

AN INTERVIEW WITH
PATRICIA SILER

JUNE 12, 2011

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HAMMONTON

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Patricia Siler from Hammonton
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Q: What is your full name?

A: My name is Patricia Mary Cardone Siler.

Q: What is your age if you care to tell us?

A: I am 65.

Q: What is the date of your birth?

A: August 3, 1945.

Q: You were born where?

A: Camden.

Q: Do you know the name of the hospital?

A: Cooper Hospital.

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

A: Yes. I grew up in Hammonton.

Q: Did you or your parents move to other states or cities or houses when you were young?

A: No.

Q: Do you have the address of where you lived?

A: I lived at 113 North Washington St.

Q: Can you describe your surroundings when you were a child?

A: It was a small bungalow about five rooms and a bath. I lived next door to Marion Helser who had the most gorgeous garden and she had a pond with big goldfish and frogs in it. We used to play outside a lot in the neighborhood. She had a rooming house so I used to have friends that lived there. I was an only child. I remember the kitchen the best I guess.

Effie: So it is good that you had a neighborhood.

Patricia: So it was good that we had kids in the neighborhood.

Q: Where did you go to school and how did you get there?

A: I went to St. Joseph's Elementary and high school. When I was older we walked. I am not sure how I got there when I was little. I guess my mother and father drove me there.

Q: Do you remember the names of any of your teachers?

A: OK. Well. Kindergarten was Sister Carmela, first grade was Sister Nicolina, she was real short and then second grade was Sister Helen, I liked her a lot. Third, fourth, fifth, I can't remember. Sixth grade was Sister Catherine. Really liked her. I remember she let us listen to the World Series in school. Seventh grade I don't remember. Sister Patrina was eighth grade and she was tough. She was a toughie. She came from New York and she had us do these Math and English regents. I guess there were the tests they used to give in New York. I remember they were really hard. They were little books. I remember her. Then in high school, well they had all different teachers. I remember Sister Mary Ann was History, there was Sister Josephine, Sr. Antoinette. I remember Sister Emma was our principal. She was really short. I had a lot of short teachers. O yeah. She was shorter than Sister Nicolina. She would stand up on a platform. She had this broken English. They were the religious teachers Filiipini.

Q: Did you have a language while you were in high school?

A: Italian. I thought my mother would be able to help me and she couldn't because she spoke the dialect and that was pure Italian. So she couldn't help me. Oh, and Sister Renata. She was Math and Music. I really liked her. They used to take us out of school. I was in the choir and the glee club. They used to take us out and we would sing at funeral masses at church because the church was real close by. It was all in Latin so we really never knew what we were singing, Requiem. I remember we used to go up in the choir loft and sing for the funerals. I guess they had no one else to sing.

Q: Who were your best friends during the school year?

A: Well. Let's see, Marion Capelli, my mom was her godmother. We played together alot I remember. She had a house on the White Horse Pike and we used to play there alot. Then there was Ann Rechner. She lived in Atco and she was a dear friend. I don't see her but she was a dear friend, because when we get together it's like we have never been apart. My friend Silva Novella. We did science projects together. I remember that. Bernadette DePalma and Carol Maimone. Her name was Maimone

then. Bernadette's father used to own DePalma's store - where Bagliani's is now. It used to be called DePalma's. I could remember the saw dust on the floor and they used to stand on the planks off the ground. It was a butcher shop. Kind of like it is now but it was a little different. That was the first place I saw a microwave oven because her parents were always working in the store and then they got this Amana Radar Range. That was the first microwave I saw. They used to use that and that was early on.

Q: Was that when you were in high school?

A: This is when, I guess it would be high school. Maybe it might have been grammar school too. Judy Wells. Judy Wells and I used to walk to school together when we went to high school.

Q: Are there any you have remained friends through the years with as adults?

A: I'm still friendly with Marion Condo (Marion Capelli) and I see Carol infrequently but she is in town. Sylvia lives in New Hampshire. We talk on the phone once in awhile. Martha Musiano lives in Georgia now. They were high school friends. So I have her e-mail address but I don't talk very often to her. Marion, I'm still close with and if Silva were around I would be pretty close to her too. We always got along real well.

Q: Are you married or have you ever been married?

A: I was married, yes.

Q: How did the teen agers dress when you were a teen ager and what would you have considered wild clothes, hair or clothes in those days?

A: I don't remember. I remember that we wore uniforms to school and you had to -- your uniform --when you knelt on the floor in the gym your uniform had to touch the floor and any skirt you wore. Well we didn't really wear skirts but that had to touch the floor. It was like a maroon uniform with a peter pan collar. Not wild at all. Then we wore a lot of skirts and sweaters I remember and those oxford shoes with the socks you know. The saddle shoes. Then we had penny loafers.

Q: How about on weekends when you could wear your own clothes?

A: A lot of skirts and dungarees, jeans used to fold up the bottoms. Hair. There was a point where it was a little teased,"back combed" when it was "big hair" . We had a lot of "big hair" at that time. I guess maybe that was high school. I can't remember.

Effie: the yearbook would show that.

Patty: I have that up in the attic.

Q: When you were a teen ager where did you people gather for entertainment? At your house, the lake, club, dance?

A: We would go to each other's houses. I don't remember going to the lake. We would go bowling a lot. That was about the only thing around, the bowling alley and then when someone started to drive. I remember going through town with the car -- cruising through town looking for people. We didn't do that too much. Alice Varga had a Thunderbird with those little port holes in the back. I remember riding in that. Then we would go to the movies after somebody could drive.

