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Showing postings 1 - 39 of 39 in the thread: What are our earliest memories?.

Posting: What are our earliest memories? Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf Date: 26 March 2007 1:47 PM	Posting 1
<p>We senior citizens talk a lot about our failing short-term memories but isn't it phenomenal that our longer-term memories tend to be more acute as we age.</p> <p>I was born in 1934 in a little house on the Hanover Road near Baltic and just months after, my family moved to Baltic to a curb-level apartment across the street from the big catholic church and school there. My mother used to sit on the stoop on warm sunny days with me in her lap and I can actually remember seeing all the legs of people that passed by. From my vantage point then, that's all I could see.</p> <p>I have other memories of the pretty chrome automobile dashboards back then since I was again on my mother's lap a lot in the front seat of the family car. One particular memory I still have is cuddling on my mother's lap in the car and seeing a hole in the floorboards with something hot and firey in it where heat came from the manifold heater in that vintage car. I remember my mom having hold me tight as my dad turned the car around to back up the Scotland hill in the stronger, lower reverse gear.</p> <p>These early memories when I felt so warm and safe are testimony to what many parenting experts will say today about the tender love and care of infants.</p> <p>These are my very earliest memories and I have a lot more from when I was between two and four years old.</p> <p>Let's hear some of yours. . .</p>	
Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Poster: Dick Donovan Date: 26 March 2007 2:17 PM	Posting 2
<p>Richard you started what will be a looooooonng thread but interesting! I was born June 1939 and lived at 88 Oak St until about 1951 and then moved to 173 North St. My earliest memories are about all the kids in the neighborhood--I was one of the youngest--most were 2 to 4 years older. Winters sledding on Summit Street; spring playing stick ball in the vacant lot across the street from the Lutheran Church; swimming at Gile Flynn's (willimantic river); summers at Groton Long Point; Labor Day at the Elks Labor Day Fair; fall return to school and all the trees turning color; family trips to relatives in Norwich in father's 1934 Buick -- no heat; Thanksgiving and Christmas. Christmas was always special because my parents really enjoyed the holiday and we would go pick out the tree and decorate it. Put up the Xmas stocking; leave doughnut and milk for Santa; and wake up to the decorated tree and presents. Neighbors would stop by to see my parents. As long as I can remember as a small guy I always had Eclipse coffee syrup for my milk. Also, neighborhood kid's parents were always vigilant and took care of all of us kids in the neighborhood. You could well expect a friend's mother to scold you if you deserved it. Listening to the radio on weekend nights and all the great programs---it really was better than tv.</p>	
Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Poster: Ada Kerachsky Albright Date: 26 March 2007 2:40 PM	Posting 3
<p>Most of my earliest memories are from my grandmother's little store on Union St. and the tiny apartment above it where she lived. I loved to be in her store with her and be greeted by the regular customers, some from town and many farmers from the surrounding area. One customer from Scotland would be driven to town by her son, and I loved hearing her conversation with my grandmother in Russian. Another customer (a Mr. Bernstein) who had daughters of his own, would hold me up so that I could pull the string hanging down from the ceiling light. They liked to hear me say "yight" because I could not yet pronounce the L. By the time I was three, I remember being in my parents' store on Church St. My favorite activity there in summer, was "painting" the bricks with a little paintbrush and a coffee can of water; also going next door to Beauchamp's Bakery with two pennies to buy a poppyseed roll. I also have very early memories of visits to my other grandmother's farm in Lebanon.</p>	
Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Poster: William Brainard Date: 26 March 2007 3:30 PM	Posting 4
<p>Though I'm a Coventry native, a warm and cozy memory for me is Mother parking the '50 Plymouth on Main Street by Woolworth's and WT Grants and not leaving me in the car, made very sure I held her hand while crossing Main Street. She bought a lovely gardenia bush that day and it wafted in the back of the Plymouth while we went to shop at the A&P on Valley St. I had to have been about 3 years old so it was about 1956. I know she bought me a cool First National grocery van toy after that at the NEW Finast on Main Street when it opened in the late 1950s. That was quite a store till Barkers and Friendly Ice Cream Shop came to town. Mother traded at Finast and A&P. She didn't like Stop & Shop till later. And she adored Shop Rite when it opened in the new Willimantic Plaza. Remember Bonanza Sirloin Pit? Yum! Seeing "20,000 Leagues Under The Sea" the day before I started grade 1 in 1959; think it was the Gem Theatre; would have remembered the Capitol. Walking home from Willimantic in 1965 after seeing "The Sound Of Music" at the Capitol Theatre. I remember distinctly the Coventry 6 Miles sign. Took us a couple hours because it was all up-hill</p>	

home to the farm on South Street in southern Coventry.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 5
 Poster: Fred Masterton
 Date: 27 March 2007 6:40 AM

