

GROWING UP IN MID TWENTIETH CENTURY TENNESSEE

**Normal District of Memphis (South of Memphis State College)
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Housing

In our middle-class neighborhood (638 Hughes Street), most homes were small by today's standards, generally less than 1000 square feet. Almost all were wood framed with wood siding, built on sub-floors supported by foundations, and a number of the homes did not have the foundation enclosed. Windows were single pane glass held in a wooden frame by glazier's points and putty, with a sash weight, rope and pulley to aid in raising them. The exterior of the house was painted, but paints did not last as long as today's coatings. Interior walls were plaster over lath, not the wallboard common in modern homes, and hence subject to irregularities, and wallpaper was also very common for most interior walls. (New wallpaper was generally applied over the old, so many layers of paper would build up over the years.) The floors were generally pine or oak tongue and groove planking. The home that I grew up in was originally heated by a coal stove and fireplace, had hand pumped wells for water, utilized an outhouse for sanitation, was located on an unpaved road, and was uninsulated. Before I was old enough to remember and once the area was annexed by Memphis, the home got hot and cold running water, a little attic insulation, one indoor flush toilet, a bath tub (no shower), gas floor furnaces, a gas stove, a gas hot water heater, the road was tarred, curbs and gutters were poured, sidewalks were paved, incandescent street lights on wood

poles were installed and we got garbage pickup. It had three small bedrooms, a living room, dining room, kitchen, one bath, few closets, a partially floored attic (where I had a rather large train layout on a big table) and a semi-enclosed back porch. (However, some of my country relatives still used outhouses, newspaper or a Sears catalog for TP, chamber pots (small ceramic pots used as a toilet during the night to avoid the trek to the outhouse), wood burning cook stoves, fireplaces for heat, feather mattresses, kerosene lights, root cellars (unheated cellars used for storing foodstuffs) and hand-drawn water wells for many years.) Not until I was a teenager did we get our first air-conditioner (1958), and prior to that it was a long time until we had even a window fan (1954). The hot and humid summers were endured by not cooking during the heat of the day, staying outside after dark until the house cooled (the adults drinking iced tea and the children catching "lightning bugs" or perhaps hand cranking the ice cream freezer), taking a late cool bath, and laying very still in bed on top of the sheets until you fell asleep to the sounds of the crickets and cicadas. In fact, most homes and public buildings were not air-conditioned. For example, churches were very hot during Sunday services in the summer, so cardboard fans were available on the back of every pew. Interestingly, the back of these fans had a Bible verse, a Bible picture, and the name of a sponsoring mortuary. Since the houses were all open, etiquette required that you kept your voices down so that no one else would know your business. Even so, I can still remember the anguished wail when a neighbor five houses down found her husband dead one morning. Because of air conditioning, the 1960's were the first decade since the Civil War that the South experienced net in-migration. Most of these old homes were poorly insulated, so the heat was on much of the time in cold weather, and the rooms farthest from the furnace or fireplace were very cold due to outside air infiltration. Locally a common source of heat for residences were floor furnaces that burned natural gas, and the metal grates above the furnaces were a pleasant place to warm oneself on a cold morning, but at the risk of a branding if you slipped into direct contact with the grate. (One way used to protect crawling infants was to pin one edge of their long gowns to the floor under a leg of a piece of furniture.) Larger buildings generally had steam radiators for heat.

Typically most homes had a large front porch (sometimes screened against mosquitoes with steel mesh that had to be painted to keep it from rusting out) where the family would sit in the summer to escape the heat of the house and to visit with the neighbors or anyone passing down the street. Porch swings, rocking chairs, gliders, Adirondack chairs, and canvas lawn chairs were the common front porch furniture. The advent of air-conditioning killed the front porch and the neighborliness associated with it. Many people tended to live in the

same house for many years, or at least in the same neighborhoods, so my parents knew most of the residents and had gone to school with many of them. In fact, Mother's childhood home was only 200 yards from my childhood home, and Dad's was only two blocks away. And for instance, within two blocks of the Hughes Street home were 34 relatives (grandparents, great aunt, great uncle, aunts, uncles, first cousins, and second cousins) from the McKain side of the family and within a mile were also seven relatives from the Duncan side of the family. Memphis also contained other aunts, uncles, and cousins. It was very true that children could not get into trouble without a report of it beating the child back to his home, since most married women did not work outside the home. (Memphis, in general, was very well run, clean, quiet and relatively crime-free with a good police department, run by Uncle Jim Macdonald. In fact our house was rarely locked. Also in all of Memphis at that time, I did not know of a single gated community.) Ethnically, our neighborhood was heavily English and Scottish, which only seemed odd in retrospect when I later lived in more diverse surroundings.

Houses generally had a gas stove, running water, electricity, a gas hot water heater, and a refrigerator, although a number of homes still lacked these bare necessities. (I think the greatest advance was hot running water so that people could bath more than once per week. In mid-twentieth century Memphis, many people still bathed only weekly, along with a good wash of the face and hands daily, consequently there were still a lot of health problems associated with poor personal hygiene. Generally, when Mom and Dad were young, a bath was made in a large metal tub heated by the sun in summer or filled with water heated on the stove in winter.) A few of the older homes with which I was familiar still had the gas lines in the walls for gas lighting, prior to the common use of electricity. Incandescent lights were the norm, and other types of lighting were rare. Appliances such as dishwashers, disposals, compactors, icemakers, automatic clothes washers, dryers and microwaves were either very rare or not yet invented. Even smaller appliances such as vacuum cleaners, mixers, toasters, coffee makers, clock radios, door bells, etc. were not at all common. Many kitchen functions were done by mechanical, hand operated devices. (In the bath, electric shavers, electric hair dryers, electric tooth brushes, and electric curling irons were either non-existent or rare.) Smoke detectors and dimmer switches were well in the future. For instance, rugs were cleaned annually by hanging them outside and beating them to release the dust. Curtains were washed annually and stretched on a stretcher bar to dry. The paper window shades were replaced as they wore out. Clothes were cleaned either by using a scrub board, a hand operated wash tub or a simple agitator washing machine, running the wet clothes through a wringer and then hanging them outside, and one family up

the road still boiled their laundry in a large cast iron pot in the backyard. Every house had a clothesline in the back yard along with supporting clothes poles and wooden clothespins, which was used on a regular basis. In general, people did not change clothes and underwear nearly as often before the advent of automatic clothes washers. Insects were controlled by good cleaning, but the use of interior insecticides was uncommon, so there were many more around than in modern homes. For instance, flour was always sifted before baking, ostensibly to break up large clumps, but also to remove insects. Rodents were controlled by closing potential entrances to the house, traps, and cats. Since there was little demand for pet food, the cats were forced to hunt for meat or ate table scraps. Many homes were decorated in the "Victorian Style", which meant heavy overstuffed chairs, rugs, lots of knickknacks on tables and etageres and heavy drapes that left the rooms dark and gloomy, since there were few lights in the room.

