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FINAL COPY - TAPED INTERVIEW WITH
SHIRLEY L. WRIGHT

Bill Gordon speaking, preparatory to an interview with Miss Shirley Wright, with her account of a history of the Westfield Memorial Library. The reason that Miss Wright is so suited for such an interview is that Shirley was with the Library for 30, how many years, Shirley?

A: 1939 to 1952.

Q: Of that time, for 19 years she was head Librarian and retired in 1971, November 1971. Shirley, with that history, would you please tell us about your memories of the library?

A: My first memory of the Westfield Library is being taken to the Library when I was quite young and joining the Children's Dept. which was then in the corner of Elmer and Broad Street in those days. Now, I, you asked me to tell about my memories. That was my first memory and I'm not going to say what year it was or how old I was, however I will go back to the origins of the Library and tell you something that I extracted from the books of minutes of the early Library Association. And, by the way, these minutes are in beautifully bound books with beautiful handwriting, of the secretary of those days. The Westfield Memorial Library owes its significance to the interests of a group of women from Westfield who during the winter of 1872 - 1873 organized a book club for the circulation of books among its members. With 26 members the Every Saturday Book Club began its career May 3, 1873. During the summer the books were carefully packed away but during the winter months the books were exchanged on Saturday mornings. I don't know what the people were supposed to do during the summer months but obviously they were not reading Library Books.

Q: What would you think was the size of the community at that time? Would that have something to do with the winter-summer activity? And did we have summer residents then who came out from New York at that time, do you suppose?

A: Ah, yes, I think there were people who came out here, ah, for the pleasant months and went back into the city because commuting was a little bit of a problem then too. But ah, the size of the community I think there were maybe, oh, 8 or 9,000 people here then, if that many.

Q: 3,000.

A: 3,000 were there? Well, I don't know. I may be coming down later on. By 1876 the number of books had grown to 160 and it was felt the time had come to consider some plan whereby the books might be put into general circulation. Mrs. Harris, President of the club, appointed a committee to investigate arrangements for the opening of a Public Library. Through the kindness of members of Atlas Lodge, F & A Masons, their reception room in the Prospect Street School was offered for use of the Library. And I believe there is a picture in the Library files, the Westfieldiana that Mr. ah, Senator Pierson compiled, of that meeting room.

Q: Well, then, that's the old Prospect Street School that later became the American Legion Hall and finally was torn down for a parking lot, is there today, the A & P parking lot I guess.

A: In February, 1877 the Every Saturday Circulating Library was opened to the public with ownership of the books and management of the Library vested in the Association of Women who had organized to circulate their own books. At the annual meeting of the Every Saturday Book Club on October 1, 1877, the matter of incorporation of the Library was considered

35:00 MINUTES

and with the advice of W.G. Peckham, legal steps were taken resulting in the incorporation of the Library as the Westfield Every Saturday Library.

- Q: W.C. Peckham, would that be Peckham of Peckham's Tower up there on Hillside Avenue?
- A: Yes, that's right. Trustees were named to this incorporation as follows: Julia E. Ladd, Martha A. Harris, Emma H. Gannett, Caroline M. Rush, Emma L. Bridges, Francis Hasford, Elizabeth Hale. In March 1878 as result of much discussion and consideration the name Westfield Every Saturday Library was changed to Westfield Public Library. And a constitution with By-laws was adopted to govern the corporation. No mention is made in the minutes of the Library Trustees as to the location of the rooms but the Library was granted use of the Westfield Lyceum Rooms where apparently the Library remained until January 1876. (?)
- Q: What was the Westfield Lyceum? Does that ring a bell with you?
- A: The Westfield Lyceum I believe, was an organization. I don't know the exact purpose of the Lyceum but it did meet or have rooms over Pierson's Store at the corner of Broad Street and Prospect Street. The site of the present National Bank of Westfield, or I should say the...
- Q: I'm ashamed to say I forget what it's called today.
- A: Is it on there?
- Q: No.
- A: Ah, after the dissolution of the Lyceum in 1885 the Library Association decided to rent the same rooms themselves and to sublet one of these for income. After debating the possibilities of a building program the Library Association decided upon another move and rented rooms west of Dr. Gale's drugstore in the Darsh Building on the corner of the north side of Broad Street in January 1893. There's no mention of it in the minutes of another move or location of the Library when the Library Association's books were turned over to the new Carnegie Library supported by the town as a free public library. They were moved from a room on Elm Street from Elm Street apparently in the block between Quimby and Broad Street, exact location.....
- Q: Shirley, you mentioned the Carnegie Library and I know that brings up some history about Carnegie Libraries in general. Does your story go on to tell about how we got to be a Carnegie Library?
- A: Yes, I will tell that in a moment. Exact location of the Library before this, just before this is not known. In April 1905 the Library decided by referendum or plebecite, I suppose you might say...
- Q: You've lost me, but go right ahead...
- A: Erase that.
- Q: Why?
- A: The town decided by overwhelming majority to establish and maintain a free public library. This was put to a vote in April 1905 in the town voted to have a public library. Debating the possibilities of building

