

**Oral History Interview
Gladys Meltreder Kelt
WH018**

(written transcript and digital audio)

On September 12, 2008, at 10:30 A.M., Gladys Kelt was interviewed in her home at 188 Worth Street, Iselin, New Jersey by Brenda Velasco.

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

My name is Gladys Kelt. I am a resident of Iselin and I was born on May 7, 1927.

2. How long have you lived in Woodbridge?

I have lived in Woodbridge since 1945.

Brenda Velasco: Where did you live in Woodbridge when you first came?

Gladys Kelt: In Woodbridge Proper. We had a home on Almon Avenue.

Brenda Velasco: When did you move to Iselin?

Gladys Kelt: I moved to Iselin in 1953 when we bought a home in Westbury Park.

Brenda Velasco: Your current address is in Westbury Park. This was one of those new developments. You moved into a new home then?

Gladys Kelt: I watched it being built because we lived in Woodbridge. We would drive over every night, my husband and I, and look at what progress there was. The streets were still like cobblestones: rocks. We were the twelfth family of 589.

Brenda Velasco: Wow! So you kept an eye on the developer all along the way.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, yes. I remember a tractor going across my backyard before we had a fence. My husband had put up a clothesline and the tractor tore it down.

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

Well, I was born and raised in Carteret and we lived in my grandma's house with grandma. We moved to Woodbridge when my mother and father bought a duplex home so actually they lived on one side. When I got married I lived on the other, so I was the only one in the family to live on both sides of the duplex house.

Brenda Velasco: Quite unique.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, but eventually you moved away and, not too far, because you moved to Iselin. So you were still close.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: And Carteret is not that far either from Iselin.

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

Well let's talk about Iselin Middle School. When I was a young bride, living here in Iselin, right up Fourth Street they decided to build a school with all this community of children. There were so many children in each house. I remember one Halloween I had 200. My husband went to the candy store, not the candy store actually, Acme, where Staples is now.

Brenda Velasco: Okay so there was an Acme where Staples is?

Gladys Kelt: Yes. And I think he went seven times to get enough candy for all the children. It was outrageous.

Brenda Velasco: That was great because we don't have that many children coming around anymore for Halloween.

Gladys Kelt: No.

Brenda Velasco: Not anywhere. Not anywhere.

Gladys Kelt: It's not safe.

Brenda Velasco: You had a small community here.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, well they were all new and all anxious to get acquainted and actually most of the children were from our development.

Brenda Velasco: Wow! And you were the twelfth house?

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: So you saw this whole area.

Gladys Kelt: There's a concrete pad across the street and people wonder what it is. It's actually the base of a phone booth before phones were hooked up to our homes. There was a public phone booth there and people would line up because nobody had phones.

Brenda Velasco: And this was in 1953?

Gladys Kelt: Yea, in fact the new owners of the house, I spoke to them and I asked him if he knew what that concrete block was? He said, no, he said, do you know? I said, yes, that was a public phone booth.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so you saw a lot of things?

Gladys Kelt: Oh, I sure did.

Brenda Velasco: Anything else you want to mention?

Gladys Kelt: Well, I didn't finish telling you about Iselin Middle School.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: I told you I was a young bride and we had so many salesmen banging at the door, selling blinds and selling all kinds of stuff. I think I had 35 in one week.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Gladys Kelt: Because it was a brand new development.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, this was an opportune moment for them to come to sell.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: So you had 35.

Gladys Kelt: Salesmen in one week when I first moved into these Westbury homes.

Brenda Velasco: Boy, they loved this area.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Did you buy anything?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, I think I bought blinds.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: Can I finish telling you about the Iselin Middle School?

Brenda Velasco: Yes. Yes, because we keep on getting sidetracked.

Gladys Kelt: There were flat bed trailer trucks, two of them, coming slowly up the street, and the arch in the Iselin Middle School, they had half the arch on each on his flatbed.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: And I saw that come by so I watched them build the Iselin Middle School.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so they came down Worth Street, naturally, with those arches.

Gladys Kelt: Yes. Half arch on each flatbed and it was like a double flatbed to carry half the arch.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so you saw a lot of construction going down. How far is Iselin Middle School from you? About how many blocks would you say?

Gladys Kelt: You can look out my kitchen window and see it.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so your kids went there.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, it wasn't middle school then it was junior high.