Hughes Street was lined with large elm trees, and most yards had a good variety of trees, including fruit trees, walnut, pecan and decorative trees. Some of the neighbors had large gardens, fruit trees and kept livestock such as rabbits, goats, cows, and chickens for food and a mule for plowing. I especially remember the garden, fruit trees and chicken coop of Aunt Rene and Uncle Willie. There were a lot of flowers planted in most yards, the beds edged with whitewashed rocks, and the grass area was normally maintained with a push mower. I did not know of anyone using chemical fertilizers or insecticides on their lawn, but mulch piles were common, and some farmers used, now banned, arsenates, salts of lead, and nicotine poisons on their crops. If there was no garden, yard trimmings and leaves were generally burned, as well as paper trash, for most people had an incinerator barrel (barrel used for burning rubbish) at the rear of the lot, but also packaging for purchased items was much less elaborate (few plastics), so there was less trash overall. Although with no sink disposals in homes, there was more food waste. In the summers, mosquito (vector) control would walk the local drainages and spray oil on the standing water to kill larvae. Also periodically during the night an insecticide fogger truck would come through the neighborhood using the recently discovered DDT, which is now banned from use in the USA. This neighborhood, and all of its residents, disappeared in the 1960's as Memphis State began to expand and raze the homes and businesses to build more school facilities.

As humble as these homes were, the stock of houses in the rural areas was much worse. In the 1950's there were still sharecropper shotgun cabins (long thin cabins, one room in width, where each room opened to the one behind and in front of it), dogtrot cabins (cabins with two rooms, sharing a common roof, with an open porch between the two

rooms) and log cabins to be seen in many farming areas, spotted along rutted dirt roads and without utilities of any kind. These poor one or two room hovels, where the children would sleep four to a bed, gradually disappeared after World War II as the economy improved. The improvement in housing, paved roads, rural electricity and better soil conservation were amazing when I revisited the Memphis area in the late 1960's.

Transportation

Prior to the Second World War the depression ruled the country, and many people could not afford automobiles. Upon entry to the war all private automobile production ceased, and people utilized the existing stock of used autos. When I first recall the neighborhood environment shortly after 1945, there were few autos evident. Many of our neighbors did not own a car, and those that did only owned one, and it frequently was an older model. How did the populace survive? In general, people didn't travel as much as they do now. There were several small groceries and drug stores in the area that people could walk to on a frequent basis and shop in small quantities. This worked because storage of fresh food was difficult; so more frequent, sometimes daily, shopping was necessary. In general, stores were small, as the self-serve supermarket was a few years in the future, and these small stores did not stay open late, nor were they open on Sundays because of 'blue laws'. (These were complex laws regulating what could be sold on Sundays. E.g. Prepared lunch meats were acceptable, but meat that had to be cooked was not acceptable.) People walked everywhere, and I recall my grandfather walking by our house on his daily outing, since he didn't own a car at that time. A few children in the neighborhood rode bikes, normally a one speed, balloon tire Schwinn. (I received my first bicycle at age 11.) Other items were delivered to the homes by truck. Non-homogenized milk (in round glass bottles with paper lids with cream risen to the top and skim milk in the bottom), butter, and other dairy products, as well as eggs and bread (most was now sold sliced) were delivered to your door. Delivery could be arranged for most any other purchase. The insurance man would come to your house to collect premiums. There were also a lot of door to door salesmen for expendable items as brushes, spices, and household cleaning products, as well as for non-expendable items such as small household items and books. (Almost all of these door to door salesmen would be wearing a coat and tie, even in the hottest weather.) There were also pushcart ice cream vendors during many summer days.

Horses, I remember horses. Most summer days, a horse drawn wagon would come down our street selling fresh picked vegetables. The melodious singing of the driver would alert the housewives so that they could walk out to the street for their purchases. The afternoon would

then be passed by sitting on the front porch shelling peas or the like. The horse drawn ice wagon was another visitor to those people not owning refrigerators. (The people using iceboxes would put a pre-printed card in the window indicating how many pounds of ice that they wanted. The iceman would then cut the appropriate sized block, hoist it with ice tongs onto a leather apron on his back and deliver it to the icebox, which was normally situated on the open back porch. If the homeowners were out, they would leave the money on top of the icebox.) Most other horse drawn services had passed, but there were still a lot of horses and mules around, particularly on local farms and at Uncle Willie's or Uncle Dan's. (Dad took me for a double mule team wagon ride (gee and haw) on one visit to Uncle Dan's and Aunt Cula's farm.)

The local bus service was excellent. Electric trackless trolleys, still with the overhead electric lines, had replaced the tracked version some years before, they ran frequently, and we had the choice of three lines within a half-mile of our house. One line ran on the intersecting street (Spottswood Avenue) and stopped just seventy-five yards from our front door. In the mornings busses came by about every twelve minutes and took you downtown in about thirty minutes, very important since most people did not have checking accounts or credit cards, and they would travel down town to pay bills (such as the gas bill) with cash. Also downtown was the shopping area for Memphis, as there were no suburban malls or department stores located elsewhere. I commuted to high school via these buses for five cents each way. With this degree of service, owning an auto was not a necessity.

Longer distance travel was in a state of flux. Passenger train service for the Southern Railroad was still offered at a station just a few miles away at Buntyn. For other train service the Union Station down town was available. I recall a steam train trip on a holiday, with Mother, Grandmother and the cousins, to Hardy, Arkansas during WWII (1945), one of my first memories. (We went to the Rio Vista Cabins in Hardy several times with all of our Duncan cousins for lengthy vacations in the summers. We swam and boated in the cold Spring River, and generally enjoyed running loose in this camp.) I also took the train to the University in Knoxville and back perhaps six times, a trip of about 14 hours each way. Additionally, I enjoyed an interview for a summer job, which entailed a lengthy train trip to Washington, D.C. and a return to Knoxville. Train tracks seemed to go to every town, small or large and generally passenger service was also available. However, for the past fifty years many tens of thousands of miles of railroad track have been abandoned and most of the passenger service as well. As for busses, competition from two different long distance bus carriers kept prices low. (A one way trip to Knoxville was twelve dollars.) Automobiles

quickly gained in popularity as the economy picked up speed, and their production resumed after the war. Air travel was expensive and not at all the mass mover that it is today (Most men would wear a coat and tie for plane travel, and women would always dress nicely.), and without jets it was relatively slow and more dangerous. RADAR (invented during WWII) was available for air traffic control but not as widely used as today. (My first commercial flight was on a twin piston engine, tail dragging DC-3.) Even the first jets, which went into commercial service in 1958, were not even close to supersonic flight, and space flight was science fiction. (The lack of space surveillance -the first man made satellite was launched in 1957- meant that there were still unexplored areas on the map of the world, and weather forecasting was more of an art than a science.) In general, most people did not have, or take, much in the way of significant vacations that took them away from their home areas. (Our immediate family was an exception.) In fact, I don't believe that my Grandfather or Grandmother McKain ever went anywhere, except the time they moved the 75 miles from Dyersberg to Memphis by train and mule wagon.

