

I Remember Millburn and Short Hills in the 1940s

by Steve Henkel

I remember...in 1938, when I was only a lad of five, coming from East Orange to what was then “the country” in Short Hills. I moved with my parents and older brother Joel into a rented house somewhere close to 600 White Oak Ridge Road (WORR), near South Orange Avenue, almost on the Livingston border. The exact address is now forgotten, though I imagine an old town directory could be used to find it.



(386 White Oak Ridge Road, SH, circa 1940)

About a year later, we bought a house a couple of miles away, at 386 WORR, a place that eventually became the Wee

Folk Nursery School. We lived there until 1952, when my parents bought land in the woods and built the house now standing (the last time I checked anyway) at 272 Hartshorn Drive, on the road’s then-newly-paved extension. Robert Drive, on the corner of our lot, was then nothing more than a 100-foot stub running off Hartshorn Drive. I still have photos of these houses in the old days and even construction blueprints of our Hartshorn Drive house.

I remember...attending Hobart Avenue (Short Hills) School all the way through from first grade in September 1939 to graduation in June 1945. I skipped kindergarten only because there was no mid-day school bus and our family only had one car, which my father took to work in Newark. My Hobart Avenue School diploma, signed by my sixth grade teacher Anna Dale and principal Eugene Wilkens, hangs now on the wall by my computer, behind glass in a dignified wood frame. I regret no longer being able to pay my old school a visit, which might have jogged additional memories, but it was torn down many years ago. Still I remember the odor of varnished wood, paste-waxed floors,

and wet wool in the "cloakrooms" behind each classroom. I remember the particularly kindly school janitor, "Mr. Van", a short, sad-looking man who seemed to be the building engineer, maintenance man, coal stoker for the steam plant, painter and sweeper all wrapped up in one. I remember making pencil drawings of B-17s and P-38s – airplanes used in the war – and trading some of them for toy ships to classmate Charles "Bus" Bishop. Much later I became a sailor and Bus, apparently into war, became a Marine Corps general. Were those early trades a precursor of "coming attractions"?

I remember...singing at school "assembly" from an orange-covered songbook called "SING!" A battered copy of this venerable tome, stamped "Short Hills School, Millburn, N.J., Apr. 29, 1940", stands open before me now, so I can accurately recite the names of some of our favorites – and we were permitted to choose them by shouted acclamation, though only if we had been well-behaved. Some of the best were: Ivan Skizavitsky Skivar; Nelly Bly; Some Folks Do; Oh, Susanna; Camptown Races; Dixie; Alouette; Short'nin' Bread; Good-Bye My Lover Good-Bye; The Erie Canal (slow-beat but suitably masculine); The Arkansas Traveler; She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain; and When I Was a Lad. It seems to me that at least the boys, if not the girls, too, groaned when we were asked to sing slow-beat sentimental songs like Silver Threads Among the Gold; In

the Gloaming; Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair; Old Folks at Home; and Juanita. I wonder whether the kids still sing these joyous, historical and moving songs, or would even recognize their titles. What about America the Beautiful and even the Star Spangled Banner? It would be nice if all these songs were still sung in Millburn and Short Hills grammar schools.

I remember...in the 1940s the neighbor's spotted cow (whether Holstein, Jersey, or Guernsey either I don't remember or never knew). The cow was tethered to a stake in a pasture along Worr. We periodically moved her so we could play sandlot baseball in her space, with the kids in the neighborhood...Gerry Dale, Bobby Berberich, the Ginty sisters (Mary Jo and Frances), Steve Fleming, Al Paulsen...Most of our fathers spent the day at work away from home, taking the single family car and leaving our mothers – and us – without automotive transportation. We made our way around the neighborhood, and just about everywhere else, on bicycles – even the three miles or so down to Millburn center and back. Of course, there was a lot less traffic then – perhaps due to wartime gas rationing. I remember one woman driver, though, who was unaffected by gas rationing – Mrs. Carl Badenhausen, the Ballantine Beer king's wife, who lived in the big house at the corner of Old Short Hills Road and Parsonage Hill Road, and who drove an electric car that even in the 1940s was an antique.

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Recent Acquisitions

The society is very grateful to receive local artifacts and memorabilia from generous residents and/or members. We are happy to be able to preserve, share and use for reference these relics of Millburn-Short Hills history.

Please contact us and tell us if we neglected to include your donation information here. We need the information for our records in addition to making sure we don't forget to thank you! Our sincerest thanks to the following people for enriching the lives of all residents by their donations:

- From Marian Nieder, courtesy of Gail Engelschjon, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1932 Millburn High School Millwheel yearbooks
- From Connie Brewer, 1935, 1936, 1937 Millburn High School Millwheel yearbooks
- From American Legion Post 140, courtesy of Dan Pariso, 1945 Daily News
- From Bea Hoffman, courtesy of Janet Pacio-Pizar, numerous photos, including Mayflower Laundry, Casa Columbo, Fandango Mill, Main Street houses no longer standing
- From Naneen Levine, 1965-66 Christ Church directory
- From Mary Haggett, ca. 1933 photo of Chatham Rd (see below), spice box from Hobart Ave store
- From Lisa Goldman, copy of 1913 postcard found in the wall of her home
- From Bob and Joan Boiles, Millburn Feed memorabilia and a hat from Le Cloche in Millburn
- From Mrs. James Marsh, courtesy of Maida Tansey, oil painting of Prince home