program, the Library Association decided upon another move and rented rooms west of Dr. Gale's drugstore in the Darsh Building on the north side of Broad Street. Although there is no mention in the minutes, of another move or location of the library, when the Library Association's Books were turned over to the new library, the Carnegie Library, supported by the town as a free library, they were moved from a room on Elm Street apparently in the block between Quimby and Broad. In April 1905 the town of Westfield voted by overwhelming majority to establish and maintain a free public library. As a result, Mayor.....

.....say some of this.....

Q: Excuse me just a moment, Shirley, you mentioned the town of Westfield does that mean the council or what, just what would you think that means?

A: This means the town government of Westfield. Voted to establish and maintain a free public library. As a result Mayor Randolph Perkins in accordance with the laws of New Jersey, named a board of Trustees to consist of 5 appointed members, 2 ex-officio members, the mayor and 40:00 the supervising principal of schools to organize a corporation for the establishment and maintenance of a free public library in the town of ^{MINS} Westfield. The first Board of.... the First Board of Trustees of the Free Public Library as incorporated May 1, 1905 included the following: George W. Cox, James O. Clark, Arthur N. Pierson, William E. Tuttle, Jr. William P. Tuttle, Jr., Salter Storrs Clark, President of the Board of Education and Randolph Perkins, Mayor of Westfield,. Salter Storrs Clark was elected President of the Trustees and served through the period of the building of the Carnegie Library.

Q: The name Salter Storrs Clark recalls to me we have a Salter Place, ah, and of course there's Clark Street but that was named after earlier Clarks, and William Tuttle, Tuttle Parkway was derived from the Tuttle family that had the lumber company for so many years. Thank you. Go ahead please.

A: After consideration of various sites they decided to purchase the lot offered by Samuel W. Reese at the corner of Broad and Elmer Streets. Subscriptions from private citizens of about \$2400 and a contribution of the former Library Association of about \$2000 which the ladies realized from the sale of their lot on Prospect Street made possible the purchase of the lot for \$3,950.00

Q: And this is the lot at the corner of...ah,

A: Elmer and Broad.

Q: Elmer and Broad where the

A: Carnegie Library was erected.

Q: Carnegie Library was first started and the building is still there today although now it is a dress shop.

A: That's right. The deed for this property was presented to the Town Council on November 20, 1905. The trustees then undertook to communicate with Andrew Carnegie regarding a gift of \$10,000 for the Library. Since the town now owned a lot for the proposed building and since the

Council had passed a resolution binding the town "to raise at least \$1,000 a year for maintenance of the Free Public Library". On December 13, 1905, the Trustees were notified that the conditions were satisfactory to Mr. Carnegie and that the \$10,000 would be granted as requested in installments as work on the building progressed. A resolution was adopted by the trustees on December 1, 1905 the management of the Library would pass from the Ladies Association to the Trustees of the Library and that after that date it would become free to Westfield citizens.

I think it is a very interesting point to make that the free Public Library of Westfield was built by Carnegie grant together with money resulting from the Ladies Association Sale of property which they had purchased and from private donations and subscriptions which came from 80 citizens of the town. The actual purchase of the Library property on Quimby Street and the construction of the Library therefore was done by agencies other than the town of Westfield. After the construction of the building, the Town of Westfield had voted to obligate itself for the maintenance of the building with at least \$1,000 a year from 1905 on. The cornerstone of the new building was laid during the summer of 1906 and the building was opened for the public use in April 1907.

Salter Storrs Clark, President of the Trustees recorded there were about 5,000 volumes in the Library, about one fourth of the town population or 1429 people were members and circulation had been 16,500 for 9 months during which the Library was opened.

