

## Thursday Night Fever

### Roslyn, L.I., Lies Awake and Wonders Why

By WILLIAM E. GEIST

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ROSLYN, L.I., July 29 — "Sometimes you look out the window at dusk," said a local resident, "and you don't see any, and you think maybe they won't come, maybe finally they are gone." But as surely as bugs to porch lights, they return on summer nights to this small village — at first just a few, then later in swarms, covering sidewalks, driving patrons away from businesses, causing some property damage and keeping people awake until all hours of the night.

On Thursday nights, hundreds of them — teen-agers — fill the sidewalks in front of the historic buildings in the quaint shopping district, now retrofitted with fashionable shops. They spill out into the street, where the police man barricades to keep the swelling crowd from making Old Northern Boulevard impassable to the bumper-to-bumper cars and occasional motorcycles.

"What's going on here?" asked a middle-aged man, caught unaware in the traffic. To which one of the youths answered, "Good question." Another explained that the young crowd was engaged in the time-honored tradition of hanging out on a summer night.

The police said that in the three or four years of the phenomenon that is Thursday night in Roslyn, there had been surprisingly few problems with drinking or drugs, fighting or rowdiness, even though the crowds had, sometimes numbered as many as 2,000. In fact, parents are known to drop their children off here.

To ask the youths why they are in Roslyn on a Thursday night seems to them to be questioning a law of the universe. "Because this is the time and the place," explained one in the

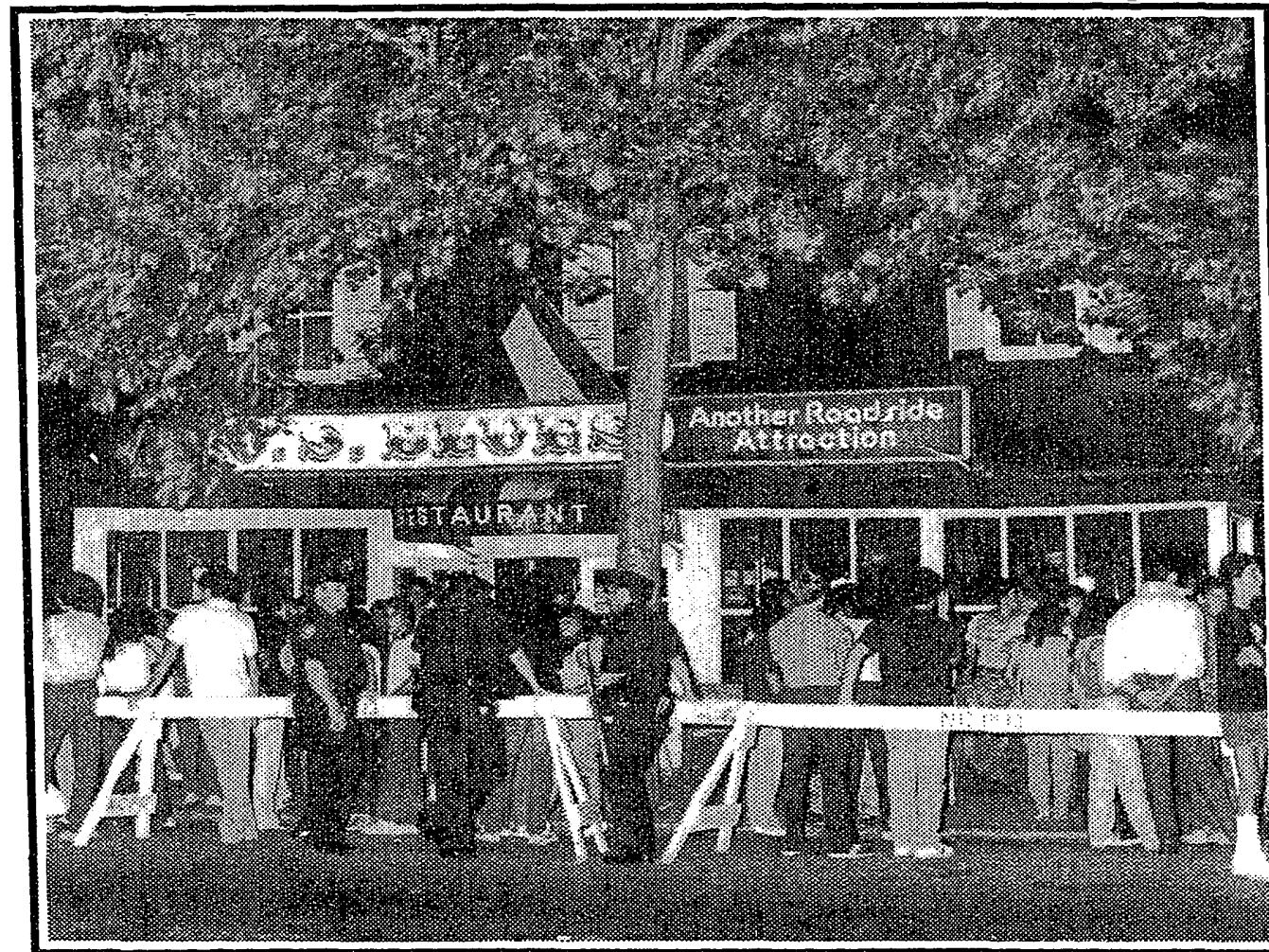
crowd. Residents contend that signs reading "Thursday Night in Roslyn" have been spotted at colleges half a continent away. Disk jockeys dedicate records to those gathered here.

