



Jean-Rae Turner

1938 Grad, Reporter & Author Shares Her Memoires of Growing Up In Newark

I'm an only child. My parents, William R. and Jessie E. Turner, lived on High Street, three houses from Central Avenue, Newark, now site of a Rutgers dorm. We moved to 69 Grumman Avenue in 1923. Our house was the last one on that side of the street for awhile. The landlord owned the lot next door which was a rose garden. I watched most of the houses being built on Keer in back of us and up the street. A brook was filled in between Maple and Parkview Terrace. A woman who had a carriage rode past us daily and waved to us. She didn't approve of automobiles or apartments. Other people used to horseback ride up the street.

Father was employed by Celluloid Company as plant engineer in 1919. An uncle, a member of Newark Rotary Club, asked members at a luncheon if any of them had a post for my father. Three of them said send your brother-in-law to us. He took the Celluloid job and became plant manager of the plastics division when Celanese purchased Celluloid. He was there 39 years. The last three years he spent building a plant along the Delaware River.

When I was little I frequently went to the Newark Public Library on Washington Street with him because he studied all the time. He was a mechanical engineer doing chemical engineering work. He was president



of the North Jersey Alumni Association of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He also was president of the Hillside Old Guard. He was a 50-year member in the Masonic Lodge in Whitman, Mass.

Mother never taught after she got married. Married women were not supposed to work! But she never stopped teaching. She was in charge of the Beginners' Department (pre-school) at the Elizabeth Avenue Presbyterian Church. She organized a Mothers' Class and found another teacher to teach it to stop the women from talking in the back of the room when she was working with the children. She was among the founders of the PTAs at Maple Avenue and Weequahic and the League of Women Voters. She also worked on the Community Chest and she was the Air Raid Warden on our block in World War II. Incidentally she lived to be almost 104 years old and she was still attempting to teach and/or help patients in the nursing home where she was for more than 10 years.

On April 29, 1927, we moved to 45 Hansbury Avenue. Although we looked at houses in Millburn etc., my father wanted to stay in Newark because of the library and the school system. We did. Even after 1967, disturbances as my mother reported two moving vans on the street on the same day. They didn't want to move.

The farm of Dr. William R. Ward Sr. was still up the street. It ran from Chancellor Avenue to Keer Avenue and covered most of the second block of Hansbury Avenue except for four or five houses nearest Bergen Street. We cut through the property on our way to and from school. I used to swing on an apple tree. The grapes supplied the juice for communion services at the church. A piece of the land was donated to the church for the parsonage. Until 1938, when Dr. Ward urged that it be moved, the old Lyons Farms School, built in 1784,

was adjacent to the church. On the corner was an open air school apparently torn down about 1928.

Our sleigh rides began at Ward's backdoor. A good run would take us almost to Bergen Street. After Dr. Ward died, the street was cut through and houses built. A synagogue went on the Ward house site. It became a Baptist church after 1967. The Wards also owned property across the street where an apartment was built in the 1930s and at the corner of Chancellor and Parkview where another apartment was built in I think the 1950s. A house occupied by the Adams family occupied the fourth corner. Adams owned the Adams theater and Proctors. They were Greeks. An apartment and two houses now are on the land.

I watched most of the houses being built on Keer in back of us and up the street.

In high school I was on the Archery team, named the second best girl athlete (Miriam Goldman was first), worked on the yearbook staff, (I didn't have the nerve to try out for the newspaper), belonged to the International Relations Club and several others, and the Junior Contemporary of Newark, the Girl Scouts, various church affiliated groups and taught Sunday School.

I selected Trenton State because I wanted to live away from home. History was my major and since we had to select two, I took English. At Trenton I was on the staff of the newspaper and became editor my senior year, belonged to numerous clubs including an International Relations Club. We also had to take some athletics after class work. I did swimming except my senior year when we might be called for interviews, then

I took golf. We had to work in the community. My work was advisor to a newspaper the Trenton YWCA put out and teaching Sunday School. Trenton gave graduates Bachelor of Science Degrees in Education.

The first job was as a teacher at Hillside High School with three English classes composed of boys who couldn't read and one Problems of American Democracy class for senior girls. In the meantime, I went to Teachers College, Columbia for an MA in Teaching of History. I was elected to Phi Lambda Theta, a graduate honorary society. I was employed by The Trenton Times in the summer of 1942 and the Military Information Service in the Pentagon in the summer of 1944.

I returned to Columbia to attend the Journalism School after I joined the staff of The Elizabeth Daily Journal. I had to quit because I won my battle to work nights to cover the township meetings I was assigned to cover. I was the first female to work nightly at the Journal. I took courses at the New School after the civil disturbances of 1967, and at Kean University when I was thinking of returning to teaching.

I was with the Journal for 34 years until I was fired during a strike with 99 others. We were attempting to keep our jobs. From there I went to New Jersey Newsphotos as the photo librarian. Newsphotos formed in 1964, was the photo department of The Star-Ledger until 2000. I was downsized in October, 1996. Since then I've been doing books.

My only child, Margaret-Ann Phillips, was a member of the Class of 1967 at Weequahic. She died December 24, 1996. Her only son, William R. Richter, has lived with me since 1989. His father, Paul F. Adams, now Richter, also was in the Class of 1967.

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Living on Hansbury Avenue for the past 76 years

"SWEDE"

A Star-Ledger article
by John McLaughlin

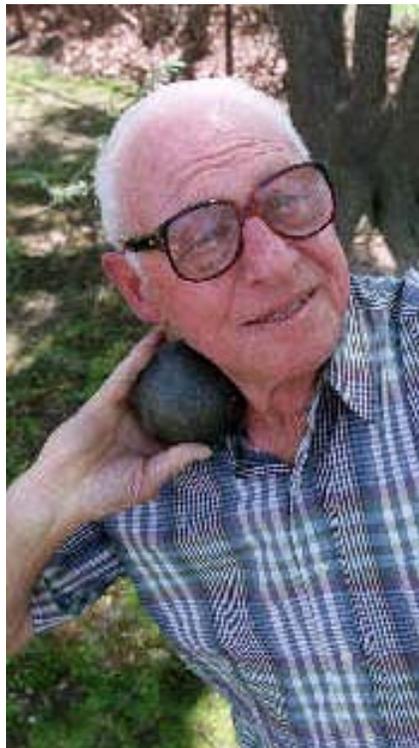
In the mid-1930's, Newark's Jews began to move in big numbers out of the city's old Central Ward to newer and better neighborhoods in the South Ward. They were drawn in part by the new Weequahic High School and they would make it perhaps the most academically accomplished in America.

