

Growing up “Bradley”

Stories from the 40's and up
Bradley, Maine 2023



Tea Party 1946 at Bradley Village School.

Left to Right:

Ruth Ann Guay Lucas, Mary Latno, Martha
Latno, Bernice Murray
and Lorraine Garceau.

Teacher, Mrs. Cram, would set up the tea
party when the girls were special good.

“Back in the day” when kids
could roam the streets of
Bradley without a care,
growing up was a fun and
happy time. Times to do all
kinds of stuff. Although I did
not grow up in Bradley, I have
heard many stories! You will
read in these pages a few of
those happenings told by
those who were a part of that
growing up experience.
Apologies to those folks I did
not contact and those who
didn't get back to me, maybe
next time. Enjoy a look back!

~Ann Delaware~

Special thanks to April (Cookson) Dorr
at the Bradley Town office
for her amazing help to put this together!!

Some of my most vivid memories from growing up in the Town of Bradley go back to the late sixties and early seventies. At that time, the Viola Rand School housed grades K – 8 that allowed us all plenty of time to develop long lasting relationships, with not only our fellow classmates, but their siblings as well. Everyone knew everyone back then, something I wish was a little more prevalent today, in our social media world, where you don't really "know" anyone.

As a youngster, I loved to play baseball, and would do so as often as I could. We didn't have a lot of "organized" athletics at that time. If you didn't play on your middle or high school sports teams, your only outlet would be unsanctioned pick-up games with your friends. Although today that would be unheard of, back in those days, we had no problems making it happen. And here's how it worked...

Back in those days, Cram Street only went as far as the Great Works Stream bridge beside the Beal and Gardiner homes that lay on the banks of the stream. I mention that for anyone who lives in the 3-mile stretch that now has become Baker Lane and beyond.

I remember grabbing a bat, a baseball and hanging my glove (or maybe two) over the handlebars of my bike and starting at the stream, I would go driveway to driveway, collecting recruits for a pick-up game of baseball in Guay's field on Bullen Street, which was probably a mile and a half from my starting point. By the time, I got to the field, between the Beals, Delawares, Snows, Kings, Landrys, Bresnahans, Petries, and a few friends we alerted during the school

day, we would always have enough to choose up sides and have all nine positions covered for the game. A game that “we kids” created, without any adult supervision or orchestration. Oh, by the way, there were no phones either, but our parents likely knew exactly where we were.

We didn’t have to “Google”, “Facebook” or “Text” to formulate some great times back in the day. Just a little ambition, a short bike ride and a boat load of friends were all we needed for some of the best times of our life...and I thank God for those simpler days.

~Al Jackson Jr.~

Herb Pelletier and Hector Guay had a dog. They tied him to a sled to help deliver papers around Town.

During World War II, we’d collect old newspapers for the war effort. We’d gather them at John Baker’s barn and on Saturday a truck would come and take them to Bangor. The money we got paid helped pay our way to Brandy Pond on our summer Boy Scout trip. Edward Buck Sr. had an old truck and a flat bottom boat to take us out to Brandy for a week.

~Lucien LaVoie~

There was always a pick-up baseball game at the ball field on Broad Street. Basketball at the Town Hall and outside the Village School. There were 2 hoops outside. I was an altar boy at St. Ann’s Church for Fr. Bouchard’s 7 am Mass- then I would go to school.

In winter I'd walk across the dam on the ice to take Dad's supper to him at the sorting gap. He'd be on the pier all night and built a shelter and a fire in any ole barrel to keep warm.

~Joel Shorette~

In the summertime we would investigate Carter Cemetery. The old road followed the riverbank along the back of Elm Street through the company field and down behind Carter Woods. Note: Carter Woods was not developed then. There is a veteran's stone there,

Calvin Carter (GOP 14th ME INF), and the Morgan family is also buried there. If you would like to go to the Carter Cemetery, you can go down to Morin Fuel's driveway to the far back and walk the river's edge up to the Cemetery. Rodney Morin made a path, so it is much easier to visit.

~Audrey Brooks Wilcox~

In high school I worked at Don's Market – stocking shelves and taking care of bottles, got paid \$2.00 a day!

~Joel Shorette~

There was always something to do outdoors. At night we'd play hide and seek. Well, one night I decided I knew the best place to hide. Next door, my grandfather had a stone fireplace, I would hide in there- guess what – there was a skunk in there, and it's hard to get rid of that smell!

Some nights we'd have a bonfire at the field, one mile out behind Tony Guay's and skate! We were always riding our bikes somewhere.

~ Brian Landry~

In the spring of 1977 Viola Rand 8th grade graduating class went to Dummer Beach, Weld, Maine. Arriving by bus, to our surprise it was snowing. The kids jumped off the bus and went swimming anyways. The weekend continued to be interesting! The Principal Mike Cormier decided to step back and put Mr. DiBiase, Jerry, myself and Charlene Lufkin in charge. He thought if he was in charge the kids wouldn't have as much fun. It didn't matter who was in charge; they had fun, believe me. They were full of energy; in spite of the weather, more so at night! They kept us up all night, looking for kids in each other's tent, (girls and boys). One night they decided they would toilet paper the woods. They didn't have as much fun the next day when they had to pick up all of the litter thru the entire woods. Campground owner was understanding. On the trip back they thought they'd sleep all the way. The chaperones had other ideas! We sang songs all the way home and made them join in, Ha Ha! The 8th grade class of '77 was a great bunch of kids.

They
talked about this trip for years.

~Jerry & Diane Roy~

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~Jerry & Diane Roy~

Tin Can Alley – fill can with rocks and toss the can, run and hide- got caught – didn't do that again!

~Brian Landry~

Skating on Otter Stream – we'd shovel off the ice, have a fire. After Christmas, we'd collect the trees and burn them – makes a great fire. Not just us kids, parents would come join us.

Go to Barton's Store and buy a spear, cut an older bush
to finish.

We'd spear suckers at night in the stream behind my
mother's and father's house.

To measure the thickness of the ice:
One inch Keep off
Two inches One may
Three inches Small group
Four inches OK

~Richard Petrie~

The Three

In the late 30's and early 40's Main Street played an
important part in a Bradley kid's life. No, we didn't have a
Grant's, or a 5 and 10, or an A+P. But we did have The
Three - Norman's, Don's and Bartons.

Normans sold among other things, groceries, gas, ice
cream and of course, penny candy. The homemade
ice cream sold for a whopping \$0.07 a single – soon
to rise to the exorbitant price of \$0.14! A bag of
Humpty Dumpty chips sold for less than a dime and
for another dime you could buy a twin popsicle to
share with a friend, and the penny candy. Mary Janes,
Bit O' Honey, Squirrel Nuts, Turkish Taffy, and my
favorite Mint Juleps, 2 for \$0.05. (I did break my 12-
year molar on that delicious green stuff, which
resulted in my first extraction!) Who can forget the
time word got out to run down to Normans with pots

and spoons for free chocolate ice cream?! The latest gallons were not quite up to their high standards, oh, happy day for kids!

