

Growing up in Buffalo's Old West Side from the 30's to the 50's

Now that most of my friends are retired, we've been spending a lot of time at breakfasts, lunches and coffees recalling stories about growing up on the West Side of Buffalo. The more we talked about our childhood, the more we realized that our generation was really the end of the immigrant European families. Italian, Irish, Polish or German, we are the last link between the waves of the turn of the century immigrants and our kids who are ethnic only in their surnames. So, in a way I guess that I'm just trying to find some way of letting our kids know where they came from and what their parents and grandparents went through to get them where they are now. There's no way that they can even imagine the journey from the struggles of their immigrant families starting a new life in America to the nice suburban houses that they grew up in just a generation or 2 later. When we start reminiscing about growing up it's hard to believe that it's been over 50 years since many of us left the old neighborhood. Here are a few things that you might recall from the memories of Jerry Grasso (with a little help from his friends).

Any story about the Lower West Side has to start with Dante Place or what we called it -- "The Hooks". That's where I lived until I was about 4. At the height of the Erie Canal trade, the area was filled with bars and hard drinking brawlers so it wasn't unusual to find bodies floating in the canal in the mornings. I was told that the area got its name by the method used to get them out of the water -- the hooks that the workers used to move the goods on the docks. The Hooks was an area roughly bounded by Lower Main St., The Buffalo River, Erie St. and Lower Terrace. This was the "port of entry" to the Buffalo area for almost all early Italian immigrants. Poverty in Italy, then as now, was primarily in Southern Italy and Sicily so there weren't many immigrants from Northern Italy. They began replacing Irish families and hardly left the neighborhood because most of them spoke little, if any English. The closest thing to a mixed marriage was that of Sicilians and Southern Italians. Besides the language problem, the Irish majority wasn't too happy with what was happening to their neighborhood and they weren't too eager to let the new immigrants out of their little ghetto. So, it wasn't unusual for those who weren't afraid, to have to fight their way out with fists, clubs or knives in order to get to work or shop for things that weren't available in The Hooks. In fact, most of the early Italian immigrants were Republican, not because they were sympathetic to the wealthy but simply because the Democratic Party was controlled by the Irish and as a newspaper clipping of the time stated, saying "I don't like Democrats" was really saying "I don't like the Irish".

Most of the streets in The Hooks, like Dante Place which had been Canal St., are now gone. There's a new Dante Place where "the Hooks" once were but it's nothing like the original area. It really wasn't a big area but there were a lot of brick tenement buildings just like NY City on streets

that can be found only on old maps now - Maiden Lane, Fly, Peacock, LeCouteulx (pronounced Lecootix), Evans, State, Water and Commercial Streets. Many of the buildings had 3 stories and it wasn't unusual to have several men sharing one flat to save enough money to bring their family from "the old country". If they hadn't torn the place down it could have been used for the set of "The Godfather". There was no political correctness at that time so the old city maps just identified the buildings as "Italian Tenements". The only wooden house that I can remember was right next door to my grandfather's building. It also came with a 3-car garage, which certainly wasn't needed by the Ciatellos, who owned it.

Our family in the lower flat at 22 State St and my grandfather Grasso lived in the rear flat there but when people asked where you lived, the answer was usually "Perna's building or Limeri's or later, the Gugino buildings". The Amato, Maisano and DeSimone families lived in our building, along with the Valvos and DiLibertos up on the third floor. I remember the very high ceilings, hard wooden floors with some linoleum over them and only cold running water. If you wanted hot water, you had to heat it on a stove. It wasn't unusual to see my aunt scrubbing the floors on hands and knees with "LaStella", our local chlorine all-purpose disinfectant and cleaner. It was also used to bleach the white clothes, which were all hung out on clotheslines between buildings with ropes and pulleys. Every house needed enough room for gallons of LaStella, olive oil, wine and flour sacks. The most common hand soap was the rough, brown "Octagon" and the heavy-duty hand cleaner was "Lava". The water reservoir for the toilet was mounted above the bowl and a pull-chain released the water to flush. In the middle of the "front room" was a pot-bellied stove that provided just enough heat to make it to your bed. We did have room fresheners – some orange peels on the top of the stove. My great-grandfather had a couple of rooms directly across the airshaft where a lot of the old "paisans" got together regularly for their card games and political talks. Those card games were fun to watch. The old men were constantly accusing each other of cheating at Brisco, 3 Sevens, Scuppa or Quaranta – and they all did cheat. They even used the same signals. Rubbing a nose or an ear to tell their partner what cards they had. They spent many evenings together discussing the news of the day and drinking an occasional glass of vino, smoking their stubby, hard, dry DiNobili or Parodi cigars. When the cigars got down to stubs, they were shredded and became pipe tobacco and were even more smelly. When the weather was better they'd play cards or bocce outside. Our Lady of Mount Carmel was directly across the alley from the local hangout's back door. We were blessed to have one of our own, truly a pastor, in Father Bernardo. He counseled and consoled, but most importantly, he was just a regular, nice guy. To the annoyance of some of the women in black dresses mumbling in Italian, he sometimes sped through the 7 PM novena to get across the alley to talk politics and argue with the men. With no television, these gatherings were important social events.

Since people didn't stray too far and there were no Wallmarts or Wegmans, we had a lot of small stores of all kinds. It was the way that money circulated through the neighborhood. Men who worked in factories, construction or other places would bring their paycheck home where it would be passed around through grocery stores, shoemakers, bakeries, tobacco shops, tailor shops etc, so a lot of people lived off the money that was brought in from outside of the area. Benny Russo had a bakery and right around the corner on State St. On Maiden Lane was one run by Tommy DiCristina who later owned Maria's and Costanzo's bakery was on Dante Pl. Although most women baked their own bread, 10-12 loaves certainly weren't going to last a family an entire week. A loaf or two could be gone while the bread was still warm, eaten with olive oil salt and pepper, or a pizza. Our pizzas were made on bread day by spreading the dough on a flat pan, spreading a little olive oil, tomatoes and grating cheese over the mix and then pushing little pieces of anchovies in with your thumb. Most men smoked pipes or cigars so John Colucci's Cigar Store was important. There were grocery stores on almost every other corner so you usually went to the ones that were near your house UNLESS your family had a disagreement with the owner. Then, every time you got sent to the store, you'd have to go an extra 2 or 3 blocks for the rest of your life. Luckily, we had a good relationship with the Scaduto's and Mascari's, which were close to our house. I still have vivid memories of Mascari's. It had sawdust on the floor and kegs containing frozen codfish (Baccala). There was also an old man usually hanging around taking slips of yellow paper --- THE NUMBERS GAME--- Policy Slips, the poor man's lottery. You could bet as little as a penny on your favorite number and then check the paper at night to see if you had won. The numbers were usually the last digits of the number of stocks sold on the NY Stock Exchange or the daily handle at a racetrack and just like today's state run Lotto games, the more numbers that you picked, the higher the odds.