In 1908, just two years later, it was necessary to add an addition, doubling the size of the reading room and shelving and adding a cellar. Application was made to Andrew Carnegie for an additional \$10,000. After consideration of the plans submitted by the architect the Board had engaged, the Carnegie agreed to advance \$5,000 for this project. Plans were reconsidered and the addition was made in 1909. *45.00 MINUTES*

Q: It's easy to see the Carnegie master of millions by being rather careful of how he got rid of it.

A: Well, of course, I think Mr. Carnegie was willing to help towns who were willing to help themselves. I don't think there's any instance, except possibly the first one he built in the town where oil was struck, which was a complete and outright gift, that he expected people to do something to help themselves. Actually Westfield practically matched the gift.

In 1926 it was realized by the trustees that the constant increase in the use of the Library by the people of Westfield showed that expansion of existing facilities was implied. Plans were discussed during these years for moving to another sites and remodeling and enlarging the Carnegie Building. In 1947 the Trustees and the Town Council began to discuss plans for a Municipal Center to be erected next to Mindowaskin Park on Broad Street. Careful planning of the financial program was necessary for the provision of funds, were made by the Trustees and the Town Council during the next few years. In 1952 final plans were approved by the Library Trustees for the Westfield Memorial Library. From the original Library building in 1954, the trustees voted to change the name from the Free Public Library to the Westfield Memorial Library and approved the following wording for a plaque to be displayed in the new building:

"This building is dedicated to the men and women of Westfield who gave their lives in the founding and preservation of our republic."

Thus the Library is a memorial to all those Westfield residents who gave their lives for their country from the earliest times to the present days. On October 24, 1954 an official reception was held for the opening of the new Library. Open House for both the Library and the Municipal Building was held for 2 days to give everyone an opportunity to visit all sections and rooms in the new Municipal Center....Preceding the official reception, the Library Trustees, the Mayor and the Town Council accepted at a ceremony in the Rotunda between the two buildings the murals painted by Gerald Foster, a Westfield artist who was then resident in North Carolina depicting scenes in Westfield history. These were given by Mrs. A.W. Taylor in memory of her husband, Dr. Archibald Worthington Taylor who had been President of the Library Board for many years and their son Robert Taylor who had spent his youth in Westfield.

- Q: Shirley, tell me about the reception that occurred? Was it well attended? Was there, it went on for 2 days, was it quite a to-do down at the Library with all the books to be installed and everything to be gotten ready or what?
- A: Well, you might be interested in recalling that when we moved from the old Library on Elmer and Broad Street to the new Library, before we actually moved, we asked all the people in town to take out as many books as they possible could and return them to the new building. Ah....
- Q: Excuse me, Shirley, whose brainchild was that? It sounds like a brilliant idea.
- A: Well, I don't know, we just thought it would be so much simpler if every library member helped to move! Well, I think maybe they do this on college campuses too, but ah, it just seemed a good idea. What we didn't know was that this would be picked up by so many newspapers and we received clippings from newspapers all over the world about how the Westfield Library moved from one building to another.
- Q: I think that's sensational!!
- A: We had it for two days.. everybody in town was invited to visit the new Library and to go through the new Town Hall and I'm sure that everybody had a very good time, they either came in the Library and wandered around the Library and went over to the Town Hall or they came to the Police Dept. and started there and came through the Town Hall to the Library.
- Q: How were the books actually moved? Those that weren't taken out?
- A: That was a very interesting process. We had a Town Councilman then named Robert Gumpert who really invented the system that we used.
- Q: Gumpert Field is named after him?
- A: Gumpert Field is named after him. He had a factory in Garwood where they would manufacture cartons and drums for industrial packaging and things and Mr. Gumpert came to the Library and we discussed what we had to do and how we were going to move them. He brought strips of material that they had discarded from their making their cartons and we bought

50.00 MINUTES

bought heavy duty staplers and the Library staff and the Pages packaged and stapled the books and labeled them with numbers and letters indicating where they were to be placed in the new building. I believe it was Townsend who actually moved in the building, no, moved the books from the old building to the new building.....

Q: That's Townsend Movers, yeah....

A: Townsend Movers, and my staff was up in the old Library ah, as fast as a load went up there and we just simply took the ah, two or three inch wide heavy material that was stapled around the books off, the books and put them on a shelf. We had diagrammed the whole thing ahead of time, Harriet McBride who was the Assistant Librarian at the time was the ah, wonderful at doing most of the planning, I must say, and ah, everything went smoothly. It seemed to me my main job was to travel from one building to another to see how things were coming along. I really had a very easy time.

