schlow's. The collar was detached and I think had pearls on it. In my late 20's I bought a gold bikini there. My mother bought a lot of her clothes there too, but never a bikini.

The Schlow's son in law Harold Zipser was a podiatrist and later on opened a children's shoe store on the lower level. I think there was some clothing down there at times too. Ellen Burns remembers that Dr. Zipser was very helpful in fitting shoes for her as well as for her mother and sisters, all of whom had very narrow feet. She also remembers standing in line with a note from her mother listing all the needed sizes when the first shipment of nylons came to Schlows after the war.

After Schlow's closed it continued to be a women's clothing store—The Lady Bug. Now Irving's Bagels is located there. This business is locally owned and the owner is a friend of our son.

Next came a store that I believe was the original site of Ethel Meserve's gift store, before it moved to Allen St. Occasionally I walked carefully through the store. My mother had always told me how very expensive everything was.

The part of Lion's Pride that is built of brown stone was the home of Hur's Mens Shop, owned by the Hurwitz family

On the corner where Moyer's jewelry store is now located was the Athletic Store, usually called the "A" Store, owned by the Brown/Leitzell family. It sold athletic equipment, Penn State clothing, school supplies and textbooks and also had a small space for the Balfour Company, the only place you could buy a Penn State class ring. Grace Antes Strong reminded me that the smallish man in charge of Balfour who seemed to be a permanent fixture in the College Avenue window near the door was named Crum Jenkins. After he died his wife Gladys took over that part of the business.

Directly across the street was the State College Hotel, just where it is today. Next to it was a small news and tobacco shop where Herk remembers getting the Sunday papers for her father. Later it was Nittany News and was owned by Mike Bell's mother.

There is still a Jack Harper's Clothing Store on College Avenue and I believe it was at about the same place back then. This was the store to go to for high quality men's clothing, both for the students who could afford it and for men about town. I remember seeing Jack standing in the doorway of his store always



looking very dapper. He was a smallish man with white hair by the time I knew him and always looked as if he had just stepped out of a magazine.

Men wore hats in those years but you couldn't take the chance of going to Jack Harper's and buying a hat for your man. After all, it might not fit or be to his liking. But Jack and other men's stores had just the thing—a hat gift certificate that consisted of a miniature hat in a little hat box. The brands I remember were Dobbs and Adams. I loved it when my father got one of those cute little hats for Christmas. I think Keeler's book store, owned by Bill Keeler came next, another place to buy textbooks

and school supplies This was a small store and they later moved further east on College and became the University Book Center. I believe this former Keeler's building now has Indigo in the lower level.

I bought my first typewriter at Keeler's, a lightweight model called the Smith-Corona Skywriter. I never took typing, but I took it along on a nighttime trip to Canada soon after I bought it. My parents and I listened to Ike being nominated by the Republicans for president and I practiced touch typing in the dark. I loved it and used it through high school, college and my master's degree. By the time I was working on my master's thesis in 1965 I was again typing in the car, this time sitting on the "couch" with the Skywriter on the table of our VW camper, and the kids playing unsafely on the floor. In the mid 70's I bought a Smith Corona electric typewriter to work on my dissertation.

There is now a CVS Drug Store in what was once the beautiful Cathaum theatre. For a time after the theatre closed and businesses moved into the street level, the top retained the beautiful ceiling with all its gilt and plaster curlicues. As "Gatsby's" it was used for a variety of events. Bud and I played in the orchestra for a local production of "Oklahoma" that was held there. I once went to the Charity Ball there. It was used for wedding receptions and other large events. But parking was a problem and I think that Celebration Hall probably took over the business that might have gone to the former Cathaum.

Next came the First National Bank. This building looks pretty much the same on the outside, but is now Citizens' Bank. Mary Grace Hoffer's dad worked there I believe. Also I think our dentist, Dr. Stewart, had his office there. I remember many a white knuckled visit to him as my teeth were never the best.

What is now Ye Olde College Diner was the New College Diner in my day and I don't remember them being famous for grilled stickies. Sometimes my father took us to breakfast there when we left on an early morning trip.

