

**INTERVIEW WITH
STELLARO (GIACOBBE) JACOBS**

MAY 16, 2007

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

**INTERVIEW BY:
GRAYCE PITERA**

**TRANSCRIBED BY:
CAROL EFFINGER**



GIACOBBE STELLARIO

STELLARIO, GIACOBBE (JACOBS), (JAKE) 93 - a life long resident of Hammonton passed away on October 6, 2007, at Meadow View Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Williamstown. Stellario was 93 years of age. Stellario is predeceased by his wife of 59 years, Theresa. (Inferrera). He is also predeceased by his father, Frank Giacobbe; his mother, Mary Jacobs (Errera); his sister, Katherine Giraldo (Jacobs); sons-in-law, George Campione and Jefferson Clark. He is survived by his three daughters, Antoinette Campione, Maria Carpenter (David) and Ellen Giacobbe Clark. He is also survived, by five grandchildren; TeresaAnn DelRossi (Bill), George Campione, Michael, Campione, Stephen Polito (MokHee), Jefferson Clark (Courtney); five great-grandchildren and three great, great-grandchildren. Stellario graduated from Hammonton High School in 1931 and immediately joined the Philadelphia Philharmonic. He was a full time percussionist until 1934 at which time the Philharmonic became bankrupt. He continued his musical career on a part time basis in a dance band named "Jacobs and Cahill" from 1935 to 1940. Stellario worked from 1935 to 1941 in a series of jobs in the food industry; first as a state inspector in Swedesboro, then for Campbell's Soup Company and finally at the C & E Canning House in Folsom. From 1941 to 1946, Stellario worked at the Navy Yard in Philadelphia. In 1946, Stellario joined his long-time friend, Frank Bruno, at Bruno's Auto Parts where he remained, for the next 50 years. Stellario retired from Bruno's in 1996 at the age of 82. Over the years Stellario continued his love affair with music by playing in small dance bands during the 1950s and early 60s. In 1976, Stellario joined the Hammonton Centennial Band and joined the South Jersey Symphony in 1983. He played with the Symphony until 1989. Stellario was a longtime member of St. Martin de Porres RC Church where he served as usher for many years. Friends and family are invited to attend his viewing Tuesday 9:30am until 11:30am at the Carnesale Funeral Home, 202 S. Third St., Hammonton. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated 12:00pm in St. St. Martin de Porres RC Church, N. Egg Harbor Road, Hammonton. Entombment will follow in Greenmount Cemetery. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Compassionate Care Hospice, 600 Highland Drive, Suite 624, Westhampton, NJ 08060, or to the Hammonton Rescue Squad.

Published in The Press of Atlantic City on 10/7/2007.

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Interview on Stello Jacobs by Grayce Pitera

For the Hammonton Historical Society

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Stellaro Giacobbe 93 years old. He was born in Hammonton, New Jersey. He grew up in Hammonton all his life in the same house on Chew Rd. He was born at home.

As a young person he danced. Things were different then as far as entertainment. The families got together and the young children were included in the family gatherings. There were dances when he was in high school. The Italian Halloween was in February the night before Mardi Gras. He played the rumba. They dressed up. The women dressed up like women. Joe Ciliberti played the accordion and would go to different houses. Then would go from house to house picking up kids, people and would wind up at one house. They went as far as Oakland, New Jersey. They all took out food and drink and had a good time.

He was 27 when he got married. He married Theresa Inferrera who was born in Philadelphia. They would go to the movies, go for a ride. They did not have a chaparone. They went to the same school from the eighth grade. He was a little chubby then. His wife was very pretty. They got married on January 10, 1932 by the justice of the peace. Theresa was 28. He did not have a big wedding. No one from his family was there. He is a Catholic.

His mother was Mary Errera. She was born in Hammonton. His grandmother was born in Italy. His mother's father was Joseph Errera born in Italy.

When he went to school it was different then today. Kids came to school with paper soles in their shoes and they would freeze when it was cold in the winter time. They had to walk almost 2 miles to get a ride on a bus. I had to walk not quite 2 miles. I lived a stone's throw along side of these.

My teachers were Miss Ryan, Miss Mary Santora, Miss Malony. His family was not quite middle income. He went to ~~school~~, Magnolia school on Chew Rd. It had a stove in each corner in a three bedroom house. There were three heaters. Joe Pepper, John Franchetti, Frank Centrirono . In high school Donald Volpe (DR) Frank Bruno, Whippie , Mirose, Driscoll, .

In the summertime we picked raspberries, strawberries, blackberries on our farm. At 10 years old I would cultivate behind the horse with my grandfather. You would not catch kids doing that today. We had 5 acres and our grandmother and grandfather had 10. My grandfather would like me. We would go to the market on railroad avenue. After they go through he would buy him a cold ice cream from hokey pokey. Everyday, he went to the market everyday.

When he graduated 8th grade he called me down to the shanty and he took out a \$5.00 gold piece and he said don't tell your grandmother. My grandmother gave me one too. He didn't know that. She said the strawberries froze this year so we could not give you much so she gave me the gold piece.

He didn't go swimming much. He had one sister, Catherine. Catherine Hart. He attended school all the time. Some children would have to leave school around October 1st to pick cranberries and huckleberries (today called blueberries).

When he went to Magnolia school the kids were dressed like rag pickers. High button shoes, dress hanging on one side. He still has a picture of them. When he was a child he played the xylophone.

Back to your music lessons. Tell us anything you want about your music.

I started playing in 1910 at 10 years old. I was 24 in 1924.

I played my first concert overture at a Catholic school. It only went up to the 8th grade at that time. Charles Saia played the violin. His instructor arranged for him to have an interview at the Phila. Philharmonic Orchestra. When I got to his office I was the only one there. It was on a Saturday. He said you are still in high school. He would graduate on the 6th or 7th of June. I sat at his desk. The telephone rang. It was his instructor. He timed me from 16th & Washington Ave. to 19th & Walnut at the Rittenhouse Hotel.

He spoke to Mr. Asher, instructor at the Phila. Philharmonic. He said he didn't think an examination would be necessary. Come in Tuesday night for rehearsal. Tuesday he went for rehearsal there were trombones, clarinets. I got lost. A trombone player sat next to me. His name was Charles Stahl. I told him I lost my place. He said don't feel bad. It happened to me the first time I played. After that progression

The best part ever was when I played .the solo..with a clarinet. He played a solo.

The conductor, who was a doctor of music sent me a card two days later. The card said "I want you to know that I am very proud of you for your performance you rendered the other night" That was a happy moment. In the winter time we played operas, in the summer we played concerts.

The opera he played the solo in was "Carmen" . He played for 3 years in the Phil both for pay and not for pay just for experience. He got home from Phila. on the Reading Railroad on the midnight train. It was safe.

Did not have to lock doors. No one locked their doors. It was not dangerous.

The streets were kind of muddy when there was rainy weather.

He was 42 during WWII.

WWII he had sinus real bad. Sugar was rationed.

Everyone was sad and worried about their children or brothers and sisters. When he voted for the first time it was Franklin D. Roosevelt for president. JFK was in 1962

Teddy Roosevelt stopped in Hammonton in 1912. I was a boy then. My mother had my sister in a coach. She was going to town and when she got to the railroad she saw the president. He didn't get off of the train. He sat on the train. It was a whistle stop.

He had a happy life when he was a child. In 1935 he worked at C&E canneries in Folsom. I didn't like it too much . He got out of it six years later, 1941. Six years later he went to the navy yard in Phila. He was a and a cook . He lived there for a short period after he was married.