

AN INTERVIEW WITH
NANCY FOGLETTO RUBERTON MAIORANO

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PROVIDED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HAMMONTON

INTERVIEWED BY: EFFIE KENNEDY
TRANSCRIBED BY: CAROL EFFINGER

THE FOLLOWING IS AN INTERVIEW WITH
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Recorded on February 5, 2010, for the benefit
Of the Historical Society of Hammonton

The interview was conducted by:

Effie Kennedy

It was transcribed by:

Carol Effinger

Effie Kennedy interviewing Nancy Maiorano

This is Nancy Ruberton Maiorano and today's date is March 5, 2010, a Friday morning.

My correct address is 308 Orchard St., East, Hammonton, New Jersey.

Good morning Nancy. Thank you so much for doing this for us. This is Effie Kennedy.

Q: What is your full name?

A: Nancy Joyce Fogletto Ruberton Maiorano.

Q: What is your age?

A: I'm 75 years old.

Q: Date of your birth?

A: February 25, 1935.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Hammonton New Jersey.

Q: Were you born in a hospital?

A: No. I was born at home and Dr. Esposito was the doctor. Then a visiting nurse would come to the house.

Q: Did you grow up in the town where you were born?

A: I grew up in Hammonton, lived here until I was married and lived in the same house where I was born.

Q: Did your parents move to different houses, cities or states when you were young. I guess not. You loved Hammonton.

A: No.

Q: When you were a teenager where did you gather with your friends for entertainment?

A: One of the places--they would have a Friday night dance at the gym when I was in high school. I would go there and meet with my friends and we would have a nice time in the gym. Of course it was all chaperoned. We would dance. Also sometimes we would go to the movies and kind of all meet together and go to the early show and sit together and see the movie.

Q: When you were a teenager I'm pretty sure you dressed like a teenager then. How was that? Can you describe it a little bit?

A: We wore the long full skirts almost to the ankles and blouses. We called them blouses in those days. Shoes were mostly saddles or loafers. As far as the hair, some wore it long, some short. I don't recall any real wild styles. I just don't remember that.

Q: Are you married or have you been married?

A: I have been married and widowed twice.

Q: Do you want to name who you married?

A: My first husband was Rocco Louis Ruberton and we were married in Hammonton, New Jersey. He was born in Hammonton but then had moved to Egg Harbor when he was about two and a half, three years old so he was living in Egg Harbor at the time but we were married in Hammonton.

Q: Do you remember where you went on dates and places you went for social life with each other?

A: A lot of the dating was movies and back then going to Atlantic City was a big place to go. We would go to the movies, we would walk on the boardwalk then maybe stop and get something to eat. That was a big dating thing. We also did family functions. That was big. We attended all the little nieces and nephews, the birthday parties and the

holidays and would even just visit with his married sisters. That was a social event for us.

Q: You talk about eating on the boardwalk. Did you have favorites?

A: No. Not really. Sometimes we would get something there or on the way home. Maybe stop at a diner and maybe get a hamburger or some kind of a sandwich or something. Going out for eating was not big back then like now. A lot of people going out to dinner is a big thing. Back then it was a very special occasion when you went out to dinner.

Q: Did you know each other for a long time before you married?

A: About two and a half years.

Q: Were you engaged for a good part of that?

A: Over a year.

Q: How old were the both of you?

A: I was twenty years old and he was twenty-one when we married.

Q: Did you have any religious affiliations?

A: Yes. Roman Catholic both of us.

Q: Did you have any children?

A: Two children. Two boys. First boy is David Anthony Ruberton who is now fifty-two years old. The second boy is Stephen Charles Ruberton who is fifty years old.

Q: Now we are going to ask you questions about your mother first.

A: What about the second husband?

Q: Who was your second husband?

A: Second husband is John Rocco Maiorano and he was born and lived in Philadelphia when I met him and I knew him for about three and one half years. Then we married. I was sixty years old at the time. He was seventy-two. Again we were both Catholics. We got married in the Catholic church here in Hammonton. We were married for almost twelve years before he passed away May 1, 2007. My first husband, we were married for twenty-nine years before he passed away.

Q: What was your mother's maiden name?

A: Her name was Nancy Sarappa.

Q: Do you know when she was born?

A: She was born in Waterford Works in New Jersey on August 13, 1907.

✓ Q: By chance do you know when her mother was born? This would be your maternal grandmother.

A: No. I don't know. I know she was born in Italy. Her name was Maria Palma but I don't really know too much.

Q: Do you have a family bible that records this by any chance.

A: No.

Q: Generally do you know where your mother's ancestors came from?

A: They all were from Italy.

Q: Do you have a town at all by any chance from hearing stories from where they came from in Italy?

A: Near Naples, both my grandmother and grandfather. I do not know the exact place.

Q: I assume your grandfather was also from the same area?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you remember any stories about your mother's ancestors that your mother might have mentioned to you or that was important sometime through the years?

A: Not too much. She was, of course, very young when she came to this country. Prior to that her mother had died and she lived with an aunt who was a hat maker and I had heard that story, that they made hats. She was an only child. Her mother had died and she had no brothers or sisters.

Q: So it's possible that she met your grandfather in America and married him in America?

A: No. He had come here first like so many did at that time and then he went back to Italy and married her and how that match was made I don't know but it was type of pre-arranged marriage.