Q: And on the next day was the Library opened for business and...

A: Oh, yes, the Library was open for business and we had a few very busy weeks when people were returning the twenty or thirty or forty books which they had borrowed during the time that they might borrow them from the old building and take them back to the new, but this ah, helped a great deal in getting those thousands of books transferred.

Q: Shirley, I understand the Associated Press picked up the details of the move....

A: Yes, that's true and some months after the move had been accomplished we were very surprised to see our moved mentioned in Ripley's Believe it or Not Cartoons one day.

Q: That's incredible. Shirley, tell about some of the names known to people who were the Librarians over the course of the years and if you have any personal recollections, why please throw those in.

A: The first Librarian, when the town assumed the responsibility for the Library, and it was the Free Public Library was Mrs. Gertrude Barr. She was succeeded by Miss Cunningham and then by Miss Josephine Teller, and then by Miss Bessie Browne, who was Librarian for a very short time. For five years, Miss Bessie Smith was Librarian, ah, I believe, I know she was a local resident and she was the aunt of Emily Ryer Griswold as I recall. Ah, from 1920 to 1952 Miss Mary Virginia Gale was the Librarian and when she retired she was named Librarian Emeritus. Bill, do you think it should be Librarian Emerita? How's you Latin, these days?

Q: Well, in today's world, I don't think we should distinguish, but I'm all for Emerita. 55:00 MINUTES

A: And then Shirley Louise Wright from 1952 to 1971. Now I think it's important to mention that we had a Children's Dept. in the Westfield Library at an early date. All Public Libraries weren't fortunate to have Children's Depts. established as separate departments that early but in 1929 ours was established with a wonderful collection of books and from then on the collection has been maintained and has grown and

it is exceptionally good in the number of books that it has. I know this in the fact that I was taking courses in Children's Literature at Columbia University and found many of the books that I needed right here at Westfield Library.

Helen Dietz Reynolds was the first Librarian succeeded by Madge Leeming and then Grace Joleen was the Librarian and when Grace Joleen who is now Mrs. Sonne left, I became Children's Librarian from 1946 to 1952, and then Eleanor Massig was the Librarian and June Toten, Ann Martin and 1950 - 1957 Helen Kelly became the Librarian. I don't have the names of the succeeding librarians, either head librarians or children's librarians right at my finger tips, just a moment.

- Q: Shirley, it seems to me those are the only things you don't have at your finger tips. This has been a most interesting interview and I appreciate the time and effort that you have given to recapitulating in your mind all these events that go so far back in our history.
- A: I think that I might conclude by saying that one of the things that I learned in Library School more years ago than I care to remember right now, was that a Library existed to supply its constituency with education, recreation and inspiration and I don't think that you can do much better than to keep those three words in mind when you talk about the purpose of the Library.
- Q: Shirley, when we finished listening to the runback, playback on this, you had a further thought, would you add that to your interview?
- A: Well, I was going to say that an early date, Westfield was fortunate in having a high School Library established. The Westfield High School Library as I recall was established in 1920 when Miss Alice Bible came to be the Librarian. So we who went through high school after that were fortunate in being trained in the use of the Library so that when we went away to school, the use of the Library was just as familiar as anything else to us and that we had studied in High School. Miss Bible was succeeded by Miss Marion Scott as the High School Librarian and Miss Bible had given many years of service and training to all of us who went through Westfield High School in the use of the Library.
- Q: Well, You mentioned that in the early twenties, many high schools in the U.S. simply had no such facilities. We were fortunate in that we had a very adequate reference dept. built up by Miss Bible and we were trained in the use of the Library. Thank you again.

Mr. Gordon: One of the advantages of conducting these interviews is the fact that you wind up with tapes that are not complete and therefore have the opportunity to sound off. Which I will do on this occasion, not really sounding off, but showing you about a next door neighbor of ours who lived in Westfield for many years and was a very distinguished man in his music career and was virtually unknown to the Westfield citizenry. His name was Otto Baake (pronounced Bach) and of German distraction, ah, he came out here in the mid-20's from upper Manhattan, probably ^{00:60} Yorkville, where his father had been a custom maker of shoes, not a ^{MINUTE} shoemaker, but a maker of shoes, ah, and depended for the wealthy New York luxury trade for his living. Otto Baake, I would judge was in

his mid to late 60's when he arrive here, he was a man of about 5'2" at the most, perhaps even shorter. His wife was even shorter than he was, they had two children who were of normal stature. Otto Baake was a violinist and his career as a violinist had brought him to the point where he was first violin or concert master to Victor Herbert. Victor Herbert was back in the 20's one of the giant, even more so in those days perhaps of American Music. Otto Baake is in Victor Herbert's right hand playing in the pit for all his great operetta's "The Red Mill" "Naughty Marietta" and others. I remember him telling that when Jake Flagler was promoting Florida real estate and opening up Florida really for the first time to the U. S. Public in generall, Otto Baake had been commissioned by Flagler to get together an orchestra and go down to play at the hotel for the opening.....

