

**Oral History Interview**  
**Daniel D'Arcy**  
**WH081**

(written transcript and digital audio)

On May 21, 2010 Daniel D'Arcy was interviewed at the Evergreen Senior Center by Brenda Velasco at 11:30 A.M. Also interviewing were Samantha Czapiak of Colonia (CMS), Madison Kaye of Colonia (CMS) and Julian Palermo of Colonia (CMS). In the audience was Nancy Paugh from Woodbridge Board of Education, Supervisor of the Gifted and Talented.

*Brenda Velasco:* This time we're going to start with you Samantha asking the first question.

**1. Identify individual-name, section, date of birth.**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* My name is Daniel D'Arcy. I live in Colonia and my date of birth is 9/15/50.

*Julian:* My birthday is 9/17.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Really, you must be a Virgo?

*Julian:* Yes.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, Julian you're going to be number two.

**2. How long have you lived in Woodbridge?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well, when I lived in Woodbridge I didn't even know I lived in Woodbridge because I lived in Colonia.

*Brenda Velasco:* See, this is the problem we have some time but (Woodbridge is) where your tax is paid.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* That's right. Well in number twelve I'm going to give a lecture for about twenty minutes and there will be a question and answer period afterward.

**3. Why did you or your family originally move to Woodbridge?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* I grew up in Colonia. We moved to Colonia from Belleville in 1955 and I graduated from Colonia High School in 1969. From there I worked a year, went to Middlesex County College for a little bit. Then I went to college in Wisconsin, a small school out in Wisconsin called Milton College and got my Bachelor of Arts Degree in history there. Then I met my wife there and we got married in Wisconsin. We moved back in 1975 or 1976, something like that, and we lived in the Iselin section in the Georgiana Arm Apartments near which there are now a lot of condos by the Water Company back in there. In 1981, we bought another house in Iselin on Trento Street. In 1993, we had a daughter so in 1995 we decided to move again and we bought a house in Colonia. We've been there ever since.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay Madison we're up to number four.

**4. What physical changes have occurred over the years in the area you lived?  
-houses, streets, services, stores, houses of worship, schools, etc.**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well, the physical changes that have happened in Woodbridge, Colonia, anywhere around here, is the fact of the new construction, the transformation

from a rural/semirural area to the suburb of the big city. Less open space, less farms, more people. Some people would say it was overcrowded, over population. Some people would consider this to be the country anywhere you're coming from. But the biggest change is the construction.

*Brenda Velasco:* How about in Colonia from 1955 when you first moved here and then now because you're also in real estate?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Colonia, as we know it today, hasn't changed much since 1957. Prior to 1953 Colonia basically, with Inman Avenue as we know it, that part of Colonia, were farms. Where we're sitting today was the Ritchie Farm. We used to buy vegetables up here. There was a stand right out front here across from the Terzella house; there used to be a farm stand there.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, we're talking about Evergreen and Colonia Middle School.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Yes. From 1953 to 1957 is when Colonia expanded, the major part of the construction. At that point there were farms or spot houses. Florence Avenue, where you live, there was a house here and a house there. Caroline Avenue and Arcangela Avenue there were small houses and that was called spot construction. On West Street there were a few houses; I'll tell you a story about West Street in a second. But in 1953, one of the first developments that was built was Woodbridge Knolls, which is over here, and from '53 to '57 was when the majority of the construction was in Colonia. So overnight you went from maybe a population in this area of a few thousand to twenty thousand. All the developments had names. You have Woodbridge Knolls, across the street is Video Park, you had Dukes Estate, Canterbury Village, Shore Crest, Lynn Oaks, Jordan Woods, and Oakridge Heights. These were all developments that were approved some time ago just at that time when the economy was picking up after the war. There was a demand for housing for the soldiers of World War II and the Korean War not only just in Colonia, Woodbridge Township, but the whole area and that's when the majority of the construction was. Since then there are houses here houses there, a cul de sac here and a cul de sac there, but Colonia, as we know it defined from 1953, basically hasn't changed the way it is today. Very few people understand that in Colonia in 1953 the majority of the people living in Colonia didn't live in what was known as upper Colonia here but lived in the Chain O' Hills section of Colonia. That area had a greater population of Colonia. The center of Colonia in 1950 was considered to be where the old Colonia library is today. That was not only a library but a community center and that was considered to be the focal point in Colonia.

