

Remembrance

By Henry Kee and George Moy

Hank as he is now called will go to Alaska for the 50th anniversary of our class from PS 23. He has a radio station program and is an expert in computers. We were neighbors in the Chinatown community and all played punch ball at Columbus Park or on the side walk by the municipal jail. Of course (Johnny on a pony 1-2-3) was a wild game too. Leo Lion was our hero as only he can hit the pink ball over the 8 or so story building. Stick ball was played with a mop stick and pink 15 cent "Spaldeen" ball.

The CCC (Chinese Community Center) sponsored baby contests and many women proudly took their kids to enter the contest during a summer weekend filled with activity at Columbus Park.

The summers would go by slowly during school vacation, but a boat ride to Bear Mountain sponsored by the Restaurant Association for the many families, in and outside of the Chinatown community, helped liven up the summer.

If ya wanted to go fishing you headed for Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn or Coney Island and finish off with a hot dog at Nathan's and corn on the cob. To cool off on a hot summer day, the kids slept on the fire escape at 37 Mott Street and then would watch the priests walk back and forth with their prayer book from the roof.

Games played on Pell Street were: RED LIGHT GREEN LIGHT...KICK THE CAN and sometimes tourists would even toss money at us and we wondered why, as if we were poor kids.

Christmas was special in the community as well as the Chinese New Year celebration. The drums, the gong and cymbals for the lion dances were the highlights with firecrackers galore.

The tradition of NYC where many came as Chinatown's history with the Dutch, Germans, Irish and the Italians evolved. The Chinese, spreading into American Society, assimilated in every direction and profession upon arrival from Ellis Island.