Q: Do you know where they lived in America when they first came here?

A: When they first came, they landed in Philadelphia and lived there for a few years. It seems they had contacts back then. There was some type of relative or someone from the same part of Italy. But they seemed to have some type of a contact that they knew. They lived in Philadelphia. He got a job with the railroad and worked for the railroad. Then after about a year, maybe two years, they moved to Waterford and that is where my mother was born. The first child was born in Philadelphia. But then they had moved to Waterford where my mother was born.

Q: Did your father have a nickname?

A: His name was Charles. They called him Charlie.

Q: When and where was your father born?

A: He was born in Hammonton on November 5, 1895.

Q: What was your father's mother's maiden name?

A: Her name was Angelina DiGiocomo.

Q: She was from what country?

A: She was born in Hammonton but her family was also from Italy. The same area as my grandfather, my father's father and they were also from the same area near Naples in Italy. So I'm really from the same part of Italy.

Q: Do you remember any stories about your father or his parents that he recalled to tell you about?

A: My father's father was Benjamin Fogletto also his parents were from Italy but he was just a baby like (I've heard 20 months old. Someone else said he was a year old when they came to this country). So he grew up in this country, went to school here really knew more about this country than Italy.

Q: What was your father's father's name?

A: My father's father's name was Angelo. His mother was Rosa.

Q: Were they born in Italy?

A: Yes. They were born in Italy and they came to this country at the time when they were taking land from land owners. I think it was about 1883 and that is when they left Italy and came to this country. They had land there which was taken away from them and they came here.

Q: Did you hear any reasons why?

A: It was during that Garibaldi or something was taking over in Italy. I never really studied that period of time. I guess I should. (Effie- good enough to know these little clues sometime. You know future people want to check on something). Thank you.

Q: Tell me something about your parents? Did they ever tell you how they met and fell in love?

A: Yes. My mother of course lived in Waterford. Not too much I guess went on in Waterford, if anyone is familiar with Waterford Works up the road there. For St. Anthony's, 13th of June they would always have a church festival and dance. That was like a big thing. My father was from Hammonton but he and an uncle of his, they were like close in age, and some other men that they hung around with decided to go to Waterford for the dance because my father's uncle at that time was seeing a girl from Waterford. So this group went and when my father saw my mother he made it a point to get introduced to her. That was the beginning of the whole thing. (Effie - love at first sight -- I guess it does happen.) Sort of that way. He made a point of courting her which was kind of funny because he was never allowed to go out with her alone. Her sister had to go with her (her older sister) or the uncle who married this girl. (they were allowed to do the chaperoning. Usually the sister went. We always made a family joke about that. She never was allowed to go out alone.

Q: Now this had to be in the early 1900's? Very early?

A: Yes. Because they were married in 1928 or 1929.

Q: What was the vehicle they used to get from town to town?

A: I know they talked about one with a rumble seat. (Effie- I remember that) I don't know what other kind of cars they had but I'm sure that whatever the cars were in those days ,I'm sure this group had it. (Effie- I think Ford was in there somehow or other).

Q: The social life that they had was also very simple, I assume. I shouldn't assume.

Did they talk about their social life?

A: They went to movies or they would visit again relatives, family functions or married couples that had already married. They visited them. As far as going anywhere too far they never did. No weekends away. That was for sure.

Q: Where did your mother grow up?

A: In Waterford.

Q: Where did your father grow up?

A: In Hammonton.

Q: Do you remember anything outstanding about the details of their childhood?

A: Not too much. My father loved to go to his grandparents. They lived out of town on one of the roads out of town. I'm not sure if it was Basin or I don't remember the road. He liked to go out there and spend time with his grandparents. They lived in town. They walked to school. He went to Hammonton school.

Q: The house that they lived in, both your mother and father, is that still here in town?

A: The house my mother lived in Waterford is still standing. It is still there. It is two houses off the White Horse Pike on Pennington Ave. and it was turned into two apartments. I have not been in it for many, many years I don't know what condition it is in. I know it is still there. I see it when I go past.

Q: And the one in Hammonton?

A: The one in Hammonton got torn down. It was on Second and Orchard Sts. and after my parents had died it had been rented and there was a fire in there. There was quite a bit of damage and the lot got sold and the house was taken down. But that's the same

house that my father had grown up in and I had grown up in. I feel bad when I think back and think that the house could have been saved in some way. It was a neat house.

Q: Was your mother married before she married your father and after and to whom? Was your father married before he married your mother and after and to whom?

A: No. For both of them it was just one marriage.

Q: Were they married for a long time?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they hit fifty?

A: No. They never made the fifty mark. My father was seventy-one when he died. He was almost thirteen years older than my mother. So my mother was really young when he died but she never remarried. She died when she was seventy-one.

Q: Did they have good health or did they have an illness?

A: My father had heart problems the last five or six years. He had a heart attack and from then on he was under doctor's care. He then had a couple of little heart attacks but he was consistently under doctor's care. Then it was a heart attack at the end and that took his life.

My mother was in basically good health until six months prior to her death when she developed a brain tumor which was cancerous. From that day until she died she really was in the hospital. She just had ,part of the time she never knew anything. But prior to that she was healthy.

Q: What were your mother's and father's likes and dislikes, hobbies and cooking?

