

HOBOKEN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEWEE: VIOLET DADICH HAAS

INTERVIEWER: MARY FLANAGAN

DATE: 11 MARCH 2001

SIDE ONE

Q: We're looking at pictures from Sam's Grocery & Delicatessen, which was on Hudson here, near Fourth, at 332 Hudson, where the municipal parking garage is now.

A: No.

Q: No? What's there now?

A: That's 332 Hudson Street. The building still stands. It's an apartment now. It belongs to the same family that owned the place when we had the restaurant.

Q: And what's their name?

A: Well, they were "Prezioso's." The granddaughter lives in there now. She's Costellano. She lives in that apartment.

Q: So when the seamen used to come to the luncheonette, you told me you used to open at 6:00 in the morning?

A: The Longshoremen came. There was this one guy who came from Brooklyn, so he was there early. He was the one who actually was a little obese, and he didn't like it when other people watched him eat. So he would come in and have a couple toasted rolls and coffee, and the Longshoremen would come in for boxes full of coffee they would take back to the ship for the other longshoremen. One would come in to take for maybe a dozen other guys. So that's how they got the coffee. When my son was small, later on, he would be the one who --

Q: Did he deliver?

A: No, my son was only two or three years old. My father, his grandfather, would pick him up in the morning and then bring him home later in the day. He would see empty boxes, and he didn't let Grandpa go before he picked up those empty boxes.

Q: But you needed them.

A: We needed them, yes, for the coffee. For the docks. The ships.

Q: So did you have any regulars? Do you remember their names?

A: I am not good with names. I don't remember the names, I really don't remember names, but some of them I still see. I used to see this guy -- I don't know his name -- and because of the Longshoremen's Clinic, in Newark, I would see some of the guys who used to come into our restaurant. Now there's no more clinic; they discontinued the Longshoremen's Clinic.

Q: Oh, that was where the police station is now, right?

A: Well, that's where it was a long time ago. Then they just had Newark and New York offices. In Hoboken, it was down where the police station is. That was their clinic.

Q: Did your mother work here too?

A: Yes. She worked in the restaurant. She worked in the kitchen. We all chipped in. We didn't have other help. But when we first opened, actually, we didn't even know how to make scrambled eggs. I told Terry Costellano -- Her father helped us make the first scrambled eggs. Our restaurant's open and we don't know -- We had a guy who was a chef, an old guy, Croatian guy, and he helped cook the stuff.

Q: Did your mother make any Croatian specialties?

A: No, we didn't make Croatian specialties. Let's see. We made regular food, restaurant food, but, of course, it was like homemade; homestyle.

Q: This was when? About 19--?

A: Well, this picture was taken in 1957. The store was opened in '56, probably. Fifty-six, because I graduated from secretarial school, I worked in the office, my father decided to open the store, so I had to quit the job and my sisters had to quit school, and go to work in here. He had no knowledge of a restaurant. He just probably wanted to have his family together.

Q: So you could work together, and be around each other.

A: I don't know what his reason was.

Q: When you were in Croatia the whole family worked together on a farm, didn't they?

A: On a farm. Yes.

Q: And restaurants?

A: I guess so. I don't know. It wasn't surprising to me that we knew nothing, because we didn't go to restaurants to eat. I don't know if we went to a restaurant a couple of times, before we opened the business. We had no knowledge of it.

Q: Well, you did learn how to make scrambled eggs.

A: Oh, yes. We learned everything fast.

Q: And you were saying that the seamen liked ham and eggs?

A: From Holland American Lines, the guys would come in -- the young guys, the seamen -- they would come in, and they loved ham and eggs, and they loved ice cream. Ice cream. Because we had a soda fountain. There was a soda fountain, so in those days you made banana splits -- Sundaes. They loved sundaes. My husband loved sundaes, too. That's how I met him. In the restaurant. He was always stopping in.

Q: And where did he work?

A: Oh, he worked for the shipyards. He worked for Bethlehem Steel, so he was a machinist job, so he didn't work too much. So he would take his radio and go to the park, but first stop in for an ice cream sundae. That's when he met me.

Q: An ice cream sundae, and you --

A: Well, I didn't even know he was interested in me at that time. I didn't even know he was interested, until they asked to be godmother to his niece and nephew. I really didn't.

Q: So do you remember any characters who used to come and drink coffee and spend all their time there?

A: Well, yes, there were some people. There was this one guy (I don't want to mention the name; he's still around). He would come in and sit on a cup of coffee a long, long time. And he was wondering why didn't we give him a free

cup of coffee? We didn't know the etiquette in those times. Coffee was ten cents a cup. I mean, what are you making?

