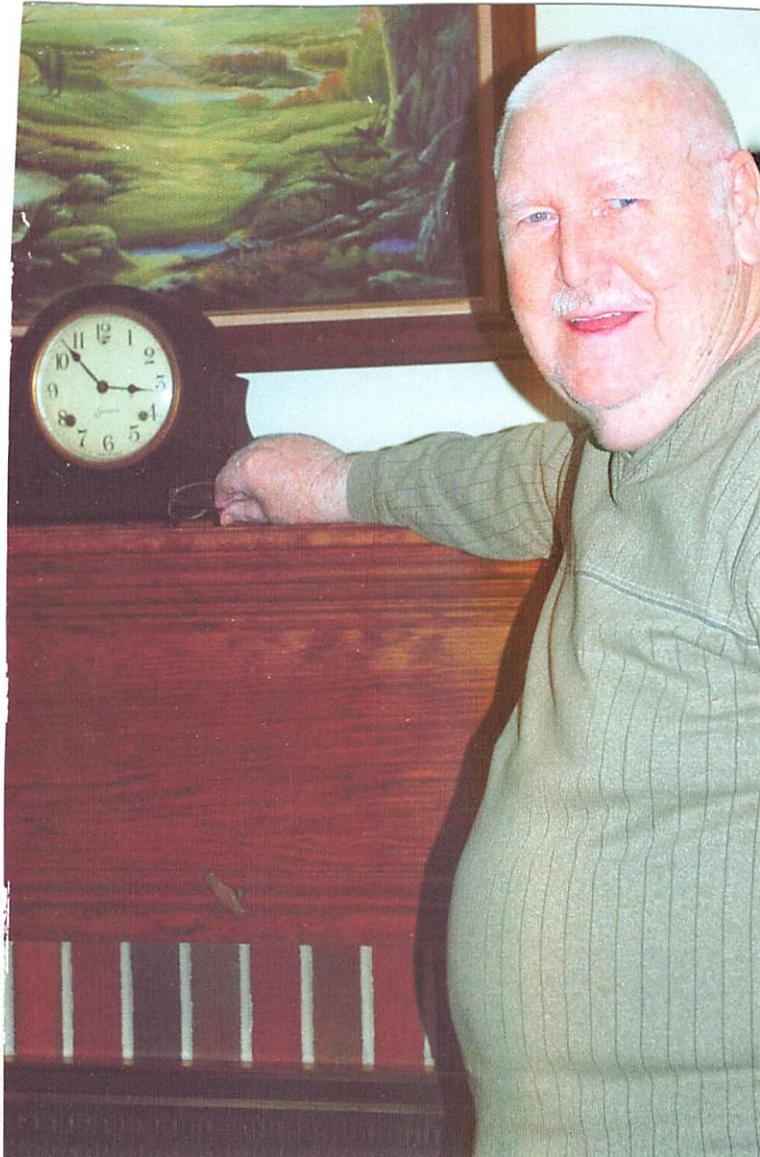


AN INTERVIEW WITH
ROBERT WETHERBEE



MARCH 28, 2011

PROVIDED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HAMMONTON

INTERVIEWED BY: MARY JO PERRONE
TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY JO PERRONE

THE FOLLOWING IS AN INTERVIEW WITH
ROBERT WETHERBEE

Recorded on March 28, 2011, for the benefit
Of the Historical Society of Hammonton

The interview was conducted by:

Mary Jo Perrone

It was transcribed by:

Mary Jo Perrone

ROBERT WETHERBEE

March 28th, 2011

Interviewer: Mary Jo Perrone

Q. May I have your full first name?

A. Robert Lee Wetherbee

Q. Your address

A. 5 North Liberty St. Hammonton, NJ

Q. Your date of birth

A. January 23, 1930

Q. Have you ever been married, Mr. Wetherbee

A. Yes, I was married twice

Q. And their names

A. My first wife's name was Helen Chavis

Q. Was she from Hammonton?

A. No she was from Orange Burg South Carolina

Q. And your second wife

A. Second wife's name was Catherine Gantner
And she was from Elwood, NJ

Q. And do you have any Children

A. I have one daughter by my first wife. Her name is Debra Eileen

Q. Does she live around here?

A. She lives in West Mount New Jersey

Q. What was your mother's name .Her maiden name and her first name?

A. Her first name was Mildred and her maiden name was Kerstead

Q. Where was she from?

A. She was born somewhere in North Jersey, I believe in East Orange. I would have to check on that, I believe it was East Orange

Q .Would you like to tell us a little about your mother while we are talking about her?

