

Oral History Interview
Dr. Vincent Capraro and Dr. Dolores Capraro Gioffre
WH115

(Written transcript and digital audio)

On Thursday, November 14, 2013 Dr. Vincent Capraro and Dr. Dolores Capraro Gioffre were interviewed by Brenda Velasco at 10:00 A.M. at Dr. Vincent Capraro's home at 8 East Port Court, Red Bank.

Brenda Velasco: I'm very fortunate to get two very busy people together. They are siblings Dr. Dolores Capraro Gioffre and Dr. Vincent Capraro. Both of them are long time Woodbridge residents. Dolores we are very familiar with because we have her at the Barron Arts Center and she's a St. James parishioner as well as part of the Historic Preservation Commission and all those beautiful pamphlets that have won awards for goes to Dolores. But we're also here for Dr. Vincent Capraro and he has been a coach at Edison Upsala and Princeton. Also, he was a superintendent of schools in Edison. We're at his house at 8 East Port Court, Red Bank.

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

Brenda Velasco: I'm going to ask each of you to identify yourself stating your name, where you grew up in Woodbridge as well as the year of your birth. We're going to start with you Vinnie.

Vincent Capraro: I was born on April 12, 1939 in my house in Woodbridge which later became Iselin. They changed the name from Woodbridge to Iselin but we didn't move and just stayed where we were.

Brenda Velasco: And Dolores you're going to be chiming in because you're sitting here and we need you as well.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I'm Dolores Capraro Gioffre, Vinnie's older sister by a year and a half. I was born in 1937 and lived again in Woodbridge which they changed every year. It would be Iselin for three years and Woodbridge the next three years but we lived kind of behind the **Howard Johnson's** in Woodbridge off Route 1.

Brenda Velasco: Do you remember your address?

Vincent Capraro: 144 Woodbridge Avenue.

Brenda Velasco: You know some people don't remember the **Howard Johnson's**. Right now you have.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: It's a Buick dealer now. It was the **Howard Johnson's** and then it became the **Landmark Inn**. People might remember that and what was the place on the left, the diner?

Vincent Capraro: Oh the **Chock Full of Nuts**....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well the **Chock Full of Nuts** was there and.....

Brenda Velasco: Right, this is the intersection of Route 9 and 1. This was our famous cloverleaf.

Vincent Capraro: Right down by the road from.....

Brenda Velasco: Yes and you were on Woodbridge Avenue.

2. How long have you lived in Woodbridge?

Brenda Velasco: Vinnie, how long did you live.....I'm going to your younger brother.

Vincent Capraro: I moved out when I was twenty-eight and moved to Franklin Township for a couple of years. Then we wanted to get back into the county so we moved to Edison for just a short time until we found a house in Woodbridge. We came to Woodbridge and we were there for close to thirty years.

Brenda Velasco: Wow, and now you're living in Red Bank and you moved you told me about 2001 to this part of Red Bank. So you've seen Woodbridge change tremendously. We're going to get into the changes but Dolores you really didn't move out thank goodness.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No I lived at home until I got married and then we lived in an apartment on Rahway Avenue in Woodbridge. The year President Kennedy died, (1963) in fact after a month that he died we moved to Parlin and bought a home there and we lived in Parlin for nine years. My husband had a business in Woodbridge and wanted to come back to Woodbridge. He was really a Woodbridge person and was not happy living outside of Woodbridge. So we bought a nice old home on Green Street in Woodbridge and lived there until about 2004.

Brenda Velasco: What was the address?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: 95 Green Street.

Brenda Velasco: And that also went back many years.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That house was built as a private girl's school in the late 1800s and then it was the first superintendent of schools, Dr. Love. He lived in that house and then it was sold to a private family. We were the second family to own it.

Vincent Capraro: My house was Dr. Hubner's old house on the corner of Grove and Linden, 134 Grove. I moved to Edison from Franklin in 1967 when I got married and we moved back to Woodbridge in 1976. It was like nine or ten years we were out of town.

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

Brenda Velasco: Your parents.

Vincent Capraro: As far as I know I was born in the house but that was after they moved. They lived in Hopelawn, they lived in South Plainfield and then they came to Woodbridge. I don't know why they moved.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We don't know. I mean my father built the house.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yeah, my father built the house on Woodbridge Avenue. Who knows maybe they were just looking for a piece of property. They had no ties to Woodbridge at the time.

Brenda Velasco: Yeah but they did move. They were from New York, right? Well we had other people move in from Brooklyn. Usually they went to Port Reading with an Italian last name.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And they were from Brooklyn also.

Brenda Velasco: How many rooms did your house have?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Not very many.

Brenda Velasco: Because you have a lot of siblings.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yes, there were six children and my mother and father.