A: My mother was a typical homemaker, she liked to cook, she sewed, she made my sister's and my clothes. She baked. We often had ---she would make a nice dessert, cookies. She liked to make cookies. We would come home from school and there would be cookies made. She really was what I call the old time typical housewife and mother in the kitchen most of the time, stirring pots of one nature or another because we ate alot of combined things like stews, soups, stuff baked in the oven and things like that.

My father was a farmer. He knew how to fix things so he did any repairs and that type of thing. He was good with that stuff.

Q: Did he work for someone on their farm?

A: He worked a while at RCA and my grandfather had a farm, a blueberry farm so he worked with his father on the farm. Then he got another farm of blueberries so then he was running my grandfather's and his farm. So by the time I was five or six years old we had the two farms. That is what we were doing. In the summer we were all out there. I was packing and my mother was packing berries. My sister and my brother were working in the field.

Q: Did your mother work outside the home?

A: No. Once she married she never worked outside the home.

Q: Did she have a favorite meal or did you have a favorite meal? Sometimes people say I'll cook you what you want for your birthday.

A: No. Not really. Everything was good and I really can't remember a favorite meal.

Q: Do you feel that you learned cooking from her?

A: Yes. I liked to be in the kitchen with her and learned by seeing her do and that when it came my turn to do it I just kind of remembered what we did. I would help her and that is how I guess I learned without actually sitting down and someone teaching you step by step.

Q: Did your father have a favorite dish that she cooked?

A: No. Not that I know. He was not a big eater. He was not your typical Italian eater. He would eat pasta which we had of course like every Sunday like everybody else and he would eat some but it was not like a favorite. He wasn't a big eater on anything. He ate but food was not a main thing for him.

Q: Did he cook?

A: No. Nothing. I never could even remember him standing near the stove.

Q: Were any of them ever involved in something that had to do with the community? Clubs or the government?

A: Not my parents. My grandfather was very active, my father's father in politics and in the community. He held a few political jobs even in Atlantic county for several years. He was well known and well respected by the community.

Q: Can you tell me some stories about your father if you think of one, his likes, his dislikes something he did, something unique about him?

A: He liked people. I^know he liked talking with them. He was always very friendly when my friends would be around. He had a very good sense of humor. I feel he was very intelligent. He was very good with math and numbers. Anything I would ask him he always seemed to know the answer, helpful with that.

Q: Was he artistic or have any hobbies?

A: No. Not really. None I know of.

Q: Did he play a musical instrument?

A: No.

Q: You said he was handy with tools. Did he build things?

A: Mostly repairing and that type of thing. I don't know of anything particular like furniture or something. Maybe shelving, some bookcases that type of thing.

Q: Did he sing?

A: No. He liked to dance though. He loved to dance.

Q: So they went to dances locally?

A: Well once they were married I don't think they really went much. My mother always said she was no dancer but I think she underestimated herself there. I think she could dance.

Q: Did they play chess or cards with friends, poker?

A : I don't know of any. Not that I know of. I think he knew how to play cards.

Q: Did he raise a garden or animals?

A: The garden we always had. There was always a garden.

Q: Did you have animals?

A: No.

Q: Particularly what skills or talents do you feel you inherited or learned from your father and mother.

A: I think I learned cooking skills from my mother. Not sewing. I was not very good at sewing. She was very good at that. I don't know of any other skills. I think some traits, I think both of them instilled moral traits in us. Honesty, super honesty type of thing.

Being kind to people. I mean even in the house. We were not permitted to argue with, I had a brother and sister. They did not tolerate any of this squabbling type of thing where kids could even get mean with each other. We were not allowed to do any of that.

Q: Did this last through your life?

A: Yes. I never remember having any problems with my brother or sister growing up and even to this day my sister will tell others "my sister and I have never had a fight or an argument". We don't. We don't always agree with each other. We will discuss something but we never actually have an argument. (Effie - no discord. You even find that in your home then. Wonderful)

Q: Did you ever remember your mother losing her temper?

A: I'm sure that there were times. I really don't remember any particular incident.

Q: Do you think they had a good sense of humor?

A: Yes.

Q: Did they tell jokes or funny stories?

A: My father liked to do that.

Q: Do you remember sad events particularly that comes to mind that you might want to talk about?

A: Well. I guess when my grandfather died. He lived with us. As I said he was just like a gentlemen type of person. He walked around with a suit if there was any type of occasion. He had this job that required him to be dressed properly too. This one day it was my sister's eighth grade graduation and of course we all went to the school for it and my grandfather went too. Then it was very hot that night in June, no air condition in

the school auditorium of course. He left a few minutes early. He said he was very warm and he was going to walk home. We lived in town. We could walk to the school. When we got home he said he was not feeling well. My father called the doctor. I remember them being up in the bedroom. He got a heart attack and died that night. Aside from the fact that he died it was just so sudden because he had been at the graduation and everybody saw him, he was talking to all these people. It was like no one could believe that it happened. That was pretty sad. I felt bad about that.

Q: This would be your grandfather who was involved in the community?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember either parent crying other than that occasion?

A: I think I remember my mother when my brother had to go into the army. When he left that day I remember she was all upset and crying that day.

Q: This was the second World War?

A: My brother, when he left it would have been the Korean War. This was in the early 50's.

Q: He returned?

A: Oh Yes.

Q: We went over the traits you told me about unless you want to add anything in between it is up to you. We spoke about traits and life teachings the honesty and the kindness and not fighting with your sister and brother. Those things are the most important to you?