Highways outside of metro areas were generally two lanes, narrow and with steep grades, without reflectors or edge stripes, as the Interstate Highway System was not authorized until 1956 and major construction didn't commence for a few years afterward. (In 1963, I did survey work for the Tennessee Interstate System in Memphis during summer vacation.) Prior to the Interstates, long distance travel required long days of driving and advanced planning to traverse major cities very early in the morning. However, traffic was much lighter, for I can recall driving with Mom and Dad across southern New Mexico early one summer evening in the 1950's, when traffic was sparse and the few small towns could be spotted for miles because they possessed the only lights about. (Remember that the population at mid century was less than 150 million, half of today's population.) Most county roads were gravel or dirt, and even some state highways were still graveled or dirt. I recall some brick highways, and city streets were frequently brick, cobblestone, or even wood blocks with cut stone curbs in some areas. I can recall the first four-lane bridge being built across the Mississippi River at Memphis in 1949, supplementing a two-lane combination railroad and highway bridge built in 1892. Also, there were still a lot of ferries across rivers throughout the south, and I remember with pleasure these short nautical excursions while on driving trips with Mom and Dad. For smaller streams and rivers, the highway, perched atop a narrow levee above flooded bottomlands, approached the main channel and inevitably crossed it on a one-lane light steel truss bridge with a wooden floor or on a totally wooden bridge. Pre-stressed concrete bridges for rural use were yet years in the future. Speed limits were high on many of these narrow roads, hence a very high accident rate.

Most motels were local “mom & pop” businesses with a few units and no restaurant or other amenities. There were few fast food chains and drive-ins, so travelers tried the local cafes or purchased food in markets for picnics. At meal times you would look for a café with a lot of business, assuming that it was a measure of its quality. Even a travel need such as ice for the cooler was only available down at the rail yard where the reefer cars were iced down. I also recall a lot of ‘roadside zoos’ and the like, billboards, “Burma Shave” signs (These were four rhymed signs in sequence alongside the highway which advertised a shaving product.), “See Rock City” painted on barns and more trash than along today’s highways.

Automobiles of the 1950’s were rather simple mechanical devices. A typical auto had a six-cylinder low compression carbureted engine using leaded gasoline, with a manual, column mounted shift, three-speed transmission driving the rear wheels. In the average Chevrolet, Studebaker, Nash, DeSoto, Hudson, Packard, Ford or Plymouth there was no air conditioning, power windows, seat belts, shoulder belts, air bags, padded dashboards, turn signals, power steering, power brakes, power seats, cruise control or other automatic devices. Cars were constructed primarily of steel and other basic metals with little use of plastics. (Wood and canvas tops and wood body framing were construction techniques of the recent past.) The most annoying device was the vacuum powered windshield wiper that would cease to operate when you stepped on the gas to pass a car on a rain swept highway. There was generally an optional AM tube radio for entertainment, no FM radio or tape player or disc player or sound system. Even a heater was optional, but at least four wheel hydraulic drum brakes had replaced two wheel mechanical brakes. There were mechanical points and spark advance on the engine, no electronics at all. Even the headlights and taillights were dim, until 12 volt systems replaced the six volt systems. Automobile interiors used a lot of metal, such as the dashboard and knobs along with cardboard backed cloth panels. Seats were covered with cotton cloth that wore out rather quickly, hence the proliferation of seat cover shops. In inexpensive autos the floorboards were covered with rubber mats, not carpet. Tires were normally built with two ply cotton cord, used inner tubes, experienced a lot of flats and did not last very many miles. The radial tire wasn’t invented until 1953, and steel belts came later. In general, the autos required a lot of maintenance and seldom lasted even a hundred thousand miles, but the average man could do much of the work himself. Gasoline mileage was not exceptional, but since the cost of gasoline was low and the miles driven each year were low, it was not of importance. (I recall seeing gasoline, including taxes, for 16 cents per gallon plus gifts for buying a certain amount or trading stamps.) The advent of specialized auto shops such as oil and lube shop chains was years away, and

much of normal auto maintenance was performed by the corner service station. (At the corner service station, an oil check, windshield clean and air pressure check were part of the full service while an attendant filled your tank.) I even helped a school chum rebuild the engine of his car in the backyard of his home. Four-wheel-drive was only available in military surplus vehicles or large trucks used by construction companies. Only farmers normally used pickup trucks, and specialized sport vehicles were not being produced. In fact, many of the farmers still had 1920's and 1930's vehicles or older, some of which did not have electric starters and required hand cranking. On Sunday afternoons if we went on a drive in the country, we would frequently end up in a long line of traffic behind an old Model T Ford that would be able to do only ten to fifteen miles per hour up hills.

Most inter-city and interstate commercial transportation was done by rail (using boxcars - not inter-modal), as long haul trucks were small, slow and rare. (I recall seeing some local delivery trucks with chain drive and solid rubber tires.) Faster service used Railway Express, which tied its cars to passenger trains. A cousin that worked for Railway Express in Memphis told of icing down fresh oysters, which were en route from New Orleans to Chicago. The post war era was the time of transition for railroads from steam engines to diesel-electric, so there were still a lot of steam engines to be seen in both mainline and switching service. There was nothing quite like seeing a smoking, roaring, steaming engine go by with the connecting rods a blur, or a steam switch engine puffing smoke and spinning its wheels. (Steam engines were sometimes pressed back into service when water, which is very bad for diesel-electric engines, would cover the tracks traversing bottom lands.) The Southern Railroad rail yard, located about six miles west, still utilized a coal tipple, a water tank, and the buildings were a uniform coal black from all of the soot. Since Memphis was on the Mississippi River, watching the tow boats and steam dredges was a fun picnic event, and many of our new automobiles were brought to town on the decks of barges. Fresh food from warmer climates was not readily available during the winters; so most people used canned vegetables and fruit, either from the store or their own gardens. Production of a wide variety of goods was decentralized (e.g. Memphis even had its own Ford assembly plant and Nabisco bakery), since the cost of transportation was significant. I recall that mail order goods were priced higher for deliveries west of the Rocky Mountains. The explosion in interstate trucking came later.

Personal Communication

Locally the telephone was available, although party lines were very common. Our home had a four family party line, with each family having

a unique ring. The disadvantage was that you could never be sure of being able to either receive or make a call, since another family could be using the line. There was a strict code of ethics to discourage someone else from listening to your conversation, although it was not always effective.

