

# Row Houses Required Mutual Respect

GROWING UP in north Philadelphia in the 1940s is a time that I'll always cherish.

We lived in a row home and had to be careful not to be loud or invade our neighbors' privacy. Sometimes that was a challenge.

When I was a teenager, I did a lot of singing and was a regular on the Horn & Hardart Children's Hour, a weekly television show.

My singing required a lot of practice. And because people years ago kept their windows open—since home air conditioners were not yet widely used—when I sang and practiced the piano, our next-door neighbors would slam their windows down.

“That's enough practice for today,” my mother would say. “You have to respect your neighbor.”

My family had dinner at 5 p.m. and my friends dined at 6 p.m., but sometimes we had our dinners at the same time. When the kitchen windows were open, you could look across the side yard and see the neighbors at their table and listen to their conversation.

We who lived in row houses in the city were taught to be quiet, respectful, always helpful to our neighbors and, above all, never bring disgrace on our families.

I'm happy I was raised a city girl. My only wish is that I could see and hear the horse-drawn milk wagons again.

—Peggy Braun, Feasterville, Pennsylvania