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FINAL COPY - TAPED INTERVIEW WITH
SHIRLEY L. WRIGHT

This is Bill Gordon speaking. We are about to record a conversation with Shirley Wright. Shirley Wright was born in Westfield and has lived here all her life. For many of her years she was head of the Westfield Memorial Library and consequently has been on the scene and aware and is a gifted observer.

Q: Shirley, it would put things in focus if you would give us some background as to how you happened to be in Westfield, where your parents came from, that type of thing.

A: Yes. I literally was born in Westfield. I am here in Westfield because my grandparents on my mother's side used to come out from New York to spend the summer in what I guess they thought was country in those days. My grandfather was in a bank in New York and he used to commute back and forth to New York in the early days. And after a while they decided that they would move out to Westfield and so they built a house and lived out here, although my mother was born while they were living briefly in Newark. They came here in, I think it was 1878. My father's people were also living in New York and my father used to come out to spend the summers with his Aunt Mary Ayliffe, who owned the property out on Central Avenue which later was known as the John Frazee's home. My mother and father met when they were quite young and knew each other for quite a long time then my father decided to go out west and work with his brother who was out there ranching in Wyoming. My mother went out to visit out there and they met one another and they decided then they would get married and they came back to Westfield to live. So, ah, we were born here in Westfield in my Grandfather and Grandmother Massett's home out on Central Avenue.

Q: Shirley, you mentioned your Aunt Mary Ayliffe owned the Frazee property originally, that brings to mind, in talking with Dr. Hely the other day, he told me about Mrs. Frazee's clothing catching on fire and putting out the fire and then subsequently she died on account of the burns. Do you recall anything about that yourself?

A: I remember hearing that story. I don't remember anything particular except that I remember hearing that story. I don't know, just one of those things you remember from your childhood, hearing about.

Q: Do you remember any interesting little insights into the Frazees?

A: No, I don't particularly. I know that my Aunt Mary Ayliffe owned that house and that property and she bought, she built two houses on some of her property further up on Central Avenue a little bit, and I also know that across the street was the old Scudder house.

5:00 minutes

Q: That explains why they have Ayliffe Avenue out there, I better get that in.

A: Ayliffe. It was a family that came from Northumberland county in England.

Q: The Scudder House. I'm glad you brought that up because that was on my list to query you about. Would you tell us a little bit about that, as to when it was built and if you know something about the underground railroad that was presumed to operate through that house.

- A: I am not exactly sure of the date. I would say that the Scudder House was built in 1810 or 1812. I think you can verify that by looking in Mr. Philhower's history of Westfield where there is a paragraph about it. I had always heard that the Scudder House was built of stones brought on sledges from Georgia. The Scudders had cousins, now I said Georgia, it could be South Carolina, because I think they had cousins in Charleston, South Carolina.
- Q: Charlie Hely mentioned about those stones and the foundations, they were 3 feet thick and I just couldn't understand where they would have quarried them or how they would have gotten them here, I suppose they came on barges and they they were sledged...
- A: Ah, I had heard, but here again, I must say, this is what I remember and I don't know that there is anything in writing to authenticate this. But they were brought on sledges by slave labor up here... Now as for the Underground Railway Station, I recall that when I was little I went in the Scudder House with my mother one day with Miss Edna Calloway whose mother was a Miss Scudder and she showed us a hidden room in the attic or the second floor, I'm not exactly sure which, you lifted, as I recall you lifted a trap door and there was a little sort of dark closet down there and the, we were told that this was the place where they hid the slaves on the Underground Railroad.
- Q: Being brought up out on Central Avnue made a problem for you in commuting to school. Ah, did you go to the old Lincoln School?
- A: Not until 5th grade. Ah, my sister and I and my older brother had all gone to Miss Calloway's school. Ah, when I went to her school it was on Clark Street in the old Alpers house. Sometimes we did take the trolley car which ran through my grandmothers property. We would walk down and the trolley car would stop at a place which she had had designated when they gave them the right of way to put the trolley through there and we would get on in later years, we would meet the Hely family also, of course, and we would go up and change at the Westfield Junction and take the trolley on up. But that was only for a few years that we did that. After that my mother drove us to school and picked us up after school and took us home. Or my grandmother would send a, the, I can recall in the very early days the man that worked for my grandmother coming to pick us up in a horse and buggy or a horse and carriage.
- Q: I remember Dr. Hely telling me that one of the reasons why he went to Public School instead of Parochial School was one of the reasons was that the transportation on the trolley car was free or partly free to public school students but to Holy Trinity Students it wasn't free.
- A: I don't recall anything about that. As a matter of fact the brief time that I went to school on the trolley car, I don't think that we had any special school tickets. I know they did have them later on but I think that was after the time that we were going to school. But of course "King" Hely is younger than I am. The reason that they were, the Hely's went to Public School as I recall, his father said that we all had to live and work together when we grew up and it was best if we started out going to school together.
- Q: But Shirley, you did go then to the old Lincoln School starting in 5th grade, and that took you through how many grades? Where did you go from there?

