

Summer Time Antics at the Drive-In

Back in the day before devices ruled, one of the biggest summer entertainments was going to the drive-in. As teens, planning our dating strategies was the top priority filled with part time jobs at the soda fountain and lazy beach time for getting the optimum rays.

Ah, that was the easy path. None of us had much pressure, and we were all pretty oblivious to the hard knock existence that many of our parents endured during the Depression. No worries. No homework. September was far off in the distance.

On occasion it would be a boy-girl night alone. A coke and a hot dog would be the big splurge along with a bag of salty popcorn for munching on during the movies. Usually we made it through just one of the two shows before we had a curfew.

More often, it would be a bunch of us hanging out together at the drive-in.

If so, one of us would have to borrow the family car for the Saturday evening and get all the details of that worked through with our parents. It wasn't easy. Society was mostly one-car families.

A few of the guys ending their senior year had their own cars, and they had a bit more freedom. They got called on first, and of course, were the popular ones just because...

Now the trick was to pile as many humans into the car as possible with a couple hidden in the trunk for the ticket price was by front and back seat at the Flanders Drive -In, three miles out of town.

Sometimes it was necessary for a couple carloads of us to meet on the road before the entrance to readjust our numbers. The car doors would fly open, and we would shift if needed.

You would think that the ticket taker would figure out what nonsense a bunch of teens were up to after week after week of it. Well, in our case, it was an older brother or sister of one of us. I suppose they were helping us out.

I remember one night hiding on the backseat floorboard with another friend stifling our giggles as we were smuggled in to the show. We lay

down flat with a woolen plaid blanket over us – I was and still am allergic to wool – and tried not to move for as long as the line took to get in the entrance. “Are we there yet?” The bumpy floor was uneven, smelled of dirty shoes and whatever else had been in there. I didn’t want to think through all the possibilities.

There was a chain link fence around the perimeter of the drive-in, and way back in an isolated corner there was a sizeable hole where the truly skilled boys would sneak through to join us. The management must have known.

For some reason – I was a scaridy cat – I never got roped into the trunk. I guess the boys looked at me, my perfectly styled hair and forgot about that thought. There were girls ready to jump in eager to please anyhow, and I lucked out.

Little kids in their pj’s, teens in their rolled-up blue jeans and moms and dads with their ice cream sundaes all filled the drive-in parking lot.

It is good to see that drive-ins are having a resurgence for family together time. Anyone up for a spooky thriller?