Vincent Capraro: The old house, before they put the addition on, had three bedrooms and a kitchen, living room and a bedroom. That was it. Then we put an addition on in the back. Me, Frank and John lived in the back room and we still only had one bathroom.

Brenda Velasco: Many homes did at that time and you had to put the timer on it. Five minutes and you're out. But then your parents stayed?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No, actually the year after the house was built my father died.

Brenda Velasco: Oh my gosh!

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: He was forty-one years old and my mother was left to raise six children. The oldest, Frank, was thirteen, Vinnie was a year old and I was after that and then we had three in between us. There were three boys and three girls.

Brenda Velasco: So are you the oldest then?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No, my brother Frank is the oldest.

Brenda Velasco: Right.

Vincent Capraro: You can't forget Frank.

Brenda Velasco: And I interviewed Frank. (Frank Capraro was interviewed on May 20, 2009, Interview #42). You're absolutely right Vinnie. Okay, let's go to some of the physical changes that have occurred for Question #4.

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

Brenda Velasco: Is your house still there?

Vincent Capraro: Yes.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: It's still there.

Vincent Capraro: It's changed a little bit. I don't know if they put another bathroom in it or not.

Brenda Velasco: I hope they did.

Vincent Capraro: They moved the front of the house to the side of the house which is facing the baseball field which is owned by the township and there's a shopping center that the old **A&P** was in it.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: It's the **ShopRite** now. **Korvette's** was there.

Vincent Capraro: **Two Guys from Harrison** started and then **Korvette's** took over. We had seen a lot of changes from the time we moved in until the time we moved out. There were about four houses on the street and when we moved out they put a whole development in. They took up all the streets that were.....Kimball and....

Brenda Velasco: Jansen Avenue.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: They were little Cape Cod houses.

Vincent Capraro: And especially when we moved out there were some houses that were changed also. The guy that moved next door to us his name was George Goodwin and he had a little two-bedroom house or two room house maybe. When he died some people bought it and they moved...Spurs. Spurs was the house on the corner of Woodbridge Avenue and Julius and they moved the house all the way down next to us. A lot of it fell apart as they moved it.

Brenda Velasco: There were a lot of houses being moved around in Fords and Woodbridge.

Vincent Capraro: They moved from Iselin to Woodbridge by moving down the street.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That whole area changed. I mean you know they built up those stores. The baseball field became a Little League field so there's a lot of activity going on there.

Brenda Velasco: Not very quiet then.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No. **Howard Johnson's** closed. They open the **Landmark**.

Brenda Velasco: **Howard Johnson's** was landmark and I know **Landmark Inn** when in afterwards.

Vincent Capraro: There was gas station on the corner of Rt. 35 and my mother worked in Rahway and she used to take the bus from there. She used to take the bus to work and the bus back home. Sometimes I went with her I know because she couldn't have a babysitter take care of me.

Brenda Velasco: What did she do in Rahway?

Vincent Capraro: She was a seamstress. She used to stop at the gas station on the way back that was owned by Esther and Harry Hines for a long, long time. I think Harry was ninety-nine when he died and Esther she just died not too long ago. They became very friendly and of course the gas station closed and they put in that food store.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so those were some of the changes. Alright, so you had bus service there, you had paved streets.....

Vincent Capraro: No.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, okay.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Our streets weren't paved for a long time.

Vincent Capraro: It was a stone street.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, but it wasn't black top surface.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No.

Vincent Capraro: No sidewalks of course.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No sidewalks and a matter of fact in the winter time we hardly got plowed.

Vincent Capraro: We used to have to across two state highways to get the bus.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: To go to school. By the Green Street circle that's where we caught our bus to go to school and at that time the Iselin side of the Green Street circle on Oak Tree Road that was called the black section. The Lakes lived there, Jimmy Lake. He went on to become a great basketball player.

Brenda Velasco: Is that where Kyle Anderson's family.....it was sort of in that section.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I don't know if they lived up there. Did they?

Brenda Velasco: That's after '67-after the riots-in Newark they moved out.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: But you know we walked from our house on Woodbridge Avenue all the way to the Green Street circle to get the school bus.

Vincent Capraro: We had to cross Route 9 north and Route 9 south.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Of course the highways weren't that busy at the time but we had to cross all those highways to get the bus to go to school.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, and that gets us to where did you go to school?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I went to Woodbridge. We both went to.....

Vincent Capraro: No. 1 School, No. 11 School and Woodbridge High School.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so No. 1, No. 11 and then Woodbridge High School and this is the time.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Now Vinnie was the last class to graduate from the Barron Avenue High School (1956). We went to Woodbridge High School when it was on Barron Avenue and double sessions. The freshman and sophomores went in the morning and juniors and seniors in the afternoon.