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- A: We went to Public School beginning, I went to public school beginning with the 5th grade and my sister was in the fourth grade. I believe my brother was about 6th or 7th grade. My older brother when he started going to public school and we went through 6th grade in Lincoln School. I do remember hearing from a friend of mine that I made in 7th grade when I went over to Washington School where all of the 7th and 8th grades from 4 schools were brought together, Gertrude Taylor told me, and she was in Grant School, that they always hated the Lincoln School May Day team because Lincoln School always won the Maypole Dance.
- Q: Shirley, do you recall who was the principal of Lincoln School when you went there?
- A: Yes, there was a Miss Penny who was the Principal of Lincoln School. Ah, I don't know that she taught any classes. I never had her as a teacher but I think she was the principal. I went to 5th and 6th grade at Lincoln
- Q: My favorite teacher there was Miss Apgar. You mentioned something very interesting about her brother, would you comment?
- A: I think Miss Apgar, who taught the 3rd grade in Lincoln School, of course I never had her, ah, she lived on, the corner of Park Street and Carleton Road and I believe there was a story which I think is recorded in either Mr. Hoffman's book on Westfield or possibly Mr. Philhower's book on Westfield, that her brother who was an amateur radio operator helped to detect the location and whereabouts of a German spy during the first World War. Also he was an amateur astronomer and some of his observations of the sky helped to locate and identify something that appears in the heavens, I don't recall exactly the year.
- Q: Well, the Apgar family was quite a family in town. The neice Virginia, went on to become a noted Doctor, I think you just mentioned she invented the Apgar Scale for measuring the normality of newborn children. To gett off on another subject, Shirley, everybody remembers their first automobile. Can you tell me a little bit about your memories about that?
- A: Ah, yes. I have no idea what year this was, but I know that we had our first car was called an Elmore and I don't think that anybody that I have ever talked to ever had an Elmore, but we did. In fact it produced such a lot of fumes when my father finally got it going that my mother said it should have been named the smellmore. Then later on my grandmother bought a Rio. A very early Rio from I don't know whether it was
 >Pinks that had the Rio or ah, agency or not, but I recall that she had a Rio with curtains that had to be adjusted and a man who sat, who cranked it and then hopped around and opened the door for her to get in and then he'd get in and off they'd drive.
- Q: >Pinks used to have the Willys Knight, I don't know whether they had the Rio or not.
- A: I don't know. I can't recall about that. But I do recall the first car we had and then we proceeded to have other cars later on, and I'm sure that I must have gotten my first driver's license when I was eligible to get one when I was 17. That was everybody's aspiration and I guess it still is when you achieve that age.
- Q: Do you recall a trip to the seashore? There used to be horrendous Saturday or Sunday trips to the seashore and then getting caught in traffic. Do you remember much about that?