There were always stores opening and/or changing owners. Mr. Neri, whose son Venardo (Lefty) went on to become a noted lawyer, had a store which he later sold to the Lazzaros. DeFranco's Antique Bar on Erie St. and Mr. Villa's poolroom provided other places of relaxation. Dr. Batista, a dentist, bought Scaduto's and turned it into Buffalo Plating. Other more permanent type businesses were the McDougal-Butler Paint Company, Pittsburgh Plate Glass and the Kendall gas station at the triangle of Seneca, Lower Terrace and Erie Streets. Since the Limeri family owned the tenements on Maiden Lane and Dante, they had a store and Phil Limeri had a bar around the corner. You didn't just sit around and drink at West Side bars. Men drank but they also talked and ate. Italians always eat, not pasta so much because you always had pasta at home, but things like a plate of fave to help wash down the drinks and the most popular bar was the Peacock Grill. The Zuppas lived above the grill and Nancy Gullo had a candy store next door. With entrances on both Dante Place and Peacock St, The Peacock Grill was popular with both

the locals and the men who worked in the flourmills on Erie St. Mr. DiPasquale owned it but his nephews, Libby, in his white apron, and his brother Joe Gullo ran the place.

From newspapers clippings of the day (which can be found in the Main Library) non-Italians couldn't understand the hold that the place had on its inhabitants. The reporter of one story wondered why people who could afford to leave would stay in apartments that shared one dirty old toilet for the whole floor. There were no bathtubs. Bathing was done at the bathhouse near School #2. It was a community, and it must be this sense of community that was passed on to us because we still get together with the "kids" that we grew up with. It was a community whose end finally came with the gas explosion that destroyed one of the buildings. Most of the Southern Italians were moving to the Lower East Side, around Myrtle and Swan while the Sicilians along with a lot of Santa Feles headed North toward where Holy Cross is now. There were so many families from San Fele on the West Side that most of the kids assumed that it was in Sicily (although it was tough to understand their parents' dialect). Even after we move to 296 Busti, near Maryland, when I was about 4, I still kept going back to The Hooks. My uncle and I used to hang around one of the doors of the Peacock Grill hoping that my grandfather would see us because whenever he saw us out there he would call us in to share some fave with him and Mr. Paladino. We also mooched from my great-grandfather and his card playing friends after bringing back cigarettes, pumpkin seeds, sandwiches made with Italian bread and cold cuts and other snacks from Lomeo's store nearby. We snuck in to the Aud. When I was a little older I organized a softball team from guys who still lived there. Our team looked like the extras from Goodfellows. We played other teams in the area and we used to play guys from St. Michaels on Washington St. when Canisius High School was still there.

Sometime during the war we moved to the place where I spent my formative years – the Gugino Buildings, a tenement building on the corner of Busti and Hudson and right next to #1. A lot of people in the Gugino Buildings (which we often jokingly referred to as The Hudson Arms or Gugino Condominiums) heated by coal or oil stoves or sometimes only the kitchen stove. The Lakeview Projects were home to a lot more of us but even though they were new, with tiled bathrooms and central heating, people were more reluctant to leave the Gugino Buildings than the projects. It was the same as trying to pry people out of their tenements in "the Hooks". Besides, living in "the Projects" was an admission that we were on welfare. Even though a lot of us had Welfare shoes and clothes, we still had our own home but we always had to watch out for the Welfare Agents who checked up to see if we had non-welfare stuff. The families in my building were the Nostro, Giamo, Roslovich, Santangelo, Faulise, Cannizaro, Russo, Barone, Gosselin, Tibbits, Dauria, Mazzara, Spano, Antonucci, Accurso, Pace, DePellino, Chiappone, LoGalbo, Mascia, Charlie Dauria, Josephine Inserra, Burrzano, and the Pikes.

Paulie Tibbits surviving a fall to the sidewalk from a 3rd floor window. His sister Marie, who wanted to be an opera singer, suffering a seizure while trying to hit a high note. Answering the doorbell on a Sunday afternoon to see a shaking Mr. Buccelato. He was so nervous after seeing the cops break up a crap game in our building that he asked if he could come in and sit down until they left. Each family had their own coal bin and they all had strong locks. I'll never forget my brother letting Junior Antonucci in for a drink and forgetting to turn off the faucet sending water down to everyone below. Mary Giamo getting all dressed up in frilly dresses and big wide hats. Peter Roslovich became a Jesuit priest and was the principal of Canisius High School for quite a few years. I remember my mother crying when we were leaving because the movers were at the door and my brother Danny and I were staying in our beds because we didn't want to move to a house way up Hudson St..

The #1 neighborhood itself was basically between Pennsylvania, Prospect, Virginia and Lake Erie. Customarily, the first son in a family was named after his paternal grandfather so in many families we had a lot of First Cousins with the same first name. If a guy named Antonio Rocco had 5 sons, there would be 5 kids in the next generation called Tony Rocco. That's why we had so many nicknames. It was even worse in Sicily because they pretty much stayed in the same town. If you're doing a genealogy of your family it's made even harder when the oldest boy died because then the next son born, maybe the 6th kid in the family, would be named after his grandfather. So if you're Antonio Rocco tracing the Rocco family in Sicily and run across Antonio, you'd think it could be you're grandfather – maybe. A person doing his family history was once told that the only person who called people by their given name was the priest who baptized him. Most names were Anglicized so that's why I was Jerry and not Gioralmo but our teachers filled out report cards with names like Angelo, Carmello, Epifanio, Ignatius, Natale, Mario, Pasquale, Rocco, Roasaria, Rosario, Santina, Santino, Serafino, Vincenza, Vito. God only knows how many Baptismal Certificates said Antonio (or Antonino), Nicolo and Calogero instead of Anthony, Nicholas and Charles, and I can understand why Giacomo became Jim but how did Vincenzo, which became Vincent translate to Jim? Ben could have been Benedetto or Biagio or Blaise, and Russell was probably Rosario. School #1's class of '47 had 4 Angelos (and 2 Angelines) and 3 Dominics (and 1 Domenica). And how many girls do you hear named Carmella, Concetta or Crocefissa today? The Versos thought that they solved the dilemma of naming their first boy after his paternal grandfather or giving him an "American" name by naming him Dominic and calling him Dick. It worked fine until he got to school. The teachers called you by the name on the record, except for E. Larry Gatti. I guess Mrs. Alessi thought that it might be easier for him later in life if he used his middle name, Lawrence, instead of Epifanio. I don't have any of my old

Report Cards because I either burned or ripped them up. They flunked kids without batting an eyelash. There were a lot of brothers and sisters who weren't twins graduating in the same year. We figured out later that they were just evening out class sizes. If one class was a lot bigger than the following class, they just flunked a few kids. Obviously self-esteem wasn't much of a problem for them to consider at the time.

