

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REMEMBERING THE PAST

I grew up in the late 1940s and early 50s. Now as I look back and compare those times to today, I really feel that those were the "Happy Days." Life seemed simpler, less complicated.

Every Sunday we would get ready for church. This meant putting on my special dress and shoes, clothes reserved for going to church, holidays and special parties and events. They were never worn for school or play. This special outfit was purchased just before Easter and hopefully fit until the next year.

Following services, we sat down for our Sunday meal, prepared by Grandma who lived with us. It could be roast veal with trimmings, (now I think that would be a special order from the butcher), real chicken soup followed by roast chicken, and occasionally we each had a thick porterhouse steak. Today that cut of meat for 6 people would probably require taking out a second mortgage. Dessert was usually one of Grandma's incredible pies: sour cherry, apple, blueberry or rhubarb.

After doing the dishes (by hand) Dad would announce that we were going on our Sunday drive.

Living in Cheektowaga at the time, a drive in the country was anything beyond the Thruway Mall, which hadn't been built yet. Mom and Dad sat up front and Grandma and we kids shared the back.

No matter what the season she always wore her long navy blue coat, a navy blue straw hat with a flower on it and gloves. She bribed us into sitting quietly with the catch of candy she kept in her navy blue purse.

Our Sunday drive took us through towns and villages, farm roads and sometimes to housing developments where we visited open houses.

The high light of the drive was stopping for ice cream or custard. I also remember begging to stop at every New York State historical sign. That was probably the beginning of a life-long love of history.

We also enjoyed the Burma Shave signs along the way. Many of them would be posed in farmers' fields. These small red signs had white letters. There would be 5 signs about 100 feet apart each having one line of a 4 line couplet. The 5th sign advertised Burma Shave a popular shaving cream.

