

Interview with John Kroner
March 10, 1992
Program at the Saddle River Valley Cultural Center
Moderated by Louise Mehren Spicer and Kay Yeomans

Louise was born in USR, taught school here for 7 years and played the organ at the ME Church. She is the daughter of Henry Mehren, one of John's best friends.

WHAT WAS USR LIKE WHEN YOU WERE A BOY?

I have to go back a little bit. My parents moved here from the city in 1905 where my father was in the bakery business. My father retired at 45 years of age and he bought up 65 acres right here by the church. People have the impression that everything back then was farming here. But that wasn't so. Farming began to bow out here in Upper Saddle River, and in Saddle River for that matter, right after the Civil War.

The thing that probably caused people to cease farming and turn it to residential was the railroad, the same railroad that came through in 1845 and made it easy to get into New York City. Before that you had to go by wagon. Eventually the same railroad that took produce to NYC soon took commuters to NYC. There were many people who bought land or farms in Upper Saddle River and took the train to work every day. The land soon turned back into brush and then into trees where once it had been ploughed.

For instance, the [inaudible-Newbury family] just two doors down where Andy Otens used to live, bought the land that went all the way up to Union Avenue, that big farm. The three sons all worked in the city. The large farmhouse where we bought had burned down about 1903, but it was about 1880 that it was last farmed on the hill section. It was largely abandoned. When we moved out my father had to clear the land of trees that were 8 and 10 inches in diameter where once there had been farmland.

If we go right on up the road to the Wood place, what we call the Wood-Taylor house. That was farmed years ago by the Terhune family. The Wood family bought it and two daughters and a son all worked in the city, New York City and Passaic. Up the street was Bindschaedler and he commuted to New York. All his land down to the river went back to reforestation. The same happened with Hawkey's land across the river, 70 acres, all the way up to Montvale. All of it was abandoned when I was a boy, yet there were stone walls that went through the woods. The same was true of McGraths, 90 acres up to Woodcliff Lake. And any of you who live on Timberlane or White Pine or Oak, all that land was once farmland. And it was already going back into forest when we moved here.

So that was the situation when my father bought the 65 acres for \$3800 in 1905. There was a barn on it but the house had burned down. There were just two rooms that had been built on the foundation. It had been an Ackerman house and before that a Terhune house. Albartus Triune bought this property where we are sitting, 330 acres, from Isaac and Leah Valleau in 1746. Then he bought two more parcels and had 700 acres, all the way down and including Hess Court property and beyond present day Carlough Road to the

border of present day Western Union. Of course they had slaves back then and when you see a stone wall going through woods, you know it might have been put up by slaves. Of course, as years went by, I sure put up enough stone walls, but the original stone walls were most probably built by slaves.

That was the world I came into, dirt roads and no cars or very few cars. When a car came along the road, you could see it coming by the dust.

HOW DID YOUR FAMILY GET INTO THE STRAWBERRY BUSINESS?

Well, they didn't actually start out in the strawberry business. There was about an acre of strawberries on the farm. But let me back track. Do you see this basket here? This was the strawberry section of Bergen County. This is the kind of basket that was used to send the berries to NYC. A man by the name of Andrew Hopper invented a way to make this basket. About 200 of them would fit into a crate to go to NYC on the trains from Ramsey and Allendale. The berries were all hulled. They were wild berries and no larger than your pinky. Before the railroad came through there were four horse wagons that took them to New York from Paterson. You had to take the berries to Paterson. Fruit had to be fresh so before the railroad it had to come from an area within about 30 miles. Strawberries were very popular. There was great demand. Every farm had its own berry and named it. There were hundreds of names. Steve's great uncle, Abe Goetschius, had a berry called Michael's Early. That was a good berry and then there was Scotch Runner and another called Hannah's Boy. Those are the three I can remember from way back in my youth but there were many, many, many others.

This basket of berries sold for 3 cents in the New York market. We live in a day when we don't realize the value of money in that day. I read in "The Agriculturalist" Magazine of that era that "It's a shame that the berries are so high that the poor people of the city cannot afford to buy them when they are three cents a basket."

