

## Woodbridge Public Library Oral History Interview

Tex Perry

WPL08

(digital audio)

On May 23, 1974, Tex Perry was interviewed for the Woodbridge Public Library Oral History Interviews.

*Mr. Almasi:* In the audience we have Tex Perry to speak to us tonight. He has quite an impressive list of activities and accomplishments here. There's a whole page and I don't think I would read them all to you but he's the Executive Director of the Iselin Citizen's Committee and I think, for the purpose of tonight, he would like to be known as an author and historian. He's going to talk to us about the history of Iselin about which he's writing a book at the present time. He's almost finished with it. So without saying anything more I'll just let Mr. Perry take over and you tell us whatever you would like.

*Tex Perry:* Good evening friends and neighbors. As Mr. Almasi said about my being in the organizations perhaps that's part of the downfall of life. This book about Iselin is not completed because I started off with good intentions about ten years ago when I started the idea about writing something about Iselin. As you know, in Woodbridge Township was have nine sections and there are some books on various sections of the township but there had never been anything said about Iselin and it seemed like we in Iselin felt, you know, that we were sort of a step-child. So I got the idea and said well why not get something about Iselin and I was told by someone that there is no history in Iselin. That's not true because there is history anyplace that you live whether it's to yourself or to a friend but it is history. How do we get history, we document it; you put it down on record. Now I was talking to Myron Schultz and I got to get down and see him because I promised to document all the stuff that I have and never got around to it. I got too involved with other organizations and said well that'll sit and I'll get to it tomorrow and tomorrow would say well I'll get to it. I just told Myron, when we met today, I will get to you. So again we get from one original idea to another but getting back to Iselin, we in Iselin have never had anything said, you know, documented so I started taking notes about ten years ago and set them down and said, well I'll get to it when I get to it. We did get to it and I got the help and I'm very fortunate to secure the help of Dave Miller who is no stranger to the township. Dave Miller was the assistant business administrator and Ackerman was the administrator here and he left. He is now the business administrator out in Jackson Township. We had the book pretty well shaped up but only the last chapter. Now we have to look at the future. That means that what we think will happen in the future. My problem now is getting a publisher, someone who will put it on the market. You know, with the cost of living now things

are going up and you weren't want to put the book on the market if it cost eight, nine or ten dollars. We're trying to keep it down as low as we can. Let me just give you some of the points of this book here. Like I said before the history of Iselin, New Jersey has never before been told. As a sub-committee of Woodbridge Township that celebrated three hundred charter members in 1969 we feel that the history of Iselin will make a valuable contribution to the state's history. Now the present slogan of Iselin is The Gateway of Middlesex County and so it's been since its early inception the intersection of the state's first areas of transportation, the (inaudible) trail and the Old Dutch Trail. Now the history of Iselin is almost completed in manuscript form with the exception of the last chapter, A Look to the Future, which will be the final chapter. It was in Iselin that Thomas A. Edison gave his first public demonstration of his perfected telephone at a graduation exercise in the local one room schoolhouse in June, 1877. This was one and a half years prior to the telephone installation at the White House in Washington, D.C. The local press stated at that time seeing and hearing such a wonderful invention could not fail to make it impressive. Now we go to Clarence Chamberlain who flew from New York to Germany shortly after Limburg had flown from New York to Paris. Now Mr. Chamberlain was no stranger in Iselin as he was once a stunt flyer for a developer in Menlo Park selling homes. According to the Foster brothers, Red and Whitey, Mr. Chamberlain was a frequent resident at his home. Now we have the Eastern Airline computerized reservation center for the eastern United States and it's located in Iselin. That was once the Metro Park Iselin high speed railroad station of the Penn Central Metro Liner which enabled motorists to make direct connection with the Garden State Parkway and New Jersey Turnpike which is also located in Iselin. Now we have the newly Berg Agency which is located on Route #27 so you see Iselin not only became like Metropolitan New York. It's not like the old Muslims left the city to come up from the country living at a country home and all that. It's getting away from that now right there in that section on the free school land where the Prudential Building is going up. It's all changed and this will all be included in our history book. I want to say about Dave Miller, Dave Miller is a real historian in town. I visited him about two weeks ago in Jackson Township and he has nineteen hundred books about New Jersey. He goes to book shops and spends hours and hours and picks up all kinds of books. Too bad that he had to leave but he's back home where you want him to be. You know, he's not from the city, what he calls the city, back here to the country. By the way, the name of the history book of Iselin will be, and this is just a coincidence, Perrytown, Union Town, Iselin, A History of Iselin, New Jersey. It explains in the book that there is no connection with my kin folks but it was originally called Perrytown and it was changed to Union Town and then it was changed to Iselin. Each chapter will explain why it was changed from Perrytown to Union Town and then from Union Town to Iselin. It gives