Don's – Don would often be standing just outside the store with his white meat cutter apron chatting with Harold Shorette and Russell Spencer- maybe waiting for his corton to cool. Don sold meat, groceries, sundry goods and again – penny candy. He also sold ice cream bars and Dixie Cups. After collecting a certain number of lids, you could send them into the company and receive a colored portrait (poster) of such famous actors as Alan Ladd or Mona Freeman.

Don also provided an important service to the town. When a couple was to be married it was understood (No invitations needed) everybody was invited to the bridal shower at the Town Hall- cake and ice cream to be served with punch or coffee. Money could be left at Don's Market and your name would go on a donor list.

As early teens, there were few ways to earn money- bean picking at 2 cents a pounds or baby sitting at 25 cents an hour, if you were 14 or older. So, Don became a source of revenue for funding our penny candy purchases.

Scavenging through the Town dump behind Barton's store we would find soda pop or milk bottles. Don would redeem them for 3 cents or 5 cents. To think Bradley had a recycling center in the early 50's!

Bartons was the Post Office and a grocery store combined, and again – plenty of penny candy. It had a pickle barrel (large), benches, and a wood stove. This is where the town sages-Popeye Spencer, Wendell

Spencer, Shrimp Moors, Harold Shorette, Merle Dority, Everett Flanders and others would gather to discuss Town politics and the weather. It was a cozy welcoming place with lots of good humor.

I didn't spend as many pennies at Barton's mainly because Normans was the first store we came to walking from school and it was just across from St. Ann Church. We could munch and crunch waiting for catechism classes to start, so by the time we got to Bartons we were broke.

No, we didn't have big name stores on Main Street, but we had The Three. What more could a kid ask for?

~Martha Latno~

On a regular bus run Cyr Bus would come to town about 3:30pm with Mill workers, the nuns to teach at St. Ann Church and school kids. The bus would stop and start. So, I was riding my bike and talking to the kids on the side of the road when bang- I ran into the back of the stopped bus. The bus driver, Woodrow Libby, come out to check on me. I said I was ok – he jumped back in the bus and was off!

~ Richard Petrie~

When we were kids, marbles were a big thing. We'd make holes in the driveway and play for hours.

~Pat White Bingaman~

I remember when I was 8 years old, I bought my first car,
a 1939 Dodge Fluid Drive. I'd drive it up stream and in
the winter on the ice.

~Lawrence Jackson~

My sister Lorraine would always make trouble for us
boys. So, we wanted to get back at her. We took an old
shoe box and put doll clothes and pooped in it. It was
some surprise for her.

~Alfred Jackson as told by his wife Charlene~

I remember the neighborhood kids would have a game
of pick-up baseball on the lawn of Ed Buck's house on
Cram Street. Kevin Michaud would be on his knees,
crunches and all swinging the bat, hit the ball and
running to first base (sometimes that was across the
street at his house), he was safe! These games
happened often and all enjoyed them.

~A.D~

I was kind of secluded in my own world down by the
river on 8 acres of cleared land and a bunch of trees that
are no longer there. I am now raising my own children in
this changed landscape. We didn't have neighborhood
kids, we had to walk, bike or get a ride to places. We had
the best sledding hill. I remember riding my bike with NO
helmet up and down the Main Rd., and around the
Carter Woods Circle. My sister Melanie and I would
walk to Spencer's Ice Cream often during the summers,
which is where our "spare tire" donuts came from. Our
dad, Rodney, would pick them up during his Saturday

morning coffee stop with the other locals. I remember playing with friends on Baker Lane. I got to have pool parties on my birthday May 14th. Maine kids are tough.

We might have been purple or blue, but we had a lot of fun. Sometimes we would jump the ditch and go up in the graveyard next to our property to explore, reading the dates on the stones until it got too “spooky” to be up there anymore. Fishing in the river just behind my house, flying kites, making spaceships with cardboard boxes, homemade slip n slides, bike races down our big hill, rolling down the hill without worries of ticks...playing lawn DARTS, horseshoes, and jumping off oil trucks into big snowbanks my dad would get his tractor out to build for us. I loved catching fireflies, frogs, salamanders, watching butterflies, finding freshly hatched snapping turtles, and just enjoying the outside!!!

It was a time (the 1980's) when we only had channels 2,5,7 and 12 on the TV and kids were outside till dark, or it was mealtime. The best way to grow up!!! If you had a rock and a stick, you were set for the day.

Spencer's: Paul Gallant taught me the value of a dollar at about 6 years old. I had gone down to get an ice cream with \$0.75 in my pocket. Ice cream cones were now \$1.00 or \$1.25. I asked why, being a curious kiddo, Paul went through the gauntlet of his costs from milk to electricity then asked me if my dad ever had to raise the price of oil...this lesson stuck with me for life. He let me leave with a past price cone but said next time I'd need to bring more money.

Fish: once a year the fisheries people, perhaps NOAA, restocked the salmon in the river and would dump them behind our house. We would run as fast as we could to

watch this event.

~Lisa Morin Colby~

We always burned tires on Otter Stream. One night I asked Frank Currier for some and he said he'd bring them down to the ice! He brought an airplane tire, it was big. We'd turn it so all sides would burn, it lasted a whole week.

~Richard Petrie~

I have lived in Bradley all of my eighty years. I lived on two places in Main Street, Carter Woods and now on Ten Road. I can think of several people who have also lived in town all their lives. Life may not have been as exciting as it was for those living in the city but it had advantages. Most everyone knows everyone else in town and their business! That could be a disadvantage. It has changed somewhat in the last twenty years or so as new developments have taken place and new people moved in and others have moved away. What we used to think of as the center of town isn't really Main Street!

When growing up in Bradley there were three stores- Spencer's (known for ice cream), Don's Market and Barton's Store, which housed the Post Office. The PCF would blow a whistle several times a day. I think once in the morning, at noon, 4 o'clock and at nine or nine-thirty. The school was kindergarten through eighth grade. Even that moved from Main Street to Highland Avenue.

When I stop and recall what we did for entertainment back in the 50's and what kids do today, I think we were

much better off than the kids stuck on phones all the time. We were playing outside much of the day (and evenings). Whether it was hide-n-seek, tag, riding bikes, we made our own good times. It didn't cost money as we didn't have any! As most families had only one car, there was no transportation until dad got home from work.

A couple of things we got to do for fun were swimming at "the cove" and ice skating at Shorette's (really Otter Stream). I can't and never could swim but I remember riding my bike to the cove. I did know how to skate and really enjoyed gathering with other kids to ice skate evenings and weekends. We could skate up to Milford (to the "wide place") and down to the entrance to the Penobscot River by the old school house. At night someone would build a bonfire and we would all sit around on whatever was available and just talk about nothing. We would go home smelling like smoked herring. To have a fire, guys would gather old tires (this was in the days before pollution was a big issue) and brush or scraps of wood. Also, people would give us their Christmas trees to burn. Remember most people didn't have artificial trees then. Remember when Clayton cracked his head once when we were playing Crack the Whip. We won't talk about what went on under the bridge.

The other thing I remember was many days after school were spent at Church. Either at catechism or choir. We also went on Saturday to help the nuns clean the Church after choir. We would put on plays about once a year or so. Father would have to bring the nuns down from Old Town every day to teach us singing and

prepare us for the sacraments.

