

**AN INTERVIEW WITH
PHILIP BARBAGALLO**

JANUARY 19, 2016

**FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HAMMONTON**

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January 19, 2016

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Michael Caffrey, January 19, 2016
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Philip Barbagallo
Interviewed by Michael Caffrey
For Historical Society
Hammonton, New Jersey
January 19, 2016

Q: What is your full name?

A: Philip Louis Barbagallo.

Q: What is your age?

A: Ninety-three, plus.

Q: What is your date of birth?

A: November 19, 1922.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Elm, New Jersey

Q: Where you born in a hospital?

A: No.

Q: So were you born at home?

A: Home, I guess, I don't remember much about it.

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

A: I grew up to a certain point, up to fifth grade I was in Elm.

Q: Do you have any idea where you were when you were ten years and moved to Hammonton?

A: I was in Elm, yes.

Q: You moved from Elm to Hammonton when you were ten?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you and your parents move to any other states?

A: Not that I know of and I could remember quite a way back.

Q: Can you describe your surroundings when you were a child when you were in Elm, first?

A: We only associated with the people across the street people, that's all. They were my Aunt and Uncle.

Q: What kind of house was it? One bedroom, two bedrooms?

A: A four room bungalow. Kitchen, two bedrooms and sort of a living room, nothing in it.

Q: You had an outside bathroom?

A: Outside, yeah, outhouse.

Q: How about when you moved to Hammonton?

A: We had a bathroom here.

Q: You had an inside bathroom here in Hammonton?

A: Yeah, upstairs.

Q: Where is this in Hammonton that you moved to?

A: 551 North First Road.

Q: You lived here since you were ten years old?

A: Since I came from Elm, yes.

Q: Can you describe your surroundings here on First Road when you were a child. The area, what was going on?

A: Well, it was all farm land and a neighbor next door and a neighbor on the other side.

They were little farmers and the neighbors across the street, everybody was farming.

Q: Was the road paved or was it gravel.

A: No. Dusty First Rd. The first fellows that had cars used to race up and down They used to make a lot of dust just for kicks. Let's put it that way. Just to show off. 1938.

Q: Who was next door, Frankie?

A: No.

Q: Who was there before Frankie bought the property? There was a school house there, right?

A: Yes. The old school house up to fourth grade.

Q: That school house, was it correct that it taught Italian part of the day and English the other part of the day?

A: No. It was all English.

Q: Did you ever go there?

A: No. I was in fifth grade when we moved here and that was a four room school house.

Q: So that was the school house here on First Road.?

A: First Road, yes.

Q: Did your brother John go there?

A: Yeah. My younger brother went there. He was in third grade and I was in fifth grade and I went to Magnolia school on South Chew Road which isn't there now, where former Mayor Berenato had a home built on the old playground where we used to play in the gravel pit. There used to be a gravel pit there.

Q: Did you walk to school when you were a child?

A: I walked. I didn't walk here. I walked to Hammonton.

Q: How about the Magnolia school?

A: The Magnolia school, the bus used to pick us up. A few kids would scatter.

Q: Where did the bus pick you up? Do you remember?

A: On the corner I guess, I don't recall.

Q: On 13th Street, First Road.?

A: Yeah. Then from 5th grade we went to the Hammonton school, 6th, 7th and 8th.

Q: Is that the school that is located on Central Avenue?

A: Yes. It used to be part of the high school. In back of the high school which St. Joe's got now. It used to be Hammonton High School.

Q: That was Peach Street, right? Central and Peach?

A: Peach Street, yeah. Oh, and whatever that road is in the back.

Q: How did you get to school there, walked?

A: Walked, every day, snow, sleet or rain. The bus wouldn't pick you up. You had to live two miles away from the school for the school bus to pick you up. If you lived within two miles, you had to walk.

Q: And there are no sidewalks, is that correct?

A: No, no sidewalks. We still have no sidewalks but nobody walks anymore. The bus picks you up at the door.

Q: Do you remember any names of your teachers?

A: Yes. Miss Joseph and Mrs. Warks in them days in Elm. Miss Joseph was up to fifth grade. Mrs. Warks took over from 6th to 8th grade. I had Miss Joseph up to 4th grade. Fifth grade I was here in Hammonton. In Hammonton I had Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. MacDougle, Mrs. Underhill and a couple of more. I just can't come up with the names right now.

