

WHS NOTE

Class of 1963 Association

March 27, 2020

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Hi Unifiers of the Weequahic Patchwork,

Cyber Indians networking:

Davis, Earl (“Pen”)(68) - earldavis1013@gmail.com (new)

Enda, Robert(66) - bob_enda@yahoo.com (change)

Jill Graifer Watkins (6/61) passes along sad info:

I’m sorry to share this sad news, as told to me by his wife, Marjie that Stanley Finkelstein, June 1961, passed away suddenly at his home in Olympia, WA on March 9th as outlined in his brief obit. [Click on blue link for Stanley Finkelstein's Obituary](#). Jill

Jac Toporek (6/63) and Lucie Prinz (49) note Weequahician “shout outs” on HBO:

Hope our Alumindians have been watching the HBO dramatization of Philip Roth’s “*Plot Against America*.” I noted direct references in the first of the six episodes to the Weequahic area and a scene with students existing Chancellor Avenue School (picture, below, taken from TV screen). The portrayal of the neighborhood with stoops and neighbors milling and talking to each other in the evening brought back terrific memories. Mention of Longie Zwillman as taking on the Fascists in Union also was an item often mentioned in our weekly newsletter. I wonder if the older son named Sandy was honorific to a creative Philip Roth who, rather than tell the

community story through words, young Sandy captured the community spirit through his art?

Perhaps some of you out there who have viewed the HBO mini-series, can share thoughts, too, as to memories revived by the program. Ys, there will be varied opinions on the rise of anti-Semitism and hate in our society, but there are plenty of forums for them elsewhere. Here, neighborhood memories are the theme. Jac

Philip Roth's novel, "The Plot Against America," started airing on HBO on March 16th and continues Monday nights at 9. You can get the first episode on HBO. I am looking forward to watching more because my father, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, is a featured player. He is the "good rabbi" opposite Rabbi Benglesdorf, the bad one.

When I read the book, I wrote to Phil to thank him for giving my dad such a heroic role. He wrote back "I only gave him the role he would have played if it had really happened." The actor playing him wears a beard and speaks Yiddish. My father never grew a beard and his Yiddish, a language he loved, was not perfect. But I am looking forward to the series in which he is a character. I thought Weequahic alums would find this fun. In the first episode there's a quick shot of Chancellor Avenue School. Enjoy. Lucie



The Ortner home received some special alumni attention:

Tom Boose (1/59)

To Mel Ortner (64), I remember your house on the corner of Summit and Keer. There was no other house in that area that could compare to it. I had always wished that I could have seen the inside of it. Tom

Alan Ginter (64/65)

To Mel Ortner (64), of course, I remember you and your house. I believe I was inside with you once or twice. We used to play around climbing on the frame of your house while it was being built. What a playground! Didn't your father have a factory down on Frelinghuysen Avenue that made staples? Sorry for the spelling of the street, reminds me of an old Larry Best joke. You and I were in Boy Scouts together under Mal Sumka.

My older brother, Fred (61) used to (reportedly and allegedly) go to drag races on Rt. 22 and hang around a drive-in that was known as a street race hangout. As *Little Ginter*, rather than *Big Ginter*, I only got to go once or twice. Of course, White Castle was the place to go on Friday and Saturday nights after sweaty basement house parties. I recall the Newark Drive-In, dances at London Fair (I used to play there with Ronnie Scruggs (64) and the Soul Bros.--all Weequahic guys which I'll save for a future post), hanging out at Fella's House, or after Thom McCloud (65), my super close friend and partner-in-crime, and I would finish ushering shows at the Mosque Theater. Alan

Mel Ortner (64)

What a great memory you have. Alan. I think the car hop was called the *Adventure Car Hop* and I spent many weekend nights there as well. My dad did have a staple and stapling machine sales business on McCarter Highway, but you are also correct in that there was a staple manufacturing company on Frelinghuysen Avenue called Zeb Manufacturing with whom we did business in the 70's.

Your mention of Ronnie Scruggs hit a soft spot as we were close friends at Weequahic. But after graduating, he seemed to disappear off the map. I tried to find him to hook up at the reunions and only hit dead ends. Any idea where he is or was? Of course, Fella and I were close as well and about 10 years ago. I looked him up in

Los Angeles and went to visit him. Thom McCloud always kept me laughing and we still see each other on Facebook.

I, too, ushered at the Mosque and had the unique opportunity to walk Ray Charles to his car after his show (no, he wasn't driving). During the show, his piano was positioned right next to the curtain so he would be able to easily just step out next to his bench and sit down. I stood behind the front curtain literally 10 feet away from him out of sight of the audience and watched the entire concert from there. What a great experience.

