

Walled Lake Memories
By Lillian Klein

"It's going to be a hot summer". Those were words that I liked to hear because then Father would talk about going to Walled Lake for the whole summer. Our 7 Gunsberg families, with 22 children, owned cottages there and when school was over we would all move out until Labor Day.

In the early years it was quite primitive. We had no inside plumbing except a sink with water coming from the lake. A yard pump provided water for drinking and cooking. At the rear of the yard was the outhouse where 3 different sized people could go. The kerosene lamps and stove were our other comforts. The lake was our bathtub. Sometimes Mother would put wet clothes on the dock to have the sun bleach them before rinsing and hanging them up to dry.

The fathers would come out on Friday after work to spend the weekend. They brought supplies that we couldn't buy at the general store in the village, which was one mile away. Once a week the women would give their orders to the store and they would deliver for each family. Farmers and peddlers came around often to sell and socialize. As a little girl, I would walk to a nearby farm with my cousins. Had a little covered pail to buy some fresh warm milk as we watched the farmer milk the cows.

Our family owned a sausage factory. Every week we would have a wienie roast. There was always a long beef salami hanging on a hook behind the kitchen door. It never spoiled, only got harder. After swimming most of the kids made different kinds of sandwiches for their supper and a few always had salami with different toppings.

There were a few rules but nobody complained. The older cousins disciplined the younger ones and we listened! Even more than to our parents.

After the big noon dinner, the girls and mothers would meet in the backyard to knit or embroider. Dear Aunt Fanny was our tutor. She had the patience of a saint. The boys would go frog hunting, play ball or some other activity until 3 o'clock. That's when we were allowed to go swimming. Not before because we were told that we could get cramps and drown or even sunstroke so everybody obeyed. We would stay in the water until our teeth started to chatter from the cold.

Those were memorable days. Even now when our family get together, we reminisce about Walled Lake. Now it has changed in many ways as we have too, but the good memories will never change.