Q: This was when the movie was still in town?

A: No. There was no movie in town then. I don't think there was. We would go out towards Voorhees or like maybe towards the shore. The fellow I used to go out with -- his grandmother lived in Greenbank. We would go there sometimes. We didn't do -- the bowling alley is what I remember and family and homes and stuff.

Q: and friends, parties and games and stuff and dancing? Anything dancing?

A: Nah. I never liked dancing very much. I guess I'm kind of a stick in the mud. Yeah we would do dancing. Marion loved dancing. The jitter bug and all that stuff. She loved that, she still does. I used to do it a little bit but not a lot.

Q: What is your spouse's name?

A: His name is Rick Siler Frederick George.

Q: Where was he born?

A: I think Trenton.

Q: How old were you when you were married?

A: Twenty-five

Q: Both of you?

A: He was twenty-four.

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

A: You know I was trying to think about this. Maybe a couple of years. Two or three years. It was a blind date. I was student teaching for someone and I guess I had broken up with a boyfriend or -- regret that. He was a nice Italian guy from Galloway.

Q: Do you go to class reunions?

A: I have been to a few of them. No. He was not from my class. The guy I went out with in high school --we went steady. He is married. I think he is a banker or something. There was one guy that I went out with -- it was when I first started to work and he was a good Italian -- my mother really liked him. I should have listened to her. He was Catholic too.

Q: Where you married in church?

A: Yes. We were married at St. Joseph's in Hammonton.

Q: As a couple what kind of places did you go for entertainment and social activities?

A: We used to go to other people's houses or they would come to our house. We would play cards. We used to go to the movies. We liked cards and games. You know how you would have those games you would play. We would do that.

Q: Did you go to the sports? You know how everybody goes to the Flyers or something?

A: Ricky used to go to them. I remember going to the Flyers. I don't remember going to baseball games with him. I guess I probably did. He loved to go camping. So we would go camping often.

Q: Where did you camp?

A: Actually not around here. His mother was a camper and we used to go to mainly the Catskill mountains. Beautiful up there. Woodlyn Valley was the favorite place.

Q: Did you have a tent or a trailer?

A: We had a tent. It was just awful. You could not touch the sides because when it rained if you touched the sides it would get wet and you would get a puddle inside. There was a place called the Catskill Game Farm. We went up there. We went camping when Christie was 6 months old and we went up there. I remember that is where she rode an elephant at the Game Farm and I used to like the Game Farm. It was really nice there. I think that is closed now. But when she went camping with her father when they first started to go camping again, you know after she was married the Game Farm was still there. Now it's closed. It was open for quite a long time. He liked to camp. I didn't like it very much.

Q: What is your child's name and birthdate?

A: Her name Christian Carol Elizabeth Siler Leslie and she was born January 13,1974.

Q: Do you have grandchildren?

A: I have two grandchildren, Eleanor Rose and she is six and Owen Michael and he is three and they're cute.

Q: Can you describe your surroundings when you were a child? We did the household (and the yard)

A: There were kids in the neighborhood. Darrell Bradley and Buddy Earling and Billy Cappuccio and we used to ride our bikes and play on Billy's swings. Billy had a swing set. We would be in and out of each other's house. It was nice. It was rural and.

Q: Did anybody have pools?

A: No. I don't remember anybody having a pool. My cousins used to go to the pool over there at the Hammonton Swim Club. I'm like 5 or 10 years older than them but I used to go there with them sometimes when you know when I was older.

Q: You told me that you have particular memories about Hammonton when you were young like you are saying you had a nice neighborhood.

A: Oh yeah! It was a nice neighborhood. It's a shame. It's going downhill now. It was nice there. We would ride. We would just go outside. We had those roller skates you know that you had the key for. We would go skating down the sidewalk and ride our bicycles and tricycles. It was fun. We could go all over the neighborhood with no restrictions you know you could go wherever you wanted (Effie: everybody was trustworthy) Patricia- yeah. There was no thought about strangers and crime and all that. No.

Q: How has Hammonton changed since you were young? Anything noticeable or it is a lot.

A: It's seems a lot more crowded now for sure. A lot of housing that wasn't here before. I remember going to the drug stores. They used to have a fountain and I remember my father and I went to Kerns. I think it was Kerns. We would get ice cream, milk shakes and stuff. That was in the middle of town. Then when they had the-I remember standing in line at the Rivioli Theatre. They would make you throw your gum out before you went in. We went to the movies a lot. There were two movies. I never saw. I remember the Rivioli. My uncle said that there was another movie in town, also but I don't remember that one. But it so completely different now. The stores are all

different. There were a lot of drug stores, the 5&10 Newberry. They don't have fountains any more. Newberry -- I worked in the fountain at Newberrys for awhile when I was in high school. I just can remember the old stores that used to be in town. Used to like Miller's. It had an upstairs and you would go downstairs for stuff too. It had an upstairs and a downstairs.

Q: That was on the main street?

A: Yeah. That was on the main street.

Q: What kind of jobs did you have in high school?