In time, this community would produce national heroes like Dore Schary, the movie magnate and playwright, and Philip Roth, the novelist. But at the time, the reigning celebrities were Abner "Longie" Zwillman, the gangster-politician-philanthropist, and Seymour Masin, a wondrous athlete of extraordinary versatility.

Philip Roth is 13 years younger than Masin and presumably never saw him play ball. But the author never forgot him. Fast, tough and smart, Masin was at one time or another during his days at Weequahic the best football and basketball player in the city and a track star to boot. An athlete so good that at 15, with almost no training, he threw the 8-pound shot put 57 feet, 6 inches for a record that would last 45 years.

Zwillman was appreciated for his power and influence. But Masin, 6 feet tall and 200 pounds with blond hair and blue eyes, inspired awe and not a little love. He went away to camp in the Catskills one summer, when he was 7 or so, and he came back to Newark with a new first name - "Swede."

He is still trim at 190 pounds and still very strong, if his handshake is any indication. Swede Masin is 79 now and long retired as a liquor salesman. He lives in South Orange and he's a walker. In bad weather, he strides through malls. Some years ago he discovered the joys of walking in Manhattan. When the weather's good, he'll often take the train to Penn Station, head uptown and have lunch on the campus of Columbia



University. A 10-mile round trip. Other times he'll head south and wander around Chinatown or Wall Street.

A couple years ago, Masin having heard that Philip Roth had just published a novel whose protagonist was a blue-eyed blond Jewish athlete who starred at Weequahic High in Newark, stopped off at a Midtown office to check in with a businessman he knows. They repaired to a bookstore, where Masin turned to the first page of "America Pastoral," Roth's novel. The book opens with a two-word sentence: "*The Swede.*"

The first name of Roth's *Swede* was Seymour, too. Only the last name, Levov, is different. Levov has a daughter, Merry, who blows people up as a way of protesting the war in Vietnam. He is a man uncomfortable with his Jewishness. He is relentlessly introspective, soft when he should be firm, and self-pitying. A hard-to-like, harder-to-respect kind of guy.

Swede Masin isn't like that. But of the dozens of real-life Newarkers that Roth has re-created in his novels over the years, none is as close to the original

model as *Swede* Levov is to *Swede* Masin.

...So when the book was published, lots of people Masin hadn't seen in years called or looked him up and a good many asked whether Masin's daughter had gotten into the kind of trouble Merry Levov did in the book, which she most decidedly had not. Did Roth ever contact him? Ever ask if the novel caused him any pain? "He couldn't do that. It would give it away. He had to cover himself. It was smart, the way he handled it.

Some people, lawyers, too, thought I should sue for invasion of privacy or whatever. It isn't as though he made me out to be a bad person. He was writing a book of fiction. And you know, I enjoyed the experience. Meeting new people, hearing from people who hadn't been in touch for so long...it was fun," *Swede* told me.

Masin met Roth for the first time in 1997 at a homecoming party for the famous author at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. "You changed my life, Phil," said *Swede*. "No, you changed my life," said Roth. And Roth was right about that because the real *Swede* Masin made the fictional *Swede* Levov possible and *Swede* Levov was the character who carried Roth to a Pulitzer Prize for "American Pastoral."

In the intervening months, they've exchanged a few notes, one of which, from Roth to Masin and dated April 20 of last year, reads "*Dear Swede: Couldn't have done it without you.*"

No he couldn't. Seymour Masin is pushing 80. His fame, always parochial, has long faded. But he has experienced what amounts to a second coming. He runs for touchdowns and grabs rebounds and soars over hurdles, not in his memories like other old men. But on the pages of a book read by hundreds of thousands of people.

He is "*The Swede.*"

COAST TO COAST ALUMNI RV TOUR

By Phil Yourish, 1964



San Diego, California area

Visualize this: *In the span of a few hours, I am talking to alumni on my cell phone who want to order some merchandise; pulling some folders from a nearby file cabinet to review; looking at our web site on my notebook computer; responding to numerous e-mail messages; updating our database with the latest membership renewals; recording individual deposits in our receipts journal; entering our latest expenditures from our bank's web site; scanning some images that I recently took with a digital camera; reading articles from the electronic edition of the Star-Ledger; and printing a report that I just completed with my multi-function printer.*

So what's so unusual about all of this. It seems like a typical day at the office ... except that I'm 2000 miles away from my office and I'm doing this work in my Winnebago RV, parked in a campground for the night, not far from Interstate 10 in southeast Texas.

Is this a way to conduct alumni business? Why not! The wonders of the *technological age* allowed me to set up a mobile office in my 1988 camper this past winter and drive more than 10,000 miles through 18 states, mostly in the Southeast and Southwest, meeting 142 alumni and organizing 8 small alumni gatherings. I was on the road for about 3 1/2 months, from late December to early April, with my sidekick "Red," a mixed three-year old Chow, as my canine companion.

While away, I spent time playing the role of Weequahic's alumni ambassador in *Southeastern Florida; Austin, Texas; Santa Fe and Chimayo, New Mexico; Tucson, Arizona; and San Diego, Los Angeles and Berkeley, California.* It was a fantastic time, a unique experience, a great opportunity - and most of all I met some wonderful alumni.

