

## 35 east South Street, Mooresville 1950-1966

Reverend Cook's health sadly declined. The bothersome clatter of two children scampering above him distressed him requiring a move for us. To this day, likely due to numerous gentle instructive admonishments, I walk like a sleuthing hunter when crossing a floor. My Mom had a distant relative, Alvin Scott, who was a realtor in Mooresville. In October of 1950 we journeyed there to be shown some houses for sale. One, a stately old brick house was occupied by two bachelor brothers, Paul and Evan Hadley. They were both had gracefully edged their way into their seventies and had let the home decline a bit. Paul was a fine artist and an instructor in watercolor at John Herron School of Art in Indianapolis. In 1916, Paul's three entries in the DAR contest for a State "Banner" in 1916 had placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. An unsupported but fitting story is that he wished he had not designed Indiana's state Flag because the notoriety in that accomplishment caused folks to overlook his ingenious beautiful watercolor works. He tended his brother whose main occupation was slow shuffled roaming around town wearing a long brown wool overcoat in all seasons. He was ever looking groundward and as he spied anything metallic he would fetch it for the pockets of the old coat. Arriving home he then delivered his treasures to the backyard of the ole brick. Years of that metal harvesting led to a pickup load of pocket sized whatevers.

Artist Paul did not take to the fine art of scaring folks by automobile. Consequently, he never learned to driving. In order to attend to his teaching assignments he took the Terre Haute Vincennes bus to Indianapolis. There at the bus station, he picked up a city trolley for his ride to Herron. The routine began with a five block walk from South street to uptown -or downtown... we never decided which-- Mooresville where he caught the bus in front of Gray's restaurant. In the fall of 1950 the combination of age and coming inclement winter weather led to his decision to seek a shorter walk. He was in the midst of planning a move to Mooresville's Washington street only a block away from Gray's bus stop. That is when and why I first met him. He was a quite man with the gentle smile of a man who had journey life creating beauty. Today when I pick up my own watercolor brush, I often recall his work. I have used some of his paintings that are displayed in the local library for self instructing...and to recall looking up at the first artist I ever knew.

On a rainy dreary October day in 1950, we pulled up in front of wrought iron fence and long sidewalk. It was not long before I saw "the look" from Mom to Dad with a similar knowing look returned. I knew we had us a new home. The stately but somewhat run down brick had been built in 1892 by AW Ayres. That builder was proud enough of his work to place his name in bricks on both the front and back of the house.

For a boy of seven the home was idyllic in location. At the end of the street was town park next to the saw mill. It was a magnet on warm days for boys...and my sister Perk to play games of scrub, a game of baseball when you're short enough players for two teams. If God had been in the gifting mode and granting wishes, I'd a been a left fielder for the Cleveland Indians. At the time I thought maybe God had mixed me and Perk up. She was like Ruth.. through right handed and knock the hide off a baseball

batting left handed. Seemed to me that if we finally would get enough players for a choose up, she would invariably and wisely would be picked before me. To this day a fresh sawdust fragrance in the warming days of Spring take me to a gathering chatter of a game of baseball at the Mooresville town park.

As you rode your bike with your mit and ball in the basket you went by May Mincy's public swimming pool. It was next to the railroad track. We loved the place and didn't mind at all that the dressing rooms had acquired their own distinct and colorful odor. Mom with her new and forever friend Louise, hired a local high school girl, Tuffy Allen to teach Perk and me along with the VanBokkelen boys, Joe and Rick, how to swim. She accomplished the task expertly and with ease. Her favorite lesson was riding the dolphin. We'd hop on her back one at a time and she was off ...you'd better be able to swim because bucking was a part of that dolphin

Most anticipated and exciting event at the park was the annual Old Settlers picnic. The three day event the first weekend in September overflowed the park from noon until the wee hours. Families and prides of teen boys prancing around gaggles of girls who pretended to ignore the attention lapped the midway. The Tri Kappa Bean Supper tent was constantly full. Small groups of old friends dotted the premises.. filled the grounds with chattering conversions like they hadn't seen each other for years—and for a few that was true. Parked cars filled several streets for blocks. Crowds joy journeyed past our home all those late summer days. Sis and I took financial advantage of our good fortune and with aid from Mom and Dad, placed a lemonade stand out front by the iron fence. It sported a snazzy sign Dad had made, "Not too sour—Not too sweet—just right to beat the heat."

Mom and Dad slowly restored the home, gardened and canned the harvest and enjoyed it immensely up to their passing... Mom in 2000 and Dad, six year later. Their neighbors practiced the same longevity. Mom and Dad however outlived all except one. Sylvia Gregory lived to be 101.

As far as I know, Sylvia, an quiet, gentle Quaker lady had lived her entire life next to the Hadley place. In the beginning she tended to her aging parents until their passing then continued living it the home until her siblings in gratitude for her parent caring, built her a fine one story brick where the older home had stood . She had graduated from Mooresville high school in 1927 and then attended Indianapolis business College in Indianapolis. Before retiring in the 1970's she had been employed at a Plumbing company in Indianapolis and then later at Indiana National Bank the 15 years. Sylvia weekly attended the Mooresville Friends Meeting and belonged to a service sorority, ADK until her passing. In her back yard she had a small garden that dad always tilled for her. Next to the garden was head high gooseberry bushes. Sylvia's gooseberry pies had the admiration of every pie connoisseur in town. Later when I was attending the Annual Mooresville High Alumni dinners catered by her ADK sorority , I made it a practice to arrive early and sneak a piece of her pie to a secure hiding place before the dinner began.

When dad passed in 2006 Sylvia stood looking at him in his casket. She tearfully looked up at me a said, "I don't 'spect anyone will miss him more than I will." Dad's armor was ever shining. Good neighboring for 56 years parts that way.