To show you the value of pennies, when my folks moved here, a neighbor came down the street and he wanted to have a quart of milk. Well, the folks were new and didn't realize that if you let the cow graze on onion grass it would flavor the milk. So the man gave them 5 pennies for a quart of milk, but he came back soon and said he couldn't drink the milk and would like his money back. My mother gave him his five pennies, but then he said he had probably drunk a penny's worth so he gave her back a penny. That was the value of money in years gone by.

In this very Sunday school, as a kid taking up the collection, very seldom did I see a nickel on the Sunday school plate. A penny on a regular Sunday, and then on a missionary Sunday you gave two cents.

WERE THE STRAWBERRY BASKETS RETURNED?

Yes, I believe they were because the farmers had boxes of them in their rafters. They were all homemade. In the large barn that was Herman T. Hopper's there loads of them.

The crates were fashioned so there would be five layers of the baskets. When my father moved here the strawberry season had ended and Terhune gave him about twenty of these crates, called the Andrew Hopper crate. On the side was J. J. Hopper, Allendale, NJ so I wouldn't doubt that they were paid something to return them. There was a lot of work that went into making those baskets. The farmers had time on their hands at night, no radio or television, so they made the baskets then. Out of white wood.

WHAT WAS THE SCHOOL LIKE IN USR?

I was thinking about it the other day when I attended a council meeting at the Borough Hall. That room was our one room school. We had a potbellied stove in the back. My brother George and I sat side by side at desks where the seat was the front of the desk behind. Some of the teachers were Miss Clay who boarded down here near where the family church is, Miss Dorothy Dewar who boarded at Carlough's, Miss Albertson who boarded at the Wood-Taylor house, and a Miss Ryan who boarded at the Carlough house across from Carlough Road. The teachers walked to school except if it was raining, then they would go in a horse and buggy. School was three hours in the morning, 9 to 12, recess at 10:30. In the afternoon it was 1 to 4, 2:30 recess. Six hours a day. In the wintertime getting out of school at 4, it was almost dark when you got home. There was law and order; I remember very few times where there was a disturbance. I never knew a kid being expelled. There were times when a kid had to stay after school, but it was a time when things were of a quieter nature, you didn't have the newspapers, you didn't know what was going on in the world. It was a nice time and I might say I would like to go back there but I don't want to stay back there. So you had your books and your lessons. When I started there were 8 grades in the one room but by the time I reached seventh grade they had decided to send the seventh grade to Ramsey. Then I had one grade in one room. What I remember are the music classes. Learning how to read music.

We did sing a lot in the one room school. I still have one of the old songbooks. There were a lot of Civil War songs, Rally Round the Flag Boys, the Union Forever, Crank, Crank, Crank, the Boys are Marching, and Tenting Tonight in the Old Camp Ground. And of course they had Dixie and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. A lot of hymns and in the morning the teacher would read from the Bible and the Lord's Prayer. That was before the days of Madeline Murray O'Hare.

WHEN YOU GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL AND ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS, WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS DO?

Well, there was very little play I can tell you that, especially in the wintertime. We had to collect the eggs, feed the chickens, and throw hay down from the haymow for the horses and cows. And you had to fill the wood box with wood. My brother and I took turns, one week he would bring in the wood and the next week I would. You had to have enough wood to last through the night. Sometimes and what I really liked, I would come home, usually during the canning season and my mother would say, "You have to run down to the store." That was down here at the Pork Store [in Saddle River]. She was running short of a spice or something. Of course, I didn't have any choice. In that store there was a

candy counter and in that display they had what we called jaw breakers. They were hard caramels and you could suck on them all the way home. They were 2 for a penny and if you had two or three cents, you were in heaven.

WERE THERE ANY PARTICULAR GAMES OR SPORTS THAT YOU LIKED?

In the springtime at school we played marbles. We played baseball. We would throw a ball over the schoolhouse.

On rainy days the teacher would get up some games to keep us organized. Once in a while there was a fight between a couple of boys.