On the home front, Board of Trustees member **Vivian Simons, 1959**, assisted me in picking up mail from our post office box and at our office at the high school; making bank deposits; getting checks signed; sending me postal mail that I needed to review; and communicating all financial transactions to me by e-mail. *Vivian did a great job and I appreciate her efforts.*

Besides alumni association tasks, some of the highlights of this trip were: snow shoeing in the mountains of New Mexico; meeting Ken Coleman's two pet llamas in Santa Fe; visiting the Desert Museum in Tucson, driving the beautiful Pacific Coast Highway, camping among the redwoods in Big Sur, experiencing the bloom of the desert at Anza Borrego State Park in California, and walking the rim of the Grand Canyon.

The alumni that I met, representing the decades of the 30's, 40's, 50's and 60's,

were very receptive, eager to get together, and appreciative of my efforts. And occasionally alumni who we didn't know about were discovered. Some alumni became new members, some bought merchandise, some shared their memorabilia, some related their Weequahic yarns, and all were proud of their Weequahic roots. It was truly a spreading of Weequahic alumni hospitality and good will throughout the country. I hope that my visits will serve as a catalyst to encourage alumni in areas where there is a Weequahic presence to organize their own local alumni gatherings on a regular basis.



Tucson, Arizona

When your on the road for more than one hundred days, you truly appreciate the assistance provided by others. Alumni, family, relatives and friends came through in helping me to organize alumni gatherings, providing me with superb hospitality, showing me the local scenery, and sharing memorabilia. So my special thanks to:

Florida: Coach Les Fein, my brother Stu, 1962, his wife Jane, and my Aunt Ruth. **Texas:** Larry Geller, 1960, friends Woody and Kathy. **New Mexico:** Herb Schon, 1950, Ken Coleman, 1944, Peter Malmgren, 1963, friends Eduardo and Sharon, cousins Janet and Alan. **Arizona:** Arnold Rubin, 1947, Harriet Honigfeld Rosenstein, 1947, **California:** Debra Schwartz, 1948, my 1964 classmates, Howard Goldberg, Al Baskin, and Norma Mark, Bernard Freedman (1952), cousins Paul and Kathy, and friends Marian, Arlene, Eliot, and Chip.



Los Angeles, California area

The following is a listing of the alumni I met on this trip:

Florida:

Attended breakfast organized by Ray Kirschbaum, (1946), in Delray with about 80 men, mostly from pre-1950 classes. Also met with Stu Yourish (1962), Arnold Cohen (1965), Paul (1945) & Rebecca (1947) Chase Goodman, Gladys Hausman Messinger (1940), Faihthe Lurie Grossman (1958), Robert Keil (1963), and Coach Les Fein.

Austin, Texas:

Larry Geller (1960).

Santa Fe, New Mexico:

Anne Kramer (1961), Herb Schon (1950), Ken Coleman (1944), William Rothschild (1954).

Chimayo, New Mexico:

Peter Malmgren (1963).

Tucson, Arizona:

Arnold Rubin (1947), Morton Rosenstein (1940), Harriet Honigfeld Rosenstein (1947), Charles Bressel (1953), Leonard Robinowitz (1954), Jerry Perlman (1957), Roberta Wright Perlman (1965).

California, LA Area:

(1964 Grads) Robert Applebaum, Arnold Blumenfeld, Howard Goldberg, Serena Friedman, Merle Kurzrock, David Larkin, Annette Rosen, Murray Rozansky, Barbara Schindel Sunenshine (1948 Grads) Debra Schwartz, Ed Berman, Ruth Blumer Greenstein.

California, Berkeley Area:

Marshall Berzon (1968), Muriel Berzon (1965), David Blumgart (1966), Michael Disend (1963), Harvey Dondershine (1959), Susan Dondershine (1960), Joan Facher, (1967), Howard Haberman (1962), Judy Klayman-Smith (1965), Susan Levine (1965), Norma Mark (1964), George Martinez (1966), Gilbert McMillan (1964), Stephen Pittel (1956), Martin Reisberg (1960), Beverly Grossman Robbins (1948), Dennis Wishnie (1964).

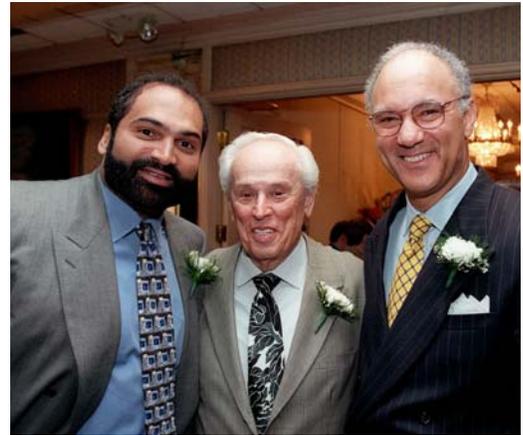
California, San Diego Area:

Alan Baskin (1964), Martin Bloom (1954), Anita Goldstein Blutinger (1954), Martin Fischer (1937), Bernard Freedman (1952), Tina Centuori Freedman (1952), Paula Katz Friendly (1953), Annette Gordon (1954), Sheldon Krueger (1956), Frances Katz Sekela (1954), Toby Katz Wolf & Jack Wolf (1952).

Sportswriter Sid Dorfman Honored at 1999 Homecoming

On Saturday, October 25th, Sid Dorfman, 79, an alumnus who has spent 63 of those years in the newspaper business, was honored by the WHS Alumni Association at the 3rd annual Homecoming football game.

He is often referred to as the "Dean of New Jersey sportswriters" and on May 14, 1998, he was inducted into The Sports Hall of Fame of New Jersey. Below is a recent article by Star-Ledger writer Brad Parks about Sid when he was inducted into the NJSIAA Hall of Fame. In the picture on the right, Dorfman is in the middle flanked by former football star Franco Harris and Leonard Coleman, the former President of the National League (Baseball).



Excerpts from an article by Brad Parks, Star-Ledger

There were only three high school sports that mattered back then, since anything outside football, basketball or baseball was considered irrelevant. There was only one town that mattered then, since anything too far west of Newark was considered wild frontier.