15:00 MINUTES

- A: Yes, I recall that we went to the seashore and we packed a picnic basket and sometimes it seems to me it was necessary to open a picnic basket before we actually got down there. But we did go and we went over a bridge at Perth Amboy. I think it was called the Victory Bridge or maybe it was a wooden bridge before that we used to go over, but we went down to Asbury Park. For shorter excursions we used to go over to Seawarren to Boynton Beach and I recall that incredible as it sounds now, my brother swam from Boynton Beach over to Staten Island one day. Now that water is quite polluted and it almost, you can't think of anybody swimming in it. But it was a nice and not too far away bathing beach in those days and I think some people used to go there by trolley car too.
- Q: Before we started taping, Shirley, we were talking about early storage in Westfield and you mentioned Hutchinson's and I don't remember a thing about Hutchinson's myself. Where was it and what did they sell?
- A: Hutchinson's was a grocery store and a very good grocery store. It was on Elm Street this side of Wittke's store before you came to Schaefer's and for a while there was a ten cent store in there after Hutchinson's moved out. But it was a grocery store and as I said a very good grocery store and they had ah, a horse and wagon delivery. In the library there is a picture of Elm Street with all the wagons drawn up in very military formation in front of the store.
- Q: But would they have been competitors of Windfeldt's then, on Broad Street?
- A: They would be competitors except in certain things, yes, but Windfeldt's also had a meat department, a butcher and I don't recall, Hutchinson's had a butcher. I think they had the coffee dry groceries, things of that sort. But they did deliver because in the picture as I recall it there were six delivery wagons and horses lined up there.
- Q: Do you remember if Windfeldt's had the green, I think it was an electric wagon with hard rubber tires and Mr. Miller was the driver. Do you remember that?
- A: Yes, of course I remember that, and then you could telephone and have things delivered too and that was a great thing. I think people had a great deal easier time doing their marketing then than I have now when I have to go to the supermarket. Push the cart around, pull the things off the shelf, put them in the wagon, take them out, put them there for the girl to charge up, push the cart out to the car, load the bags into the car, drive them home, carry them into the house and unload them. But my mother could telephone to have the things delivered and a boy would carry them into the kitchen and hopefully she would have someone in the kitchen who would put them away.
- Q: It always seemed to me that being able to have a, that arrangement with one of the either Windfeldt's or Hutchinson's was a sign of affluence in Westfield. Ah, the bargain people went to the A & P in those days.
- A: Bill, I'm going back to the time before the A & P came to Westfield when there were just stores and when there weren't the stores that you telephoned, there were people who came around to the house. I can recall when we had an ice box and an ice man came around and you told him how many pounds of ice you wanted, then a vegetable man came around and you discussed how many pounds of spinach you would have...

Q: Can you remember the names of some of the people who came by? I know Reynolds used to have one of the ice wagons and it seems to me Willoughby had an ice wagon, didn't he?

A: Yes, I think you are right about that. I had forgotten that and I don't recall the name of the vegetable man. We also had a fish man who came around. I don't think we had a butcher. I know in England for many years, they had all sorts of people delivering, coming around with all sorts of things like that. We did have, this I recall very well, an ice cream cart in the summertime. And I can recall running out to get ice cream and the man would dip out the ice cream and put it in a cone and he had two sizes of cones, penny cones and five cent cones. And then he would fill your order and you would be very happy with what you had gotten and then he would drive on to the next house.

20:00 MINUTES

Q: Shirley, one of the great little shops when I was a kid was old Mr. Wittke the old gentlemen who had one arm and he had a rounded glass top counter with all the penny candies in it, oh, Mello Rolls and Mary Anne's, Mary Janes, the licorice and Tootsie Rolls, and you'd go in there in season to buy marbles, we used to get the clay glazed marbles, as well as the glass Aggies and ah, the Steelies and Jacks and it seems Fourth of July stuff we could get in there too. But do you recall that? You mentioned something on the phone about some incident with ah....

A: Yes, I do recall, I recall Mr. Wittke, well I, yes you're right, he did have one arm, I remember hearing that that arm was blown off at a Fourth of July celebration when they were firing a cannon which I think is now up on that little park on Mountain Avenue. But anyway, that was the story that I had heard, that he had lost his arm during the firing of a Fourth of July, of a cannon for a Fourth of July celebration. We did go in there and buy and he was open Sunday mornings and after Sunday School and Church we used to explain to my father that we had to go in there and get some candy if he was stopping in there to get a Sunday paper. Of course sometimes he would go over to get the paper on the corner of South Avenue and Westfield Avenue where Mr. Wendlandt sold newspapers. well, to go back to Elm Street, next to Wittke's was Hutchinson's grocery store which we discussed a minute ago.