(A series of short rings would advertise an emergency.) Most homes had only one rotary dial-type phone. (One aunt still used the candlestick style phone which was tall and slim with a mouthpiece on its top and a separate earpiece on a cord.) Since every home did not have a phone, telegraph messages delivered by messengers were still sometimes used. There was no such thing as push button phones, telephonic ordering by pushing buttons, cell phones, portable phones, email, pagers, answering machines, voice mail, teleconferencing, call waiting, caller ID, etc. Local calls in the larger towns had direct dialing, which used electromechanical relays, although operators were required for all out of town calls and for calls in smaller towns. These operators still used the large patch boards with plugs to make the interconnects, and they handled most of these calls until the 1960's. Long distance calls went either "person to person" or "station to station", the "person to person" being considerably more expensive. In a "person to person" call the operator would call the requested number and ask for a specific person. No charge if they weren't there. Area codes, access codes and free "800" numbers were unheard of, and my first phone number had five digits (4-6291). Letter writing was still common for any long distance communication (no ZIP codes), since the cost of long distance phone calls was prohibitive, and email was years in the future. Postcards or letters were inexpensive (3 to 5 cents) although airmail was more expensive, and in cities it was not uncommon to have twice daily mail delivery. There were no satellites to bounce calls, nor any such thing as fiber optic cables or microwave towers for ground based calls. In fact, space flight, communication satellites, and the like were the bastion of science fiction readers. Overnight delivery services were unheard of, and the most common long distance delivery was either the US Postal Service, or the Railway Express. The use of portable and stationary two way radios was confined to licensed amateur radio operators and business or public services that could be licensed such as cab companies or the police. CB and small hand held two way radios, global positioning receivers, or scanners were not available.

Entertainment

AM Radio, using large tube type receivers, was the mass entertainment, since TV was not commonly available, and the solid state electronic explosion did not happen until later. (Even after TV started with its dim ten inch screens, it was many years before there were more than two or three channels of limited black & white (low resolution) programming. Videos, VCRs, DVDs, video games were

unheard of, and cable or satellite broadcast TV were years away.) A typical evening found the family close by the radio listening to their favorite shows, many of which were on five nights a week. Network shows such as "The Green Hornet", "The Lone Ranger", "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon and His Wonder Dog, Yukon King", "Sky King", "The Shadow", "Lights Out", "Inner Sanctum", "Fibber McGee and Molly", "The Jack Benny Show", "Burns and Allen", "Buelah", "Dragnet", "Gangbusters", "Your Hit Parade", "Allen's Alley", "Dr. Christian", "Our Gal Sunday", "Amos and Andy", "Suspense", "X Minus 1" and a host of others were on every week. Sound effects were effectively used to prime the imaginations of the listeners. In addition, local music shows with local programming were available during the days, and national music shows were common in the evenings, featuring Broadway show tunes and big band songs, with an hourly news broadcast. Also during the day "The Breakfast Club" and the original soap operas (named for their laundry soap sponsors) were very popular. There were a few portable radios, but these were large and heavy tube devices using heavy and expensive A, B, and C batteries.

In many homes a record player was available, normally 33 1/3 RPM, although there were still lots of 78's available, and the 45's were very new. The record players were normally low fidelity, non-stereophonic, mechanical and vacuum tube devices that used a needle (steel or diamond pointed) and required a lot of maintenance. The records themselves were normally hard wax or later vinyl discs that were subject to scratches and warping. (Hence, "you sound like a broken record".) Juke boxes utilizing records were popular at cafes and small remote versions were available at tableside in some teenage hangouts (25 cents for 3 plays). Reel to reel tapes, eight track tapes, and cassette tapes were in the future and CD's were unheard of, since the laser had not yet been invented. Electronic keyboards, "Walkman", and other electronic entertainment devices and toys were not available. Most children made up their own games. Additionally, the few computers in the entire country were generally large and slow vacuum tube and relay monsters with tiny main memories and no disc storage and were housed at government research facilities. The idea of personal computers (PC's) was science fiction, and no one had even conceptualized the Internet. Extended news coverage was provided by the morning and evening newspapers, and many large cities had more than two daily newspapers. In the event of a major breaking news story, "extras" (an additional edition of the paper) were sold on street corners. In general, the pace of life was much slower back then.

Movies were generally shown at the large downtown theaters with their ornately decorated lobbies, auditoriums, balconies and box seats. In many of these older theaters a pipe organ, formerly used for silent

movies, would be raised to stage level to provide entertainment during the intermission. Also these theaters would generally be the only air-conditioned buildings in town and hence, were very popular during the hot and humid summers. Typically people would dress nicely to go to the movies. A normal evening movie show would consist of a double feature separated by intermission, a newsreel, comedies, and the trailers for future attractions. Movies were generally black & white and without stereo sound or wide screens. There were a number of suburban single theaters, which frequently would show (for 25 cents admission) Saturday morning serials such as "Rocketman" or "Don Winslow of the Navy" for the younger set and evening movies for the adults. Also for families with children, drive-in movies were very popular since they were relatively cool, inexpensive (you could bring your own refreshments) and allowed the children to be bedded down in the back seat for the second feature, usually of a more adult theme. Some of the drive-ins even provided a playground area for the children located in front of the combination projection house and concession stand. (Oddly, it was not uncommon for people to start watching a movie in the middle of a feature, which would require them to sit through the entire set to catch the first part.) Most movies (as well as television and radio) did not use foul language and strictly limited violence and nudity.

Live plays were popular, as well as open-air concerts in the summers in Overton Park. I can remember my grandmother Duncan taking me to my first live play when I was eight. It was a comedy and performed in a theater converted from an old indoor swimming pool at the 'Pink Palace'. (The 'Pink Palace' was a large old home that had been purchased by the city and was used as a rather lackluster museum.) Grandmother Duncan instilled a love of music and plays in all of her grandchildren that continues to this day. She said that a love of music was the only thing that distinguished man from the beasts. Plays and musicals were generally un-amplified. Rallies and speeches were sometimes available at various venues in town. For the children, the circus came to town once per year for performances in the old Ellis Auditorium, and we generally had a day off from school to attend. Also in the fall, the Mid-South Fair ran for one to two weeks at the old Fairgrounds, and again the schools generally would let out for a day so all the children could attend. The sideshows typical of a circus were pitched at the fair instead because of the limited area available at the old auditorium. The annual 'Cotton Carnival' was fun because of the parade and fireworks from a barge on the river. Local softball leagues were popular spectator sports, and the local baseball team, the Memphis Chicks (Chickasaws) played at the rustic wooden Russwood Park, until it burned down when I was in high school. Bowling was popular, but automatic pin setters and automatic scoring were not available. Young boys called "pin monkeys" or "pin boys" would pull

downed pins, reset the pins after your turn, and roll the ball back down a rail between the lanes. At the end of a game, sliding coins to them down the lane paid these boys.

As a teenager, I can remember the sea change when rock & roll began to supplant the country music and the blues that were so common locally. Memphis was the hub of the early rock and roll revolution with Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, Charlie Rich, Johnny Cash and others representing this new sound. Sam Philips of Phillips Recording Service and later "Sun" records was the person who sponsored this new sound. I won't go further into this era, since it has been well documented in books and on TV, but I well remember all of these artists as they first started out, as well as the local DJ, Dewey Phillips, who's "Red, Hot & Blue" program on WHBQ radio promoted them. Brother Dick even had the original Elvis "Sun" records. (While Elvis lived on Audubon Drive in Memphis, I delivered a shopper's newspaper to his house and still remember the ornate driveway gate. I also spent one summer working across the street from Elvis's Graceland home and recall, more than once, seeing Elvis drive out the gate to the delighted squeals of dozens of teenage girls.)