The Romance and Tragedy of a Widely Known Business Man of New York (Part Three)

In the prior two editions of the Thistle, William Ingraham Russell's life in Short Hills in the 1880s was introduced through his book "The Romance and Tragedy of a Widely Known Business Man of New York", in which he recalls his prosperous business ventures, followed by darker days, when he felt his Short Hills friends abandoned him. At the point at which part one ended, the Russells had purchased "Sunnyside", the house which they had been renting, at 39 Knollwood Road. As his business and family thrived, Mr. Russell began to consider building a larger home in Short Hills. Part two chronicled the move from "Sunnyside" into "Redstone" and a frank look at some of the Russells' Short Hills friends and neighbors. Part three of Russell's story will carry the reader through to the imminent collapse of his business.

"The year 1883 was uneventful.

At home, life moved on serenely in its accustomed channels. We were very happy and did all we could to make others so.

For the summer months, thinking that a change might be good for the children, we rented a cottage at Oyster Bay. This was a pleasant experience, but we were glad to get home early in the fall. Our elder son was now nearly ten years old, the school at Knollwood was not satisfactory, and we entered him at the Academy at Media, Pennsylvania. His mother and I went over with him, and though the little fellow was brave enough to keep a stiff upper lip when we said good-by, I knew he was homesick, and so were we. It was a very hard strain to leave him behind us.

Business had fallen off a little during the first half of the year, but this was made up later and I did about as well as in the year previous, making a little over twenty-five thousand dollars."

While Russell never reveals to the reader the precise nature of his business (but it seems fairly obvious that he was a commodities broker or trader), he reveals much more about his business practices and his income:

"At the beginning of 1884 our business was increasing so rapidly that it became necessary to have a larger office force to handle it. Orders poured in

day after day and it was evident we were getting the preference from all large and most of the small buyers throughout the country.

That the future had a much larger business in store for us we felt assured and we wanted to get ready for it in advance of the coming. Gradually we commenced to weed out the little fellows.

Some of these small concerns had become so accustomed to sending us their orders and were so well satisfied with the way we had treated them that they objected strongly to being turned down. Still, we were in the line of progress and had outgrown that class.

Now for the broader field. We had one thousand letters prepared and mailed at one time. These were addressed to a list of allegedly wealthy out-of-town investors, which we had purchased from an addressing agency. Not one single reply did we receive.

Then we took our "Bradstreet's" and at random selected the names of five hundred firms, scattered over the United States, rating not less than five hundred thousand dollars. The letters were addressed to the senior partner of each firm. Before the end of the year nearly two hundred of those men were on our books. Every one of them made money.

Toward the latter part of the year there was a falling off in our trade with the consumers, owing to a period of dullness in the manufacturing industries; but what we lost in this way was more than offset by the gain accruing from the business with speculative clients.

On December 31st I had the satisfaction of knowing that for the first time my profits for a single year exceeded thirty thousand dollars.

In my home life there had been nothing to mar in the slightest degree its serenity and delight; indeed, our happiness had been increased on the ninth of June by the arrival of our third daughter."

In chapter ten, Russell reveals some of the dips in his road before the even bigger fall to come:

"Although the conditions of general business were unsatisfactory at the beginning of 1885 and I had much doubt of the year proving as profitable as the one previous, I never dreamed of such a falling off as actually occurred.

Our clients had done well and we expected they would continue their operations. We did not in our calculations make allowance for the

fact that these men were all in active business. As a rule, such men do not go into outside matters when their own business is dull or unprofitable. It is in good times, when they are making money, that they enter the speculative field.

Before the winter was over our books were cleared of speculative contracts.

We thought of making efforts to secure new customers but decided it would at that time be useless for if men who knew the business and had made money at it were unwilling to go on, it was hardly possible to enlist the interest of people who knew nothing about it.

Month after month I saw the business decrease, but took it philosophically. I could afford to wait for better times and meanwhile did not worry, knowing that we were getting more than our share of what business there was.

These dull times were not without their compensation.

They brought me the opportunity to go off with my wife on little trips of a few days' duration. What delightful trips those were! Newport, Narragansett, Nantasket, Swampscott, Manchester-by-the-sea, Newcastle, and all the pretty places accessible via Fall River boats – these were the most attractive, for we enjoyed the sail and disliked train travel in warm weather. Frequently some of our friends accompanied us, but oftener we went alone.

What jolly times we had!

Then too in this dull year I made my business days shorter, a late train in the morning and an early one home in the afternoon giving me so much more time with my family.

Oh, it was a great year!

For better times I could wait with patience. I was not money-mad, not eager for accumulation of great wealth; my real fortune I had already gained in the wealth of love bestowed upon me by the woman I adored. I valued money for the good it would do, the comfort and pleasure it would bring to those I loved; but for the reputation of having it, not at all.

I wanted to succeed. I felt I had succeeded.