A: Yes.

Q: I did ask you about the health of your parents, pretty much so. I am assuming again from what you said about your religious affiliation your mother was raised in it and apparently your father too and all of you?

A: Yes.

Q: You went to St. Joseph's.

A: Yes.

Q: I'm not supposed to put words in your mouth but I am assuming that might have been the only Catholic church in town at the time you were growing up.

A: That's right. It was the only one at that time.

Q: I should ask you while I'm thinking of it. Is the school that you attended either grammar or high school still being used today?

A: The high school is now St. Joseph's high school. That is the building I went to as high school. The little building that was in the middle-- that was the primary building I went to--kindergarten, first, and second there. Three to eighth grade I went to the big building on the end of that lot that is no longer there and then over to the high school. So that site had three buildings on it and that is where I went to school from kindergarten to high school.

Q: Are your parents buried in the cemetery in town?

A: Yes they are. In the Greenmount cemetery. There is a Fogletto rock. It is spelled Foglietta because that is the original spelling of the name. Somewhere along the line my father had it changed because no one seemed to be able to pronounce it and he at time being very, very much into Americanizing everything, he had it changed to Fogletto but originally it was Foglietta, and the cemetery has a big stone with Foglietta on it and

there are several small stones that have my mother, my father, my father's brothers that are all gone, my father's mother and father and my father's grandmother and grandfather are all in this one cemetery plot in Greenmount.

Q: Is the spelling of the name any different over the years or is it still spelled that way?

A: Right now it is Fogletto.

Q: Where did your parents go to school?

A: My father went right here in Hammonton in the same buildings that I went to but not the one that is St. Joe's. That wasn't there yet. The one that I went to eighth grade, part of that was high school at that time.

Q: So he finished high school?

A: No. He did not finish but I think close to it. My mother went to the Waterford school up to eighth grade.

Q: Then she didn't go to high school?

A: No.

Q: I was going to ask you if she came to Hammonton for that.

A: They would have. A few people in later years that came to high school had to come into Hammonton high school from Waterford at that time.

Q: Do you remember them talking about any experiences in school, friendships, notable events?

A: Not really.

Q: Was your father in the military?

A: Yes. He was in WWI but was never in action but he was in the service during that time.

Q: That was army?

A: Yes.

Q: He returned?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever hear of any ancestors who were hurt or killed in the any of wars within your lifetime?

A: No.

Q: Was your mother's father healthy?

A: He was very healthy. He lived to be 91. He would walk, he never drove. He walked every day from where they lived and to the post office which would be by St. Anthony's Church in Waterford. He just would walk there and would just go out walking after he retired from the railroad. He loved to walk. He was in very good physical health. He had a garden. He just until the last few years of his life he just was getting not really sick but you could see the age taking its toll. He just didn't care to eat that much any more and he seemed tired. He really never had any serious illnesses.

Q: At that time did he live in Waterford with your grandmother?

A: No. My grandmother had died when she was only fifty-five. She died young. I had two aunts that were still living at home at the time and they continued to live there until they married and my one aunt moved and wanted him to go and live with her. He would not go and leave his home. He lived there alone but his son and wife lived right next door and they looked in on him and he would go there alot. The one aunt who had married late in life would go there once a week and stay the day cleaning, washing and

cook some meals and have them ready for him. So between that and his son, he preferred that way.

Q: What was his name again?

A: John Sarappa.

Q: What were the aunts and uncles names?

A: His son was James (Jimmy) and his wife was Stella Sarappa. Then my mother had the older sister was Betsy. Of course these names were all changed in school from their original Italian names. Her name was really Pasha and she became Betsy and she married a man named Mike Massaro. My uncle Jimmy's real name was really Vincenzo changed to Jimmy. My mother of course was Annunziata and she became Nancy. Then there was my aunt Angelina and she married a man named Malvin Wright and she lived in Florida. My aunt Dorothy married Albert Franchetti and lived in Hammonton and then the youngest child was Jennie again Johanna changed to Jennie who married Justin Illianetta and she lived in Cedar Brook. There was one other child, a boy, Jerry who was between my uncle and my mother. When he was around twelve years old he was playing with friends there was a big lot right near the pike. They were playing ball and a truck tire came off of a truck going by on the pike, rolled and him right into him which caused his death. He was only twelve when he died.

Q: Your aunts and uncles that you mentioned, where they born in a hospital or at home that your recall?

A: They were born at home.

Q: How many children did your mother have?

A: Three

Q: Who were they by name, birthdate and who was the oldest and who was the youngest?

A: My brother is the oldest and his name is Benjamin Charles Fogletto and he was born on Oct. 16, 1930 so he is 79 right now.

My sister is Johanna Marie and she was born on January 27, 1932 so she is 78 right now.

Then me. I am the youngest. I'm Nancy Joyce born on February 25, 1935 and I am 75.

Q: Do you or your brothers and sisters look like anyone else in the family, perhaps your parents or an aunt and uncle?

A: My sister and I were always told that we looked like my father and we did have more of his traits. But now in later years we both see resemblances to my mother and my mother's family. How that works I don't know but we see it more and more.

Q: Are your siblings still alive?

A: Yes both of them.

Q: Did your mother or father have a favorite?

A: No.

Q: Do you have a favorite?

A: No.

