

Newsletter270

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

July 12, 2024

### July 4<sup>th</sup> in The 1940s

Back in those ancient times, we McGill heathens celebrated in many different ways.

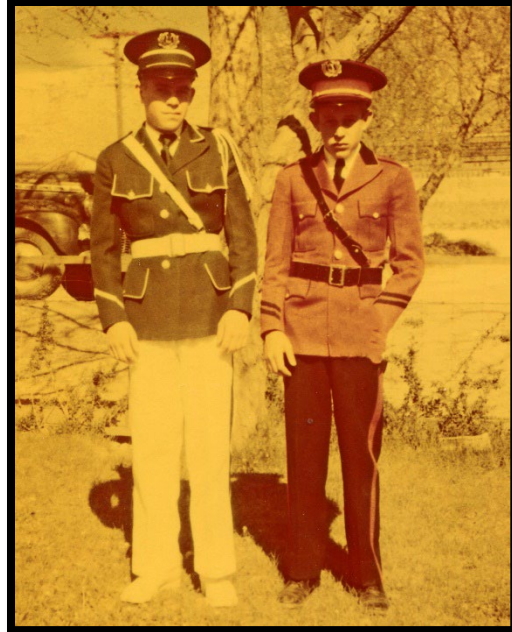
When the gulags finally let us out of captivity for the summer, we enjoyed our freedom. One of the first things was to go down to Johnny's barbershop and get a crew cut. This accomplished several things. It was a lot cooler and it saved precious time that was wasted in combing one's hair.

The next step was to start wearing our coveralls and 'work shoes' instead of school clothes and those uncomfortable oxfords.

The next great move on our part, was to scrounge up some money for fireworks. We did yard work, sold garden seeds and anything else to earn a few dollars. Then we hit the McGill Drugstore comic book section to browse thru the many ads for fireworks. When we found a good one and had the money, we paid the 5 or 10 cents for the (funny books) , as we labeled them and tore out the ad and headed for the Post Office. We got a Money Order for the right amount from Kiki Londos Spell and mailed it off. Every day after that we checked the mail for our stuff. Finally around July 1, it arrived. It was like Christmas all over again.

We strived to get the most firepower for the money, such as 3 inch firecrackers, cherry bombs etc. etc. We liked the cherry bombs because they would work under water. There were other items like sparklers, Roman Candles, but those were for July 4<sup>th</sup>. There were a few small rockets that would go up about 100 feet and explode. All in all it was the firecrackers we liked the best.

The morning of the 4<sup>th</sup>, we dressed in our band uniforms and marched in the big parade. The McGill, Ruth, East Ely, Ely and WPHS bands always marched.



The photo on the left, shows the McGill grade school band uniforms we wore in 1947. The photo on the right shows the blue and white WPHS uniform and the brand new McGill orange and black uniforms in 1948.

The ranks were full and in uniforms. It took many hours of practicing our instruments at home and learning to march to be in the band. We learned that with hard work we could achieve a goal and a tremendous feeling of accomplishment, that has lasted a lifetime.

Our parents and all the other WP folks could see that their school tax dollars actually had results. Everyone was proud of the bands.

Also in the parades were many beautiful floats, that took long hours of work to build. They were from civic groups that did so many wonderful things for the community. Folks back then cared and were willing to do something besides complain.

The parades had many horses with their riders decked out in colorful outfits. They also spent many hours preparing and bringing their horses into town.

All of us that participated had a feeling of accomplishment and pride. That to me is the soul of a good parade. That is lacking now and it is sad.

After the parade my parents took us to the Purple Sage Drive Inn. The girls would come to the car for your order. They would bring a metal tray that hung on the partially wound up window. There were some very tasty burgers wrapped in wax paper, French fries and cold frosty mugs of cherry root beer.

Then it was back to McGill, get out of the hot uniform, put on some “go to the creeks” clothes, find the fishing poles while our parents loaded the grub in our 1929 Model A Ford coupe. My brother Paul and I would get in the rumble seat and off we went to Timber Creek for a picnic and fishing.

When the sun went down, leaving a beautiful golden sunset, we built a bonfire and roasted marshmallows. Later we loaded into the Ford and headed home. On the way through the gap, Dad would stop and put the spotlight on the hay fields. The eyes of the many deer would glow as they looked at the light. At home we unloaded the car, took a bath, looked for wood ticks and crawled into bed for a good night's sleep.

## McGill News



The north side of the Drugstore has been sanded, pressure washed, primed and painted.

## Old Photo



McGill on July 13<sup>th</sup> , 1907.