

Keith's Corner/McGill News

July 2, 2021`

A WW11 School Day .

I knew it had been a cold night, as my bare feet met the ice cold linoleum floor and I could see my breath, that November day in 1942. I grabbed my clothes and headed for the living room. It was the only room that had a rug. Wall to wall carpeting had not yet, arrived in McGill. Our house at #28 E Row was built with only one bedroom. My brother, Paul and I slept in a bunkbed on the narrow front porch. The cold air slipped under and around the front door. It even came through the keyhole at a velocity that would make a hurricane blush.

I dressed in front of the warm coal stove, then moved on to the bathroom and did a quick wash up in cold water. We boys, wet a finger and rubbed it behind our ears and didn't wipe it dry with a towel. Mom would always check and that wet finger technique, developed over many years of experimentation and consultation with other boys, usually did the trick.

The kitchen stove had not been fired up long enough to heat any water. Between the cold floor and the cold water, I was fully awake. Mom had some hot Cream of Wheat cereal and homemade bread toast, covered with elderberry jam on the table. A cup of hot Hershey's cocoa was the final item.

Then it was back to the bedroom, take out the red, rubber hot water bag beneath the covers. It warmed the bed for a few minutes, but then was cold the rest of the night. With the usual 6 heavy blankets covering us, I never understood how or why, the bag got cold. Figuring that out, would, I am certain improve the lives of every kid. This bag also served as an early form of immunity from most forms of sickness. Whenever a kid complained of being sick, the bag was filled with warm soapy (Ivory) water and an enema was administered. That was followed by a spoonful of cod liver oil. I never thought it was fair, to steal some old, stinky oil, from a poor cod fish. It certainly needed it more than me. That procedure

worked better than any vaccine ever developed. We would be so sick, that we had to crawl on the floor, but we still preferred school over an Ivory soap enema.

Next stop was the bathroom sink, to brush my teeth with my old favorite, Ipana. The tube was almost empty and took a lot of squeezing to get enough to do the job. I took the empty tube to Mom. You had to turn in an old tube to get a new one. It wasn't called recycling. It was called "for the war effort".

Mom needed my ration book to get some meat and sugar that day. It was wartime and most items were rationed. I got it for her. Seems everything was rationed, except that dreaded homework.

I grabbed my lunch sack and headed for the local prison yard, oops, I mean school grounds.. We 'Real McGill boys' would not be caught dead with a metal lunch box, like the girls carried. Mom always remembered to tell us to eat everything and then fold the sack and put it in our back pocket, as there was a paper shortage, due to the great WWII.

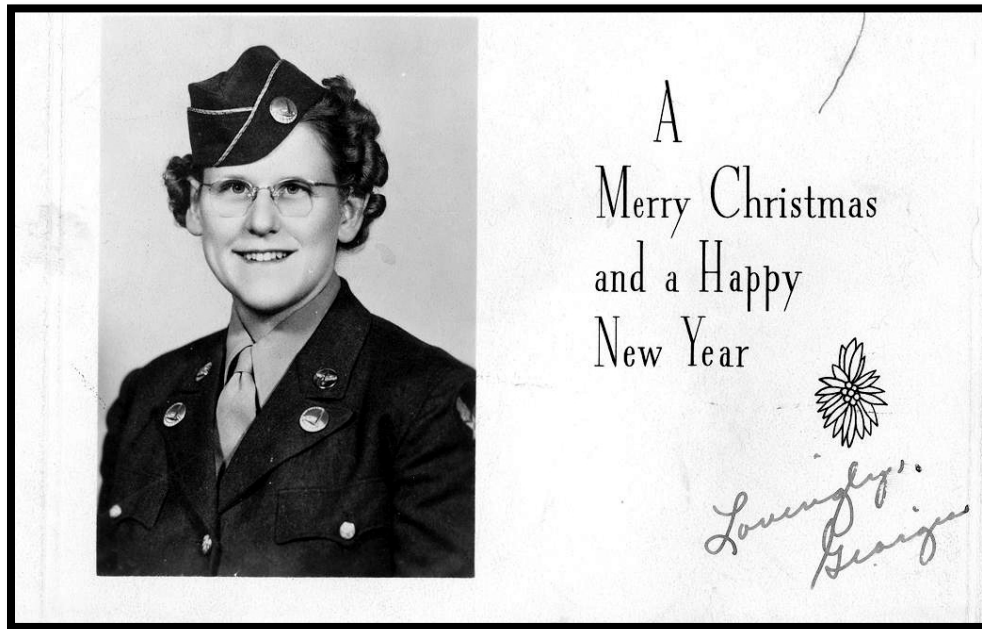
There was a rumor, a happy one, that today was another silk/nylon stocking day. We kids would get an extra, long recess while the teachers went downtown to stand in line at the KCC commissary store for a chance to get a pair of stockings.

A lot of the women used to cover their legs with light rouge and then paint a dark line up the back of the leg to simulate silk stockings. We, boys, never understood that, but since it meant a long recess and other than that, who cares? Recess was the only part of the school system that made and sense.

After several hours of sitting on those hard seats in our desks, the final bell rang, or as we called it, the Freedom bell. Since it was November, it would be dark soon. Not much time to throw snowballs at the girls. They didn't throw any at us, cause they had their hands in those silly hand muffins.

We were usually wet and cold by the time we got home, so it was back into the living room and get warm by the stove. Then some homework, dinner and off to bed. Another day of school behind us.

Most, if not all, of the teachers were single women that were brought in by Kennecott from all over the US. The company built a nice brick building to house the gals. They had a cook and housekeeper. Many of these teachers met and married some of the local men. Some of the teachers joined the military, such as my 3rd or 4th grade teacher. She sent us all a nice Christmas card. I can't remember her name— I think it was Georgia VanWee, or something like that.



They were all very good teachers and cared about what they did.

McGill News

The replica of the Viet Nam Wall parade went thru town today. Lots of motorcycles. The wall was inside a large semi. It will be set up in Ely.

Plane crash update. Chuck Overfelt called me and told me, that he saw the plane and went over to the crash site. He lived on the corner of J Ave and 3rd st. . He was home from school to have lunch when it crashed.

Oldies

1908—June 3—Race track to be built in Smelter (McGill). (I could find no more info about this.)

1909-December 17—Eugene Frenetter was the shoemaker. And Morris Glowers was the manager of the Nye Brothers clothing store in McGill.

Old Photo



With all these hot dry days, I thought you might like to cool off a bit. The good "ole" McGill pool before all the so called improvements.