Q: Did any of them have special talents or skills?

A: We all wound up in the education field. My brother first teaching and then being a principal. My sister also taught and of course I taught.

Q: After you graduated from Hammonton High school did you go on to any further education?

A: Yes I did. I went to what was then Glassboro State College and finished with a Bachelor of Science Degree and a teaching certificate for grades 1-9 and most of the time I taught either fourth or fifth grade through my teaching career.

Q: What school, what town?

A: I finished here in Hammonton but I did teach in Egg Harbor City. Prior to that my husband was stationed down in Maryland and then he went on to work as a civilian at the National Security Agency that is stationed on Fort Mead. So we lived down in Maryland for awhile. I did teach down there in one of the Maryland schools. So I taught there, Egg Harbor and Hammonton.

Q: Was this while you had children?

A: Yes. I taught a short while before my first son was born and then I did not go back again until the youngest son was almost five years old.

Q: Did your sister and brother have education after high school too?

A: My sister also went to Glassboro and taught elementary school for a good many years until she retired from that. My brother went to St. Joseph's College, graduated from that and went on to Temple and was there a while and then went into the army. When he came out of the army he decided to go into the education field and got his teaching certificate from Glassboro and then went into teaching and also with the State Department for a while and then also as principal.

Q: When you were going to college did you live away or did you live at home?

A: I lived at home while I was at college. I commuted every day.

Q: Did you work while you were going to college?

A: In the summer I worked. I did not work during the winter. I worked at a custard stand down in Margate that my father's cousins owned. I would go down there and work. I lived at home yet but I would commute down there and work down there. That was fun. I liked that. I met a lot of people. It was nice working down there. I did enjoy that.

Q: Did you drive by that time? Did you have a license?

A: I did have a license once I was in college, yes. But I did not drive down there. I would take the bus and then when they would come home at night they would take me home. They were still living in Hammonton at the time that they had it.

Q: I would like to ask you about your grandmother. What kind of person was your grandmother? I'll start with the maternal one.

A: I really don't have too memories of my grandmother. I was six when she died. Prior to that she had not been well for several years. So I can vaguely remember being there with her working in the kitchen but as I say she was not a well woman and I do not have too many memories of her.

Q: Do you remember if she had an education past high school?

A: No. I don't know.

Q: Did she have other children?

A: Yes. She had as I said besides my mother there were five other girls and two boys.

Q: Was she married more than once?

A: No just once.

Q: Do you know when she died and where is she buried?

A: She was living in Waterford when she died and off hand I don't know the year I would have to figure it out. I was six years. Well I guess she died in 1941. I was born in 1935.

She is buried in the cemetery right in back of the Cedar Brook Catholic church which off hand I don't remember the name. They changed it awhile back and I am not sure what the name is right now.

Q: Did she have any kind of work or employment that added to the family income?

A: No.

Q: Aunts and uncles on your mother's side, they would be her children. Their names and birthdates you may not remember at this point.

A: I don't remember all their birthdates and their names I believe I gave them to you before.

Q. Are they still alive?

A: No. None of them are alive or their spouses.

Q: The little you know about your grandmother do you know if she had any influence on you that was impressive. Her presence was with you to some extent or not?

A: No. I know that we would go there almost every Sunday but my sister and brother would go and stay like maybe for a week at a time in the summer because I still had a couple of aunts living at home at the time and the youngest one stayed at home and helped my grandmother as I say she was not well and she never went out of the house to work. She stayed at home until she married. So my brother and sister would go and stay but I would never go because they always said I was such a cry baby and would never leave my mother. Even when we would be there on a Sunday I always was with

my mother while the others would go out playing with some of the neighborhood kids. They got to know some of the kids that lived around there. I had cousins that lived next door. I was never comfortable going and being out of the house. I wanted to stay where my mother was all the time.

Q: Do you know what she died from (your grandmother)?

A: I believe it was some type of cancer in the stomach.

Q: Your mother's father. What kind of a person was he? What did he look like?

A: He was tall. He always had white hair as long as I could remember and they said it was reddish when he was young. He had reddish color hair, light eyes. He did not have the dark coloring. My mother was also light with the blondish hair and light eyes and another aunt had sort of auburn hair and light eyes. He always talked about some of his family living somewhere other than Italy. I don't know if it was Austria and that they had gone to Italy from there. We always felt there was some other kind of nationality mixed in but we never knew the whole story of it. He was in the Italian army in the horse, whatever you call that, horse brigade (cavalry). He rode a horse. He worked on the railroad. He was a very strong and healthy person. In later years he, I don't remember so much myself as a child, you know, talking with him that much. He did speak broken English but he loved the grandkids. My kids would sit on his lap and he would sing little Italian songs to them. He seemed to be more with the great-grandchildren that he did with the grandchildren at the time.

Q: He had how many children? Your mother?

A: Her sisters. I don't remember how many. There were five girls and two boys. I think I had said six the other time. There were five girls and two boys.

Q: Was he married more than once?

A: No.

Q: Do you know of some of his best qualities? We have kind of been talking about them. The love of his family particularly and being an interesting story teller, amusing.

A: He did a little bit but as I say growing up I don't remember too many of the stories.

Q: Did he have any bad qualities that bothered you?

A: No. Not really. He was easy to be around. I think it was more me than him. I just seemed to stick around my mother. That was true of me in general, even my first years of school. I was not happy in school. I was not a child who wanted to go to school.