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

A: I didn't have too many. I had one fellow that we used to get along with. Louis Rapacitti. He served in the army. He died after he got home from WWII. He lived in Absecon at the time.

Q: Anything else you can remember about school?

A: On May day we used to have off. I had to go pick strawberries in Millville. I always missed the last week of school. I had always advanced. I missed some tests. I was a good student and I understood and they released me to go pick strawberries. Mr. Smith was the principal of high school and he okayed it for me to go pick strawberries.

Q: You didn't graduate from Hammonton High School, is that correct? You had to quit and go to work?

A: I had to take my test in order to go to work for Whitehall. I didn't have a high school education.

Q: You took a GED, right?

A: Yeah, and I passed those tests and I got my GED certificate and I went to Whitehall and they would only hire high school graduates or GED people.

Q: But you quit Hammonton High school to go to work. Is that correct?

A: Yes. I started Hammonton High school. I only went two months. I had to quit.

Q: Here living at First Road, was there any room in the house that you could actually remember very clearly? Was there any special thing in a room?

A: In the house?

Q. In the house itself.

A. No, there was nothing special. We lived in the house. That's it.

Q: The kitchen as it is now, is that the way it was when you lived here?

A: No. The kitchen's been rebuilt twice. In three sections, kitchen where you have all your utensils and the bathroom but that was way afterwards. After we grew up we ...

Q: The only heat you had in the house was a wood stove in the kitchen?

A: Yes.

Q: That is what your mother cooked on too?

A: Yes. Then we had a stove down the cellar, hot water heater for heat.

Q: But that happened later?

A: Yes. Oh yes. When I grew up.

Q: When you were a teenager did you have any sort of wild clothes, suits or shoes?

A: No. I didn't have any clothes until I really grew up. When I graduated 8th grade I had to borrow my brother's suit.

Q: That was your older brother is that correct?

A: Yes.

Q: Your older brother Nick?

A: Yes. Nick.

Q: How about the shoes. You had to borrow the shoes too because they had holes in them.

A: I borrowed his clothes and the seam was out of the rear seat.

Q: So you had to get it fixed?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, when you were a teenager where did everybody gather for entertainment, movies, Sweet Shoppe?

A: Well, originally everybody gathered at one house or another house. After we grew up a little bit we could get in town. We would hang out at Varga's, that was one place.

Q. Varga's had a soda fountain, right.

A: Yes. Rivoli theatre and where the dance hall used to be right along the side of the Rivoli theatre.

Q: Where was Rivoli Theatre?

A: On Bellevue Avenue and 3rd Street, right across from Varga's. Originally before I grew up, there was another movies across from Rice Hardware Store on the other side of the street there on Bellevue Avenue. Let's say it's Bellevue and 2nd Street, not quite 2nd Street. There was another store in between. That was a movies but I never went to that one. I seldom got to go to the Rivoli Theatre in them days.

Q: Where was the dance hall? Was that beside the Rivoli heading toward the center of town?

A: Yes. That is what they used to call it. The Rivoli theatre used to be downstairs and that was right next to it. Further down was the funeral parlor. It is still there.

Q: Anything else you used to do when you came to town?

A: Not too much I tell you because my mother remarried because we lost the home in Elm. The bank foreclosed and we didn't have any place to live and she remarried and I ended up here at First Road. I have been here since then.

Q: So you have been on First Road. about 80 years?

A: Pretty near, yes.

Q: You have always lived here?

A: Yes. My second home.

Q: So. For eighty-three years you have been here.

A: Yes. This place has been remodeled two times since then.

Q: You raised your family in this house too. Is that correct?

A: Yes. My family.

Q: So when you first came here from Elm you had your two brothers, your sister and yourself and your mother. Is that correct?

A: Well, my sister had passed away. She was the youngest. She passed away, she was almost three years old. My father passed away and that's why we got here through marriage. My mother remarried but we were still Barbagallos. We didn't take anyone else's name.

Q: You have been married. Is that correct?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when you got married?

A: I have to think. I don't remember.

Q: Your spouse's name? What was your wife's name?

A: Jane Panichello.

Q: She was from Waterford?

A: Atco.

Q: Do you know where she was born?

A: Atco.

Q: Was she born at the house?

A: I imagine. I don't know.

Q: You think you were twenty-six years old when you got married?