And then I think came Schaefer's Dry Goods Store. And then as I recall there was a vacant lot and then there was Trainor's Feed and Grain Store, supplied all the feed that you needed for horses and what the grain was for, I don't really know except maybe some people had cattle, I don't know. But anyway, in front of Trainor's Store you'd go up a few steps and walk across and down a few steps and continue on the wooden sidewalks which were still extant there. In my early childhood. Then you came to the building which later on had Jarvis' Drug Store in it and I can't recall what was in it in the early days but I was told and I'm quite sure this is true, that that was the wooden railway station which had been moved when they built the stone railway station for the New Jersey Central Railway. And it's not so many years ago that they removed the shelter. Ah, I don't know in architectural terms what you call that, which came out along the front there, over the doors, but ah, I'm sure you can find somebody who can recall that. Then you came to what was known as the Randolph Building in my days which was the triangular building on the corner of Elm and Quimby, similar to the Flatiron Building in New York.

- Q: Yeah, it was our two storey Flatiron Building. Shirley, you mentioned to me about the grade crossing of the Central Railroad and the crossing keeper was a man named John Marsh, did you say? 25:00 MINUTES
- A: I think, now I don't know that that was in my time, but I remember hearing someone in my family say something about a Johnny Marsh who I believe was also the grade crossing man who was the town constable in those days. But I think that as Town Constable he may not have had very much to do, I'm sure you can verify this by looking in the town records.
- Q: We're going to start a little bit about your experiences working with Miss Gale in the old Library that's now the dress shop. And mentioning the Gale recalls the Bill Gale who was the druggist and pharmacist of one time on Broad Street and then later was seen all over town selling vanilla from door to door. And Bill Gale was a town institution, had a limp and him going about with his bag, do recall anything further about Bill that I don't remember?
- A: I recall his drugstore there on Broad Street, ah, I do remember that apparently he took to selling vanilla. I don't know how much vanilla he was able to sell but that was the one item that I know, that I remember in connection with him.
- Q: Well, now, Bill was Miss Gale's brother and as I grew up, Miss Gale was the, she was the institution at the Library, an institution in itself. But can you tell us a little bit about your experience there at the old Library?
- A: Oh, yes, I can recall going to the Library at a very early age. Miss Gale was the Librarian, I can recall also, when they instituted a program of having someone specially to deal with children's books. A children's librarian and ah, I believe Helen Reynolds was the first children's Librarian that we had. And that was a very good idea. After a while they moved the special collection of children's books downstairs to the basement of the old Library. That old Library which is now Felice's Dress Shop was built with contributions from townspeople and from grants from the Carnegie Foundation. In plans for it were started in 1904. It think it was about 1906 that actually that building was built.
- Q: In talking on the phone, Shirley, we were discussing the blacksmith shop that I remembered down by the Plaza about where the new motel is and you mentioned a further blacksmith shop up by Woodruff's Storage Place.
- A: I think there was a blacksmith's shop where Townsend's Storage Place is now. And I don't know which one it was but I do think there were two blacksmith shops in town. But I can give you the name of someone who will identify that for you. Ah, Bill, I thought I would like to mention one of the things that I remember. Maybe because we are having such a cold season now, and it gives me such pleasure to drive by Mindowaskin and see the young people and youngsters enjoying themselves going skating there. I can recall skating there when I was little and I can recall also that in those days we had a house, they took it down in the summer-time, I think it must have been a sort of a portable house, but they would put these frames up in the wintertime and they had glass windows in them but inside there was a nice warm stove. I think there were two

stoves, where you could go in and get warm. And you could go in there and put your skates on and then it was right at the edge of the ice so that you could skate out. But this was wonderful to have and I remember very many happy days there. Of course that was in the days when the Traynor's house was still on the property where the Municipal Building and the Town Hall is now.

Q: You called it the Pavilion earlier and that's the name that I always remembered for that structure and I'd forgotten, but yes it was, it was put up every winter and I'd forgotten that.

A: And, we, ah, used to have great fun skating there with great snap-the-whip games going on, ah with somebody invariably getting, falling down and getting hurt during the course of this, but it was great....

Q: Snap-the-whip and Tickle-Bender and that rock there, ah, in the back section of the pond, this was something to be jumped over and invariably somebody's skates would catch on the rock and we'd have another broken arm or shoulder and it seemed to me Paul Godfrey was the greatest I ever say at jumping over that rock.

30:00 MINUTES

A: I don't recall that.

Q: Well, Shirley, thank you very much for the very pleasant session we've had here today and thank you.