A: I did the fountain at Newberrys and then just worked in the 5&10 you know like on the floor whatever. There was a lady used to sit up high. She was the bookkeeper and she used to watch you, when you folded stuff, make sure you kept working. I did pack blueberries one summer. I didn't want to do it. It was Carol Maimone and I. My mom, I can remember her saying you had to do something. I think I made \$90, all summer. It was horrible. I hated it. I used to like pack the blueberries like just so, make sure all the berries were in the right place. Then you would put the cellophane on it and push the frame down and put a rubber band around it. That is all done by machinery now. But people used to make a good amount of money in the summer. But I didn't. I did that one summer and I remember one summer I worked in the factory, Kessler's and I marked pockets. I was slow at that too. I was not destined to do anything that had to do with production. I really wasn't, no. I worked on head start. I was out of college then but I worked as a teacher in head start in Hammonton, the migrant program they had way back, in the '60s I guess. I might have done that when I was in college.

Q: Was that in that little red building on that road that takes you into Wall Mart now? That little red school house there?

A: Where they had the summer school? It was there. I think the building I worked in was with Jennie Tomasello one year. It was the little kids in kindergarten and it was ~~where~~ the public school is on Vine Street. One year they had it at the lake, I think, where that head start building is now. No, no. I know what it is. It was at the Presbyterian church and we used the nursery school in front of the church. So I worked one year with that in the public school and another year it was at the Presbyterian church.

Q: Do they still have that do you know?

A: The summer migrant program? I don't think so. I had the nursery school kids. They used to get on the bus and we went to the beach. They were tiny. We used to bring the potty on the bus with us. They were good jobs in the summer time. I had some good summer jobs except for packing blueberries.

Q: Are there places in Hammonton that are no longer there?

A: Well, the movie is not there. It was on 3rd and Bellevue. Then there was the drive-in. Mr. Frank had that drive-in on the White Horse Pike. We used to go there too when we were in high school. The nuns used to call it "the gates of hell". We weren't supposed to go to the drive-in.

Q: What was a major event or the major news event in your life?

A: Well. I was born right at the end of WWII and I think Kennedy, the assassination. I can remember being in college and coming out of gym class in the locker room and they said that he had been shot. I think that was the one that impacted me the most.

Q: What was your mother's name including her maiden name?

A: Her name was Rose Frances Catonia Cardone Sacco.

Q: When and where was she born?

A: She was born in Philadelphia February 27, 1917. I don't know what hospital she was born in.

Q: She grew up there?

A: She grew up in Philadelphia.

Q: You have pictures so you know what she looked like. You remember it.

A: Right.

Q: Do you resemble her?

A: A little. I think my eyes, shape of the face, eyebrows.

Q: Did she have brothers or sisters?

A: Yes she did.

Q: Who were they?

A: My mom, my aunt Bertha was the oldest, then would be my mom then my uncle Phillip, Camile (her name is really Carmella) and Nathan and she lost a brother between Camile and Nathan and they named the one (my uncle Nate who survived) they named him the same name they called him Nathan also. Actually they called him Nunzio. My

aunt Bertha's real name was Bernanzio. They kind of like just took-- why she took Bertha I'll never know.

(Effie-- I went to school with a Bertha so maybe it was from that era)

My aunt Camile's real name is Carmela.

Q: They were all born in Philadelphia?

A: Yes. I believe they were.

Q: And they are alive yet?

A: Just Camile.

Q: Your uncles too are gone?

A: Bertha was married to Joe. He is gone. Aunt Louise is still alive. That would have been Nate's wife. So I have Aunt Camile left and Aunt Louise.

Q: Where does Aunt Louise live?

A: Aunt Louise lives in Barrington.

Q: Barrington, Massachusetts?

A: No. New Jersey.

Q: Oh. There is a Barrington, New Jersey?

A: Yes.

Q: What schools did your mother attend?

A: She went to school in Philadelphia. Calhoun grammar school in South Philadelphia. She skipped the second half of third grade. They used to walk to school.

Q: Do you remember any stories that she told about her childhood or home life or school?

A: She liked the city. I do remember she said that they had a really nice home. I think it was on McKean St. and it had a spiral staircase and you know they used to have that double glass in there. She said that was a really pretty house. My grandfather owned another home also in South Phila. Then when the depression came he lost everything. I guess he had been a tailor. I'm not sure but they lost their houses, they lost their money, they lost it all. So you know. That wasn't too good. Before that she would walk. She liked Philly. She liked being in the city better I think than she liked it down here. She did tell me when she was ten that she was walking. (They used to send them on errands) and I can remember her saying that she walked under a window and someone

shot above her head into a window and killed a man that was sitting in the chair.(I don't know why she told me that ... but) She did tell me that. It was the 20's when she was growing up there. She went to grammar school there, she went to high school there in Philadelphia.

Q: Did she go on after that or did she marry?

A: She got married.

Q: What religion was your mother raised in?

A:Roman Catholic.

Q: Probably a church in Philadelphia?

A: Yes. She made her communion. The Church of the Epiphany. When she was in school she liked to play volley ball and she wanted to be a nurse. My grandfather wouldn't let her be a nurse and she wanted to be a nurse. He wouldn't let her.

Q: So she finished school. Did she work outside of the house after she was out of school and before she married and or after she married? How old was she when she married?

A: You know I really don't know. She was in her 20's also. I know she worked in a factory in Hammonton, Kessler was a big employer. She was a very good seamstress and she could weave. She could fix a hole what do they call it, invisible weaving. She was really good at sewing.

Q: Now you say Hammonton. When did they move to Hammonton?

A: My mom and my Aunt Bertha would get sent to their grandmother's house on Passmore Ave. They would come here in the summer time. When they were older they would pick raspberries and things. They hated it. They didn't like it at all. I think I was on Passmore Ave. That would have been my grandmother's mother, Rose. My mom was named after her. She moved over here in Hammonton. It must have been really farm,it was mostly farming then you know.