Q: Sure, sure.

A: Because that's a cup of coffee. He would actually spend the day there. He wasn't working at that time. He would mostly go to his car and read books and come in. But he lived in the neighborhood then.

Q: There's a picture over in the post office of the top floor of City Hall, when that was the "shape-up room," I think it was for the waterfront, for loading the ships. Is that the sort of "shape-up" place your husband went to?

A: No, this was for the longshoremen. My husband was shipyard. The shipyard is where they are fixing ships. This was longshoremen; they were loading and unloading the ships.

Q: Like the movie, *On the Waterfront*. Do you remember when they were making the movie? Were they around at all? Did they come for coffee to your restaurant.

A: No, I don't think we were in business at that time. I don't remember that.

Q: You're right. It was probably '55. I think they were here in '55.

A: We were not in business in '55, yet.

Q: Right. You didn't come into business until '56.

A: Yes. So, no, I didn't see anybody.

Q: And with the rooming houses -- Did you have seamen in your rooming houses?

A: We had mostly seamen; mostly seamen. I owned four houses at that point, so 315 Hudson Street was mostly railroad guys. They lived in Pennsylvania, but they worked on the railroads so they would go back home on weekends. The others, the seamen, yeah. They were characters, because they would be on a ship for so long, that

when they'd come they would just get drunk, most of them. The only one I think didn't drink was Mr. Schweitzer. I remember Mr. Schweitzer. Mr. Schweitzer was a nice, clean man, and he loved his music so he had this big radio. Actually, he died, not in my house, but I was helping him out, and he died, I think, in University Hospital in Newark.

Q: And where were the seamen from? You said Mr. Schweitzer was German?

A: Mr. Schweitzer, I don't think he was German. Maybe from Switzerland or something. They always dream of going back home, but they don't make it. They don't make it. I had names and everything, but I'm not too good at remembering them.

Q: Well, it was a long time ago. So here we are, with the rooming houses, and there was one rooming house of railroad men, who came and stayed during the week, then went home to Pennsylvania on weekends. Were there any characters among the railroad men? Any more characters?

A: My mother-in-law lived in the house where the railroad men were, actually. Characters? The guy who took all those pictures on the waterfront? In the post office right now? He lived in one of my houses, too.

Q: Oh, really.

A: Yes. Red Barrett. Donald. His name was Donald but they called him Red, because he used to have red hair. Now it's white.

Q: Oh, he's quite a photographer.

A: Beautiful pictures. He took them during that time. He worked down there, too. I didn't realize, until I went to the post office and he told me they were there, so that's when I took a look.

Q: So you had the railroad men, and then you had the seamen. My aunt taught at St. Peter & Paul School -- in about 1959-1960, and she said that at that time the ships would pull in; they needed work in dry dock; the families would be in town for about four or five months, and the kids

would go to school. In other words, on ships from some countries the seamen, or some of them, traveled with their families.

A: I didn't know that.

Q: You didn't have any families? You just had individuals?

A: Yes.

Q: I see. Yes, these men seemed to live on the ship with their families, most of the time.

A: Well, there was a seamen's home down here on Hudson Street.

Q: Oh, there was?

A: There was a seamen's home right here -- It's been knocked down. The parking lot that used to be Shoprite? The seamen's house was there. Because the people who took care of the seamen's house, once they were closing

up, the guy asked if I could take in a couple guys he cared about. One man was very poor. He would pick up cigarette butts off the street and make a cigarette, and he would buy chop meat and keep it on his window sill. He didn't have a refrigerator. I don't know how he didn't get sick from that. The other guy had money, and he wouldn't cash his check. He lived upstairs, over me. He would not cash his check, and he stopped eating. He didn't want to eat anymore. He wrote himself notes: "Old men live too long." That he lived too long, and he wanted those checks turned back to the government; he didn't want to cash them. I have no idea what happened, because the guy who took care of the seamen's building, he was his executor. So I have no idea what became of those checks. But he had checks, and he had notes with them. But he just refused to eat. I used to go upstairs and give him water, or try to feed him oatmeal or something. But he refused to eat. So he only lived -- But he was happy when he came in. Because finally he had his own refrigerator, and he was able to cook on a little hotplate and stuff. But he decided not to eat. He gave up. So that was sad. I fed him. I put the straw to his mouth, just so he could drink a little. His mouth was dry. When he died, finally, he didn't die upstairs. I think finally they had to take him out and put him in a hospital. There's a

lot of sad things, because these people didn't see their families, if they had families. Anyway, they were not in touch for many, many years.