We were for the most part Italian, Roman Catholic and now Democrats - except for me - I was still one of the few remaining Republicans, which was brought home in my loss for Niagara District Councilman to Tom Santa Lucia. Along with FDR, Pope Pius, the New York Yankees, Notre Dame and Joe Louis, our world was pretty stable even after World War II came along. Until I went to high school, most of my friends were from the schools whose kids had catechism at Holy Cross, #1 (It was never School 1 or School #1 --- just #1), #3 and 76 (It was 76, not #76 like #1, #2 and #3). Not everyone was Italian or Catholic but you'd never know it on St. Joseph's Day -- "Viva San Giuseppe!!!!". We were very patriotic, booing on cue at the movies when we saw "The Rising Sun" flag slowly rolling onto the screen or seeing the Japanese fighter pilot sneaking up in his Zero. We never really thought about fighting against the Italian army. We were fighting the Nazis and the Japs. Besides, outside of Mussolini and hinting that they were helping Rommel in North Africa, Hollywood never made movies about Italian soldiers. Either they couldn't come up with a script that worked up a good hate for Italians or they were afraid of waking up with a horse's head next to them. We almost looked like the setting for a Jimmy Cagney or "Dead End Kid" movie with "Welfare clothes" and corduroy knickers. Some guys becoming priests, some becoming cops, some "going away to college" for a while and some actually going to college. We even had a guy who looked like Looney in the Bowery Boys - Gus the Greek, who had a candy store near the Marlowe Theater, across from the Butler-Mitchell Boys Club on Virginia. The way things disappeared in his store and eaten in the alley, it's a wonder that he made any money. That alley was also the scene of some pretty big crap games. Our language was enriched with words that might sound bad in English like "va caca" but were merely earthy in Italian or those that didn't quite have English equivalents like "acitu". Then there was "Meesca" which is like "Shoot" today, a socially acceptable way of expressing another word. Even the non-Italian kids picked up an extended vocabulary, also understanding which words were OK to say around adults, because they treated us all like their own kids -- a whack on the back of the head if they heard a bad word.

#1 closed down on the afternoons when we had Religious Instruction at Holy Cross Church and St. Josephs Day. There was no such thing as separation of church and state at #1. I remember Mr. Grine, Principal Ambrose Grine, calling my classroom to have my teacher send me to the office for skipping Catechism. He pulled out a razor strap and gave me 15 whacks on each hand

but I wouldn't give him the satisfaction of seeing me cry. Besides, he wasn't as bad as the nuns - -- they used slats from the backs of folding chairs on us. I use to imagine them gathering around a broken chair like vultures getting big, new back-up sticks. We got even with Ambrose by pushing or verbally abusing his son when he came to visit. The kid got our grudging respect because he never told his old man.

Russ Falletta, Sam Mangione and Bob and Gary Doane got into real trouble for breaking into the school --- to go swimming. That's about all the cops had to do in the neighborhood -- break up crap games, make sure that there weren't too many guys standing on a corner and taking our footballs away when they caught us playing in the street. Joe Valenti was walking home from violin practice just as the cops were breaking up a crap game next to #1 and taken to Precinct #10 on Niagara St. for being involved. He had to play his violin for them at the Station House before they let him go home. Bernie Nigro (MD) who went to #3 told me about playing football in Prospect Park, across from D'Youville College at lunchtime and having the police constantly being called to break up the game until one time about 5 squad cars pulled up, took all of the kids to #10, had them all fingerprinted and told that if they got another call, the kids would be arrested. They never played there again at lunchtime.

So many memories come back thinking about #1 --- Loading up with pumpkin seeds at "the Old Man's" (Mr. Palame) for Monday afternoon assemblies with Joe Valenti playing his violin and RoseMarie Palmeri singing, 1930 movies, class plays and the floor littered with candy and gum wrappers and lots of pumpkin seed shells when the lights came on. John Dascoli pitching for the softball team and taking his comb out of his pocket to fix his hair after every pitch. Being excused to attend The Eucharistic Congress at Civic Stadium and on every St. Joseph's Day when everyone was Catholic and brought notes from home guaranteeing invitations to St. Joseph's Day Tables. Syl Andolina losing a finger in a shop accident, Mrs. Stevenson, who was a cleaning lady there letting us come in to play basketball while she was working. Mr. Muto punishing me and Iggy Fasciana for fighting making us stand in the middle of the gym until he told us that it was OK to move and then asking what we were doing there when he was leaving at 2:45. Fr. Caligiuri standing on the corner of Niagara and Hudson to make sure that we went to Catechism and not hanging around the restaurants across Niagara Street. Summer swim classes at #1, which was one of the few schools in the city to have a pool. Imitating Erroll Flynn by "sword-fighting" with sticks on 7th St. behind the A&P after school until a teacher came out and took our "swords" away so we "wouldn't poke out someone's eye". Worrying about getting sent to "Dippy High" (On Delaware, where the Federal Bank is now) was enough kept us in line because we certainly didn't want our parents to know that we were causing any problems in school. Watching the traveling Yo-Yo contests as soon as school ended and wondering if the young demonstrators had skipped

their own school. Trying to stop the building of the annex that took up part of the playground. The playground in the summer full of kids with their summer brush cuts playing horseshoes, ringers and battleship. Tony Tona hitting a ball with a bat in one hand while holding on to his crutch with the other. Jumping the fence when it was closed to play softball and football. Playing any game that Tony Morgante wanted to play. Walking to school on mountains of snow piled up on the curbs. Snowball wars. King of the Mountain on snow piles and finally getting to home or school soaking wet.

As we've all told our kids more times than they'd like to hear, there was no way that we'd complain about punishment for something we did in school because it wouldn't come close to the "lignati" we'd get at home. Some of the teachers there had taught our parents and physical punishment was not unheard of, especially from the men. And as I mentioned before, no one hit as hard as those sweet little penguins from the order of "The Missionary Sisters of the Divine Child" who taught "Catechism". Quite a few neighborhood girls joined the Order. Their convent was the Birge Mansion on Richmond and unlike today, they were unmistakably nuns. Dressed in heavy woolen habits with rope belts, a big crucifix and beads, sensible black shoes and a thick stick to rap our knuckles when we talked. When we got bigger we had priests who not only taught us about our religion but in some cases decided to "straighten out" some of those Italian kids -- most notably Father Meloch who had a wrestling match with "Horse" Fiorella and ended a Catechism class early rolling around the classroom with Jimmy Dauria.