Brenda Velasco: Alright, so that would split up your family too because you were about.....

Vincent Capraro: We actually I think the first year.....Dolores did you go in the morning in your sophomore year too?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No, I.....

Vincent Capraro: Or did you go in the afternoon?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Afternoon.

Vincent Capraro: So we were okay then and then I was lucky enough to be on the football team so they had to put me in the morning.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: He was good. He was the center on the football team then.

Brenda Velasco: Boy, your sister remembers.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We went to all games and guess who coached him.

Brenda Velasco: Frank, right? Your brother coached you. Oh my God that could have been your worst nightmare with Frank because he's your older brother. So Frank coached his younger brother, geez. How about stores around you at that time? Where did you go shopping?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Was **Mutual** opened yet?

Vincent Capraro: Well **Mutual** was opened when I was at college. I don't know if before I went to college.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well I'll tell you Brenda we grew a lot of stuff. We had...one of the things we did in the summertime like when my mother went to work we stayed at the house. We never went anywhere, we weren't allowed to go anywhere and we had a full garden of all vegetables.

Vincent Capraro: We raised chickens.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We had chickens and eggs and we had a goat and we had peach trees and apple trees and a grape arbor so in the summertime our responsibility was we would go to what we would call the black panther which was the area, if you can place this, where the **ShopRite** shopping center is now and you would get to the railroad tracks back there. We used to go back there and pick blackberries and blueberries and we spent all summer canning the vegetables from the garden and making jelly and doing all of that stuff so.....

Vincent Capraro: There were stores in town like the meat market.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: **Busy Bee**.

Vincent Capraro: **Busy Bee Meat Market**.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: As a matter of fact the **Busy Bee** was owned by the Shephard family. It was right on Main Street in Woodbridge and ten years after my father died my mother remarried a gentleman called Joseph.....

Vincent Capraro: It wasn't that long.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Eight years?

Vincent Capraro: Maybe four years or five years because I was young.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Joseph Marobito and his daughter Marie, my step-sister, was married to the Shephards who owned that **Busy Bee Market**.

Vincent Capraro: **Christensen's** was there then.

Brenda Velasco: Yeah.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: **Chopper's**.

Vincent Capraro: If we had to go shopping no one had a car and my step-father wasn't there, we would have to take the bus. It was the bus that went to Woodbridge and Perth Amboy.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: It was the 48 that used to go to Woodbridge and the 84 went to Iselin I think it was and the 46 went to Carteret.

Vincent Capraro: There were stores we were able to go to like supermarkets.

Brenda Velasco: There was no **ShopRite** back then.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No.

Vincent Capraro: It was built while we were there; I was still living in Woodbridge when it was built. It wasn't **ShopRite** either it was. I don't know what it was before that.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I don't even remember what it was before.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, but I'm more interested when you were growing up-when you were younger to try to capture what Woodbridge was like with chickens and goats.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And people used to come, I don't know if it was illegal, to the house to get a chicken and my brother Frank used to kill the chicken and give it to the person and they would buy the chicken.

Brenda Velasco: It was fresh chicken with all the antibiotics.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And I hate to tell you but they used to catch rabbits and they used to tell us it was chicken that we were eating. I'll not forget that one. We were very poor you have to know that. That's something you should know. We were extremely poor. When my father died, my mother went to work at the **Forster Wheeler Plant** in Carteret and she used to take the 48 Bus to Woodbridge and 46 to Carteret, that's how she went to work. My uncles told her to put us in an orphanage and she said she would not even think about that so she did a good job of raising us.

Brenda Velasco: She sure did. All of you went on for higher education basically and got your doctorates. Okay, Houses of Worship.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well that's interesting. One year they would tell us we were St. Cecelia's parishioners and next year we were St. James so to be honest with you.....

Vincent Capraro: We picked one place to go. We used to go to St. Cecelia's Sunday mornings for mass because we thought we belonged to St. Cecelia's and then they changed that address again so we belonged to Woodbridge so we started to go to Woodbridge and I think we stayed in Woodbridge.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We used to walk to church.

Vincent Capraro: We all made our confirmation and communion and everything else over there.

Brenda Velasco: So you walked to church, that was a long walk from where you guys lived.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: A couple of miles, yes. We would go by that pottery place, **Gerber's Property**, and then we would walk down Green Street until we go to like Elmwood Avenue area and cut up that way. But we used to walk ourselves to church. We went to public school so we attended CCD there at St. James.

Vincent Capraro: When I was in kindergarten we attended CCD together and I had to walk to it.

Brenda Velasco: Right, you would have to leave your public school.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right and we got out early to go.

