

On London St.

by Tom Peters

Sept. 2021

Even though I witness insulation going into our new house as it was being built on London St, but after we moved in I sure I was the first to discover cuddling in front of heat vents to keep warm in Michigan's frigid winters. I know now that 2 bedrooms, 1 bath homes are for a small family. But in the 50's when I grew up that size home was fine for a family on 10 kids! It's where I developed a lifelong intolerance of raised voices. I remember being so scared during storms watching the two giant elms swaying, swaying and ready to come down on our house like the Fitzpatrick's home down the street.

During a blackout at night, you knew where you were by the smells, ammonia around the diaper pails, mold in basement shower, W-D-40 near Dad's workbench, perfume in my parent's bedroom and dusty pine in the attic before my dad refinished it. The fruit closet under basement steps had a smell I'd recognize but can't quite put into words. Musky and damp is the best I can do.

Occasionally we'd get locked out and I'd have to squeeze through the milk chute by the side door.

My mother was always busy, cooking, laundry, changing diapers and keeping living room extra tidy for guests that could show up at any time.

The small kitchen gave off strong and inviting smells near dinner time. Liver bacon and onions in the electric frying pan was one of the more distinctive aromas followed by tuna casserole.

I loved that tiny home for its inherent warm.