

## Our History

### Memories of Dewey Stone Area by Bill Bartling



This is what it was like in the 1940s growing up in Greece in the Dewey Stone area.

When I was 5 we moved to 22 Dalston Road. It was the first house on the street behind Sarvey's Gulf station. Across Dewey, one block toward the city, was Shorty Junker's Barnard Grill. Directly across from Sarvey's was a Hart's grocery. It was sort of a 7-11 before there were 7-11s. Next to Hart's going toward Stone Road was Veltri's shoe repair. Back on the West side, next to Sarvey's was Esler's, which sold records and probably some other electronic stuff. Back on the East side was a little strip shopping center with a little haberdashery shop and on the corner of the center was Johnny's Diner. Then there was Cowan's drug store. Across from Cowan's was, and still is, the Dutch Mill. There was nothing behind the Dutch Mill at the time, just an open field. Back across Dewey there was a small country store on the Northwest corner. Going East on Stone there was McBride's Tavern. Heading west on Stone was Barnard School and behind Barnard was St. Charles. Back on the other side of Dewey was a church and farther down the Barnard Fire House. The fire house was much smaller then. There was a large home just before the fire house with a large open lot between the house and the fire house. The home owner let the firefighters make a large garden on the lot where they grew food for fire house use.

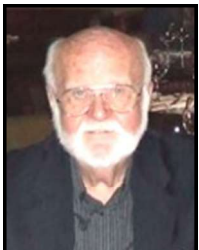
You'd find mostly homes from there to the Britton Road area except for Hope Lutheran Church. Every day at noon the firefighters sounded the siren. I don't know if that was to test it or to let everyone know it was time for lunch. The siren's real purpose was to alert the volunteers that it was time for action when there was a fire. When the siren sounded shopkeepers would come running out of the stores, jump into their cars, and head for the fire house to learn where the fire was.

Kids would be out all day in the summer and after school when it was in session. Parents didn't worry about the children's safety and usually the Barnard school playground was the destination. Smaller children played on the swings, slides, monkey bars, and whatever else was there while the older kids played baseball, football, or soccer, whatever was in season. With no assigned teams, we chose up sides, and had no coaches or even adults. I almost think this was better. We learned a lot about life without an adult directing what we should do and how we should act. There were no school buses; we all walked to school.

Every year a group of Gypsies came and camped in the lot behind the Dutch Mill. We youngsters always went there to talk to the exotic people who were really quite nice to us. Today people would never let their children go there unsupervised. Later, the shopping area around the back of the Dutch Mill was built and the Gypsies' camping grounds were no more. One of the shops there was a bakery. A young ex-sailor by the name of Jackson started his bakery which still exists today now found across the street.

One event we always looked forward to was the minstrel show performed by the Barnard firefighters and exempts members. It was amazing to see people we knew performing— some with great talent and others with great enthusiasm. The shows were stopped because they were considered racist I believe. We were too young and innocent to understand racism and we all wanted to be one of the End Men (as they were called) when we grew up.

Another annual event we looked forward to occurring was the Christmas party the Fire Department conducted for children of the firefighters. We always were given a net stocking filled with hard candy, a little toy, and an orange which was a real treat. We only had whatever fruit was in season in those days and seldom from a faraway place like Florida..... So many more memories....



*Bill Bartling was born and grew up in Greece. He attended Barnard Elementary and then John Marshall High School as there were no high schools in Greece at that time. Bill's father was one of the first four full time firefighters at the Barnard Fire House, so Bill spent many hours there. He knew Chief Carter and the police officers there too as they were housed at the rear of the fire house. After a career in the electronic security industry, Bill and his wife of 54 years retired to Austin, Texas along with their three children.*