*Brenda Velasco:* Could we just stop because when you say Woodbridge Knolls what main street are we talking about?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Westminster, Cameo, over there.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, and that's where Julian lives in that area over there.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Yes.

*Brenda Velasco:* And when you say the Duke Estates.....

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Duke Estates is Wendy Road, Canterbury Village is Cleveland Avenue, Lynn Oaks is Carson, Jordan Woods is Spencer, Video Park is Miliken, Shore Crest is Mercury, Country Club Estates is over by Longfellow. I'm not sure, I forget what the one next to Village Green is; I'm not sure what the name of that development is.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, when we say Chain O' Hills are you people familiar with that, Samantha, Julian or Madison? That's where the Merrill Park Softball League is.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* The road on the top of the hill behind the trees.

*Samantha:* Oh, yes.

*Madison:* Yes.

*Brenda Velasco:* I just wanted to give them the locations because you and I know because we've been here for a long time. Okay Samantha Question #5.

**5. What public buildings/property were there?-post office, library, parks, firehouse, schools etc.**

**6. What did you do for recreation?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well the firehouse was where it is today but it was much smaller. It's expanded three or four times. There was a small library on the corner of Chain O' Hills Road and New Dover Road. That was there before the Henry Inman Library was built. In Colonia, the local parks were attached to the elementary schools. There was a post office attached to the train station. There was a train station in Colonia over on Route #27 and New Dover Road where that is located right now. Colonia's post office is attached to the Rahway Post Office. Colonia is a subsection of Rahway so if you look at Colonia's telephone numbers which are 382, 381, or 388 extensions that stand for Fulton and that Fulton station was located in Rahway. So the reason of that being I'm not really exactly sure but you could go into the Middlesex County phone book and Colonia is probably not in there anymore or wasn't when I was a kid. The phone book where Colonia is listed is the Union County book because of the extensions. When we moved into Colonia in 1955, very rarely did we have anything to do with Woodbridge. We had more of an affinity with Rahway than Woodbridge. We shopped in Rahway, played in Rahway, went to Milton Lake in Rahway and played in Tully Field in Rahway. We had a bus on Inman Avenue that went to Rahway. It cost a nickel or dime and that's where our center of recreation was, in Rahway. It had nothing to do with Woodbridge although again we did pay the taxes in Woodbridge. Some of the things have changed now. There is a post office in Colonia but it is part of the Rahway Post Office. This part of Colonia was considered to be part of Rahway for years even though it was vice versa. Parts of Rahway were actually part of Woodbridge Township for years. There used to be an army hospital in Colonia and after World War I there were postcards that said "Army Hospital, Rahway, New Jersey" on it. So there was a lot of misunderstanding there. As for parks, the major park in Colonia at the time we grew up was Merrill Park which is a county park. It's in Colonia but considered to be a county park and not a municipal park. When we grew up our biggest park was where School #27 is now. Where you went to school that was a baseball field. It was woods and there were two paths leading from the top of Patricia Avenue into the baseball field. Pennsylvania Avenue was a dirt road and the woods went from the baseball field and you could virtually walk all the way to Clark without seeing anything but paths. You could walk to the reservoir, cross the reservoir and all the way to Central Avenue and it was all wooded. So we made our own parks. Milton Lake, which was considered to be a Clark park in Rahway, Union County, that's where we went to fish and ice skate and things of that nature but rarely did we

go in the opposite direction towards Woodbridge Schools. School #17 is where I went to kindergarten. Schools were a problem because when the township expanded in 1953 and 1957 you have to remember that was the time when, before 1953, I think the population Woodbridge Township was somewhere around twenty-five thousand. The population in Woodbridge Township in 1969 was over or close to a hundred thousand and that was the year that Colonia, Woodbridge Township, was declared an all American city and that's where that plaque came from. We went to School #17 for one year, kindergarten, and a lot of the schools in Colonia weren't built yet so we got shipped over by bus to School #11, Ross Street School, in Woodbridge from first grade to fifth grade and spent another year in Woodbridge at the new Mawbey Street School. Then I went to Colonia Junior High School, seventh, eighth and ninth. Colonia High School wasn't built yet so I went back to Woodbridge High School for my sophomore year and for junior and senior went to Colonia High School. So the school expansion didn't keep up with the population expansion.