~Priscilla Shorette Applegate~

I never missed a day of school, walked every day. So, when I graduated, they presented me with a pair of doll shoes to commemorate this great event.

~Al Jackson as told to wife Charlene Jackson~

When the Baptist Church would put on a Bean Supper, we'd walk to the Town Hall from school (across the street) and be the first to eat before the crowd would come from the mill.

~Betty Brooks~

Always after school we'd stop on the way home to visit our family, aunt or grandmother. Water fights were a big thing back in the day. Ruby Oakes and Harold Shorette were always ready for a water fight. We'd also gather in the field by the first bridge and play ball till it got dark. Sometimes, guys would come with their motor bikes and give us a ride around the loop.

~Betty Brooks~

The Boy Scouts would sweep the streets of the Town, the money we got went to send us to Boy Scout Camp Roosevelt.

I was the youngest of 8 children and every Sunday night we'd all gather at my house. Always had a lunch. My oldest sister Mary played the piano and my brother Edmond would sing away. Before they all left, we had to

sing my mother's favorite song, "I wish all my children were babies again, playing around my knees" by Gene Autry.

~RuthAnn Shorette~

Pat Michaud, Cheryl King and I after we had trick or treated on Halloween would sit under the light post at Sucky's and we'd eat away.

~RuthAnn Shorette~

BRADLEY'S THREE MOM AND POP STORES

SPENCER'S STORE: I lived next door to "Spencer's store". It proudly had the "Flying A" sign for its gasoline sales. Inside I would liken it somewhat to today's mini-mart. My family only bought bread and milk, yet my great- great uncle and aunt purchased all their groceries from Spencer's. One day I asked my mother WHY our driveway was so wide where Spencer's customers parked? She said years ago this was the access to the ferry to cross the Penobscot River from Bradley to Old Town.

Spencer's was well known for their home-made ice cream. Lots of flavors yet I usually got a scoop of chocolate, French vanilla or coffee. I am a purist. I remember paying a nickel for a scoop. The price went to \$0.07 a scoop then a dime for a scoop, then 12 cents. With a dime I could buy a scoop of ice cream and a bag of King Cole's potato chips...or penny candy: Bazooka bubble gum, a pack of Juicy Fruit gum, a roll of Lifesavers, fireballs or a tootsie pop, pieces or rolls.

DON'S MARKET: I never really frequented Don's Market. But when I wanted a half pint of fries, ice cream sandwich, ice cream bar, creamsicle or Humpty Dumpty chips, they were only sold at Don's Market.

BARTON'S STORE: My favorite chore was to walk Main Street to Barton's to get our mail in box 31. It was high up on the top row so I had to ask for the mail. When I was tall enough, I could turn the combination dial to get the mail on my own. I would occasionally browse the store yet the items sold; can goods, etc., did not interest me.

~Nancy Nolette~

When I was in the 7th or 8th grade different students were chosen to walk the kindergarten kids up to the Post Office where the parent would pick them up. It was a reward to be allowed to do this.

We played hop scotch, jump rope and double Dutch.

We'd go swim in the pool at the river , there was a dock to jump off of. I wasn't allowed to go alone, only if my older sister went.

~Rosemarie Shorette Bate~

Ed told me this story a long time ago. He was about 10 or 11 and he and a friend would pick up cigarette butts around the stores and roll a new cigarette. One day they were under the bridge over Great Works Stream having a great time, walking across the bridge was Theresa

Gallant Cote. She saw smoke rising from under the bridge and goes to investigate, there was Ed. She grabbed him by the ear and marched him to his mother. Ed never smoked after that.

~As told to Ann Delaware~

Growing up in Bradley during the 40's and 50's

Bullen Street was a dirt road and in the winter snow and ice froze on the road so we could skate on it. That was until dirt was put down to prevent cars from sliding.

Another place to skate was up in the field when run off from the cow barn froze over. We learned not to fall because the ice was "yellow".

Our dog Blackie came with us on Sunday mornings howling to sing along with the bells from the Baptist Church which was just down the street.

Our favorite pastime was going up to the woods exploring.

My father took us up one day to the woods to show us how to get home if we got lost. He had us close our eyes and turn around, then he showed us where to look for the sun and to listen for the mill. He gave us directions from that, needless to say we never got lost. We spent many hours up in the woods as a means of recreation, no TV or video games at that time.

Skating down at the bridge is something many did. Sunday afternoons and in the evenings with bon fires

from tires was a joy that was fun for all who skated there. Those were the good ole days for us who lived in Bradley many years ago.

The "Minstrel Shows" were a big thing at the Bradley Town Hall. Anyone with talent to sing could sign up. I remember Curly Avery singing and Mary Thibault who could play anything on the piano making these shows something never to be forgotten.

~Mary Latno~

Ice trucks would come to town and if you wanted ice, you put an ice sign in your window and the ice man would leave you a block. The same was for the dry cleaners.

~Richard Petrie~

I was born and raised on Bullen Street, surrounded by grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. All social activities were either there or at Church. Martha and Mary Latno, Rosemarie Shorette Bate and I took tap dancing lessons from Gloria Latno in the Latno's barn.

Every year at Christmas time my uncle would put on a Santa suit and come to the kitchen window to get our list. One year my grandfather said if Santa came, he was going to shoot him. So, when Santa came, we heard a gunshot and thought he had killed Santa. Mom said it took her all night to calm us down.

~Evelyn Landry Petrie~

LUNCH TIME AT VIOLA RAND

Durning my grammar school years, I walked to school, nice days, windy days, rainy days, and snowy days. I would usually walk home for lunch. Most students walked to and from school back then.

On foul weather days, I would bring my lunch and made a sandwich of either peanut butter and jelly, peanut butter and marshmallow fluff, fried spam, fried bologna, ham salad, egg salad, or cream cheese and olive. Yes, it was packed in a metal, themed, lunch box that closed with a clip. I preferred the western scenarios (Superman would do) on my lunch box.

After lunch we were encouraged to play outside. I was obsessed with baseball. I did not understand why we did not play baseball every day year around with each fall deferring to football and later basketball.

On bad weather days lunch hour allowed students to remain in the classroom. We had board games we could play: Candyland, Chutes and Ladders, and Checkers. We could create paper challenges of “hangman” and always “tic-tac-toe.” I preferred the game board of Chutes and Ladders.

On some cold winter days, I sometimes walked home from lunch taking a “secret” shortcut. I would walk Highland Street towards home and stopped directly across the dead end of Pine Street separated by Otter Stream. I would carefully slip, slide and step down the embankment to cross the stream where the water was just dribbling by and was narrow to cross. I would take giant leaps across the water holes. I had to be careful

not to get my shoes or boots and clothing wet or muddy.

Then I had to take large steps to reach the top of the opposite bank. All I had to do was walk down this short street to main road and “voila” I was home for lunch.

Then I had extra time to watch my favorite noontime soap operas. “Love of Life” and “Days of our Lives.” I had to leave before “The Guiding Light” finished. My return to school reversed my shortcut home so I would not be late for the afternoon session.