And the newspaper that carried this smattering of high school sports news, which was then called the Morning Ledger, cost less than a nickel. That was the sporting world Star-Ledger columnist Sid Dorfman began as a 16-year-old at Weequahic High School in 1936, and it was a world he spent a lifetime changing.

For the innovation he brought to New Jersey high school sports coverage, and for the energy and time he spent doing it for 63 years, Dorfman was inducted into the NJ State Interscholastic Athletic Association Hall of Fame yesterday along with seven others at a luncheon in Edison.

"To me, personally, Sid Dorfman is the father of high school sportswriting in the state of New Jersey," said NJSIAA Assistant Director Ernest Finizio, Jr. "His conscientiousness, his dedication, and his sincerity has helped to promote high school athletics to the extent it is today."

Dorfman got his start calling in reports of Weequahic basketball games to the Ledger. In 1937, a man named Stewart Morrison started the Metropolitan

News Service and made Dorfman the sports editor. Nine months later, as Dorfman tells it, Morrison ran away with his secretary and the payroll money.

Shortly thereafter, Dorf Feature Service - which still provides The Star-Ledger high school sports coverage - was born. "The thing has grown from a tiny seed into what it is today," Dorfman said. "At that time, we were barely functioning, whereas today I feel we have the number one high school coverage in the country. That's not just me being biased. In my travels, I've picked up other newspapers and I've never seen anything our equal."

Dorfman introduced the Top 20 poll to the newspaper shortly after joining it. Through the years, he championed other causes, from the inclusion of sports outside of football, basketball and baseball, to increased coverage of girl's sports.

NJSIAA Executive Director Boyd Sands called Dorfman a pioneer and a critical figure in the continued success of his organization. "When we go to national conventions, we're the envy of all the other states because of the high school sports coverage we get," Sands said. "We owe a lot of that to Sid."

..."I'm going to keep going as long as I can function," Dorfman said. "I wouldn't know what to do with myself when I got up in the morning if I couldn't go to the office. To me, this is absolutely a labor of love."

Sid's Other Accomplishments:

Dorfman was particularly cited as a golf writer and in 1990, a column he wrote was judged the best in the nation by the Golf Writers' Association of America, and was put on exhibit at the World Golf Hall of Fame in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's he booked high school basketball games into Seton Hall University and raised directly or indirectly some \$1000,000 for the fight against infantile paralysis or polio.

Some of his other awards include:

- 1962** - Inducted into Old Time Athletic Hall of Fame
- 1972** - NJ Sportswriters Association Distinguished Service Award and honorary life membership
- 1982** - NJ Interscholastic Coaches Association Service Award
- 1987** - Boys and Girls Club of Newark Philip Dameo Memorial Award
- 1988** - Inducted into the Newark Athletic Hall of Fame
- 1989** - NJ State Interscholastic Athletic Association Award
- 1992** - First Fidelity Bank Humanitarian Award, Seton Hall University Larry Keefe Memorial Award
- 1993** - NJ Genesis Drug & Alcohol Program Humanitarian Award, Athletic Advisory Board-NJIT, Honorary Chairman, United Way in Mountainside, Honorary Member, U.S. PGA and NJ PGA

LORRAINE GORDON

1937 GRAD OWNS

FAMOUS NYC JAZZ CLUB

By Howard Mandell



When the hallowed grounds of jazz are hailed, special reverence is received for the music's renowned dives. The Village Vanguard, Manhattan's underground chapel of modernism, is foremost among these for its current action as well as its

history. The Vanguard is a nightspot that's survived without interruption for seven decades, featuring jazz and nothing but jazz since the mid-'50s.

When it was opened in the mid-'30s it presented poets, then folk singers, cabaret reviews and a politically incorrect breed of comics. Today it is the place to go to listen seriously, with little distraction and even less hype, to established jazz stars who can really play and emerging talents just a bit left of center.

On 7th Ave. South, down a steep flight of stairs and through a single, nearly soundproof door, the Vanguard is a wedge-shaped room that holds an audience of 233 snugly, sitting on straight chairs around teeny round tables in the center, on padded benches at the edges and on half a dozen barstools pulled up close to an unfancy counter. The booze that's served is equally basic: no single malts, microbrews or wine lists, and don't expect special attention from the bar-tender or waitresses. No food is available, not even chips.

Red is the color of the felt on the walls, which are hung with photos of the men and women who've played there, and the upholstery. There are nondescript carpets, and futuristic murals on the curved wall farthest from the stage. But that stage is the focal point of the room. It's slightly raised and big enough, though not by much. A lot of times, the drummer is packed in behind a post.



It doesn't seem to matter: this is one of the best acoustic situations jazz of any style has ever enjoyed.

"We have a great sound system, very expensive, but I can't tell you what it is", says Lorraine Gordon, the handsome woman of a certain age who's owned and operated the Vanguard since the death in 1989 of her second husband, Max Gordon, who was in his late 80s. "The ceiling's the right height, the floor's the right depth and we're on our third Baldwin piano, the best we've had yet. That's why the guys like it here, because they sound so good."

...Such moments encapsulate what makes the Vanguard special. It is managed by a determined woman with taste, experience and attention to lavish on detail; a small but devoted crew staffs the club, including Gordon's daughter Deborah, who keeps the books and paints signs for a window announcing the week's attractions, and the most talented musicians remain interested in performing here.

The Vanguard is a year-round jazz festival in itself presenting two or three sets seven nights a week, starting roughly at 9 p.m. and winding down, when things are hot, in the wee hours. On its Web site, www.VillageVanguard.net, there's a gallery of thumbnails depicting the covers of more than 90 albums recorded here live, including masterpieces by Cannonball Adderley, Kenny Burrell, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Tommy Flanagan, Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Joe Henderson, Earl Hines, Keith Jarrett, Art Pepper, Sunny Rollins and recent issues by Wynton Marsalis (a seven-CD boxed set), Brad Mehldau, Joshua Redman, Mary Stallings and Chucho Valdes.