*Brenda Velasco:* Did you have to go split session at Woodbridge?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* My brother went split session at Woodbridge, yes. It only didn't pertain to Colonia it pertained to Iselin too. In Woodbridge High School when you had split sessions you had all the students throughout the whole township and later on they built JFK High School which was Iselin High School before obviously JFK was assassinated, and then they built Colonia High School and in fall of 1967 was when that was opened up. So eventually you had School #17, Pennsylvania Avenue School, Claremont School, the Lynn Crest School and the Oak Ridge School. There are more grade schools in Colonia than any other part of the township.

*Brenda Velasco:* And that reflects that population explosion.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* The population explosion but one thing you have to remember when the families moved into Colonia, not even Colonia, Iselin, Woodbridge, wherever they moved into those years they didn't move in with one child. I'm one of nine children and where that wasn't the norm there were plenty other families in the township that had eleven children or ten children or nine children but it was uncommon for any family not to have at least four children.

*Brenda Velasco:* At that time?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* At that time.

*Madison:* Yes, we did like a project in fourth grade where we did a line project where we did like how many siblings that we had in each family. The most that we had was one of my friends who moved last year and she had nine kids and like everybody else the most was like three.

*Brenda Velasco:* Julian, how many are in your family?

*Julian:* Two kids, me and my brother.

*Brenda Velasco:* Madison?

*Madison:* Me and my brother.

*Brenda Velasco:* Sam?

*Samantha:* Me and my brother.

*Brenda Velasco:* So we see that reversible trend because when we interviewed the Tarci's before Mrs. Tarci was one of nine children too.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* So many people think that the schools are crowded today. The school population in Woodbridge Township is, I think, somewhere around twelve or thirteen thousand.

*Brenda Velasco:* Thirteen thousand. (2010)

*Daniel D'Arcy:* When I graduated in 1969, the school population was over twenty-one thousand.

*Madison:* And we think our hallways are crowded.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* So it wasn't uncommon for you to be sitting in your class and having thirty-five kids in the class. Sometimes you didn't have enough chairs and had to go to another classroom and pull a chair out.

*Brenda Velasco:* Different experience totally.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Different experience than it is today, yes.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, Madison we're up to you.

### **7. What was the focal point of your community at that time?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well, the focal point of the community was depending who you are and how old you were at the time. As a kid growing up in Colonia the focal point was where you lived, your house, and the friends that you had. During the summer it seemed that our house was the focal point because at any morning at nine o'clock in the summer there were twenty kids on my front lawn. We got together and went to Tully Field in Rahway and played baseball every morning. When you came home from school you did something in front of the house or something in the streets with your friends. You didn't go inside you were always out until you got called home for supper or the lights went on: the street lights. We had a couple of other things that we could do that we really can't do today. Where we lived on Lake Avenue there were a couple of horse farms and we would hang out there. I'll tell you a little story because you can't do it today but there was a horse farm on top of Wendy Road, there's a development called Darla Village there and there was a big old barn and the land went down in the back so when you walked into the barn you got to the end of the barn you could see down about twenty feet. Well they had the stalls there and the horse produced manure and they'd sweep the manure out the stalls and down the back through the back and it would create mounds of manure. When I say mounds of manure I mean twenty feet high. So what we used to do is go up into the hay loft and just jump off into the pile of manure.

*Brenda Velasco:* Oh!

*Daniel D'Arcy:* So when we got home my mother didn't really appreciate it but it was one place we hung out. There was another horse farm where we lived and learned how to ride horses on Lake Avenue which has new construction on it now. Up and down along the Parkway there were horse trails. From Colonia High School all the way up into Clark basically following the path of the Parkway there was a horse trail and if you go look for it you can still find it but that's where everybody rode their horses up and down that trail. Some people will tell you that's the same trail. There was an Indian trail that used to go from North Jersey down to the Raritan River that followed the exact path of the Parkway also and it's a possibility that that trail did mimic or follow that horse path. There is documented evidence that that trail did go right through the Colonia High School property.

*Julian:* When did the Parkway come?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* 1953/1955.

*Brenda Velasco:* Yes, it was extended as far down as Iselin.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* It started many, many years before that in 1948.