Although hunting remained a popular outdoor sport, specialized camping, hiking and other outdoor gear was hard to find. Also more unusual sports such as SCUBA (invented during WWII), snowboarding (1990's), rock climbing, kayaking etc. also lacked the lightweight and well made gear of today

Education

The local elementary and junior high school was Training School, a city school located on the campus of Memphis State College and used for student teaching in the College of Education. Here in this well respected school the students enjoyed very good teachers, lots of extra help from the college students, and some use of the college facilities such as the ceramics shop and the then large open areas. There was no audio/video or other similar media available for education purposes, and the typical room utilized only a blackboard. I was active on the school newspaper, and I played trombone in the junior high orchestra. I attended here from the first through ninth grades (1948 to 1957). (During this time we were in the Cold War with the USSR, and there was a strong emphasis on bomb shelters and Civil Defense. All of us students were drilled in "duck and cover" in case of an atomic attack. Thank goodness it never came, for "duck and cover" would have been worthless.) At times as many as eleven cousins from both sides of the family were in attendance simultaneously, and both of my brothers and my parents attended this same school. I did take Latin at Training School, which proved to be a boon for my vocabulary. I attended with

the same two cousins in my class for these nine years plus three more years at Central High School, a total of twelve years. (As I recall, obese children were rare and most of my classmates were rather lean, perhaps from a lack of fast foods and more physical education.)

Central High School, a thirty-minute bus ride on the excellent Memphis Transit System, was known as the college preparatory high school and had an enviable reputation for sending a high percentage of its graduates to college. At Central I took extra credit courses in mathematics and electronics shop and a number of advanced placement courses such as English and Mathematics. (Electronics shop taught us how to build and repair tube type electronics equipment, which I naively thought would be a useful skill. I even made a bit of money repairing radios until the solid state electronics revolution changed the concept of electronics equipment forever.) I was a member of the National Honor Society and worked on the school newspaper and yearbook. My parents and brothers attended the nearer Messick High School. Latin, which I took, was still commonly taught in junior high school, high school, and college, and was a wonderful basis for vocabulary, languages, history, and technical nomenclature. Army Junior ROTC in high school was also a required course, and ROTC was required at many colleges and universities. Many male students would therefore have four to seven years of military training in either Army or Air Force ROTC prior to graduating from college. I had a total of three years of ROTC (Army and Air Force) through college. (I left Memphis to go to the University of Tennessee in 1960 at age 17, and returned only for summer jobs and for visits, so this narrative ends approximately at this point.)

Medicine

Medicine was very different in these days. Health insurance was rare, Medicare was not available and in the 1940's about 80% of medical costs were paid directly by the patient or family. The family physician was the only doctor that most people ever saw and even then rarely, since home remedies such as mustard plasters were very common. (I recall that some children in elementary school wore asafetida bags around their necks during cold season.) The family doctors still made house calls, since many of their patients did not have a car available to come into the office. There were few emergency facilities available, and many accidents were fatal because of the delays in getting medical attention. Also many scars still remain from home bandaging of cuts, when in today's environment a trip to the emergency room for stitches would be more common. I remember breaking my arm and waiting till the next day for a bus trip with mother to have it X-rayed and set in downtown Memphis. Cosmetic surgery was so rare that it was only rumored for movie stars. Intensive Care Units with electronic patient

monitoring were in the future, as were all organ transplants, joint replacements, most types of heart surgery, and scores of other procedures, now commonplace. Modern diagnostic tools such as MRI, CAT Scans, etc. had not been invented yet. Hospital stays were generally longer, since experience with short hospital stays and outpatient procedures was limited. The birth control pill, which caused a radical change in social mores, was first introduced in 1960.

The amazing world of antibiotics was in its infancy, and most people just suffered through illnesses that today would be cause for hospitalization, hence one reason for the lower life expectancy in those days. I recall taking sulfa drugs before the common use of penicillin or even newer antibiotics. I also recall the sickening smell of ether, an early anesthesia, when I had my tonsils out at age four. There were fewer shots available for preventative medicine, although we all had smallpox vaccination scars on our arms. Many, then common, childhood illnesses are now preventable, such as my cases of whooping cough, mumps, chicken pox, etc. (More serious diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever, diphtheria, pneumonia, strep throat, scarlet fever were not all that uncommon.) However, the great fear of that time for children was polio, which was incurable and had no vaccine available. In fact I personally knew many people that had contracted polio. It affected one leg of my cousin Margo making it smaller and weaker than the other. Our afternoon paperboy wore one shoe built some five inches higher than the other, for the same reason. A good friend on the first street west had one arm much weaker than the other, requiring some difficult maneuvering when he learned to drive in the years before power steering. A boy just a dozen houses away was confined to a wheelchair and spent his nights in an "iron lung". And these were the lucky ones. Each year my parents would get special polio insurance in case I developed the disease. I remember the city pools being closed at times as a preventive measure when the annual summer polio season was among us. Thus you can imagine the relief when the announcement of the first polio vaccine was made in 1952. Dr. Salk was a hero and had schools named for him across the country. (On the other hand AIDS was unheard of.) The structure of DNA wasn't unraveled until the 1950's and genetic engineering or genetic treatments for illnesses were again subjects for the science fiction writers. Chemotherapy for the treatment of cancer was in its infancy.

For the average family, dentists were used to fill cavities and to pull teeth. Back then, I recall few children being able to afford orthodontics; hence there were a number of people with rather unattractive teeth. Eyeglasses were common, for the advent of contact lenses or eye surgery for correction of vision was years in the future. Even cataract

surgery was not at all common. My Uncle Dan, as a young man in World War I France, was blinded by poison gas. It had destroyed his corneas, and it was not until more than fifty years later that he received a cornea transplant and was able to see his then old wife and grown children. The family had a “coming out” party for him where he was introduced to all of his relatives. He did not know anyone until they spoke, and then he was able to recognize their voices.

Public health was focused on the treatment and prevention of disease, and it was not for many years that the health of the environment was made a cause. For example, raw sewage flowed from Memphis directly into the Wolf River and hence the Mississippi River, making the riverfront in Memphis disgusting on a day when the wind was from the north. We all applauded the first major steps in cleaning up the rivers and the air, for many health problems associated with the bad environment slowly disappeared. Cigarette smoking was a more intractable problem, although its deleterious effects were apparent to all. At this time free samples of cigarettes were commonly available in college and at other venues. (Back then a pack of cigarettes cost between ten and twenty cents.) Lead was still used in some paints and was still used in most gasoline. (My first job after college was for the Ethyl Corporation in Pasadena, Texas, the major producer of tetraethyl lead for gasoline in the United States.)