In my twentieth year under the largest salary I was ever paid, my income was five hundred dollars – in my thirty-fourth year it was thirty thousand and earned by my own efforts, out of a business that I alone had created; for the business of that time bore no relation whatever to the one in which I had succeeded my old employer. Surely I had cause for congratulation, no matter how dull business might be for the time being.

Knollwood had been growing these years with astonishing rapidity and our social circle was now a fairly large one.

The characteristics, so attractive the first year of our residence there, were still unchanged. The newcomers were all nice people and the right hand of good-fellowship was extended and accepted in the true spirit.

In addition to the many beautiful new houses there had been erected a small but very pretty stone church of Episcopalian denomination.

At the time the building of the church was planned, I remember a conversation on the subject that afterwards seemed prophetic.

I was talking on the train with a gentleman, an officer of the New York Life Insurance Company, who, while he did not reside in the Park, lived in the vicinity and mingled socially with our people. I told him we were going to build a church. "What?" he said. "Don't do it; you have a charming social circle now that will surely be ruined if you do." I expressed surprise at his remark, and he only shook his head and with more earnestness added, "Mark my words, that church will be the commencement of trouble; cliques will form, friction and gossip will arise, and your delightful social life will be a thing of the past."

It is a fact that his words came true, and yet I contributed to the cost of the building and support of the church, and under the same conditions would do it again.

At the end of December I found my income had been cut in half. I had made but fifteen thousand dollars, but the year had been so enjoyable in my home life I was entirely satisfied. The additional time dull business had permitted me to spend with my family was worth all it cost."

In 1886 Russell noted that the "dam" of "dull business" finally gave way and "consumers and dealers again became liberal buyers and their lead was soon followed by the speculative fraternity". He noted that long hours and hard work once again became the rule as their "...success had become known by this time, not only to every one in the trade, but also to many outsiders." He adds:

"Business activity was maintained until the close of the year and I again had made a record. My profits were thirty-six thousand dollars.



Our social life at Knollwood this year had been going on at a rapid pace and its more formal character began to take shape.

The frequent pleasant little dinner-parties of four to six couples, where bright and entertaining conversation was general, had gone through a course of evolution and become functions where two or three times the number sat at the board and struggled through so many courses that one became wearied of sitting still. Those enjoyable amateur dramatic performances, followed by light refreshment and a couple of hours' dancing, had been replaced by the grand ball with its elaborate supper. But there still remained one feature, unique and delightful:

The New Year reception – every New Year's day for many years a reception was held at the Casino (*Editor's note: The Casino was where the Racquets Club is now. The building was designed by noted architect Stanford White, to serve as a social center for the community. It was constructed in 1879 and destroyed by fire nearly 100 years later.*) The residents, loaning from their homes rugs, draperies, paintings, statuary, and fine furniture, transformed that large auditorium into an immense drawing-room. The green-houses contributed palms and blooming plants in profusion. In the enormous fire-place burned great logs. At one end of the room a long table from which was served, as wanted, all that could be desired by the inner man. The stage, set with a pretty garden scene and rattan furniture, where the men lounged as they had their smoke. Music by a fine orchestra, interspersed with occasional songs by our own local talent.

The reception was from six until nine, then the rugs were gathered up, the furniture moved from the center of the floor, and dancing was enjoyed until midnight.

For miles around, every one that was eligible never failed to be present on those occasions. It was the one great social event of each year, and long after the circle was broken the custom was still kept up, until finally it died out owing to the indifference of the new-comers. For such a community it was a beautiful custom and in its inception served to cement the spirit of cordiality and good-will."

The following year, a single venture into the speculative purchase of one hundred tons of Russell's commodity netted him a profit of twenty thousand dollars almost overnight. It boosted his earnings for the year to sixty-one thousand dollars and he notes:

"On February fourteenth, as a valentine, there came to 'Redstone' our fourth daughter and the family was complete. With two sons and four daughters, the ban of 'race suicide,' theory of President Roosevelt, rests not on us."

In the following chapter, titled "Exciting Times", Russell notes: "The year 1888 from start to finish was one whirl of excitement in my business life. The mental effort of handling the enormous business – it must be remembered that ours was a one-man concern – was most exhausting. I became weary of making money and longed for a dull period that I might rest. But there was no dull period that year."

His observations on some of his business transactions at that point indicate a great deal about the gentle side of Russell's character – and the less-than-admirable side of some of his clients:

"As previously explained we guaranteed all sales, and whenever a customer defaulted we at once sold double the quantity we had sold him, to some strong concern. This made us short of the market, and while we made some loss on the initial transaction, our profit on the second sale always more than extinguished it.

The first man who defaulted brought to our office a deed for a farm in Pennsylvania and offered it to us for the four thousand dollars he owed, I handed it back to him, told him to give it to his wife, and forgave the debt.

The next man was a bigger fish. He owed us nineteen thousand eight hundred dollars. We

made up the account, and when I handed him the statement I told him we would not press him and if he was ever able to pay us twenty-five cents on the dollar we would give him a receipt in full. In later years he was worth a good deal of money, though I believe he has since lost it, but he never paid us a dollar.

After him came a few small men, who altogether owed us perhaps ten thousand dollars. We told them all if they ever felt able to pay we would be glad to have the money, but would never press them for it.