Living on Circle Drive (off Conantville Rd, barely in Mansfield) in the late 50's (I was born in late '55). We shopped at A&P in Willi, and took taxis either way, since my dad used THE family car to drive back and forth to work. One time we could not get a taxi, and walked back home a couple of miles, my mother, infant brother and I. A fond memory for me, but I don't think my mother enjoyed the walk with groceries.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 6
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
 Date: 27 March 2007 9:06 AM

Yep . . the human brain is an amazing machine allowing us to remember things for sometimes 70 years.

We left Baltic when I was about two years old and move to an apartment in a big, brick house on the corner of Park and South streets in Williantic. I don't remember much about the inside of that house but remember playing in my uncle Homer Beauregard's back yard next door and a nice old lady who lived in a quaint cottage across the street. Someone gave me a white, round sailor hat that I wore all the time since I must have had military aspirations even at that young age.

Sometime in early 1938,we moved to the downstairs left apartment in a six-tenement house at 49 Brook Street down Sodom as it was called. I remember being uncomfortable in the back seat of the car loaded with small furniture and boxes heading down there. I was three going on four at the time.

In October 1938 we must have had some word-of-mouth or radio warning of the impending hurricane and I remember many residents gathering on our downstairs front porch as storm clouds gathered in the west. I remember being on my tricycle riding among all their legs on the porch and getting yelled at for running over someone's foot.

Amazing!! All these little memory details happened almost 70 year ago!

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 7
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 27 March 2007 4:53 PM

Fred ,

At least your family had A car . We didn't get one until 1964 when my grandfather gave us his old , black 1951 Chevy Belair that my teenage uncle had been driving until he joined the Marines . My Grandpa drove a T Bird !

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 8
 Poster: John McCommas
 Date: 14 July 2007 4:07 PM

I was born in 1967. My parents lived on Memorial Drive when I was a toddler before they moved to Hanover Road in Scotland.

I recall Halloween with the kids all dressed up in costumes all along Memorial Drive. I was coming home in my Mothers VW bug. I saw them just as we turned the corner on the High Street end. Every time I go by that road I think of that day every single time! I was amazed. When we got home my Dad was on the sofa with a bowl of candy corn on the end table. My eyes must have popped when I saw it.

I recall for whatever reason we had a black rotary telephone and I remember I thought the outside lamps at the High School were pretty. They had round bulb covers at the top. I noted recently they have changed them.

I remember I was talking with the kid next door in my back yard. His name was Ricky who was my age. I used to talk with him over the fence that separated our two yards all the time. One day Ricky tricked me into coming over the fence to play against my better judgment. Once there he pushed me into his swimming pool. It was only a foot deep so he just got me wet. I think he tried to get me to come over again but I learned my lesson.

I also remember my Grand Uncles' gift and card shop on Main. Try as I might, I have not been able to pick out that store front today. Whenever my mother stopped in (usually to buy a card) one of them would offer us both a piece of chocolate. I recall I was always shy about taking one. I only remember the face of one of them. I don't know which one.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 9
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
 Date: 15 July 2007 12:08 AM

I was born in what used to be the first house on the left on the Hanover Road when you were coming from Baltic. Since that date in 1934, I've driven by the house a few times and never stopped to take a picture. All I know is it was a duplex and we lived in the apartment on the left. I'll have to drive out there and take a picture if it's still there.

Talking about old theaters. . . Does anyone remember the Strand Theater? As little kids, we went there often on Saturdays for a quarter. The program was composed of a Serial that continued over several weeks and then a full length movie. During the war, I remember the Movietown News clips telling us of battles won or lost halfway around the world and there were also little short clips warning that "Loose Lips Sink Ships" and one I remember very well for some reason. . . It showed a lady factory worker on an

inspection line checking newly manufactured bullets for the war effort. She quits her line position and sneaks off to have a smoke and several bullets go by without being inspected. The clip then switches to a jungle scene where one of our soldiers comes face to face with a Japanese soldier. They both raise their rifles and our man pulls his trigger first but all he gets is a "Click." There were many such short movie clips pushing the war effort in those days.