*Brenda Velasco:* But when it went to Iselin and Colonia a lot of people moved into Colonia.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* The thing about the Parkway is you've got the entrance in Clark and the exit in Iselin but you still don't have one in Colonia which makes Colonia appealing because they didn't want that traffic there. People fought that for years not to have an entrance and exit on to Inman Avenue. One of the reasons why they wanted to have that entrance and exit was because North Edison wasn't developed yet. Compared to Colonia, North Edison was developed yesterday. When we were kids there was a bar over on Ellis Avenue called **Gus's Bar and Grill** and it was out in the middle of nowhere in the woods. It was a hunting club at one time and it did go all the way up to Potter's Crossing where the tracks are now and it was virtually nothing between here and there. The development didn't start until about, in earnest, in North Edison until 1965 but the new construction not until the 1970s; the condos and the townhouses not until the '80s and early '90s.

*Brenda Velasco:* They used to have a horse auction or something.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* The horse auction was on Oak Tree Road where the bowling alley is back over there, which is no longer a bowling alley. But the focal point was where you made it, you know. Where was the focal point for my father? The focal point was either the Civic Club or the VFW. The focal point, if you were a fireman was the firehouse. If you're a first aid squad volunteer it was the first aid squad. We talked about these developments. Back then I don't want to say the people were different but they were organized different and that's just the way of the times. In Dukes Estates, where I grew up, there was an organization called DECA and they had their own newspaper and their own choir, their own bowling league and for years they had a softball league in the summer. Each of the developments had a team, the Dukes Devils for which my father played, Woodbridge Knolls had a team, Video Park, the Civic Club had a team, Lynn Oaks, Shorecrest, the firehouse had a team and a lot of time the focal point was **Gus's Bar and Grill**.

*Brenda Velasco:* Which is no longer there.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* That's a story in itself.

*Brenda Velasco:* Yes, but we're not going to go into that.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* No, we're not going to go into that. Okay.

*Julian:* One of the churches?

*Brenda Velasco:* No, no, no, Ellis is.....

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Ellis Avenue is about two blocks into North Edison; Beatrice Parkway/Ellis Parkway and at the end of Ellis and Grant or something like that.

*Brenda Velasco:* It was like unreal that there was a bar and grill there right off of Wood Avenue because by the time I moved there were houses around here but it still had the liquor license up until the 1980s.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* And when they sold it they reopened it in the Town Mall called **The Evergreen** because that was Edison.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, Samantha.

**8. What did you like about living in your section of Woodbridge?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well from 1955 to 1990 and 2010 the way I look at it this question could be asked of anybody in any town so it's the things that are most important to you and where you're living and of course the family is first. When you're a kid its things that are immediately around you: your family, where you go to school, you know, is Christmas coming and when you're sitting in school is three o'clock coming.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, you were from Belleville.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Yes, we moved from Belleville and Belleville was more developed and what we had was more open space and we were fortunate. We had a rural setting where we could grow up and some of our fondest memories were of riding the horses and playing in the woods and things of that nature. As you get older, you appreciate Woodbridge or Colonia because of the convenience of it. You appreciate the security that it provides you and what it provides your family. You know you have different interests when you're growing up and once you get married and have children it offers other things.

*Brenda Velasco:* Because you came back from Wisconsin.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* When we came back from Wisconsin, the unemployment rate in Rock County in southern Wisconsin was thirty-seven percent. So coming into this area what we knew we would find would be jobs. So in this area your economic stability was, and probably still is, one of the highest rated in the country; actually Middlesex County is. Middlesex County and Somerset County of New Jersey are listed as one of the ten best places to live in the country. I think the capital income is one of the highest.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay. Hear that Julian, Madison and Samantha. Okay, Julian we're up to you.

**9. Did you experience any significant happenings in Woodbridge-construction, accidents, sports events, riots, discrimination etc.**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well, we already talked about construction in Colonia and the surrounding towns expanded in the early 1950s. Accidents. When we were kids the biggest thing wasn't a car accident or anything of that nature. But I can tell you that certain things you remember as a child and I can remember in 1961 when the two planes collided in New York over JFK Airport. I can remember that because it had an effect on me because it was something that, why it affected me I don't know. I think it awakened me and led me closer to mortality. Back in 1953 or 1956 there was a train accident in Woodbridge. (1951) In Colonia sporting events or major sporting events were baseball and then, maybe I should have mentioned this earlier, but one of the focal points in the township, and maybe still is today, is St. John's because at that time a greater portion of the township was Catholic and you had the CYO after school or at night. They had recreation leagues also. They had flag football leagues and they had indoor basketball leagues in the winter and we would be part of that. We did something back then that probably you couldn't do today. When I was in junior high school, when JFK was assassinated, twenty minutes later we were in the church which probably wouldn't happen today.

