

Chapter 13 - Junior High years (age 12-14)

Summer is over. I really enjoy Little League baseball all summer. The tryouts for the All-Star picks is disappointing. I am considered good enough to make it as first baseman and relief pitcher. I hit a good drive into the right field corner during a tryout and stretch it into a triple.

I sprain my right ankle sliding into third base. I cannot walk. It takes me almost 6 weeks to recover. I did not make the team. My friends on the team eventually made it to and won the 1956 Little League World Series! I listened on the big AM radio.

On to Junior High, grade 7, at North Junior High School on the northwest side of Roswell. It is a formidable huge three-story building made of thousands of red bricks. Each classroom has tall, wide windows, some open and some closed. There are outdoor water 'fountains' where you can sip from a water stream shooting up from a long horizontal pipe.

Rumors reach me that 7th graders should be aware that the older boys are looking for us. It is a bully scare that we will be "de-pants" and our pants run up the flagpole. It hits home for me. I am terrified most of the school year. I hide among crowds, avoid the older groups of boys, carefully choose times to use the restroom, and stay in safe places. I never see anyone get "de-pants" but it definitely affects my behavior.

I do not remember how I traveled back and forth to school. It was about 2 miles. I might have ridden my bike, but I remember thinking that might look like a little kid and make me a possible target. The big boys drove cars and Vespers. All students have a whole hour at the same time for lunch and recess. Some of the kids drive to one of the fast-food drive-ins like A&W or Tastee Freeze. Some who live close by walk home and then return. I eat a sack lunch at school. I usually stay on campus and play softball and tetherball (I was the champ with both my left and right hand).

During 9th grade, I can hit the softball on top of the 4th floor of the gym. I can catch high-fly balls with one hand by reaching higher than the shorter kids. With the catch, I earn the right to bat again. Whap! There it goes back on top of the gym. Somebody must go through the high window to the top of the gym to fetch the ball. I catch flack for the delay of the game. I feel proud of my abilities. Coach puts me in charge of getting and returning the equipment.

Part 1 - Times and Places

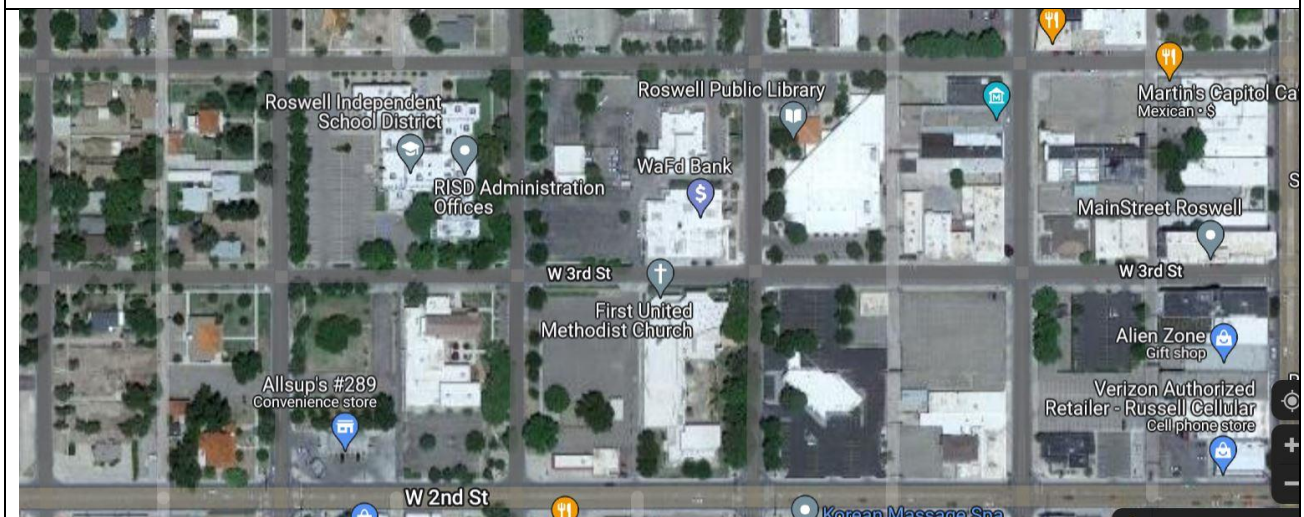
I live on the far east side. I do not know the west side neighborhood very well. Many of the west side students are not very friendly. I have just enough friends to feel liked.



School Days 57-58



North Junior High School, Roswell, NM - c.1930s



<http://scottymoore.net/roswell.html>