A. Yes, my mother was the third child in her family, she had an older brother and an older sister, and when my mother was just a baby, she was put in an orphanage

And not long after that she was put out for adoption and her real mother came back after her about two or three month after she was put in there and the agency would not tell her real mother the names of the people that she was put out for adoption and my mother never saw her again in her life time, but she did make contact with and became friendly with her sister and her brother, but that was about 50 years after she was put in the agency.

Q. What year was your mother born?

A. My mother was born in 1897

Q. And she passed away when at what age

A. At the age of 95 and she died in 1992

Q. Your mother had other brothers and sisters, did they stay together or were they adopted out too?

A. No they stayed together with the mother

Q. Did you ever see your mother's brother and sister? Did you ever meet them?

A. No because when my mother found her brother and sister. Her brother died about two to three years later and I never met him, but I did meet my aunt, my mothers sister She came down to stay with us for an extended period of time when we lived in town at the apartment at 225 Bellevue Ave. She had a daughter and years later her daughter lived in Florida and was an Artist and I used to go down and stay with her and her husband and my sister would go down and stay with her. We got very friendly with our cousin. They were from North Jersey and they had moved to Florida

Q. Is there anything else you want to tell us about your mother? What did she look like? Was she

A. My mother was a blonde and natural blonde. She had clipping of her hair in an envelope and they were pure blonde

Q Was she tall?

A.. My mother was about 5'5" and she was on the heavy side.....an interesting thing, when she about 70 she went to weight watchers and lost 25 pounds and kept it off for the rest of her life.

Q. Did she work or was she a home maker?

A. Mostly she was a home maker...but she did get a job at Kessler. But they laid her off because she was too slow on the sewing machine. Which when I told that to other people they said they mother had the same problem. In those days to work for Kessler, you had to be very fast on the machine or they figured they could replace you with someone fast. Everything was timed in those days in making cloths for Kessler. How many stitches could you do in a day so they just laid my mother off...but my mother was a great home maker and I mean you could give her a couple of pounds of ground beef, some potatoes and carrot and she could make a great meal of that In those days in the thirtys that I remember. I would go to Luccas bakery and get three loafs of Italian bread for a quarter.

They were 10 cents a loaf, but when you bought three loafs you got three for a quarter. With Italian bread some carrots, potatoes and some meat you my mother made great meals and she was also a great baker, pie, cake

Q. What was her specialty? You must have remember one of them

A. Coconut custard pie, coconut custard pie and coconut white cake, we liked coconut in our family and my mother was a great cook. When she had the money. Things were very tight in the 30's.....I grew up in the 30's and I can remember back to 1935 so 1936, 37, 38, 39, 40 when times were really rough, before world war two we always got along some how and my brother was 15 years old when my father died and he made enough money to hold the family together ...we were on welfare, in those days it was called relief and we would get grocery or small amount of money and with what my brother made. We got along.

Q. Let's talk a little bit about your father what was your father's full name

A. My fathers name was Alexander Edwin Wetherbee. He was named after his grandfather Alexander Edwin Drake. When he was young, he and his brother Frank, they were singers and they sang in department stores and played the piano and sold sheet music .they also played in theaters before they had sound and as they grew older. They got

Into the landscaping business. They sold evergreens and plotted out houses and planted the evergreen. I remember the books around the house. Landscaping books. We had four or

five around the house. It showed plots of layouts in front of the house on how you would plant different kinds of plants. And I remember my uncle and father talking about this kind of bush and that kind of bush. I still don't know the difference between a Christmas tree and an evergreen. but that was what my father did for a business with my uncle Frank Wetherbee

Q. When did your father pass away?

A. My father passed away in 1934 of TB and he was, for awhile when I was about four or five years old, he was in the TB hospital down in Northfield and now it belongs to the county of Atlantic and they have offices in there.

Q. He must have been quite young when he passed away?

A. My father was 49 or 50 years old when he died. He got in a automobile accident out on Pleasant Mills Road near Nesco and in those days the glass shattered. It was not like the safety glass like today and they claimed he inhaled scattered glass into his lungs and that's what started his TB, but of course, by the time my father died, I was only about 4 or 5 years old and I was actually I think I was 4 1/2 when he died, so I only remember my father two times, once when I went down to the TB Hospital in Northfield he came outside with my mother and I for about an hour or two, then we went back and caught the bus back to Hammonton and then another time was at home, I think it was right before he died, I remember him being there...but my brother and my sister, being older then, they remember their father..