There is a small section to the left of the State Theatre where the box office is now located that I believe is where the Candy Cane was housed. This was a great place to run in and get some candy to eat in the movies. Their candy was much better than the Juju Fruits in the theatre's vending machine. I remember maple sugar soldiers were once all the rage. They had a rough texture on the outside, but when you bit into them they were smooth and creamy to the tongue. I really, really liked them, that is until I ate too many. I didn't get sick, but I still don't care for maple sugar candy. Now maple syrup though, that's a different thing— I want only the genuine article on my pancakes.

We also bought little blue and orange boxes of Rock Candy. It looked like the grayish crystals of salt you spread on ice, but was pure sugar. The other thing I remember about the Candy Cane was that they sold white chocolate. I had terrible food allergies when I was a teenager and couldn't eat chocolate or anything with caffeine. So for Easter my parents gave me white chocolate rabbits and once I received a whole box of chocolate covered cherries.

The present day State Theater is located on the same spot as its predecessor. To the right of the theatre is an area that says "Support the State Theatre. I think this was the site of the Penn State Diner, smaller than the New College Diner, although maybe it was located in part of what is now Herwig's.

The corner property where Herwig's, Chocolate Madness and Spectacles are now located was occupied by a large old house with a front porch that reached to the sidewalk. At one time it was the home of Dr. Peter Dale who also had his office in the building. His son Dr. H. Thompson Dale joined him in the practice later on. I never knew "old" Dr. Dale, but when I got married I switched from Dr. Bill Welch to Dr. Tom Dale since he was my husband's doctor. The office looked like the older era that it came from. It had its own large and outdated x-ray equipment and old fashioned medical cabinets. When I became pregnant for the first time I decided I would like to go to an ob-gyn and Dr. Dale recommended Dr. Clair who was new in town then. He saw me through a miscarriage and for a few visits into my pregnancy. Then his National Guard Company was called up during the Berlin wall crisis and I went back to Dr. Dale who delivered both of our children. Crossing Fraser Street, I think there may have been a grocery store in the place Dunkin' Donuts now occupies. Underneath I remember an appliance store operated by a Mr. Blatt whose daughter Patty was in our class. She was the first person I knew with anorexia. Of course it didn't have a name then.

The building where Café 210 West is located has been a restaurant as long as I remember. As a child we went to The Anchorage for dinner after church. When I was in my 30's it was Myer's and we went there to listen to Dixieland and eat a dozen large shrimp boiled in beer for \$1.25. Next it was owned by a Penn State professor from Iran who taught in the food sciences department at Penn State. His name I believe was Kurosh Ostovar and he called the restaurant La Chaumeiere. I think 210 West came right after that.

I'm not positive what was in that little mall that is set back from the street, but I think it was the location of the house that the Schlow family donated for our first public library.

Sears and Roebuck was located where Starbucks now is. The store had mainly tools, appliances and some furniture. For all else it served as a catalog ordering center. On the corner was Sear's Auto Center. After Sears moved to the mall Pizza Hut had the corner location. It caused quite a stir. Some people thought its bright red roof was too garish and wrote letters to the editor about how it spoiled the look of College Ave. Others wrote back that some people wouldn't be happy unless everything in town was brown!

Across the street was the Koch Funeral Home, reaching from the corner of College up to the alley in the middle of Burrowes. It was originally in a former home, but then expanded. When parking became too much of a problem they built at their present site. My family knew the Koch family well.

If we take a left and go south on Burrowes St. there was State College Auto Company, an Oldsmobile dealer in the middle of the block, about half way up on the left. Later Paul and Tony's Stereo took over that building. If we continue west on College Ave. we come to Dr. Welch's office, located in an old house. Next was Hoy Brothers, run by two brothers. They sold appliances, Woolrich clothing and had a soda fountain. But most important to the well dressed junior high girl they sold Lee jeans. Never mind that the jeans were not shaped to fit girls. Never mind that the dressing room was a small storage area with piles of boxes and a ratty curtain for a door, we patronized Hoy Bros. because they were the only game in town. I remember that the jeans that fit me through the hips were too big around the waist, but that's what belts were for, right? On the corner of Atherton and College was a large house that had Sally Houser's beauty shop on the first floor. I got many a hair cut there.