Q: That was Rose. What was her last name?

A: Basil. That would be my great-grandmother.

Q: So she married in Hammonton I'm assuming?

A: They got married in St. Joe's church. The old St. Joe's church. The one before the fire.

Q: Was your mother married ever before she married your father?

A: No. She was engaged but he died. He had a blood clot or something. She had a lot of boyfriends but my grandfather liked my dad. They both worked in the factory in Hammonton and my Aunt Camile says that he was the one who tried to match make them to go out together. Then my dad died in 1983 and then two years later , I can't remember how long later, she married again. She married Pete Sacco. She was 70. I remember her saying I am seventy and I am going to do what I want.

Q: Was he related to Virgil?

A: Yes. His brother. They were the farmer Sacco's.

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

A: Well. My grandfather's side were from Italy. Domenic and Mary. They were both from Italy. My grandfather's father must have died when he was young because he went to work in France in the mines or something. He was kind of an unruly guy, I think. He stowed away. He got caught the first time and he stowed away again and I think he had to paint the ship or something on the way over. Now I think, I don't think he came ashore through Ellis Island. I think he got in illegally. He was without papers, so... My grandmother came over and they went through Ellis Island. They have the page of them. It was funny. They all changed their names. I don't know if they had you do that so you sounded more American when you came over or what but they changed their names when they came here. She was four when she came here.

Q: Say her name because you will need it eventually.

Q: Oh. I have to look. Let me see. Her name was Concetta and she became Mary. She had a sister Maria who became Jennie. She had brothers, Anophio, Frank, Nuncio and they all came over with their mom. The father came over first. His name was Nuncio and he came over first and she came the next year, his wife Rose (Rosa) Pelewski, something like that. She came over with the kids. Now I don't understand this but she from what I see here written down from the papers from Ellis Island she was older than him, quite a bit older than he was. He came over first and you had to have a sponsor I think. He had a sponsor when he got here. Then he must have sent for them a year later. She came, my grandmother's mom came with children. I don't know they said there was a nine year old son but he was twenty-four when he came over so if he

had a nine year old son he was like fifteen when he had this kid. Sometimes I wonder if this lady Rosa, my mother's mother's mother, was thirty three when she came over and he was twenty-four and they had a nine year old, the four year old was my grandmom. They had a three year old and a two year old. So she came over with four kids.

Q: Unless she had the oldest child with someone else.

A: You know it enters your mind. It makes you wonder because she, he was twenty-four to have a nine year old child. I don't know but that is the way it reads, so, interesting.

My grandmom was probably his. She was four when she came here.

Effie: This is the manifest of the boat probably.

Patricia: This is the I think this is the page from Ellis Island when they came over. They didn't tell you much. I thought they were from Gesso but.

Q: Did you ever hear any stories that your mother might have told you about her ancestors?

A: Well. My mom used to talk about her (what would that be) her grandfather Nunzio, Nathan. They called him two names. He had blue eyes. He was the only one in the family with blue eyes and he used to like wine a lot and his wife didn't want him to drink but he used to go down in the basement, I guess where they had the wine and if it was winter time they knew he was hitting the bottle because when he came up he had a little icy mist on his mustache. My mom, the house that she talked about was the house they had on second. They lived on Passmore. They lived on Maple St., Vine St. They ended up on Second St. That is the house I remember them being in. She really wanted to be a nurse. She would get the bird that fell out of a tree. She tried to nurse it back. She had a rabbit. She just liked taking care of pets. My grandfather.

Q: Was she ever able to go into that area to work?

A: No. No. He didn't want her to and in those days you didn't go against what your father said and she ended up working in Kessler's which she didn't want to do but that is what she ended up doing.

Q: What kind of work did your father do?

A: My father. I really don't know. My father- he worked in the factory too. He worked in Kessler. He was a presser. Horrible hot job. I guess she sewed on the machine. My grandfather, my mom's father worked in Kessler's. He was like a foreman or something

and he was very dedicated but heh you know. You can be replaced. When he got sick he was replaced very quickly. It's a shame.

Q: How was your mother's health?

A: In general I guess she was really healthy until she got older. She had some problems gynecological things.

Q: When did she die and how did she die, what circumstances?

A: She died in August of 1995. She died of ovarian cancer. She always had this gynecologic thing. She lost, she had a lot of miscarriages. I had a brother that was still born.

Q: Is she buried in town?

A: She is buried in Green Mount Cemetery.

Q: What was your dad's name?

A: His name was actually Biascio I thing, Pasquale. They called him William.

Q: The last name?

A: Cardone

Q: Did he have -- you said they called him...?

A: I have William but somewhere I was looking at his birth certificate and it has, I think it has Biascio on there. Maybe it was baptism. They were big on the church stuff. See on the certificate of marriage to my mom it's Biascio Cardone but he was really I knew him as William, Bill. Everybody called him Bill.

Q: Did he have a nickname?

A: I guess his nickname would have been Bill.

Q: Where was he born in Italy also?

A: He was born in Hammonton I believe probably at home.

Q: He grew up in Hammonton?

A: Yeh.

Q: Do you remember what he looks like?

