

More Stuff from Childhood I can't get out of my head

By Gail Grenier Sweet © 2006

- A fire truck coming to rescue my brother Danny, who had locked himself in the bathroom in our upper flat in Grandma Hoerig's duplex (about 1955).
- Watching Dancing Bear dance interminably and mutely to songs on "Captain Kangaroo," and wishing I could visit the Treasure House (around 1956?).
- Smelling sour kraut cooking for the first time at a holiday dinner at Grandma Hoerig's house, and saying, "Did Sally poop in her diaper?" (1957)
- Watching a strange show (on Saturday mornings?) with an Indian boy on an elephant, Buster Brown and his dog Tag in a shoe, and someone who said "Pluck your magic twanger, Froggie!" (date unknown).
- Watching the "Loretta Young Show" on TV and being amazed at Loretta Young's giant gown, pouffed out like a big bell (date unknown).
- Picking flowers along the creek on Beckett Street before it got filled in and built up with houses, and Mumma telling me they were "sweetpeas" (about 1957).
- Sending a bouquet of sweetpeas to my Aunt Marlyce in the hospital, through my mother (about 1957).
- Capturing and bringing home many turtles I caught near the creek on Beckett Street, then having to release them back to the creek or to a neighbor's little pond (1957 – 60).
- Playing with my brother Danny in the creek and a muddy area full of discarded building materials, being very excited about building a swell boat out of scrap metal and trying to float it (around 1960).
- Being forced to wear saddleshoes and *crying* about it (about 1958).
- Sleeping with every new pair of shoes I ever got (all through childhood – Mike still asks me once in a while if I want to sleep with my new shoes).
- Having my tooth pulled out by Pop making a loop of string, tying it to my loose tooth, then tying the other end of the string to a doorknob, then Pop swinging the door shut (date unknown).
- Having a sty in my eye – yuck! (about 1958)
- Going to movie theatres and genuflecting – or *almost* genuflecting -- before I entered the row of seats (much of childhood).

- Having an infection in my eye and waking up in the morning unable to open my eye because it was sealed shut with gunk (about 1959).
- Going to the “sandpit” with my family and the Yeko family and being *really scared* in the back of our big red '53 Ford, going down the steep and sandy incline until we got to the bottom where we all played and swam and picnicked (many times during childhood – would love to know where that sandpit was!).
- Going to the “sandpit” with my mom and her friend Pauline Yeko and my best friend Kathy and my siblings and Kathy’s siblings, but not being able to swim because I had “bugs,” as my mother told me... feeling *so incredibly sad* sitting on the hot sand and not being able to swim, and also *so very confused* not understanding what “bugs” meant (still don’t understand and can’t ask Mum) (date unknown).
- Visiting my friend Mary at her new house, piles of dirt all around, and (while our mothers visited in the house) joining Mary in capturing little frogs and pinning them to her mother’s clothesline using clothespins on their tiny “hands,” then playing with her sister Vicky and my brother Danny in the dirt hills, later returning to find all the frogs dead, dry and baked in the sun, no more soft frog bellies pulsing with heartbeat (about 1959). (*Oppressive summer heat and the sound of heat bugs – cicadas -- bring back this memory every summer. I wish I could forget.*)
- Standing next to my bike, hands on handlebars, and moving the bike forward and backward so the front wheel would run over what seemed like hundreds of scurrying ants on the sidewalk right in front of Genova’s Restaurant on Appleton Avenue (about 1959).
- Doing cartwheels all around our block – from our back door on Glendale Avenue, around the corner outside the front door on Beckett Street, down Beckett to Ruby, from Ruby to Appleton Avenue, up Appleton back to Glendale and back home. It was easy to do, but sometimes little stones would not feel good under my hands (around 1960).