Brenda Velasco: Right. Right. Right. We used to call the intermediate schools junior highs back then. Okay, so it was a junior high. So they didn't have far to walk?

Gladys Kelt: No.

Brenda Velasco: Very good. Where did your children go to elementary school then?

Gladys Kelt: St. Cecelia's.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: And actually in 1st grade there wasn't enough room for all the kids at St. Cecelia's. There were 65 in the class.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Gladys Kelt: They had morning and afternoon classes. I belonged to PTA1 and PTA2. I had to go twice.

Brenda Velasco: You were busy then with your children and PTA.

Gladys Kelt: Oh, yes. Yes. And there was a quonset hut next to St. Cecelia's. That's where my daughter went to 1st grade, the pre-fab, or left over quonset hut from the war.

Brenda Velasco: Alright, so all your children then attended St. Cecelia's, which was quite a walk.

Gladys Kelt: No, they had a bus.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, they did have a bus, okay.

Gladys Kelt: And our post office wasn't where it is now on Middlesex Turnpike; it was next to the senior citizen building now.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, okay next to Cooper Towers?

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Alright, and what other stores were there then?

Gladys Kelt: In Iselin?

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: One of my favorites was the bakery. I got a coffee cake for 25 cents with extra powdered sugar.

Brenda Velasco: Wow! You can't do that anymore.

Gladys Kelt: And they had penny rolls. I remember one time when I belonged to the Woodbridge Woman's Club they told me to come to Iselin to get the rolls because they were a penny each. Little dinner rolls, you know, not much, like a White Castle hamburger.

Brenda Velasco: And where was this bakery located?

Gladys Kelt: Right on Oak Tree Road.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, Oak Tree Road, okay. Was it by the movie theatre or?

Gladys Kelt: No, I think it's an Indian jewelry place now.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, well you can't find cake there from the Indian jewelry place. That was a bargain. Coffee cake you said for?

Gladys Kelt: 25 cents with extra powdered sugar. It already had sugar and crumbs and everything on it but they would give you extra.

Brenda Velasco: That was a buy. That was a steal.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, did you have garbage pickup back when you lived here in 1953? Did the township provide it?

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so the township has had a long service.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: What churches were here at the time?

Gladys Kelt: Well St. Cecelia's. The masses were actually held in the school auditorium but it was made into a church. I'm so glad it's not that way anymore.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, because they have a beautiful church now but that was late in coming.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, but the school church was on fire.

Brenda Velasco: Oh.

Gladys Kelt: That's why they had to build a new church. The candles or something like that.

Brenda Velasco: That's always been a hazard. I know my church has switched over to electric candles right now. I see you have electric candles, I noticed.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, yes. That's because for 18 months I was on oxygen. I couldn't have regular candles.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, okay. How about a movie theatre? There was a movie theatre, right?

Gladys Kelt: Oh the State Theatre. On Sunday nights they used to have a movie and vaudeville.

Brenda Velasco: Right here on Green Street or Woodbridge Proper?

Gladys Kelt: Woodbridge Proper State Theatre.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, that was on Main Street.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: So that was Sunday nights?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, vaudeville and a movie. It was great.

Brenda Velasco: Now, there was also a movie house in Iselin on Oak Tree Road. Did you visit that as well?

Gladys Kelt: I certainly did.

Brenda Velasco: That had a beautiful façade, didn't it?

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Do you remember what that movie house was called?

Gladys Kelt: I used to but I don't right now. I'm sorry. I went there often. I remember the sound was louder than other movies. And right next to the theatre was a hardware store.

Brenda Velasco: Eagle Hardware.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, Eagle Hardware. I used to like that store.

Brenda Velasco: They had everything.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: It was better than going to a Home Depot because it was smaller and they knew where everything was.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Can you think of any other stores? Drug stores or....?

Gladys Kelt: Well years ago I used to go into Woodbridge because I was familiar with Dern's Drug Store, on the corner. And there used to be a German butcher that sold good kielbasi.

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

We used to always go to Roosevelt Park and feed the ducks. You're not allowed to do that any more. Every Sunday after church we would go to Roosevelt Park to feed the ducks. Do you know they had horse trails then for horseback riding?

Brenda Velasco: Oh, in Roosevelt Park.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Gladys Kelt: My uncle had few too many drinks and he went for a horse ride. It was funny.

Brenda Velasco: Did your children go on the horse rides at all?