Q. I did get your brothers name. Alex, Charles and Robert. but you had a sister also.?

A. I had a sister Elaine and a sister Vivian

Q. Were you born at home, or in a hospital?

A. I and all my brothers and sisters were born at home and every one of us had Dr. Esposito the delivering doctor. Everyone of us had Dr. Esposito

Q. As a child you said you lived in a couple of different places. The question is where did you live as a child...and did you always lived in Hammonton?

A. Yes

Q. And you had a few different homes? Is there one you remember the most?

A. Probably. The one I remember the most interesting. I would say one of the most interesting was when I lived on the corner of French and Tilton. It was right across the Street from

the Carnival grounds and at the time I was like around 5,6,7 years old and we would go when they were setting up the carnival. I would go over there with a friend of mine and we would carry water for the animals and we would get passes and tickets to different shows. We would say. If you give us a pass we will carry a bucket of water to the animals. So we would go all the way to our house. get a bucket of water. go all the way back give it to an animal and they would give us a pass for a different side show and for a ride at the carnival. and in those days we would have like 5 carnivals and two or three circus in a year. It's not like it is today where there is only one carnival and maybe one circus. I don't even know if they have circuses anymore. but in those days five carnivals and 5 circus's were normal....

Q. So that was a big thing back then?

A. Yes big entertainment, many of a wonderful night would be spend at the carnival. Because at the beginning of my time, going there they didn't charge an entrance fee. Later they started blocking it all off and you had to pay an entrance fee. Well when they started that, we would sneak in. One interesting thing. A friend of mine name Vincent Repa who I grow up with, and one of my best friends, after the carnival would leave and Saturday would come and we would wanted to go to the movies. We would get a rake and go over to the carnival grounds and would rake the carnival grounds and we would find all kinds of money. Well, the movies were only 10 cents and candy was a nickel and the only thing they had in the theater was a candy machine. You would put a nickel in, pull the lever and you got the kind of candy you wanted.....so we would go rake on Saturday morning. Make thirty five or forty cents and then we would have enough to go to the movies and in those days we would see a cow boy show. a main feature. and a serial. Buck Rodgers.....or Flash Gordon, the Lone Ranger had a serial with thirteen chapters and we would never miss a Saturday. We always, always went to the movies on Saturday

Q. Where was the Movie Theater?

A. At the corner of Third and Bellevue that later became the Colasurdo Building on that corner that was re-vamp and re-build as of this year 2011. its now some type of a banking building

Q. Do you remember the people that worked in there in the movie theater?

A. I remember every one of them.

Q. Can you give me there names?

A. Well, first of all it was owned by Mr. Frank.....Mr. Frank had a top manager named Mr. Romgo. Dominick Romgo and Floyd Fogletto was the clean-up man Dominick ran all the ushers in those days you had ushers when you came in they had little flash lights

and they would take you down and help you get a seat not everybody came at the beginning of a show and in those days if you had to get seated by somebody and some other people that worked in there was a Pinto he was the projectionist I can't remember off hand his first name and there was even my brother Alex worked in there for a short whileand there was a Bizell.....these were all ushers .it was a pretty good job. In those day about thirty cents a hour and they would work four or five hours, but I'm going back to the mid-thirty's and even 30 cents and hour was good money, because if you worked on a farm, you could get 10, 20, 30 cents and hour. If you were skilled you got 30 cents if not you would get 10 , 20 cents and hour working on a farm.

Q. While we are on the subject of down town, tell me a little more about what you remember about the down town. Was there a sub-shop. a soda shop, drug store.