the life story about Iselin. A lot of people will say, who is Iselin named after? The answer to that is, after Mr. Iselin. Of course that makes sense. But who is Mr. Iselin? What did he do for Iselin? What was his first name? In there it explains that his name is Adrian Iselin and they had a finishing school for women and it only lasted two years. That was known The Adrian Institute. All in all I think it's a fantastic book. Like I said, it should have been on the market a long time ago but when you get involved you get involved and you can't do too many things. Now my concentration is that I want to finish that book, I want it documented and I want to put it in the library. I have a lot, through the years, I'd say about twenty years, of township activities in various organizations. I want to document that and I talked to Margaret and Mr. Beckerman and when I retire in about three years I want to go to Florida. I want to leave this all behind and say well here it is. I found out one thing most of the time that people have a lot of things that have value, whether sentimental or history, and they pass away or something happens and the first thing the wife will do is say let's get this junk out and clean house. It has happened to me where I traveled and got something or documented it and find well you're too late we threw it out. A lot of us will say well this has value but this does not have value. Then it will be documented. The thing is why do we document this, so somebody else can get the knowledge and say well this happened in 19 so and so and this happened and this. This is why you have your libraries so you can go back and get a wealth of information. I'll tell you one thing, maybe five years ago I had no value of the library, I couldn't care less, I couldn't care whether they had a small one or a big one; it had no value. But as you get involved in the activity you say you need information so you go down the library, pick up a book, and you find out, gee, there's so much information for us to grasp. So you go down there and you get your information, you get your background, and you back yourself and lay down an issue. So I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak before you. Again, like I said, this is not a farce it's going to be a reality that it will be on the market and I'm looking forward for you folks to come look for it. I'm not anxious about selling it as I am getting it out on the market because you have an idea. You say, this is what I want to do and you get satisfaction. You say, well I've done it. So I'm going to thank you folks for taking some of your time. Thank you.

*Mr. Almasi:* If you'd like to ask Mr. Perry some questions maybe he can let us.

*Tex Perry:* Sure, sure.

*Mr. Almasi:* When was Iselin founded? How old is it?

*Tex Perry:* Actually technically there is no Iselin, Colonia, Sewaren or Hopelawn. It's Woodbridge Township. It's the town of Woodbridge and that was chartered in 1669. That's the way it's been as we've grown. If you remember some time ago, and this is also in the book, that they wanted to make it a city status and they wanted to make this the City of Woodbridge. Well I don't want to get into a controversy whether you are for or against

It but I will publicly say that I was very much against it because you see I live in Iselin and I pay my taxes in Woodbridge Township. I live in Iselin and why do we have fire district, why do we have voting districts and why do we have school districts. That's because within our community we know our neighbors and we work together. But in a whole what happens in Woodbridge Proper or what happens in Colonia will affect us because we are the Township of Woodbridge. Like we always thought that we in Iselin are Iselinettes and if they lived in Colonia they were from Colonia. We're not separated we're together but that's the way it is. So getting back to your question, 1669 is the Township of Woodbridge.

*Female in the Audience:* So then that section of Woodbridge is Originally called Perrytown?

*Tex Perry:* Yea, at that time it was called Perrytown.

*Female in the Audience:* Was it the farmer that was called Perry?

*Tex Perry:* We could only trace it down to the tavern owner. In those days way back the hub, the center, would probably be the church. You know there would be a church, maybe a couple of stores and then there were all farms. There was an innkeeper, at that time a tavern owner, and they traveled by horse and buggy. They had horses there and that was a big thing that was the center of attraction. The fellows name was John Perry who was the innkeeper. But it didn't last too long because then it went to Union Town on account of they had the union chapel which the No. 1 Firehouse in Iselin on Green Street that was the union chapel so that became Union Town and then it became Iselin. Like I said in the book the stores didn't do anything too much for Iselin. It just stopped the Black Market in New York. There was a wealthy man in New York and they named it after him. It explains everything in the book. I don't want to give too much out, not that we're enemies here but it seems the woman who raised him had eight children and when she got through she retired and she wanted to do something else. He set her up at the school there on the property he owned. She named it Adrian Institute after him. It was in Iselin. She got the Pennsylvania Railroad to change the name to Iselin. So that's the way it became Iselin. Actually, Mr. Iselin didn't do too much for Iselin; usually they name the town after someone who is real active and does things for the town but he never lived here, he just had a summer home here.