A: Yes.

Q: How old was she?

A: She was about 4 years younger.

Q: So she would have been about twenty-four?

A: Yeah.

Q: So your wife was about 4 years younger than you were when you got married?

A: Yeah.

Q: How long did you know each other before you got married?

A: Oh, four or five years.

Q: So you were dating?

A: Yes.

Q: Did that mean that you would have to drive up to Atco to date?

A: Yes.

Q: So, you had a car?

A: Yes.

Q: How did you meet? Do you remember?

A: Through church. A group of fellows from Hammonton that played at the Atco church basement were dancing. Young fellows, girls.

Q: So that was the Assumption church in Atco?

A: Yes.

Q: That was a Catholic church?

A: Yes.

Q: They used to have like weekly dances in the church?

A: Yes, maybe once a month.

Q: So you used to come from Hammonton and that is how you met your wife?

A: I would go to Atco.

Q: Who was the band?

A: There was Bobby Raffa, Mento. We used to follow. Those boys were bigger than me and I used to associate with their younger brothers. Then we used to go where the

band used to go. They used to go there regularly, either every month or every two weeks. I don't remember. I think it was every month. They would have a place down the cellar of the church, a dance hall.

Q: When you were married were you married in a church?

A: Yes.

Q: You were married in Atco at the Assumption church?

A: Yes. White Horse Pike.

Q: As a couple when you and your wife got married she moved here to Hammonton, right?

A: Yes.

Q: What did you do for entertainment or social life?

A: Just visit different friends.

Q: So you would go from house to house to visit friends?

A: Yes. We would spend time down Clementon Park.

Q: How did you get to Clementon Park? Did you drive or the train?

A: I drove, yes. I had a 1936 Chevy.

Q: You had four children. Is that correct?

A: Yes.

Q: I am going to ask your son Donald if he could give us the birthdates and names that will help you.

A: Philip Barbagallo, Jr. is the oldest. Born in November 9 1949. I'm Donald. I'm next in line. My birthdate July 24, 1955. My brother is Michael. He was born June 20, 1958. Last is my sister Karen. November 11, 1963.

Q: Do you have any grandchildren?

A: Yes. I have eight grandchildren.

Q: Do you know their names?

A: DONALD: Philip, Joyce, David and Jeffery from Philip Barbagallo, Jr. I'm Donald. My son's name is Mark. Michael has one son Stephen and Karen has two daughters, Brianna and Ashley.

Q: You have some great grandchildren too?

A: Yes. Megan, Maggie and Ellie are the great grandchildren. Three great grandchildren.

Q: Can you describe your surroundings when you were a child? What did First Road look like when you were a child?

A: Well. In Elm there was nothing there just a couple of houses. When I moved to Hammonton there were a little more houses, there was a little school on the street from where I am living now. But that only went to 4th grade. I didn't go there because I was in 5th grade when I moved from my home to Hammonton. They used to call it the First Road School. It was a four room building. It was from first grade, second, third, and fourth grade. My youngest brother John went there to school. I went to Hammonton grammar school.

Q: Do you remember who your neighbors were when you were a child?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you remember their last names?

A: I remember more than their last names. I do the front, first ones. First one was Frank Arena, he had two sisters. Across the street were the Giordanos. There were five of them, Carmen, Angelo, John, Tony and Mary. Another person was the Jacobs, Bill Jacobs and he had two sons, Jack and Bill. They were across the street. Next door to me on my right was the Scaltrito's and the Silvesti's and the Bucci's. Mr. & Mrs. Tomasello.

Q: Do you have any particular memories about Hammonton when you were young? Was there anything that stood out about Hammonton when you moved there?

A: The 16th of July. That is what I remember about Hammonton. I also remember Brita Brothers Shoes, Godfrey's Drugstore and Olivo's Groceries.

Q: Tell us what you remember about the 16th of July.

A: There was a big carnival, a big parade and lots of people. I remember in the 40's you couldn't find a parking place from the White Horse Pike to Chew Road in Hammonton. Everything was taken up with the big carnival and people going to the celebration.

Q: How about the trains?

