

## MY HISTORY STARTS HERE

-Robin (Rodgers) Robinson

I was born in 1956 at the West Side Memorial Osteopathic Hospital and came home to a small house in Zion View. About six miles north of York on the Susquehanna Trail; turn left at the beacon light, fourth house on the right; those were the directions we gave everyone that came to our house. The road did not have a name and houses were not numbered. Our mail was addressed RD # 4, York, Penna. It was later in time that the road was posted as Copenhaffer Road and houses were numbered. The beacon light, installed in the mid-1930's, was well known and you could not miss the red and white structure that reached skyward guiding the planes between Harrisburg and York Airports with its highly visible rotating beam of light.

We lived beside the grocery store owned by Dutch (Blaine) and Janet Drawbaugh. Years later Bob and Madel Bear, who lived across the street from the store, switched houses and the Bear family took ownership of the store and lived in the upstairs apartment. The Morton's Salt man always wrote, in salt the trademark tag line, "when it rains it pours", on the sidewalk when he made deliveries. Kottcamp's butcher shop, located across from the ballfield, was where my dad took some of our steers to be butchered; cut, wrapped and frozen to be put into the family's chest freezer.

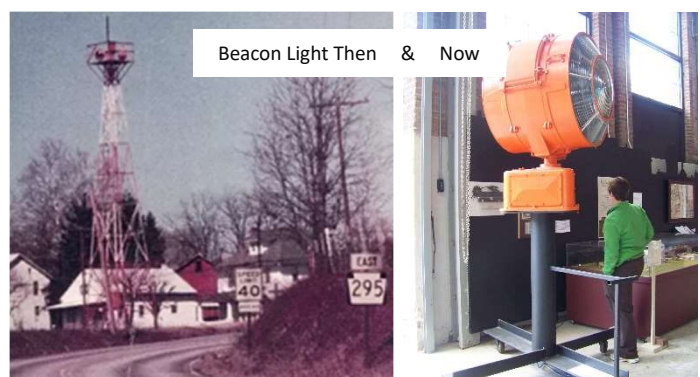
When my parents purchased our house in 1954 it did not have running water and only a single light bulb swung from the center of each room. Dad was a "jack-of-all-master-of-none" homeowner and began to do the hit-or-miss work himself. The outhouse was finally replaced with indoor plumbing when I was about 10 years old.

Summers were spent planting the garden and taking care of the animals. We (my brother and I) rode bikes around the Band Hall, in the alleys and back to Conewago Elementary School, returning home, frequently with scraped knees and elbows. Summers were also times to meet the neighborhood kids at the playground for ballgames and crafts in the rec building. Early fall was spent on our long cement front porch where we shucked corn, hauled beans and peas and made sauerkraut. We raised chickens; I've had my fill of plucking feathers in the front yard with a wash tub over a fire pit. The Kochenours Farm allowed us to board a couple of steer every year for our family and friends' year-long dinner tables. I remember many times hearing a neighbor's voice on the other end of the telephone, "your cows are out and they are in my yard."

Winters we hopped on our sleds and down the road we flew or over to Hooper's pond for ice skating. At least until a temporary skating rink was built at the ballfield, out of 2 x 4's and plastic sheeting, giving all the neighborhood moms rest from thinking their child would fall through thin ice on the pond.

Laundry was a front porch activity, too, with the wringer washer, then hung on the stretch of clothes line in the yard. I still find that one of my favorite smells; laundry fresh from hanging outdoors.

Many years (decades, really) have passed since that time. Sometimes we have tangible items to stimulate our aging memories. Shortly after starting to work at the York County History Center in 2015, I was intrigued by a spotlight at the Agricultural & Industrial Museum. The light was bright and massive. Reminded me of the Zion View beacon light. The Library & Archives contains a book, "More About ...the Way It Was; and is Today, Zion View a Country Village" by Norma B. Gates. Mrs. Gates was a teacher at Conewago Elementary when I attended. She documents that in 1970 the tower and light were sold via sealed bids. Floyd Miller had the high bid of \$111.00. Mr. Miller later sold the structure to a Lancaster County farmer, probably to be used as a windmill stand. The beacon light was repurposed as a hanger light at the York Airport and was in service until 1987. In 2004 John Shue restored the beacon and it was donated to the History Center...IT IS MY BEACON LIGHT! The same light that sat atop that red and white structure and flashed into my bedroom window as it guided the planes, is the same beacon light at the Agricultural & Industrial Museum. My History Starts Here.



Zion View  
Photo provided by NEYCHIP.com

Agricultural & Industrial Museum  
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