



Susan Cohen at the Philmont Food Co-op

My grandparents, Beatrice and Edwin Stichter, lived here in Philmont, down from the Methodist Church. I was growing up in Greenport, but it was fun to come visit them. We would play across the street at the ball diamond. There was a swing set, and there would be lots of kids. We would walk up with my brother and sister and cousins to Palen's Candy and Soda shop--where High Falls Pizzeria is now-- and get penny candy in a little brown paper bag. We would walk up to the Reservoir from Church Street and we'd swim and play in the sand, get a snack from the concession stand, maybe an ice cream bar. I remember feeling so happy, safe. No worries, just being a kid. I'd love for my little granddaughter (soon to be born) to move up to a place like this, where she can go to the park, and where there's no traffic, no road rage like in the city!

I remember Christmas parties at the American Legion Hall when I was around nine years old. Santa was always played by Philip Mossman. I remember lots of times, cleaning up with my grandpa on Sunday mornings after a party. There were parties once a month or so. The American Legion Hall had a big bar, a big open dance floor, a kitchen. For occasions, they would decorate. My sister's wedding was held there.

In 2012, I moved back to the area, to Philmont. It was a different place then, scary. There were thugs on the sidewalk on Main Street, litter everywhere, and just an eerie feeling. Now, it's 100% better again. Big improvement. Much cleaner. You can see progress. Mike and Nancy McNann are part of that change; they are very kind, good people. Michael is my safety net. They are part of the positive change happening in the village now. Also, Purpose Making has done a lot for the village. And Jo at the green truck, and Gina at the Philmont Co-op. The co-op used to be a Stewart's gas station. That's gone. The Key Bank is gone. Richardson Hall used to be a bar room! The senior center was an IGA grocery store. But there's still a lot of beauty in Philmont: the trees, the churches. I'd like to get more involved. I mean, I'm here,

for g-d-loving sake! I walk my dog and pick up garbage, and I try to help out when called upon. I try to be friendly. Sometimes, I think I'm over-friendly!

Life is a full circle. I'm back where I grew up. It's really strange. I used to walk here with my grandparents. Now, I'm going to be a grandmother myself very soon! I see kids playing in the parks here and I think, that was me! Beautiful.

By Susan Cohen 10/12/2019