A. We had the greatest entertainment store there was. It was called the sweet shop, and as young people the older boys kept out the younger boys until we graduated eighth grade. And then we graduated eighth grade and then they allowed us to come in and dance. What we had in those days was a jukebox .the jukebox was a nickel. And we would go in, and they would have milk shakes and ice cream and we would go in the back room and dance to this jukebox. I remember when we graduated eight grade all us boys we thought we were pretty tough we were going to fight the older boys. But on graduation night we all got together and we walked in the sweet shop together probably about 10 of us and we decided we were going in the sweet shop and that was it.. and we went in until we graduated high school.. The sweet shop was just exactly like in Happy Days on TV. All the kids went there and they had a big back room, they had a long hall and one group was on one side, the other group on the other side and like four or five or six kids from each group would hang out with their group and when they danced .they would dance on the side .it's like the old story. Everyone has a gang today. ...well in those days we had our own little group. you could call them gangs . and they were wonderful days ...we would come out.....if we went to a movie on Saturday night. We got out of the movies 8 or 9 o'clock we would go into the sweet shop for about an hour .had some ice cream.milk shake then we would go home.after we danced a little bit. It was a wonderful place. I remember who would run it.It was Jennie Bruno had the place.

Q. What else was down the street.....the five and ten?

A. Five and ten was a big store then.next to it was Millers Department Store and on the other side of it was Malinsky Department store and on the other side of that there was a shoe store.....I can't think of the name. of it was a branch store and .
Across the street PAGE 6

was Brit:a Brothers shoes they had and A&P on the corner was ~~Godfrey~~ Drug Store ..every Friday and Saturday Night in the 30's and 40's the street was full of people, You could hardly walk the sidewalk, because everyone would come to town Friday and Saturday Night.myself and a friend of mine would sell newspaper on Friday and Saturday Night and made a lot of money .I had jobs in townI worked for a grocery store.....a restaurant washing dishes and I worked in a gas station....quite a bit. I worked for Austin Perrone he had a gas station. I'd pump gas and change oil and wash cars .Every Saturday I would work all morning washing cars and I would get tips from the people from the people and also got paid working hourly washing the cars. I got hourly salary plus tips. .and I would wash the cars for Mr. Kessler. William Kessler and when I got my license after I would wash the car.....Austin would let me drive it over the Kessler Factory and they would give me a tip and I would walk back...it was only about three blocks in those days everyone walked and no one thought anything of it.. ..but I always wanted to drive Mr. Kessler.because he had Big Chrysler and a Big Cadillac and they were rare cars in ~~those~~ days and also he had money to buy new cars..so not only were you driving a big beautiful car you were also driving a new car that was like a feather in your cap, when you were seventeen years old .you could say I drove Mr. Kessler's car. Mr Kessler was a nice gentlemen and he always had a tip,fifteen,twenty cents maybe a quarter .he had an African American chauffeur and it was very interesting walking into the factory and say I brought the car back and someone would come down and give me fifteen or twenty cent tip and I would give then the keys and the car would be serviced on Saturday, change oil filter and washed. Then they had the car for the whole week, they didn't need any service for the week then the next Saturday we would have the car again.

Q. Where did you go to school?

A. I started right in Hammonton; the little red school house is still there after all these years.my mother . took me there when I was four years old. I started kindergarten. There was a Miss Wood and a Miss Loblely and my mother took me there and I started crying and I remember they gave me a little man on a motorcycle.it was made out of rubber and I stopped crying about an hour hour and one half later, my mother came and looked in the window. They had a window on the door and when I saw my mother I started crying again...I wanted to go home, but I didn't. I stayed and I went thru kindergarten I had a good time. I remember lot of the people I went to school with .They were in my kindergarten class...

Q. Then after you left the kindergarten class where did you go then.What school?

A. I went across the hall to first grade

Q. How many grades were in that school? Do you remember? Yes. Up through second grade .and then you went over to the big building. Where they had

Third grade to eight grade. That building is now torn down, but the little red school next to St. Joe...which is now St Joe.....my old high school, the little red brick building is still there.

Q. . That's on Vine Street?

A. Yes on Vine Street. They called it Vine Street. Once in the front of the park.

Q. Then you went to Hammonton High School?

A. Then I went to Hammonton High School. When I was about 18 I went into the United States Army

Q. How long were you in the Army?

A. I was in the Army four and one half years. And I was a Korean War veteran. I got to Korea in the early part of the war. I went there in August in 1950 and the war started in June 25. I got there in August and I was there until April of 1952. I spent eighteen months in Korea.