We had one character next door in 208. They called him Porkchop. He was a cook. I think the food tasted good, but anybody who looked at him wouldn't believe it. I had a swimming pool in the back and he said, "Oh, why don't you use that swimming pool again? I'll help you." Because he liked to watch the girls swimming there. His room was right there, close to the swimming pool. Actually, I have a picture of my swimming pool. I'll show you. His window was right overlooking. I think he liked to see my sister in-law in her bathing suit.. Nineteen-sixty. Look at this.

Q: Oh, that's a wonderful swimming pool. It's a beautiful swimming pool. You must have had water -- maybe the owners --

A: It was the only one in Hoboken. Because somebody said something and they actually came to inspect, to see if it was inground. But it was above-ground. Because I had the length of three houses.

Q: Oh. So you had three backyards, all together --

A: You see, this tree is in 206, so 208-210, this swimming pool is going back there. I have some other pictures with people on it, but the deck over 206, and this tree -- my husband made a swing there. There were sumac trees, and they were not too strong, so sometimes, actually, you didn't get the sun because there were three trees -- one tree here, this tree, and then another tree there -- so they would kind of cover up the things. But look how nice it is.

Q: Oh, it's beautiful. And you have beach chairs, and a railing all around --

A: We had lounging chairs and things, and then we had this backyard. You see the tables here? It was beautiful in the back.

Q: So was this for the people in the rooming houses? So they could swim?

A: No. No, that was private. That was family. My sister-in-law would come with her three kids, I had three kids, and at first we had a little kiddie pool. Then we went to this, because my husband could not swim. He wanted to make sure his kids could swim.

Q: Oh. That was a good way -- So they can swim?

A: Yes, they can swim, but I think when my youngest son was small, actually, he was afraid to go into the bigger pool. He wanted the kiddie pool, and somebody pushed him in. I was pushed into the swimming pool once. Not my swimming pool, but at "Tall Man" Mountain Park? That's a horrible experience if somebody pushes you in. You have no idea where you're going -- where are you? -- you're so disoriented. I was maybe nineteen years old, but I couldn't swim.

Q: Did you learn to swim?

A: Yeah, I learned to swim. But, actually, when I was a little girl I lived by my grandparents. They lived

on the sea, so they used to have that -- What is that gourd thing that -- It's big like this. It's like little "gourds" but only big, and they emptied that somehow and it becomes like buoys, for you to learn to swim?

Q: Oh, yes. Uh huh.

A: You string up two of them, you lay down on that, and that keeps you afloat.

Q: Oh, that must have been beautiful.

A: It was. It was really beautiful. Nobody could believe that that was back there. Because this was all painted a beautiful aqua color, and the pool, also, had a blue lining so it gives you an aquamarine color. We had plants up there. It was beautiful.

Q: So when did you take the pool down?

A: Oh, I don't know what year. Because it needed a lot of repair and stuff, constantly. This was wood, so a lot of times -- It was a lot of work, because my husband was

very fussy. He was immaculate. All the decks were painted every summer. Before the pool is open everything's painted. It looked beautiful. It was nice.

Q: What else do you have over there? Do you have more pictures?

A: No, this is not from the [?] -- This is just my family and my kids. That's my Sime. This is years later, when I had the garden on the garage roof. See how many pots I had?

Q: Oh, my goodness, yes.

A: But you should see -- I don't know where the pictures are, of course, but when everything was in bloom, when everything was growing, a lot of people admired it. You could see the tomatoes and stuff hanging down, against the fence. But I got rid of the pots.

Q: You got rid of them?

A: Yeah. Some pots are still up there, not that I'm using it for any vegetables. The pots are in the front now, most of them. That's the ones from up here. I took this picture from my bedroom window. It was so beautiful, looking outside with the snow falling down. There's nothing like virgin snow, when it's just hanging there, no breeze to knock it off the things. I'm always ready with the camera.

Q: You are, aren't you. So do you remember what it was like when you first got here? Do you remember your first day here?

A: I came by ship. We docked close to Pennsylvania or something. I don't remember. Is there a Closter, Pennsylvania?

Q: I don't know. There's a Closter, New Jersey.

A: Yeah. But the thing is, I think we landed someplace. I don't know where. I know somebody came to pick us up. Now, the experience when we got off the ship -- I was

crying. I felt like I was leaving home again, because we were twenty-three days on the ship.

Q: Twenty-three? Where did you get on the ship?