A: Yeh. I don't remember him with a lot of hair. He was skin was darker than my mom's andwell he was my dad and he was a nice man. He was even tempered, quiet but he had this big voice but he was a low keyed person. He loved to sing. He would sing a lot. He loved to sing. He had wanted to be a French teacher. The war came along

and he had to stay at home and help with the family. He ended staying home because he was flat-footed and he couldn't get in the service. He loved to dance and my mom... that is what they used to do. They would go to the Lillian-On-The-Lake. I guess they were going out together and my dad would end up dancing with all the females because most of the other guys were in the service. I guess when they weren't here he would dance with everybody. He stayed at home and helped on the farm. He must have worked on the farm. I really don't know. I know that they had land out there on Peach St. They had a house where Urgo lived there. Around the 600 block on Peach St. Then he gave up that house and they got this little bungalow which hearsay it used to be a library that was moved from the middle of town. I don't really know. They used to say that was a library that they moved. They put a foundation and they put it on Peach St. That is the house I remember them in. But by then most of them - I never knew my paternal grandparents. I never met them.

Q: They were probably still in Italy?

A: No, no. They were here but they died. They must have died when they were young. I never knew them. That was Biasco was my father's name and Angelina Chiavo was my father's mother's name.

Q: Did they have brothers and sisters?

A: Yes.

Q: So your aunts and uncles and cousins do you keep up with them?

A: They are all dead. My Aunt Thersa I knew. I knew Charlie, Billy and Thersa. I remember Uncle Charlie. We used to sit outside. He had a garden and we would eat the radishes. He would read comic books to me. I remember sitting under a tree with him, yeah. Out in the back of that house on Peach St. My aunt Thersa was deaf. She was operated on for tonsils and I guess -- they would have sued them now. It messed up her hearing but she was in that house. My uncle Charlie. He had all heart. Everybody had cardio problems, cardiovascular-- both sides. I remember him Charlie died at a young age in his 50's or something. He had a stroke and then he died. I really only knew Thersa, and Louie and let's see there was Aunt Thersa, Uncle Louie, Uncle Charlie and there was another one Thomas, who I never met. He had died earlier.

Q: So they had children, your cousins? Do you remain friends with them?

A: I know my .. on occasion I see ... who would that be, that would me my cousin Thersa. She has daughters and yeah they would be Tom. I never met Tom. He was the only one that had children. That was my father's brothers and sisters. In fact my Uncle Charlie and my Uncle Louie and my Aunt Thersa never married. Tommy had four or five daughters so they would be cousins yeah I had contact with but I don't really see them very much any more.

Q: Did your father go to school in Hammonton?

A: Yes. He went Hammonton High School. He was on the basketball team.

Q: He went to church in Hammonton?

A: They went to St. Joe's. The old St. Joe's.

Effie: He wasn't in the military because of his feet.

His feet, right. I think I got his flat feet.

Q: His ancestors were from Italy but your not sure of the town at this point?

A: No. I don't really know where they came from.

Q: Did he ever talk about the ancestors there?

A: I never remember him ever saying anything about himself or about my father's family.

Q: His health was problematic too with heart?

A: Yes. My mom's was too. They all had high blood pressure.

Q: Was he buried in Hammonton also?

A: Yes. He is in Greenmount. My grandparents, my mom's parents are buried in Holy Sepulcher.

Q: They are all the same height?

A: Oh yes they are. Probably a little short for a basketball player. That one is kind of tall. That was 1927. Dr. Volpe. Donald Volpe. They must have been in the same class. That was the second Dr. Volpe. Charlie Siple was their coach. He taught math I think in Hammonton High school. In daddy's Mary Oliv.o, one of the teachers that taught in Hammonton, music teacher taught there forever. They were in the same high school class.

Q: Did you parents every tell you how they met and fell in love?

A: Nope. I never asked them. My Aunt Camile says my grandpop introduced them because they both worked at that Kessler's.

Q: With your mother .. do you know her likes, dislikes, hobbies, what she liked to do, special things about her?

A: My mom liked gardening. She liked to travel. She wasn't real crazy about cooking I don't think. She liked dancing. Both of my parents like to dance. I don't know why I didn't like to dance. They were very good dancers. My father was an extremely good dancer. They used to go out and dance and stuff. She liked. She was in the Republican Club and she was quite active. I remember her being very active in the PTA at school. She would be room mother. They worked until about 5 o'clock in the factory. My friend Marion and I, I think the nuns used to have us stay at the convent with them when we were little. I can remember being in the convent. I guess they were kind of like child care until.

Effie: Latch key.

Patricia: It was the convent latch key in those days.

Q: Did she like to cook? You said not particularly. Did she have a favorite meal though?

A: My mother loved fish. As much as I dislike it she liked it. She loved fish. She loved to go fishing and she liked the beach. She would eat anything that came out of the ocean. She used to make crabs and spaghetti that I really really liked, the red crabs in the red sauce. I really really liked that.

Q: Does the VFW come up to hers? I heard they have a good crabs and spaghetti.

A: No. They were much better. What they made was really good. I tried once. It was good but it didn't taste like hers did.

Q: Did they have a garden, your parents?

A: Yeh. They had a garden. They always had a garden. They liked to grow things. My father liked to garden. My mom liked flowers. She and the neighbor, when we lived on Washington St. My neighbor's name was Marion Helzer. They loved flowers. They would go to Longwood Gardens. She would go there with her friends. A lot of the plants that Marion had in her gardenmy mom and Helen Ravelli and Marion Helzer used to go to Longwood Gardens and I think two of them used to (because Marion Helzer was

big) used to kind of like stand in front of her and she would snip off like shoots from the plants and bring them home and these things would grow. She had gorgeous roses and iris. A lot of iris. They liked to do that. She liked flowers alot. But she liked fish. She liked to eat fish.

