



**"Where thou art - that - is Home."** ~Emily Dickinson



## WILDWOOD by-the-sea: Nostalgia & Recipes *Tent City: 1939-1953*

"Wildwood-By-The-Sea: Nostalgia and Recipes"  
is the newly published book by Anita Hirsch

Imagine spending a summer on the beach, sleeping in a tent, having fun on the sand and in the ocean all day and every day! At the southern end of the barrier island near the stone jetty just below Diamond Beach, between the years of 1939 and 1953, more than 100 tents were set up there each summer.

The Enkoff's were one of those families who pitched a tent. Harry and Christine Enkoff, thought camping on the beach would be a great place for their children to spend the summer, to get off the streets and get away from the summer heat in Philadelphia. They both had full time jobs in Philadelphia, Harry at the Navy Yard and Christine as a seamstress. So Grandmom Theodosia Polisky stayed with the children, Christine and Raymond, at tent city during the week while their parents went back to Philadelphia for their jobs.

The Enkoff's bought permits for two dollars and a tent from the army surplus store, packed up the car and drove down to the beach off Loran Drive at the Coast Guard Station. From the time Ray was two years old until he was nine, his family spent the summers at the beach.

Ray remembers only good things about those years. They dug trash pits and they hauled fresh water for drinking in five gallon glass bottles from Ottens Harbor or Cold Springs Harbor. Water was also obtained "at the Two Mile Landing where there was an artesian well."

Ray remembers that he got tired of sand in everything by the end of the summer. He remembers being bothered by the green head flies. Many of the kids got the rash from the foliage of the poison ivy plant but Ray was never bothered by "ivy poison." For washing, they would gather water and heat the salt water in the tar paper so it wasn't so cold to wash off. Many campers got severe sunburn.

Fishing for stripers with his father was memorable for Ray. They also caught flounder, weakfish, and Blue Crabs. Ray remembers scooping up crabs and in an hour, they would have a bushel. Grandmother Theodosia would cook them and they'd have crabs or fish for dinner. For dessert they would have blackberry pie made by their grandmother from the blackberries they picked. A Coleman stove was used for cooking. Ray remembers her making spam and eggs.

Milk was limited. They had an ice box in which they put the blocks of ice which his father carried to the tent with huge ice tongs and then they would chop the ice.

They "had to be sanitary and not slob," remembers Ray. They slept in army cots in the tents and on really hot nights, to be cooler, they would set the cot up outside. Inside, they had netting near the opening for air and to keep the mosquitoes out at night.

His mom and grandmother would buy paraffin in the A&P and then melt it and mash bayberries in it and make candles. They used the candles and the Kerosene lamp for light.

But they gave off smoke.

Raymond Enkoff remembers fondly those wonderful summers! He made many friends and played games on the beach in the daytime. They buried each other in the sand, made sand castles, and swam, even during a hurricane. They played board games, like Parcheesi and read comic books. At night they used flashlights. They had bonfires and they would roast potatoes and marshmallows on a stick until they got blackened. And they made sling shots.

After several years, his father made a prefab bungalow and they graduated to that. It could be bolted together and it had a hard wood floor, four walls and a roof.

Ray remembers that their tent was close to the rockpile jetty at the end of Diamond Beach and then as the tent population grew, they moved up closer to Diamond Point, in particular when they used the prefab bungalow. Dad Harry carried, somehow, the four walls and a floor and a roof to the beach from Philadelphia and they stayed in that a few years. That was great since there was a floor that could be swept of sand.

Ray said that, "lots of cars got stuck in the soft sand" and then "everyone would get. boards and shovels to free the cars buried axle deep in the sand."

There was an old abandoned restaurant down in that area on Pacific Avenue called Podgers and they would sometimes play in there.

Other days, they would walk in to Wildwood to the Strand Theatre on the Boardwalk. Ray remembers seeing King Kong there starring Fay Wray. He remembers swimming in Sportland Pool. The management would throw coins in the water and whatever you could get, you could keep. He remembers riding the wooden roller coaster on Schellenger Avenue and the Boardwalk.

This area where they camped is now federal government owned and closed to swimmers but used for promoting wild life. It is designated as the Coast Guard Wildlife Preserve.

Once the building of motels began along the beachfront in Wildwood Crest, it was no longer permitted to set up tents and the Tent City was no longer. Ray enjoys speaking of the years spent in the summers at Tent City, and reliving "those wonderful times."



A tent in tent city with a cot outside



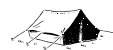
Rear right is mom, Christine Enkoff, in front of her is Ray Enkoff and to his right in two piece suit is his sister Christine.



Mom, Christine Enkoff, fishing on the rock pile at the end of Diamond Beach at Tent City.



Ray on side of new four sided prefab bungalow they purchased to use for the summer, mom at door, two women cooking, on the right grandmother Theodosia Polisky. Right picture, mom sweeping.



**Thank you to Raymond Enkoff for his memories and photos.**



**"The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope."** ~John Buchan



Dad, Harry, with a Striper



Mom and Dad bringing in water on shoulder



Ray and Dad playing baseball in front of cars on the beach.



Mom, Christine Enkoff, sitting on the rock pile at the end of Diamond Beach at Tent City.



Dad bringing in basket of crabs



Mom Enkoff



Mom, Christine Enkoff, dressed up, was either going for a walk on the Boardwalk or to church



Ray with mom and Dad on the beach



Ray and Dad in ocean



Ray Enkoff in front of tent



Mom Enkoff

### BLACKBERRY PIE



#### Crust

- 4 cups flour
- 1 1/3 cup Crisco shortening
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6-8 tablespoons water

Add the flour, Crisco, salt and water into a bowl. Combine the ingredients with your hands. Form into a dough. Divide dough in half. Press the dough into the pans.

#### Filling:

- 5 cups fresh black berries
- 1/2 cup brown sugar

Fill the pie shell with the berries and top with sugar. Pull the pie dough over the berries.

Place on a grate over the Coleman stove burner. And cover and bake. Bake for about 40 to 45 minutes until pastry is brown and juice bubbles. (or bake in preheated oven for 15 minutes at 425. Reduce heat to 400 and continue baking for 30 to 40 minutes until the pastry is brown and juice bubbles.)

**Yields: 6-8 servings**

## Wildwood Memories Make the Perfect Gift!

### WILDWOOD-BY-THE-SEA: NOSTALGIA AND RECIPES

the newest book by Anita Hirsch, is available now at the Wildwood and Wildwood Crest Historical Societies. This collection includes her columns which have appeared in The SUN-by-the-sea, which are nostalgia-packed, lavishly illustrated with photos and includes more than fifty recipes in all. Revisit people and places that make the Wildwoods so special. Read how Wildwood-By-the-Sea came to be: stories of your favorite places with more than 250 photos that will take you back to the best times of your youth and your family vacations. Memories of the boardwalk, the beach, the ocean, the sand, sand castles, the tram car, and the food...here is your chance to revisit your favorite memories of Wildwood-By-The-Sea..



**Hot Off The Press!**

*Pick up your copy at:*

**6 years in the making!**

### THE WILDWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

3907 Pacific Avenue • Wildwood, NJ • 523-0277

Send Check or M.O.

**\$19.95**

plus \$6 shipping & handling

to: **Anita Hirsch**

P.O. Box 295, 3140B Tilghman St.  
Allentown, PA 18104

or e-mail orders to

[tasteofwildwood@aol.com](mailto:tasteofwildwood@aol.com)

### Order form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