I had to be home by 4 o’clock for “Dark Shadows”

EPILOGUE—HOT SCHOOL LUNCHES AT DON’S MARKET

I was recently told that a decade later another Viola Rand student, and his friends admitted to using the same “secret” shortcut at lunch time to get a hot meal of fries and a burger, a hot dog or other edible items at Don’s Market.

~Nancy Nolette~

A bunch of the boys and girls too would get an old potato bag, fill it with rocks, tie a rope to it and lay it on the side of the road. We’d hide in the Company Field and wait to see if someone would stop and if they did, we’d pull the rope and run! Well, this one particular day we did it – a man stopped his car and went to the bag when he grabbed it – we pulled and ran- he hollered, “Don’t run, I’ve haven’t seen this done for a long time, come back and I’ll give you each a nickel,” – he did –

what a surprise for us.

~Ed Delaware as told to Ann Delaware~

On the same idea, a bunch of us girls would fill an ole flour bag with stuff and lay it in the road- we'd hide in an ole tree by the Company Field and laugh when someone would stop. Sometimes they chased us, we'd head home.

~Valerie Gallant Buchanan~

At the end of Boynton Street in the 50's, Forest Willette had a food stand. He sold hot dogs, fried clams (the best), French fries, and lots of other stuff. There was a juke box and ping-pong table in the back room to dance. It was a favorite of the locals. They were great people. When Paul and I were dating we'd go there and have lunch, sit out back at the booth and dance to the juke box. It was a big deal back then.

~Valerie Buchanan~

One of the things we did as kids was to collect "Belly Busters" and have a fight – throwing them at each other – oh, what a mess. Today no one knows what a "Belly Buster" is!

~Christine Buchanan Holt~

Who would have thought that, that scrawny kid who rode his bike all over Town and spent evenings watching the test pattern at Don's Market would have several

terms on the Board of Selectmen, and be on the Board that hired the first Town Manager.

~John Petrie~

I have many fond memories growing up on Elm Street, the point or the moose yard. There were many large old elm trees that all lined the street. There is not one left from 40's and 50's, when I grew up on Elm Street.

One of the places that I remember was the big old farm house, that had never seen a coat of paint. It had a shed attached to the barn that housed the outhouse. There was no indoor plumbing, but they did have a well and a hand pump. The shed served as the way to the barn in the winter months. Addie Niles Spencer lived there, Norman Spencer's mother. Addie sold a few groceries from the house but best of all she sold penny candy.

There was a pasture and an apple orchard behind the house and the remains of an old ice house. Then there was Chubby, the white horse that lived in the barn. The blacksmith would come to the barn to work on Chubby's feet and put on new horseshoes. As kids we were all excited to be able to watch him with his black apron. Then there was the ice truck that would deliver blocks of ice to neighbors who did not have an electric refrigerator. The ice blocks were buried in sawdust on the back of the truck. The driver would use large ice tongs to deliver the blocks of ice. In the summer the kids would go to the back of the truck to eat ice chips.

~Audrey Brooks Wilcox~

I remember at the Village school downstairs was Mrs. Cram or Mrs. Hilliker, across the hall was Mrs. Viola Rand, upstairs was Mrs. Doris Wood – can't remember who was across the hall.

~Valerie Gallant Buchanan~

A TRIBUTE TO MRS. MARJORIE HILLIKER

Mrs. Hilliker was my teacher in the first grade.

Mrs. Hilliker was my teacher in the second grade.

Mrs. Hilliker was my teacher in the third grade.

Mrs. Hilliker taught me the basic and essential learning skills well.

~Nancy Nolette~

We'd play in the road, "Red light, Red light."

Latno's cows would come down the road from their pasture to the dairy to be milked at 4pm. There were lots of poop in the road all the time. Some cows would stray and we'd help herd them back. There was a lead cow with a bell the others would follow her. Mr. Latno would come down behind them with his mean dog, Devil. He'd bite you if you got near him.

~Paulette Guay Gifford~

We'd squash out cans with our feet and run around the neighborhood.

~Richard Petrie~

There was a couple who lived on Pine Street who worked at the shoe shop and they owned a TV. On Friday nights we kids in the neighborhood would gather outside their window to watch the "Test Patterns" and when "Boston Blacky" or "Life of Riley" would come on she'd invite us in and make us popcorn.

~Richard Petrie~

My class was the last 8th grade class to graduate from the Village School and my grandson, Scott was in the last 8th grade to graduate from Viola Rand School.

~John Petrie~

When Bradley had their Town meetings at the Town Hall, the Thomasine Ladies of the Baptist Church would put on a Bean dinner. They would get a few of us kids from school to help pick up food from different homes and take it to the Town Hall. They would drive us around and we'd get to eat after that.

~Lorraine Brooks Herzog~

Eddie Delaware, Sr. and I were fishing at the fishway by the dam and Moses Jackson, Game Warden came along and told us it was illegal to fish there. Then he said "I'm gonna take you guys to Bangor." So, he took us to the Veazie dam and we helped him

clean out the racks. Our parents didn't know until he brought us home.

~John Petrie~

In the summertime when Daddy was home (probably weekends) he would get the hose. All the neighborhood kids would come and we had a great water fight- guess who held the hose.

~Lorraine Brooks Herzog~

On hot days we'd ride our bikes or walk to the cove at Blackman's Stream to swim, some days we'd go there in the morning, walk home for lunch and go back again to swim. We did that a lot of days in the summer.

~Joanne Gallant & Valerie Buchanan~

There were so many games we did in the 40's. Hide – n- Seek was a great community fun game. Some evenings there were many boys and girls gathered at my house to play. Eddie Delaware, Jim Brooks, Barbara Bracy, Lorraine Soucie, and many more would begin. Ed would start counting and we'd all run and hide but Ed would watch where everyone went and catch us. My mother would sit on the porch and laugh- then finally we discovered how he'd always found us.

~Ann Thibault Smith~

One of my most fond memories is going to Don's Market. His store was a wonderful place to go, from getting a new kite, jump rope, or a Jax set every spring to

getting candy apples in the fall and pickled eggs. My Dad's favorite was hamburger royal, loaded to the Italians we got on our last day of school to eat picnic style on the school's front lawn. My sister Barbara's favorite was candy apples, my sister Rosemary's was root beer popsicles and mine was the sugar babies. My mother's favorite was the Peach Blossoms. There were lots of penny candy choices from candy buttons, pixie Stix, Ni-L-Nip (bottle drinks), smarties, and much more. The cooler right by the front door was unique in that you could get your glass bottle of soda right out of the ice-cold water. Don himself was iconic with his white apron, leaning against the door jam watching cars go by on Main Street. Being able to go barefoot all summer and we were allowed to go into Don's Market barefoot. Wonderful memories.

~Suzanne Richards Delaware~

Mary Delaware Beal and I used to go down the bank of the river behind the house and pick moss for our school projects and explore the area. Mary Jane Currier and I used to get a baby and ride them in their stroller around the loop. Mary Jane had Nina & Frank's baby and I had Aunt Clara and Uncle Calvin's baby.