A: And the trains used to pull in at the church on Egg Harbor Road now across from the American Legion Hall.(the old St.Joseph's Church and the Library). The trains used to be parked there with all the loading cars. The people used to get off there and they came from Philadelphia and they would pull out at night time right from the siding, right there right on the main rail line back to Philadelphia. At one time there was two railroad stations in Hammonton. The one Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Line and the one off of Washington Street. (The Jersey Central Line) where coal business people were and the ice house. A lot of old places. Some are still there. Where Hammonton News press is, that was right by the tracks.

Q: How about all the buses that used to come?

A: Oh. thousands. I think they had 40 thousand people here at one time.

Q: So the 16th of July was a very big day ..

A: A big day in Hammonton. Hammonton and surroundings. They all supported the big processions and the good times, big carnivals, BIG carnivals.

Q: Would you say that the town stopped for the 16th of July.

A: It didn't stop but it slowed down after. It came almost to a stop. They still celebrate it. At one time I think that they had about 40,000 people down here at one time. You couldn't find a parking space within a mile of the carnival grounds. Nothing around. Everything was tied up.

Q: What did you do when you went to the carnival? What did you used to do?

A: We would look around, that's all. We only had a nickel to spend.

Q: Did you buy stuff?

A: Oh. You walked around and you walked around. You couldn't spend more than five cents. That's all you had. You might buy a hot dog or an ice cream cone. Then you went home.

Q: What did you spend your five cents on?

A: On ice cream. I never paid anything to see any carnival parts. I didn't have the money. I had nothing at all. I didn't earn anything until I was eighteen, twenty years old. I used to go pick wild huckleberries in the swamps to make a quarter to spend. That's it. Nobody--we never got a penny from my family. To pick. We got bread and not butter but bread. We got bread to eat. That's it.

Q: How about when President Reagan came to town. Where you here?

A: Yes. We saw him. I was standing on Central Ave. about twenty feet away from him. There was a big crowd. Never in my life will I see that crowd back.

Q: Was that about the same type of crowd that you saw at the 16th of July or was this a bigger crowd?

A: I think it was bigger. More congested. Everybody wanted to see the president. It was a big affair. We saw him close within ten feet of him. He had to go by me. I was standing on Central Avenue near Bellevue.

Q: Was that by the railroad station?

A: By the town at Central Avenue and Twelfth Street.

Q: Where the bank was?

A: Yes.

Q: Today that is where the Wells Fargo Bank is?

A: Yes. It used to be Peoples Bank, the name. Now it is Wells Fargo. Boardwalk, yes, but the real name was Peoples Bank.

Q: Any favorite place in Hammonton that is not there, any buildings or things?

A: Ranere's Chevrolet place is not there anymore.

Q: Where was that?

A: On Central Avenue and Bellevue.

Q: So is that like behind Varga's Drug?

A: Yes. That was in the back of Varga's. There was a big repair shop. From Bellevue Avenue to Central Avenue in the back of the bank. They used to repair cars and sell Chevrolets.

Q: It is true that they parked the new cars out on Central Ave.

A: Not the new ones. That is where they parked repair cars. I had to pay one dollar fine because I parked there to get my car fixed. I told him I wanted to fix the car. When I come out illegal parked vehicle .

Q: That is when the town had parking meters?

A: Yes. Parking meters. It ran out. I had to pay \$1.00 fine for me to go and tell them the car is here to get fixed.

Q: Do you remember how much the parking meter was? Was it a penny?

A: I think it was a nickel, 5 cents. Then I think they jumped it to a dime. Finally they got rid of them. That was it.

Q: Philip, do you remember your mother's maiden name?

A: Yes. Vincenza Chiarenza.

Q: She was born in Sicily. Is that correct? In Catania?

A: Yes. The outskirts of Catania. That is like we would say Atlantic City and somebody is in Cologne. She was out in the country. Catania would be the city closest to the country.

Q: She was born around April 6, 1896?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any idea how many brothers and sisters your mother had?

A: No. But enough.

Q: Are you in touch with any aunts or uncles?

A: No. Not any more. They are gone. They all died off. None of them are here in the country.

Q: They were all in Italy, Sicily?

A: Yes.

Q: Was your mother a Catholic?

A: Yes.

Q: What church did she attend?

A: St. Joe's here in Hammonton, here. I don't know what church in Italy.

Q: Did your mother ever work outside the home before or after marriage, only on the farm?

A: Only on the farm.

Q: Was your mother married before or after your father, after? She had another marriage right?