*Female in Audience:* When did this all take place this Adrian Institute?

*Tex Perry:* About 1877 because up on St. Cecelia's Church, they just raised a building there, that used to be the rectory of the church and they put a new building up. Are you all familiar with that? On Oak Tree Road a lot of houses were built about 1875 and it was a thirteen room house that was known as the Graham Estate. They just tore that down and it's a shame because that had a lot of history.

They tore it down and replaced it with a modern building. They're the owners and they have the right to do what they want with the building. It's a shame because that was a brick building. There are a lot of towns that have them stay for history reasons or some other reasons. The same way as Flip's Tavern. Flip's Tavern was always the Iselin Hotel. There used to be a hotel there and a stagecoach used to run through and they used to stop the horses there. They used to feed the horses and the fellow that rode them would have a few drinks or whatever and then there was a hotel that they used to sleep in at night. They would then pick up the trail from there and go down to Trenton or to Newark. There is one marker around Colonia Boulevard and New Dover Road that says thirteen miles to Newark. The best part of the trail would be the stagecoach that would go from there and windup by the Iselin Hotel. I understand that's the only one left. There used to be three of them, twelve miles, which Mr. Miller has in his book. He has a picture of that twelve mile somewhere back further and that's gone. That thirteen mile marker looks like a tombstone right in the front there. I remember one time that the township was building around there and they knocked it down and I got a hold of Mr. Beagle and I told him gee whiz don't lose that. He was good enough to his men to go down there and they cemented it. It's only because I had seen the kids from school walk over it and, you know, it was just lying on the road. We finally got that up and up and you don't want to lose that. That's something that the history society moves to preserve because that's one of the markers of an old trail. Things like that are special.

*Lady in the Audience:* Do you have any maps, very old maps, that shows you where the trails ran through?

*Tex Perry:* No, but I have all the maps, you know, I just doesn't show that. Mr. Miller has it I think. He has more because that's Colonia. He took care of that. I think he has the numbers of the trails right through and that's one of the things we talked about because we have a chart, you know, made up for the library. Not many people know, I didn't know myself, that Route #27 was cut in across there and opened. They used to go through the back of Middlesex/Essex Turnpike. That's where the original trail was. There was a lot of things like farmland and a road that used to go back where there was Eastern Airlines on it. And then it went back to Gill Lane, that's all cut up. Gill Lane was just a little private road and now it's a highway. In fact, if you'll notice on Green Street by the Westbury Sweet Shop, they already have the sign there that says that you have to go right, only right, and straight ahead on the right lane. The left lane had these up already, you know. It's my opinion that they are going to cut that right down to Gill Lane. It means that when you go on Gill Lane you can come up to Green Street or the other way around. So already they are planning a lot of townhouses

down there. So the whole thing has changed. There once used to be a little cemetery which they got homes there now with big lighting and cut in streets.

*Man in the Audience:* How many people live there, in population?

*Tex Perry:* Well I would say honestly that in population would be after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War because they had Menlo Park Terrace which is part of Menlo Park there. The veterans who came back from the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War were looking for a place and they developed that. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War everybody came back from the service looking for a place to live and married and started a family, you know, because up to that time there was all farmlands. By the way too, you must not forget, we had an airport there where the Shop Rite is on the hill.