Of the whole lot, only one ever paid. His account was only a few hundred dollars, and I had forgotten it, when one day he called at the office, said his father had died, leaving him a little money, and he wanted to pay us. He asked, "What rate of interest do you charge me?" I replied, "Nothing; and if you cannot afford it, you may leave us out entirely." He insisted on paying the principal.

Our treatment of these people was not good business in the general sense...but they had our sympathy in their trouble and we could afford to lose the money."

In spite of these events, Russell reported that: "At the end of the year, after charging off all the losses, amounting to about one hundred thousand dollars, (he) had made a net profit of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars."

That very comfortable income apparently allowed the Russell family to enjoy the status of the most affluent family in "the Park" at the time and they shared that comfort with their friends and neighbors: "Although very fond of horses and driving it was not until 1888 that we indulged ourselves in that direction.

When we built 'Redstone' we planned where we would put the stable when ready for it, but were in no hurry about building.

For fast horses I had no liking. My taste was for high-stepping carriage horses. A pair that could pull a heavy T-cart (*Editor's note: Defined as "a kind of fashionable two seated wagon for pleasure driving."*) with four people eight or nine miles an hour and keep it up without urging, were fast enough in my opinion. I wanted high-spirited, blooded animals, fine carriages and perfect appointments. Until I could afford such, I preferred to go without.

In the spring I bought a pair of black Vermont Morgans. They were beauties and the whole family fell in love with them at once. For the summer I secured the use of a neighbor's un-occupied stable and then commenced the erection of my own. After

this was finished I matched my first horses with another pair exactly like them and also bought a small pony for the younger children and a larger one for the boys.

It was not long before I had trained my horses to drive either tandem (*Editor's note: Defined as "Hitching two or more horses in a line, not abreast"*), four-in-hand (*Editor's note: "The first four-in-hand was a four-horse carriage, introduced in England in the late 19th century and rigged in such a way that a single driver could handle all four horses by himself. This was significant, because before the four-in-hand came along, you needed two drivers to handle four horses. In fact, this solo driver could handle all four horses by holding the reins of all four in one hand, thus the name four-in-hand*), or three abreast, and with an assortment of various styles of carriages my equipment was complete.

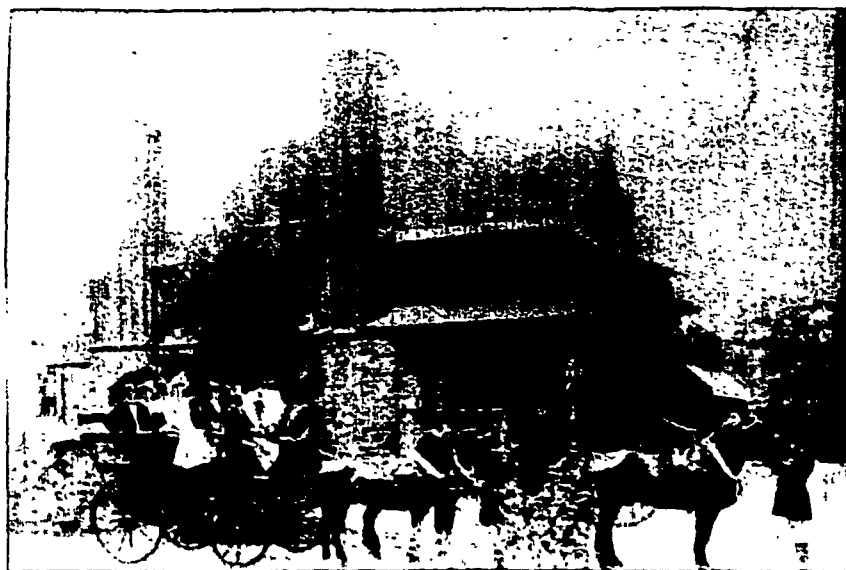
From the Paris-built drag (*Editor's note: A large-capacity enclosed carriage-with a roof and sides*) carrying eight passengers besides my two men, down to the pony cart, everything was of the best.

My combination carriage-house and stable was architecturally a very handsome building, and in its interior every detail, useful and ornamental, had received careful attention. The building cost me about seven thousand dollars, but judging from its appearance and size my neighbors thought that my investment was larger. As it approached completion I suggested to my wife the idea of giving a barn-dance, something unique in the annals of Knollwood. We immediately went into a committee of two on plans and scope and as a result evolved an evening of surprise and delight for our friends.

The invitations, engraved in usual note-sheet form, had on the upper half of the page a fine engraving of the front of the stable, and beneath in old English, "Come and dance in the barn." We received our guests in the hall and drawing-room fragrant with blooming plants. From a rear piazza a carpeted and canvas-enclosed platform extended across the lawn to the carriage-house. The floor had been covered with canvas for the dancers. Brilliantly illuminated, in addition to the permanent decorations, a life-sized jockey in bronze bas-relief and numerous coaching pictures, was the work of the florist. The large orchestra was upstairs surrounding the open carriage trap, which was concealed from below by masses of smilax.