A: After my father died, she remarried. We did not have anywhere to go. This way we had a home. The home is 120 years old now.

Q: That was in Elm. Then you moved to Hammonton?

A: Yes. We lost the home in Elm. Then we moved to Hammonton. The Hammonton home is 120 years old now.

Q: You don't know anything about your mother's ancestors in Italy.

A: I didn't associate with my aunt's and uncles. We only associated us kids with the two grandmothers and two grandfathers.

Q: How was your mother's health? Was it good?

A: It was good at one time, yeah.

Q: She passed in 1985?

A: In 1986 right here in Hammonton at Kessler Hospital.

Q: She died of heart failure. Is that correct?

A: I think that is what the doctor was saying.

Q: She is buried in Oak Grove?

A: Oak Grove Cemetery. The whole family is there.

Q: What is your father's full name?

A: Salvatore Barbagallo as far as I know. I don't know if he had a middle name.

Q: Did he have a nick-name do you know?

A: They used to call him Sabatori. That is Italian for Salvatore.

Q: Your father was born in Sicily.

A: Yes. In the outskirts of Catania.

Q: About the same area where your mother was born?

A: Yes.

Q: He was born in 1890. Is that correct?

A: I think it is, yes. He was here in America when the First World War broke out and went back to Italy to fight.

Q: That is an interesting story. Your father was forced to go back to Italy? Is that correct?

A: So he could get back to Italy again. If he didn't go back, he would lose the right to return to Italy in the future.

Q: They were going to put some of your grandparents in jail if he did not go to fight?

A: I don't know if that would be the problem but he had to go back. In order to go back to Italy he had to go back to fight for Italy. They he came back again here.

Q: Do we have any idea when your father came to America?

A: No. I don't know the exact date.

Q: From the photographs of your father he was a very nice looking guy. He had a nice mustache.

A: Yes. He was neat. He was well groomed.

Q: He had brothers and sisters. He came from a very large family.

A: Yes. They all had large families there.

Q: Are you in touch with any of the aunts and uncles from Italy?

A: No. No more now. I was in touch when my mother was living. I used to write the addresses for her to send letters back to her family.

Q: Up to 1986 you were in contact? After that your mom passed away.

A: Yes. She passed away and everything came to an end.

Q: Do you have any idea what schools your father went to or what grade he finished?

A: No. I don't think he went to school in them days. My mother went to third grade school. That is how she learned how to read and write.

Q: Your father went to St. Joe's church and he was Catholic? Is that correct?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: You used to live over in Elm and then come to church.

A: Yes. Not every day. 16th of July all the time.

Q: Did your father work in the Winslow Brick Yard? He worked there until he passed away, 1931.

A: Yes. He also worked in the cranberry bogs in Elm. Miller Cranberry Bogs in Elm.

Q: So, you used to work there also.

A: Yes.

Q: Your father was never married before he married your mother?

A: Not that I know of.

Q: Your father was in the military.

A: Yes.

Q: But he went back to fight for Italy in the first world war. He was in the Italian army.

A: Army. Yes.

Q: He got captured by the Austrians and he was a prisoner of war.

A: Whatever it was. Whoever captured him. The reason he had to go back to Italy to fight because if he didn't go back to Italy and fight he was never allowed to get back to Italy and he wanted to get back to his families. He went and fought for Italy.

SON: We have citizenship papers for grandmom, for your mother but not for your father.

PHILIP: No. My father never got his papers. He passed away before he got his citizenship papers.

Q: Your father's health was good up until 1931?

A: Yes.

Q: In 1930 your father took the whole family back to Sicily so you could meet your grandparents.

A: Yes. We all went, 9 day trip across the water.

Q: There was your mother, your father, your older brother Nick, yourself, Philip, your younger brothers John and your baby sister, Sarah, two years old.

A: yes

Q: You spent about 6 months in Sicily?

A: Six months back and forth. After you spend five and a half months you had to take the trip.

Q: So your father came back from Sicily, went back to work and sometime in late summer, early fall he passed away in 1931.

A: Yes.

Q: We think it was pneumonia.

A: I think so.

Q: He is also buried in Oak Grove.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any idea how your parents met and fell in love?

A: No. I wasn't there.

Q: Did your mom like to cook?

A: Yes. Very good cook and a baker. She baked bread.

Q: Do you think her favorite meal was beans and macaroni?