*Man in the Audience:* (Inaudible)

*Tex Perry:* Right, well we have, in our book, the streets listed alphabetically and we have subdividers like 1920, then the line and 27. That's how it's broken down. Now you take John Correja, Correja estate, and then his son junior. There was somebody else and it keeps cutting down and we have that all listed. It gives you a pretty good idea and we have, also, how the street were named and why they were named that way. The development you're talking about that's Woodbridge Oaks south and north. That would come about and then there was an airport. That was sold to someone else and that was part of Shop Rite. You see, that's all listed how they subdivided it. There's a lot of, you know, going down to the Town Hall and looking up records and going down to the county. The county would send you to the state and then you wound up having it right here. It's a lot of work, you know, but I enjoyed doing this because it's not a book where your documents say 1887 this happened or 1878 this happened. It's a story form because it takes in like we have a chapter on education and we have another chapter on subdivisions and all that. It explains right from the very beginning. In fact, because of this book, I found out that I live on a lake, what used to be a lake. I was wondering why I was getting all the water in my cellar. John Correja, from Oak Tree Road all the way up to School #15, Pershing Avenue School, there used to be a lake there. They got pictures of people ice skating and that was all farmlands, let's face it. Now they got homes, one right next to the other, and the only empty lot there has been La Guardia Avenue because they had put a senior citizen there. When they put the senior citizen home there we had talked to the engineers and they said they were going to put a cellar down and put air conditioning and put all the pumps and all down there. We told them they would never make it because this is going to sink and they said look you're no engineer we know what we're talking about. Well my neighbor is a real bug for this, you know, and he's telling the engineer, you know, you'll never make it. Our neighbor

says, he's right, you'll never make it. You know what happened? You know there's concrete after concrete poured and all that. It sunk and they covered the first floor and they just cemented that right up and put the air conditioning on the side. They had to redesign it. But we were right, the spring is there still. You know you look in the backyard and I have a picture back when they had the sheep and a shepherd there looking around. You can see Oak Tree Road and you can see down by Costello's and all that. That was all farmland, farms that's all it is, and you can see the lake there. Talking about Costello's, that used to be an old barn. Well I wasn't born in Iselin but I feel as if I was born in Iselin because that's part of me. It's part of me because I've done the research and I lived with it, you know.

*Lady in the Audience:* When did they fill up this lady, after World War II?

*Tex Perry:* No, I really don't know when they filled the lake. Now you take on Green Street they used to have a lot of brooks and all that and little by little some guy will fill it in a little bit and before you know it.....they're not even supposed to touch brooks. You know the law says you can't divert, you can't change the course of brooks and all but people do that. You know they have a little brook in the back and they subdivided they lot and sold this one. Then this guy comes along and he puts a little fill dirt and then somebody else and before you now it that brook is gone. But I guess, how can I say, it shrunk because the people, as they build, they just do away with it. What we have there now is that they have a big pipeline which they had a right of way because of the Garden State Parkway for drainage purposes. That's all we have left out of there. I know when I first moved there the kids used to take my 2 X 4s and disappear and make a raft and go down in back of the professional building. They had a big hollow there and they would just float it right there. When I first moved there La Guardia Avenue wasn't cut through. At Correja Avenue it stopped and at Hillcrest Avenue it stopped and the town had to put stakes there, big stakes, so people wouldn't cut across because if they would cut across, when they got to the other end, up by towards the Parkway, there's a big drop there and people would probably get killed so they had to block them off. But then later on they took that right away and put the senior citizen home there so they had to give them a back street. They made La Guardia Avenue come from Correja Avenue right up to Hillcrest and it stopped at Hillcrest because from Hillcrest down is the Parkway. Then that comes back up to Oak Tree Road. But I've seen them little changes just like that just a senior citizen home and a street being curved in. We have a little empty lot there not as much as compared to when we moved there so I've noticed a little of a change. But, gee whiz, you go back to the natives and they probably appreciate it more. We also have a chapter about the post office. That took me over three years to dig up. I had to go down to even Washington, D.C. to the archives down there and I found out that I had it right here in Iselin. You know the records, not all of them, but you have to piece them together. But you get right from the beginning from 1875 and at that time the train station would be the post office. You know they'd go in there and buy the tickets, get their stamps and mail a letter. Then

they moved out and they started drifting. I found out we have three postmen, something I never knew. Three women were postmasters. One of them her husband didn't qualify so she took it over. And then you would go down to Green Street and then from Green Street you would come back to Oak Tree Road, you know, where the railroad is. That's something about Iselin, we're divided with a railroad because Green Street is that side of the railroad track. Oak Tree Road is this side of the track and on the opposite side is the track.

*Man in the Audience:* What is known as the best side of the track?