Gladys Kelt: No, but do you know when I used to take, well I had to take my whole family, but take my son for a haircut. Right next to the haircut, it's a beauty salon now, it used to be a barbershop.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: Well, right next to it there was an empty lot and they used to have pony rides so on the way or coming back my children would all go on the pony rides after their haircuts.

Brenda Velasco: So you'd bribe them for the haircut?

Gladys Kelt: Right, and they got bubblegum from the barber, so it wasn't too bad.

Brenda Velasco: And where was this barbershop that you took them, right on Oak Tree Road?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, Green Street actually. It's Oak Tree Road after the train and the train station used to be right there at the underpass.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, because that's moved down to Metro Park now. Now did you husband commute to work?

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Did he go by car or by train?

Gladys Kelt: He went by car and he just worked at Chevron in Perth Amboy.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, so he was close by with work?

Gladys Kelt: Yea, Chevron was a big busy place.

Brenda Velasco: And that was in Perth Amboy.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: So he commuted by car.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Did you use Merrill Park at all?

Gladys Kelt: Oh, there used to be fireworks there and actually one year a helicopter landed with a TV celebrity, not a big celebrity, but I think the host of a children's show or something and he entertained. Then when it got dark the fireworks started; but it stopped when somebody was killed on the railroad track.

Brenda Velasco: They had stopped by the time I moved here late (1960s). Now we have the fireworks down in Sewaren.

Gladys Kelt: Speaking of railroad tracks, I remember going to Merrill Park and waiting for the slow moving train. Jacqueline Kennedy was on the train and everybody was waiting for the train to go by to see her. It must have been the body of Kennedy because it was moving slow.

Brenda Velasco: JFK, right.

Gladys Kelt: We went to Merrill Park to see the train go by.

Brenda Velasco: That was in the early '60s, about 1963.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: What public buildings or property were located in Iselin?

Gladys Kelt: Oh, Iselin. I was just going to talk about Woodbridge Proper.

Brenda Velasco: Well, let's talk about Woodbridge Proper first.

Gladys Kelt: I was so sorry to see the old Town Hall go because I used to go there to pay taxes. It was a nice old building but it had to go, I understand that.

Brenda Velasco: Unfortunately, yea, I think the top floor was condemned.

Gladys Kelt: And then also I was married in the original old St. James Church and even when I got married it was so rickety that they had to have braces to hold it up. Indoors, you know, braces like this kind.

Brenda Velasco: Yes. What year did you get married?

Gladys Kelt: 1948.

Brenda Velasco: 1948, because this was going to be your 60th anniversary if your husband had lived.

Gladys Kelt: So the Town Hall and the old St. James Church.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, anything else in Woodbridge Proper?

Gladys Kelt: What do you mean an event or a building?

Brenda Velasco: A building, we're on buildings right now.

Gladys Kelt: Well, all stores have changed. I mean the banks, the water company, all that. The water company used to be right on the corner.

Brenda Velasco: And you could just walk to pay your bills then?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, I used to take the baby carriage down Main Street and go to the old A & P.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, but you said you also had an Acme?

Gladys Kelt: Where the Staples is and then it became the Greenwood Manor and I think there was something else in between.

Brenda Velasco: Well, that was handy for you living here if there was an Acme there because you could walk there. It's not too far from you.

Gladys Kelt: No, I didn't shop there often, I had my own place: different places. But it was handy when you would run out of something, to go up to the Acme.

Brenda Velasco: And with kids you always ran out of something.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, anything else in Iselin now, coming back to Iselin? Any other public buildings? How about the library, did you have a library in 1953 when you moved here?

Gladys Kelt: In Iselin?

Brenda Velasco: Yes.

Gladys Kelt: I don't remember.

Brenda Velasco: I don't think you did. It was just the Woodbridge Main Library known as the Barron Library at that time, which wasn't too far from where you originally lived in Woodbridge if you lived on Almon. Anything else? You mentioned the post office had moved.

Gladys Kelt: And the train station.

Brenda Velasco: Yep, the train station moved.

Gladys Kelt: And schools were built up and added onto and things like that.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, was the firehouse by the railroad? There's a firehouse there that was District 9.

Gladys Kelt: No, I belong to District 1.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: There's one on one side of the railroad tracks and one on the other side.

Brenda Velasco: Alright, so that firehouse was there then?

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: And where do all the children from this development, Westbury development, where did they go to elementary school?

