

East Falls Past--Courtship Customs

The Fallser, February 2007, by Wendy Moody

25 years ago, a series of oral history tapes of local senior citizens were made at the Falls of Schuylkill Library by gerontologist Cherie Snyder. Below are excerpts of a Feb. 6, 1981 tape on the topic of "Courtship Customs in the Falls." The participants were most likely dating in the 1920s and 1930s.



Can anyone remember their funniest date?

- "We went to the movies on Midvale Avenue. I paid my way and he paid his, though he bought me a box of liquid cherries."
- "A friend and I decided to double date. We were to meet our dates at the movies on Allegheny Avenue. The girls never showed. Because my friend fancied one of the girls, we waited there through two shows."
- I was walking with my boyfriend along the Wissahickon on a bitter November afternoon. We went into Valley Green Inn where there was a cozy fire – we were the only ones there except for a ferocious German Shepherd in the corner. I was petrified. When the waitress brought our order of sandwiches and coffee, the dog whipped my sandwich off the plate! We walked out – I really wanted that coffee; it was so cold. But the dog had a good meal."

What was your most romantic date?

- "I remember ice skating near Valley Green on a beautiful snowy winter day with snow piled on all the pine trees like a picture. We went to the inn afterwards for cocoa."

Do you remember a special party?

- "I remember "VJ" Day (Victory in Japan). All the neighbors came into our house. We rolled up the rug and had a wonderful time until 3:00 a.m."
- "I remember "VJ" Day too. We went into town to see the celebration and as we were crossing Broad and Chestnut a marine threw my sister into the air."

How did you meet your husband?

- "I met my husband at a Paul Jones Dance. We made two circles – boys going one way and girls the other. When the music stopped you danced with who was across from you. He became my husband."
- "Years ago the Methodist Church had a picnic on Memorial Day at a big pavilion in Forest Park. The women served the meal. In 1927 my husband proposed to me there."

- - “I met him by the reservoir playing football. The girls knew the Germantown boys would be playing there and we’d sit on the wall and watch them.”

Where else did you go for dates?

- - “Nice plays at Old Academy.”
- - “We had Sunday Evening Company – about 8 couples would go to each other’s houses on Sunday nights for coffee (there was no soda then). Someone would play piano. ”
- - “We’d go to different dance halls, especially on 13th Street. It was Prohibition time and there was no drinking. We would hear of deaths caused by people drinking bad alcohol.”