To play the Vanguard is to arrive - to join the pantheon whose vibrations echo silently as sonic ghosts in the nooks and crannies of the coat-check closet, the ladies' room and the back stairs to the delivery entrance. The musicians sense each other hovering in the wings, recently

departed or awaiting their turn its the spotlight. To pay one's way into the Vanguard is to make a pilgrimage not to a den of entertainment but to a sanctuary of sound. No talking is allowed during sets, few whoops of laughter are indulged and rowdiness is strictly verboten. Recently a beautiful Hollywood starlet and her escort were asked to leave for smooching too heavily at a banquet. If you make reservations, you'd better show up on time.

It's all about the music at the Vanguard, and those who come to listen help keep it so. "This is a funny room," Gordon recognizes. "Audiences make this room, too. You can't cram things down their throat. I won't book just anybody. I have to hear the musicians and like them. I want to enjoy everything we have. I keep my eyes and ears open for the young guys; they may not be all wonderful but some of them prove to be, and I'd rather they do it here. I like to find older musicians who can still play and get them to do something new. Jazz doesn't have to be cerebral; it can be fun, and wildly exciting, although one thing I abhor is drummers who go berserk. That upsets me. Drumming can be so beautiful and subtle.

"I've got the background to run this place. I know jazz, after all. My whole life has been in jazz. I was collecting records when I was 16; Bessie Smith was my favorite singer. I worked all those years with Alfred Lion (her first husband, co-founder of Blue Note Records), and learned from Ike Quebec (saxophonist and Blue Note's first modern jazz A&R man). Max's tastes ran pretty much the same as mine, though he was more old-fashioned; he didn't understand Monk, who I kept telling him was a genius. I love it here. Why wouldn't I? The most beautiful thing in the world is to sit at the back and hear the music, look out on all the people sitting, without anything extraneous, listening, transfixed. I get so much out of that."

Vignettes of a Newark Childhood

By Marcia Kahan Rosenthal,
Class of January 1952

Perhaps it's torn down, now...that house on Tillinghast Street in Newark, NJ, in which I idyllically spent most of the first 11 years of my life (1934-1945), surrounded by an extended loving family, familiar landmarks (Charlie's Candy Store, the Hawthorne Avenue Movie Theatre, Keil's Bakery, Hoffman's Green Grocer), and friendly neighbors who never seemed to move away. Perhaps it is all gone now, a casualty of the riots, poverty, a mass exodus to the suburbs, and exists only in my memory...All the more reason to try to give the scenes life again, on paper.

The Stoop

In summer, during the late afternoon and evenings, I would often sit on the front stoop...those outside steps and small platform at the top of stairs just before you entered the six-family building in which we had the middle-left apartment.

It was a small stoop, just enough to hold about five or six of us, unlike those large, many- stepped stoops found in other areas of the eastern United States that had to accommodate dozens of tenement families on hot summer night. The grown-ups would gossip with one another or talk about the war or commiserate on life's hardships, particularly during those years between 1940 and 1945. We children would take it all in.

I learned to use a horse rein on that stoop and how to knit, and the words to all the popular songs of the day. My favorite, which I learned when I was 9 (and which I now sing to my grandchildren), was "You'll Never Know." I pictured myself as Alice Faye singing to John Payne, or better yet, John Payne singing to me. I also discovered from 'stoop gossip' that one of the tenants of the building, whose daughter was my playmate, entertained a boyfriend while her husband was at work at a defense factory.

The stoop was the place to await the fruit and vegetable peddler. When I would spot his old horse and cart



turning the corner onto Tillinghast Street, I would immediately call up to my mother on the second floor to tell her of his imminent arrival. His cart was full of "New Joisey" tomatoes, green vegetables, and there was always a cornucopia of wonderful summer fruits. My favorites were (and still are) peaches, cherries, and, especially, watermelons.

One day, as I remember it, my mother was unable to come down so she called out the window to tell me to buy a quarter of a watermelon. I ran up the stairs two at a time to get the money and to try to talk her into letting me buy a whole one...so delicious and cool on those hot summer days in Newark, when I could eat at least a half of a melon all by myself. Luckily (and

surprisingly), I was able to convince her. My mouth watered as the peddler put that 8 or 10 pound watermelon into my skinny nine-year-old arms.

I had just made it up the stoop and into the vestibule when the melon suddenly fell out of my grasp, broke open and splattered all over the walls and floor in a collage of seeds, juice and rind. My heart was broken and I could only imagine how delectable that mouth-watering watermelon would have been, for there was no money to be spent on another that day nor, most likely, for the rest of that week.

The stoop had other daytime uses, too. It was there that we children played a game called "Stoop Ball" ...throwing a tennis or rubber ball against the point of the steps, with each succeeding step up from the ground worth more points than the lower one, if the ball hit the point and was caught on the fly. This was no mean feat for a little girl not known for athletic prowess. I usually confined my outdoor games to "A, My Name" or "Russia" (otherwise known as 'onesies, twosies, threesies), jump rope, marbles, jacks, trading cards, hide and seek and hopscotch.

The best place to eat a chocolate Mellorol, that creamy, luscious ice-cream roll that came wrapped in paper and had to be slowly unpeeled

(like a Charlotte Russe), was on the stoop. (It was only and always chocolate for me. I never experimented with other flavors...what if I didn't like it"...a nickel wasted!).

On the stoop, I could concentrate on every delicious lick, perfunctorily watching the panorama around me, but thinking only of my Mellorol and savoring every drop. Eating it in the house was not fun and licking it as I walked home from the candy store could be disastrous as I learned one fateful day when I was 8 years old. I had just been given a nickel for my Mellorol and was returning from Charlie's candy store with the ice-cream roll in one hand and my ever-present tennis ball in the other, planning, no doubt, to play "Stoop Ball" when I finished eating the Mellorol.