At home what we did at night after we 8, and remember, we had no electricity, my sisters had work to do, trimming the wicks, filling the lamps.

When we did get electricity in our kitchen, a 75-watt bulb, it was unbelievable.

This was a time for me that was a lot of fun. I liked to go to school and I did get very good marks.

YOU WORKED FOR MR. HOPPER. WHAT DID YOU DO?

Herman T. Hopper was mayor of USR. From 1894 until 1932 we had 5 mayors. All of them were Democrat. All of Bergen County was Democrat. The only newspaper was the Bergen County Democrat. Herman never drove a car. He and his wife had no children. He was a Terhune. His mother was a Terhune and she married John Eckerson Hopper. They were friendly with us. Herman's father, John E., was born in 1826. When I was a little fellow he lifted me up. I did different things for his son Herman. He was mayor for 18 years. I mowed the lawn for him, drove for him. If I had been really interested, I could have learned a lot about local history. They were among the first to have a telephone. I drove them here and there. They were traveling people. We went to the Sussex Inn for dinner, and up to Newburgh, and when the Ironsides was docked here at Alpine, we had our pictures taken. Some of these baskets came from him. A lot of the history I do know, I gleaned from them.

His mother and father spoke Dutch. This area was once very Dutch.

CAN YOU GIVE US ONE OR TWO FAVORITE BOYHOOD MEMORIES?

There was a kind of free enterprise. Living on a farm with the river on one side, you knew where every wild grape was or raspberry, that was one of the things I looked forward to as a kid. Our city slicker cousins who came to visit called us the country hicks but we had hickory nuts and wild berries and we could sell them and that was our money. Old timers never cut down a nut tree.

And then along came Prohibition. You could make your own wine but you could not sell it. There was such a demand in Paterson for elderberries. I knew where all the elderberries were along the river. And when my father would come home from the

market, the first thing I asked was “how much did you get for the elderberries.” We didn’t get any spending money from our parents but what we made, whether it was shoveling snow for the Hoppers or selling elderberries, it was ours to keep.

The Sunday school entertainment at Christmas here in this building was one of the happiest childhood moments and then the Sunday school picnic. I didn’t have ice cream very often. I hate to tell you how little I had ice cream when I was a kid but at the Sunday school picnic we had ice cream in a brick. They called it Neapolitan. And I might get four or five of those bricks.

My parents were bakers in New York City. I must say that was alright. When you came home from school on a cold day and came around the corner of the house and you would smell fresh pumpkin pies, apple pies, oh boy, you knew right away what was coming.

In the summertime there was fishing down at the river. I never came home from fishing without any fish, a dozen or more. You would bring them home, clean them yourself, and fry them up. Those are happy memories. Growing up in a place where you could roam the fields. Those are days I would like to go back to again.

WHAT DO YOU RECALL ABOUT WWI?

I was young at the time. Two events I remember. In 1912 the sinking of the Titanic, I remember that vaguely, and then the sinking of the Lusitania. That really led us into war quicker than expected. That was a terrible loss of life. I remember the day of registration, how all the whistles around blew. They registered from 21-to 31, and later on from 18 to 45. At that time, the Paterson mills all had whistles and the way you knew it was 12:00, the steam whistles would blow. There was a sweep across Midland Avenue and sometimes you could see the steam rising from the large smoke stacks when they blew. There were six or seven who went, Walter Bindschaedler, Sherry Butscher, Eddy Taylor [at Elmers], Harry Curtain where the nursery is over on the East Road [Creative], Weaver Carlough, the son of the second mayor, Harry Sanderson who lived on Old Stone Church, and Jim Hennion’s uncle [wounded in WWI]. [Also Cornelius Berdan.]

They had the welcome home when the war was over. In school they had Liberty Bonds. You bought stamps for a quarter and when you got 20 stamps then you got a \$5 liberty bond. Oh, you thought you were a rich person. Of course they had larger sizes, \$10 and \$25. The girls at the time were given a ball of yarn and they knitted 9x9 patches. Mrs. Carlough sewed them together to make a patchwork quilt to send to the soldiers. The nearest camp was Camp Merritt over near Dumont. It became Camp Shank in WWII. A lot of them went to Ft. Dix.