Also. . . at the Strand theater, they gave out dishes and glass sets and our mother would tell me to pick up a saucer, my sister a cup, my brother a plate, etc. We had those dishes around the house for many years and they are probably antiques today.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 23 July 2007 11:28 PM

Posting 10

I was walking down Mountain Street on August 8 or 9th in 1945. I was 4 years old. Had my red wagon with me. I passed Miller's house on Mountain Strret when Mr Miller (I think he was a fireman) came out a yelled to me.. "hey kid, the war is over...the japs have surrendered"

I ran with my red wagon all the way home to our house on Pleasant St, located near the armory. My mother had our large Philco console radio on and I can remember President Roosevelt giving an announcement of some kind...his voice was one you never forget.

A few days later there was a vicotry parade on Main Street. I went to the front of The Capitol to watch it all...

It is a bit hazy and murky now, but I still recall that day pretty well !

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: Dick Donovan
 Date: 24 July 2007 2:07 PM

Posting 11

Skipper-- I was 6 when Germany surrendered and remember hearing the news and where I was at that particular moment. Don't remember Japan's surrendering. Do remember a big military prade on Main Street. My mother took me and I think I remember we stood in front the Saving Instiute at the corner of Bank and Main, if my memory is still working. Its amazing how one can remember certain things from the past as if it happened yesterday but can't remember what happened last week--age??

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: William Brainard
 Date: 24 July 2007 10:58 PM

Posting 12

It's like those of us over 45 can remember where we were when President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in November 1963. To me it seems just like yesterday.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 24 July 2007 10:59 PM

Posting 13

Hi RD:

Yes, I recall the victory parade okay...see my posting from last nite.

It was really something...what I recall mostly were the aging WWI vets marching and one guy was a highly-decorated officer who rode in an open car draped in the US flag. There was teh St Marys Drum & Bugle Corps playing and so on and so on.

And here we are today in Iraq in a war our boys and girls cannot even fight properly, let alone win.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 24 July 2007 10:59 PM

Posting 14

Hi RD:

Yes, I recall the victory parade okay...see my posting from last nite.

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Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
 Poster: Dick Donovan
 Date: 25 July 2007 9:53 AM

Posting 15

I have read several books about the war in Iraq and one book contends that soon after the US defeated Saadam and his army, the US sent retired Lt Gen. Jay Garner to oversee the rebuilding of Iraq. One of his immediate goals was to retain the defeated Iraq Army and police force and to train at security police. One of the incentives was to pay each Iraq soldier \$20/month which was a huge sum for them to help restore peace and stability. Garner was shortly replaced by Bremer who immediately disbanded the Iraq army and police force. Bremer refused to take any orders except from Pres Bush. From there the whole planned reconstruction of Baghdad,etc went into the toilet

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 16
 Poster: Ada Kerachsky Albright
 Date: 25 July 2007 12:01 AM

I also remember walking "upstreet" to stand in front of Woolworth's or Grants to watch various parades. When you are a little child, your heart thumps with those drums! I remember war vetrans without legs. One clear memory was walking on Union Street with my aunt and hearing church bells ringing all over town. It was unusual, so I asked my aunt why they were ringing. She told me that the president had just died (FDR).

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 17
 Poster: John Costello
 Date: 27 July 2007 1:12 AM

Hey Dick,

in the good old days, the bill of fare to get into the Strand for the Saturday afternoon shows, including the famous 'serials" like Rocket Man, (or something like that) - was only 18 cents!

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 18
 Poster: John Tormey
 Date: 27 July 2007 12:55 AM

What a great thread this is!