A: I got on the ship in "Split," in Croatia (formerly Yugoslavia). When I was there it was Yugoslavia, only recently -- then they stopped. It was like a cargo ship; there were only about forty passengers, so they stopped in Casablanca.

Q: Oh. Did you get off?

A: Yeah, we got off. I was five days in Casablanca, a few days or whatever in Tangiers. Of course, I don't remember those things too much. It was the first time I ate a banana. I couldn't eat the banana. It was the first time I had seen a banana. There I was, fifteen and a half years old, the first time I see a banana. And the cars. I couldn't believe all the cars over here, because we had no cars. All the streets were full of cars. That was something.

On the ship we had a breakfast that was like cold cuts and stuff, and we would eat that. For dinner or something my mother would take beer, and my sister was only, well, she was twelve years old. She drank beer with my Mom. So when we got off the ship and we would stop on the road somewhere, to have something to drink, my father asked us what we wanted to drink. His youngest daughter said, "Beer." He nearly dropped dead. She didn't know. She drank beer with Mom. If you asked my Mom, did she drink beer, she'd say she never drank beer. My mother denied it, even, that Mitzi asked for beer.

Mitzi's a nickname, actually. My younger sister.

Q: How do you spell your maiden name?

A: My maiden name is Dadich.

Q: And what's Mitzi's real name?

A: Milka.

Q: And what was your other sister's name?

A: Anna.

Q: That's an easy one.

A: What's my name? You want to ask for my
real name?

Q: Sure. Tell me your real name. Spell it for
me.

A: Ljubica.

Q: Oh, it's your license plate.

A: Yeah. But it's Ljubica. My license plate is
short, because they only allowed me that many letters.
Ljubica. It's a flower.

Q: And what does Milka mean?

A: Milka, for Milica. I don't know. She was
really Milka. Milka's like milk. But maybe her name was

"Militis." I don't know. They called her Milka. Milka. Well, not everything means something; not all the names mean something.

Q: You were lucky you got a name that has an easy equivalent.

A: A flower. Yes.

Q: And it's also a girl's name, in English. So you arrived, and your father had the house ready for you when you got here?

A: He rented an apartment at 207 Willow Avenue, top floor. It's not five. It's the fifth floor -- Yeah. Fifth floor. Now it's Applied Housing there, all those houses. So 207 doesn't have an entrance; it's maybe 209 or something, that would have an entrance. Because they've eliminated a lot of entrances.

Q: Have you been in there? They carved it down the middle.

A: You know, I haven't been there.

Q: And your apartments -- there were some facing the front and some facing the back.

A: Yes. Just like they did on Washington Street. I've been in those because I went to see my friends there, some friends. So my younger sister was sent a lot, up and down those stairs, because they figured she could climb a lot. For every little thing she went down.

Q: But it must have been very different from living on a farm, everything on one level or two levels, and to have to go up and down all these steps. You just have a lot of climbing. I was homesick, really. I think I took it the hardest. I was homesick. I cried when I left the country, then I cried when I came here. For some reason I was very homesick, and I always wanted to go back someday, for grapes and figs. I finally went back, after forty-seven years. That was a long time, and my desire for figs and grapes is not there anymore. I love to eat them, but I don't have to have them. Not that I crave them anymore. I still have a mark from falling from a fig tree. I paid dearly for my figs.

I just came across my house, in the old country. I think I showed them to you once, but anyway --

Q: You showed me --

A: -- there used to be a big fig tree there, next to the house, by the house, and underneath that were big rocks that could really hurt you badly, when you fall down. I must have been very young, because they told me I split the nose and split the lip, and nobody took me to the doctor.

Q: Oh, you have scars.

A: I have this, and you can see a tiny --

Q: -- tiny little scars.

A: -- but that was when I was a little girl.

Q: So you came and, did you go to school right away?

A: I went to school -- Okay. I came in July, July 13th we arrived, in '52. Then the first September I went to school, and they put me in the tenth grade. I didn't speak a word of English. In those days nobody paid attention to you. There was no special education for you, somebody to teach you the language or anything, but I did go to night school. That's where I learned English. In night school. Even my mother went. She was in my husband's class.

Q: And where was the night school?

A: 4th and Bloomfield.

Q: And the classes were there, for anybody?

A: Yes. Any language you spoke, you came in. Oh, yes. My husband and my mother had an Italian teacher. She spoke more Italian than she taught them English. I think they learned Italian in class. That's what he remembers. Because I did speak to him. I have a picture of him and my mother, in the same class. Never did they know he was going to be her son-in-law.