(Effie: and then you landed in school for the rest of your life).

(Nancy: and then I was in school for the rest of my life -- right) Kindergarten and first grade were not good years for me. I cried a lot in school. I was very young. I was only four and a half when I started kindergarten. Really looking back, my mother always said they should have kept me home another year.

Q: Do you remember any of the teachers that you had?

A: I can remember every single one of them. Kindergarten was Miss Wood and her partner was Mrs. Lobly. One would have the morning class and one would have the afternoon class. I went in the afternoon. First grade was Miss Miller, second grade Miss Cathcart, third grade, Miss Facilla, fourth grade Miss Rush, fifth grade Miss Harper. You notice they are all "Miss". I did not have too many married ones until later. Sixth grade we changed classes. I had Mrs. Proctor for my home room and there were other teachers involved. Mrs. Malony I remember one of them. Of course I had Miss Olivo, the music teacher from kindergarten straight through high school. Seventh grade

my home room teacher was Miss Wood, the sister of the Miss Wood in kindergarten and some other teachers also we changed classes. There was Miss Eddie from South America. We learned South America up one side and down the other and every kid knew every country in South America or you didn't get out of seventh grade. Then in eighth grade again we changed classes and I had Mrs. MacDougle and Mrs. Fithian -- I think she was sixth grade. But we changed classes there. Of course then I went into high school. Miss Peoples for English, Miss Lyker for Latin, Mr. Fry for History, Mr. Jolley for Algebra and Geometry, Mr. Fisher for American History, Miss Driscoll for gym and I know there were a couple more. Miss Palegi at the time and then she became Mrs. Ruberton. She was the home-ec teacher. Mrs. Packard was sewing. That was a trip. In eighth grade we had to make our graduation dresses. Now picture us sewing dresses -- I could not even thread a needle. Of course I blamed part of that on my eyes. At that time it was just such a chore. We started in sixth grade half a year sewing, half a year cooking. I think we made an apron. Then in seventh grade again, I don't know what we made. I can't remember. Eighth grade you made the dress. You never saw such a dirty looking dress when I got done with it. I took it home. You were not allowed to take it home until the end where you could wash it and get them ready to wear for the graduation night. Well I took that thing home. I think my mother took it all apart and redid it because it was so bad that she really had to fix it up. Once it was done, washed, starched and ironed it looked pretty good. But making a dress for eighth grade graduation was really a chore.

(Effie - it is amazing that it fit you after three years of growing)

(Nancy - No. we started it in eighth grade. In sixth grade we made, I think we made an apron and in seventh grade we made some type of a bag where you needed to keep your sewing supplies. Or may it was reversed maybe we made the bag first. I think that was it.) Really amazing when you think we did all that stuff. I mean we did learn really quite a bit when you think about it.

Q: Do you have pictures of this dress?

A: Eighth grade graduation class. Yes I have the whole class. There we are in our dresses.

Effie: (maybe you can let us copy them so they could go into this interview too as a little plus)

Nancy: I have my kindergarten picture too. Do you need that today?

I have my kindergarten picture. I have that and the kids in that picture are the same ones that I went all through school with. It's amazing. They became like family. The same ones.

Q: Do you go to all the reunions?

A: I went to several reunions and now I've been going with several classmates, the girls, they meet almost every month and I try to get in on that. It's nice to see them.

Q: Did you enjoy high school?

A: Yes, I did, very much.

Q: This is a little aside. Do you find teen age rebellion, teen age changes things like that, did that occur in any instances that you remember in high school?

A: No. No. If it went on I wasn't aware of it. I mean I liked going to school, I enjoyed being there. I was in the band and we did a lot of things, you know. Not like today

where they go all over the country but whatever we did was still exciting fo us back then. I belonged to the Blue and White, that was a newspaper and we would write little articles and meet with the advisor, Miss Peoples and then we would put the paper together and it would go out once a month. I enjoyed doing those things. We had sports. I wasn't big on school sports but I played on the intramural, the classes between themselves and I enjoyed that.

Q: What did you play in the band?

A: Clarinet

Q: Do you still?

A: No.

Q: Did you have an absolute favorite teacher?

A: I guess you like some better than others but no not really. I really liked my teachers, Mrs. Falciani. I guess of all of them I guess she is the only one that, well she is still living. For science I had Mr. Celi, Mr. Pastore, Mr. Yehl. Like I said Mrs. Falciani is still living. In sixth grade I had Mrs. Arico who then was Miss DeMarco. I think I was one of her first classes. She then got married and became Mrs.Arico and then when I taught in the school system she was one of my teachers that I taught with. She taught fourth grade and I taught fourth grade. That was kind of neat that she had been my teacher. Same with Mrs. ~~Patricia~~ ^{Patricia} She was my eighth grade teachers and then I taught with her.

Effie: (Still a mentor. Really.)

Nancy: In eighth grade we put out a newspaper too. I don't know if they still do that anymore. It was called the Pine Tree Crest and it was all done. The articles would be typed up by the secretary. She was so nice. She would get different ones, we would

help her put it together. We would have to run that mimeograph machine you know. We would crank that thing and we would get that newspaper out. I just remember doing all those things. Staying in at lunchtime and working on all those things. Just having a lot of good times.

Q: Did your grandfather on your mother's side. Did he go to school in Italy or here?