Gladys Kelt: Most in School #18. Do you remember where the Shop Rite, no I don't think you would remember but where Richard's Paint Store is, now it's an Indian place but it used to be the Shop Rite?

Brenda Velasco: Right.

Gladys Kelt: That's the Shop Rite I used to go to.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: And across, where there's an Indian store now, it used to be Arthur Treachers. After we went shopping at Shop Rite we'd stop for a snack, for corn dogs at Arthur Treachers. And before that, there used to be a private tiny airport there.

Brenda Velasco: Wow!

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Where was that?

Gladys Kelt: Where the Shop Rite was.

Brenda Velasco: That was where the private airport was.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, and instead of Metro Park there used to be corn fields and Cooper's Dairy was where the Social Security building is. It used to be Cooper's Dairy with a silo and a cow. Just think, when I first moved here, there were cows in Iselin.

Brenda Velasco: I remember seeing that because we would go to Menlo Park Mall when it was first built and if you took the back way you'd see all the cows.

Gladys Kelt: It wasn't closed in. It was an open air mall.

Brenda Velasco: Right, right, Menlo Park Mall.

Gladys Kelt: Outdoors.

Brenda Velasco: That's right.

Gladys Kelt: If you wanted to go from the 5 & 10 to Penney's you had to go out in the rain and everything.

Brenda Velasco: I forgot about that.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, it was an open air mall.

Brenda Velasco: You're right, you're right.

Gladys Kelt: And there was a Grand Union on one end which was handy when you have a, you know, food store in the mall.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, Woodbridge Center wasn't here for awhile?

Gladys Kelt: No.

Brenda Velasco: That was in the '60s.

Gladys Kelt: That was a clay bank.

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: Can I tell you something about Menlo mall?

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: In the 5 & 10, when my daughters were teenagers, we used to go to the mall and go upstairs and downstairs and they had an escalator then, in the 5 & 10.

Brenda Velasco: Now they don't even have a 5 & 10 there.

Gladys Kelt: And you know who cut my shades? John McCormac, our mayor. He was a teenager working in the 5 & 10: Woolworth's.

Brenda Velasco: Wait till I tell him. Have you spoken to him lately?

Gladys Kelt: No.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, I'm going to mention this to him.

Gladys Kelt: Didn't he just have his appendix out?

Brenda Velasco: Yes, he did.

Gladys Kelt: Is he okay?

Brenda Velasco: He's in some pain but he's functioning and getting around. He's lost weight and looks better. Looks much better but he's still in pain. He's doing his job. I just e-mailed him this morning, but I will definitely tell him that he cut your shades.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: Did he measure correctly?

Gladys Kelt: I had no problem; they didn't have to go back.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, I'm going to tell him that. I think he's doing a better job as mayor though.

Gladys Kelt: Speaking of mayors, do you know the first time I saw McGreevey?

Brenda Velasco: No.

Gladys Kelt: I worked at the Iselin Fair, stretching pizza dough.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, with your last name you're stretching pizza dough?

Gladys Kelt: It was a sit down job. You sat at the table with plastic gloves on stretching the pizza. But, anyhow, I parked behind the firehouse, because I couldn't get a parking place closer, and then I walked through the alley and actually political people weren't supposed to mingle. So here was this nice looking young man standing by the firehouse greeting people, and I said, oh what a nice young man. He introduced himself to me and he said, "I'm a State senator running for office" and shook my hand and he was very pleasant, I got to the fair and I said, that "McGreevey is going to go some place".

Brenda Velasco: Well you knew it didn't you?

Gladys Kelt: Yea, I said, what a nice young man: a natural politician.

Brenda Velasco: Yes, and he went on to become governor. Okay, so we'd gotten into some political background here as well.

6. What did you do for recreation?

You know, believe it or not, sometimes children now a days say they are bored. We were never bored. You know, I remember, even before television, our first television was a 10 inch screen.

Brenda Velasco: Now look at them. Did you have a magnifying glass on it?

Gladys Kelt: No they had them but we didn't have one.

Brenda Velasco: Okay.

Gladys Kelt: We'd watch wrestling or we'd watch anything that was on then, you know.

Brenda Velasco: When did you get that first television?

Gladys Kelt: Oh, about 1950. In our first couple of years of being married, we decided to get things like ironing boards and pots and pans.