Clothing

Clothing choices were limited, for the explosion in designer clothing had not taken place, and the use of synthetic fibers (nylon, rayon, spandex, etc.) was limited, so most clothing used natural materials such as cotton or wool and was generally heavy. Wash and wear clothing was not available, so all shirts had to be manually ironed. Luckily the electric iron was common by then, for the old flat irons heated on a stove were heavy and awkward. For adults, hats for both men and women were common, as well as gloves for women to attend church or at dress-up occasions. Also most young children or teenagers had only a limited supply of clothes. (In high school, I recall a comment that I certainly liked one style of slacks in only brown, blue, or black, but the fact was, that I only owned three pair of slacks.) Most young people wore ‘hand-me-down’ clothes, generally received from a relative. (Since my brothers were much older, I would get shirts from an older cousin.) Specialized footwear, such as running shoes, cross training shoes, racquetball shoes, basketball shoes, etc was very limited. For instance, the only running shoe available was a spiked lightweight leather shoe used by track and field athletes. Additionally shoes were expensive and most people only owned one or at most two pairs at a time. Shoe repair was a common occurrence. (I recall that it wasn’t until I took a gym class in junior high school that required tennis shoes on the basketball

court, that I owned a second pair of shoes.) Generally younger children would go barefoot all summer (I would have to wear shoes for Sunday church.), and then receive a new (and big) pair of shoes for school in the fall, required to last until the next summer. (I wore the rugged 'Boy Scout' brogans for years.)

Products

Many products, now common, were not available, or provided differently, in mid-century. One family on our street still made lye soap from animal fats over an open fire in their backyard. Easy to prepare foods, diet foods, and ethnic foods were all uncommon. Supplemental vitamins were rare. The explosion of product varieties on store shelves began later, e.g. there was generally only white bread available. There was not a fear of mass poisonings, so safety caps, blister packs or hermetically sealed bottles were not used for over the counter medicines. A few people still churned their own butter. Sassafras tea was made from tree roots. There were no artificial sweeteners commonly available. Even frozen foods were rare, as most refrigerators had but a tiny freezer used primarily for making ice cubes. (There were rental frozen food lockers available in our neighborhood icehouse, but they were typically used for hunters or the like.) Pre-prepared foods such as biscuit dough, cookie dough, pie shells, cake mixes, etc. were not common. The TV dinner didn't appear until the 1950's. The approved diet as shown in health classes contained a lot of whole milk, butter, cheese, and red meats along with the fruits and vegetables. In our house we ate a lot of corn bread, grits, black-eyed peas, sow belly, turnip greens, and other typical southern foods, many from local farms. Many people canned vegetables and fruits from their own gardens, a holdover from both the depression and the WWII victory gardens. Memphis was also famous for pork barbecue. In the local groceries, meat was cut to order and wrapped in paper.

Tin-plated steel cans or glass bottles were used for long term storage of most items, as specialized plastics or aluminum were not yet commonly available. E.g. Oil came in heavy tin plated steel cans of several designs, then was switched to aluminum foil and cardboard cans before finally switching to plastic containers. Toothpaste was available as a powder in steel cans, then as a paste in tin tubes and only later switching to aluminum and then plastic tubes. Some people still brushed with bicarbonate of soda or salt. (At least the toothbrushes that I remember used nylon, not the formerly used pig bristle brushes.) Soft drinks only came in bottles with pry-off metal caps, and the collecting of bottle caps was fun for the children. (Metal drink cans were only moderately popular until the invention of the pop top in 1963.) Six ounce 'Coke' bottles were bottled locally in thousands of towns around the country with the name of the town embossed on the bottom of the

bottle. Two friends would play “far away” to see who bought. (Whoever got the coke bottle with the farthest point of origin won the game.) A ‘Coke’ was five cents, with a penny deposit on the bottle. Lots of local or regional cola brands were popular such as “Double Cola” and “Royal Crown Cola”. Oddly enough children’s candies included candy cigarettes and small edible wax bottles containing colored sugar water. Aerosol spray bottles with a gas propellant were unknown or very rare for any product until the 1950’s. Disposable baby diapers were not available (as well as feminine sanitary products) until after WWII.

Devices

Mechanical machines formerly served many functions now handled by electronic digital or analog devices. The word processor was a wonderful and more productive replacement for the electric typewriter, which in turn replaced the manual typewriter. The only thing that I miss of a manual typewriter was the smell of the oil in all the mechanical innards of the machine and the sounds of the machine, such as the ding of the bell when the right margin was reached or the clack of the keys. Copiers were not available, and copies were made via carbon paper (hence the cc on the bottom of memos), ditto machines or mimeograph machines. Fax machines were only used by large companies, and the telex was a poor substitute for email. Newspapers used the complex linotype machine that utilized molten lead to make slugs of metal type that was then set up in a press for a run. These machines were large, hissing “Rube Goldberg” contraptions that were difficult to operate and maintain. (I would often see the ‘home keys’ of the linotype (etoin shrdu) at the end of a story where the operator had rested his hands.) Stories were processed through the paper manually from notes to typewriter to paper to linotype. Watches and clocks were normally mechanical, with the exception of a few plug-in electric kitchen clocks. The idea of a digital electronic quartz wristwatch was science fiction. The best watches were mechanical, self-winding, jeweled devices. Writing pens were either fountain pens, using an ink refillable bladder or steel pens dipped frequently in ink that I used in college drafting classes. Cameras were simple fixed focus boxes using black and white film, and even the concept of digital camera was decades away. In the rare event that someone used a flash, it was a large battery powered device that used magnesium filled bulbs (one-time use) that burned with a very bright light. I used to visualize the past in black and white, since I had so very seldom seen colored photographs. There was no such thing as a video camcorder, and 8mm home movie cameras were rare. There were no hand held calculators in homes, for the only thing available at the time were expensive mechanical business adding machines, usually hand cranked. Even in graduate school in the late 1960’s, classes were still held for the use of slide rules and large electromechanical calculating machines. Most products

seen in the home and for personal use were made using metal, wood, rubber, or cardboard. Metal children's toys were very common, including cheap toys made in Japan after the war from pressed and painted tin cans. Also, many children's toys were homemade, generally from wood. Plastics were not at all in common use at the time.

When people traveled, they took cash or travelers checks, and the only credit cards commonly available were from major oil companies and used paper transactions for gasoline. The concept and capability of getting cash or doing other banking business from an ATM was non-existent, and furthermore wildly improbable that such a thing would ever be used for foreign travel. If you camped, kerosene lanterns and white gas pump-up stoves were used.

Vacuum tubes and associated devices were the mainstay of electronics, and some ingenious ways around their limitations were utilized. (They took a long time to warm up to operating temperatures.) For example, car radios used a mechanical vibrator to make and break the 6-volt (later 12-volt) battery current from a car so that it could be stepped up by a transformer to be converted back to DC for use on the plates and grids of the tubes. I saw my first computer when I went to college. It was a vacuum tube analog machine in the Chemical Engineering Department that used dials and potentiometers to change the variables of an equation and plug boards to program. The only other computers were in the university accounting department. In fact most of the data processing devices used cardpunches, card sorters, paper tape punches, paper tape readers and plug board adders. These complex electromechanical devices required a lot of service. By the time I was a junior in college (1963) and took a programming class (machine language, Autocoder, and FORTRAN I), the Math Department had received the first non tube type computer, a transistor machine with a 4K main memory of magnetic cores, no other storage capability, and input and output via punched cards. These computers were very expensive, used lots of electric power, and filled a specially designed, air-conditioned room. Later computers began to use magnetic tape storage and the first rudimentary disc storage devices. (The first company that I worked for in 1965, which had 1200 employees, did not have a computer, and the most amazing calculations were done by hand or with mechanical calculators.) The first personal computers were twenty years in the future and the only software available were programs that you created yourself. (The computer mouse was not invented until 1968.)

