

Warm Feelings by Adria Fisher Price

As a young girl, I was very interested in sports and was an avid Brooklyn Dodger fan. Jackie Robinson was my favorite ball player. A vivid memory of Sunnyside often flashes before me....I was walking down 46th street from the Bliss Street train station on Queens Blvd. I was returning home from Greenwich Village where I was an 8th grader at the Little Red School House / Elisabeth Irwin HS (LREI). As I remember, it was a warm October day in 1951. I was walking past the attached houses that comprised Sunnyside Gardens. Many Sunnysiders had their windows and doors open while their TV's blasted the play-by-play of the National League play-off game between the Dodgers and the NY Giants. I was rushing to get home on 39th Avenue to watch the end of the game...but then I heard the announcer say that the Giants' Bobby Thomson hit what is now known as "the shot heard round the world". His home run clinched the pennant for the Giants. My beloved Dodgers had lost!

My memories of Sunnyside are interwoven with attending the Sunnyside Progressive School, LREI and Camp Woodland; all three were attended by many Sunnyside children. Sara Abelson Abramson, herself a Sunnysider, was my nursery school teacher and later taught at LREI. She was also the Lower Camp director at Camp Woodland. She was a tiny woman who radiated warmth and a love for teaching young children. Along with two other Sunnysiders, my nursery school classmates, (Flora Friedland Bryant and Irene Friedman Glassberg), we kept in touch with her until shortly before she died in her late 90's. Our last visit with Sara was in a nursing home in Nashua, NH. Since we knew she had suffered a stroke and couldn't converse with us, I suggested that Flora bring her guitar. We sang folk songs with her. She nodded her head, recognizing the songs. The school held a memorial service for her that was attended by many former students as well as by Paul Robeson, Jr., Pete Seeger and his wife, Toshi, an LREI alum.

Norman Studer, a Sunnysider, taught at LREI and was the director of Camp Woodland. I remember wonderful summers there as a camper and later as a counselor when I was a high school student. I particularly enjoyed our folk songs and square dancing.

Tennis has been an important part of my life. I have fond memories of the Sunrise Tennis Courts on 39th Avenue. It had red clay courts and a metal shack for a "club house". My father took me with him and I hung out with my brother, Stephen, and other kids and I learned to play tennis.

The Sunnyside Gardens houses now have Landmark status. Very little has changed over the years. I've gone back to visit as an adult. The houses look much the way they did in the 1950's...tree lined streets and grassy common courtyards on each block. I have warm feelings when I return there.

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