Brenda Velasco: I think that was a better priority. Okay, now you mentioned you also went to Roosevelt Park.

Gladys Kelt: Actually we used to ice skate right on the lake. Now they have the artificial rinks.

Brenda Velasco: Yep, that's what we have at Woodbridge Center too, that big ice skating rink.

Gladys Kelt: I've been there in a wheelchair to see the place.

Brenda Velasco: So you checked it out? Okay, so you were never bored you said.

Gladys Kelt: No, there was ice skating, picnics, and movies.

Brenda Velasco: Most of these were within Woodbridge except for Roosevelt Park, right?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, the ice skating and picnics were in Roosevelt Park. We used to make home movies too.

Brenda Velasco: With your family?

Gladys Kelt: My father had a shed, a darkroom, and he used to develop movies himself but most of the time he sent them away. It was a big endeavor to do it yourself.

Brenda Velasco: So this was the house on Almon Street then, where he lived?

Gladys Kelt: No, that was when we were still in Carteret when he developed the movies. There was no shed on Almon Avenue.

Brenda Velasco: Okay. What type of movies did he make?

Gladys Kelt: 16 mm home movies and 8 mm. He started out with 16 and switched to 8; 16 was expensive. I was a Depression baby, everything was expensive.

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

When I was still a teenager, before I got married, every Friday night was the, this is funny, they called it a rat race, a dance, and it was held right on Green Street. What was the name of the building? The commute public building. (Masonic Lodge which had the Craftman's Club located in there.)

Brenda Velasco: Oh, yes. Okay, I think that's where John McCormac's office is right now, where his business is right now.

Gladys Kelt: Still standing.

Brenda Velasco: Yes, it is.

Gladys Kelt: Dr. Rothfuss's house was right near there. I'd pass by and admire, he had tulips, hundreds of plants of tulips. It was so beautiful.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, what was the doctor's name again?

Gladys Kelt: Rothfuss.

Brenda Velasco: So you liked his beautiful tulips?

Gladys Kelt: Yea, and he delivered my first two children. You asked about the focal point, well for me it was mostly the church. I belonged to the Rosary Society and I belonged to the Sodality. When I was younger I'd go to meetings and card parties and things like that. There was always something to do. Parades. We used to have a Memorial Day parade about 10:30 in the morning and we would walk from our house up to Rahway Avenue, because it would pass by right there, and all the neighbors would be out and it was fun. Then we'd come home and have a picnic. We always had fun.

Brenda Velasco: It was mainly geared around your family, and this is what I'm getting from a lot of people.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, well, we couldn't afford to go to Disney World and things like that in those days.

Brenda Velasco: You made your own fun?

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: You did a good job.

Gladys Kelt: I have a lot of other things to tell you about Woodbridge.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, fine.

Gladys Kelt: Okay, do you know where the Hungarian American Club is near the White

Church? (Port Reading Avenue)

Brenda Velasco: Yes, I do.

Gladys Kelt: Alright, well when I was still living in Woodbridge, Cardinal Mindszenty, a Hungarian cardinal, he was there and I went to see him. That was a big thing in my life because he had been imprisoned by the Russians.

Brenda Velasco: By the Communists, right. Yes, yes.

Gladys Kelt: Cardinal Mindszenty, and we were allowed to go up for a blessing and he had the most piercing eyes. It seemed he looked through my soul.

Brenda Velasco: So that was a very memorable occasion.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, it was. Should I keep going?

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: Where the new Woodbridge High School is, Barron Avenue, was the high school when I moved to Woodbridge; the Barron Avenue school was the Woodbridge High School. But before the new Woodbridge High School was built, many, many years back, I was a little girl, there was a wooden race track there.

Brenda Velasco: Oh, okay. That's where the new high school is?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, yes.

Brenda Velasco: Did you ever visit it?

Gladys Kelt: The race track?

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: With my dad. My dad was a race fan. And also there was a newspaper in Woodbridge, what was it, something press and the newspaper building used to be across from the train station. (*Leader Press*)

Brenda Velasco: In Woodbridge?

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

Brenda Velasco: Wow! And I know *the Home News Tribune*, when I first moved here, that was a Perth Amboy paper though, that was located off Route #9 somewhere. Now they're in East Brunswick, their headquarters.

Gladys Kelt: They are?

Brenda Velasco: Yea.

Gladys Kelt: I remember going to the building. It was behind Fords Park.