The spiritual leader was Monsignor Gambino who was directed to build a church for the new neighborhood while he was at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. He was a devoted priest who was burned after going back into Mt. Carmel during a fire to rescue the hosts and really worked hard for his church, but he was a hard man to love. He was tough on his parishioners and his assistants. Many of us were in church at times when he would stick his head out of the little window next to the altar rail listening to a young assistant and if the poor guy ran a little long, Monsignor would ring the bell. We had the first "Gong Show". And who could forget him standing on the steps in his cape and berretta making sure that we were dressed in a respectful outfit, that females had something appropriate covering their heads and boys trying not to get too close avoiding his friendly little slap in the face accompanied by "Faccia tosta". He must have done something right because over 20 priests and 4 nuns came from Holy Cross. There were so many kids attending mass that we had to go downstairs in the Chapel and listen to sermons by Father Bosch, a really moving speaker, but difficult to understand, partially because of his accent but also because of his loud endings. As he warmed up pounding on the lectern, with his face reddening, his fire and brimstone finishes practically guaranteed that we'd be going to hell if we didn't follow all of the rules set out in the Baltimore Catechism. And he did spit a little when he

started getting into the “burn in hell” stuff. We all made our First Communion there with boys all dressed in white suits with short pants and girls in lacy white dresses and veils, and of course, our Prayer Books. The Rectory was right next to the church, on Maryland and the caretaker was Mr. Casarsa (Isidore). There was a playground between the Rectory and Niagara St. and Mr. Martone’s Funeral Home had an office in a corner of the playground, diagonally across from the rectory. We never could figure out what a funeral director did since the Martone Funeral Home was a tiny little store in the corner of the playground and hardly seemed big enough to even hold a coffin, much less work on a dead body. Most wakes were held at home and you knew someone had died by the black wreath on the front door. Italian wakes were not much fun, women wailed and no one smiled. You didn’t play the radio at home if the deceased was a relative or close friend (and certainly not on Good Friday either). Widows wore black, it seemed until they died and old women in black dresses, stockings and shawls were everywhere. They also cured “spells”. If anyone ever had a headache or was feeling run-down it had to be the result of a Mal’ Occhio, an “Evil-Eye” curse that someone put on him. The only cure was blessed oil in a dish held over their head and prayers said in secret by someone who knew the rituals. When the oil disappeared, the curse would be gone.

We had a Youth Center above Aunt Lucy’s Pies on 7th St. near the church. One side had a soda bar with tables and jukebox for dancing next to a ping-pong tables and “basketball court” with ceilings so low that anyone who played there learned to shoot “set shots” that never got more than 12 feet off the ground. There was a skating rink on the other side of the soda bar. The Holy Cross Boy Scout Troop 29, with Scoutmasters Joe Yamarino and then Mike Tritto, met at the Youth Center. The Troop never had much money. Dominic LoGalbo, who was also famous for his long line drive 2-handed set shots, somehow always forgot to bring his quarter for dues. We never collected much but it didn’t help when the Treasurer, Joe Graf skipped out with the small savings which we did accumulate.

A lot of memories come together when we’re actually sitting around and talking, but when I’m just driving through the old neighborhood or just thinking about when we were “yoots”, pictures constantly go through my brain like my life flashing before me --- mentally going down Busti from where I was born towards Hudson St., I can still see in my mind’s eye where everything was, just like it was in the 40’s and 50’s --- all of the stores and the people on the porches --- it’s almost spooky how they never go away. At times I’m still standing on the corner of Busti and Hudson, leaning on the brick wall of the corner Gugino Building taking in what’s happening on both streets as clearly as if it were yesterday or imagining ---

turning down just about any street on warm Saturdays when the windows were open and hearing Emelino Ricco's Neapolitan Serenade and smelling the tomato sauce starting up for Sunday's dinner -- Guys going with their father to his secret spot to pick "cardoons".-- Mr. Pavinelli sharpening knives on his stone powered by pedals on his pushcart and later, the back of his truck. -- Mr. Amato the tinsmith -- Hard working Mr. Bracco doing double-shifts for the city -- The steam whistle that let us know that the "foreign guy's" (I think that he was an Arab, but he wasn't Italian or American) pushcart was coming with popcorn and hot chestnuts -- Kids hoping that Mr. Mule would stop nearby so they might ride the carousel -- Waiting by a house with a sign in the window showing how many pounds of ice they wanted (25, 50 or 75) until Mr. Carruba, the iceman, started up the steps with a block of ice on his back, and then jumping on the truck to get some ice chips. -- Multi-lingual ragmen and hucksters in horse-drawn wagons bargaining with housewives -- Old-timers playing Bocce in the lot by the old sand pile or card games like Brisco, Scuppa, Quaranta -- Watching them crumble their smelly old DeNobili stogies into their pipes when they had smoked them down to nubs -- The "men of respect", in their wide brimmed hats and double-breasted overcoats thrown over their shoulders like capes. Joe and Mike drooling while delivering papers in their Joe Palooka caps and old overcoats that hung down to their shoes -- The guy who didn't speak English wearing a big blue handkerchief and a sprig of mint behind his ear -- The dapper Julie Caputo, owner of Julie's Flower in a straw hat and flower in his lapel - - The fish man pushing his cart down the streets yelling "Pisce vive" and the whole neighborhood smelling of fish on Friday -- Looking in the window of Traina's aromatic fish market next to #1 and being stared back by the bulging eyes of the fish laid out on the ice -- Watching the old-timers waiting for the News to get to the store so they could check their "policy" numbers and kids waiting to check the baseball scores -- For those who didn't "summer at the farm", there were trucks rumbling down the streets on early summer mornings stopping for people who would pick beans or berries -- "California" grape crates on every block in the fall after their contents had been squeezed at the house of someone who owned or could borrow a press -----

I can't get them out of my head and I don't ever want to --- I love that I grew up in that place and at that time ==

Candy apples. Ice cream for a nickel a dip. Taking home a pint for company or a special treat -- Chocolate, Vanilla, Strawberry or Neapolitan. Sliding on the ice while hanging onto car bumper. The Niagara bus route starting at Shelton Square. Making skateboards with an orange crate, an old skate split into 2 parts and nailed to the bottom of a 2X4. Rubber-band guns from cut up tire tubes. Wire hanger slingshots for paper-wad wars. Girls wearing sweaters, saddle shoes and their father's shirt. Hi-Teen on Saturday afternoons with Bob Wells at the Dellwood Ballroom. The guy in the big Camel sign on Main and Genessee blowing big smoke rings into the sky.

Walking to Canada over the Peace Bridge for a nickel and sun bathing at the Baby Hole. Dropping firecrackers to our friends waiting on 7th Street. Summer night with "Sandflys" (the real ones not the Santa Felis') around every lightpost and foghorns when it was misty.