On November 11 Walter Bindschaedler came home, the last one home, so they had the welcome home in the spring. That was the first celebration I had ever been to. The soldiers marched in, their girlfriends behind (none of them were married at the time) and then the school kids. It was at the schoolhouse. Everyone in town came. Tables were set up. They had a cold supper, boiled ham, potato salad, hard-boiled eggs, and a whole lot

of relishes. And then for dessert it was pie a la mode, the first time in my life I ever had pie a la mode. The mayor spoke a few words. It must have been an ordeal for him. He was a wonderful man but a jittery speaker. But he did well. After the supper they took all the tables out. They hired a band and had four or five musicians. I sat near the drummer, the boom, boom, boom. One of them sang. It was my first band.

TELL US ABOUT FARMING IN THE BEGINNING AND HOW IT CHANGED.

At first everyone used horses. I often think I spent half my life driving a horse. But then tractors came in. The first tractor we had was in 1924, a Fordson. They were rather crude. You had to have horses with them. Then came cultivating tractors, McCormick. That ended the need for horses. We kept a lot of tractors, five at a time, hooked up with different equipment.

I could count the hours I spent on a Fordson tractor. On a cold morning, they had to have 50 oil, why they had to have #50 oil, I don't know, it was almost like grease. There are a lot of things we did then that you wonder why today?

CORNELIUS BERDAN HAD A TEAM OF WHITE HORSES. WHY DIDN'T HE CHANGE?

George Berdan was the farmer. Corneil was never a farmer. But then when George died, Corneil took to doing some custom work. A lot of people had small gardens. People would hire Corneil in the spring to plow their gardens for them. George Berdan never drove a car or had a tractor. There were a lot of Fordson tractors in this town. They were used for hauling and plowing.

Steve and Lizzie never had a tractor. They worked for Lizzie's brother Dave. Where the Library is today, George Goetschius had hay fields.

One of the reasons my father came out to the country is that he was allergic to flour dust. So he sold the bakery and came out to the country. My father got roped into farming gradually. Someone said there was money in milk cows. There was a depot over by Napolitano's pond where you dropped your milk off.

WHEN DID PEOPLE START BUILDING SUMMER BUNGALOWS?

The people who moved out from the city moved into existing homes. But later on it was different. But later on, I think it was in the 1920s, a fellow named Davis put in a number of bungalows where Pleasant Ave. meets. As far as Cottage Lane is concerned that was done by the fellow who brought on zoning. Those were not summer bungalows; they were year-round houses. That was what brought zoning into our town. He was building on very small lots on Cottage Lane.

Some regular residents closed up in wintertime. The Bindschaedlers moved to Bloomfield in the winter, and the Richardsons, who lived up across from Cherry Lane,

left town in the winter. He worked for the NYTimes. They went to Florida. A lot of the city folks didn't stay here year-round.

We had the prize summer boarders at our house. They stayed for the weekend.

DID YOUR FATHER BUILD YOUR HOUSE?

He bought the property from a man named Voll who had bought it from Smith. Smith's large house had burned down in 1903. Voll had built two rooms by the side of the foundation. They came in from the west side of the house. People lived down in the basement but that was not unusual at that time. The foundation of the old house was still there, 60 feet by 30 feet, a large house. The burnt timbers were still there. My father filled in the section he didn't need, 15 feet of the basement, and built on what he needed. My father built onto the house three different times to what it is today.

HOW DID PEOPLE COMMUTE? DID YOU HAVE A BUGGY POOL? A CAR POOL?

The Woods had a 1903 Franklin. Boy, what that would be worth today. It had a brass gearshift and brakes, big long handle like a railroad car. It was a big long car. They could go over in that and meet the train in Allendale. Bindschaedler would go by horse and buggy. His horse was fast, ran all the way.