In the stable each of the six stalls had been converted into a cozy nook where soft light from shaded lamps fell on rugs and draperies. On each stall post was a massive floral horseshoe. The orders of dancing, besides the usual gold-embossed monogram, bore an engraving of a tandem cart with high-stepping horses and driver snapping his long whip. Attached to each was a sterling silver pencil representing the foreleg of a horse in action, the shoe being of gold. Supper was served in the dining room from a table decorated in keeping with the event, the center-piece being a model in sugar of the tandem design on the order of dancing.

The affair was a great success in every way, and the following evening we allowed our colored servants to entertain their friends at the stable. With a few of our neighbors we witnessed the "cake-walk" and found much fun in it. The next day the horses were in possession."



William Russell was very proud of his jet-black horses. They always drew attention in town when they went to be re-shod. A group poses in an open carriage for a picture before a Sunday drive.

(This photo is from the historical society's newest book, Arcadia Publishing's Images of America: Millburn-Short Hills, written by Owen Lampe. Pictured here are the horses of which William Russell wrote and of which he was so proud. We presume this carriage might be his "heavy T-cart", of which he was also proud. They are seen here posing before the Russells' house, Redstone. This book is available from the society for \$20)

The story of the Russells' stay in Short Hills will continue in the next edition of the Thistle, when the Russells decide to leave Knollwood and their beloved 'Redstone'. Redstone, which is no longer standing, was at Wells Lane and Knollwood Road. It succumbed to fire in 1934.

GLENWOOD

During the months of November and December the society will have on exhibit

MEMORABILIA AND PHOTOS OF THE GLENWOOD AREA AND GLENWOOD SCHOOL

Please come on Tuesdays 5:30-7:30, Wednesdays 3:30-5:30, or the first Sunday of the month 2-4 to see

Glenwood class photos & report cards, real estate maps and information, Chatham Road circa 1933 and more...



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A Tribute to Tom Collins

This past June the historical society and the residents of Millburn and Short Hills lost a much-loved and valuable friend and resource. Tom Collins, one of the finest gentlemen we have ever had the pleasure of knowing, passed away in June. He left us a legacy of wonderful memories and enriched our lives and archives with his reminiscences and research.

When Tom was a young man growing up on the Hartshorn estate (his father was Stewart Hartshorn's driver), he remembered watching the artist William Rowell Derrick painting scenes of the estate. Those vivid memories stayed with him throughout his life and grew into a determination to find as much about the artist as he could. It was with more than a grain of truth that Tom said many times that he knew more about Derrick's history and life than the artist himself probably knew.

That life-long absorption finally brought Tom to the fulfillment of his dream when he self-published a wonderful book about Derrick. The book features beautiful color photos of Derrick's work, on almost every other of its 45 pages of text (a total of 57 pages with the bibliography and notes). In addition, it has a delightful chapter of memories and photos of Short Hills in the mid-20s to mid-30s.

For those society members or township residents who have asked about a small donation in Tom's memory, the society would like to suggest the purchase of his book. The beautiful little hardcover book is \$45. Checks can be made out to the society and the money will be forwarded to Tom's wife, Ginny. A few Derrick books can be picked up at the museum and the rest will be sent by Ginny. For more information, call the museum at 564-9519.

I Remember Millburn and Short Hills, *cont'd*

I remember...the frail, elderly Mrs. Parsil next door, who was probably the sole remaining heir to the Parsil family acreage in our neighborhood (with the possible exception of the Reverend Leroy Parsil, then the old and almost totally deaf pastor of the tiny White Oak Ridge chapel on Parsonage Hill Road, just down the hill from the corner of White Oak Ridge Road). I imagine that Mrs. Parsil's ancestors – some of them Revolutionary officers who fought bravely in the Battle of Springfield – and perhaps she herself – had gradually sold off the land. By the time we moved in next door, she was living alone in a small wood-frame house that, as I picture it today, might have been as aged as the Revolutionary-era Parsil family cemetery just a few hundred yards south of us, at the corner of White Oak Ridge Road and Parsonage Hill Road. Her house, I think, by now must have long since been bulldozed away. (*Editor's note: Happily, we can report that it still stands on White Oak Ridge Road.*)

I remember...the two-man wooden bobsled, complete with a spoked steel steering wheel, left abandoned in the back shed at 386 Worr by a former owner. We kids used bent-over nails to attach a pair of previously-junked "Radio Flyer" wagon axles and hard-rubber wheels under the runners, and – presto-chango! – we had a go-cart, admittedly with a rather high center of gravity. It didn't have any kind of brakes, but we figured we could drag our feet to slow it down if necessary. One day, alone and bored, I pushed the go-cart to the top of Parsonage Hill Road, jumped aboard, and began coasting down the hill. Only when it was too late did I realize that the cart was going much too fast for my foot-dragging to work. When a critical speed was reached, the steering wheel started to oscillate wildly, and the cart and I went totally out of control. The cart turned over and I slid along the gravel strip at the edge of the road, acquiring a classic "sidewalk burn" as I tumbled and skidded down the hill.