Q: Did she ever have any secret recipes that she passed on?

A: Not that I remember. I wish I knew how she made the crabs and spaghetti. I could remember them doing it but you know ...

Q: Did your father ever cook?

A: My father was a very good cook. She taught him to cook. After she left the factory she worked in Whitehall for a while. Then she worked, she liked to sell things, so I can remember she worked ... in the middle of town there used to be a children's shop called Youngland and Bernadette DePalma's mother I think owned that ... no no Josephine Capelli owned that. Mommy worked at Youngland and I can remember walking home with my friends through town and we would stop and say hello and then we would go to this place called Joann's where they like french fries and we would go on the way home. We lived on Washington St. and across the street on the corner was this big coat place called the Aggressive. Oh. You could buy any kind of coat you wanted in there and she would work there. It was close to home and she that was like, I think that was like a second job when she was working in the factory. She used to work for a little Jewish lady, Mrs. Hoffman. So cute she was. She liked to do that. She liked to sell things. Then later on she worked at the Ideal. She did work two jobs to put me through college. She was interested in getting me some kind of profession that she was never able to have. My father, not too much, but my mom said that education is never wasted. I remember she worked two jobs to put me through college. And then when she was working she would leave the recipes for my father to cook. We were talking about did he like to cook and he did like to cook and he became a really good cook. He was famous for his meatballs. The family used to get his recipe for making meatballs.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: I went it was Glassboro then. Glassboro State College.

Q: Did you know your grandmother?

A: I knew my mom's mom. My grandmother Mary.

Q: Your Paternal grandmother.

A: Paternal? No. I never met them. Either one.

Q: Where did they live?

A: They used to live in the house next to the little bungalow. The bungalow was 610 Peach St. and right next door was like a two story house that I think they owned before they went into this other little house. My grandmother and grandfather probably lived in that two story house with their kids. They used to buy things during the depression I guess. I have this music box that is very very pretty. Regina records. I can remember being in a house on Peach St., a little house, a bungalow. I used to go in the basement and play with that, those metal records. I still have some. They had furniture. They had so many pieces of furniture. I guess they got ... I don't know where they would go to get these things. I guess they had sales. I remember they said they paid very little for the music box. It used to have a case but they burned the case for firewood. So it doesn't have a case anymore.

Q: Were yard sales common when you were growing up?

A: For me? I don't remember any yard sales.

Back again to Pat's history of living in Hammonton with her family. Her mother cooked good Italian food and she liked to. Pat: My mother liked fish and my favorite food, I loved the way they made crabs and spaghetti in red sauce.

Q: Did you mother have any secret recipes?

A: Not that I remember no.

Q: Your father cooked somethings?

A: My father liked to cook, yes. He liked to cook his favorite food was pasta.

Q: They are both gone and your grandfather is gone also and your grandmother and they died of ...

A: Everybody died of cardiovascular problems, heart attacks, strokes, both sides.

Q: Do you think your grandfather or grandmother had any influence on you and what was it?

A: It would be my maternal grandmother and grandfather. Well my grandmother liked fun. She liked to have fun and I wish she would have influenced me more doing more

fun stuff. She liked to travel. I guess they influenced me in that way. My mother too. They all liked to travel. I do like to travel. My grandmother and grandfather on my mother's side would go to Florida a lot and my grandmother loved gambling and I did not. She didn't influence me in that way because I don't like gambling. She loved playing cards, hi li, dog races, whatever they could go to in Florida they would go to.

Q: This is your paternal grandparents?

A: No. I did not know my paternal grandparents. These are my mom's people. They all died of, my grandfather - a heart attack, my grandmother - died in Wildwood. I believe she died of a heart attack also.

Effie: the paternal parts we can't really talk about.

Patricia: My paternal grandmother I would not know anything about grandfather or grandmother on my father's side. I never knew them. I can give you their name.

Effie: that would be good.

Patricia: ok. My paternal grandfather was Biasio Cardone and his wife was Angelina Chiavo and she was a Cardone also.

Q: Where they born in Italy or here?

A: I think they were born in Italy and they must have been from Philadelphia lived in Philadelphia for awhile because my father's family did have relatives that used to come down from Philadelphia to visit so I think that they lived in Philly. None of them are still living. My grandmother and grandfather on my father's side are buried somewhere in Greenmount Cemetery. I'm not sure where.

Q: So this you don't know about, education?

A: My paternal grandfather, I have no clue. I knew what he looked like. We have pictures of him. He was tall, he was thin. He had a mustache. I have no idea what he was like. I don't know if he went to school, how many children they had. They had .. let's see my dad was the youngest. There was Louis, Charlie (Charles), Theresa and my father. I guess there were four, three boys and one girl.

Q: And you don't know where they all live?

A: Where they lived? They lived in Hammonton. They all lived on Peach St. They're all gone. They passed away. They're all buried here in Hammonton in Greenmount Cemetery.

Q: The children are?

A: They didn't have My father was the only one of his siblings that married so he is the only one and he only had one child. I did have a brother that passed away. He was born

Q: The great-grandparents on your mother's side?

A: The great-grandparents of my mother would have been his name was Nunzio (Nathan) and he had blue eyes and then there was his wife (Rosa). My mother was named after her grandmother which would be my great-grandmother. Do I know anything else about them? They came from Italy.

