

## Remember When

*By Donna Bishop*

The song I love depends on the emotions and pictures that flood my mind as the familiar musical sounds or lyrics stimulate my ear drums. Although I enjoy many types of music, I can neither carry a tune nor play an instrument. I would be hard pressed to name all the words to even one song. I do not sing to myself in or out of the shower. I'm the kid that was always encouraged to lip-sync in choir to keep the other singers on key. Whatever that meant.

Searching my memory bank for any song that would elicit a possible subject for a story I remembered a skit in the summer of 1958 that might fit the bill. I had just graduated from high school and taken a summer job in Yellowstone Park as a hotel maid. I was assigned to the beautiful Historic Canyon Hotel. The original temporary hotel opened in May 1886, with the second hotel completed in 1891. The hotel was redesigned in 1910 to create an elegant resort-like air. The hotel was built on a hill west of the Canyon Falls. It included 400 rooms with an interior lobby that measured 100 feet by 200 feet with exposed natural timber beams and a panoramic view. The hotel was showing serious aging signs by 1958 but was still much sought after for lodging and dining by visitors to the Park.

Each night a talented young band played dance music in the lounge which attracted tourists as well as the college-age employees. Traditionally the young employees who came to Yellowstone from all over the county were asked to prepare one night of entertainment for the tourists. We decided to do a program featuring music from the thirties. I was rooming with three other maids: Bobby from Massachusetts, Judi from Indiana, Susie from Connecticut. We worked up a skit doing the Charleston dance to "Has Anybody Seen My Gal?" The song enjoyed its greatest popularity in the 1920s but has been recorded many times over the years. The familiar lyrics still cause plenty of toe tapping.

*Five foot two, eyes of blue,  
But oh! What those five foot could do  
Has anybody seen my gal?*

Fortunately for me the band played the song and sang. Our role was to pantomime the song and dance the Charleston. Who can't do a turned-up nose and turned-down hose, or diamond rings, and all those things?

The night was a roaring success. I love to hear that song because it reminds me of old friends, my mother who taught me the Charleston, many adventures in Yellowstone and the elegant old hotel that was never opened again after that summer season. The Yellowstone Park Company decided it was not cost effective to restore the resort. Demolition was started in 1959 and somehow it mysteriously burned to the ground in 1960.