Q. What did you do when you came out of Korea?

A. That's a very interesting story... Well I was about to get discharged and I ran across Gerald Colasurdo and Gerald asked me, Well he knew my family and he knew me, and he asked me what are you going to do, and I said I don't know. But I'm going to get out in a couple of weeks and he said come with me. He put his arm around me and he took me over to Mario Mendolia at the Nash Agency and he said to Mario , here is kid Wetherbee and he said he wants to sell cars.....I looked at Gerald and I had never said I wanted to sell cars, so Mario said if you want to sell cars you come in here when you get discharged and I break you in and I'll make a sales man out of you. .. so that's what happen, I got out June 15th ,1952 and I started selling cars for Mario Mendolia and the first car I sold. In those days they didn't have a lot of cars on the lot. You had to order the car they had like one or two cars on the show room or Mario had a demonstrator. but if someone bought a car, they order the car and you got it in about four or five weeks later. The first car I sold was in Long Beach Island and the Second car I sold was from Langhorn, Pa. and I got those through tips. I went to see the people and I sold them. And I worked for Mario for about a year and a half.

Q. Where was his place?

A. It was directly behind, Varga's Drug store on Third St... There was a little tiny store, it was called Jimmy the Cooks it had a little bar, restaurant ...behind that, there was a

garage and a gas station right on third street and there was a little used car lot right there. And then there was Delaurentis's home, so between Jimmy the Cooks and the Delaurentis's home there was a garage.....it had a couple of bays, so you could take cars in and service them and they also had a little show room where you could pull a car into and that's where I started in the car business. Then I got out of the car business for a while, and then I got back again and stayed for 40 years.

Q. Is that where you retired from?

No. I took up something new. I got out of the car business in 1987 and in 1988 I bought a big truck. They called it a tri-axle dump and I hauled sand and stone. And I did that for about five years.... There I was sixty-five years old. Running around with a bunch of twenty-five year old drivers and I was just a crazy and they were.

Q. And is that where you retired from?

A. No .I never retired.....I'm still working I'm 81 years old and I work for Atlantic County. I open the Welfare Building every morning and I see that the place is properly maintained and that order is kept. I wear a uniform and I like the job and as long as I can keep going, I'll keep going I believe it makes me feel pretty young. I had a lot of interesting jobs in-between .After I sold cars about a year or so, I worked for one year for Kerri Pipe and I was their first salesman. After one year they owed me five thousand dollars in commission and wanted to get paid they decided it was cheaper to fire me. they gave me two weeks pay and fired me..I went to a lawyer and he said all you have is a verbal contract, so you will never collect the five thousand dollars. Which was a terrific amount of money in 1953, in 1953 is when I worked for them and I worked one year for them. I was their first salesman .I went around and met their engineers and their contractors all over South Jersey and I knew when contracts were coming out for concrete pipe and I sold it to them.

Q. Let's go back and start talking about your grand-parents

A. I tell you my mother's side. My mother's side was the adopted side. That was Herbert Berry. He lived on line street and my grandmother was there and my Aunt Eleanor. My aunt Eleanor was a school teacher who had a very interesting career, in that she graduated high school in Hammonton about 1929, she got a job teaching school in Blue Anchor and the stipulation was she had to attend college. She was not college taught before she got the job. She got the job right out of high school. Her and a woman by the name of Betz who was a Hammonton family, and they got a job teaching school in that area, Blue Anchor and my aunt did get a degree and went on to teach until she was in

her late 60's and she finally quit, .so she had taught from the age like of 18 until the age of

63 or 65 then she quit.....I use to run across people every once in a while and they would tell me they were from Blue Anchor and I would think about their age and I would say.do you remember Miss Berry ? They would say "yes that was my teacher and I would, yes that was my Aunt. And a lot of people remember her from that area, the Blue Anchor area cause of all the years she taught. And then when she got married, she taught in Mt E.h. m

Q. That was your mothers...?

A. That was my mother's youngest sister

Q OK and how about your mothers father. Do you remember .You wouldn't remember your grandfather?

A. Yes Herbert Berry. Herbert Berry was a carpenter and when he came to Hammonton he bought a house across the street from Arena's on the White Horse Pike and after he bought the house something was wrong. I think there was a leak in part of the house and he went to the build^{er} and he said you sold me a house and I am very unhappy and the builder gave him all of his money back and he moved back and from that house. That's where my mother met my father.....My father was a hunter and he was walking thought the yard at the corner of Broadway and the White Horse Pike and where there is a shopping center now and there was a house there that my mother lived in and my father came through and she said he was all dressed up in hunting gear and had a gun and a couple of dogs with him and said have you seen any rabbits around and my mother said I didn't see any rabbits, but I said yes I did and got into a conversation with him and he started to leave. You should come back pretty often, because there are a lot of rabbits around here

Q Good pick up line

A and my mother ended up marrying him and it was a very good marriage because they really loved one another and they had five children and until my father died there was never any problems in the family , except that when my father got sick in the later part of his life he had TB and it got a little difficult, but there was some help from his brother Frank and his mother down on Central Ave they helped us out from time to time and we got along and it was a wonderful marriage

Q And how about your grandparents on your father's side

A That is a very long story because my grandmother was born Louisiana Drake now her father Alexander Edwin Drake was in the United States Army

Q Now this would be your great grandfather?

