

Mikie's Journal

By Mikie Dumire

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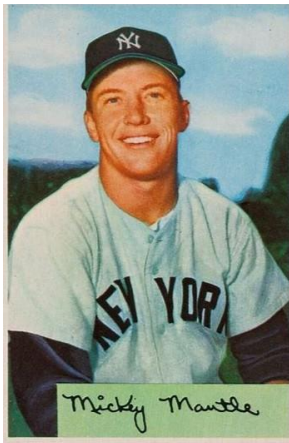


I invite you to take a journey back to the good ole days. I will be sharing some of my memories with you. They may not all be exactly as you remember it; they are factual to the best of my memory. I hope you enjoy the journey with me.

I'm sure you have heard of the Greyhound bus? I rode it several times as a kid. It used to be a very popular mode of transportation. The Greyhound Bus still serves several places in West Virginia. I know it makes stops in Bridgeport, Sutton, Weston, Bluefield, Charleston, Mount Clare, Parkersburg and I'm sure other places. Did you know it used to be in Elkins? When I was a kid, it was in the building where Papa John's Pizza now occupies.



My brother and sister collected sports cards. I remember getting a package that contained five cards and one stick of chewing gum for five cents. If only he had that collection today. Who knows.... he might be a rich man.



At Crystal Springs there is a brick building (it might be a tattoo shop now). It was home to Demotto Honda Sales. A few years later they built a huge structure across the road and moved over there. China Garden moved in the brick building. Years later it moved closer to Elkins, since then it has changed ownership and names several times. It is currently known as New China Cook. Demotto Honda stayed at that location until they closed a few years ago.

Originally it was owned by Tony and Jesse Demotto. Their son, Mark, grew up in the business and eventually became manager and at the time of closure, he

was the owner.

Charlie and Judy Chen owned the China Garden. They had a son named Bruce. He grew up in the restaurant until he was about six or so; then they sent him to China to the grandparents.

In the eighties and nineties, it seemed like everyone went sparkle crazy. If your clothes did not come with lots of sparkle, people added glue and sequins to make them glitter. Tops had lots of sparkle as well as some on the pockets and down the legs of their jeans. Some even sparkled up their shoes, even tennis shoes and flip flops. Oh my, the age of shine! LOL Even little kids' clothes, shoes, hair bows and clips were sparkly.

Why would you wash and save empty frozen orange juice cans? Why? To roll your hair, of course, especially long hair. They curled it up and straighten your hair and gave it more body.



Fashionable was the peasant blouse, mini skirt and colored tights with a pair of wedge shoes or a pair of Mary Janes or Penny Loafers. Speaking of Penny Loafers, remember when the guys had heel taps added to their loafers?

The maxi dress was just the opposite of the mini dress. It was a long, flowing dress that typically reached the ankles.



The major grocery stores were A&P, Kroger's and

Garden Fresh. Also, Wilfong's Market and the Key Market were both popular. Where Garden Fresh was is now a parking lot, beside Citizens Bank. The VFW is where the A&P was. After it

moved to the mall, the VFW moved in. Kroger's was just across the street and down a little from Tomblyn Funeral Home. I'm not sure what occupies that space now. Kroger built the new store where they are now. They have since expanded by building on to it and making it larger.

Tinker Toys could keep a kid busy for hours as well as give the imagination a work out. Tinker Toys was more or less, a construction toy consisting of wooden or plastic rods, spools, and connectors that can be assembled to create various structures and models. Modern updated sets are available today. They came in a round, canister type cardboard container with a lid.

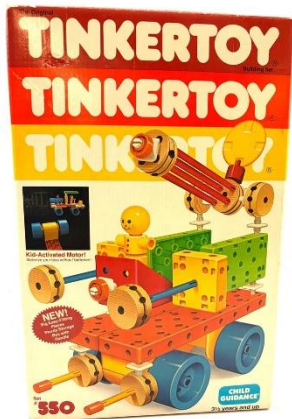
Every morning at grade school, the first thing we did after Mrs. Skidmore rang the bell was, both teachers would get together beforehand and choose two students to go up front and lead the Lord's Prayer. Then two other students would go up and lead the Pledge of Allegiance and (believe you me), you had better do it right; from standing, to the correct placement of your hand over your heart.

Lincoln logs were another thing that could keep kids busy for a very long time. They also were packed like the

Tinker Toys, only thing was, the container was larger.