Q: Oh, that is an interesting coincidence. So you had night-school classes, and then did you go back to school in September?

A: Not the following year. I had one year of high school, then I worked in a factory here. There was a "Marvel" bulb company, right here on Newark Street. Light bulbs. I worked on a machine where you have the bulb, the glass; you have the other gismo that goes in there; the wires, the metal thing. My job was to put the metal thing that goes around a "wire" thing. That seals it, and cuts that other wire and stuff. So my job was to make sure that goes in. So I didn't go to school.

SIDE TWO

Q: -- spoke to your father and said -- I'm sure they thought you were much too bright to work in a factory.

A: I was always good in school, so I went to secretarial school. I graduated from Drake Secretarial in Jersey City, on Bergen Avenue, and then my first job was at "Plochman & Harrison," in the "Lackawanna" Warehouse. They were on the seventh floor, and they made mustard, actually. I

worked in the office, smelling of vinegar all -- It was a one-girl office, just me, and I had to do everything -- call the truckers, make the checks, do the billing, take the dictation. All that stuff, so that's what I did. My first job, and that's the job my father took us out for that restaurant. I had to leave there, and then he bought the restaurant.

Q: Well, after smelling that mustard day after day, maybe the restaurant seemed pretty good in comparison.

A: Yeah, everything smelled of that. You'd go on the bus -- I'd take the bus home. You don't smell it when you're in there, but you smell it when you go outside.

Q: Did it get into your clothes and everything?

A: Yeah, it got into your clothes. Because the tank of vinegar was right there, behind my office, which also had a door to it, I guess, so the smell was --

Q: What was the name of the mustard? Do you remember?

A: It was "Plochman & Harrison," they called it.

Q: And that was the name of the mustard?

A: Well, they made mustard for -- You know how you have a business or store or something. They made different mustards, to the specifications, for your business.

Q: So you could give them a recipe, and they would make it for you?

A: They would make the mustard for those people. I still think I have one of those glasses. It came in, like, a mug, and you could have the mug. Some of them came in a mug, so you had a mug. You had a cover, and you had a mug.

Q: And the light bulb factory. What was the name of that? Do you remember the name of that company?

A: I don't know. Was it "Marvel?" I don't remember.

Q: Where were they?

A: Do you know where Neumann Leather is?

Q: Yes.

A: This was facing Newark Street. Not
Observer the highway, but Newark Street. So I think the
building is no longer in existence. I would have to pass it. I
see things building up there, so --

Q: I think there's a strip mall now, behind
Neumann Leather, isn't there?

A: Oh. You mean across the street. Yeah.
Across the street. When you go there, there's an auto store
there. Maybe like next door to it was this other place, where I
worked. This is an extremely hot place to work in, because all
these things are lit up; all these jets. You would have, oh, I
don't know, twenty, thirty bulbs going around at the same
time, and you had to actually make it fast. Because I'd put
that thing on, then make sure that one wire's up.

Q: You were fifteen or sixteen years old?

A: I was sixteen. I was sixteen that October, the first October. That was the first time I ever celebrated a birthday, the first time I ever got a present.

Q: Oh, really?

A: I never had a birthday before, in my life. Sixteenth birthday. But all of us. We didn't have any birthdays.

Q: Well, did you have your "Feast Day" at home?

A: No, we had nothing. We had nothing. There was no such thing as celebrating a birthday.

Q: Or Feast Day.

A: Or Name Day, you're calling it. Name Day. Like in Germany, they celebrate Name Day. A lot of places

celebrate Name Day. But no, we had nothing. Ourselves. I don't know about anybody else, but I don't remember anybody having birthdays around me.

Q: So it was your sixteenth birthday. You had your first birthday celebration, then you went to work at the lightbulb factory.

A: Yes. The following year. But it was really sad to sit there. You feel like a dope, actually, when you don't understand the language. So my feelings go, always, to these minorities, because I've been there. I've been poor. I've been not understanding the language, so I have sympathy for everybody. And you know me better, right?

Q: Sure. Oh, I do.

A: So I do go back. No matter if I be \$10 million -- Would you consider that rich? I wouldn't feel any different than I feel today, because no money is going to make me different. There would just be more to share. More to share.

Q: So did you have to stand on your feet all day, in this hot factory?

A: No, you sat. No. You sat there.

Q: But you had to keep up with this machine.

A: You had to keep up, yes. They had all these jets burning, so come summertime or whatever, this was extremely hot, and sweat pouring off you.

Q: I'm sure. And some people did that for years and years and years.