A Yes Alexander Edwin Drake is my great grandfather and where ever he was in the Army he would name he liked certain names and he named my grandmother Louisiana Not that she was born in Louisiana. He also named the other daughter Florida so we had Florida and Louisiana. They had four boys; one was named Charles, Edwin, Frank Drake Sam Drake and then the two girls Louisiana Drake and Florida Drake. So there was quite a family from this Colonel from the United States Army and for which we still have, my daughter has all kinds of papers from the Civil War era and one of them were signed my Secretary of War Stanton, because the orders that were given to my great- grandfather were official documents and we have many of them maybe forty or fifty of them. He started out in the Navy when he was a young boy he was in the Navy and as he got older, he transferred into the Army and I got a very interesting story about how he ended up getting married this Colonel Alexander Edwin Drake, but I think it is so long that

Q. So can you cut it shorter.....So this would be your great grandfather how he got married

A. That is right

Q And where was he from, first of all

A His family was originally from Kentucky but he was in the Navy. So when he was in Florida his commanding officer in the Navy was going to get married in Fort Augustin~~ne~~: in Florida which is a Spanish settlement. And so he took my great-grandfather, he was about 15, so he took him with him to the marriage. So when he got married my great-grandfather was there as a witness, because he was in the Navy. Seventeen years later he came back to visit the family, because he was friendly with the family in St Augustin~~ne~~. when he came back, he was in the Army. He gotten out of the Navy and now was a young officer in the Army, a Second Lieutenant in the Army and at that time he was roughly 30 maybe give or take a few years maybe 34, 35 years old well they had a daughter from that marriage who is now 17 years old, and he ended up courting her he was like 34 and she was 17 and he ended up marrying her, so in those days a lot of the marriages were arranged. , now the women that I am talking about, this Colonel Alexander Drake, she's buried on the White Horse Pike in Hammonton. Across from Ideal Manufacture company and there is a very large monument there and on it, it says Mary A. Drake which was her married name, her real name, her maiden name was Mary A Brush. She was half Spanish and the other half not. The Spanish people from St Augustin~~ne~~, Florida were quite educated, for the times. It was a big Spanish Colony, I believe St Augustin~~ne~~, Florida on the east coast was the first settlement in the United States on the eastern coast goes way back to the 1600 and we have

traced the family back in the Spanish side, to the year of 1410. They come from ~~Majorca~~ Majorca, off the coast of Spain so we have quite a history of Spanish ancestry

Q. Now how did they end up leaving here in Hammonton that she was buried here? So that will be your great-grandfather came to Hammonton?

A., they were living in Philadelphia and somehow my grandmother, their daughter Louisiana, met a Wetherbee from Hammonton, so the daughter Louisiana, got married to a Hammonton person and came to live in Hammonton then when her father Col. Drake died the mother came to live with their daughter Louisiana Weatherbee and of course they came to Hammonton in 1857 and they build a grist Mill and a saw mill down at the lake and a big home....the big home is still there, it's occupied by one of the daughters of Rocky Colasurdo from the country club I believe it's a daughter that is a lawyer,...the house has been redone a couple of times and it's a gigantic home and it was right there off of the stream that came off of the lake alongside of the house they had a grist mill and a saw mill and they came from Maine and they bought this house and, of course, the Drakes moved in there only through the fact that my grandmother was living there and married to a Wetherbee, her mother came from Philadelphia to move in with her when her husband died, Colonel Drake in Philadelphia, and a lot of people thought it was a Drake House, but it's not a Drake House it's the Weatherbee House.....