Vincent Capraro: No. 1 School at that time was where the Board building is now, that was No. 1 School. I used to run there in the morning and the custodian would ask me to ring the bell so when I would go in, I was in 3rd or 4th grade, and I would ring the bell. Jimmy Sandler his name was.

Brenda Velasco: That was quite an honor to ring the bell then.

Vincent Capraro: It's the one by **Parker**.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's the bell that's at **Parker Press** that they were going to throw away by the way and my husband picked it up.

Brenda Velasco: That was good on his part.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Now it's displayed there. Thank God it's saved.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, I think we covered most of Question #4.

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

Brenda Velasco: How about the public buildings?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well Woodbridge Library was the Barron Arts Center it was the Barron Library, that's where the library was.

Vincent Capraro: The post office was a different location. It was on one of the streets behind Main Street. James Street or.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: James Street area.

Vincent Capraro: Yes, one of those the post office was there. Then they moved to Main Street.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And actually when they built the post office where it is now in Woodbridge my husband's father had a shoemaker's shop there which they tore down to put the post office up.

Brenda Velasco: What was the name of the shoemaker place then?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: **Gioffre's**.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, and that's where the current post office is now and I think **Vaticano** even closed up there right on Main Street.

Vincent Capraro: They closed up?

Brenda Velasco: It's a tailor now so. I don't know where another shoe repair store would be.

Vincent Capraro: No more in Woodbridge. When his father-in-law stopped working his brother-in-law took over.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's when they closed it down, that's right, because he moved to South Amboy then.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, that was Mel Gioffre then.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yes. I mean the firehouse was where it still is. They just built it. The first aid squad was on that street. Vinnie was a member.

Brenda Velasco: Okay you were a member and Frank was a member. Frank was one of the founding members or were you one of the founding members?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No my husband was one of the founding members.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, okay Gioff was a founding member but all three of you then.

Vincent Capraro: When we had night shift we all served together. Gioff, Frank and myself we were on the same crew on the night. If someone had a heart attack or had an accident we were on call.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I don't remember any formal parks where they would have.....

Vincent Capraro: There was only one park and that was on School Street and that was just tennis courts and a basketball court. Also, I don't know when it was built, when I was in #11 School we used to go there. For lunch you didn't have to eat lunch in school you had to go home for lunch.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's right.

Vincent Capraro: We lived to far so we used to go down to the little candy store.

Brenda Velasco: That's right that sweet shop and it's all boarded up now.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: There was a sweet shop and then also if you go to the other side of James Street there is this house that has the steps going up that was a bakery. We used to go there and get chocolate covered crème donuts and then we'd go on Main Street and **Jasper's Fruit Market** was there. They used to have really good Chinese apples.

Brenda Velasco: So that's when you circulated around Main Street because you were at school before going to St. James for CCD.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Because once we got home, you know we were sort of out of the way.

Brenda Velasco: Yeah, you were more isolated.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We didn't have a car you know. There was no car in our family so our legs took us almost everywhere we went.

Brenda Velasco: Well it made you healthy.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No question.

Brenda Velasco: I mean instead of being chauffeured around you had your exercise. You didn't have to join a gym.

Vincent Capraro: We walked most of the places we went. Even if we had a car and we couldn't get around we had to walk.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well eventually there was one car in the family so you know.

Vincent Capraro: Then later on we were both married and Frank bought a car. We were older then.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, I think we covered most of Question #5.

6. What did you do for recreation?

Brenda Velasco: For recreation, two different perspectives male and female, what did you do for recreation?

Vincent Capraro: Recreation was family.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right, that's it.

Vincent Capraro: Then we got into high school it was a little different because the school generated recreational programs for you. I participated in football and I was the manager of basketball and baseball so I was tied up. My recreation was mostly with the guys I was playing most sports with. Of course I had to practice so you really didn't have time to do your homework until you got home so we didn't do too much recreation. I remember going to **Shore's Sweet Shop** with Phil Shore and Moose Boland and we used to get dusty rose. I used to get one every day. Every day we stopped there and they'd take me home after that.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, what was a dusty rose because people won't recall?

Vincent Capraro: It was a milk shake which had powder and cut up nuts on the top and it was mostly nuts and not so much ice cream. It was dusty because of the dust on top.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I never had one of those. I wasn't a guy.

Brenda Velasco: That's right so let's go to you Dolores.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Well the same thing. I mean in our family there were so many of us that it was just family most of the time and we had a lot of aunts and uncles and cousins so we would have a lot of company at our house. Our house was always opened for people to come and just like Vinnie said as we got older I mean I belonged to the chorus in school. I didn't play football or any of the sports but certainly we attended every single football game that my brothers were involved in. My brother Frank played for Rutgers and we would go to those games and we went to all the high school games so school became the area where we would have recreation afterward. You know maybe we went down the shore to Ocean Gate one week during the summer for a little vacation but most of the time we spent at home doing the things that we were doing to get us ready for the winter and spent a lot of time....our family was where we spent our time.