~Lorraine Brooks Herzog~

Uncle Joe Pelletier built a cart with 2 wheels- narrow high wagon wheels and he said I could use it and so I went up the road (The Irish Coast). I told the kids I'd take them for a ride as long as they stayed over the wheel area. So off we went Evelyn & Lanette Landry, Lorraine & Ronnie Pelletier and Victor Smith in the cart. I pulled

them down the road. They were having a great time and moved away from the center and I went up in the air holding onto the handles- out the back of the cart went all of them tumbling down – Lanette was on the bottom and she broke her leg. I never used it again!

~Bud Smith~

Both our parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts were bi-lingual. My younger sister, Carol and I were raised speaking French-Canadian at home that was reinforced when speaking with our relatives.

As preschoolers' Carol and I played outside sometimes together and sometimes with our next-door friends, the Hildreths, the Morrisons and the Shorettes. Of course, Carol and I only spoke French-Canadian.

Many years later, one childhood friend voluntarily admitted they thought Carol and I were foreigners because we spoke a different language than them.

During childhood I lost my French-Canadian language proficiency with the acquisition of a television set and attending school at Viola Rand then speaking only English in the classroom.

~Nancy Nolette~

When Halloween rolled around my friends Sharon LaVoie & Patty LaVoie & I would dress up in old hats & shirts & I would tease my hair (I have a lots of hair) and put baby powder on it. Off we went out Cram Street – when we get to Ann Delaware's – we scared her really

bad! She took a picture & I have it.

~Ann Buchanan Thornton~

What was it like growing up in Bradley you ask. Well, I'd say it was the best for me. I had both pairs of grandparents living in the same town, in the awesome houses my parents grew up in. On warm summer days my grandmother Pauline Richards and I would grab a loaf of bread and walk over to the bridge on Bullen Street and feed the ducks that would be swimming in Otter Stream. Sometimes there would be many and other times there wouldn't, but it was nice spending time with my Meem. Being able to ride my bike down was always fun. Getting back home going up Cram Street hill never was. I will admit I called my parents to come pick me up maybe once, okay more than once. That hill was huge!

Another thing I loved growing up was my other grandmother, Ann Delaware's beautiful garden. I remember feeling like I was in a whole other world when I was in it. It was even better when Meme would take me around to every plant and tell me what they were. I got my love for flowers from her for sure.

I also will never forget the times my friends and I would ride our bikes around, playing at the playground at Viola Rand School, even though we didn't go there anymore.

Growing up in Bradley was one of the best things in my life. No matter where I was in the Town, I always felt safe.

~Abby Delaware~

In the 70's Troop 49 – Bradley Scouts had fun at the Old Bradley Town Hall. Scout Master Jerry Roy and Webelos Scout Master Ed Buck made it fun for the boys. Building their Pinewood Derby cars and racing them there plus it was big enough for the boys to run around and get rid of some of their energy before the meetings. Den Mothers were unsung heroes but a great asset to the Bradley Scouts. The Scouts had equal times at Camp Roosevelt. Ed Buck hosted many events at his camp at Chemo Pond. He was a good man, great times together.

~Jerry & Diane Roy~

I was probably 13 or 14 and I'd ride my bike up to Old Town High School for football practice. One morning I was riding up the Bradley Road and there on the side of the road was a 1979 Trans Am convertible for sale. Well, I stopped and convinced the owner I had a driver's license – so we took it for a spin – the owner in the passenger seat. He decided we needed gas so I pulled in at the filling station at the Milford Crossing and he got out and was fueling it up, I looked across at a lady filling her car- it was Ann Delaware. I slide down in the seat as much as possible so she wouldn't see me – she didn't. The owner got back in the car and I drove back to his place. I told him I wasn't interested in the car- jumped back on my bike and off to practice. I never told my mother – but she knows now!

~Kris Rutherford~

Ken Shorette's family lived in the brick house across from Spencer's Ice Cream right next to St. Ann's

Catholic Church. I am the oldest of his four children, Wilhelmina, Ken Jr., Margaret and me. Our mother, Gloria, had her hands full with four children all within a five-year span. Dad worked at the mill and, on occasion, Mom worked at the Shoe Shop in Old Town. We did not venture far from Bradley in those days. Entertainment for me was watching everything that went on next door at the Church. I saw beautiful brides, kids in their First Communion finest, big heavy looking caskets and pall bearers in suits followed by the grieving family. I watched the priest walk in circles around the church reading what I thought must be a good book. As kids, we studied our prayers and catechism questions so we could get a religious picture at our class on Saturday morning. The priest, who lived in the rectory, drove his big black car to Old Town to pick up the nuns and bring them to Bradley for our catechism class. When his car turned into the driveway of the rectory, we ran across to the basement of the Church for our class. I respected the religious and worked hard to win their approval. We didn't get into much mischief because confessions were Saturday afternoons at 3 o'clock. As a family, we went to church every Sunday morning. The women wore hats and many men wore ties. These were simpler times. My world was small and life sheltered. I even thought one day I might be a nun. Oh My!

~Ethellena (Shorette) Hill~.

Dough boys from Don's Market, being able to bike or walk to Don's from Viola Rand School during lunch, was in itself awesome. Epic Dough Boys, chicken burgers and all the penny candy you could carry. Just what we

need to stay focused for the second half of the school day. Scout Pack 49, the Sesquicentennial parade and celebration, Ann Delaware and Joan Brown dressed up as clowns, biking up and down Baker Lane, must have been at least a billion times, with friends that we still cherish today. All the things that put a smile on my face, when I think about growing up in Bradley.

~Jason Milligan~

We had no cell phones, cable TV, or internet, but we still managed to have fun. I grew up on Cram Street and at the time we moved out there it was all dirt road from Highland Avenue out, not a lot of people lived out there so I use to spend a lot of time at my grandparent's house on Elm Street because most of my friends live in or near the village. During the summers we would get together, play games like tag, Hide-n-Seek, even toss a few marbles, other times we would venture into Carter Woods exploring and even playing games out there. Winter time we would get together at Gary DeGrasse's parents' house for a fun day of sliding down the hill which ran from Albion Lavoie's back yard down across Elm Street over that bank and down to Great Works Stream. We always manage to find something to do.

~Lloyd Beal~

I might have been 8 or 9 and we had a blizzard. There was so much snow that my Gramma Ingalls wouldn't let us go out to play. I said, "Gramma, I will put on 2 pairs of socks, 2 snow pants and 2 jackets." She said "No, no, no!" So, I went upstairs to Eddies room opened the window and jumped out and landed in a deep snow

drift, so deep that when I opened my eyes all I could see was white. It took me 20 minutes to get out of the snow drift.

~David Delaware~

One year we had a real bad ice storm and I was able to ice skate all the way to Spencer's store without ever touching tar.

~David Delaware~

I was out bike riding on my way home and I was about where Jacksons lived across from the frog pond when I looked over my shoulder and saw the rain coming up Cram Street. So, I booked it home but by the time I got there, there wasn't a dry spot on me.

~David Delaware~

Growing up in Bradley.....