I remember...that sidewalk burn being the reason I visited the big old house at the corner of Forest Drive and Park Place, where Doctor Thayer Smith kept an office in his home. Dr. Smith was a tall, angular man with a shock of snow-white hair and bushy eyebrows that reached way out into space. He had a no-nonsense manner, and smeared iodine on my backside with what seemed at the time like coarse sandpaper. Meanwhile I wailed and struggled, and was held down on an examining table by my father. The experience did nothing to endear me to doctors, iodine, or go-carts with no brakes. After that, the kid designers got together and devised a pair of wood levers, attached to the go-cart's frame, one on each side above the wheels, which would rub against the tires when firmly tugged. They worked well enough to avoid the need for anymore visits to Thayer Smith – especially since thereafter I was quick to reach for the brakes at the merest hint of too much speed.

I remember...going swimming (skinny-dipping, actually) in the old swimming hole at Fourth Pond, and later at Third Pond, in the days before the lakes were filled in and a new prep school campus was built.

At that time, a babbling brook of crystal clear water flowed northeast from Fourth Pond, into Third, Second, and First Ponds (as we kids called the ponds then, though they may have had other names). The stream proceeded northeast, through a culvert under Parsonage Hill Road, paralleling Worr a hundred and fifty yards or so to the southeast of the roadway. It flowed right along the back edge of our long, narrow, roughly one-acre lot, and served a purpose in flood control, filling right up to the brim in heavy rains, and going almost dry in droughts.

I remember...the fish pond in the back yard of 386 Worr. One of the property's earlier owners had created a round pond by widening the brook, to perhaps thirty feet in diameter,

I Remember Millburn and Short Hills, *cont'd*

building masonry walls using cement mortar and field stones almost certainly "borrowed" from the plentiful old stone walls back in the woods, and damming up the brook at the northeast end of the property. This was done by using wood planks which fitted into slots made for the purpose in the sluiceway where the brook flowed out. Some former owner – probably the fish pond builder – had abandoned what appeared to be a waterwheel rig, complete with bearings, shafts, pulleys, belts, and other nondescript parts, stored in a shed used mainly by us kids as a place to play. We found most of the parts to the water wheel, but never figured out how to set it up, or what it had powered, if anything.

I remember...the woods – a couple of square miles of them – behind 386 Worr in the 1940s, which were part of the vast holdings of the Hartshorn Estate. The woods seemed totally untouched by the hand of man, except for low stone walls that criss-crossed the area. These walls were built perhaps a hundred or two hundred years before, when the area was open farmland, rather than covered with trees. The edge of the woods began at our property line, right at the brook. A sturdy wood foot bridge arched the flood on the downstream side of our fish pond.

I remember...my brother buying his first two "junk" cars, for junk prices, from neighbors right after the war ended in 1945, when he was 16 and I was 13. We were both too young to drive on public roads, but not too young to drive around in the pristine woods behind our house, with nobody around to stop us. Though old, the cars were big, solid and tough, with heavy-duty bumpers and big wheels. They had no trouble crashing through the underbrush, knocking down saplings and bumping over the low stone walls. One was a 1927 Willys Knight, with a huge engine – I think it had twelve cylinders – with rotary valves and a gigantic truck-like body. The other was a 1932 Willys Overland. Eventually the bodies on both cars disintegrated, but both would be worth a fortune today if only we had preserved them.

I remember...meeting "Stewie" Hartshorn (the third) and later his wife, Ernestine, who were friends of my parents. When my father first introduced me to Stewie, he was a bachelor, and he soon befriended my brother and me. He was a good craftsman, with all kinds of power tools in the workshop at his big house on Highland Avenue, where he lived alone except for a couple of his house staff. My brother and I had acquired an old one-cylinder motorcycle engine, and wanted to build a powered sidecar to clamp onto our bicycles, with the engine as motive power. We drew up plans, and Stewie agreed to weld for us a frame of galvanized pipe, and to machine some parts on his metal-cutting lathe according to our specifications. The sidecar ran, but unfortunately pulled strongly to the left side, opposite the powered side wheel, requiring considerable strength to steer the contraption in a straight line. We soon learned to plan ahead during our road tests, because we knew we didn't have the strength to turn right – only left.



(The sidecar that "Stewie" Hartshorn helped build. View is looking northeast on Worr. Note the empty land on the left – the cornfield where Marshall Wilder had his radio tower)



