

WHS NOTE

Class of 1963 Association

APRIL 10, 2020

TO RESPOND WITH A COMMENT OF YOUR OWN, PLEASE CLICK ON WHSALUM63@AOL.COM.

Hi Imagers of Life in the Weequahic Section,

Beverly Kreiser Berg (1/50) moved her e-tepee address to bkjune26@gmail.com.

In times of concern, we are all “One Family:”

Roberta Blake Abramson (1/54)

Remember we are Weequahic strong! Stay apart. Be smart; we are the smartest graduates. No private school could live up to Weequahic in its heyday. I am quarantined on Boca Beach with hubby (Burt Abramson, Class of 1948). Can't fly, am staying put and missing Passover with wonderful family for first time in life leading to matzoh ball withdrawal. Love to all alumni and families. Roberta

Clark Lissner (6/63)

Hope everyone can find some things to smile about, draw upon that “ole” Weequahic spirit, and stay safe and healthy during these trying times. Clark

Honor to a WHS Alum:

The late Joel Rinsky (1/56) will be honored by the Essex County Bar Association and its Foundation Memorial Committee on May 5, 2020 at 3:00 PM at which time Joel's name will be permanently inscribed on a memorial plaque that is located in the Rotunda of the Historic Essex County Courthouse. For more information and whether COVID19 forces a cancellation, contact Judy Rinsky at rinsky3@aol.com.

Eliot Braun (1/64) with another teacher special:

Who among you remember the History teacher Sadie Rous? I thought she was a great teacher and enjoyed her classes immensely. One little tidbit remains with me every time I see or hear the word "normalcy." If my memory of more than 55 years serves me well, that was not an acceptable term until the presidency of Warren G Harding, who used it. The correct word then, and form still is, 'normality,' as it appears in the British form of English. Harding was no great intellect and his term of office was a national disgrace as we know of the *Teapot Dome Scandal*. In these challenging times, looking forward to "normalcy" and "normality."

We had really quality public education and it remains with me. I'll end it here with best wishes for all of you and yours for good health etc. Eliot

Ron Bruguière (6/53) seeks an assist from Alumindians:

Can anyone identify who I'm sitting with on the lawn in front of Weequahic? The year is either 1952 or 1953. My brain wants to call her Marcia, but If you have an answer, please contact me at norbr@sbcglobal.net. Ron



“Scary Newark” (comment authored by Sara Friedman Fishkin (60) on furnace areas of the home) was more prevalent than thought:

Beverly Farber Cook (1/54)

We lived in a four-family house on Leslie Street. My dad (the man of the family) took care of our furnace. It was serious work, but every once in a while he would go downstairs with some steaks and a wire holder (?) and grill away. Delicious! Everyone who lived in that house knew what we were having for dinner. Beverly

Jac Toporek (6/63)

Episode 3 of “The Plot Against America” contained a scene where young Philip was asked to get the Shabbat tablecloth drying on a line in the apartment basement. He cautiously made his way down the staircase into the basement and through a seemingly darkened abyss, while the voices and coughs of other apartment dwellers came loudly through the creaking floorboards above. Even the washer in the basement looked menacingly human like. Art imitating life: our childhood fears open to the television watching public. Perhaps a flash and time filler for the vast majority of the HBO audience, but for our Weequahic section residents, we know better; “Scary Newark!” Jac

Judi Wodnick Chait (62)

OMG, that basement (cellar) story is always with me and I’ve told it dozens of times. We lived on the second floor of a two-family house on Patten Place where there was a coal bin and furnace in the basement. “Spooky” was not the word for it. My mother stored our bicycles there and when I was older, I had to get it by myself. Fright could not describe what I felt. I lived with my mother, father, two sisters and my grandmother: and one bathroom. At some point my father built a bathroom in the basement. LOL never used. Who in their right mind would go down there? Judi

Ronald Price (65)

Reading Sara Friedman Fishkin’s (60) account of checking the furnace brought back a very similar experience from my younger days. We lived at 565 Hawthorne Avenue, on the corner of Fabyan Place. It was an apartment complex with five apartments. On the ground floor was *Allied Radio and TV Repair* and a candy store that was owned by “Charlie” and his wife. There may have been another commercial business on the ground floor; I just cannot remember. Each apartment

had its own coal burning furnace in the basement and a coal storage bin where coal was delivered through a small window down a chute.

As the older of two sons (my brother, Jeff, WHS 69), I was usually called upon to stoke the furnace and add more coal just before or after dinner. At times, I got my brother to do it with me. He had been similarly tasked at times but was not fearful of what he might find in the basement. For me, it was my most feared household task. Access to the basement was from a door in the back of the building and there was a door to the outside world. Neither door was ever locked, and the basement was always warm in the winter, a perfect place for homeless people to hunker down for the night.

The stairs down to the basement level were not that sturdy nor were the step intervals equal height. There was one light bulb that could be turned on if the bulb worked and if one could reach the string. I couldn't. So, I crept down the stairs in the dark, fearful of who I might encounter once at the bottom of the steps. Then, it was a tiptoe walk to the furnace and the coal bin, keeping an eye out for someone who I was sure was going to kidnap me.

Once at the furnace, I opened the door to expose the glowing coals that shed enough light to get to the coal bin. After a few shovels of coal and some stoking, I accomplished my chore and had to reverse my steps to the stairs and back to the apartment. I figure the whole ordeal took at least 20 minutes, but my parents did not seem to notice. I never was accosted in the basement or fell down the stairs, but the fear never diminished and is vivid in my memory. Ron

“Roots,” Weequahic area style:

Anita Wassermann Banks (55)

I came across this picture taken at my sweet sixteen taken in the kitchen of our home. The guests included Sheldon *Midge* Geller (arm across chest), Sandy Dreskin, me, Eddy Garfinkle (upper right, almost off the page). The girls and the other guys are from my NH crowd. Anita



Neil Rothstein (6/59)

The story a few weeks ago about Burgerama and White Castle and hamburger and cheeseburger consumption brought this story to mind. I once went with Sid Friedenberg to the Burgerama, 1964 or 1965 for dinner, probably a hamburger platter. When we were done, he said something like, "I would love some chocolate pudding." They were made in those tall ice cream soda containers. One thing led to another and the short version of our discussion was that Sid said that he could eat 10 in a row right now." We made a sick deal; I would pay for all 10, 75 cents each, if he finished all 10. If not, he would have to pay for what he ate. The waitress could not believe her ears when I ordered all 10 at once. One by one he finished them all.

PS: Sid had to eat while we were laughing so much. It was such an impressive accomplishment. I was so proud to be his friend. We talked about it for many years. Neil

Alan Ginter (64/65)

For Mel Rubin (56) about Lerhoff's Bakery on the corner of Lyons Avenue and Schley Street, it was next to (eventually) the Schley Street Shul (synagogue) and across the street from a vacant lot that used to have barracks for returning troops. In 1960-61, when I used to walk home from music lessons at Music Unlimited on Lyons and Bergen Street (who would spend bus money if you had the time to walk the mile [probably a mile]) as I lived on Schley near Chancellor. Especially in the winter, I could smell that bakery for half a block in each direction. I don't know if they baked the bread there or just stored it, but that smell remains one of my favorite memories. Alan

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