A: Whatever schooling he had was in Italy.

Q: What kind of work did he do?

A: Railroad.

Q: Was that one of the railroad that came through town?

A: Yes. I don't know where his line was that he worked on but I think he went into Philadelphia every day. I'm not real sure on that.

Q: How did your grandmother and grandfather meet? Mother's parents then father's parents?

A: I don't know any of that.

Q: Where there any family heirlooms or property that would be handed down from generation to generation?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any photographs of the ancestors that generation lets say?

A: I do have one of my grandmother. I guess I have a few pictures.

Q: Do you have any old letters that might have been written? Or diaries or journals?

A: No.

Q: Did anybody start a geneology or family history up until now?

A: No.

Q: Can you think of anything else about your grandparents?

A: Not really.

Q: How about, Are there any stories about famous or infamous relatives on either side of the family?

A: No.

Q: Do you want to describe the surroundings when you were are child? Where you lived, the neighborhood?

A: Well it was a big house on the corner. It was just a block from the main street so there was a lot of activity going on all around and it had a fence around, a little fence, an iron fence. As a young child I was not allowed out of that fence. The kitchen was large with a big table and really that is were most of the activity took place. Besides eating in there we sat around the table and talked. That is where we did our homework, that is were we played the games. Back then there was no TV. We did a lot of monopoly, checkers, chinese checkers, some card games. That is what we did. Most of that was done all around the kitchen table. We'd sit there in the evening. In later years, like when I was in high school that is where I would sit many times and talk with my mother and father. We sat in the living room, I mean in the kitchen rather than the living room. It wasn't until we got a TV that we sat in the living room.

Q: Did you pass some of these games, rules down to your children and grandchildren. Are they passing them down further if applicable? Like card games. Do you play with the children?

A: Yes, oh yes. Card games. I do that with my grandchildren and games that they come with, monopoly. They come here and stay with me awhile. I have some games here for when they are here. We do card games.

Q: This is a question off the blue. Do you have a favorite cousin?

A: No.

Q: Why?

A: My brother, sister and myself were the oldest three cousins on my mother's side. The others were quite a bit younger and none of them lived...well the very youngest lived in Hammonton but there was a big difference in age. So outside of family functions they were not of the same age that I could pal around with them or do anything special with them. On my father's side they were older and I never got to really do anything much with them until like later years when you are all adults and that is different.

Q: Do you keep in touch with them to a point?

A: Yes. I do.

Q: Aunts and uncles too as much as you can?

A: I was very much in touch with my aunts and uncles until they all passed away.

Q: Did someone in the family arrange for reunions every now and then?

A: No. Unfortunely but no. We do have mini ones in a sense with my sister, my brother, their families, my family. We get together often for the holidays and even in between. I do see my cousins especially the ones that I have, two that live here in town on my father's side, two sisters, Rita Benedetto and her husband Danny and Dottie Cartica and of course her husband Ray passed away. I do see them.

Q: Was there ever a major news event in your life?

A: I guess the biggest thing was the evasion of Pearl Harbor.

Q: Did your parents or grandparents belong to a political party?

A: Well they did but they were not active.

Q: Did they vote?

A: Yes they did. Very much. They believed in, yes you voted and pride in country.

Q: Going back to education. When you were going to college and you graduated all three of you and you started a career was that very important to your parents?

A: Oh yes. Yes.

Q: They had pride?

A: Yes. It was extremely important. We were told at a very young age that they hoped we would go on to college. Of course we were not able to go to some of the highest priced colleges. My sister and I went to Glassboro which was fine since we both wanted to be teachers anyway. That was really a very fine school for that but, no, education was a top priority. We were encouraged. Nothing came in between. We did our homework and we were not expected to get part time jobs after school. The priority was to do your school work and school activities. We were allowed to do those things.

Q: You really don't, I assume, remember anything about your great grandparents?

Either side?

A: No.

Q: You walked to school, right? You told me all your teachers names. That is wonderful.

A: Yes.

Q: Did your parents and grandparents speak another language?

A: Yes. They spoke Italian.

Q: In the house?

A: No. Only on occasion.

Q: With friends and relatives, things like that?

A: My mother's father as he got older my mother would speak more things to him in Italian to him. He seemed to be reverting back to that.

Q: Did they speak English before they were married, your mother and father?

A: Oh. yes.

Q: Did they learn it here or before they came over from Italy?

A: My father learned it from birth because his father was a baby when he came here and learned the English language and promoted it. He was very strong in that. If you were here, you spoke English. He spoke and read fluently both English and Italian. He would help other people in the town if they would need letters or papers read if they did not understand. Also there were people coming to the house asking him questions and to help them understand something that they were not able to read.

Q: Did they ever subscribe to foreign papers? Let's say an Italian newspaper?

A: I don't recall seeing any.

Q: Who were your best friends during your school years?

A: Oh. I had a very good friend, Denise Durney Pitman. We started kindergarten together and she remained my best friend until she died about five years ago. School mates, Annamae Berenato married to a man named Jack Sullivan down in Delaware is where she lives but he has passed away. We have rekindled friendship again when she

comes up. I do see her. In my class, my close section there was Mary Jane DiDonato, Marie Butkowski, she was Marie Valenti, I knew her from kindergarten. Her mother and my mother were friendly so she would come to the house even before we started school she was one of my very early friends, in fact, when I would cry in kindergarten the teacher would have her sit near me to console me because I knew her the best. We remained friends and we see each other more now. She goes when the girls get together.

