

I am delighted to have just found your website. I looked it up on a whim as I was reminiscing about living at Riviera Beach from June 1945 to Dec 1948, when our family moved to Hopewell, Virginia. I have so many fond memories of the time I lived there that I would like to share and would like to hear from anyone who might remember me or my family, after all these years.

My parents were Dan and Vera Lilly and we lived in a corner house facing the park. We lived catty cornered from Hattie Kissiger (not sure of the spelling) and her family. My brothers were Harry Lilly and Sherman Halstead. I don't remember the street names, but the house was brown and had a sun porch around the front and side where I loved to sit and read in warm weather.

I attended 6th grade at the elementary school and Ms Hopkins was the principal and 6th grade teacher. When we moved there and I was enrolled in the school, she found out that I had transferred from a two room school in West Virginia and told Mother that she was going to put me back a grade. Mother insisted that she test me first and after I took some tests, there was no more talk about putting me back. Some of my friends were Janet Herbig, Patsy Kissiger, Arden Fox, Lynn Stalnaker, Dale Smith (?), Robert Schimpf, and Wally Huber.

My older brother, Sherman, had a crush on Joyce Kobruge, whose father owned Herman's Grocery. We were the first people in the area to have a television and Herman loved to come to our house to watch wrestling. We loved it too, because he would bring a big cardboard box filled with pretzels, potato chips, pickles and other goodies and we would all sit on the floor, turn the lights out and watch that tiny screen.

I loved the park and the monkey bars, where Janet Herbig and I would pit our skills against one another. We were both very competitive. We would gather up soda bottles on the beach, trade them in at Herman's Grocery and buy a big bottle of soda and potato chips and have a party in our basement with several friends. (It didn't take much for a party in those days!). I remember a birthday party at Wall Huber's house, where we all pretended we couldn't see through the blind folds to pin the tale on the donkey and would instead head toward someone with the pin in our hand! Sitting in Arden Fox's living room and playing "gossip", and seeing how outrageous things sounded after we had whispered it around the group.

We rode our bikes everywhere – even to Fort Smallwood a few times to see a classmate whose first name was Helen, but can't recall the last name. Janet's Aunt had a summer cottage at Bar Harbor and we used to go there to watch the boat races when Guy Lombardo's boat would race and his band would play from a yacht out in the water and we could hear it from shore. We ice skated on the "lake" in the winter and spent many, many hours on the beaches in the summer. There was a beach on the Stoney Creek side near a home where the nuns lived and we would be very careful because we knew they were watching for us to make mischief. At the point was a dangerous place to swim and the water dropped off sharply there. The beach on the Potomac side was the best place to swim and have "hot dog roasts" in the evening. There were also some grape vines in trees that we would swing on back there.

It was such a free time to be young. There was a cemetery on a cliff and once when Stoney Creek froze over, we rode our sleds down the hill from the cemetery all the way out onto the ice on the creek (until some sensible adults made us stop). There was a large building which I think had been a hotel or something that for one summer opened a "milk bar" for youth and we would go there and get great milkshakes. The whole of Riviera Beach was our playground.

I attended church at the Community Methodist Church and sometimes went with friends to the Luthern Church. The Catholic Church and the Luthern Church both had carnivals in the summer which were small, but great fun. We really looked forward to those. Our church had a "Strawberry Festival" in June. The women baked all sorts of cakes and you could have a piece of cake with all the strawberries on it that you wanted with ice cream to boot. I think the price was 25 cents. Everyone in the community attended these events. Of course, at that age, my friends and I were always looking for what boys were there.

We went to 7th grade in a school nearby and I can't remember the name of the community. In the 8th grade, we started Junior High at the brand new school in Glen Burnie beside the High School. I left in the middle of the school year to move to Virginia.

I will never forget that time at Riviera Beach. I would love to hear from anyone else who might have lived there at that time.

Sue Lilly McCool

sue.mccool1@gmail.com