*Brenda Velasco:* This was in 1963.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1963. Seventh grade, history class, Mrs. Karabencheck. I was the second seat from the door on the right hand side on the wall.

*Brenda Velasco:* Older people tend to remember exactly where they were.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Well there's going to be a defining event in your life too that you'll know exactly where you were when it happens.

*Madison:* I remember where I was on 9/11.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* 9/11.

*Brenda Velasco:* That is your defining event.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* There you go.

*Madison:* I know my father was helping my mom because she was pregnant with my brother.

*Julian:* I know where I was.

*Samantha:* I don't even remember that. I have the worst memory ever.

*Madison:* I do, too, but I don't really remember I just know that that's usually what I did.

*Samantha:* I think I was buying bagels, I'm not sure. I remember bagels. I think we were buying bagels when it happened.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Riots, I'm not sure why riots are in there but there weren't any riots in Colonia. But in 1967, in the summer, there were some happenings around the country. There were riots in Detroit and Newark and Plainfield which is right around the corner, race riots, and part of the Civil Rights Movement at the time. Everybody knew what was going on and it was a little difficult for some people because a lot of fun friends were black. At that time you would call your friends black or colored; today you call them African-American. That wasn't a significant point; we were all friends.

*Brenda Velasco:* That was a nice thing about Colonia. We had an integrated community.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* I'll tell you a story, and it goes along with this discrimination thing. I tried to determine how it happened and I'm not sure but Colonia had a lot of farms, basically five farms on Inman Avenue, and there were some farms in Edison also. There was a significant black population in Edison and Colonia and where and why that black population was is a guess. Migrant workers who came from the South to work the farms and would go back during the winter and/or freed slaves that went through the Underground Railroad that settled in this area, that's a possibility. But the fact remains that if today the most significant black population is right here, East Maple and Pine, and there was a relationship between the local residents in 1953 and it was a good relationship. Everybody knew everyone else but what happened is that the black population in Colonia understood that when Colonia was going to expand, they were going to build this area up. The people that would be moving here weren't necessarily their friends because they didn't know them and they were coming from areas that you could say were a hot bed of discrimination. Okay, so what they did is they formed what is the Independence Club and it's still over here on Delaware Avenue. Ben Jackson is a member there and I have.....

*Madison:* Wait a second, that little house?



*Daniel D'Arcy:* That little house is the Independence Club and basically what that club was doing was rallying everyone together. It was circling the wagon saying, okay now what are we going to do basically is to protect ourselves or to identify ourselves. The organization became a club where they associated with themselves and almost instead of expanding they kind of like pulled back and they kept to themselves. Adults do that; children don't do that. So when we moved in our friends were who our friends were and we went to school with the Ken Bostics and Dorren Edlers and the Jacksons and the Wilsons. We had nine kids in our family, the Jacksons had thirteen and the Wilsons had eleven. Just to give you an idea we didn't have any money, we had a two bedroom house. When we moved in we had a two bedroom house and six kids and my uncle. Just to help out the Jacksons, my mother would send the laundry up to her house and she would do it and we would pay them. The Jacksons house burnt down in 1961. The community got together and built them a new house and provided them with electric and gas service for a year. For the younger people there were no issues but for the older people I'm sure there were plenty of issues. A few years ago, the Independence Club was reorganizing and they had a meeting at the Colonia Library; they invited me to go to the meeting so I went up there and we started talking. It was obvious that there were a different set of rules for everyone; where you could go and where you couldn't go. The older people knew it and they passed those things down to the younger black kids but us we didn't know those rules where you could go and where you couldn't go and it really didn't matter. So was there discrimination, I'm sure there had been discrimination but certain things die out as people get older and pass away. I can tell you that in Colonia High School there was no such thing as discrimination, they were our friends.