Many devices now controlled by computer were manually controlled, an example being elevators, for all elevators in Memphis in the 1950's had an operator. The operator, once they learned the route, opened and

closed the doors, moved the elevator between floors, and in department stores announced the products on each floor. Escalators were unknown in Memphis at that time. Even cash registers were manual devices without the change calculating capability of today's electronic versions or the laser scanners to read bar codes. In fact, there were no lasers and no bar codes. In many department stores, change for purchases came via a pneumatic tube or an overhead trolley from a central site. Robots of any sort were science fiction, and CNC controlled machine tools in manufacturing applications were years in the future. Pencils, not pens, were in common use and the mechanical hand cranked sharpener was new to those used to using a knife to sharpen pencils.

Repair of devices, appliances, etc. was very common, unlike today's throwaway society. Since these things were low tech and larger in size, repair was relatively easy and cost effective, and many unique repair schemes were available. In general, people were used to repairing and reusing all sorts of things. Repair shops were common, and do-it-yourself repair was feasible for the average person. Most electric devices used woven cloth covered rubber insulated wires. Many stores had large tube testers where vacuum tubes used in radios and TVs could be tested and new tubes purchased, as the circuits of these devices were relatively easy to understand. Today, it is cheaper to buy a new radio than to repair the old one, even if you could find the parts. Today, the total integration of electronic circuits leaves very few components that could be individually replaced. (When I worked for Motorola in Phoenix during the 1960's, the company was primarily a producer of discrete transistors and was just beginning to produce the first of it's integrated circuit devices, the forerunner of today's microprocessors.)

Race Relations

These were calm days, at least in our neighborhood and for Memphis in general. There was nearly complete explicit segregation and a set of implicit behaviors that most everyone followed. Examples were separate restrooms and water fountains; separate neighborhoods (except in farming areas), separate entrances and seating at the major downtown theaters; separate days at the zoo, public pools, circus, Mid-South Fair; separate seating on each bus, and separate schools and sports leagues. However, at urban work sites, in farming areas and with domestic help such as maids and nanny's there was generally a lot of mixing, and each race saw the other as a person. The nanny's were frequently a beloved part of many children's lives. The Duncan side of the family was associated with a very nice colored (approved terminology at the time) lady for many years, first as an employee in Grandmother's café, and then as a maid and nanny. (Since I had no

younger brothers, my lightly worn clothes were given to the boys in this family.) With all of this, generally the personal exchanges were pleasant, helpful, and non-derogatory. In fact, I did not know of anyone in the KKK or other hate group, or of any specific acts of coercion, although I'm sure that they sometime happened. As a small child I had no concerns about riding my bike through a "colored neighborhood", as it was perfectly safe. Once de-segregation began (after I was in college), it generally went forward without violence, although the demise of neighborhood schools by forced bussing was a real loss. Race relations in Memphis suffered a bad turn for the worse after the 1968 riots, never to recover to this day.

Public Behavior

Movies, books, magazines, radio, and TV generally portrayed a moral and violence free society. To a great extent this was true in real life. People were more civil to one another (lots of sirs, ma'am, and pleases), and profanity was seldom heard. The "pill" and the sexual revolution had not yet happened, and out of wedlock births were rare. Divorce was still uncommon. Drug use was confined to the margins of society, and I did not know of anyone through high school that used anything more exotic than alcohol. The scourge of the drug culture was years away, along with the deadly violence associated with the drug dealing and transportation. I never heard of a drive by shooting until many years later, and crime in general was less common and less violent. However, smoking was extremely common in all aspects of life, and it was difficult to escape the smoke, and alcohol abuse was as common as today. Unless a mentally ill person lived with family, they were generally confined to a state hospital, hence the sight of mentally ill persons free to live on the streets was rare, and public dereliction was uncommon.

Clubs and service organizations, both national and local, were much more common in the mid-twentieth and prior than they are now. It would seem that the slower pace of society, dearth of other entertainment and the general service ethos of the society made these organizations a desirable adjunct to many people's lives. (A condensed list of those I can remember: Lions, Elks, Moose, Eagles, Optimists, Woodsmen, Masons, Shriners, Sertoma, VFW, American Legion, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Caledonian Society, YMCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, Boys Club, Knights of Pythias, Rotary, and various ethnic and local clubs.) Today many of these outfits are having trouble with retaining membership as people look for other more specialized ways to spend their time or to serve their altruistic needs.

Wars

During World War II Memphis, like so many cities around the country, had been mobilized to support the war effort. I recall ration books for all sorts of things like sugar, shoes, meat, etc. and still possess my shoe ration book. After the war, lots of military personnel were in transit and being demobilized. There was a railroad siding at the north end of our street where wounded servicemen were unloaded from ambulance trains for transport to the Army hospital about two miles away. (The hospital was built during the war on a street that was renamed from Shotwell to Getwell.) For years after the war my brothers and I used Dad's Navy equipment, such as hammock, mattress, pea jacket, watch cap, sailor cap, etc. There were several major depots in town that procured, stored and transported war materiel of all sorts, so after the war, a number of war surplus stores sprang up offering an incredible variety of military goods at cheap prices. For instance, I purchased a pair of combat boots for only \$1 that served me very well as hiking boots for a number of years. After the war, the G. I. Bill allowed many veterans to go to college, and the rush of students resulted in lots of temporary wooden classrooms at local schools. (Some of these buildings were still in use at the University of Tennessee when I went there in 1960.) For many years after the war we went to the Milington Naval Air Station to see an air show featuring the 'Blue Angels' and to see the other military aircraft, and there were abandoned Army Air Force bases at Halls, Tennessee and other places. For fifteen years after the war, even the mailboxes in Memphis were painted olive drab with surplus military paint. My father, Uncle Shedric, and Uncle Howard were in WWII. Uncle Klyce and Uncle Dan were in World War I. The Korean War occurred when I was in elementary school, I was in college when the reserves were called up for the Cuban missile crises, and the great buildup for the Viet Nam War occurred after I was out of college. Most males had at least two years of active duty service along with six years of reserve duty, since this was during the period of the 'Cold War' with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

Speaking of wars, when I went to work in Houston in 1965, a hundred years after the end of the Civil War, the ICC railroad tariffs still discriminated against the South in the way the rates for raw materials vs. finished goods were set up. There were still a handful of Civil War veterans alive in the 1950's and a good number of widows still on pensions. The ill feelings from the reconstruction era were plainly evident in the comments of older people, including my grandfather who was born shortly after that war. In effect, they said that the United States treated the defeated Germany and Japan much better than they had treated the South.