A: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. And you were lucky you got it. Because all these immigrants, they'd take the jobs nobody else wants, and they're lucky to have it because it's still a job, even if you're working so hard and not making big money. But little by little, you're making some money.

Q: How fast were the machines?

A: I don't know. It was going fast, and I had to work fast. For me.

Q: It must have been hard to keep up with, I imagine.

A: Yes. Especially --

Q: How would you check the lightbulbs and stuff?

A: They would check them. Actually, they would light up. If you didn't do the job right, if that metal part was not on the bulb right, somebody else would have to take that off and correct it. So you have to do it right.

Q: Do you remember if you got paid by the piece? Did you get paid by the lightbulb?

A: I don't know what my first checks were, but I know my office job was \$45.00 a week.

Q: Forty-five dollars a week. That was actually pretty good in those days, wasn't it?

A: I don't know. I don't think -- My boss was very cheap. He didn't give me a raise. You know what? He blamed -- Now I could do excellent work. I did excellent work. But he would still say -- because I was an immigrant -- I think I spelled better than a person who was born in this country --

Q: Well, from what I've seen -- the poetry you've written and stuff -- you do.

A: Somehow, I would always think in my language, then I would spell -- I would read it in my head, then I could spell it. Because I really could not spell out that way. I would have to write it. It was easier for me to write it. But I always thought in my language, then wrote it down. But spelling was easy for me, somehow. And if I was given an opportunity to go to college and stuff, I think I would have done very well. Then I was taken off the jobs, because once the restaurant -- Once I got married I wasn't working in the restaurant. I worked for "June Dairy" in that other -- I always worked in fancy places. (Laughs) "June Dairy." The building

still stands there, as you come off the turnpike. Yeah. That building. That building.

Q: And what did you do there?

A: I was in the billing department.

Q: Were you a secretary there?

A: No, I was in the billing department. I worked in the billing department, so I wasn't a secretary. I was doing the bills and making things like that. They sold eggs and cheese and butter, and all those things. One day I slipped on the steps and I had a cut on my head. They paid me \$1,300. That was a big thing, then.

Q: Yes. So you stayed with them until --

A: Until we bought the place. I stayed with "June Dairy" until my husband and I bought the place in 1958. The restaurant. So we're going back to the restaurant. My first son was born there. My second son was born there. Then I was six months pregnant when I had the bursitis, and I

had to close the store. I couldn't work. That's when I moved into here. This was my bedroom here, when we moved in first. Because we didn't have time to fix everything up so fast. My bedroom was here. Did I tell you the story where this guy walked -- I opened the door. I thought my husband was coming home, and I had my little baby here. Did I tell you this?

Q: No!

A: The door downstairs was not locked. In those days not many front doors were locked. Today you can't do that. There was a bar across the street here, and I heard somebody walking up the steps. So I thought my husband was coming home, I opened the door, and there was a guy in a uniform.

Q: A military uniform?

A: Yeah. He pushed himself in, and I pushed myself out, because I can't get help if I'm in here with him. I pushed myself out and I ran downstairs. I called for help,

because my little baby was here. Joey's crib was next to my bed. Sam and Fritz were in their room.

QQ: There's a triple bunk bed in there.

Q: Oh, yeah? The boys slept one on top of the other?

A: Yeah. When the baby got bigger. There was a triple bunk, yeah.

Q: And who slept in the back room?

A: Well, we didn't have that fixed yet. So it took time to fix that.

Anyway, this guy grabbed -- The police car was going by, and I was screaming out there. I had two guys living upstairs, one guy downstairs, and nobody came to my yells. So the police car came by, and I was frantic. I said, "There's a guy in my apartment!" So he kept banging on the door; he said, "Open up." Because this was a slam lock; you just closed the door. So the guy opened the door, and he had my Sammy in his arms. So the policeman said, "Put the baby down. Put

the baby down." He was disoriented, I think, the man. He finally put the baby down and they took him down to the police station. And I had to go there too. I was in my pajamas, but I had to go down there. Then, finally, the guys from upstairs watched my kids; I had to go press charges.

Q: Who was he?

A: He was a professor from Stevens.

Q: No kidding.

A: What is that that they teach --?

Q: ROTC.

A: Yeah. Uh huh, yeah. He was drinking across the street, and he was disoriented, whatever. He didn't mean any harm, but what do you do?

Q: Oh, how scary it must have been.

A: That was so scary. Later on, they came with stories that I was screaming out the window. How could I scream out the window? I ran right out. But people always make up things. Then they thought, "Oh, maybe she drank at a bar or something." I never went in a bar. I can't say that for my husband, but, no. But my husband didn't come home until the morning, so all this happened without him being here.