Residents feel as though they have been visited by a plague. The picturesque village has gone from outdated and dilapidated to historic-chic in recent years, through the painstaking restoration of dozens of homes and buildings. It is a village — says one resident — of "us old-house nuts," where talk at parties tends to be of rococo revival mantels and lamb's-tongue window facings. The regular Thursday night infestation of teen-agers is as unwelcome as a horde of door-to-door aluminum-siding salesmen.

"Things are fragile here," said Millard Prisant, who lives in an 1845 Greek Revival home that he and his wife, Carol, have restored. "The whole village is an antique." Mr. Prisant told of waking on a Friday morning to find an eight-foot section of his half-solid, half-swag picket fence, which he and his son had built from scratch, lying in the street. He regularly finds pickets broken off of the fence, he said, and once a beer bottle was tossed through a window.

But the police say serious incidents are rare. Of the teen-agers who gather here, many of the young women, who seem to range in age from about 14 to about 21, are dressed "in the very latest Bloomingdale's has to offer," in the words of Larry Krause, 21, of Manhasset. The young men, who on the average are perhaps a year or so older, are dressed more casually, but rarely in anything that would embarrass parents at a country club.

"It's the biggest fashion show in the



A Thursday night crowd at U. S. Blues, a bar and restaurant on Old Northern Boulevard in Roslyn, L.I.

world," explained Michael Posillico, 20, of Old Westbury. "The girls come here to show off. The boys come here to look, and maybe get a phone number. It's like a shopping center for girls."

Said Jackie Steele, 19, of Woodmere: "You come here to get dressed up and show off your tan." A young woman with her questioned if this was

so different from why adults go places.

"It's a meat market," said Danielle Sedlak of Plainview, who said she had picked up two telephone numbers and a date for Friday night. "No," said Mr. Krause, echoing the view of many others, "it's just a place to see everybody." He was renewing an acquaintance with Neil Feirick of Jericho,

whom he had not seen for 10 years, since they went to camp together.

"This is not real," said Bruce Introp of Queens, who had driven out to witness a Thursday night in Roslyn. "Everybody is just standing around in fancy clothes and hair styles and jewelry." Someone standing nearby de-

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scribed the scene as "Woodstock 1982." A local homeowner commented: "They just stand and stare, a whole lost generation thing."



U. S. Blues, a bar and restaurant with live music and a dance floor, is a focal point. Many in the community would like to see the establishment closed. They believe that the crowds might go away, even though there are several other bars here on what one sweatshirt advertises as "The Hottest Strip on Long Island."

Ironically, the crowds are bad for business at U.S. Blues. "People see the crowds, the barricades and all the parking places taken," said the night manager, Ron Joy, "and they keep going." Most of those in the crowd, he said, just stand out on the sidewalk all night, some of them because they are under 18 and too young to get in. "I pray for rain so they'll come in," he said. But, said Diane Texin, 21, of Bellerose, Queens, "I've driven by on rainy Thursdays and seen hundreds of them out here with umbrellas."

"There's very little to do in the suburbs when you're 16," said Mr. Joy. "You can't drive, go to a bar, or even

On a recent Thursday night, the crowds did not begin breaking up until about 1 A.M. and many were still around at 2. When they were asked what time they had to be home, a typical answer was, "Whenever."

"I suppose it's not so different from our cruising the drive-ins in the 1950's," said Mrs. Prisant, standing at her fence, watching the traffic whiz by. What the Prisants and seemingly everybody else in this sleepy little village would like to know is: Why do kids hang out? Why, Lord, in Roslyn? And why Thursday night? Science holds no answers.

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