Q: Did they have siblings? Great uncles and aunts?

A: I really don't know anything about them. I don't know their history. They were born in Italy. I don't know. They were the ones. He came over here when he was 24 and a year later she came over. She was 33 actually. She came over the year after. They went through Ellis island. My grandmother and her brothers and sisters came with their mother a year after their father. That would be her great-grandparents my great-grandparents. They were born in Italy. I know that.

Q: They settled in Hammonton eventually?

A: My grandmom. Her maiden name was Basile. Her parents were Basile and they did settle in Hammonton. They lived, I believe Rosa Basile lived on Passmore Avenue. My mom and aunt Bertha used to come down in the summer time. I remember they used to pick raspberries or something there. So they, they were here and my grandparents came down after the depression, during the depression. I'm not sure. They lost everything and they came down here and that is when they came to Hammonton.

Q: Now your father's side.

A: I know nothing about them. Less than my mother's side.

Q: Did the depression have any effect on you?

A: Ultimately I guess it did because my maternal grandfather had done very well in tailoring and one of my aunts said that he worked at Stetson hats too but I don't know. It was only one that thought that. But he was a good tailor and he owned two houses in Philadelphia. My mom said that one was just beautiful that they lived in with a big spiral staircase. Then they lost everything. So anything that he was giving to his children was

lost. I guess in a way that affects you. So when they came to Hammonton they were starting from scratch.

Q: Back to your grandmother.

A: My maternal grandmother. I can tell you a little bit about her. Her name was Mary Basile Catonia. When she came to Ellis Island her name was Concetta. When she left Ellis Island her name was Mary.

Q: Her personality?

A: My grandmother was a lively person. She was the one that liked to gamble and she had a house in Wildwood. She loved to rent rooms. She wanted to make money so she could go traveling and have fun. She had diabetes. I remember sitting down with her and her snack would be crackers and this was like in the 50's or 60's when they came out with that sugarless jelly then and she would put this saccharin jelly on crackers and we would have crackers and tea. I could remember doing that with her and talking with her about things. She was not very tall. A little shorter than I am, a little under 5 feet, maybe 5'2" something like that. I remember her hair was salt and pepper. I never remember her with dark hair, completely dark. She wore glasses.

Q: Did she go to school?

A: She did. I can't remember. I think she did though. One of my relatives said that once. I think she may have gone to school. Yes, because she was in school with my aunt Camile's mother-in-law, Viola. They were in the same class or something like that. My Aunt Camile said something like that. That they both went to school in Hammonton. Now how did she do that if she was in Philly? I don't know. That doesn't make sense. That would be my grandmom. My maternal grandmother, my mother's brothers and sisters were Bertha.

Q: Was she married more than once?

A: No.

Q: Did she do any kind of work for the family?

A: I understand that when they were here in Hammonton they used to get... my grandfather worked at Kessler in the factory, clothing factory was a big industry here. They used to get coats that had to be marked or ... take the basting out. My Aunt Bertha used to .. they used to get these coats and they would bring them back to their

house. They used to go -- my grandmom, my Aunt Bertha and my mom and they would bring these coats home I guess from the factory and they would pull the basting lines out and then Aunt Bertha would... they would put them all back in a wagon and she would bring them back the next day. So I guess that was working out like beside the house and the regular part of running a home. They used to make money that way. That would be the only thing I knew that she worked outside of the house.

Q: How many aunts and uncles do I have on my mother's side?

A: I had my Aunt Bertha, my Aunt Camile, my Uncle Nate, My uncle Phillip and then I had my Aunt Charlotte. My Aunt Charlotte was my grandmom and grandpop had friends. Their friends had .. Charlotte's parents died young and her grandmother, Maria she lived somewhere else. Aunt Charlotte... they moved.. my Aunt Charlotte wanted to stay here in Hammonton and finish high school so my grandparents, my mom and my aunt convinced them to take Charlotte in. So she was like you know. They fostered her I guess you would say in this day and age. But she lived with them on Second St.

Q: Charlotte was the youngest?

A: Charlotte was not blood. She was from another family. I always called her Aunt Charlotte because I always thought she was related to them because she lived with them all those years well I think she lived with them maybe two years. I'm not sure. My Aunt Camile would know. She went to school with them. I have pictures of my mom, Aunt Charlotte, and Aunt Camile. They were in the swinging seamstress club or something. They liked to sew and they liked to swing dance so that's why they were called the swinging seamstress or something like that. There is still swing dancing you know.

Q: Can you give me the names and birth dates of those aunts and uncles?

A: My youngest aunt or uncle on my mom's side the youngest is Nathan. He passed away. The oldest was Bertha then came my mother. Then came Uncle Phillip, then Aunt Camile and the Uncle Nate.

Q: When was your born?

A: I don't know. They were born like two years apart I think most of the time so if Aunt Bertha ... my mother was born in I think 1917. That would mean my Aunt Bertha would

probably have been born in 1915 and two years later. There was pretty much a two year spread.

Q: And they are all gone except Camille. When did your grandmother die and where was she buried again?

A: My grandmom died in 1958 and she is buried in Greenmount Cemetery. I remember about her. She came with me to fix up my first classroom. I think I was the first grandchild to graduate college. I do have a picture somewhere of her and I at my college graduation which I wish I could find that. Then she came to help me set up my classroom.

Q: Was that kindergarten?

