

The Neighborhood Park



The neighborhood park was and still is located in Scotch Plains--across Route 22. It was our favorite playground.

Part of the the Union County Park Commission, it is located below Sealy's Pond. The Green Brook winds its way down the mountain and levels off in the park. The falls was always a favorite. The daring ones would walk across or swim in the deepest part of the brook. We especially liked it when when it rained hard. Then the brook would be raging, flooding the park. The kids gathered to view this spectacle.

It was a lovely brook that ran through the park. Long before pollution was even a bad word, the water was clear and we could walk across the brook on the large rocks or cross it on the foot bridge. Before the expansion of roads and businesses, there were lovely weeping willows in the wetland section of the park. Now that is gone, making way for a super roadway.

We spent many summer days and evenings playing shuffle board, whiffle ball, and tennis, swinging on the swings, sliding down the old-fashioned sliding board, see-sawing. We loved to pump the fountains--it was clear well water--and watch the water swoosh up a few feet.

There were softball games in the evening and the neighbors would turn out to cheer the local teams consisting of residents. This was before organized anything.

In the center of the park was the shelter house. Here we could pick up play equipment and return it when we were done. It also housed the rest rooms. A fireplace was in the center of the shelter--to be used whenever there was a big gathering. As I recall these memories, the musty smell from the shelter lingers.