

One summer, probably in the late 30's, Fanwood suffered quite a serious flood. After seemingly endless rains, I believe in the month of August, the water was so deep that I have vivid recollections of my father and all the other commuters having to do a balancing act, walking to the train station on the green benches that were placed along the way to Station Park for that purpose! Quite a hilarious sight, to a child, but the waters were that deep.

But more about the town itself. The streets. Best remembered because I lived on it, was Martine Avenue. At that time, the street was made of concrete, and was two lanes, not very wide, but adequate for the times. Wavy, thick strips of tar zig-zagging horizontally mended large cracks here and there. It seemed as though a lot of cars passed by then, but in comparison to the traffic on that same street today, it was a country road! South Ave. was also made of concrete, and at the intersection of South and Martine Aves. stood the only traffic light in town! There was none, as there is now, at the corner of North and Martine (which made for some chaotic tie-ups at commuter times).

There was no light at the corner of La Grande and Martine either, nor at La Grande and Terrill Rds. There were only "Stop" signs. La Grande was just a narrow, Macadam road, rather rural in nature, but its intersection at Martine could still be quite dangerous at times. I recall there were collisions at that corner during my childhood. On at least one occasion, Pete Foglia astounded us all by single-handedly "righting" a car which had overturned in an accident there. The sidewalk in front of our house, leading to La Grande, was just a dirt path, and there was no curbing. I was frequently admonished by my parents to "be very careful" at that corner.

Pete owned the land on that corner, where the dentists' building now stands, and which like so many other areas in town was just a field. Each spring Pete obtained a permit to purposely burn off the long grass there, in order to prevent any accidental field fires. One year, I seem to recall the fire got out of control, and Pete had to call the fire engines. Excitement!

In Pete's side yard, horseshoe pitching was a favorite summer pastime. Pete, my father, and other neighbors spent many enjoyable hours tossing the iron shoes, and the familiar "clang" would ring out throughout the neighborhood, as the horseshoes hit the iron peg. People enjoyed slow-moving, easy type activities in those days, but there was a good deal of walking involved in this game, as you strode back and forth to retrieve your horseshoes.