A: Yes. That is what we ate.

Q: Is it true you told me that all the food that was grown on the farm your mom would cook into different meals for you?

A: Yes.

Q: So you could have all kinds of food that was available from the farm?

A: We had chickens, we had pork we raised. We didn't buy it. Never bought it. Every year pork and chickens, wild, chickens would graze.

Q: You never had milk then as a kid?

A: No. We never had milk. We had canned milk that you bought (condensed milk whatever it is. I don't know if they have it anymore).

Q: You didn't have a cow that to milk for milk. Milk was a special drink.

A: No. We didn't have it but we had a neighbor once in awhile would give us a glass full. They had a cow but they had a bigger family than our family. They raised a cow.

Q: Which neighbor was that, do you know?

A: The Grasso family.

Q: Where did they live?

A: Flemington Pike in Elm.

Q: When you came to Hammonton when you were around nine years old did you have milk then?

A: Yes. We had milk here, yes. We did not have it in Elm. In fifth grade, I'm thirteen years old.

Q: Did you father have a garden or did he farm also?

A: Farmed.

Q: He worked at the brick yard had a farm and he worked in the bogs?

A: Yes. Cranberry season he would help harvest it.

Q: As for inheriting traits it looks like you inherited more traits from your mom because you knew your mom longer. You were only nine years old when your father was alive?

A: Yes.

Q: Which parent do you resemble the most, like your mom?

A: I have no idea.

Q: Or a mix, your mom and dad?

A: Yes. Mixed, both.

Q: What do you think was the greatest tragedy for your mother?

A: The death of my father. It just pulled us all apart.

Q: He was the love of her life.

Q: So Sarah died in 1931 also?

A: Yes. The same year or 1932.

Q: Philip, your mother had four children, three boys and a girl? The oldest boy was Nick, you were second as Philip, John was the third and Sarah was the baby.

A: Yes.

Q: Your brothers and sisters looked like your mother and father, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Tell me about the jobs you had when you were working, maybe when you started working on the farms.

A: I worked on a farm, our farm until we lost it and then after I grew up I worked for all different farmers.

Q: During the second World War, who did you work for because you were exempt from service to work on the farm.

A: Yes. I worked for our farm and I worked for the Rigolizzo's orchard farms which was on Cemetery avenue which is what is the name of that town there, on Cemetery Ave. off of third street. The settlement over there. That is where the farm was, big farm peaches were there.

Q: Your brother Nick and your brother John were drafted and went to war?

A: Yes. They were drafted and I was exempt because I had my own farm and my mother to take of. My father had been gone, he passed away.

Q: So you worked on the farms when the war ended did you still work on the farms, 1945, 1946?

A: Yeah. I did it for a year or two then I got a job. I went on construction work. I did construction work on highways and roadways. Then I went to Whitehall.

Q: Who did you work for on construction?

A: I worked for construction companies. Bancheri Construction Company.

Q: You worked at Bancheri for a long time then?

A: Yes. I also worked for the Abbotts Dairies until the milk delivery went out of business.

Q: How many milk companies were there in Hammonton at that time?

A: There were five.

Q: Do you remember who they were?

A: Yes. Abbotts, Sealtest, Mazzagatti – then on Bellevue Avenue there was a milk company. I just can't think right night. Sippy. There were five milk companies in Hammonton at one time.

Q: You all delivered milk to Hammonton and other places.

A: Hammonton and the surrounding areas, Folsom, Winslow, as far as Waterford.

Q: How long did you work as a milkman?

A: I can't remember, about nine or ten years and then that faded because the milk business went out. They use to controll the milk prices. Chain stores got the milk at prices and sold it to get you in the stores so you could buy cigarettes and bread and it knocked all the milk business out of business.

Q: So you went to Trenton that time to get your GED, right?

A: Yes. I took three days of tests.

Q: And you passed?

A: I got my certificate and went to work at Whitehall.

Q: How many years did you work for Whitehall? Do you remember?

A: About fifteen or sixteen years.

Q: So you worked there about fifteen or sixteen years and then you had a heart attack, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Then you had open heart surgery?

A: Yes. I had open heart surgery and retired before I had my heart attack. I had my heart attack in Chiofalo and Mitrovic's office. My mother was the patient and I had the heart attack.

Q: Did you retire from Whitehall? Do you get a pension from Whitehall?