Inadvertently, and much to my horror, I bounced the Mellorol and stuck the tennis ball into my mouth! I can still, 60 years later, remember the shocking taste of that ball and recall the tears welling up as I watched, with horror, as that longed-for ice-cream melted and spread out on the hot sidewalk. From that time on, I kept the Mellorol "under wraps" until I got to my stoop to enjoy it.

Watermelons and ice-cream desserts were certainly not daily treats and were so special that those two episodes in which I lost the chance to have them, made indelible impressions - as did the little stoop on 42 Tillinghast Street, where so many of my sweet memories were made.

The Ocean, by Krystle Walker

When I am laying by the ocean,
I feel special.

Everyone else goes away,
And my mind is blank from worries.

Just laying there with the waves,
Rushing against my legs,
Chills start to come over me,
because of the slight breeze.

The wind and the waves comfort me,
While I watch the sunset,
The ocean is where I can be free.

The 8th Decade: ERGO Literary Magazine 2002-03

The Rain, by Ciara Martin

Rain is like a plane flying high in the sky,
Sometimes it makes noise,
Sometimes it's as quiet as a fly.

Rain is the crying of the gods,
They are down and blue,
Maybe they need light,
Maybe they need love, too

Rain sometimes brings lightning and thunder,
Sometime not, which makes me wonder.

Rain has heavy winds that act like saws,
Tearing things apart with its ragged jaws.

Rain, nature's watering can,
Makes things grow and die for always hungry man.

Rain sometimes gently puts you to sleep,
Sometimes it makes things beautiful to keep.

Rain, Rain, Rain,
Is the most wonderful thing.

There were 15 of them in the beginning - all boys, and they were neighborhood friends even before they started kindergarten in the late 1920s at the yellow brick Peshine Avenue Grammar School in Newark's old working class, then mostly Jewish Weequahic section on the city's southwestern boundary. As their lives evolved in the classrooms, on the boisterous streets and stoops and in the gravel schoolyard that was their second home, a sort of alchemy transformed their friendship into something more like brotherhood.

On they went to Weequahic High School where, in their junior year of 1938, they pledged to be comrades forever under the banner of Gamma Sigma Chi, for "Know Thyself." Earlier, they had dubbed themselves the "Oriole Athletic Club," or more informally, *the Peshine Avenue Boys*.

Never out of contact, meeting every other Friday whenever possible, their friendship has remained steadfast for some 70 years - through high school, college for some, World War II service for 13, marriage, careers, children, grandchildren, retirement and, finally, ripening old age. Through all this, the fellowship among the 12 who survive continues unwavering and unstoppageable.

"If the question is asked, 'How do you make and keep friends?,' I guess we should have the answers," said **Irv Newman**, 76, of Roseland, a printing business representative. "Certainly, we had a lot going for us - similarity of heritage, commonality of schooling, a terrific social life. For most of our lives we also had the good fortune to live within a 25-mile radius of one another. But we needed more. The ingredients that have held us together are honesty, communication and good humor."

When some of the gang began to drift to retirement homes in other states, it was Newman's idea that everyone be assigned a month of the year in which to write a newsy letter about himself and family that would be photocopied and distributed to the others. Five still reside in New Jersey, four are in Florida, and one each in Arizona, California and Pennsylvania.

"It's a great way of keeping in touch," said **Dan "Chuck" Klein**, 75, a retired vice president of a container business in Union, now living in Sarasota, Fla. "We do it religiously, two or three pages, typed or in longhand. Some of us now use computers." Writing from his home in Clearwater, Fla.,

STILL TOGETHER AFTER 70 YEARS



From left: **Irv Newman, Chuck Klein, Jack Kamin and Herb**

Bobby Bierman told of taking his 2-year-old granddaughter ice skating on a local rink and "falling on my backside. Needless to say, some smart aleck 15-year-old had to help me get upright."

When Klein and his wife Vera came north recently, their called for a mini-meeting of some of the Peshine Avenue "boys" still in New Jersey. The site was the Retreat lounge of the Hilton of Short Hills where the Kleins were staying. Also at the table were Newman; **Jack "Jake" Kamin**, 77, of Union, a tool company operator, and **Herb "Jasco" Jacobsen**, 75, of Jamesburg, a retail furniture salesman.

In keeping with the gang's age-old exclusion of wives from their sessions, Vera Klein cheerfully absented herself to a far table, and when a twinge of guilt drove one of the men to invite her to join them, she replied without rancor that she was very comfortable where she was, thank you. Newman explained, "No Women!" had been the group's "rallying cry" since regular meetings were begun during the high school years.

The talk gravitated to the war that 13 of the group survived. Newman and Bierman flew in B-17's, the former a bombardier, the latter a lead navigator. Jacobsen, an airman, guarded a stockade of American prisoners in Italy. Klein was an army communications specialist. Kamin was a flight engineer in a 9th Air Force C-47 cargo plane that flew

survivors out of the German concentration camp at Dachau. "Normally, we transported 16 fully equipped paratroopers," said Kamin. "On this run, I had to load 102 live corpses. They were alive, but barely. Their eyeballs were popping out...you could see all their bones. I'll never forget it."

After lunch, someone suggested a visit to the old neighborhood, which some had not seen for many years. They were pleasantly surprised to find Peshine Avenue School in good condition and bursting with children. "Growing up, we spent all our time in the playground, every day after school, and all day on weekends and summer," recalled Klein. "It was open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. At 7 we'd gather on Bobby Bierman's stoop, playing fantasy baseball dice until his mother yelled, 'Get those bums out of here.' Then we'd head for the playground.

"There were no mitts, but we had bat and a big softball with stitching on the outside. We had teams, Fishers, the Shamrocks, the Orioles and Comets. We'd go home for lunch and supper, then come right back until the fence was locked for the night. Our folks never worried. They knew where we were."

Someone recalled a red headed neighborhood roughneck called "**Red**" **Lebzelter**, who became a prize fighter, a World War II paratrooper, and an actor who renamed himself Jack Warden. "If I saw him coming, I'd cross the street," said Newman. Other notables who came out of the Peshine Avenue neighborhood included **Vivian Blaine** and **Mort Lippman**. Blaine, born Vivienne Stapleton in Newark in 1921, became a singer and actress who appeared in Hollywood musicals, starring in the Broadway and film versions of "Guys & Dolls." Lippman, a pianist, became bandleader for Merv Griffin.

