

Then and Now

by Emily Hayes

I had the pleasure of interviewing Beverly Colligas for this project. I enjoyed talking with her and found out some interesting facts such as Bev and John were high school sweethearts and got engaged at graduation. She was born in Somerville and raised in Raritan. Bev and John transferred from Third Reformed Church to United Reformed Church in 2009.

1. What advice would you give your younger self?

Bev: I would do everything I did because I have had a really good life but I would have continued my education. College was not pushed for girls back in the 50's unless you wanted to be a nurse.

Emily: I would tell my younger self not to worry about what other people think.

2. What were some cool things you like to do with your friends when growing up/what did you and your friends do for fun?

Bev: There were five of us who were always together and on Saturday afternoons we would go to the Somerville Movies and they used to give away glasses and dish towels. I saw ventriloquist Shari Lewis and her puppet Lamb Chop there and also worked there selling tickets. Another thing, I enjoyed was going to the Somerville Armory on Sunday afternoons to listen to some rock and roll singers who went on to become famous, such as Ricky Nelson, Frankie Avalon, Fats Domino to name a few. One of the girls got a car senior year and we started to go to Drive-ins to have hamburgers or just cruise around. We also had sock hops and we really had a good time.

Emily: My friends and I go to the mall, the movies, the park, or just hang out at each other's houses.

3. Who was famous and what were they famous for?

Bev: Elvis Presley, Connie Francis, Johnny Ray, Frankie Avalon, and Fats Domino who were all singers. Debbie Reynolds, Gene Kelly, Elizabeth Taylor, Sandra Dee, Doris Day, Paul Newman, Jimmy Stewart, Rock Hudson and all the girls heart-throb James Dean who were all actors.

Emily: The Kardashian's and the Jenner's and they are famous for makeup, and reality television.

4. What were movies like?

Bev: There were musicals such as White Christmas with Bing Crosby and Singing in the Rain with Gene Kelly. Westerns were big such as High Noon with Gary Cooper, Giant with James Dean and a lot of Alfred Hitchcock suspense and drama, like Dial

M for Murder with Ray Milland and Grace Kelly. The best part was that there was no nudity or foul language in the movies.

Emily: Today's movies have a lot of foul language and there are a lot of scary or comedy movies, but there isn't really any westerns today.

5. What was a memorable play the drama club presented in school?

Bev: I never went to any of the school plays

Emily: A memorable play was How To Succeed In Business without Really Trying.