Now, let's go back to Fraser St. and head south on the left hand side of that street. We've passed the side of Dr. Dale's building on the corner and next we come to Struble's Clover Farm store. It had two entrances and later became Nittany Quill which also kept the two entrances until it downsized,

There is another small retail space before we come to the alley. I don't know what was originally there, but after WW II a small produce store opened. It was owned by Frank Sciortino who was Italian. I remember Mrs. Hostetter, a neighbor on Locust Lane saying that the Sciortinos were back, and I have since wondered whether they had been in an internment camp during the war. The only thing I clearly remember about the store is Mr. Sciortino's Italian accent and that it had the first red onions I had ever seen. My dad called them Sicilian onions. My husband remembers they had a one-eyed cat there. Much later it became the Stage Door Deli, home of delicious sandwiches, named for movie stars. There is another deli there now.

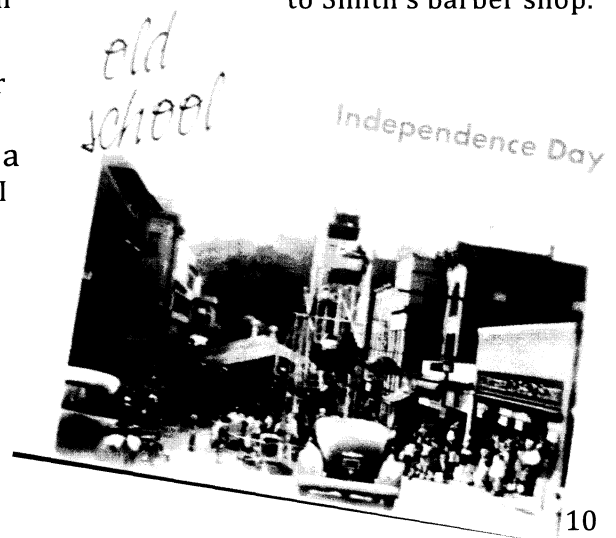
Crossing the alley we reach the Centre Daily Times Building, where the Fraser St. mini mall is now located. It was an evening paper then and every Monday through Saturday in the mid afternoon boys and girls would gather behind the loading dock until it was time to go into the building and fill their orange news bags with the day's newspapers.

There were houses between the CDT and Beaver Ave., for a time one of them also contained a small music store, the Harmony Shop. It was owned by Angelo Vespa who was a social studies teacher at State Hi, but also a violinist who had at one time aspired to a concert career. Opposite the CDT was the building that housed the Alpha Fire Co. and the borough offices, And I think there were homes from there to Beaver Ave.

Turning left at the corner onto W. Beaver Avenue there is a brown stone building that is still there. I remember a number of businesses that have been at that location. To reach the first three businesses one walked up a few steps from the street level. To the left was Dr. Alexander, an optometrist who opened his office after the war. He was a neighbor of my husband's family and his daughter a friend of my sister in law. My first pair of glasses was prescribed by him. It was this practice that developed into Nittany Eye Associates,

In the center was a beauty shop called the Beauty Centre or perhaps the State College Beauty Centre. This is where my mother had her hair cut and sometimes permed. I often went along to her appointments and marveled at the large machines for drying hair and at all the wires hanging out of the perm equipment. I don't remember ever getting my hair cut there. I was taken to Smith's barber shop.

On the right was a millinery shop operated by either Madame or Mademoiselle Maude Mayes. I don't know whether she was married or not, I remember her only in black with perfectly coiffed very blonde hair, waved on the sides and with a figure eight shaped bun in the back. Of course it was perfect, I later found out it was a wig. She had red lips and rouged cheeks—more make up than almost all of my mother's friends or any of my teachers wore. I passed her shop filled with colorful hats on their stands when I went to the Beauty Centre with my mother. My mother bought only one hat there—a large black picture hat to wear to my brother Bill's wedding which was a rather formal affair.