Brenda Velasco: Yes, yes.

Gladys Kelt: I visited there one time. I had a Christmas ornament that was an antique and they were photographing antique Christmas ornaments for the paper. I got my hair done and everything and all they did was take a picture of the ornament.

Brenda Velasco: Do you still have that antique Christmas ornament?

Gladys Kelt: Some place up in the attic but I can't go up and downstairs anymore.

Brenda Velasco: Anything else?

Gladys Kelt: I'm sure there are a lot of other things but my memory isn't as good as it used to be.

Brenda Velasco: You did very well.

Gladys Kelt: Oh, thank you.

Brenda Velasco: You did very well.

Gladys Kelt: Thank you.

8. What did you like about living in Woodbridge?

I think Woodbridge has everything. It has the small town feel and yet it's close to everything. It's close to New York, it's close if you want to go to the shore, it's close if you want to go to the mountains or the Poconos. You know, it's a very nice place to live.

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

Oh I can tell you another thing, when that terrible train wreck happened in Woodbridge.

Brenda Velasco: Yes.

Gladys Kelt: My husband said he was going to go down and look at it when it was happening, you know?

Brenda Velasco: But you didn't see it though?

Gladys Kelt: No, no, I was home with the children. He did go and actually saw it.

Brenda Velasco: Did he talk to you about it?

Gladys Kelt: No.

Brenda Velasco: That was horrible.

Gladys Kelt: Yes.

10. What do you like about Woodbridge today?

The Woodbridge Community Center. I've been there about five times.

Brenda Velasco: Even with your wheelchair? It's ADA accessible, that's great.

Gladys Kelt: Yea, but I don't think I can go anymore, but I watched them ice skate. There was a skating class.

Brenda Velasco: And then the rink is rented out. Two teams as well. So it is heavily utilized and it's been a success. Do you watch them roller skate, too?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, I watched them and I watched the seniors running around the track upstairs.

Brenda Velasco: And we're hosting tryouts for the Senior Olympics, nationwide. This weekend it starts. So we've got a lot of seniors participating which has been very, very rewarding.

Gladys Kelt: It's a nice idea especially after just watching the Olympics on TV, you know.

Brenda Velasco: Yes, weren't they beautiful?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, oh gosh, it was beautiful.

Brenda Velasco: Okay, so you liked the Community Center?

Gladys Kelt: Yes, and I liked the idea that they're going to put solar panels on the public buildings. First time I saw solar panels it was in the '80s in Colorado.

Brenda Velasco: And what were you doing in Colorado?

Gladys Kelt: Visiting my daughter and son-in-law and the children. Also, I'm getting used to the new Town Hall. I realize it was necessary. I just wish it could be facing the other way, like the old one used to be.

Brenda Velasco: Right on Main Street then.

Gladys Kelt: Yea.

Brenda Velasco: It faces into the parking lot.

Gladys Kelt: Yea. Another thing I like, very much, is the Alvin Williams Park in Sewaren.

Brenda Velasco: Isn't that beautiful? I was there yesterday.

Gladys Kelt: Were you?

Brenda Velasco: With the kids.

Gladys Kelt: They had the ceremony there?

Brenda Velasco: No ceremony, I took my grandson.

Gladys Kelt: Well I'll tell you something about that, a few days after 911 my daughter and my son-in-law were here visiting me and we took a ride there. I wanted to show them the brand new park, and they were amazed, you know, they didn't even know it was there. And we looked across and there was still smoke coming up. You could see the smoke.

Brenda Velasco: Don't forget, across from Sewaren Park was the landfill, the Fresh Kills Landfill, where they were dumping a lot of the debris and whatever. But, it still was smoking for a while from ground zero. But that's a beautiful park.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, it is.

Brenda Velasco: And we have the fireworks there now and you can see the boats going back and forth.

11. Do you have family members living in Woodbridge?

No.

Brenda Velasco: Nobody?

Gladys Kelt: Either they've passed on or moved away, even my own children. One's in North Carolina, one's in Colorado and one's in Florida.

Brenda Velasco: So they really scattered, your family scattered.

Gladys Kelt: Yes, they did.

Brenda Velasco: Well, I am very happy I was able to interview you. I learned a lot, where the race track was, the airport and I'm glad you were able to see me. Thank you very much, Gladys Kelt, it's been a pleasure.

Gladys Kelt: Thank you very much, Brenda.