The old police call boxes on corners. Cops pulling around a corner scattering players in crap games and then picking up "the evidence" when nobody came back to claim their money. Big games next to the Marlowe and the City Barns where sore-losers would throw the dice on the roofs. Police cars sent out to investigate complaints of kids playing ball in the street. Going to #10 to pick up your football and promising never to play in the street again because it was dangerous. Firemen training on the tower on Court Street. Playing softball when each team had 10 players and basketball had a jump ball after every basket. In fact playing when the refs actually called traveling and "palming". Going to the serials at Shea's Niagara Saturday matinees and sometimes getting a comic book. Going with your parents on weeknights play "SCREENO or to get dishes playing 10 - 0 - WIN at the Marlowe".

There were always fights. Golden Glove fighting Genova brothers Jimmy, about 5' tall and Joe, a slim 6 footer were always fighting each other with no holds barred. The problem with winning was that you often had to take on the loser's older brother or cousin later. Some families were so big that it was better losing the first fight. Some of the more memorable: Paul Stoffo getting the first punch in on Tony Morgante and John Antonucci and then disappearing for a while. Tony Pinto vs Richie Battaglia (Tony won), Tony Cuppone vs Frank Montileone. DuDu Parisi, Frankie Domini and Chops Alberti working as corners at fights at the Aud.

Finding out later that other parts of the city didn't have clam stands or 10-cent crab shells littering their neighborhood. We never rang doorbells when we called our friends - we just stood under their kitchen window and yelled "Hey Toneeeee". Standing on a corner and having a car pull up, the window roll down and someone inside saying "Hey kid, you wanna buy a pair of shoes cheap?". Where did "Fonzi" with leather and motorcycles come from? Nobody wore leather. We had Spade Shoes, One Button Roll suits, pegged pants with dropped loops and a big comb in the back pocket. For the really cool, double-breasted overcoats and wide-brimmed hats hoping to make us looking like George Raft. Most of the suits were bought at Charley Baker's from manager Jimmy Immerese and Mel Palano or from Carm Billonio at Joey's Custom Shop.

Tony Gerace and his orchestra. Jimmy Vullo, a great artist. Accordionists Dick Contino, Sammy Fanara and Pete Argiro. George Lorenz, the Hound Dog on KB. Harold Austin's Orchestra playing on the Canadiana's Saturday night ride to Crystal Beach. Sending Canadians who

stopped for directions to the Peace Bridge off in the wrong direction. Cutting discounts coupons out of the News for amusement tickets and boat rides. Dances and Big Bands like Stan Kenton at the Crystal Beach Ballroom. Sugar cones and Loganberry drink. It all changed after "The Riot" but that's another story..

Trying to get invited to someone's house who had a TV. Since most of us didn't have television we spent a lot of times playing games like Nip, Buck-Buck, Kick the Can, Lam the Goose (the goose hopped around on 1 leg and hit kids with his belt - no buckles allowed), 1-2-3 Relievo, Baby in the Hole (where you'd dig holes and then try to roll a ball into different holes to knock someone out of the game), Kingers (with Horse Chestnuts), Hopscotch, Marbles and Softball, pitching pennies, war cards and baseball cards. When there weren't enough guys for a baseball game we'd play Running Bases or 1-2-3 where you'd get a point for catching a ball on the fly or if you got a grounder, you'd get one for rolling the ball in and hitting the bat that the hitter laid down. Whoever got 3 points would be the new batter and we'd all move up 1 position. We rarely played "hardball" because nobody had a catchers mask but when we did it was usually with a ball covered with friction tape. We got a lot of our bats by begging for them at MUNY games and then nailing and taping them. Losing a baseball in the weeds of the outfields in LaSalle Park slowed games down.

Raiding yards with fruit trees or grape vines and running from an old man throwing rocks and yelling "You come back you summana beech and I killa you" was a common "sport" in late summer and early fall evenings. Watching Babe Paternostro, Joe Ciresi, Babe LaMancusa, Whitey LaMendola and Casey Palisano playing at the Buffalo Softball Park. Tall and impeccably dressed, Mr. Santa Lucia striding down Hudson in his suit and hat. Pete Notaro walking down Hudson Street in late afternoons to his red brick house on Trenton after another long day of practice. Summers at the farm in North Collins with the DeMarie, Muscarella, Lauria, LoSecco and Caruso families. Mike Malucci eating up the pizza profits at Tarts as soon as they came out of the oven.

Playing handball between the "Old Building" and "New Building" of #1. Playing basketball in Gary Doane's house. Adeline Sacchera saving old comic books for me. Joe Cicatello "Yoo-hoo, egg man?" Shooting hoops with Betty and Joe DiCarlo at a bushel basket stuck on a telephone pole. Playing pinochle with Pete Giglia, Tony Dispenza and Richie Guttuso on Ritchie's porch and on Saturday mornings with Dick Verso and Ben Tibollo. Trying to form an ice rink by watering the little lot where Guarino's Dairy used to be with Sam Zarcone and Nick George and then playing basketball in the garage while waiting for it to freeze. Watching Charley Cordovano work the pinball machine. Joining the Harry James Fan Club and getting an autographed picture. Joe Alto

practicing his softball pitching in front of Gus Monte's house on 7th. Everybody was nuts about Kay Fontana. Henry Aguilar's picture on the Society Page of the Courier. Digging through the pile of sports stuff in the back of Markel Cleaners (Home of the Marba System of reconditioning athletic equipment). What other kids had plastic Riddell football helmets and real shoulder pads? So what if the helmets were cracked and we wore Kensington's Green and Gold jackets and sweatpants to Grover or Hutch. Eddie O'Grady strutting down Maryland biting on his trademark cigar and telling me that if I became a cop he'd show me how to twirl a night stick. Tony Pinto's red '49 Ford convertible. Tony Vella's father walking his Seeing Eye dog. Sledding down Hudson Street by the projects.

After finally scraping up enough money and "chipping in" to buy a new football we excitedly ran to try it out at the #1 playground. While waiting to get in I threw a pass into the playground to someone who had already jumped the fence but it was just a little short and landed on the sharp points of the fence. Everybody heard the hissing and just stopped and watched the ball slowly getting flatter. Didn't make many friends that day. Sitting in the playground when Tony Palumbo threw a ball at the fence over our heads. It went over the fence and right through the Cicatello's window. If you had a good fence-jumper in left field you could hold Whiskey Sam Todaro to a double when he hit it over the fence. If he didn't hit it over the fence Dominic LoGalbo could sometimes throw him out at 1st from Left Field.