A: Yes. Sort of, yes. I got a cash settlement.

Q: Were you 62 when they closed down?

A: No. I was 65 when I retired.

Q: I was thinking that you were collecting social security early. That is what I was thinking of.

A I was sixty-five.

Q: In 1987 you collected social security at 65. What did you do after that?

A: I just did a little bit of farm work here on my farm and helped some of the other farmers. I pruned peaches. I worked all through the winter pruning peaches.

Q: Isn't that how you made extra money? You used to prune peaches all winter long when there were a lot of peaches in Hammonton you used to prune them?

A: Yes.

Q: That is how you made ends meet?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you used to work on Russell Clark's farm too?

A: Yes. I started there before Russell Clark was born. Mr. & Mrs. Macri used to own the farm.

Q: That was Russell's grandmother and grandfather?

A: Grandmother and grandfather.

Q: You have known Russell for 80 years, since Russell was born?

A: Many, many years, since Russell was born is right. I'm still good friends with Russell. We meet every other day around the area.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to tell me before we end this?

A: You have to ask me questions and I should answer alright.

SON: After he retired he did do some traveling. He went with my uncle John who was the instigator usually. They went to Florida, Disney World. They went to Canada.

A: (Phil) I went to Canada, Disney World since then.

Q: But is it true that you have never flown on an airplane?

A: Never flew on an airplane. I remember when Central Jersey and Camden had an airplane. I used to go to Philly. I used to watch them. It was a single engine plane.

Q: Is it true when you went to Sicily that you got on the famous Blue Comet? You went to New York?

A: Yes. Went to New York, came back to Hammonton on the Blue Comet. That was a beautiful train.

Q: What do you remember about the train ride, anything?

A: Nice ride. It was nice. All blue seats and pretty, beautiful train.

Q: Let's talk about your trip to Italy when you were nine years old or somewhere around there.

A: It was rough. Nine day rough.

Q: Tell me about when your mother thought you fell overboard. You were just wandering the boat.

A: We were in Gibraltar at the time. The boat had anchored there and it stayed there half a day or so, whatever it was. When they got ready to go they started to go and the inspector didn't get there and they had to stop the boat for the inspector to get back on. My mother said at that time she had been told that when the boat blows its whistle for something like that, it is a disaster. But she didn't know they stopped the boat to let the inspector on the ship to inspect the ship. She couldn't find me. I was upstairs looking over the rail but she couldn't find me. She went on a fainting spell I think. They finally located me and I was alright. I was upstairs.

Q: That was about 1930?

A: Yes.

Q: So, is there any other stories you want to tell me about traveling?

A: On the horse and buggy when we went to my grandparents home in Sicily. There was a lady. We got off of the big boat. We had to get to Sicily. There was no big port in Sicily.

Q: Do you remember if you went to Messina?

A: We might of went to Messina but I didn't know too much about the towns there. All I know we lived in Sicily. It was in the Catania area.

Q: Was it a horse and buggy ride to get to your grandparents?

A: A horse and buggy. After we got off the big boat that took us to Italy, we had to go from Italy to Sicily by ferry boat. Then we got on a horse and buggy. We got to my grandmothers late at night from all afternoon horse and buggy ride to get to where we had to go. A little outside town of Catania, a little settlement. I recall coming back after

we got off the boat and started back from New York. Coming home and we came back to our home that was along the railroad in Elm from the Blue Comet. My cousins and everybody was waiting on the porch. My cousin got in his car and come to Hammonton. He beat us to Hammonton. He made a lot of dust on the road.

Q: What road did you live on in Elm?

A: Flemington Pike.

Q: All the way down the end where the Tuckahoe Sod Farm is. Is that correct?

A: Yes. And that is Flemington Pike and Union Rd. that comes back to route 206 in Hammonton.

Q: Anything else you can remember? You rode the Blue Comet twice. That was a thrill, steam ship was a thrill.

A: The steam ship was sickening because I was down in a hole all the time.

Q: What was the first car you owned?

A: First car? First car model A Ford.

Q: Did you court your wife in a model A Ford? Is that what you drove up to Atco?

A: No. I improved to a '36 Chevy.

Q: So that had to be in the late 40's, right?

A: Yes.

Q: When did you get married?

A: 1947.

Q: Your son Phillip was born in 1949?