Do they even make iron on patches anymore, or does anyone patch anything? When we got the tiniest of hole in our clothing, Mom patched them. If our jeans got so bad, they were cut off at the knees or mid-thigh to wear as shorts. If our iron on patches came out, she used them; even if she had to cut them for the tiniest of holes.

I remember when women were pregnant, they wore maternity clothes. Shirts and pants had a stretchy panel from hip to hop on down below the



stomach. Tops were stylish, but they were long and flowery. Some had strings with which to tie in the back. What a change to maternity wear today!



I recently wrote about the transistor radio. A lot of guys carried a small one in their pocket and had a set of ear plugs that went from the radio to their ear. The style evolved to the boom box. They carried it on their shoulder and blared the volume to the high heavens! This is about the time the men's fashion started changing to longer hair, sloppy clothes, baggy jeans, ill fitting t-shirt and an unbuttoned flannel shirt that was a couple sizes too large; and tennis shoes that had seen better years (about two years



prior).

Right about this time of the year, we were in peach juice up to our elbows. We ate fresh peaches, peach cobbler, homemade peach ice cream (yum yum) peaches in our cereal and oatmeal. We made peach jelly, jam and preserves and canned a bunch of peaches so we could enjoy them in the winter. The peach jam, jelly and preserves sure did taste good on homemade biscuits or homemade bread with real butter. Sometimes we even had homemade butter or even toast.

After I got married, my husband loved the jam, jelly and preserves not only on the bread products, but on his cottage cheese. During apple season, we did the same with the apples. Once we got a freezer, we froze a lot. That way we could have fresh apple pie any time. Oh, geez a wheeze, frozen homemade apple sauce is soooo good.

Haywood and Lucille Buck had a laundry mat on Randolph Avenue where the storage buildings are now. They also offered drop off service as well as dry cleaning. Beside the laundry mat was a very small building. It was home to Dick Earle's Used Cars. Both of these businesses were very busy.

I was just thinking about some game show that I watch now. Chuck Woolery started as host of Wheel of Fortune in 1975. In 1981, Pat Sajak took over and in 2024, Ryan Seacrest became the new host. Art Fleming was host of Jeopardy from 1964 to 1979, at which time, it became Alex Trebek-- until his death in 2020. Ken Jennings and Mayim Bialik shared the host duties for a while with Jennings finally taking over. The Price is Right started in 1956 with host Bill Cullen. Probably the most popular host was Bob Barker from 1972 to 2007, at which time Drew Carey took over. Another very popular host was Monty Hall from Let's Make a Deal. He was host from 1963 to 1976. Wayne Brady now hosts the popular game show. I also remember Peter Marshall from Hollywood Squares, Chuck Berry from the Gong Show, Bob Eubank from the Newlywed Game and Jim Lange from the Dating Game.



After the Greyhound bus terminal closed, it was reopened as the Greyhound Inn. After that, it was empty for a while; and as I said earlier, it is now home to Papa John's. There was a long building behind there. It was industrial. It had a lot of roll out windows and garage doors. The only thing I ever remember being was Gladdino's Spring Shop.

There was, also, more convenient, local, transportation. There was a Taxi Service. The taxi dispatch office was beside Wimpy's Bar and Grill. Wimpy's became known for their hot dogs and chili. People still seek Wimpy's hog dog chili recipe. Every now and then, someone will ask and someone else will respond with the recipe; or someone will post one and say it is similar to Wimpy's. Wimpy was a bar, but it also had a restaurant, pool tables, and pin ball machines. I think you could lay a game of pool for a dime.



There was a unique building close to the Iron Horse. It was Elkins Tire. The waiting room was almost all glass. The building was constructed to accommodate the industry and that whole section was curved.



On Third Street there was Mountaineer Optical. There were some very nice people that had it. It was Richard and Penny Doyle. They were very good at their job. I got several pairs of glasses there and was always happy with the results. Unfortunately, Richard had a stroke. They kept the business open for a while, but eventually it became increasingly more difficult for him to do his job and they closed. Also, Walmart opened the Optical Shop there and the competition there made it more difficult to compete.

Thank you for taking another journey with me. I hope you had as many smiles reading it as I did remembering it. I leave you with these words of wisdom: "Good people are good because they came to wisdom through failure."