I think at one time there was book store and lending library owned by a Mr. Roberts tucked into a small space to the right of this threesome. I believe that's where I bought my copy of "A Child's Christmas in Wales."

Next door was the Temple Market. I loved walking past it, because the front was lined with baskets of seasonal fruits and vegetables, protected by a large awning. They provided a calendar of treats for the senses. My mother didn't shop there until her usual stores went out of business or stopped making deliveries. Temple Market was the second to last grocery store to stop home delivery. O.W. Houts was the last. I often shopped at Temples and loved the convenience of leaving work, collecting the kids and having the groceries waiting for me at home.

The Presbyterian Church has been across the street as long as I remember and after the war, before the parking lot was built. Centre Film Lab opened in a house located about where the lot is now.

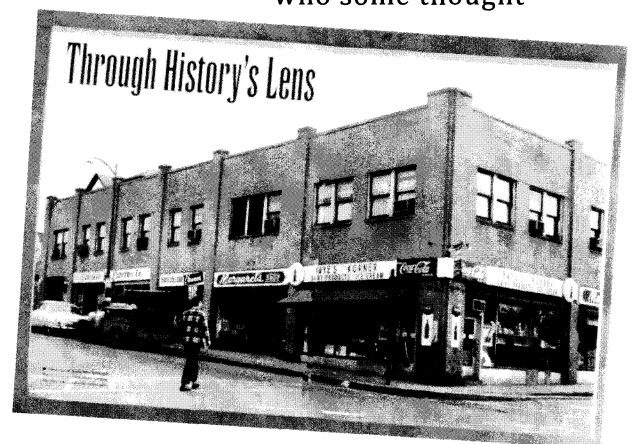
I'll pause here for a word about shopping in State College when I was growing up. It was definitely not a shopping destination then. In fact people often drove to Altoona (Gables), Williamsport (Sterns), Lock Haven, Lewistown (Danks) and believe it or not, even Bellefonte (The Katz Shop, Brachbills) to shop for furniture, appliances and clothing. People who moved here from urban areas complained incessantly about our terrible selection of stores and even scoffed at the Nittany Mall when it was built.

Next to the Temple Market was the State College Floral Shoppe owned by the Shirk family. It's one of the few locally owned businesses still here from my childhood. When my family needed flowers we bought them there because "Mid", short for Mildred, Shirk was an Eastern Star "sister" of my mother's. I'm not sure what was in the space next to the Alley until Alice and Don opened their hair Salon there sometime in the forties or fifties. They later sold it to Ian Weisberg, who eventually moved to the lower level of the Danks building and became Ian of Danks.

On the northwest corner of Beaver and Allen was the Allen Crest Tea room, really more of a regular restaurant. It may have also had an entrance on Allen. At some point in the fifties it burned down and Danks Department store built the two story building that is there now. Before that people who wanted to shop at Danks drove to their Lewistown store. The upper floor is now Paneras. The lower space is now the home of Penn State's Downtown Theatre.

Across the St. on the southwest side in the corner space was Kaye's Korner, owned by Kaye Vinson and his wife Betty. Kaye was tragically killed in an auto accident in Philipsburg which also injured Betty. I believe she had to have an artificial leg after that. Walking home from school in the spring my friends and I often stopped at Kaye's for a Popsicle. I believe that's where I had my first Creamsicle, which I thought was really delicious with the orange ice/vanilla ice cream combination. They always had the Pittsburgh Pirates' games on the radio. Those were the days of Ralph Kiner might outwit Babe Ruth. But alas like many Pirate dreams it never came to pass.

Kaye's Korner was surrounded by the Bottorf Shoe Store, which had entrances on both Allen and Beaver. These were roughly in the spaces occupied now by the Growing Tree. We always bought our shoes at Bottorf's. Maybe it was the only one in town then. The really exciting thing about Bottorf's though, was its x-ray machine, thought to be the latest thing in scientific shoe fitting, especially for children with their growing feet. My friends and I would often go in while down town just to have a look at our foot bones. I wonder whether there are people around who were actually damaged by the radiation from what we thought was a harmless novelty.