*Brenda Velasco:* I've interviewed people from the Independent Club of Colonia and they say the same thing as you do. Glenn Morgan was one and Ben Jackson but the purpose of that club was to mentor the younger kids.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* They wanted them to know everything bad because they knew things were going to change drastically.

*Brenda Velasco:* Yes, it served a very good purpose.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Here's a point. The Garden State Parkway, where it is today, is not the original place where it was supposed to be. The original Parkway was supposed to go right through the house that I live in right now. It was supposed go right through the heart of Colonia down Stafford and Route #27 out through Iselin that way. But the people in the neighborhood got together and said, no not in my backyard and they actually petitioned the Senate. There was a reason for that because in the estate section, in Colonia, a lot of people were involved in politics and they had connections in Trenton. They got the Parkway moved and they said, okay now the Parkway is going to go down where Middlesex Avenue is and they said, oh no, not down Middlesex Avenue. So they finally got it moved a third time and it's my opinion, not fact, it's no coincidence that the Parkway divided through the middle of the black community, East Pine and West Pine and the black population on both sides now who was in the middle? Now there were other people obviously in that path that had to move. There is a house in Colonia now that has had three addresses.

*Brenda Velasco:* So it's been moved three times.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* There is a house on West Street that was farther back and when the Parkway came through it was going to lose all its property so they picked up the house and moved it over to East Street on the other side of the Parkway. Then his address was East Street. Then when they put Jason Court in there the development then had to change his address to Jason Court. So it had three addresses. Drive down the Parkway and you'll see a brown house right next to the Parkway right at the end of Jason Court. That house was on West Avenue at one time. So a lot of people were displaced by the Parkway but it was no accident where the Parkway and why the Parkway ran through there.

*Brenda Velasco:* Interesting. Okay, who are we up to now? Question#10, is that you Julian?

*Julian:* No it's Madison.

*Brenda Velasco:* Madison, go ahead.

### **10. What do you like about Woodbridge today?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* I should have studied the questions.

*Brenda Velasco:* You're here, your business is here.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Yes. Woodbridge, I think Woodbridge is different than a lot of other towns that I deal with. I think that it has been for quite some time that you have a pretty good access to the government in Woodbridge, the Administration. The way that the township is run they have a ward system and there's a reason why they have a ward system. If you have a problem you can go to the representative of your Ward, the Councilman, and there are Council People At Large who are also elected. There are enough people in town that if you have problems you can go to them. There is always access. I don't think I've ever been denied access to anything that I've ever needed and wanted to see in Woodbridge. I've always said the municipal services were probably some of the best around. I never had a problem with Public Works. I always thought they were the best around. Some people don't like the new system with the large cans and all that and I didn't like them in the beginning, but now I do like it. One thing that's done with the blue cans, the recycling cans, it's made me more aware of recycling and I recycle more. I intentionally take paper that I normally would throw out and I throw it in the blue bin. Woodbridge Township is convenient. I work in Woodbridge Township. Woodbridge Township is my place of employment. I'm self-employed; I'm a realtor in town. Not only do I work here but I have to sell Woodbridge Township so I know a lot of about it. I know a lot of people in the town; it's very important. The people in Woodbridge and the administration have been very, very good to me and I really don't have any qualms about that.

*Brenda Velasco:* This is all going on record you know?

*Daniel D'Arcy:* That's why I'm putting it in.

*Brenda Velasco:* Alright, Sam you're next.

### **11. Do you have any family members still living in Woodbridge?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* I have a brother. What happens a lot in a town like this where the mother and father buy a house or they either move away or they pass away (in our instance), and when you have a lot of children you just don't necessarily sell the house. My brother bought the house so the house has been in the family since 1955.

But I can go into that neighborhood and I can go into other neighborhoods in Colonia where if the original owners aren't living in those houses, and there are very few left, a lot of the families are still living in those houses.

*Brenda Velasco:* Agree.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* People decided not to move out of Woodbridge Township, they wanted to stay here because this is where their lives are. The grass isn't necessarily greener in the other lawn. Sometimes your lawn is better. So you can find that. When you have nine children in your family, if you can't afford town or circumstances dictate (some leave). I have a brother in Pennsylvania, a brother in Cranford, a brother in Hightstown, two sisters in Rahway, a brother in Colonia, a sister in Skillman and myself in Colonia; that's nine.