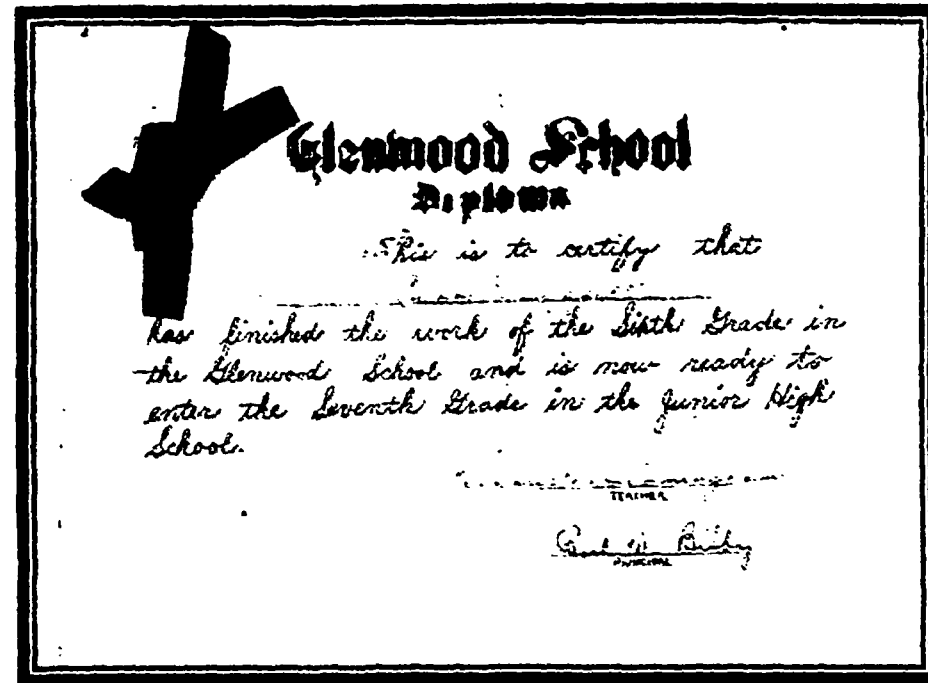
(The 6th grade at Glenwood School in June, 1946:

L to R, front row: Harry Richardson, John Pfaltz, Pete Shipman, Art Schmauder, Mary Beth Ward, Anne Von Thaden, Joan Smith, Tina Coyle, Ruth Jean Philips, Carol Pippitt, Betsey Alford.

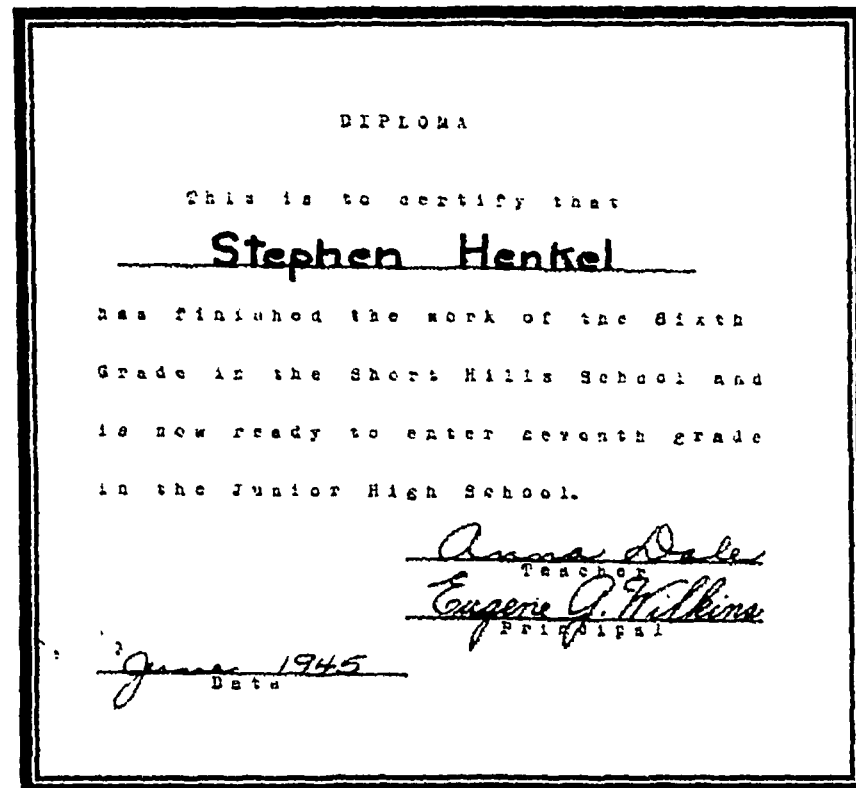
Second row: Roger Woodruff, Andy Anderson, Jane Freund, Mary Lou Harter, Sally St. John, Dottie Kenlan, Judith Reutlinger, Barbara Koch, Karin Peterson.

3rd row: Bill Klehm, John Power, Bill Hollister, Spencer Letts, Peter Van Orman, Bill Blemings. Back: Mrs. Henrietta Birmingham.

Missing: Nadia Zahodiakin.)



(Carol Pippitt Henkel's Glenwood School diploma)



(My Hobart Ave School 6th grade diploma, showing how they did it in the old days.)

Remember Millburn and Short Hills, cont'd

I remember...the old Racquets Club in the 1940s, before it burned down. I didn't appreciate it then, as I would now, the magnificent Stanford White design, particularly the wide, balustraded circular staircase leading dramatically from the first-floor reception area to the theater-cum-badminton court on the second floor. I remember Hugo, the club steward, a rotund, but not particularly jolly man with a pronounced German accent. His wife (Anna? Hannah? Frieda? Does anyone remember?) seemed much nicer to us pre-teen boys when we hung around the club. My friends and I would walk over from the Hobart Avenue school after classes, and play pool in the sky-lighted game room, or play hide-and-seek all over the clubhouse, from the pits behind the bowling alleys to the wings behind the upstairs stage.

My father taught me to play squash and tennis there (supplemented by some lessons from Tommy Ianicelli, who moonlighted from his job at the Short Hills Club). It was at the Racquets Club, too, that I attempted to learn how to dance, under the stern and watchful eyes of Mrs. Chaliffe and Mrs. Wells.