I think some did pool together. Curtain, who lived where Creative Gardens is, did pool together with Gardner who lived where Ranch Road is. They were both city people. And Keidel, who later on planted all the apple trees on Cider Hill, also carpooled. They were all city people who bought large acreage and it went back into forest.

HOW DID YOU GET TO RAMSEY SCHOOL?

I went to school by bus. When my sister went, she had to walk. The bus took us to Ramsey through Allendale. When you were playing ball, you would hear "Here comes the bus". Oh my, just when you were getting ready to hit a home run.

WHO WERE SOME OF THE FARM FAMILIES, AND THEIR CROPS AND ANIMALS?

In my youth you had the Hennion family on Pleasant Avenue. They farmed all their land. It went right on up to the top of the hill. And on Union Avenue you had the Van Blarcums and then the Snyders over on the corner of Union. They grew mostly vegetables and fruit. Dave Carlough had fruit and vegetables. Ed Smith was where Western Union is (he was born in the old house on my property). North of Grist Mill Lane, the old place was completely farming. And Skinner's across from the Old Stone Church. When Philips bought that in 1920 he turned it back into a farm. Sunday was the time you would drive around and see how other people's crops were growing.

WERE YOU EVER INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT?

No, not really. One time the janitor got sick and George and I filled in for a while. I think it was \$30 a month.

But I was on the Election Board for 30 years. You knew everyone's name in town and how to spell their name. School elections too.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE MAYORS LIKE?

Herman T. was Herman Terhune Hopper. Bill Yeoman's grandfather was the first Republican mayor in this town and it has been Republican ever since. I didn't know Jim Carlough, the first mayor. His brother John Carlough, the second mayor, was the one who eventually appointed me to the election board. But people had strong feelings then. I had good friends up the street, their name was DeBaun, who were very much Republican. And Herm Hopper and all the Carloughs were very Democratic. And this was during the Depression. And you got \$75 for being on the Election Board. Anyway, I was on top of the world. I was appointed to a job at \$75 a year. I was rich. Anyway, I went up to DeBaun's and told them and you would have thought I had committed an unpardonable sin by being appointed to a Democratic position.

DO YOU REMEMBER JACOB TICE?

No, this building was Harmon Tice. He was one of the early trustees of this church. Members of a family named Van Ryper were also early trustees. They lived where the YWCA had their camp down the road here. In 1870 they moved to Michigan. Johnny Hopper took his wagons and moved them to the train station in Allendale. Herman Hopper had a crush on 8-year-old Hester Van Ryper. When he heard the train whistle he knew that Hester was getting on the train and going west and he started to cry. His father John asked him why and he said, "I got a stomachache."

DID YOU EVER GO INTO THE CITY?

Yes, the first time was just before the first world war. We had cousins in the city, see. My father's brother had a bakery on 92nd Street and Third Avenue. We went there for three or four days. We took the trolley from Ho-Ho-Kus, not Allendale. If you go straight down West Saddle River Road, before you get to Ho-Ho-Kus there's a red light by Hollywood Avenue. Just beyond the red light about a hundred feet is the high tension crossing today. That was the trolley crossing, the trolley station, and you would get the trolley there and go all the way down to East Paterson about where Rte. 208 is today, and there you would get the Hudson River Trolley that ran from Fort Lee to Paterson. And you would get on there, they called it Ridgewood Junction, and you would go all the way through Hackensack and Tenafly and Teaneck down the hill to the Palisades and there was the Fort Lee Ferry. There you would get on the Fort Lee Ferry and cross the mighty Hudson River and dock over on the other side at 125th Street and take the elevated which took us down. I saw the circus, the Barnum and Bailey Circus, the first one. They had a steamroller. A man laid down in front of it and the roller went right over him and then they picked him up. And we went to the Bronx Zoo. I remember there were a lot of flags

out in New York. It was before we went to war. The Lusitania had been sunk and the mayor had said, "If you think the United States should get involved in the European conflict, hang out a flag. It roused a tremendous spirit thinking that Germany was going to conquer the world. Who knows what would have happened if we hadn't gotten involved?" Anyway, that was my first visit to the city. You always remember the first visit. Don't ask me when we went the second. I don't remember the second.