Before we turn the corner and head down the 100 block of South Allen, I'll mention a few businesses that were in the 200 block. Next to Bottorf's was "Hick" Hartman's appliance store. He sold large and small appliances and we bought our first vacuum cleaner there. Next was Kramer's barbershop which had a small merry go round style horse with a leather saddle shaped seat and reins. It was on a raised area right in the window. The idea I'm sure was to make haircuts fun for young children. I should have started our son out

there because he always screamed when he got in the barber's chair. Near the alley, the Christian Science Reading Room has had a presence for as long as I remember.

On the opposite side of the street, there was the Post Office on the corner now occupied by Schlow Library, and just past the alley was Centre Hardware, a great place to find almost everything. Next door, at various times, were Jim's Army-Navy Store and Mac's haberdashery. Down the hill a bit was the town's only free standing bakery. The Electric Bakery was located in a small brownish brick building. Later a shoe repair shop moved into the building. The rest of the block toward Foster was made up of homes.

O.K. we're back to the corner of Beaver and Allen, and turning north on Allen, in other words heading toward the Penn State Campus gates. This 100 block of South Allen St. was usually the busiest part of town. Of course we all remember the Alpha fire Co. 4th of July carnival that took over this whole block for their fundraiser. I remember Gene Lee and Ray Watkins calling the bingo games and Dr. Stewart my dentist helping with the horse race game. And how exciting was it to rock back and forth on the top of the Ferris Wheel and look out over our town?

The space on the northeast corner with entry on Beaver was at various times occupied by College Sportswear, a Young Men's Shop, Tot and Teen and the Penn-Whelan Drug Store, managed by Bob Heiser, Jr. More recently, Tadpole Crossing occupied the space for a number of years. Tot and Teen may have opened after I no longer lived down town, but it is remembered for its sales, when women lined up around the corner onto Allen St. ready to rush in for the bargains at 9:00 am. Now there is retail space in the downstairs with entry from Allen St, but I don't think it was open when I was growing up.

The Woodring floral shop was not there in the early fifties, but over the years, several other stores were located in that general area. For a time there was a Shaeffer Market there. It was the only store I'd seen that had little pipes that sprayed water on the vegetables. I always think of yellow and black when I think of that store so maybe those colors were on their sign. There was also a women's clothing store called The Merivale Shop. My memory of it is of frilly blouses in the window. It was a chain store and my mother bought her clothes from locally owned stores. She also thought that the Merivale's merchandise was "cheap", as in "not well made."

Also in that area was Vic's Milky Way. Their regular milkshakes were excellent and their "freezes" were even better. Before it moved to College Ave. Pop's Mexi Hots was also in this area. A rather mysterious place was located nearby top—Jim Harris' hat blocking business and pool room. I never actually saw him blocking any hats and the place looked dark and smoky, partly from the cigars that were always fired up in his mouth.

Across the street on the west side of Allen there were several small stores. I remember especially the Blair Shop, a nice little gift shop, filled with pretty, dainty things. I still have the sterling silver thimble that I bought there for my mother's birthday. Later on Bottorf's shoe store moved into that area.

The biggest store on the East side of Allen was the G.C. Murphy Co. with its two floors of merchandise. They sold greeting cards and always had a big sign with the date saying, for example, "Today is October 17th. Tomorrow is someone's birthday." Murphy's had everything from clothing to plants to animals. At Easter they had boxes of baby ducks and brightly dyed chicks. I remember spending a great deal of time in elementary school staring at the lipsticks that I was too young to wear. I think that I, like other girls started with Tangee. They also sold Evening in Paris perfume, still available from the Vermont Country Store as is Tangee, and the cheaper Blue Waltz perfume. There were school supplies, yard goods and clothes for the whole family. My mother didn't buy clothes there either—too cheap.