My family moved to Bradley when I was in the middle of my 7th grade year after my dad retired from the Air Force. Mom and Dad were both from Old Town and wanted to settle the family near their roots. I had been attending the Jr. High in Old Town since we had been living with my grandmother on French Island until we found our permanent residence. I was allowed to finish the year in Old Town since there was a bus already running to the high school.

One of the first friends I met was David Delaware. Though we weren't attending school together yet, he lived just up the road on Cram Street. He was either always at my house or I was down the road hanging out with him as Ann and Ed Delaware treated me like I was

one of their kids. They had a camp out on Great Works Stream that was only accessible by boat in the summers or by snowmobile in the winters. By inviting me on a few weekend outings, I got to experience what I think a lot of Mainers take for granted and that is the natural beauty of the area and what recreation that it affords. I got to canoe out to the camp one summer and spend the weekend fishing and I got to snowmobile out with the family and spend the weekend snowshoeing and snowmobiling. I thoroughly appreciated those opportunities because they were a lot of “first” for me.

First time canoeing.... First time snowmobiling...., first time climbing Big Rock in a sled pulled behind a snowmobile (though it was a surprise because I had no idea Eddie was even about to attempt it and didn't have time to bail out... luckily, he knew what he was doing and we made it...lol) Other firsts included navigating in the dark in deep snow to the outhouse which made me appreciate modern plumbing and staying in a camp in the winter.

I have a lot of fond memories around my childhood in Bradley. David turned over his paper route to me so I met almost every family on Cram Street from that point and would get up with my dad every morning at 4am so he would go to work at the airport and I would deliver papers before school. Most days, I would barely make it home to catch the bus, but if I timed it just right, I could catch a ride on the back of Ed Delaware's motorcycle (another “first”) back to the house on his way to work at the mill.

~ Ralph P. Snow~

It was mid-February 1972 as a driver was plowing snow in Bradley, Maine. This road needed clearing for a wood hauling truck to access already cut, stacked and measured wood for delivery to the nearby pulp and paper mill.

The plow driver accidentally hit and disturbed a large snow-covered mound. It was a hibernating bear's den. The sudden disruption and noise caused the confused bear to exit its den. Once the driver saw the bear, he reversed his truck away from the snow-covered mound. The bear runs into the woods to escape.

With the bear gone, the driver continued plowing the snow away from the road surface. When he was nearly finished, he stopped his truck and looked around. Disturbing the quietness, he heard strange noises like crying. As he approached the opening to the den, he notices two small black bear cubs lying inside.

Not knowing what to do next, he drove his truck to Old Town to get wildlife advice on what to do in this situation. The specialist told him to leave the cubs alone and the mother bear will return to them. In addition, he was told not to return to the site until the next day.

Upon returning to his work site the next morning, the driver finds the two bear cubs in the same position as the day before yet they were frozen from the cold and the absence of their mother.

~Nancy Nolette~

THE VALUE OF A NICKEL

Something that you might not know about the Town of Bradley, is how much some areas have been paid for, one nickel at a time, through the determined collection of bottles and cans. Especially by one particular individual I knew very well, David Shorette. He lived most of his life on Main Street, and was always looking for ways to improve things around town, whether it be at St. Ann's Church, or his pet project, the softball field on Broad Street. Being young, bright-eyed, energetic nephew of David, I spend the majority of my summers doing odd jobs and running errands for and with him. Sometimes it was just mowing his lawn, sometimes it was picking weeds and dragging the softball field. One thing that I was sure to be doing, no matter what the day's plans were, was looking for bottles and cans on the side of the road.

When it came to those empty, five-cent, rolled aluminum containers, or the tall, often, half-empty, glass soldier, Uncle David had the eyes of a hawk. We could be driving on I-95 at 65mph, and he could spot a can in the median like it was sitting on the dashboard of his 1978 Dodge Aspen. He would immediately hit the brakes, pull over, and go in reverse in the breakdown lane so that I could quickly jump out, climb down whatever embankment was there, retrieve the "piece of gold", and toss it in the back seat. I will admit, when Uncle David had a pickup truck, it made collecting a little easier, but we made things work with the Aspen. We would make regular stops at the redemption center, using a large manila envelope to collect the proceeds, then add them to an old cigar box he kept on his kitchen table. That cigar box

was pulled out to purchase softballs, trophies for the yearly league that Uncle David ran, a statue and various items for the Knights of Columbus Hall (of which he was a devout member), as well as for St. Ann's Catholic Church where he worshiped his entire life, flags that would wave throughout the town, even smaller flags that would wave on the headstones of many individuals in the Evergreen Cemetery off of Boynton Street; and if the cigar box happened to not have enough to cover the cost, and I believe very few people knew this, Uncle David's wallet would then open up to finish the job.

David Shorette passed away in November of 2010, but whenever I looked around the church that I grew up in, or drive by the house he lived in (which was his childhood home), I am taken back to the summer days of my youth when he would pick me up early in the morning, and we wouldn't get back until late afternoon, following a day of doing things that made everything and everyone around him better. He was the embodiment of the phrase, "Live simply, so others may simply live", and he always tried to find a way to bring a smile to someone's face. Very few people realize what an empty can or a bottle can get you, but he taught me that you can never overestimate the value of a nickel.

~Chris Shorette~

One of my favorite times of the year growing up in a small town has to be winter. Winter time meant sled riding, snowball fights, snow forts and never-ending ice skating. It seemed while growing up in Bradley there were never ending adventures with Town kids. It wasn't unusual for a couple of us to get together with sleds and go around

knocking on doors to round up as many friends as we could to spend the day riding our sleds. We would find a hill anywhere we could in town. It was always fun because we could use anyone's front yard or backyard that had a hill or big snowbank. No one seemed to mind because we all knew each other in Town. One favorite spot was across the street from the Viola Rand school. That hill was steep and we could get going fast enough to make it across Otter Creek. We always built ramps to see who could go the highest and farthest in the air. I look back on those sledding adventures around town as a kid and it makes me realize how lucky I was to have grown up in the small Town of Bradley.

~Howie Jack~

I remember the annual Town meetings held at the Town Hall in the spring. We kids would sit up in the balcony and listen to the towns people argue and argue about the annual school budget. Now that was entertainment.

~Anonymous~

My mom had a stroller that would hold 4 children. The stroller was no longer being used so I took the top off (basket) and put a cab on it. I sold it to Robert Coulter for \$5.00.

Johnny Morris who lived by Spencer's store, had a J3 Cub. One day he took Moses Jackson, my sister Ann and I for the ride in his airplane. The ride was \$1.00. Took off in the field out back of school. We flew 1st class for 15 minutes in his Piper Cub. First time we ever flew.