TELL US ABOUT THE PATERSON FARM MARKET.

When the folks went to market you were always happy that they were going. Sometimes my father went alone; sometimes he went on a Saturday. Paterson had a lot of Jewish people in the mills in Paterson. Anybody who had eggs and chickens or you name it, and usually on a Friday or Saturday, you would take them to Paterson and everything under the sun was sold. There were a lot of live chickens that were sold. The Jewish people liked fresh killed chickens. I always loved to go to Paterson. That was a great event, to see something different. You talk about the birds and the bees and the sounds and silence [of the country], but in Paterson there was life. Years later when my mother would go to uptown Paterson and go into the stores, she would take me. That was a great event.

It was a great event. In the wintertime I remember the same mayor I mentioned, John Carlough, taking a basket of eggs on a Saturday and going over to the trolley in Ramsey. He would take the trolley down to Ridgewood Junction and right on into Paterson and he would sell his eggs there. Eggs at that time were sold by the quarter's worth. In the springtime when eggs were plentiful I saw eggs sold one Easter, that's when chickens laid the most, I saw them sold for 25 for a quarter. That's less than a penny apiece. But in those days if you came home with 75 cents or a dollar in your pocket, you were rich. A dollar was a lot of money.

DO YOU REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT THE DE BAUN FAMILY? ONE OF THEM WENT TO AUSTRALIA?

Yes, well, they were the Republicans. John went to Australia. Incidentally the DeBaun's had one of the first land transactions from Queen Ann. They showed the deed to me one time. My what I wouldn't give to see it again. 1709 from Queen Ann of England. Anyway John DeBaun went to Australia for the pearl fishing in Perth and he had pearl fishing boats. He was rather wealthy I would say. He planted north of where Old Chimney is, on the west side of the road you'll find maple trees all a certain distance all along the road. He planted those before he left for Australia. They went around the bend almost to Lake Road. I think maybe he planted all the way to Ripplewood. He never came back. He married in Australia. The DeBaun's I knew, three of them, never married. And when he died he left his widow an income from his estate. They never met the widow but they couldn't receive anything from the estate until she died. So we would always ask "Well, how's the widow?" And the answer would be "Oh, she's in good health." We always made fun of that. And then the widow died and it took so long for the inheritance to come and we used to say they'd be frying snowballs this winter. They were

all good friends of ours, Minnie, Irv and Wal DeBaun. Wal was the last to live there. It is the house where Ollie Parker lived [just south of Ackerson Drive.]

HOW WERE THE STREETS NAMED?

Well, right here we have Kroner Court. Of course, I would rather have had Strawberry Lane. We have Carlough Road for the Carloughs and Secord Lane. Weiss Road after the Weiss family. Union Avenue we called Hicks road for the Hicks family.

Lake Street was called the Road to Ramseys for years. This road here (West Saddle River Road) was called Maple Avenue from the New York State line right down until it crossed the bridge going into Paterson on First Avenue. All my youth it was that way. East Saddle River Road was the main road to Monsey. West Saddle River Road really goes nowhere so they called it the "back road." Right here by Upper Cross we always called "Benny Moore's crossroad" because he lived right across from it. On Lake by the horseshoe bend, Hen Snyder lived up there, so we called it "Hen's Curve." Where Elmer's is, we called it Goetschius' corner. Where the West Road meets Old Stone Church was called DeBauntown because so many DeBauns lived there. Down here everything was Terhune.

WAS THE HORSESHOE BEND ALWAYS THERE?

Let's go back to 1823. Prior to that, if you wanted to get up to the turnpike, you would have to go to a road that was in between where Bogert and Reynolds schools are today. There is a road there and it hit where Aspen Way is and went left and came out on present day Lake Street where Forest Ridge is today, across from Union Avenue. In 1823 they cut it through from the corner, a very sharp corner. The reason it is such a sharp corner is that Ackerman, who owned the property, wouldn't give any land for the road, so it makes a sharp turn to the north there. Because Ackerman was so mean, Terhune who gave the property for the road kept one foot on the south side for himself so that if Ackerman wanted to get on that road he had to cross Terhune property.