Q: He worked nights at that point?

A: He worked the night shift. He worked, actually, at that time -- Let's see. Not Bethlehem Steel anymore. He worked for Bethlehem Steel at one point. Then he worked for "Todd" Shipyards in Hoboken. Later on they closed that, so he worked for "Todd" Shipyards in Brooklyn. I don't remember the years now. But yeah, that was '62. It was 1962. Yeah, he was still, I think, over here.

QQ: [Violet's granddaughter, Vanessa speaks]
My Daddy was born in 1962.

A: Not your Daddy. Uncle Joe was born in 1962. That was my last one.

QQ: Yeah. And my Daddy was four.

A: Oh, okay. "My Daddy was four in 1962." I didn't hear that part.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to say?

A: I don't know what else to say. You know me. I keep talking, and when you want me to say something --

Q: Well, you've told us some wonderful things. I don't think anybody knows about the lightbulb factory. I've never heard that mentioned. And the mustard factory.

A: There was the factory at the Lackawanna Warehouse.

Q: Yes. So those were two events they might be able to look into further, and find out more about. Because they're very interested -- For the history project, they're very interested in all the industries that were in Hoboken. Of

course, the big ones, like the shipyards, we know about. But there were a lot of small industries, too.

A: Oh, there were a lot of them.

Q: They know about the shipyards, of course. They know about Maxwell House. They know about -- What are some of the other factories that were mentioned. I can't think of the names.

A: I'm not good at remembering things, but I think it was Marvel Light bulbs. Because it was right here, in the back of Neumann Leather. There was a building that was also -- a red brick building -- and you went upstairs. It was facing North Street. I don't know. I don't even know if it's still standing. I doubt it, but I'm going to make a point to look at it, if I'm going into this detail of this stuff.

Q: Okay. We can finish up now.

AWARDS from page 4

many other ways. Thursday, he was honored for his general volunteerism.

While employed in financial services, Gordon has often spoken out on town budgets at City Council meetings, and has written many letters to the newspaper.

Gordon got his award just in time this past Thursday. The following day, he moved to San Antonio, Texas to start a new job.

Gordon was honored with the first "Hoboken Life Award" for his years of service to the community.

Paul Neshamkin, Gordon's neighbor for 25 years and a long-time friend, presented Gordon with the award and

truly enjoyed my 25 years in Hoboken. It will always be a part of me."

Islands and boats and factories

The recipient of the Environmental Award was Alice Broquist, who organized the Hoboken Islands Association, a group of volunteers who tend to gardening and upkeep of the center islands on 11th Street.

Broquist was lauded for her ability since 1998 to collaborate with the city's Parks Department, community helpers, and local condominium asso-

"I'm not affiliated. I'm not associated. I'm a loner."

— Helen Hirsch

called him a great "respector of education." Neshamkin said that it was this respect that led Gordon to first run for school board in 1991.

Neshamkin said Gordon exposed over \$860,000 in overexpenditures in the district, and generally improved the school system's fiscal health.

He also mentioned the time Gordon, a Navy veteran, served as a Grand Marshall of the Memorial Day Parade.

"We almost formally forgot to thank him," Neshamkin said emotionally. "Hoboken loses a friend."

Gordon was touched by the award. "There's no better place to spend literally my last hours in Hoboken," he said. "I'm a better man for having been among you."

Gordon said in an interview last week that he loved the way people in Hoboken were "genuinely friendly" and willing to help in tough times.

"If you walk down Washington Street, you'll run into at least three people you know," Gordon said. "I've

ciations to make the 11th Street corridor one of the most appealing in the city.

Sandy Sobanski and David Downs were awarded the Community Service Award for their work with the Hoboken Cove Community boat-house.

Sobanski lost her home in town and most of her possessions in a fire last year, and has since moved to New York City. Yet, she remained a driving force in bringing the boathouse and free kayaking program to Hoboken.

Sobanski said, "The community was really great to me during the fire."