~Joe Thibault~

LIVING IN BRADLEY

1. An interesting fact- If you lived on the “lower end” of Bradley you had a Brewer address, an Orono phone exchange and lived in Bradley. Try explaining that over and over again especially to creditors and debtors!
2. Living in the “lower end” of Bradley seemed to have its own connotation. It may have just been a perception of the people that lived there vs. the Villagers (Village people 😊).
3. There could have been some socio-economic disparities between the two ends of the Bradley Road but generally speaking our neighborhood was multigenerational, community and family oriented. Back in the day, adults and children alike participated in board games, card games, baseball/softball games, all with friendly rivalry. Snowmobiling was a favorite pastime. The power line and the Government Road (Penobscot Experimental Forest) were handy and made a great trail to get you to where you wanted to go. Also, during warm weather, the Experimental Forrest Road and Blackman’s stream was a shortcut to Chemo Pond. Our family camp was across the pond and accessible only by boat or an amphibious car like the one my grandfather, Robert H. Rowell owned. The car that could float on water always piqued the curiosity of those that witnessed the vehicle transitioning from road to water!
4. The “Cove”, part of Blackman’s Stream was a favorite swimming hole amongst the local kids. Swimming in the “Cove” only came with my

father's permission and my mother's lack of knowledge!

5. A distant memory was attending the retirement party at the Town Hall for my second-grade teacher, Marjorie Cram Hilliker (in addition to myself, word had it she also taught my father and my grandfather). As young as I was, I remember being amazed by the wheelbarrow full of cash that our towns people donated to her retirement!
6. Safety and security while living in the less populated part of Town was predominantly built on trusting your neighbor and maybe a potential flashlight. Houses and light poles were far and few between. My girlfriends and I would gather at each other's houses and when our visit was done, we would walk each other half way home. During our travels on foot, we would be talking to each other with an occasional quick glance and our voices getting louder and louder the further apart we walked until we finally reached our respective driveways. I actually lived on a short road in-between my friends. The second I reached the mouth of the road I did the two-step to get to my house. The silence and darkness always made the trek scary!

Other:

Flooding of the Village always brought out the curiosity seekers including those of us living in the lower end!

As a child attending Vacation Bible School multiple years at the Bradley Baptist Church. Girl Scouting. K-8 at Viola Rand School, etc.

My grandmother Beatrice (Mutch) Rowell held the
Boston Post Cane.

My father/family-owned multiple businesses in Bradley –
R&R Trucking, Rowell's Garage. Penney Lane Estates
and High Point Place. My father also plowed snow at one
time for the Town of Bradley. My father worked on the
Leonard Mills restoration project.

We (to the best of our knowledge) had the first colored
T.V in the Town of Bradley.

My mother and I both supported the school system in
any way we could short of sitting on the school board.

I still live on my family's original homestead (previously
known as the Mutch Farm, where my father was born)
that is now legally known as High Point Place.

I could tell you so much more...

~Pam (Rowell) Robichaud

When asked to share a story or two about growing up in
Bradley, so many wonderful memories came flooding
back. It's impossible to name just one...Here are a few:

Playing Red Light, Green Light, Mother May I, and Red
Rover on our front lawn with my siblings and the
neighborhood kids. Also playing marbles in the driveway
with Nancy Lavoie.

The excitement of watching the fire department burn the
field by our house each spring and following it all around
Town as it burned the others.

Main street was also a source of entertainment because it housed the old Town Hall where we had Halloween parties, a street dance, Spencer's Ice Cream, and who could forget the raging waters in the spring when Main Street flooded.

Riding my bike "around the loop", and stopping at Michaud's Store to get penny candy or a freeze pop for 5 cents. I often stopped in to visit Grampy Leo and Grammie Tiny Baker too. How lucky was I to have them so near and Meme and Pepe Desrosiers just down the road in Milford.

The best part was the abundance of other kids to play with a moment's notice- The Crouse family that lived across the street, Mark Martin who lived next door, the Bresnahan girls, the Kings, the Thebarger girls, the Lavoie girls, Howie Jack and his brothers, and the Jacksons just to name a few. I'm so sorry for anyone I left out!

The one family that changed my life when they moved to Town when I was in 5th grade was the Snows. Diana and I are the same age, and we became fast friends. Their home held so many special memories for me, and they were my second family. Ralph & Joan Snow treated me like their own. Mary, Ralph, Carlene and Diana felt like siblings to me.

I felt safe and loved the small community of Bradley, Maine. What a gift! Even with the smell of the paper mill, I wouldn't have wanted to be raised anywhere else

~Linda Baker Kothman~

There were lots of things to do when we were growing in

Bradley. The three of us were always together. Snowmobiling, ice skating, fishing, walking the roads, snow cabins and forts, snowball fights for fun, hide n seek, tag and playing baseball. There was always something to do. We made our fun together. When we walked the road, we never worried about being outside, we were together. We were always together.

***~Alison Beal Bragg, Brenda Sampson Wasson
& Linda Sampson~***

“Tom Watt”, oh, how that brings back memories! That suitcase size box that contained a number of items that the Boy Scouts would go door to door taking orders. Ed was Scout Master for a number of years and when the shipment came in, our house was full of “Tom Watt” that had to be delivered.

~Ann Delaware~

There were other door to door salesmen that came to Town. Mr. Nachem came once a month with his woodie station wagon loaded with lots of stuff, sheets, pots and pans, curtains, any number of household items.

There was the “Rag Man” who had more than rags to sell.

They also sold to the three stores in Town. Selling any little items because they would sell in small quantities – not a whole case, as they might have to order, for instance 12 bottles of aspirin, band aids, toothpaste and tooth brushes.

~Suzanne Richard Delaware & Richard Petrie~

When I was younger Barton's Store was also the US Post Office. Every day there was a bunch of ole fellows that gathered around the pot belly stove and they'd be talking and telling stories. Some of them were Toddy Knapp, Mr.

Spencer and Bummy Ouellette. I can't remember the rest of them. They'd be arguing with each other about the olden days. For me it was good amusement.

Mr. Arlow Barton had molasses in a big wooden barrel. People would bring their own jars and fill them up. My mother would send me there to get molasses and she would tie a rope around the jar and then to my wrist so I wouldn't lose it.

Mr. Barton used paper bags to keep track of who owed what. If you were a single person he would have a small paper bag, and if you were a family, he would use a bigger bag. When you paid it off, you got the bag! That was his accounting system. Worked good for him.

Mr. Barton was a soft-spoken man, slow and low voice. I asked him one time how long have you owned this store. He said, "All my life." He bought his brother's share and his brother went to California for the Gold Rush.

One other thing I remember was that we always had a flood every spring but it didn't always flood the streets.

My father, Doc Brooks fixed bicycles. He had all kinds of bicycles and parts. At one point he had bought all the bicycle parts that Dakins in Bangor had. He was always working on them and I was there helping and watching.

Another job I had was working with Henry Baker. He

made Pick Poles 8 feet to 16 feet long. He used Black Spruce, only found in bogs. Usually 3 inches or so, 20-30 feet long. Tough work, I was the horse on the operation. I carried, hauled and stacked many poles.

~Jimmy Brooks~

Ed's father, Otis Delaware found a wing tank from an airplane out in the woods. He brought it home and Ed and I spent hours taking the screws out of it to separate the top and bottom. There were a lot of screws, it filled a whole jar.