Brenda Velasco: And you had a lot to do with all those....the peaches and the apples.

Vincent Capraro: For New Year's Eve, my father and my uncle or somebody got these flares by the railroads and they set the flares in the ground on a piece of wood so they would catch fire and we used to light those flairs at midnight. My mother would make pizza.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: There were some kids in our neighborhood, mostly boys, but that didn't stop me from playing baseball or football when they were playing it even though they used to treat me bad.

Brenda Velasco: Of course.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Tracy Weisenberger, the Franchek's and the guy down the street on Woodbridge Avenue all the way down, Lungred, and then we moved out to Califon do you remember that?

Vincent Capraro: Tracy was younger than you.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: They tolerated you.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: They treated me bad. I can't tell you this but you know I tended to get very, very dark in the summer, very dark, and so my good brothers

would put signs around the neighborhood that said, Hershey lives here and they'd have an arrow down to the house.

Brenda Velasco: Nice going Vinnie.

Vincent Capraro: Frank as well.

Brenda Velasco: Let's blame it on Frank; we'll blame it on Frank.

Vincent Capraro: I didn't even go to kindergarten. I went to 1st grade when I five years old.

Brenda Velasco: How come you skipped kindergarten? You didn't have to; it wasn't mandatory right?

Vincent Capraro: No, it was mandatory. But either one of two things happened. My mother went to the principal and he said he will go in the morning and she said he can't go in the morning because I can't get a babysitter in the afternoon. So the principal said well we'll put him in the afternoon and she said no I can't find a babysitter in the morning either so he said why don't we put him in 1st grade. So they put me in 1st grade and I had just turned five in April.

Brenda Velasco: Wow, and for a boy that's usually more difficult to adapt.

Vincent Capraro: Especially as you get older.

Brenda Velasco: Yes, boys aren't, sorry it sounds sexist but I've had two sons and I've had grandsons. They're different than girls. So you just went full time and 1st grade you had no little prep period for kindergarten.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I didn't go to kindergarten either.

Vincent Capraro: You didn't?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I don't remember.

Vincent Capraro: You must have, you were a year ahead of me.

7. What was the focal point of your community?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I think for us it was like church and school, that was it. I mean there were not a whole lot of activities that kids could get involved in.

Vincent Capraro: Not a lot. I mean the town didn't have picnics or.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Little League.

Vincent Capraro: Little League started when I was twelve when I was playing Little League and I used to walk to practice, that was for Little League. As far as anything else I don't know if there were any real focal points.

Brenda Velasco: Judging from what you're saying it was family, school and church because you had to go through your sacraments and everything which meant you were going to CCD or whatever they called it back then.

Vincent Capraro: Not CCD.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: What was it called?

Vincent Capraro: Catechism.

Brenda Velasco: Catechism, right.

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

Brenda Velasco: Because you lived in different parts of Woodbridge too. As you grew older, you moved around.

Vincent Capraro: Just one place. I just moved to 434 Grove. The other times I was out of the township for nine years. I liked living on Grove Avenue a lot more than I

liked living on Woodbridge Avenue because there was a lot more to do. I was older and I was married and had two kids at that time. We happened to live equal distance between the high school, the middle school and the nursery school so our kids could walk to school. We could go with them if we wanted to. Judy (wife) didn't work for all the years while the kids were growing up so she was able to help out with the library as a volunteer.

Brenda Velasco: You were centrally located. That was a great address.

Vincent Capraro: We had a store on Main Street. We owned a sporting goods store there so I was close to the store and close to the church. Sometimes we walked to church and sometimes the kids got tired so we would drive them. Of course we were always late for church because we drove and couldn't find a parking space.

Brenda Velasco: You could have made better time walking. Okay Dolores, you also live in Woodbridge and you live now in Highview Manor.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: First of all I liked the place where we grew up. Of course it was the only place we knew but it was very private and you felt very safe there.

Vincent Capraro: I don't remember locking our doors there; otherwise we'd have to give six kids keys.

Brenda Velasco: No, because they would lose it.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: But as far as living on Green Street you know we lived out of town and my husband wanted to come back to Woodbridge so he bought this house on Green Street that was in terrible disrepair. We bought the front door because it was beautiful. It had stained glass in it and little by little we restored the house. Being close to town was great, it really was. We used to walk a lot. We could walk down to Main Street which at that time was a pleasure because there were so many stores on Main Street.

Brenda Velasco: You had a downtown, a viable downtown.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yes, we had a nice **5&10** and an **A&P** and all kinds of stores, a men's shop and a department store. We really had everything we needed on Main Street.