My time at trying to dance was not well spent. I was among the shortest boys in those days (and am somewhat vertically challenged even today), and if life was always fair, I should have been paired with short girls. But life is not always fair, and it seems to me that I danced mainly with girls who were excessively - I am tempted to say "grotesquely" - tall, towering above me. Furthermore, the girls I ended up with, I think, may have been as shy and silent as I was in those days, if not more so. If there is such a thing as a male wallflower, I was it.

I remember...the Wilder girls, Keita and Ginger, who lived across WORR in the pre-Revolutionary-War-era house that George Washington was supposed to have slept in. The house, at 365 WORR, was allegedly built in 1709 by Thomas Parsil, and is said to be the oldest dwelling in town. Ginger was in my class at school (and would have been a welcome partner at dancing school, being of reasonable size and vivacious personality, but she didn't attend). The girls' father, Marshall Wilder, was an electronics

inventor who worked for RCA, and had a hand in the development of television. He was also a radio hobbyist, and had built a radio antenna tower, perhaps a hundred feet high, behind his house in what had been a cornfield. The antenna was wired into a room full of ham radio equipment, with which he was able to talk to people in other states, and even other countries, whenever he felt the urge. To us kids, this was a true miracle.

I remember the Wilders' TV set, which was a box about the size of a modern washing machine or dryer, with a hinged lid featuring a mirror on its underside. A tiny TV screen, perhaps three inches by three inches, faced upward, and projected an image onto the mirror. Only the person sitting directly in front of the mirror could watch the shows, which were few and far between in those early days of TV broadcasting. And I remember Marshall Wilder giving us kids old radio parts from his "junk box" so we could build a crystal set to get WOR and WJZ, the local (Newark and New York) stations, without much success.

I remember...the barbershop where my brother and I would get our hair cut on Saturday afternoon, and then walk across the street to take in a matinee at the Millburn Movie Theater. This would be an all-afternoon affair, with a Lone Ranger (or Tom Mix?) short, the latest Movietone News with Lowell Thomas (and Stan Lomax?), and a double feature, all in black and white on the big screen.

I remember...that Millburn was more like a village than a town in those days. And I remember so many Millburn people from the 1940s who helped shape my way of looking at the world, and contributed to my growing up straight (if not tall) and becoming a happy adult. For some reason, Frank Tighe, proprietor of the Gulf station at the corner of Essex and Main Streets, comes to mind, though I never saw the man outside his place of business, nor ever for more time than it takes to gas up a car. Yet I



[The house my parents (Marv and Jean Henkel) built at 272 Hartshorn Drive in 1952.]

believe he helped me to understand the world, in some way I can't remember, or even imagine now. Perhaps it is the way I remember his face, always smiling and jolly, as if he didn't have a care in the world – a good face for anyone to put on for the world to see.

And I remember Mr. Miller, at Miller's Market across the street from Tighe's gas station, when I went with my mother to do grocery shopping. Mr. Miller amazed me by adding up the prices of dozen or more grocery items in pencil on the flattened side of a paper bag, and doing it almost instantaneously. (This, of course, was in the days before electric, let alone electronic, calculators.) It was an inspiration and a challenge to any seven-year-old to try to accelerate his calculations to Mr. Miller's lightning speed.

And I think of Mr. Fruchtman, the owner of the local cigar and newspaper store at the corner of Millburn Avenue and Main Street, who I seem to remember mainly because he objected to my reading, but not buying, comics and model airplane magazines in his shop. For some reason he made a lasting impression on me, though I can't define it now, unless, perhaps, that was where I learned that there is No Free Lunch.

The good ones were often the disciplinarians: Mrs. Rechnitzer, Mrs. McCollum, Mr. Denninger, Mr. Shannon More definable help in shaping my ways might be expected from teachers, both good and bad ("I can be a good friend but a hard taskmaster") – or they were easy-going but good

explainers: Mr. Salisbury, Mrs. Wirsz, Mr. Focht, Mr. Ridgeway – or just hard-charging, like Mr. Toan ("Hustle! Hustle! Time's awastin'!"). I won't name the bad ones, but in the long run, they too contributed to my view of things. All of them – good and bad – taught lessons that I have never forgotten.

The author of the above reminiscence, Steve Henkel, grew up in Short Hills, and graduated from Hobart Avenue School in 1945 and Millburn High School in 1951. In 1955, a week after graduating from Princeton with a degree in mechanical engineering, he married a Short Hills girl, Carol Pippitt (Glenwood '46, Millburn High School '52). After a year of residence in Manhattan, the couple returned to Short Hills and lived in a garage apartment (now a separate house) at 68 Hemlock Road, behind what was then known as the Carrington Estate. In 1961 the Henkels decided to take up sailing, and after determining that neither North nor South Pond was large enough for extensive navigation, they moved to Darien, CT, on Long Island Sound. There they resided for 30 years, raised two sons, and were shipmates with more than 30 different boats. In 1990 they moved south to Osprey, FL, where they now live. Steve is currently working on his fourth book, and the third on boats and boating.



(100 South Terrace, home of the Pippitt family from 1940 to 1983.)

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