My earliest memory is the first time I met a nun -- my teacher in kindergarten at Saint Joseph's school. I remember staring at her and asking "Do you have any hair?" She laughed and gave me a hug. I can still feel that hug But she never answered the question.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 19
 Poster: Francis Sellars
 Date: 29 July 2007 2:32 PM

Mr.Phaneuf,

Park St. does not intersect with South St. However Park St. does intersect with South Park St. I don't remember if there was a brick house on that corner,South Park & Park Sts.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 20
 Poster: Ada Kerachsky Albright
 Date: 30 July 2007 3:35 PM

OK I might be a tad younger (WHS '58). When I was very young (mid-40's) the Saturday matinee at the Strand was a quarter. My grandmother's little store was just around the corner on Union St. On Saturday afternoons she would give me a quarter and Veronica Elliot and I would go the the matinee: Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, lots of cartoons (Popeye, Mighty Mouse, Tom and Gerry, etc.), the Three Stooges, some sort of serial. All in all, a relatively inexpensive babysitter.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 21
 Poster: Ernie Gesner
 Date: 30 July 2007 6:47 PM

Ada, I first met Roy Rogers and Dale Evans at a water skiing lake in Victorille, California in 1962. I met them again in 1967 when I was a Wholesale Liquor Salesman for that area and their Apple Valley Inn in Apple Valley California. They had a small museum across the road from the Inn. They later built a much larger museum next to the 15 freeway in Victorville. They were the nicest people that I have ever known. Sadly they have both passed away and their children have closed the museum and auctioned off the entire priceless collection.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 22
 Poster: Nancy Harrington
 Date: 30 July 2007 7:42 PM

They auctioned off Trigger?

I went to the museum in 1980 while visiting friends at George AFB. They lived off-base in Apple Valley just a couple of blocks from Roy Rogers' house, so of course we had to see that too.

I remember a car covered in silver dollars, and the dog (Bandit?) and their two horses stuffed and displayed. There was also a large statue of Trigger rearing up at the entrance of the museum.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 23
 Poster: Dick Donovan
 Date: 31 July 2007 8:25 AM

Watching Roy Roger movies at the Capital theater on Sat/Sun matinee was the best. Wasn't Gabby Hayes his sidekick? I liked him better then the replacement who drove a jeep--or am I thinking of someone else?

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 24
 Poster: Ada Kerachsky Albright
 Date: 31 July 2007 12:38 AM

Roy Rogers and Dale Evans were my favorites. Of course I thought that Trigger was the most handsome horse ever. Gaby Hays was one of the best character actors.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 25
 Poster: Armand Biron
 Date: 31 July 2007 3:40 PM

Okay folks...this discussion has finally brought me out of the wood work. I was born in 1939 in Willimantic I well remember the Strand Theatre which was also known as the 'Scratch House'. I recall they even had pie eating contest on the stage. I also recall there was a big event on main street when a guy would climb up the front of the Nathan Hale Hotel. He was called the Human Fly. They closed off main street and had fire trucks and spot lights everywhere. While in High school I worked as a shorter order cook at the Shell Chateau. I remember the buses used to stop there on there way back from the Narragansett Racetrack. The cop 'Red' Vertefeulle used to clean out the drunks on Saturday night. He was a great guy but you didn't want to mess with him...

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 26
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 1 August 2007 12:03 AM

Hear ye:

And Wmtc cop Hub Haddad used to give kids nickels once in a while when he was cleaning out the parking meters on main st.

Anyone remember the motor cycle cop called "Sy" ????.who was he???

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 27
 Poster: Ernie Gesner
 Date: 1 August 2007 8:28 AM

Skipper could that be Sy Vertefeulle (SP)?

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 28
 Poster: Jim connell
 Date: 1 August 2007 9:56 AM

Skip

Willimantic had 2 motorcycle cops, Red Vertefeulle(sp) and Cy Villermette(sp) Cy went on to become a detective in the dept. and I think might have been chief for a short time

Jim

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 29
 Poster: vince cerreto
 Date: 1 August 2007 10:24 AM

Jim I don't know if you were with the fire dept at the time my uncle Ted Cerreto was on the force. I thought I had a little status because my uncle was a cop WRONG..... he used to report to my father (his brother) every thing I did in town. What girls I went out with,all the bars I went to. Even got to the point of how many drinks I had and where. So this turned out to be real ugly.He used to like using the stick a lot. Later he went to the motor Vehicle to work.....Peace
 By the way your personality was like your father (Joe Connell) he was a good cop to. Was you on the force when Bobby Ricard was in the Dept?

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 30
 Poster: Dick Donovan
 Date: 1 August 2007 10:26 AM

Jimmy--good to see your name on the board! Are you going to the 50th at the Elks in October? If so, will be great to see you. Is Harry White still around in Willi?