A: Yes. It was kindergarten in Tansboro. It was the old school in Tansboro. It is now the town annex or something. It is on Tansboro Rd. So the first place I taught was in Winslow Township. So she helped me fix my classroom up. She was really proud you know that one of her grandchildren had graduated college.

Q: Where you the first?

A: I was the first one of my cousins that graduated college.

Q: Your grandmother had some influence on you then?

A: She did in a way. Yeah. She was, she helped me out when she could. We talked. I remember sitting down talking with her but to say what we talked about, I don't really remember. She was a good person and kind, you know. I liked her.

Q: Your maternal grandfather?

A: My mother's father was more of a stern guy. I think he was like really old world. He was a good guy though.

Effie: Women belonged in the home taking care of families?

Patricia: Pretty much. I think he was pretty straight line, old world like that.

Effie: Now he was the one that wasn't happy with her wanting to be a nurse?

Patricia: My grandfather, yes. Dominic did not want my mother to go to nursing school.

Q: Where would she have gone to do this nursing training, away?

A: See now they had this, Charlotte used to stay with them. I don't know if mom and Charlotte were the same age or not..Charlotte became a nurse. She went to school, I think at Cooper. So that was I guess my mom's plan. She probably wanted to do the

same thing but my grandfather wouldn't let her. So she didn't like that. She really didn't.

Q: Tell us about your grandfather. What kind of person was he?

A: He was kind of a firm person.

Q: His education. Did he finish school?

A: I don't think so because he was the one that worked in the mines in France and they came over stowed away. I don't think he had a whole lot of schooling. I don't think so. But he was a good tailor.

Q: How many children did he have?

A: Who?

Q: The father of your mother.

A: The same. They had the same children.

Q: Married more than once?

A: No.

Q: Worked he did?

A: When he came to Hammonton he worked at Kessler's making suits.

Q: Again. How many aunts and uncles do you have on your father's side?

A: I don't have any living relatives on his side.

Q: You can't name their names and birth dates?

A: Uncles and aunts. They are all. I know my aunt Theresa was. One of them was born in August. My father was born August 12. My aunt Theresa was born August 18. I don't know when any others were born.

Effie: then again they would have been two to four years difference than your father's age too.

Patricia: My father was the youngest.

Q: Did your father play chess or cards?

A: Oh. They loved to play cards. They played pinochle and poker. They loved to play cards. My father's hobbies was he liked to grill outside. Liked to cook outside. He liked gardening and he didn't like to build things. He liked to make meatballs. He liked to cook. He really liked to cook and he liked to grill outside he liked to Bar B Q before it became popular. He liked to go out and cook on the grill.

Q: Did he ever raise a garden or animals?

A: He had the garden.

Q: Did you ever have a dog or cat?

A: When I was little I had a dog named "buzzy", a Cocker Spaniel. I had a cat named "Joey".

Q: Where either of your parents artistic?

A: I wouldn't think so. No. They weren't artistic.

Q: Were they actively involved in the community?

A: Actually they were. My father was the secretary of the union at Kessler for a very long time. My mom was involved in politics, the St. Rita Society, she was in the American Legion auxiliary. She was a joiner. My mom liked to join things. My dad mostly was kind of an academic person. My father was not as much a joiner. My mother used to work on the election.

Q: Did they ever run for office?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Did they have a decent sense of humor?

A: I think they both had a pretty decent sense of humor. My mother especially. My dad was kind of low key but he had a sense of humor.

Q: Did they ever lose their temper?

A: My mother more than my father.

Q: Do you remember them telling funny jokes or stories?

A: Yes. But I don't remember what they were. My mother would like to tell jokes more than my dad did. He wasn't much of a talker actually.

Q: What did you learn from your mother?

A: I wish I had gotten more of my mother's feistyness and my mom always said that she believed in education. She said nothing you did with education was wasted. My father. I think I got more of a laid back kind of feelings from him. My mother was very speedy. Everything she did was very quick. I certainly didn't get that from her. I must have gotten my kind of pacing from my father because I do things very slowly. They were really good cooks both of them so I don't think I got those kind of talents from them. I

didn't pick up those talents from them. I inherited more from my father I believe than my mother.

Q: Did you all go to church together?

A: Yeh. We always went to church together.

Q: That was important to them?

A: That was important. Church was important. I can remember we used to go to church and then a lot of times we would go to the shore, beach, Margate.

Effie: Lucy? Patricia: Lucy, Lucy the Elephant, Decater Ave. I don't know if Lucy was near there then or not but that was the street we would go to and then when grandmom and grandpop got the house in Wildwood we would go to the shore quite often spend time there.

Q: Which parent do you think you resemble the most?

A: I resemble my mother. Darker skin. My dad had a little darker skin than she had, more olive complexion than she did.

Q: What do you think was the tragedy your mother or father suffered?

A: I never really thought about that. I'll have to think about that.

Effie: Their parents death?

Patricia: My father, I really don't know. I think the greatest tragedy we had he had a major stroke and it debilitated him. Then when he was in rehab that is when he did a little bit of crafty things to get his motor skills back and that kind of thing. I think that was tragic for him. I think the other thing that was tragic for him was that he never got to go to college and be a French teacher. He told me that he did want to do that. The greatest tragedy for my mom -- the death of her parents certainly affected her.

Effie: The death of her son?

Patricia: Oh. That's true. That might have been the greatest tragedy in their life because she had a lot of trouble carrying babies and I do remember being at my grandmom's house and I remember my father crying because the baby was born dead or died shortly after he was born. It was a boy baby too. I remember that. That was very tragic.

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