A: Yes. 1949.

Q: You had a pretty new car then. You were a rich guy. A ten year old car.

A: Yes. They were all used cars. I bought one new car, 1988 Buick that I am still running. Twenty seven years I've owned that car.

Q: Is there anything else you want to tell me? Was this hard for you to do or is it easy?

A: It's easy. I can explain some. Sometimes I get confused..

Q: Didn't you say you used to go, when your cousins would all come down, you used to go to all the bars in Elm.

A: In the old days everybody.... We had a lot of local bars like in Elm. I think there was three of them. Ain't nothing there now. Old people used to play cards or bocci balls.

The bocci balls, yeah and fingers. They got along.

Q: For a glass of beer, right?

A: For a glass of beer, yeah.

Q: You used to play Boston second.

A: Boston, second. Then everybody had a crack at it.

Q: What was the name of the bar, you know? There was about two or three bars.

A: Yes. The Columbia here in Hammonton, the old Columbia Bar.

Q: That was the Columbia Bar on West End Ave.?

A: Yes. Up around Waterford there was one, Amadeus in Waterford and that is about it.

Q: I saw a picture which I actually had helped restore. It had you and Uncle Nick. You were all in the bar. It is a big picture of everybody. Your cousins.

A: We didn't go too much. On the weekend maybe, on a good day.

Interviewed by Michael Caffrey, January 19, 2016

Transcribed by Carol Effinger, May, 2016

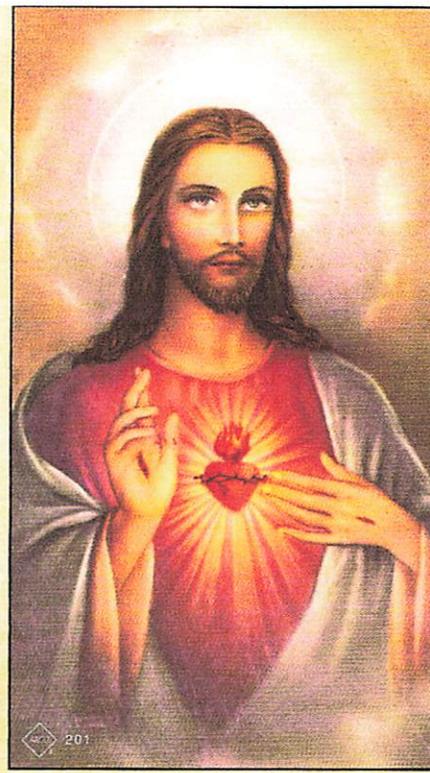
In Loving Memory



Philip L. Barbagallo
Nov 19, 1922 - Aug 4, 2017

I'd like the memory of me
to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow
of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo
whispering softly down the ways,
of happy times and laughing
times and bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those
who grieve, to dry before the sun.
Of happy memories that I leave
when life is done

Marinella Funeral Home, Inc.
Hammonton, NJ
(609)561-1311



Philip L. Barbagallo



Philip L. Barbagallo, 94, of Hammonton, died peacefully Friday, August 4, 2017, at home with his family by his side.

Born in Elm, he was a lifelong area resident. He worked many years ago for Bancheri Construction, with Abbott's Dairy for 10 years, and retired from Whitehall Labs after 16 years of service, although he was a farmer at heart. He especially loved his favorite Fig Trees and spent many years helping Russell Clark on his farm. He was a member of the Never There Gun Club, enjoyed playing cards at the Canoe Club and Nutrient Center in Hammonton.

He was predeceased by his wife, Jean (nee Panchiello); parents, Salvatore and Vincenza Barbagallo; brothers, Nicholas and John, and sister, Sara Barbagallo. He is survived by his children, Philip S. (Barbara) of Hammonton, Donald (Mary) of Cherry Hill, Michael (Meryl) of Sewell, and Karen Berenato (Domenic) of Hammonton; his eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend his viewing today, Wednesday, August 9, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel Parish - St. Joseph Church, Third and French Streets, Hammonton, with a Mass of Christian Burial at 11 a.m. Burial will follow at Oak Grove Cemetery, 500 N. White Horse Pike, Hammonton, NJ.

Donations may be made to the American Diabetes Association Philadelphia, Pa., office 150 Monument Rd., Suite 100, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004.
Arrangements made by the Marinella Funeral Home.

