
Patricia White

Pat White lived in Judson House for a year while studying at New York University.

In September 1948 I registered for a couple of graduate courses in education at New York University. I also found a part-time clerical job at a magazine conveniently located on Fifth Avenue a few blocks up from Washington Square. After college, I had moved back in with my parents in Westfield, New Jersey, and commuted by train, ferry, and subway to the corner of Sixth Avenue and West Third Street.

My great good fortune was to be introduced to Margaret Wright. Margaret and her husband, the Rev. Dean Wright, had just moved to New York from Oregon to join the staff of Judson Memorial Church. The Wrights lived in a staff apartment at the top of 81 West Third Street, a small historic house owned by the church. Margaret invited me to drop by their place on my way to the subway one day. She introduced me to Dean, and they talked about their work with students.

The Wrights' apartment had a big skylit living room, with a kitchen along the windowless west wall. On the first landing of the staircase ascending to the Wrights' place were two double rooms for women students. At the next landing, a cut through the wall of the building led to the third floor of 237 Thompson Street, which then had a number of single rooms occupied by men students.

My tiny income and student registration qualified me to move into "81" to share a room with Sylvia for five dollars a week. I was overjoyed to skip the long commute and be a grown-up again, as I felt too old to live in the parental home after having been on my own for five years.

A VERY HOT SUMMER

The summer in 1949 was very hot. I remember the women's bathroom, where I showered three times a day and washed my entire

wardrobe in rotation (one seersucker dress, two greenish cotton skirts, four blouses, and underwear). Around dinner time, after yet another shower, I put on whatever was clean and walked the few blocks to the Judson men's shared apartment, where Lou had cooked a wonderful communal dinner. We paid Lou weekly in advance for ingredients; he had free rent in exchange for shopping and cooking (who did the dishes?). Lou did fine Italian home-style dinners, of which I especially loved the huge green peppers stuffed with rice and ground beef, then covered with rich tomato sauce and baked. Spaghetti with meat sauce was popular then, as now, but pizza had not yet crossed the Atlantic as universal food.

When we could afford it, we ate out at local restaurants. I especially remember a fish place on Eighth Street, where we often ate what the menu called lemon sole—fish and asparagus in a lemon sauce.

After dinner, walks through the streets of Greenwich Village and Washington Square Park were semi-cooling before another shower and then to bed in a higher-than-body-temperature room. My laundry never included pajamas.

At the end of the summer I was no longer a student and moved to a furnished room on West 11th Street. I remained active in Judson Church, and in the early 1950s I was one of the few women on the Board of Trustees. In March 1950 Bob Newman and Dean Wright set up an exhibition of Georges Rouault's religious works in the church. Dark French Roman Catholicism by Rouault (1871–1958) offended some visitors who expected more traditional Protestant works. I did some volunteer hours of guarding the exhibition and was amazed that people could be so upset they took one look and ran down the stairs to the street.

From October 1955 to February 1956 I served as church secretary. It was a quiet winter as Bob Spike was spending most of the time at his new job while doing the necessary interim work at Judson until Howard Moody arrived.

Right after my wedding on March 7, 1956, I moved to Canada. I was sorry to miss the exciting innovations going on at Judson as they were recorded in the newsletters that came to me in the mail.

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lives in Victoria, British Columbia.