A hero to the gang to this day is **Allie Stoltz**, who as a skinny kid clever with his dukes, was often called upon to make short work of playground bullies. Stoltz, who today lives in Irvington, entered the ring and fought Sammy Angott for the world lightweight championship in Madison Square Garden in 1942. To the crowd, Stoltz was the victor, but the decision after 15 rounds went to Angott.

Other members of the group were: **Norman Aronchick, Milt Cooper, Monroe Greene, Jerry Marlis, Mendy Frieder and Marvin Tinsky.**

Carrie Jackson, class of 1975, Newark's Jazz Singer

Excerpts from an article by
Barbara Kukla, Star-Ledger Staff

As a singer Carrie Jackson knows how frustrating it can be to keep jazz alive at a time when heavy metal and rap dominate the industry. That's what's driven her to create her own record company - C-Jay Records - and a related enterprise that books more than 50 acts a year for Newark-based clubs and beyond. Simply put, Jackson's is Newark's jazz maven - high energy all the way despite her subdued singing style.

...A Newarker, Jackson got her start singing at assemblies at Peshine Avenue School. "My first solo, a little song called 'Playmates' was in kindergarten," she recalled. Coincidentally, her daughter Loretta Gronau teaches seventh grade at Peshine in the same classroom where Jackson was a seventh-grade student. Jackson's teacher was another of Newark's gifts to the music world - Melba Moore.

During her days at Peshine and later at Weequahic High School, she sang in choirs at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Newark. ... "My interest in jazz stems from the fact that I grew up listening to Sarah (Vaughan), Billie (Holiday), Dinah (Washington) and Carmen (McRae)," she explained. "I also was into Betty Carter, Nat King Cole and Arthur Prysock. They stimulated my deep love for jazz."



Jackson got her start in jazz as a piano and voice student of the late Howard "Duke" Anderson at the Newark Community School of the Arts where she also studied voice under Winton Hughes, Inez McClendon and Nadine Herman. "When Duke's band got a gig, they took me along," she said. "Everyone else was 40 years older, and I was the sweetheart of the band. It was an honor for me because I learned a lot about showmanship and all the technical aspects of music that a vocalist should know.

Anderson, who played piano in Dizzy Gillespie's first band in 1943, can be heard on Jackson's "The Nearness of You" CD. Jackson said it was Anderson's thinking that encouraged her to go beyond singing and reach out to people of all ages in the community. "The legacy that Duke left with me was the fact that he was a great teacher," she said. "He wanted to leave what he knew to others, especially children."

Jackson has followed suit, serving for several years as vice president of the New Brunswick-based Jazz Institute, which provides free music lessons and

experiences to children as young as three. On the other side of the age spectrum, she often performs for senior citizens at area nursing homes. "I love it," she said, "because the seniors really get into it. They know all the old songs. Often they get up and dance."

Jackson decided to get into the recording business in 1990 when she found that many other singers like herself were well into their careers, yet still waiting to be discovered. "I decided to incorporate my music label and did just that as a venue for other artists like myself and to keep musicians working," she said. "It was a way of sharing information, to guide other artists from what I learned from Duke and his friends."

The whole idea behind music is promotion," she said. "And what better way to promote your product than to do it yourself. A lot of singers and musicians think you just have to show up. But you have to know your business and you have to keep up with your following." Jackson got into the booking end of the business two years ago when she began lining up artists to perform on Friday nights at the Renaissance Cafe, 195 Mulberry Street, Newark.

Since then, she's gotten work for many familiar names including a gig for saxophonist Buddy Terry, a mainstay at the old Key Club and Front Room. Other clients include jazz singer Rasheema, the father and son duo of Gene Phipps, Sr. and Gene Phipps, Jr. and the Don Williams Trio. Jackson not only does all the bookings for the cafe, she also does all the promotions, press releases, fliers and mailings.

Mike Mirabella Inducted Into The Newark Athletic Hall of Fame



Mike Mirabella lived most of his life not only as a very active participant in the world of Newark athletics, but also as a dynamic leader. As team member, team captain and coach, he was an excellent athlete and a true sportsman.

While at Weequahic High School, Mike "lettered" across the years in two sports, gymnastics and track. In gymnastics, Mike participated and won in many events, including long horse, tumbling, rings and horizontal bar. In his senior year, he was elected by his teammates as captain of the gymnastics team.

In both his junior and senior years, Mike also served as captain of the track team. It was here, as a pole vaulter, that he truly excelled. In his last two years of high school, he was the city, county and state champion pole vaulter - and both years was chosen to the New Jersey All State Track Team.

Starting with a jump of 11 feet 7 1/4 inches in a Board of Education tournament during his junior year at Weequahic, Mike became a record breaker. By the time he was a senior, the only pole vaulting records left for him to break were his own. His highest jump was 12 feet 1 1/8 inches, the best in the state.

Following his graduation from Weequahic in 1936, he attended Panzer College where he received a double major BA degree in Special Education and Physical Education /Recreation. Later, he received two MA degrees in Physical Education/Health and Administration.

After completing his education, Mike returned to the Newark School System as a Special Education teacher. He also taught

sports and athletics skills to the city's youth in afterschool recreation programs. In 1962, he became a Physical Education and Health teacher at Vailsburg High School where he stayed for the remainder to reach the greatest number of students.

At Vailsburg, he became coach of the Track and Field and Soccer teams. In 1965 and 1967, his teams won the State Soccer Championship and in 1974 his track team won the NJ State Championship.

After years as a teacher and coach, Mike became a Vice-Principal at Vailsburg and Central high schools. He remained dedicated to his work in Newark until heart disease

wife Rosina, eight children, and many grandchildren.