In the back looking out over the street level floor was a sort of loft that housed what **I** assumed were bookkeepers at desks with their typewriters and adding machines. There was a woman from our church who worked there, a Mrs. Hetrick. I have tried to remember whether Murphy's ever had a pneumatic system that sucked our money up there and sent back the change. I don't think so.

There was always the smell of food in Murphy's. I think they had one of those roasted nut machines and there was a lunch counter and soda fountain. When I worked in the State College schools as a speech therapist for a few years, I sometimes went there for lunch on the day I was working in the Frazier Street or Nittany Avenue building. I bought our daughter her first ice cream soda there and sometime later when a friend

offered her a “soda” and gave her a plain soft drink she was very disappointed. Chili's is in that spot now, although other stores were there after Murphy's first closed.

Further down the hill toward Calder alley were The Smart Shop, a women's clothing store owned by the Aurebach family and Mur's Jewelry store owned by Murray Gritzman. Before he owned the jewelry store I think it was owned by the Shomberg family Later on Ethel Meserve had her gift shop there and now it is part of Appalachian Outdoors. . Persia's shoe store was also in this area and of course Mary Persia was in our class.

Tucked in between two of these buildings was The Spa, a bar. It was in the basement, but a door opened onto Allen St. If you walked past when someone was opening the door there were loud voices and the smells of beer and smoke.

Rea and Derrick's drug store was next. It was L shaped and the back part which required a left hand turn went behind People's Bank. R and D had the usual drugstore items and also a soda fountain. I remember going there after the movies with girlfriends and also on dates. At some point they installed large glass photos of nature scenes that had lights behind the glass and were a new art form in town. I had my first phosphate and my first flavored Coke there, but my favorite treat was a Lover's Delight. It was a small Coca Cola glass filled with vanilla ice cream and other yummy things. I think there were strawberries and several kinds of syrup with whipped cream and a cherry **on** top. As was often the case for drug stores in those days R and D sold cameras and film and took in exposed film to be processed. They went one step further though and sold the chemicals for those who processed their own film. My husband purchased his chemicals there and also, when they needed something quickly my brother and father bought supplies there for the Penn State Photo Shop.

Just before Calder Alley was the People's Bank, now First National Bank. This was the bank my family patronized.

Across the street from Murphy's was another drug store, McLanahan's. While R and D was a chain, McLanahan's was locally owned by Bob McLanahan, It had a large curved coral and chrome soda fountain area, and best of all, air conditioning. I remember it as the first retail establishment in town to have air conditioning. I'm not sure how this related in time to when the movie theaters installed AC, but anyway you had to pay to go to the movies whereas McLanahan's was free and you could pop in with the excuse of browsing and cool off on a hot day. There had been an A&P in this location, but it had moved to a new location on Atherton and Beaver.

Where Aurum is now located was Crabtree's jewelry store. In addition to the usual diamonds and other jewelry they sold sterling silver flatware. Each girl in the high school's senior class received a teaspoon from her pattern, when she registered it with them. Our pictures were in the window with ribbons leading to our chosen patterns. The idea, of course, was that people who wanted to buy us graduation gifts would add to our silver patterns. Mine was “Silver Flutes” by Towle. At that time the Kalin family operated both a men's and a woman's clothing store that came next. In later years the Charles shop was on that side of the street too. And also later Glick shoes had a store there. Before there were two Kalin's's stores, one of the spaces was Fred's Restaurant, owned by Fred Spannuth. While I was in high school or junior high a rumor circulated that there was a brothel above the restaurant.



the Pastime Theater, memory and replacing it was The Electric Supply Company, owned by Bern Sheehee, Russ Fisher and Ray Rewbridge. There was still a slope in the floor from its theater days. They sold electric appliances of all kinds and did electrical repairs—both in their shop at the store, but also of appliances in homes. My husband began working there as a radio repairer when he was about 14. Child labor laws must not have been as strictly enforced in those days. He mentioned that Bern Sheehee was a master at electric razor repair.