Charlie Figs throwing a bushel top but missing his target and cracking Loblaw's plate glass window. Everybody ran but Charlie who was there when the cops came. His only excuse was "Those fishing guys made me do it!" Charlie never swore. The no-nonsense ushers at the Niagara - Frank Angelo, Tony Maritato, Ben Palumbo, Frank and Tom Barone, Dick Thomas, Phil Tiranno, Jimmy Zaccagnino, Sam Militello, Chuck Runfola and Sam D'Amico. Once, my "Goombah" Sam Todaro and I actually were able to sneak in - we convinced the new ticket-taker that we were friends of the Manager, Frank Barone. We weren't in our seats for more than 2.5 seconds when there were so many flashlights shining on us that it looked like we were out in the sunlight where we soon were, after personally being escorted out by Frank although he admitted as we headed to the door, that it was a nice try.

Talking Bill Coppola into letting me ride his new bike to chase Whiskey, who had thrown a piece of coal at me. The Whisk turned into the alley next to his house but I was going so fast that I couldn't make the turn and crashed into the brick wall. As soon as Bill sees what happened he starts crying. He's crying for his bike and I'm lying there bleeding from a head cut that took 6 stitches to close.

Going for an Easter suit with my late grandfather (“Buon Armo”), the family bargain hunter, to a clothing store to get a deal from a Jewish guy who he knew. When we left with an all wool suit and 2 pair of pants for about \$10, he was sure that he had out bargained the owner. I thought so too until I had sweat through a hot Easter Sunday - great bargain. My uncle taking me to the Aud in the 75-cent seats to watch Joe Trimboli playing for Canisius College.

The only time I had a car to drive was when Dick Verso would let me drop him off at The Aud where Marcy , who he later married, worked. They’d take her car on their dates and I’d drop his car off on Prospect and walk home when I was done for the night. After taking buses, streetcars and bumming rides I finally got my own car -- a ‘39 Dodge 4-door. It was really a 1-door because 3 of them wouldn’t open. Then I moved up to a ‘40 Dodge 2-door. Any time I hit a bump one of the rear windows would drop. Next came the 40-something DeSoto with no parking brake. I just parked with the front wheels turned towards the curb. It worked fine until one day one of our neighbors on Hudson St. knocked on our door to ask if I owned a 40-something DeSoto. When I asked why he said, “Because it’s parked on a sidewalk near Cottage”.

And finally, Babe’s Poolroom, also known as the Unital Club in its charter that made it a social club. The charter enabled its members to gather for recreation without fearing a raid by the police. Membership requirements required asking for a membership card. Howie Eberle and Eddie Malfo from Precinct 10 checked it out from time to time anyway. “Uncle Charlie”, who was a great guy when he was sober, warning everyone there to keep their distance because he had a gun and if anybody bothered him he was going to kill everyone in the place. Captain John would growl, “Get out of here you drunk or you’ll be the one who’s carried out of here. He never really had a gun. Playing Tap Rummy with the world’s worst losers. I hope for their sake that the Lord isn’t too tough on those who used his name in vain. “Jumbo”, the poor alcoholic who would take any job for enough money to get another drink.

Food

The smell of olives, salami and the hanging cheeses and baccala at the Columbia Market (the Limeri brothers were tough to work for). Pasta e (name it, as long as it was green and had no meat for Friday dinners). Pasta e succo (NOT GRAVY, what they call it in Jersey), Pasta fazool (*fagiole, beans*), Pasta e scalora, Pasta e pisedi (*piselli, peas*), Pasta e lenticchie (lentils), Pasta con sarde, Pasta e brodo, cardune (burdock), cicoria (dandelion), baccala, calamari, sphingi on St. Josephs Day - Viva San Giuseppi, cannoli and lemon ice from Romano’s Virginia Pastry or Muscarella’s on Busti and Georgia, ceci e fave, clams and tripe at Scotty’s, Ted’s hot dogs under the Peace Bridge, raw clams, caponatina, molingiani (melanzana ,eggplant), breaking off a piece of pepperoni and “Italian” bread, mom’s pizza with anchovy and then discovering Neapolitan style

pizza the Bocce Club, getting "American Cheese" and "American Bread" at the store as opposed to the real stuff like pane scannatu at one of our bakeries. Big pots in bathtubs stained from soaking "greens", with a brick holding down the cover to keep the "bobalucci" (little snails) from crawling out and sterilizing your needle over a flame before you ate them.

Travaglio(Work)

Joe Nobile, Joe Notaro and Mr. Tagliarino delivering milk from electric trucks. Joe Sileo and Vinny DiStefano working at Loblaws Bakery. Lifting garbage cans on the East Side with Angelo Massaro. Working for \$1/hour at Chimera's radiator and shooting craps on payday with Pete Runfolo, Jerry Giglia and the owner's nephew Charley Chimera. All of the guys working at Birge sitting around smoking at lunch or sticking their heads out of the windows and whistling at the girls walking down Maryland. I worked there with Mimi Polito and Jim Telesco in the area that was called "The Swamp". Christmas Post Office job at Memorial Auditorium with Antoinette Sciandra, Connie LoBruto at Luigi's Bakery. Charley Bancross, the painter and his brother, Crazy Joe. Ruby Dauria wallpapering our apartment when we moved into the Gugino Buildings. Louie Guercio and his sister Connie at their restaurant near the tracks at the Front Park.

World War II

Pearl Harbor. Selective Service (Draft) - guys leaving for the service. Looking at the pennants with stars in the front windows of all the houses to see who had boys in the service and getting a lump in your throat every time a new gold star appeared. Remembering how proud 2nd Lt. Mike Billonio looked before leaving for Europe. The bomber on which he was a navigator went down over Yugoslavia and was never found. His brothers Tony and Carmen got through it OK. Glen Miller's plane disappearing over the English Channel. Paper drives, War Bonds, buying Victory Stamps in school and trying to collect enough to get a bond, saving grease, scrap metal and foil, victory gardens. Air Raid drills with wardens in white helmets checking to see if anyone had any lights on. Ration stamps for sugar, meat, gas and tires. Women keeping their seams straight on precious nylon stockings. Victory gardens where the Thruway is now. Soldiers at the Army barracks protecting the Colonel Ward Pumping Station. Roosevelt dies in office. Newspapers incorrectly declare Dewey the winner before results are final. Being at Jabber's house when his brother Sammy brought home his War Bride.

Korea

Seeing John Antonucci off to the Marines from the old Central Terminal. Going to Phil Tiranno's wedding in January and then leaving for the Army with him in February. Russ Todaro, Jimmy

Bancross and Faw-Faw Polito enlisting together. Phil Limina and Vinny Vella in combat together but only Phil coming home. Sam "Whiskey" Todaro gets a hardship transfer and ends up stationed on Main St., Buffalo. Standing soaking wet in the lobby of the elegant Shoreham hotel in Washington, trying to talk with some of the Yankees, with Gus Monte after sightseeing and hoping to watch our first Major League ball game on a weekend pass from Camp Pickett, VA and getting caught in a downpour. Truman fires MacArthur. "Old Soldiers never die".