*Tex Perry:* It all depends on what side of the track you're at. You know Oak Tree Road and Green Street, the Pennsylvania Railroad, had to use the street level. The train used to come right across and they used to have guards there. But then like St. Cecelia's we have a picture of the grand stake right on the Sidewalk but then the WPA dug under that and made Green Street. A lot of people were killed in Woodbridge Proper even. They had the same problem and you notice that if you go there you'll see a plaque that says WPA in front. They have a plaque and you have dates there. You can trace who to write to and all but we don't have them in Iselin. That was about three, four or five years later after the WPA funds were given to Woodbridge Proper. But it came up that they had to elevate that and it took them over ten years to elevate it. You know with the politicians they had to take a survey and they got to bring them back and it takes time.

*Lady in the Audience:* (Inaudible).

*Tex Perry:* Well the Green Street circle, when I was on the Safety Council, I was chairman of the Safety Council and we said that was outdated back in 1960. A couple of people got killed there and it will still be outdated ten years from now if they don't do something about it. It's the same way you have you metro liner. Sometime when I go to drive a car and I got to duck I get sacred. If there are two coming opposite one another you kind of breathe because they're too close. Well maybe in the bicycle days or horse and carriage it might have been alright but certainly with the Metro Park Iselin Station it's not the thing we want.

*Man in the Audience:* You're not supporting that we destroy it, it's an historic site, the tunnel. Let's get the horse and wagon back.

*Tex Perry:* Well, I don't know but if you're going to go with progress.....

*Man in the Audience:* In five years then try to walk across it.

*Tex Perry:* Well, if you can do that you're alright but see they have a lot of plans for that and they were supposed to but they'll never get to it because they're arguing who's going to do it and who's going to foot the bill and who's going to make the money or whatever. It's a big thing.

*Man in the Audience:* Are you speaking of Wood Avenue now?

*Tex Perry:* Yea, Wood Avenue side from Route #27 there.

*Man in the Audience:* Right.

*Tex Perry:* That road right there.

*Man in the Audience:* Well, Route #1 is also split isn't it?

*Tex Perry:* Well Iselin is split. It has Route #35, #36, Garden State Parkway, Turnpike, and Route #27. Name it we have it. That's why I say we're a



metropolitan thing now. I know I used to paint my house maybe every three, four or five years and now every year you got to paint it because you're in the city, let's face it.

*Man in the Audience:* Mr. Perry, a day to remember in 1960 when Richard Nixon came to Iselin, is that true?

*Tex Perry:* Yea, we have a picture in 1960, and I don't want you to think I'm Crowing, but I was on the Board of Health. In 1960, on Oak Tree Road, we had a supermarket there that somebody had and they jacked the rent up and they said well you got to pay more rent and he said well I'm not going to pay it so you're just going to have to padlock me. He left everything. They had cans that were popping up from the heat and in the wintertime it would freeze and all that so we got the Board of Health to kind of clean it up but it was private property and the politics said you can't do it and all that stuff. Finally we organized the Iselin Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce, I was president then, it came between the Board of Health and the president. I figured well I must have enough power and we finally got the place cleaned up and everything. We have a picture that Nixon is coming through with Pat Nixon right in the automobile and Freddie Adams, who was then mayor. He's with him and we also have a picture, a big one blown up and signed by President Nixon to Freddie. He has it in his office where he can look up at it. He has a couple of pictures of them. He was vice-president then.

*Man in the Audience:* It's just that it showed all kinds of training because if I remember he was wide opened to the people. People were clustered around him. I guess now with people they wouldn't dare do that.

*Tex Perry:* You know, Oak Tree Road is not a very wide road and you got people right along side of you.

*Man in the Audience:* In your book you have the old Grand City, we used to call it the Old Compromise and used to go there boy scouting.

*Tex Perry:* Yea, we got something in there about that. Thomas Edison mined a part of that for his photograph or Victrola or whatever you know and all that. Then it died out and then later on Henry Ford tried to revive it and tried to mine that. But I guess they had mined it out by the time that Thomas Edison tried to get something because you see Thomas Edison had his studio, or workshop, right in Menlo Park and he was always looking around. See how things have changed? Menlo Park, New Jersey is now just Menlo Park. It's Edison Township now. So they've done away with that identification, that little thing, Menlo Park. Now that has value because Thomas Edison was the Wizard of Menlo Park and I remember when I used to read the Wizard of Menlo Park I used to say where the heck is Menlo Park? Now that's gone, there's no more Menlo Park. It's the same as Nixon, New Jersey, Oak Tree, New Jersey and Stelton. In our book we talk about Oak Tree, New Jersey. A lot of people say where is Oak Tree, New Jersey? Well, again, that's part of Edison. That's gone and that's what they want to do here in Iselin in Woodbridge Township. Do away with Iselin, Colonia, Hopelawn, Sewaren, and Port Reading. They would do away with that and there would be only

a section. You wouldn't get your mail like Tex Perry, Iselin, New Jersey. It would be Woodbridge, New Jersey. Somebody in Colonia would be so and so Woodbridge, New Jersey. That would be the Colonia section. That's why I said we keep them on a city status.