Google Maps has a photo of the house, Click on this blue link: [Mel Ortner's house on the corner of Keer and Summit Avenues](#). Mel

Leslie Goldman Pumphrey (6/62) shares some BB moments to warm us in times of winter:

I'm one of those people who loved, and will always love, Bradley Beach. I spent single months, usually July, in Bradley from the time I was 3 until age 12. As a toddler, my parents, my older brother and I stayed at the Lorraine-Bradley Hotel. My memories of that time and place are really sense-based, a scent of some sort of store that was either in or near the hotel.

Most of my memories center around the beach block of 4th Avenue. We rented from Mr. Grushkin. His daughter-in-law and granddaughter stayed there, as well. Each summer, we stayed in a front or side apartment, and I can clearly visualize the layout of each place as well as the three matching red brick buildings in the complex. We made friends with the neighbors in the home next door, held "concerts" (we charged a penny for admission), walked the boards and played games and miniature golf, went to dances in the 5th Avenue gazebo, ate ice cream, went to Asbury when my dad came on the weekends and played on the beach (where mom told us not to play too long in the damp sand but never said why). We also watched hurricanes spill over the boardwalk, and we played in the flooded street. We learned about mysterious Ocean Grove, but never were allowed to go there. Dinners out were rare, but my favorites were *Mom's Kitchen* and *Vic's*.

One summer (I think it was 1956), apparently the cost of staying at Grushkin's was too high, so my parents and I stayed in a big house on the corner of Ocean and

3rd Avenues. There were other families there too, and my memory says it was like a boarding house. Each of the upstairs single bedrooms had its own bathroom; the three of us stayed in that one room. The kitchens (ALL the kitchens) were in the basement. I remember that each family had its own stove and refrigerator down there. I did not like that place at all, although I did meet new people, some of whom became friends. We would play on the big covered porch (I was particularly enamored of a set of books called *Sue Barton, Student Nurse* so we acted out the roles!). At night on the weekends, the men would sit on the porch and smoke cigars. To this day, the scent of cigars makes me tear up because I associate it with the shore and my dad.

At around age 10, I developed a huge crush on the 4th Avenue Beach lifeguard, whose name was Dave. My girlfriends shared in this silent adoration. We even had a password whenever we met, which was whispered as “E-V-A- D” (isn’t that cute?). He was tanned, sat up high on his stand and was totally professional when this group of giggling girls would approach him. I recall him removing a splinter from my foot after I had ventured under the boards. I was in love!!

I still have photos of my family, my parents, some friends (and of course, one of Dave, the lifeguard) on the beach and on the boardwalk. So many memories, all sweet. Loads of stories fill my head whenever I hear the word Bradley. Leslie

Sharon Rous Feinsod’s (66) comments on life in the Custer Place, Meeker and Elizabeth Avenues locale brought out memories:

Dawn Knight Gaskin (6/63)

Thank you, Sharon, for the nostalgic look back at Custer Place. I lived directly across from you at 17 Custer Place. Clark Lissner and the Toporek twins, Jacob and Norbert, were my classmates. Also, thanks for reaffirming that the grocery store on Elizabeth Avenue was known as *Kelly’s*. A few months back, someone referred to it by another name, and I wondered if I was losing it! Dawn

Bette Krupenin Kolodney (6/60)

My sense, though it could be erroneous, is that schoolmates at WHS thought of the neighborhood feeding the school as being from the Weequahic section of Newark. But there were sub neighborhoods within that area, too, with happy memories of those living in the various areas of the Weequahic section. What I have learned

from my beloved WHS alum is of all the other neighborhoods feeding the school population. I am impressed with the happy memories of those who lived in the Meeker, Custer, and Elizabeth Avenue areas including bordering Weequahic Park. I had no knowledge of this area growing up.

And then there are those of us who lived in the Clinton Hill Section where we attended Madison Jr. High School through 9th grade and entered WHS in 10th grade along with the kids who completed 9th grade at the Annex. We from Madison JHS were kept together in Mr. Kobetz's Homeroom class, though we were integrated in the academic classes. Quite a few of us have maintained our friendship throughout the years including in the present. Bette

Ellie Miller Greenberg (49)

The *Tavern* was our “home away from home.” My father loved it and we were regulars there. The owner was Sam Tieger and he loved to chat with everyone. You are right about the coconut cream pie: nothing like it! Ellie

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