

Whenever my father would take me along with him to the barber shop, I was fascinated by the long rows of interestingly-named and various-colored lotions, "Bay Rum", tonics, and powders, lined up along the long mirrored wall. The fact that a good many Fanwood men were New York commuters, employees of Western Electric, and the like, and that many women and children of the day wore their hair quite short, probably explains how two barbers were able to thrive and survive in our small town.

Right next to "the corner store" was a shoemaker, named Bill, and his wife. They were German and had a young son. You could get "Cat's Paw" lifts on your shoes for around 25 cents, or even climb up on one of those great throne-like chairs and get a shoeshine, for a nickel or a dime. I loved the smell of the different polishes, and all those various machine belts which were always whirring away at a mad and noisy clip. I never understood quite what they were all for. In later years, Bill moved his operation around the corner onto Martine Ave. where he also added a cleaning and tailoring service to his business.

Going west on South Ave., just a few steps further were Hand Lumber and the Fanwood Lumber and Coal Co., AND, the most amazing thing in the world.....train tracks which actually crossed the street! Many times traffic on South Ave. would have to stop and wait, in order to allow a freight car or cars, carrying lumber, to cross over to the lumberyards and deposit their load. I never ceased to be amazed and bemused by that, throughout my entire childhood. Of course, the tracks have long since been covered over.

For a period of time, and this goes waaaaay back, around this same spot on South Ave. was Green's garage, for auto repair. It is an undisputed fact that during the 30's my parents' green Pontiac "Roadster", of late 20's vintage, saw a good deal of the inside of that garage!

A few steps more up South Ave. was Sands' Hardware Store, owned and operated by an older couple, Mr. and Mrs. Sands. Mr. Sands, like so many of the others, also always wore an old brown cardigan sweater. The Sands enjoyed talking with the little children who'd pass by the stores with their parents. Mrs. Sands was a pleasant lady with a sweet face and twinkling blue eyes which hinted that she might have been quite pretty as a young girl. Many times the Sands invited my young cousin, then around two years old, upstairs over the store, to their living quarters, to chat and perhaps offer her a cookie and some juice. Mrs. Sands always wore the "compulsory" sweater too! Many of the items and cans of paint on their