Vincent Capraro: It all disappeared.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right, it all disappeared. It's just sad. You know I liked living there and it was great. My brother was a couple of blocks away so it was just nice and Mike, his children and my children could walk to school too which they did all up through high school.

Vincent Capraro: They went to No. 11 School instead of No. 1 School.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: They started at No. 11 and went over to the middle school which was then Barron Avenue.

Vincent Capraro: It was two blocks down School Street through the park.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right and then they walked to Woodbridge High School when they got to the high school. Our children were all involved in activities, so it was great.

Vincent Capraro: It was more of a recreation watching those kids perform because Eddie was in the play and in the talent school. All of my three kids were in the plays.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: He played sports.

Vincent Capraro: And Lillian was a cheerleader.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: She was in the band and she was the accompanist for the chorus.

Brenda Velasco: It kept you busy.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: But you were right in the center, you didn't have to go far. You didn't have to go across town.

Vincent Capraro: Even to go to **Verne Fowler's** for dancing even that wasn't as far.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's right.

Vincent Capraro: Sometimes they'd go together so we'd pick up both kids. We'd pick up Lillian and pick up Suzanne at the same time.

Brenda Velasco: Where's **Verne Fowler's School of Dancing**?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: At that time she was on Route 35 but for a while she was up there in Metuchen. She's been on Route 35 for a very long time.

Vincent Capraro: By the pizza place.

Brenda Velasco: So that wasn't too far from you guys either.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No.

Brenda Velasco: That way you can rotate. That was good.

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

Brenda Velasco: Okay, Question 9, and it could be different responses from both of you, significant happenings in Woodbridge that you recall. Any construction that impacted you, accidents, sport events because Vinnie you played sports, riots, discrimination.

Vincent Capraro: While a lot of things happened. When I was twelve years old I belonged to the Boy Scouts and one of our Boy Scout members was walking home and got hit by a car and it was killed by the car. The driver of the car happened to be the police chief of Woodbridge, Mr. Keating. He had a woman in his car who wasn't his wife so he ended up killing himself after that. Then the other big thing that happened again we were in the Boy Scouts and we heard this rumble and it turned out to be the train crash they had on Fulton Street. That must have been....I don't remember the year

Brenda Velasco: 1951.

Vincent Capraro: That's the most horrible position I'd ever been in the 8th grade.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And that's significant also because Gioff was in the First Aid Squad and his parents lived on Pearl Street and they were bringing injured people into the houses around there. The First Aid Squad was used as a triage center.

Vincent Capraro: My brother also belonged to the First Aid Squad. (Frank)

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: He was part of that also so that was a major thing.

Vincent Capraro: Well he was there because it was the football season.

Brenda Velasco: It was in February, the late winter, so it wasn't the football season. That had been concluded already.

Vincent Capraro: Because he graduated in '52 so he went there the following year.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, anything else? Woodbridge Center.....

Vincent Capraro: That was done while we were in Woodbridge.

Brenda Velasco: Yeah, that was in the late 60s early 70s.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I think the thing for me that has shocked me most about Woodbridge is, and I guess the whole township, is just over construction. That has really changed.

Vincent Capraro: Just since I moved down here the group of houses that they built on Rahway Avenue.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yeah all of those apartments and what have you.

Brenda Velasco: Barrons Gate or I forgot what it's called.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I think watching my brothers coach and particularly the number of times that the teams went to championship games was always extremely proud to just be part of that high school. Then when they went to college and played ball we went to the Rutgers games. My brother Frank played there and Vinnie played for Upsala.

Vincent Capraro: It shows that even after we got out of high school we still stayed. While I went to high school Dolores was handling the Alumni Association and Frank and myself became president of the Woodbridge Township Athletic Alumni Association so we stayed involved. Frank went back to Koster.

Brenda Velasco: Yes he did.

Vincent Capraro: We stayed involved with the school until just recently about five or so years ago.

Brenda Velasco: Now you've been lifelong involved in Woodbridge. That's why I wanted to interview both of you and I finally got it. How about anything with sports Vinnie?

Vincent Capraro: I know that we won seven games my senior year. We were 7-1 and 1. We played a game and we lost but we were one of the better teams that Woodbridge had in a long time.

Brenda Velasco: And that's when you had that one high school though.

Vincent Capraro: One high school. All the kids in the Township played for Woodbridge and in 1964 Kennedy opened up. Colonia was in '67 and then they were divided into three towns but they've been pretty successful. Just the last couple of years they haven't been but they were pretty successful.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, and what was the year that you graduated?

Vincent Capraro: I graduated in 1956.

Brenda Velasco: That's the year that you had a good season.

Vincent Capraro: Well '55 was the football year.

Brenda Velasco: You're right.

