

## Down By The Berry Patch

### "MSU Memories"

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May 15, 2005

My graduation year was 1955 and my Student ID Number is 77518. However, that was the year the college changed its designation to university and our class voted to wait to receive diplomas so it would indicate that we graduated from a University rather than a College. Thus, I attended the School of Home Economics Education program for four years at Michigan State College and my designation is now that I graduated from the College of Human Ecology from Michigan State University.

My freshman year, I lived in South Williams Dormitory where the house mother would stand at the door at 10:00 P.M. on weeknights, 1:00 A.M. on Friday and Saturday, and 12:30 A.M. on Sunday, greet us as we returned to the dorm, and record any minutes that we were late. As I recall, an accumulation of fifteen late minutes meant a "grounding" for an evening out. Men or boys were not allowed on the floors and if a male worker appeared, we would call out, "Man on the floor!", as a warning to our floor mates. Sunday dinner in the dormitory was always fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, a nice salad and vegetable, and a calorie filled dessert. We did not have choices; we ate what was served.

I was a member of the Speaker's Bureau and performed magic acts around the community. I was a recognized member of the Scholastic Honorary, Omricon Nu, as well as becoming a member of the social sorority, Zeta Tau Alpha. After joining the sorority, I lived in the new sorority house at the end of MAC Avenue.

Since I came from a small town that had no sports program for girls, I was in awe of being required to take six physical education classes and selected: fencing, square dancing, hockey, tennis, archery, and Swedish gymnastics. Or maybe those were just the classes open for my schedule at the time of registration. I recall that girls were not allowed to wear shorts on campus, even as we walked to the tennis courts. We wore a long coat as a "cover up."

I recall the quonset huts where we had our chemistry labs after our lecture sessions in Kedsie Hall. We would walk across campus to the labs, down through the Botanical gardens as a short cut to/from the dormitory. It seemed like a safe place to walk, even at night. Beaumont Tower, the Sparty Statue, "new" Shaw Hall, Union Building, beautiful ivy covered buildings, the Red Cedar, and feeding the ducks along the river are good memories.



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Reprinted from *Down by the Berry Patch*

<http://berrypatch.info/judy/013.html>

Last updated on 25 July 2014

Photo Caption: Julia Ann Libracki in front of Williams Hall, 1952

I had a welcome full scholarship to pay my tuition of \$50.00 a semester regardless of how many credits taken. The tuition also covered admission to all athletic, cultural, and social events and health services. You just picked up your tickets ahead of time, showed your identification card, and walked right in. My part time jobs were cleaning ovens in the Home Economics building and cleaning houses in the community. I chose these jobs because I could make \$1.25 an hour and other work on campus only paid ninety cents an hour.

I felt very privileged to be able to watch the TV in the dormitory lounge to see President Eisenhower elected. TV was new, everyone had their own manual typewriter, and many sported Samsonite luggage--a traditional high school graduation gift. We often wore long, full, circular skirts, white socks and saddle shoes. I don't recall owning slacks or pant suits.

I married before graduation and lived in a trailer park behind the Poplar Restaurant east of East Lansing. While working on my MA, we lived in Spartan Village with our family during the summer months. Riding a bike or hitchhiking a ride were common because we did not have two cars and my husband was also a student and our schedules were different.

Many lasting friendships were made at MSU where I received my BS and MA. They were good years during my life journey--creating many wonderful memories.

(Submitted for a journal of MSU graduates on their memories at the time of their 50th Anniversary of graduation.)

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