AND THE HORSESHOE BEND?

In 1923 that road went from dirt road to macadam. If you went straight you would see the old road. The house on the bend uses that road as its driveway. By Skyline Drive. It went only to the East Road. In 1928 they went east with Lake Street up that hill to Montvale and made that macadam. Over there going up on your left where Sturbridge is, there was a Peach Orchard. Coming in from Cider Hill there is a Peach Street. One of the Goetschius family had a peach orchard and he canned peaches.

WHAT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

Well, I don't know. I guess the old story. We get old too soon and smart too late. If we had known the way things were going to go in town, we would all be multi millionaires. But we didn't.

YOU HAVE GIVEN A LOT OF TALKS. DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME YOU EVER MADE A SPEECH HERE IN THIS BUILDING?

Well, I was in Sunday school here for many years and I just don't recall the first time. At Christmas time we had to give a recitation here, but our eyes were on the boxes of candy and the book we would be given. I think maybe my first Christmas recitation was when I was three, "I am a little boy, not so very tall, God Bless All, large and small." Something like that. When I sat down from that, I thought I had conquered the world.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER OF WWII?

I was on the Election Board at that time. I got a citation from the President of the United States and I framed that. Ali, my sister said, "Boy, you have some ego to put that on the wall." They sent it for patriotic services done on Sept. 16, 1940. We weren't in the war then but they wanted everyone between the ages of 21 and 31 to be registered. This was before Pearl Harbor. Tilley was the mayor at that time and the overseer of the Election Board. The first one who came to be registered was Bob Samuels. I filled out his form. There were maybe about 20 that day. Then they jumped it to 18 to 45. But when that happened it went through the town clerk. It wasn't through the Election Board.

In the First World War they had home defense drives. In the Second World War, they had liberty bonds. You had to have so many pails of water and pails of sand and a broom somewhere in your house. And they had the bonds, this time they called them [inaudible] bonds. I think they had five different drives for [inaudible] bonds.

At that time Paterson was the hub of Wright Engines. Sometimes someone would come and speak here at a church service asking for people to come work there. They needed help so badly. That was a time when there was no unemployment.

WHAT ABOUT ZONING?

Well, Bill Yeomans grandfather, [who was mayor], came in with zoning and he went out with zoning, I would say. Saddle River had zoning around 1928. In 1931 they tried it in Upper Saddle River and it failed. And then in 1937 Bill Yeomans was mayor and he was for zoning and the other group was against it. They tried again in 1945 when I was on the zoning board. I think it would have passed but someone wanted two acre zoning and that didn't fly. But it failed again in 1947.

But then came Cottage Lane and that was a blessing in disguise. They built small houses on small lots. Then there was a rumor that Chimney Ridge was going to be the same thing on 90 acres in 1950. That pushed zoning through.

HOW DID THE STRAWBERRY FARMING START?

It was my brother and I who got us into the strawberry business. And in the end we started the strawberry picking. It was hard to get pickers but people loved to come and

pick strawberries. The strawberries came gradually as we realized that in the later years. We gave up the peppers and tomatoes and other crops and concentrated on strawberries.

In my youth you got 2 cents a quart picking strawberries. Pick a hundred quarts and get \$2. That was a lot of money.

Speaking of old timers, John E. Hopper always wore boots and they were always highly polished. Herm Hopper was also fastidious. He would go out in his horse and buggy and the wagon wheels always shone. He must have polished them.

This is an apple-picking basket made of white oak by Ev Pitt. Ev was descended from the mountain people. There was a time when the mountain people would come down with wagonload of baskets.

Where was your parent's bakery?

They had two or three. My mother was a real businesswoman. She built the business.

Fire and police departments?

I was a charter member of the fire department and was chaplain. Today I don't know much about them. As far as the police, they had a marshal system. There was very little excitement in years gone by; there wasn't much to do. Rechain was the first chief marshal.