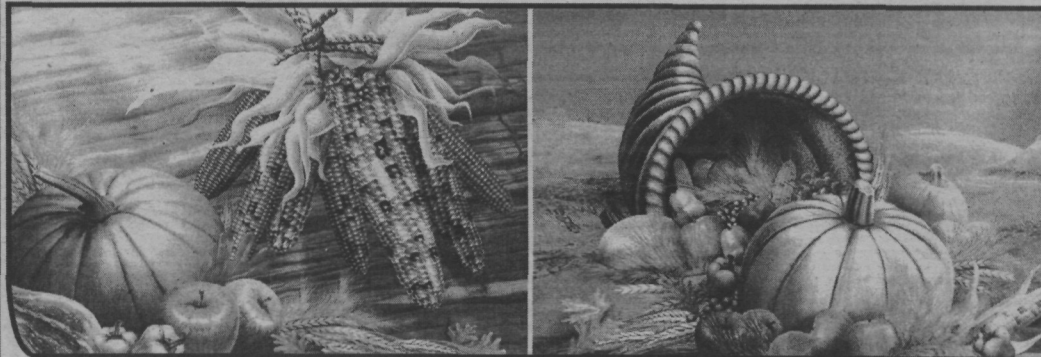
Downs has since taken over the boathouse operation, with Sobanski still involved, and they hope to play an integral part in the boathouse planned for Weehawken Cove.

The Saving Our History Award was given to Tim Daly and Tom Newman for their "efforts in mounting a cam-

see **AWARDS** page 7

www.hobokenreporter.com

WISHING YOU, YOUR FAMILY, AND FRIENDS A DAY OF THANKS...



BCB
COMMUNITY BANK

**WE WILL BE CLOSED THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 27, 2008**

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING
FROM BCB COMMUNITY BANK**

104 AVE C • 510 BROADWAY • 860 BROADWAY IN BAYONNE
229 WASHINGTON STREET IN HOBOKEN **201-823-0700**

www.BCBcommunitybank.com

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, EQUAL HOUSING LENDER, MEMBER FDIC

DEATH NOTICES

THE HUDSON REPORTER NEWSPAPERS

HASS, VIOLET. Mass for Violet (Glavan) Haas, 72, formerly of Hoboken, will be held Nov. 24 at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Hoboken. She died at home Nov. 18 in Mission, Kan. Born in Croatia, she lived in Hoboken from 1952 until she moved to Kansas a year and a half ago to live with one of her sons. Haas was a homemaker and a published poet. She was a member of the Rosary Society of Ss. Peter & Paul Church. Survivors include three daughters, Barbara, Mary and Bobbi; three sons, Fritz, Sime and Josef; two sisters, Ana Dendulk and Emily Glavan; and five grandchildren.

MAGARELLI, BENEDETTO. Mass for Benedetto Magarelli, 90, of Hoboken, was held Nov. 19 at St. Francis Church, Hoboken. He died Nov. 16 at home. Born in Molfetta, Italy, he moved to Hoboken in the 40s, working for more than 40 years at T&M Contractors. He served for eight years in the Italian navy. Survivors include his wife, Carmella (Amato) Magarelli; two sons, Giuseppe, and his wife Eileen, and Lorenzo, and his wife Chari; four grandchildren, Dina, Joseph, Nicole and Melissa; and a great-grandchild.

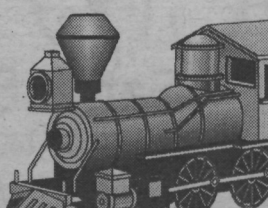
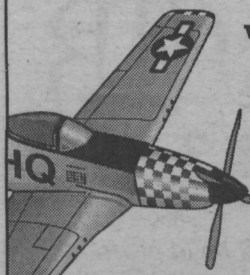


RIDGEFIELD HOBBY

North Jersey's Most Unique Hobby Shop
508 Broad Avenue, Ridgefield NJ

Specializing In All Gauges Of Model Trains • Expert Train Repairs
Plastic Models • Wooden Model Kits • Large Selection Model Paints
Model Rockets • Stamp & Coin Supplies • Large Magazine Selection
Die-Cast Models • School Projects — We Buy & Sell Lionel Trains

www.ridgefieldhobby.com



201-943-2636 • Fax 201-943-0238

email: rhobby@ridgefieldhobby.com

Vespa
JERSEY CITY



NOW OPEN!

Fuel your soul, not your ride. The Vespa LX gets nearly 60 mpg.* See the LX and other Vespa products at your local dealer now in Jersey City.

Vespa Jersey City 247 Tenth Street 201-VESPA JC (201-837-7252)
www.vespajc.com

©PIAGGIO 2008. PIAGGIO AND VESPA ARE U.S. AND WORLDWIDE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THE PIAGGIO GROUP OF COMPANIES. OBEY LOCAL TRAFFIC SAFETY LAWS AND ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, APPROPRIATE EYEWEAR AND PROPER APPAREL. *GAS MILEAGE VARIES DEPENDING ON WEIGHT, SPEED AND RIDING CONDITIONS.