Q. Mr. Wetherbee, I spelled your name wrong and you just explained to me that the spelling of your name. Explain it to me again, please

A. Well. The name Wetherbee has nothing to do with the weather, it has to do with the sheep.....On the Coat of Arms it has three rams. And that's where it comes from. A ram is a wether and so the bee has something to do with the area that you come from, they come from Yorkshire in England and there is a town that is spelled exactly except it's spelled with an I instead of with an E which is the alternate spelling. Lots of names here in the United States have alternate spelling and so do mind. I think there is about 25 different ways in spelling Wetherbee. .

Q. So the Wetherbee's came here in what year?

A Approximately 1670-1680.They came here from Yorkshire area which is North England up near Scotland and they came to Dexter, Maine. ..They ended up in Dexter, Maine. For a while some of them came down to Massachusetts then they came back up to Dexter, Maine and then two brothers came to Hammonton, from Dexter, Maine in 1867 and one of the brother build a saw mill and a grist mill on the north side of the Hammonton Lake. And the other brother, on the corner of Central Ave and the White House Pike he had an evergreen farm. Raised evergreens and sold them, it's now a parking lot for the Hammonton Hospital Area, used to be Kessler Hospital so on the old lots maps of Hammonton, they showed where they lived right on the plots, they showed where they lived and so they have been in Hammonton since 1857. I'm trying to think off hand how many generations there have been since then...It was my great-grandfather

, my grandfather and my father, me and my brothers son. There are 5 generations. No one of my nephew have a son...so there are six generations of Wetherbee's .that have lived in this town.

Q. Do you know any other family that can go back that far? What other family can go back to 1857?

A. In the Hammonton book. It's a little book that the Historical Society had reprinted. They have some of the other family, but off hand I don't know anyone that can go back prior to 1857 that still have family here. I think there are some that came a year or two after that, which still have family here. My daughter has liens, dates, birth, and dates of marriages. When I look back at the family tree they have every bible name, every name you can think of. And on the Spanish side, we have the same thing Gonzales, Remoras, every Spanish name you can think of, because we have so many hits on Ancestry. Com, so we know their names and who they married, what year they were married, so our family tree is quite traceable. My daughter has been working on it for over thirty years. We have tons of papers, backing up, like the story of my great-grandmother going to see Abraham Lincoln.

Q Tell me that story.

A. When the Civil War started, my great-grandfather was already in the Army and he was already married. He wasn't married to long and his wife, my great-grandmother Mary who her middle name was America, Mary America Brush, then she married the Colonel Drake, but at that time in the beginning of the Civil War, Lincoln was president, she got an appointment to see Lincoln and she wanted to know why her husband had not been promoted for so many years. He had been in the Army for many , many years and he was still was a Lieutenant, he was a first Lieutenant, so she got to talk to Lincoln, and Lincoln was impressed that a women came to him and wanted to know why her husband was not promoted, when he had good service and had no problems, so Lincoln said he would look into it. Then he made a statement that my great-grandmother was well spoken and she knew what she was talking about that my great-grandfather had not been promoted, he made a note to Stanton, who was Secretary of War to look into on why he was not promoted. Eventually he was promoted, very shortly after Stanton looked into it and he was promoted two ranks, because he had such long longevity already he was not a young man when the Civil War started, I do not have his date of birth, but he died approximate 1896 and is buried in Philadelphia. They wrote this up about my great-grandmother going to visit Lincoln. We have the newspaper articles about this and Lincoln was very, very impressed about my great-grandmother. It was a lot easier to see the President in those days then it is today. After he was assassinated they tighten up a lot of things, but in those days you went over there and said I want to talk to the President and if he was free you could go right in to see him. If he wasn't free, you made an appointment and come back to see him. She made an appointment and of course, her husband wasn't around when she went. She went on her own .

I have pictures of her and my grandmother the two of them together , it was taking about 1900 and they both have long dresses and it is a very clear of both of them and my great-grandmother, died in 1925 She was buried in the Oak Grove cemetery on the White Horse Pike along with two of her sons a my Grandmother.. They are buried in the same plot. It's a very large monument but the kids have knocked the top off . I had the top for years, but I don't know where it is now . They never but it back on, but it is still was over seven feet high.

Q. Tell me a little about what who have seen change in Hammonton, from when you were a child. What was the biggest change.?

