

The Soda Fountain Has Become A Childhood Memory

By RENE WINKLER
Courier-Post Staff

THE SONG says it all too well: The times, they are a-changing.

No more do teenaged girls in Florence dream over Ed (we always called him "Edgie") Fagione, his hair a reddish-blond, hair curling slightly over his forehead as he struggles to dip out the extra-extra-hard cherry vanilla ice cream.

No more do strawberry ice cream sodas mean the end of a perfect date.

And no more do 16-year-old boys know that winning the job as a soda jerk in the neighborhood drug store also wins them a date almost whenever they want it, merely by returning for a little extra ice cream, nuts, chocolate sauce, and cherry.

Today, many of them work at quickies, drive-in hamburger stands. And the offer of a few extra pickle slices can't win over your best friend.

LIKE PENNY loaders with the bright copper pennies, and such hope in the high school gym, the ice cream soda fountain of yesterday has vanished into the memories of those over 25.

If a modern day grandmother wants to treat her brood to banana splits today, she usually has to drive to a shopping center where one of a chain of ice cream stores offers too many choices for any five-year-old.

Parents who promise their children an ice cream cone in return for good behavior on a long drive often have to rely on pre-wrapped varieties they find in the supermarket.

And siblings who have not lived through the struggle of power and self-control over who can take the longest time to finish a dish of pistachio ice cream will never understand what it's like to have fond memories of childhood.

THERE ARE truly mysterious surroundings a soda fountain — why didn't the soda jerk ever get aquainted in the eyes with the whipped cream, how did they keep the spoons so cold, and could you really get tired of all that ice cream?

Researching the mysteries prove difficult, since there are only a handful of authentic soda fountains left in the South Jersey area.

One of the most popular sites is Belle's Retail Drug Store in Woodbury, at the corner of Broad and Cooper Streets. Looking like any other

drug store from the outside, the interior features a lunch counter, and booths, at least eight flavors of ice cream, and a full range of sundae toppings.

AT ALMOST any time of the day you will find both young and middle-aged customers sipping a cherry-Coke, made just the way you like, or their heavy on the side or the cherry.

Valued by attorneys, judges, and politicians during the lunch break at the Gloucester County Courthouse, it is the sweetest spot in town to find an official lunch.

And more often than not, he'll be finishing off his lunch with a dish of ice cream, trying to be careful not to drip the chocolate sauce on his tie.

There was a similar spot to Beverly for many years, until store owner John Ruggier gave in to the trend to modernize and took out his fountain.

"I got to be a trend," Ruggier recalled. "We needed the space for other things. We wanted to put in a gift section, and you just carry all kinds of things in drug stores today that you didn't 15 or 20 years ago."

Although we did have a lunch counter," he explained, and it led to some of her fondest memories.

The Woodrow Military Academy was in operation at that time, she recalled, and "it was a young lawyer's dream to be the daughter of the man that owned the ice cream and soda fountain, with all those candies around."

"I don't know why more people don't sell ice cream. When you go for a drive today, you just can't find anywhere to stop."

There are still some places that sell their own make ice cream, like "Hamel" on Woodbury-Gloucester Road in Woodbury Heights and the Sherrill Dairy in Westampton Township. To check on their popularity, you only need try to find a parking space on a warm day.

MANY OF the places that made our mouths water ten years ago have fallen to the developer's offer of high prices and the losing battle against dairy products by the truckload.

Drug stores that spring up in shopping centers today often don't even sell magazines, much less ice cream sodas. It's the old battle of profit — a



Belle Robertson on the job at a popular spot in Woodbury, the Belle Retail Drug Store, which has one of the few authentic soda fountains left in South Jersey.

grocery store in Woodrow for years, she explained, and it led to some of her fondest memories.

The Woodrow Military Academy was in operation at that time, she recalled, and "it was a young lawyer's dream to be the daughter of the man that owned the ice cream and soda fountain, with all those candies around."

"I don't know why more people don't sell ice cream. When you go for a drive today, you just can't find anywhere to stop."

There are still some places that sell their own make ice cream, like "Hamel" on Woodbury-Gloucester Road in Woodbury Heights and the Sherrill Dairy in Westampton Township. To check on their popularity, you only need try to find a parking space on a warm day.