In the spring the water was always high on Otter Stream. Behind my house one-day Ed and I decided to try it out. We'd been paddling a while when the current grabbed us and put us up against a tree and we flipped over. One of my overshoes got hung up on a barbed wire fence, but it finally came loose. Ed was worried about the new watch he got for 8th grade graduation, so he put it in his mouth! We finally made it to shore and saved the wing tank, too!!

~Joe Thibault~

We grew up happily in Bradley, it was St. Ann's Church, Town Hall, Viola Rand School (built in 1953). We organized sports in the field across from my house; football, baseball, whatever. We were not allowed in the village. We were told to stay in our own area. We played marbles in the spring, picked wild strawberries in that same field, raked blueberries out in Aurora (Route 9). We'd hitch hike out and back.

The Town Hall was the center of what was happening. Jobie Petrie and John Petrie lit the fires for us at the Town Hall, so we could play basketball. Everyone hung around the Town Hall. In the 1960's Theresa Morin used the Hall for square dancing, young and old and lots of folks joined. If a Bradley child was in trouble word would travel fast, EVERYONE knew!!

~Vern King~

My Dad (Calvin) was born in Bradley in 1922 and, after a few years in Boston, returned with my mother (Clara) to live, first on Main Street and then at the end of School Street. I came along in 1947 but my memories start when we lived next to, and too often in, the river.

As a child it was amusing to see the water get closer and closer to the house each spring, until it, often, forced us to walk across boards to get from our door to a dry section of the road. Only later did I realize what a difficult situation that must have been for my parents, never knowing just how the water would come and how much damage it might do. I remember one year that we moved, temporarily, to my grandparent's house on Elm Street, which was on much higher ground.

Much of what happened, in those days, we connected to the river. My father had a somewhat leaky little boat with a one and half horsepower Johnson outboard motor that could barely push it up the river against the current. He failed to pull it far enough onto the shore one day and by the time he had walked up to the house the boat had been washed in the river. Pulling off his shoes and his pants, he waded into the water and attempted to swim

after it. The boat was moving quickly and by the time he got to the other side of the stream it was obvious that his efforts were in vain. Disappointed but, fortunately still alive, he pulled himself up on the river bank ,fortunately, within a short distance from my Uncle Walter's house where he was able to borrow a replacement pair of pants. Some time later, someone informed him that the boat had come to rest upside down on some rocks a ways down river. Someone, probably Uncle Walter or Uncle Loren, one of them was always coming to his rescue, helped him retrieve the boat, which was repaired and saw more service but, that Johnson motor never did quite fully recover.

Try as I might, I can never forget the time that a skunk was discovered in my grandfather's basement. Always one to help in a crisis, my father ran to Grampy Brooks' house and offered to remove the critter. Armed with Grampy's double barreled shotgun he soon had the beast cornered. He never did explain why he thought both barrels were required to finish the job but there was, quickly, nothing left but a ringing in his ears, a bit of black and white fur and a whole lot of stink! My grandparents had to abandon their home and stay with one of my uncles until the smell had faded sufficiently. I learned some new words from the discussions that followed that adventure.

We left Bradley in 1957, moving to Medford, Massachusetts where my Aunt Myrtle Brooks Moser and her family lived. I live in Florida, now, but Bradley will always be home and I take pride in telling people I'm from Maine.

~Gordon Brooks~

Epic Childhood: A snapshot of Bradley in the 90's

From my house on Cram Street,
to Spencer's for a treat,

On foot with friends or on my bike,
a million times I'd take that hike.

Two dollars for an ice cream,
a pittance now it seems.

Around the block, to the turnaround,
my boundaries in town.

A stop at the post office wouldn't be complete,
without stopping at KGM's for penny candy treats.

Sundays were spent with Father Nadeau at St. Anns,
or around the corner at Bradley Baptist with Pastor Dan.

Some days would take me on adventure,
to glimpse the mountain lion that lived at the redemption
center.

Friends not from town would scrunch their noses at the
smell of the mill,
But I'd look across the river to admit it still.

I remember my neighbors on Cram,
as well as my teachers from Viola Rand.

Across the street was the Avon lady, Ann Delaware.
My mom would get lotions and perfumes and there
would be samples to share!

Beside her, the Guays, with a room full of porcelain dolls,
I'd get so excited going down the hall.

The Jackson's and McAlpine's became my friends,
with kids to play with on the weekends.

We'd be with the same classmates from K through fifth,
today's students might think it's a myth.

From the swings to the merry-go-round,
familiar faces could be found.

Smith, Johnson, Oliver, Labree, Jackson, and Miller too,
the best teachers were at our school.

We'd raise the flag and pledge allegiance,
and then our school day would commence.

At the end of the day the bus driver would let me stay on,
and drop me off on the way back when all my friends
were gone.

At home for a snack then out to play,
under the branches of a weeping willow, is where I'd end
my day.

Home before dark, where my parents were waiting,
to be greeted by the smell of supper baking.

Soon it'd be goodnight, and in my bed, I'd be,
oh, how I miss those days of feeling carefree.

~Jennifer Frey~

My dad owned a house in Bradley. As a small child, my favorite memory was playing on the HUGE rock in the front yard.

One would say that I actually 'grew up' all over the State of Maine.

I moved back to Bradley as a young teenager. It was a comfort to move back into the same house and the same bedroom I had as a small kid.

One of my first memories of that era was my 1st day at the Viola Rand School. Prior to that day, my most recent school had been a structured Junior High School, where students and staff had a dress code.

I felt proud that my dad took me to meet the principal, Mr. Cormier, and start my 8th grade year. As we entered the building, I was immediately feeling a sense of 'small town' school. The BEAN-BAG CHAIRS in the hallway, just outside the principal's office and the CARPETING on the floor was just the beginning...when I was introduced to the principal, HE WAS WEARING OVERALLS.

It was easy to become comfortable at my new school. My homeroom teacher, Mr. Debias, wore corduroy pants and a flannel shirt and who can forget Mrs. Rosen's personal sense of comfort & style.

I have two younger siblings who also attended Viola Rand. My little brother was a 'challenge' to his teachers on many occasions that ended in him being ask to report to the principal's office, via the school intercom system.

It was awesome that Mr. Cormier would use my

brother's nickname. We all called him Beattle. I'm sure that most folks don't folk don't know his real name today.

I cannot forget to mention my first job – with a real paycheck. I believe it was Ann Delaware who signed it. It was the summer recreation program. Ann was a fun boss. I still smile when I see Ann today. It was a fun job. We got to go on a road trip to the Mammoth Mart to buy games for kids enrolled in the program to play with.

Howie, was also part of the crew that year. At the Mammoth Mart, I remember a typical juvenile moment we enjoyed. It involved the inappropriate use of a shopping cart – somebody ended up inside said cart.

~Shelly Page~



Bradley Girls

WE ARE THE BRADLEY GIRLS
WE WEAR OUR HAIR IN CURLS
WE WEAR OUR DUNGREES
ROLLED UP ABOVE OUR KNEES

WE WEAR OUR FATHERS
SHIRTS
WE WEAR OUR BROTHERS TIES
AND WHEN WE WANT A GUY
WE TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE

TAR RAR RAR BOOM DE A

~Some of the Bradley Girls!~

Joanne

Valerie

Sandy

Mary