Nicknames

Guys got nicknames in a lot of different ways but make one mistake or do one dumb thing and you had one whether you liked it or not and every infielder wanted to be called Scooter (like Phil Rizzuto). My Compari Sam Todaro and his buddy who always got him into trouble, Steve Cino, were crashing a wedding for the free food and beer when they noticed the little paper shot glasses of whiskey that were given by the bride and groom to those guests who had handed them an envelope. They waited until the happy couple went to dance and then took some. They had never had whiskey before but Sam had seen his father toss a shot down so he did it the same way. As soon as it hit his throat it came back out -- through his nose, so he became "Whiskey Nose".

Here are some of the other nicknames:

Alfalfa, Arapahoe, Babe, Balls, Beagle, Beaker, The Bear, Beaver, Bimbo, Bomber, Bones, Booty, Bop, Brillo, Brush, Bucky, The Bull, Bunny, Burp, Butters, Butts, Caper, Captain John, Carky, Chandu, Charlie Figs, Charlie The Hat, Charlie Why Not, Chicky, Cheech, Chooch, Chico, Chisel, Choker, Chong, Chops, Cockeyed, Cocoa, Concrete Milly, Corky, Curley, Danny Boone, Dates, Deacon, Deever, Dingy, Doc, Ducky, Dudu, Dukey, Faw-Faw, Ferocious, Firpo, Flappy, Flash, Flat-top, Flip, Freddie Wee, Fu, Gabby, Gando;ph, Gates, George Raft, Grapes, Greek, Gumps, Gurr, Ham, Happy, Hoagy, Hoppy, Hollywood John, Horse, Humpy, Jack Holt, Jeets, Jiggy, Jinx, Jobber, Jock, Johnson, Jumbo, Junior Bloomers, Chicago Joe, Jumbo, Keystone, Knute, Lips, Little Dink, McGurn, Melt, Mert, Midge, Mingy, Moongy, Moose, Mugaboo, Muzzy, Neeny, Nerves, Nicodemus, Nine Footer, Ninny Gots, Nino, Oinky, Pantaloons, Patches, Peanuts, PeeWee, Popeye, Rabbit, Red, Reiler, Rinky, Ruby, Sammy Agony, Sauce, Sausage, Schmootie, Shabby, Senator Claghorn, Seery (Adornetto), Seri (Lacorte), Sharkey, Sha-Sha, Sheriff, Shine, Shoes, Silo, Skipper, Slippery Al, Smart Money, Snafu, Sneakers, Snow, Soapbox, Socks, Sonny, Springer, Squeeze, Steamboat, Stengel, Stitch, Stumps, Sugar, Teeny, Toto, Trader Horn, Turtle, Vasco, Whitey, Yakima, Youngy, Zsa-Zsa. Then the Jimmy's and Joes -- Jimmy Junk, Jimmy Arabian, Jimmy Nose, Jimmy the Black, Joe Bats, Joe Black, Joe Beak, Dempsey, Joe Fish, Joe Giggy, Joe Hungry, Joe Mo, Joe Nobody, Joe Nyah, Joe Post, Joe Shades, Joe Shine, Joe Turk, Joe Walker

Butler- Mitchell / Muny / CYC

Joe Bi, Ralph Garnish and Al Guarneri were The Butler Mitchell along with Paul Messana, Millie Battaglia and Benny Constantino. Hoping that someday I could play as well as the smart and athletic guys like Pat Raimondo, Pete Todaro, Tony Gregory, Happy Cascio, Vito Leto and Johnny Calabro. Playing around the pillars.

Mr. Todaro watching our MUNY team from the balcony of the Connecticut Street Armory and laughing afterwards when finding out that one of our players who threw nothing but air balls didn't have a vision problem. Al Guarneri suffering a fatal heart attack one night while we were there. Playing while a free-for-all involving one of our bigger teams broke on the next court. Pete Giglia and Tony Pinto came out of the stands to help and ending up at #10. Nick Croglio, Len Rizzo and Frank Bagarozzo all wanting my shortstop position on the Holy Cross CYC softball team. Frankie died young – either in high school or shortly after.

Politics

Frank Sedita Sr. elected judge and then Mayor. Congressman Jack Tauriello. City Court Judge Christy Buscaglia dies in office while campaigning for Surrogate Court. Erie County Sheriff Mike Amico. Judges Peter Notaro, Frank Sedita Junior, Mario Rosetti, Jerry Grasso loses Niagara District Council seat to Tom SantaLucia.

Businesses and hangouts

Buying lemonade at Grace Federico's basement store. C&C Clams on Maryland and Trenton, which later became Al Zarcone's butcher shop. Picking up a Courier around 9 PM at Dominic and Tony Battaglia's news-stand near Shelton Square, Andy Sedita, the Connecticut Street Fishman, Chicky DeCarlo at his Office at the El Morocco, Joey Giambra playing at the Gayety, Jimmy Christopher smashing the front window of Nick's Lounge, Sibi Adornetto backing his car up to the front door of Nick's to let the exhaust fumes drift in. Wedding receptions at the Holy Cross Hall, Fiorella's Hall on Virginia, the L.O.O.C or Monte Maggiore Hall's on Connecticut. Playing the 1-ball machine with French-Fries and Ginger Ale, and sometimes a Creamed Ginger Ale, at Vernor's on Main St. Nick and Richard Izzo's Prospect Auto Sales, Daniel's Candy/cigar store on Maryland near Niagara, Christiano, Ballisteri Bakeries. Grocery stores Cleaners/Tailor shops- DelMontes, Joe the Tailor, Niagara-Hudson, Varsity, Meat/Chicken markets - Russ Mancuso's, Johnny's, Leones up on Maryland, Syracuse's Chicken Market, and Shoe Repair

Restaurants/Bars Valvo's, Jennies open all night, DanDees, Twin Oaks next to #10, Oliveri's in the Gugino building. Bud Bender opening clams at Scotties and The Turf Club. Andy's where

“the men of respect” often went to eat their Gnocchi, McDoel’s, the Mayfair, Lorenzo’s, Laube’s Old Spain, Tom and Jerry’s, Deco, White Tower, Bowle’s Lunch, The Waldorf Cafeteria, The New Chicago Lunch at Ferry and Main, and Dewey’s Diner near Hutch, where something could generally be found on sale - or where you could sometimes put in an order for something that might fall off a truck later. The Rendevous with Dick Giambrone checking you out through the peep-hole before he let you in, Alibi Lounge, Why Not, Amber Bar, Nicks, The Nimrod, Ringside Lounge on Main near the Aud, Hudson Grill where the city workers from the Efner Street barns would stop for lunch and a quick nip (or before or after lunch), Tom the mailman would sometimes stop there after finishing his route. Abbarno’s Subway Grill with “Special Menu” on Friday and Saturday -- Ravioli. A heavy rain would plug the corner sewer and overflow down the steps. The Green and Black Saloon where you could get a big plate of Fave.