Risk

Back before the explosion of lawsuits trying to find someone to blame

for all of the vicissitudes of life, life was more easygoing, if a bit more risky. The average person accepted the risks inherent in daily life and it did not occur to him to sue someone for a bad outcome in the absence of malice. For example, children's playgrounds were set on hard soil and I'm sure some of the play devices would not be in use today. Most public and many private expanses, such as woods and streams, were open for all children to use without fear of nuisance lawsuits. As I got older, friends and I would explore the local woods, ponds, and creeks; build forts and hike. More public tours of facilities were available for families and school classes. Many children's toys such as chemistry sets, erector sets, live steam engines, lead soldier casting sets, lawn darts, shoe skates with keys, archery sets, etc. are no longer available because of implicit dangers. X-ray machines were commonly used to fit children's shoes. At age eleven many young boys, myself included, got paper routes that required them to be out in the evenings collecting, but now liability limits paper routes to adults. Many teenage boys got .22 rifles, which they would use for target practice or hunting, and cartridges were sold in most small country stores. Driving along country roads you would often see boys out with their rifles. The idea of mass shootings was inconceivable.

Miscellaneous

Grandmother Duncan ran the Goldcrest Café in downtown Memphis for many years. It was located across the street from the Goldcrest 51 Brewery alongside a rail siding. A long flight of stairs on the bluff also allowed access to the café by the workers from the river barges. She loved the river and its promise of travel and adventure. ("Always coming from somewhere and going to somewhere else.") Although this was a rough part of town, there was never a problem with serious crime. She had been a widow since the 1930's. I remember visiting this café in the late 1940's. Grandmother was later the matron for the girl's dorm at Memphis State College in the 1950's. During the 1950's she would ride the bus to New York City twice a year to see the new plays on Broadway, quite an adventure for an elderly woman. She was tolerant of other people, including other races, religions and nationalities, disliked gossip, inspired a love of reading and live entertainment in her grandchildren, and cultivated many friends. She later lived with Aunt Katy on Norriswood Avenue, about a mile from our house.

Grandfather and Grandmother McKain lived two blocks due east of us on Normal Street. Grandfather, although kindly, was tall and had a gruff demeanor, so I didn't feel at ease dropping in for a visit. Grandmother was a very sweet, small woman. Because Grandfather had retired prior to social security and didn't have a private pension, his children each contributed to their maintenance in their old age. As late as 1948, half of the men over 65 were still working, and retirement never happened

for many, as Social Security (started in 1935) had not yet expanded to fill its current role. Since Grandfather McKain and was born in 1871 and my grandmothers born in 1877 and 1888, they were my direct link to the 19th century as evidenced in figures of speech, speech patterns, and attitudes. (I have collected their numerous figures of speech in a separate listing.)

Arizona Recollections

Although these are post-Memphis memories, I decided to insert them in this narrative because they also may be of interest. I had traveled to Arizona with my parents in 1958 and 1962, and I recall traveling through Tempe and Phoenix as well as long rides on Route 66. But mostly I recall seeing the Grand Canyon both times and also seeing the Glen Canyon Dam under construction. I took a later trip in 1966 to scout out graduate schools (including a mule trip into the Grand Canyon), before permanently moving here in January of 1967. The following will be memories of my first few years here.

As I recall the valley, Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Scottsdale, Glendale, Chandler, Gilbert, Peoria, etc. had a population of approximately 800,000 (the state's population was about 1,500,000), and there was open desert, farms, flower gardens and orchards between the towns and cities. (When I moved to Mesa in 1968, it had a population of less than 50,000 and was a major citrus packing town.) (Payson had a population of less than 1000, and the business that you saw traveling through were a few cafes, service stations and small stores.) Freeways in the valley (and in Arizona) were nearly non existent, but traffic was light enough that they weren't really required, and there were many miles of dirt roads in the area. I first lived in Phoenix and recall the distinct odor of the stockyards and remember the nearby open space for desert outings. I attended my first Phoenix Symphony performance at the new Gammage Auditorium in Tempe, since Phoenix did not have a comparable venue. Events, such as the State Fair, were generally not very crowded, and there were no major league professional sports available locally except spring training. For outings, reservations were not required at any campgrounds in the state, including the Grand Canyon. The skies were normally very clear, and one felt that you could count the trees on Four Peaks to the east. There were still a lot of people living at that time who could remember living in old Arizona Territory prior to 1912, working some of the old mines, or ranching before there was a US Forestry Service, and it was enjoyable talking with them or reading their memoirs in the newspaper.

I bought my first four-wheel drive truck in 1968 and found that it was unusual to own on of these vehicles at that time. I recall that the old mines and ghost towns that I visited in the 1960's and 1970's were still

relatively untouched and had a lot of mining equipment, old buildings, and vehicles strewn about. I particularly remember many old cars from the 1920s' through 1950s that were in moderately good condition, although not in working order. These autos were gradually retrieved by people wanting to restore them or by salvage crews when the price of scrap iron got high enough. Backcountry travel was generally done only by those working in these areas, such as ranchers and loggers, so my initial trips were along non-crowded roads and into some beautiful unsullied country. A number of trips were on roads that are now closed by wilderness designations, and I visited many cabins and ranches that have since been razed by the Forest Service. I particularly remember a trip on the White Mountain Railroad in 1967, a trip up Hewitt Canyon in the Superstitions in 1969, a trip through the Salt River Canyon and the New Mexico Outer Loop in 1970, a trip through the Cabeza Prieta, to the top of Escudilla Mountain, and across the Sierra Anchas in 1972, a trip across the Arizona Strip and from Lake Pleasant to Crown King in 1973, a drive to Asbestos Point in 1978, a crossing of the Hualapai Mountains in 1979, a drive to the solar observatory on Harquahala Peak in 1980, a crossing of Baca Float Number 1 in 1985, a drive to the Gila Bend Indian ruins in 1990, and a stay at Robson's Mining World in 1992

Between ages 25 to 35, I also did a lot of hiking, camping, rafting in Arizona, and crossed country that was then rarely traveled. I particularly remember hikes to Reevis Ranch and down East Clear Creek in 1969, a climb to the top of Humphries Peak and a hike through Fish Creek in 1970, a hike through Arivaipai Canyon, a climb of Mount Graham and a north to south crossing of the Grand Canyon in 1971, a climb of Mount Baldy, a hike to Thunder River and a hike of the Mazatzal Crest in 1972, a long trip through Paria Canyon, a hike through the East Verde Canyon and a raft trip through both the Salt River Canyon and the Grand Canyon in 1973, a Buckskin Gulch hike and a climb of Weavers Needle was in 1974, a 16 mile horseback ride to Keet Seel Indian ruins in 1975, a hike in West Clear Creek in 1976, another raft trip through the Salt River Canyon in 1977, a hike up Siphon Draw in 1978, a hike of Deer Creek in 1981, a hike to Chiracahua Peak in 1982, a hike through the Heart of the Rocks in Chiracahua National Monument and our first hike to Horton Springs in 1989, a hike across the Dragoon Mountains in 1992, a hike to Perry Mesa and the Tabletop Mountains in 1994, and a hike into Redfield Canyon in 1995.

Arizona was a wonderful place to live when I first came, and it has lost little of its fascination since, although it has become tamer and more crowded. I only wish that you could have seen it when both the state and I were young.