Q: What has changed the most about Hammonton from when you were a kid?

A: Oh. I guess downtown. It is coming back. There are a lot of little stores opening but when I was a kid I mean you could walk downtown and there were all kinds of stores, drugstore on every corner with a soda fountain, two movie theaters, of course one closed earlier, the Palace, it was called. The Rivoli stayed open and that was as they say a neat place to go and meet your friends on a Friday night or a Saturday. We did that. I don't know how many dress shops were in town and two men's clothing stores plus of course the 5&10 and Millers. You could just walk around all day in the 5&10 and look at stuff and find something to buy. I really really liked that, Millers. We had a couple of other stores that were like clothing, they sold a whole lot of stuff like Malinsky's, Press's store. You could just get anything you wanted in town. A lot of little grocery stores and the two chain ones, the Acme and the A&P. All were in town.

Q: The differences in teenagers, under teenagers and young adults now compared to when you were growing up?

A: The differences is so vast, so different. I hear the young children talk. They just have so many things at their disposal. With TV and cell phones that they can practically do

anything on, all texting and everything else they do. Their social life. The way they are taught, what they talk about. I mean sex was not even mentioned. We never even said the word much less anything that it implied. It was just not mentioned. Any kind of words that pertained to hygiene or bodily functions were not talked about. The language, never any kind of words that were crude or curse words. That was just unheard of. Higher standards I thought. In the home we never even talked about pregnancy. It was not something you talked about. Someone was with child or expecting and even that was not said that openly all the time. You maybe said it with your mother but you did not make a big family announcement about it. It was just something private. That is just the way it was. Now the little kids are talking about where babies come from and the whole thing.

Q: Do you think there is a point and time you can see a cut off where it changed from family dinners, the life of work and interesting people and then it became worldly and brought all these actors into it. Do you think there is a point and time when it was drastic. From then on it was different? Using your school experience and your own family and your own personal experiences as a judge?

A: I would say around in the late 70's I guess I started to see more of a change. Even when my own boys were growing up and one graduated high school in 1975 and one in 1977 thinking back I mean the talk at home was still more of a caliber of how I grew up and their father, I mean we do not talk about sexual things, even stuff you hear on TV now. That was not part of our conversations. Then gradually it seemed to be more open. You heard more and saw more and now the grandchildren have vast knowledge. They talk like little adults.

Q: What was one of your favorite places in Hammonton that is no longer there?

Q: The movie theater would be one and I think the 5&10. That to me was a very enjoyable place but of course you have to remember that growing up back then we were not exposed to alot. There were no malls. We had no malls to go to. We had no TV until I was a senior in high school.

Q: Was it because there were choices there and it was affordable possibly?

A: It was affordable and you were able to look at different things, hands on like there was a big jewelry counter and things for your hair and some of the games. We were younger there would be the game counter and that stuff. It just seemed that it was fun to walk around in there. I guess that was one of our places to have enjoyment. Where else would you go? Unless you went out with the family somewhere. But where did you go. There were no malls to go. We had the movie theater in town so we did go to the movies.

Q: How old were you when you got a telephone in the house?

A: I think I was in high school. We did not have a telephone when I was very small when I was growing up. We did not have a telephone in the house. Then we got one when I was in high school and I was a senior in high school when we got our first TV. Others had it. My girlfriend had a TV, I guess two or three years before that. They were like the first ones in the class and I would go to her house sometimes and watch TV.

Q: When you were a young adult and you started to work probably before you were married or in that area were there goals and dreams and ideas of things you hoped you would be able to do and experience?

A: Yes. I guess the goal was. I was married young so I hoped to have a nice family and a home and beyond that I don't know of any just to raise a family and be involved in it.

Q: When you were still going to school and after you started teaching did you have occasion to take any vacations away from Hammonton?

A: No. We were not into vacations. We might take a day here and there but we did not go away like today families do. No. The first that I was really away I guess was my senior trip in high school. We went to Washington D.C. Prior to that I had gone on a few camping trips with the Camp Fire Girls from 6th through 8th grade and we did go some places and sleep overnight like four nights, that type of thing. But as far as family going on a vacation for several days, no.

Q: That was not until after you were married or the kids were older?

A: After I was married and as far as a family vacation it wasn't until they were about twelve or fourteen we went down to Florida for several days. Disney World had not opened yet. It was a year or so before they opened we went down there. We did go down to Cape Canaveral and saw one of the missiles that was going to lift off. We went several places and it was a very nice vacation.

Q: Is there any place now that you would almost not mind seeing?

A: No one particular place. I did have the privilege of going many places with my second husband. It was just a time in both of our lives, we were both retired and neither one of us had young children at home and we did go several places. He liked to do the bus trips and I enjoyed that. We did go several places. We went to Branson twice, Nova Scotia and through Canada down along the gulf coast and down to Florida a

couple times. We went many places and they were very enjoyable twelve years married to him. That was a very good time in my life.

Q: What do you hope for your children and your grandchildren?

A: I hope that they can have a successful life but not in monetary terms. I hope they could meet someone and have good marriages. I hope they realize that religion is very important. I hope they continue to keep Jesus in their life. Right now they seem to understand that.

Dictated : Effie Kennedy 3/5/10

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