When his family remembers Mike it is as a husband, father and grandfather, but when other people remember him, it is the athlete, coach and sportsman that comes to mind. On a bus trip to Atlantic City last year, Mike's wife, Rosina, ran into a man who had grown up in the Weequahic section of Newark. This man recalled knowing Mike. He said, "Mike was always an athlete. I remember him hanging clothes lines between the houses to practice his pole vaulting. And he was always trying to encourage all of the kids in the neighborhood to stay out of trouble and to play sports. He was always organizing some kind of game or another. Mike Mirabella was a great guy...a true leader."

On Friday, October 15th, 1999, Mike was enshrined in the Newark Athletic Hall of Fame in the "performer" category at their 11th Annual Induction Dinner. His family was present to accept this prestigious honor.



Marty Friedman Speaks To His 1951 Class At 50th Reunion

I embrace you all. Thanks to the committee. Thank you so much **Eddie Bond, Lenny Karp, Carol Osterweil, Eddie Goldstein, Carolyn Katz, Barbara Horowitz, Doris Horland, Sy Grossman, Ethel Bohrer** and VERY special kudos to **Roz Klinger** for the tremendous effort that they have all made putting this wonderful gathering together. Without their dedication, this afternoon never would have happened.

When first approached to be your Master of Ceremonies it was suggested that I do some comedy routine or shtick. This time is too valuable and momentous to cheapen and waste with probable bad jokes and poor taste. Please allow me a moment of reflection. Do you remember 1951 when gas was twenty cents a gallon and first class postage was three cents? Can you remember Tony Bennett's "Because Of You", Nat Cole's "Too Young" or the Four Aces doing "Tell Me Why"? Willie Mays became a Giant and Joe DiMaggio retired. Bogart won the Oscar for "The African Queen". What brings us together here today? What great strange bond do we have? (other than Eddie).

We are here to share memories and to try to recapture for just a few hours the sweet recollections of a time gone by. A time in which we were all brought together by a wonderful school in an age of discovery and awakening. We shared our youth together at Weequahic. For many of us we discovered our first love, and experienced our first kiss; for some our last and only love, and for some of us our first heartbreak.

Hopefully those loves are still with us here today. It was a time when we were asked questions of ourselves for the first time. We established friendships that have lasted half a century. Some of those friendships have been strained through the years

by omission or neglect. But now is the time to renew them and to forgive. We may not pass this way again. We have survived 50 years since our graduation.

We have had in that 50 years many successes and joys. We have had tragedies and disappointments. We have lost many dear ones in that time, but we have brought forth a multitude of new cherished loved ones. I hope that they will be able to create amongst their friends the same feelings of belonging, admiration and warmth that we hold for each other.

The catalyst for all of this was a unique High School and educational system. That kind of school comes down the road very rarely. It was a mix of very special people from a very special neighborhood in a very special era. We owe a lot to Weequahic High. It served us well in a very special time of our life. And we are very special people from a very different generation.

We were born into the depths of the depression. 1932 and 1933 were not good years for America. As a result of that terrible economic problem, our numbers were few and most of our families were poor. In the early 1940's our first recollections of the world around us were probably the air raid drills in school and little starred flags in windows. We planted victory gardens and bought savings stamps. We knew who were the bad guys and who were the good guys. 1947 arrived and we started a new life in High School. It was a wonderful time. It was an age of discovery while we were coming of age.

We were taught well by teachers who cared. We were taught and we knew right from wrong. We grew up between the end of the Swing Era and the beginning of rock 'n roll, so we didn't even have our own distinctive music. John McLaughlin put it well: "We were too young for Jazz and too old for Rock and Roll." In the '50's we looked for jobs, rather than careers, and once we got them we tended to keep them. We were the last generation to be imbued with loyalty to

institutions, religion, political parties, baseball, labor unions, and marriage. You went to school, you got married, you bought a house, you raised your kids, and every year you hopefully made more money. Most of us were drafted in our youth, and when we were, we went without question just as the kids after us who were sent to Vietnam did.

When the '60's came, we were in our solid citizen 30's, minding our own business, getting on with our lives. Then Vietnam, hippies, beatniks, Watergate, and suddenly, the attitudes and values of our youth and the WW II vets were challenged. All of us changed some and some of us changed a lot. So we learned from the generations both before us and after us. We are the better for it.

And the 70's and the 80's came and went. And our lives went on, molded by our friendships and relationships and what we were taught and experienced. And here we are 50 years later still friends. We were two hundred and six in January of '51. Too many of that number have passed on.

So now I take the opportunity to say good-bye to Sonny and Ruth and Fred and Herb and all the others. I regret not staying closer to all of them and to all of you through the years. For you have all helped to shape in some way each of our lives and all of our destinies. And I am sorry that I never had the chance to say thanks to you before and to tell you that I love you all.

My brief little message to you today is simple. Without it a void is too often created. Never be afraid to say either I love you or I'm sorry. How many times have we regretted not saying those words. Let your dear ones know how you feel. Life goes and passes us too quickly. As John Lennon wrote: "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans."

So take that person's hand sitting next to you, whether spouse or friend and say: *I love you and I will be your friend forever. Thank you all for being here.*

HOW MANY DO YOU REMEMBER?

- Candy cigarettes
- Wax coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water inside
- Juke boxes
- Party lines
- Lincoln Logs
- Fuller Brush man
- 45 RPM records
- Roller skate keys
- P.F. Flyers
- Butch wax
- Home delivery of milk in bottles
- Blackjack, Clove & Teaberry chewing gum
- Drive-in movies
- Peashooters
- Blue flash bulbs
- Wash tub wringers
- Tinkertoys
- 5 cent pack of baseball cards with bubblegum
- Reel-to-reel tape recorders
- 15 cent burgers
- Penny candy
- 35 cent per gallon gasoline
- Telephone numbers with a word prefix like Bigelow-22088
- Cork pop guns
- Newsreels before the movie
- Studebakers
- Underwood typewriters
- Fountain pens
- White bucks
- Erector sets
- Lionel trains