The store must have sold some toys too, because when Leslie Shultz and I were about 10 we looked in the window and saw stuffed white cats that we desperately wanted. They were covered with real fur, rabbit I

suppose. We went in, asked the price, and found we didn't have enough money. So we made our first deal to buy something on time. I think the total price was \$1.25. Each week we went in and paid a part of our allowance until they were ours. My cat lay on my bed into my teenage years.

This brings us to Calder Alley on the West side of Allen St. Just across the alley on that side was the Nittany Theater, nicknamed "The Armpit". In elementary school and may even later we lined up for half a block to get into the Saturday afternoon Cowboy movies. It always smelled like stale popcorn and we cautioned each other to keep our feet up on the seat, because rumor had it that one girl got so intrigued with the movie she didn't realize that a rat was chewing on her foot. Next to it was a tiny taxi office, first the L.R. Tony Cab Co. and later Handy Delivery. Next to this was Bunn's Barber Shop. In the early days of the civil rights movement this shop was picketed with sign of "Jim Crow's Got to Go" since they refused to cut the hair of African American students.

Today Bill Pickle's Tavern comes next. Earlier, Bostonian Ltd., owned by Guy Kresge was in that site. They had at various times clothes for men and women and also sold shoes. My memory is that before that The Corner Room continued into that space on a lower level. You went down a short flight of stairs in the restaurant.

Now back to the east side of Allen St. between Calder Alley and College Ave. The most prominent store in that half block was L.K. Metzger's. Like most stores then, it was locally owned. They sold textbooks and sporting goods on their two floors. I think the textbooks and school supplies were on the street level and the sporting goods down a level. My first bicycle came from Metzger's. It was a Christmas gift, but I couldn't actually get it until spring, since production was just getting started after the war. The receipt for it was in my Christmas stocking—for \$36.95, I believe. I also bought my only tennis racket there. At some point the store underwent a remodeling project and advertised itself as "The Store with the Black Granite Front on South Allen St." (Was there a fire there??) There were apartments above the store that were reached by one of the few elevators in State College. My friends and I took many a ride up and down just for the novelty of it.



Originally The Charles Shop, owned by the Petnick family was on this side of the street. My father was angry with them because during his WW II air raid warden days, they refused to turn their window lights off during the drills. It had the reputation of being the priciest of the woman's clothing stores. Grace reminded me that at one time there was also a shoe store called the Juliette Room on the second floor.

Smith's Barber shop, now Rinaldo's, came next. George Smith had his barber shop on the first floor and upstairs his wife, Frida, had the Powder Puff Salon. As a child I had my hair cut in the barber shop. I sat on a white painted board that was placed across the arms. A huge white cape was wrapped around me and the chair was pumped up. I remember the tickle of the hairs on my neck and the brush with talcum powder the barber used to brush the hair off. It always had a nice smell in there. I went back for awhile as an adult, because they did a better job with short hair than some of the salons did and were cheaper.

Grahams, owned by George Graham and his sons, was next. They sold cigars, candy, ice cream, newspapers and magazines. Mr. Graham carried a cane and often wore spats. They sponsored a program on WMAJ, our only local radio station. Each night they announced a name of someone who could win ice cream. ("If _____ is listening, call Bubb at once and a nice big pint of Borden's ice cream will be waiting for you in our freezer".) Before that they gave away Pe Ro ice cream, a local brand. Bubb was one of the Graham sons. My brother Bill never liked George Graham because one time he saw him kick a dog that was in front of his store.

Now, most of the local stores are gone. We have shopping centers, a mall and many of the national Big Box stores. Allen Street is still a busy place, but it is mostly student oriented—not the shopping heart of the town. I walked through parts of the downtown every day as a teenager, but now I can go a year without visiting anything but the library. State College was a nice little town then, filled with local businesses and people we all knew. People who grew up in cities would think we were provincial and

deprived—no zoos, no department stores, no trolleys, etc., etc. But most of us had what we needed to have fun and feel we were in a safe place where our families and the community cared about us. And that's something for which I'll be forever grateful.

Written 2010-2014