MANY OF the places that made our mouths water ten years ago have fallen to the developer's offer of high prices and the losing battle against dairy products by the truckload.

Drug stores that spring up in shopping centers today often don't even sell magazines, much less ice cream sodas. It's the old battle of profit — a

\$10 electric watch doesn't take up nearly as much room as a cardboard carton of fresh ice cream, one South Jersey pharmacist explains.

But the profit margin is much greater, and that watch won't crystallize if it is refrigerated after a day.

The ice cream is still there, explains the operators of such chains as Baskin-Robbins and Friendly Ice Cream Shops. The flavors range from good old vanilla to such wacky specialties as blueberry twirl and butter crunch-chocolate chip. And the counters are usually filled with customers.

THE SUNDAYS are prepared by pretty girls wearing checked aprons, and the padded walls reflect an unbelievable degree of sparkle.

But it doesn't taste the same, maybe it's because you're no longer a teenager but the buttered goodness doesn't seem nearly so sticky, and the nuts taste a little bitter and the marshmallow topping reminds you that you were going to start on your diet today.

The dishes and spoons are warm to the touch from the automatic dishwasher, rather than ice-cold.

And you wind up leaving something in your dish.

COURIER-POST

The Way We Live

A daily look into the life and times of South Jersey's people

18 MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1973

Accessories Match

Paris is doing a new look in accessories. Instead of jamming them on, they're matching bag, neckties, even sunglasses, as fabric extras. The world materials for spring and summer are being placed in the hands of the fashion designer and the buyer, rather than the retail store.

Paris is doing a new look in accessories. Instead of jamming them on, they're matching bag, neckties, even sunglasses, as fabric extras. The world materials for spring and summer are being placed in the hands of the fashion designer and the buyer, rather than the retail store.

Allergies Are Nothing to Sneeze At

By GAY PALLEY

NEW YORK (UPI) — ALLERGENS are nothing to sneeze at. The 100 to 200 million who work and live in the discomfort from them is monumental.

Statistically, an allergy can be traced to a reaction to some, but for millions it can be a severe chronic and potentially fatal disease.

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.

Dr. Davis was one of the common allergens in our environment. Pollen from grasses, plants and trees, dust in the air, mold and water mold spores, fungi, bacteria, dog and cat dander and hair, tobacco.

Exposures — eggs, chicken, chocolate, nuts, shellfish, pork, walnuts, strawberries, chestnuts, apricots.

Concomitant — dust, pollen, dry, saline, certain metals

such as nickel, wool, cement, etc.

Exposures — Bee and wasp stings and pesticides.

But there's one last encouragement in his statement also that "these are only a handful."

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.

Dr. Davis was one of the common allergens in our environment. Pollen from grasses, plants and trees, dust in the air, mold and water mold spores, fungi, bacteria, dog and cat dander and hair, tobacco.

Exposures — eggs, chicken, chocolate, nuts, shellfish, pork, walnuts, strawberries, chestnuts, apricots.

Concomitant — dust, pollen, dry, saline, certain metals

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.

At Wit's End

By ERMA BORECK

There's a female voice today belting out against Women's Lib wailing, "The American woman never had it so good. Why ruin a good thing?"

Ironically, the voice belongs to an Anglo-American divorcee named Esther Year who has written a book on American husbands called, "The Manipulated Man."

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.

The Downtrodden

By ERMA BORECK

There's a female voice today belting out against Women's Lib wailing, "The American woman never had it so good. Why ruin a good thing?"

Ironically, the voice belongs to an Anglo-American divorcee named Esther Year who has written a book on American husbands called, "The Manipulated Man."

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.

The Downtrodden

By ERMA BORECK

There's a female voice today belting out against Women's Lib wailing, "The American woman never had it so good. Why ruin a good thing?"

Ironically, the voice belongs to an Anglo-American divorcee named Esther Year who has written a book on American husbands called, "The Manipulated Man."

HEAVY ALLERGIES can be readily managed, if you're a "house" person. However, who has so many kids had to be treated on baby food.

As a co-worker has some form of dermalitis that keeps her on medication. And I'm the neighbor on her neck of skin boils with everything from medicine to antibiotics. She's had to see a doctor.