*Man in the Audience:* That reminds me, is New Market still in existence?

*Tex Perry:* That's Piscataway. See that too is gone. My brother-in-law lives there now. He lives right by the firehouse and you still have New Market Exempt Firehouse. The name of the New Market is there but they call it Piscataway, New Jersey. Sometimes they have a tough time they don't know how to spell Piscataway so they put New Market. He gets it but that's not right though.

*Man in the Audience:* (Inaudible).

*Tex Perry:* Well, it all depends of what boundary you ask about. The fire department is different from the voting and, you know, they've changed it so much now. Let's put it this way, if it's strong in one party and this party wants to get in they'll change it somehow. You know that's politics. But it's kind of hard to say. Now Klein's, S. Klein, is actually in Iselin and they advertise that way. You can't stop them because I just brought this along and fought them that they should say Iselin in parentheses. Now you take the Acme on the Green Street circle, they used to advertise Woodbridge and I got down to see the manager and I had written letters and all that. He at least put Iselin in parentheses. No you have Woodbridge, it is more commercial than him, it's to his advantage, so you can't blame him. But actually like Ronson that's in Iselin and still they advertise Woodbridge. Gill Lane is still in Iselin but they advertise Woodbridge.

*Man in the Audience:* (Inaudible) on Park Avenue?

*Tex Perry:* Well right down by free school land on the Parkway that's Iselin, you go back to Metro Park down Wood Avenue south and it goes right up to Wood Avenue which is the other side of Edison. Then it comes back all the way down by Koyen's there, you know, by the undertaker because that's Colonia there. It's kind of rough too, you know. You have to look at a map and trace it but there's a lot of discrepancy where actually it is. Another thing too I keep aware of is that I pick up the paper sometime and see somebody say Gills Lane, you know, or Gills and Pantry Pride is one. I'm going to get down to see this guy. I'm going to go down and have lunch with this manager because there's no such thing as Gills, you know. No hypotrophy or pleural. It's Gill Lane. It was named after a fellow who lost his life in World War II by the name of William Gill. The same way as Byrd Avenue, that used to be Iselin Parkway. That was after Jack Byrd who also lost his life in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. See this is all in the history book and it tells you that.

*Man in the Audience:* On a personal level, tell me how Tex Perry got his name?

*Tex Perry:* That's very good, I'm glad you asked. I can document this with a newspaper clipping, I used to be known as A. George Perry. When I was on the Board of Health the resolution was A. George Perry. It goes back to when

I used to be a cowboy entertainer. I had a cowboy name and my children and to everybody it was Tex. That was my trade name, Tex Perry. When I moved into Iselin that's where I got in trouble and I had my boys come down and rehearse. I'd tell them to get off at Exit 131 and make a left on Route #27 and then another left there. Well as soon as they would get to Exit 131 they'd be a sign that said Metuchen and Rahway, no Iselin. So I would get a phone call and the guy would be down in Metuchen somewhere or down in Rahway and would say come on and get me back there, I missed Iselin. At that time there were no signs on the Garden State Parkway. They had Commissioner Dwight Palmer and he was a son of a gun. He said no way am I going to advertise anybody, nobody. He wouldn't even put a sign on there. Today you have litter signs, you have slow signs, you have all kinds of signs there but at that time he was strict against signs. So it took me a year fighting with him to get Iselin and now you have a sign that says Iselin/Route #27, next right. Then when you get to Route #27 you have a little sign that says Iselin make left. They used to have Fireside Realty that said Welcome to Iselin. But that's the way it came along about that Iselin got its sign on the Parkway. I changed my name because I was starting to get in the newspaper and then when I'd go down to the Town Hall they'd say to me hey is that your brother, who's George, who's Tex. So you know I was fighting myself, you know Tex was kind of losing it, so I said well I got to change it so I changed it. So its been Tex Perry since. I don't know maybe when I retire I'll go back to being\ George.