Radio Shows

Let’s Pretend, The Great Gildersleeve, Fibber McGee and Molly with Digby (Digger) O’Dell, the Friendly Undertaker, The Life of Reilly, Mr. District Attorney, The Jack Benny Show (Rochester and Dennis O’Day), The Bob Hope Show (Jerry Colonna and Frances Langford), Eddie Cantor, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, Red Skelton (If I do dat I get a licking -- I do dat), Fred Allen, Ozzie and Harriet, Major Bowes Amateur Hour, Lux Radio Theater, Saturday Night Hit Parade with Frank Sinatra, Life with Luigi, Amos and Andy (The Kingfish), Our Miss Brooks, Inner Sanctum, I Love a Mystery, Gang Busters, Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Dinah Shore, Mr. Keane (Tracer of Lost Persons), Bulldog Drummond, The Shadow, The Lone Ranger, Roy Rogers, Terry and the Pirates, Gene Autry, Tom Mix, Jack Armstrong (The All American Boy), Sky King, Captain Midnight and Kate Smith - who could forget her singing “God Bless America” during WW II and leaving many teary eyed as she closed her show with “ When the moon comes over the mountain”, Bill Mazur, Roger Baker and Charlie Bailey’s ticker tape Bison games.

Movies

Saturday Serials, Tarzan, Jane and Boy -- whose kid was he? Westerns Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes. Abbot and Costello, Martin and Lewis, The “Road” movies with Crosby, Hope and Lamour. Carmen Miranda’s fruit hats. Edward G. Robinson, Cagney, Pat O’Brien and Spencer Tracy with Leo Gorcey and the Dead-End Kids. Bogey and Bacall. Big musicals with Fred Astair, Gene Kelly, Donald O’Connor, Ginger Rogers, Anne Miller and Cyd Charisse dancing. Pinup girl Betty Grable, Joan Crawford, Lana Turner, Barbara Stanwyk, the heroes Clark Gable, Tyrone Power, Errol Flynn, John Wayne and the good guys, Henry Fonda and Jimmy Stewart.

Movie Theaters

Shea's Niagara, Marlowe (The Bug House), Allendale, Victoria, Circle, Senate, Rialto, Keith's, Academy and the Little Hip (which was off limits -- as were the bathrooms at Shelton Square -- we thought it was because they were so smelly) and the big Downtown Shows -- Shea's Buffalo, Great Lakes, the Hippodrome, Lafayette, -- and the Palace also showed movies.

Night Clubs / Music

MC's Tony Oddi and Lenny Page, The Town and Glen Casino, Chez Ami, Jan's, Bafo's, The El Morocco, Salemi's Club Rainbow, The Stagedoor with Frankie Martin who on seeing 4 sailors walk in one night, comments "Oh boy sea food tonight" from the stage. Pete Argiro Quartet at The Royal Arms. At first we didn't know what homosexuals were, then, more amazingly, finding out that not all Italian guys really liked girls.

I'm still working on this, so with more help from my friends, maybe we'll make this even bigger and more personal for you including more about families, days at Grover, people that I worked with etc. Write them up and get them to me. I'm in the phone book and just about any breakfast gathering of guys from the neighborhood. Just remember, THEY'RE MY MEMORIES (well most of them). Keep in touch and maybe we can give our kids a better idea of why we act like we do.

Memories of School

PS #1

The faculty:

Mr. Ambrose Grine, the Principal and the Office Secretary, Miss Sullivan (who was not bad looking)

Mr. John Muto , Gym Teacher and coach (this was before Phys Ed, Industrial Arts and Custodians), "my name is not "God", if we made a mistake we were all "hammerheads". He wasn't reluctant to get a little "physical" but he must have done wrong to get transferred to School #6 later.

Italian Teachers: Mrs. Alessi, Mrs. DiLeo, Mrs. Lanza

Mr. Wolf , Gym Teacher -- really shower room attendant. All we remember about him was handing out towels and trying to whack us on our bare butts with his rubber tipped pointer

Shop teachers, Mr. Wilkinson , "Keep sanding -- it's not smooth enough yet", "You want a slap in the jaw?" and Mr. Weiss whose Shop was in the basement of "the Old Building". Dominic LoGalbo was the "Industrial Arts" teacher there when the school was torn down.

Mrs. Mahoney, Home Economics, very nice person

Miss May Martin. We thought that she must have been a drill sergeant before becoming a teacher but at our graduation ceremonies she cried when presented a bouquet of flowers.

Helen McConnell, 3rd Grade, prematurely white hair, stressed personal hygiene and made us buy those little brushes so that we could pass fingernail inspection.

Miss Corcoran, Special Class, for students who weren't quite up to their studies.

Miss Cochran, Speech Class

Miss McCarthy, classy in all ways. You could hear her high heels clicking when she walked down the hall. The boys nicknamed her "Bubbles"

Music Teachers, Mr. Walters, we always thought that he had a thing for Miss McCarthy and Miss Mineo who led the school band which included Angelo Macaluso on trumpet and Larry Gatti on drums.

Miss Wild, Art, who introduced us to finger-painting

Miss Hart who was remembered for falling down the front steps and badly hurting her leg.

Mrs. Sawyer, wore same clothes and they weren't Liz Claiborne

Mr. Alt, Mrs. Farley, Mrs. Lanza (Kindergarten), Miss Manning, Mr. Mallory, Mrs. Petrino, Mrs. Privatera Dileo, Mrs. Schlotzer.

Grover

Staff:

Charles Kennedy, Principal

John Devine, Ass't Principal

Miss Sullivan and Miss Driscoll, Office Secretaries

Mr. Kuhn and Mr. Spahn, Phys Ed

Mr. Fahey, the Engineer

Mr. Buck, Mr. Cavaleri, Ms Conley, Mr. Conley, Mr. Davidson, Mrs. DiPasquale, Mrs. Dohany, Mr.

Dowd, Mr. Egan, Mr. Eldridge, Ms. Faber, Ms Hall, Ms. Hanaman, Mr. Hogan, Mr. Howe, Ms

Lombardi, 2-Gun McGovern, Mrs. McNamara, Mrs. Muggridge, Ms Ozarin, Ms. Ricotta, Mr.

Schanzer, Mrs. Spear, Ms VanHorn, Ms Welch, Mrs. Westfall