*Brenda Velasco:* Quite a few remain in the area.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Yes, in the area. You got to remember when you talk about Woodbridge and we talk about Colonia its regional too. It's not just the town you're living, it's the region too. You talk about the history of Colonia and the history of Woodbridge the histories are similar, similar people and similar time frames. A lot of it is personal history.

*Brenda Velasco:* Okay, Julian are we back to you?

**12. Are there any other stories or events that you would like to discuss?**

*Daniel D'Arcy:* Colonia as a whole and you know we're talking about Colonia as a part, a section, of Woodbridge Township. Woodbridge Township was incorporated in 1669. At that time there was no Colonia, there was no Iselin, there was no Hopelawn, there was no Menlo Park Terrace; there were sections of town. In Colonia, as we knew it, Rahway was part of this area, what was part of Woodbridge Township up until about 1860. You had sections in town here that were called Leesville or Milton. The corner of New Dover Road and Wood Avenue was called New Dover; that was a town. At the time the White Church on New Dover Road was in Colonia, as we knew Colonia. It was built by the members, the Toms family, who lived in Colonia. So this whole area was not just a town; Colonia itself was like Woodbridge is today. They had sections of the area. Inman Avenue had its own name and the corner of Lake Avenue and Morningside Drive had its own name. So there were just certain names and there was one section, this we'll define Colonia. There was one section of this area that was called Houghtenville and that is where the bridge on New Dover Road goes over the railroad tracks on Route #27 where the golf course is. There was a farm there and the person who lived there his name was Mr. Houghten? He had a farm but across the street he had the most convenient thing of all which was a train station and it was no accident why it was put there. At one time there was a grist mill on the corner where the library is up there, it was a saw mill before that, but all the farmers in the area when they had to transport their goods they brought it to Colonia to the Houghten? farm and everything went on to the cars from there. Just like everything else the area was expanding and New York City was growing into the *mecca* of the world and there was a lot of money in New York City. People in New York City said: I have a lot of money; I want to get out of the city, live some place in the country, get on a train, be in the city in a half an hour and live in the country in this idyllic situation on the weekends. Voila, Colonia, but it was called

Houghtenville. So there's a family in town by the name of the Cone family. Their father was already here for years. They lived in a house that was built in the 1700s called *The Trees* which I drove by today and they chopped down two big trees on the property and I don't know why. They had a lot of money but they wanted more money so what they decided to do was create a situation off of New Dover Road where they bought real estate. They were going to subdivide the lots into one acre lots and they were going to sell those lots and make money to create their own ideal situation bringing people in from New York City. That is what we know as today as the Colonia Estate section or part of it was called the Colonia or Middlesex Colony right around where Woods Lane is and the corner of Colonia Boulevard and New Dover Road which at one time was a focal point because that's where the Middlesex/Essex Turnpike and New Dover Road met. But anyway, Elizabeth Cone, and they started what at that time was a nine hole golf course where the golf course is today. (Colonia Country Club) So what they said, you know what we want to sell these houses, we have a beautiful golf course and we have a train station; we have it all, but there is one thing we don't have and that's a name. Who's going to buy a house in Houghtenville from New York City? Elizabeth Cone said, we've got to change that. Now she did a thing where every letter in Colonia means something. They needed a new name so they called it Colonia. That's how Colonia got its name. It could have been something else but basically the name Colonia became a real estate transaction. Areas like this were all based on real estate transactions, all developments. Colonia could have been developed years and years in the 1920s. The **Klein Realty Company** had developed a plan for this whole area not just Colonia but Clark and Rahway. They had it all mapped out and they had a lot of the same streets but a lot of them were different. They had a trolley coming through town and then the Depression hit, and it was put on hold. Then there were more plans and then World War II happened and that was put on hold. Then they couldn't put it on hold anymore, and then it happened.

*Brenda Velasco:* Then the demand and that's when you moved in post-World War II.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* And the people, who basically benefitted from that, the children of that era, are called baby boomers. That is why Social Security, when you get to the age to contribute to Social Security, is going to be so high.

*Brenda Velasco:* On that note we thank you very much. I'm older than all of you at this table so you're going to be paying for me. But thank you very much.

*Daniel D'Arcy:* You're welcome.