*Man in the Audience:* You know back in the '20s this was known as Bungalow Town because ninety percent of the homes were all little bungalows.

*Tex Perry:* Well they had these little bungalows for three thousand dollars. You could buy a home for like two dollars a week. We have the original advertisement, xeroxed copy, the one in the newspaper.

*Man in the Audience:* How far back do the birth records and death records in Woodbridge Township Town Hall go?

*Tex Perry:* I wasn't too big on the birth and death records. The only thing that would be important to me was like Adrian Iselin. When he was born and what he had gone through in his life because the book is actually about Iselin. It's his name sake and what he accomplished. But as far as going too much into.....

*Man in the Audience:* No, I mean I thought maybe looking through the records you might have come to a point where the records stopped. That's why I was asking that question.

*Tex Perry:* We go back to 1669 which is the first one and that's in the Middlesex County Clerk's Office.

*Man in the Audience:* That's in New Brunswick then?

*Tex Perry:* Yea, then they had somebody by the name of Randolph that was paid by the township to write the records and all that. A lot of these records have been lost or they've been so worn out that you can't make anything out of it, you know. One thing that would be good for this organization to go

after, and I've gone down to the township and nobody knows, the original Charter of 1669. Where is it? I wanted them to display this in the Town Hall or in the library or something and have it incased in glass, you know. But I don't think it's around. I think probably they lost it. Nobody will give me an answer.

*Man in the Audience:* It's in the Administration Building on School Street.

*Tex Perry:* Not the original. I'm talking about the original Charter. The original Charter of 1669, who has it? The last time I saw it it was at the Town Hall.

*Man in the Audience:* It was a copy?

*Tex Perry:* No, the original. I'm talking about the original Charter. I wanted them to display it, you know. What good is a thing so valuable? Because it's even earlier than our Declaration of Independence. So it's more valuable and more important to us because that's the beginning. So what good is it locked up in a safe, you know.

*Lady in the Audience:* A lot if it went into Rutgers in 1969, a lot of our town records.

*Tex Perry:* Well it's a good thing to look into and ask Rutgers if they really have it, you know. That's something I would like to see them display. I don't care where they display it whether it's in Colonia or Iselin or Woodbridge. It should be displayed. I was talking to Margaret and Woodbridge Township had a seal. You know when something is official they put a seal on it. The Chamber of Commerce or the State of New Jersey they all have a seal that's official. Woodbridge Township has been using a seal but it was never officially adopted. In other words there was a seal that they used but by bylaw it's not official because it was never adopted. So in 1966 I went before the Town Council and asked if, doing the research if I could use the seal but it was never adopted. So I said why don't we adopt this and make it an official seal. You noticed they changed it a little bit. It used to be a bird of paradise, you know a little bird, and a wheel but they changed it. Now they put a big eagle, like a federal eagle up there, and they changed it and put a ship through it. Then they came along on the three hundredth anniversary and they put Chartered in 1669. Now you don't put Chartered in. Drop the word in because you say settled 1775 or founded. You don't need to put the year. So they had it right up to this year. So I got insurance that they would drop the in and finally the township gave me a seal that said Chartered 1669. All the police cars, if you notice, dropped the in. But now I'm trying to get the township to, instead of putting a little seal the size of a dime, put the size of a half dollar because they get communication from various other towns and it's a real problem. They display that, you know, and they display it with pride. This is Official. I just got the status of Woodbridge Township and it had the little seal in the back and I wrote them a letter and said gee whiz you should put that seal in the back larger and put it in the front. Make it official, you know. But that's it, alright. Well folks I want to thank you

very kindly for allowing me to come to take your time. Believe me, I really enjoyed this and I want to say publicly, like a real politician, Margaret I hope I get down to see you soon. I mean it because, you know, she's doing a terrific job down there. Every time I get down there, the old place, I haven't gotten to the new one yet, but I get down there and she dying to get some stuff, you know, and I think that we can thank her. I used to go down very early and look around. They have a good history room there.

*Lady in the Audience:* Usually the historical information is in the library.

*Tex Perry:* I know, they have it in the library and the New Jersey Society has it too but I'm talking about the library. But I think right here in Woodbridge Township we'll eat them. Okay, thank you.