A.. I think the biggest chance was when I was young, they had about 10 clothing factories in town That kept this town alive, that they made clothing in the town. Someone would get a contract. They would open up a factory, they would operate for a couple of years they would run out of their contract, the factory would close for six months or a year then they would re-open again. The one that stayed open the longest was WB Kessler. He build a large business... Quick story. I was out in Colorado working one time . I was a manager of an auto agency in Colorado . I went to Nebraska to a store to buy a winter coat. I noticed they had WB Kessler clothing in there, Hammonton Park. I mentioned it to the clerk. The clerk said, just a minute and went in the back and got the owner of this department store and he said my clerk said you knew WB Kessler. I said yes, I used to wash his car and he said I met him and Morton Epstein, the son in law of WB Kessler. He said I met then in Chicago at a clothing convention and I took over the line of clothing The Hammonton Park Line. I said yes I noticed, that's why I mention it to the clerk, because here I am in Nebraska talking to a store owner about Hammonton Park Clothing which I think were not only nationwide, but I think they sold Hammonton Park Clothing, in Europe. That's the story I hear.. Hammonton Park Clothing was a very fine label . Here I am out in Nebraska, western Nebraska, I would have to look at a map. I was running a Buick Agency in a town called Sterling, Colorado, I was managing a store in Vineland, NJ and I wanted to make a change. I looked through an auto magazine and here was an application for a manager out in Colorado, so I sat down and wrote a letter, put my phone number and told them what I had done here in New Jersey as a manager. I got a phone call from an agency in Sterling, Colorado, for Chevy, Buick . He said I found your letter very interesting and he said if you come out I'll pay for your flight, and rent a car because they were about 100 miles north east of Denver. It's the only place you can land, I flew out and got the job and had to fly back to Vineland for about a month, my job started in September he said do you know why I hired you and I said no, This was after the interview. He said all other applicants had typed the resume and they all looked like they were taken out of a book. Yours was hand written and three pages. You explained to me how would train your own salesman and you worked on the floor instead of having a back office as a manager. Different things you wrote in the letter ,even before I saw you I had decided to hire you. So when I went out there and went into his office , that first day when I flew out I introduced myself, I said here is the plane ticket cost and this is going to cost me so much for the rental car and he sat right down and wrote out a check.

He said "I'll take you right down to the bank, it was Saturday morning and the bank was opened and they will cash the check for you" Then he interviewed me. That's how I went to Colorado, that's how I got to talk to someone in Nebraska about Kessler's suits.

Q. I have one last question to ask you .If you can go back to any person, dead or alive and talk to that person who would that person be?

A. I think with out hesitation I would say George Washington. I read quite a bit about the revolution war and George Washington got very little help from congress that's why they had the bad winters in Valley Forge . They did not have the proper clothing or food , the soldiers were not paid . The one battle that he fought and won, was the battle of Trenton. He came across the Delaware River from Pennsylvania and attacked the Prussians in Trenton, and he figured that they would be celebrating Christmas very thoroughly. That on Christmas day morning they would be hung over and he planned to take over Trenton, and he did. He captured 800 Prussians Soldiers where the elite of the soldiers in the United States at that time. Now when he captured 800 Prussians, you have to remember he also captured 800 rifles . He also captured cannons , he captured food, blankets, and in those days when you captured a prisoner, you dis-armed them, then you shipped them back where they came from and they were bound by honor, not to re-entry the war. But when Washington marched the prisoner a lot of them wanted to stay in the United State. They claimed that about 200 of them went into Pennsylvania and to the western part of Pennsylvania and that's where a lot of the Germans came from. Washington held together Army and also the idea of a country. When times could not get worse, the next day they got worse and George Washington certainly earned the title the Father of our Country...He is the greatest man in my life.

Q. What was it that you would tell him?

A. I would tell him that. I would ask him how did you ever get the fortitude to stick out the winters and the terrible time that your troops had with bleeding feet, no shoes, no cloths , no food, and no ammo. That was a miracle. A lot of people in New Jersey have no idea how important if he would have lost that battle. His troops were running out of there enlisting . They would run out on the 31st of December , this was the 25th of December when he captured all that stuff, a lot of the troop enlisted. They next day they went to Princeton and they won another battle. None could even compare to the hardships he had and what he went through to hold everything together. He not only held the Army together he was holding the revolution together on what he did on that Christmas Day. When he sent the troops back to Philadelphia about 600 of them were put on ships and were sent back in disgrace . No one had ever beating these Prussians troops. They were first class quality men He had caught them drunk and in bed at day break . The Colonel got killed , Washington Lost about three or four men and the Prussians lost about 30 men and the rest were captured. It a wonderful story