Vincent Capraro: We had Leroy Alexander who was our coach.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yeah, Leroy Alexander and Al what was his name, the big guy?

Vincent Capraro: Lou Haggler?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No, Lou Haggler was one of them but Al.....

Vincent Capraro: Pallazo.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Yeah, Al Pallazo.

Brenda Velasco: So you had some outstanding players along with yourself then for that year.

Vincent Capraro: It wasn't me it was them.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And you know my brother Frank played with Lou Creekmur.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: He was in the Football Hall of Fame out in Canteen, Ohio.

Vincent Capraro: He was invited to the New Jersey Hall of Fame to present Lou Creekmur with his award.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And did Frank play ball with Hardy Peterson or coach him?

Vincent Capraro: They played baseball together.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Hardy Peterson who was with the major leagues.

Brenda Velasco: Detroit and then he became a manager.

Vincent Capraro: Yankees too.

Brenda Velasco: Yankees too?

Vincent Capraro: Oh yeah, he was general manager of the Yankees.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: It's ironic that my brother Frank coached my brother Vinnie but he also coached his son Jimmy and he also coached his nephews Robert and Vincent and Joey. So it's really interesting.

Brenda Velasco: Yes it's a family affair.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And you should also know and I think that Woodbridge and Edison played each other on Thanksgiving Day and how many years were you guys coaches together? They played each other and Frank coached Woodbridge and Vinnie Edison. And they played each other on Thanksgiving Day after which we all had Thanksgiving dinner together.

Brenda Velasco: That must have been interesting.

Vincent Capraro: Edison lost.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Edison always lost.

Vincent Capraro: The only time we beat them was the championship game in '76 and then I retired.

Brenda Velasco: And then you retired but then later on you became the superintendent in Edison, right?

Vincent Capraro: Yeah, and I was there until 1993.

Brenda Velasco: After you retired from Edison where did you go?

Vincent Capraro: I stayed teaching in Edison but I coached at Upsala then I went to Princeton and I came back to Upsala as the head coach.

Brenda Velasco: So you've got a bit of experience.

10. What do you like about Woodbridge today?

Brenda Velasco:

Brenda Velasco:

Brenda Velasco:

11. Do you have any family members still living in Woodbridge Township today?

Brenda Velasco: People still living in Woodbridge today. Not you, you're in Red Bank.....

Vincent Capraro: I'm retired.

Brenda Velasco: You're retired however where do your children live?

Vincent Capraro: My daughter lives in Red Bank, my son right now is going for his masters at the University of Texas and Cindy lives in Highland.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, off the Hudson River there somewhere.

Vincent Capraro: On the other side of Poughkeepsie.

Brenda Velasco: So she's not far from Alene.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right, exactly.

Vincent Capraro: That's a couple of hours.....

Brenda Velasco: Albany?

Vincent Capraro: Yeah.

Brenda Velasco: So that's not too bad. Okay, so Dolores is the only one living.....

Vincent Capraro: And Frank.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And Frank.

Brenda Velasco: And Frank in Woodbridge.

Vincent Capraro: Everybody else was there too until they died.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right, my sisters were there. Of course they're both gone.

Vincent Capraro: The only one who lived in California was my brother John. He moved his family to California when I still was in Franklin Township '68 or '69.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, you're it then Dolores.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I mean I stayed in Woodbridge for a couple of reasons. You know when I sold the house on Green Street everything was there you know. My church was there, my friends were there, at the time my family was still there and I still have family there of course. I just like Woodbridge. I think Woodbridge is a great town. I've seen a lot of changes that sometimes don't make me very happy but I still feel like it's got "a small-town feel".

Brenda Velasco: It does.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's what I like. I feel comfortable there, I just feel comfortable. Do I like all the construction? Do I like all these stores? No I don't because I just don't think we need all of them because many times they get empty and then they're abandoned. But I still like Woodbridge.

Vincent Capraro: I moved out of Woodbridge now twelve years ago and one of the primary reasons we moved down here was because my daughter moved down here. She had children and we would take care of the kids a couple of days a week. We still do, a lot less time then we used to, but that's primarily one of the reasons we moved here because there were a lot of these housing developments all over the state. I used to read the *Home News Tribune*, I still do that, and I read it every day to look and see who died from Woodbridge, to see what's going on in Woodbridge and Edison. I still do that every morning. I get up and I still talk to Dolores and I still talk to Frank about what's going on in Woodbridge.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Your heart is still in Woodbridge.

Vincent Capraro: So the reason that I moved to Red Bank is not like I wanted to move out of Woodbridge because we lived in a real good location on the corner of Grove and Linden.

Brenda Velasco: You could take the train, you could walk to the train from where you lived, Vinnie and you too Dolores.