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 31
 Poster: Jim connell
 Date: 1 August 2007 12:04 AM

vince, I did work with Ted and Bobby Ricard, you uncle left not to long after I came on the dept
 Jim

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 32
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 1 August 2007 9:03 PM

yo jim:

yes, it was sy villermette. that's who i was thinking of.

how are you ????.i remember you when i was a reporter for htfd times in wmtc circa 1966???. i used to put your name in the paper all the time for your "pinches" !

is marie barrea your cousin???.she was in my class at WHS in '58. is she still in wmtc??

best

sb

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 33
 Poster: Jim connell
 Date: 2 August 2007 1:15 PM

Hi Dick, No I'm not going to be able to make the reunion, but I would like to get up North before the snow flies. Hope you have a good time and say HI to the gang. As for Harold I haven't seen him in some years.
 Jim

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 34
 Poster: Jim connell
 Date: 2 August 2007 1:19 PM

Hey Skip, Marie was my sister and she passed away 97 of course you had no way of knowing that.
 Jim

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 35
 Poster: Dick Donovan
 Date: 2 August 2007 3:11 PM

Hey Jim-- sorry to hear that you will not be there. I counted the number of graduates in our class--309. Pete Rich helped send out the invites along with a list missing grads and those who have passed on--which there quite a few. Some of the guys I knew well have gone--Bobby Dawson; Charlie Bonnano; Roger Pepin; Brewster Murdock--all I can remember now.

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 36
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 3 August 2007 12:27 AM

jim:

i am sorry to hear about marie...she sat next to me in freshmen english class. she was a very pretty girl...i did not know she was your sister, but thought you were related as cousins.

enjoy life in sunny fla.

best

sb

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 37
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
 Date: 3 August 2007 7:31 PM

For Francis Seller: My mistake Francis. The big brick house was and still is on the corner of Bain and South streets.

For John Conner: I remember your dad very well, John. On cold winter nights when he had the beat when he'd walk all the way from uptown down to Cardinal Square. My dad ran Leonards Bar and Restaurant and I worked on the restaurant side after school in the evenings. Officer Connel would come in the back door half frozen with his overcoat and little earmuffs and would always get a free hot cup of coffee with a taste of whisky in it. A nice fat sandwich or an order of clam fritters were also available. I enjoyed the short chats and really looked up to him.

Red Verteveuille and others would also stop by at night when on duty. A big thrill for us kids when we were just little tikes was to have Officer "Pinkie" White or "Red" Verteveuille pick us up under the armpits and give us a spin as we crossed the street at the corner of Valley and Jackson. They were the original "School Crossing Guards" in my life and I still remember them with much joy. Of course, if we had a nickel or more, we'd stop in Osso's store for some penny candy.

Does anyone remember Mr. Shilberg, the "Ragman" who would drive through the neighborhoods shouting "Raaaagggggs!" as he was picking up rags and throwaways? How about in the Fall of each year when the Sawmill truck that would come around and cut you a cord of wood right out front of the house with a belt driven saw mounted on the back of his log truck? You could hear the sing of the saw all over the neighborhood. An then. . . how about the smell of leaves burning in the streets in the Fall?

And then, there was the Iceman's sign that had 5,10, 15, 20 cents printed on each edge that you'd place in a front window to tell him what size ice block you needed. And the horses and wagons out on the frozen lakes cutting blocks of ice for storage at the ice houses on West Main and at the end of High Street.

And for you really old guys!!! Remember when cars had a standard clutch, brake and gas pedal but also had another "Reverse" pedal between the clutch and brake?

Man!! Am I old!!

Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories? Posting 38
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf

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Posting: Re: What are our earliest memories?
Poster: Ed Gervais
Date: 4 August 2007 1:41 AM

Posting 39

The "Ice Man" was Truman Ives. He and the family ran the ice and heating oil business for many, many years. Sons that I remember were Truman Ives, Jr. who graduated in 1957 from Windham and Louie Ives his younger brother. I remember seeing Truman Sr. many mornings delivering ice to Hallocks Restaurant, Bill's #7 and the Frontenac Restaurant and others. Sometimes as early as 4 AM.

The High Street ice house was "Brown's Ice House" That little pond has some really big fish and enormous snapping turtles.