Vincent Capraro: Cindy had an apartment and she used to walk to the train station and go to New York and come back and walk home.

Brenda Velasco: That was perfect. You had a great tenant then.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Then my son moved in or before that.

Vincent Capraro: Yeah, he was there before that.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Vincent moved in then Cindy.

12. Are there any other stories or events that you would like to discuss that we haven't covered that pertains to Woodbridge?

Brenda Velasco: Okay, have we missed any stories or events that you would like to discuss? Have we not hit on anything in these questions?

Vincent Capraro: Did you belong to the Girl Scouts?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Oh yeah, I belonged to the Girl Scouts. We used to go camping at Kiddie Keep Well Camp (Edison).

Vincent Capraro: I used to go to Camp Cowaw in the Boy Scouts.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Oh, that's right.

Vincent Capraro: I think I was only in there for a couple of years and then when I got out of high school I dropped out.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I did too but again when we went to Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts we had to walk there and you know we did a lot of walking at night. I mean we used to go to St. Cecelia's which had a Quonset Hut and we used to go roller skating at the Quonset Hut. For recreation, that's right, that's something I did for recreation.

Vincent Capraro: I didn't do that.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: But we used to walk home from there at night and not ever think anything about it.

Vincent Capraro: When we got into 8th grade, kids from Iselin school would come to our school for shop and we got to meet some of those kids that I played baseball with in Little League.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And who was one of your best friends?

Vincent Capraro: New York Ronnie?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Ronnie Osborne, yeah, they were best buddies.

Vincent Capraro: I remember on Christmas Eve we would go to midnight mass and come back to our house at two o'clock in the morning and Ronnie would be there, Joe Martino, some of your friends and they would come to our house and have sausage. That went on for a couple of years. Where did we go roller skating or swimming or ice skating?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We used to go down the park in Woodbridge by South Park Drive and North Park Drive on New Year's Day. That was a yearly tradition. We would go ice skating on New Year's Day.

Brenda Velasco: Right, Heard's Brook around there.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: There's not even any water in there anymore.

Brenda Velasco: Especially this fall. It is dry.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Our house was always open to whoever you wanted to bring there.

Brenda Velasco: You had an exceptional mother.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Many Christmases the Weisenberger's would be by themselves and you know a couple of extra dishes on the table and they would come and eat with us.

Brenda Velasco: So you both have happy memories.

Vincent Capraro: Oh yeah.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Very happy.

Brenda Velasco: You had good memories. That's good.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Very happy memories.

Brenda Velasco: You were fortunate.

Vincent Capraro: And then the taxes went up.

Brenda Velasco: Vinnie, that's what has happened throughout.

Vincent Capraro: Not here. It went down as a matter of fact.

Brenda Velasco: Is this an adult community then?

Vincent Capraro: Yeah. I guess I'm an adult.

Brenda Velasco: Finally.

Vincent Capraro: I think I probably have maybe one friend from high school who left.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: A lot.

Vincent Capraro: There's Martino and Bob Beni.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Never see him too much anymore.

Brenda Velasco: He just participated in the Senior Olympics and won one of the medals.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Oh wow!

Brenda Velasco: Yup, I see Sandy.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Our friends were our family friends if you know what I mean.

Vincent Capraro: Walt Houseman and (inaudible) were our friends at the time.

Brenda Velasco: Who was that?

Vincent Capraro: Walt Houseman. His brother is a custodian in town. He died maybe ten years ago. But we met each other in 1st grade and we were friends until his kids graduated from colleges.

Brenda Velasco: Wow, a long time.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: And Ronnie Hoda.

Vincent Capraro: He was one of my assistant coaches. So we kept a lot of our friends rather than reaching out to other people.

Brenda Velasco: You just had an extended family.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: I think having the six kids in our family.....well it was difficult for my mother obviously because you know she was left to raise us and we were very young when my father died. But like everybody's friends were part of our family if you know what I mean. That's just the way it was.

Vincent Capraro: Gioff and Frank went to school together and Gioff was always at my house and that was even before Dolores knew who he was.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Right, exactly.

Vincent Capraro: But he was always at our house but even I remember some of Rose's friends. Rosemary Riggard.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Dolores Pennick.

Vincent Capraro: Dolores Pennick, Ann Ross.....

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: Dorothy Kushner.

Vincent Capraro: They always came to our house.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: We just had a lot....our house was always.....I mean it was.....

Vincent Capraro: Pete Dalina used to come to our house.

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: That's right. Pete Dalina was a good friend of the family.

Vincent Capraro: He graduated with my cousin John.

Brenda Velasco: And we lost him too. Again we're going to conclude. Anything else you want to add?

Dolores Capraro Gioffre: No.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, I thank you both.