

Interview Log

Interviewee: Pat Biddle
Don Owens

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Comments:

BEGIN SIDE A

P.B.: Twenty-seven, twins.

K.F.: Twins.

P.B.: And March 17th, that's my birthday, that's why they call me Pat. I'll be 74 then. And I've lived in Chestertown all my life. I'm a native and have a lot of fond memories of Betterton, because we used to go, I used to go every Saturday night to the dance, and a lot of times on Wednesday nights they'd have dances down there. And then we'd go down to swim. And a lot of times, we'd go down to catch the boat, either Betterton or Tolchester, to go to Baltimore. And that was a great weekend trip for us to go to Baltimore on the boat. We'd, we'd go down to Tolchester most of the time to catch the boat, and we'd go down there early and get the best places where they go get the picnic - what would they call those, where they'd - gazebos like where they were all out on the place there. And here they go coming off the boat with all the things, and they'd want these best things, and we had them. We said we were saving them for our mother, you know, we couldn't let them have it. So when they offered us enough money, we sold them to them, and then we'd run down and get on the boat and go over to Baltimore. And when we'd get off the boat to go to - off the boat there, we'd either get on the trolley to go to Carlin's Park (phonetic), or we'd go up to Baltimore Street and go to the Hippodrome Theater where we'd see all the big bands and a movie. And then we'd walk down Baltimore Street to go by the gaiety, which was the coochy show. And we -

K.F.: Coochy show?

P.B.: Yeah, at that time. Strip joints and stuffy you know.

K.F.: Okay.

P.B.: And they opened the door, and we'd -

K.F.: Just wanted to make sure I got it right.

P.B.: And we'd look in the door, and we'd watch the girls dance, and that was a big, big thing for us. We were about 16 at that time. Then we'd get back on the boat, come back on the moonlight cruise. Always had the moonlight cruise we'd come back, and they had a band on the thing, and then we'd fall in love with all those Baltimore girls every Saturday night on the way back on the moonlight cruise, and they'd promise to meet us the next weekend, but they never did. And all the Baltimore boys had been over to see the Eastern Shore girls at Betterton and Tolchester, and then they would get back and come back. So this was an annual thing, every weekend and all. Was quite an activity. That was the big thing to do at that time; Tolchester and Betterton were the two great places to go. They were the forerunners of Disney World; they were the Disney World of our time. Because in Tolchester, you had the rides and all the activities, although you did have rides and things at Betterton too, but Betterton was more of a place where families would come and spend week or two weeks, and did it year after year and after year, after year. And people grew up knowing them. And I have a postcard showing a lady, and she says oh, there I am as a child, and she named all the people in the postcard because they stayed, this is at her house, and she told us this doctor so-and-so would come every July the 16th and stay through such and such. And so Betterton was a great place for people to come and stay for a while. The beach was so much better than Tolchester beach. It was good for swimming. Betterton was known for their swimming beach.

D.O.: And Tolchester had sea nettles too.

P.B.: Sea nettles and stones and stuff The sand wasn't as nice. Betterton always -

D.O.: Even today, they still say Betterton Beach is the only, what, public beach in the State of Maryland that's free of sea nettles.

P.B.: Yeah. Well we only have two public beaches. That's why we work so hard. I was on the committee that worked with Don when we tried to rejuvenate Betterton Beach. It was getting ready to be sold to private people and all, and we wanted to try to keep it as public as we could because other than the one right on where the Bay Bridge comes across is the only other public beach that most people can go. And we lost a lot of nice beaches along, a lot of nice other resorts on the western shore too that are no longer public.

D.O.: Talking about, people talking about going to Betterton. The seven years I was in Cecilton, I worked in a grocery store. And I got to know a lot of the people up there through the grocery store, and I was active in the fire company, and I had kids, and getting in school, work, and everybody up there, all the younger people used to tell me the same thing. You're from Betterton? I don't remember seeing you down there. Ask why; did you used to go to Betterton? Certainly went to Betterton. You weren't living you didn't go to Betterton on Saturday night.

K.F.: Well, tell me about Betterton on Saturday night.

D.O.: Well we had a dance, had a big long pier. And the middle of it had six bowling alleys.

P.B.: Six bowling alleys.

D.O.: And up over top of it was a dance floor.

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: And they used to have a five-piece band, and I would say that dance floor was, the dance floor itself was probably 200 feet long.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: About 60 foot wide.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Then it had tables on the other side that was almost that long, about 40 foot wide that you could sit in. And I used to like to bowl a lot, and I'd go down there on a Saturday night after I got done working in my father's store, and try to bowl, and they'd play a fast jitterbug piece up there, and you couldn't keep the pins sitting up, jarred the pins over.

P.B.: Yeah, I used to set the pins up. I used to go down there and make money.

D.O.: I did too.

P.B.: They had the old rubber pins.

D.O.: Rubber band.

P.B.: Rubber band pins, which you only see now up in New England, I guess. You don't see them, called barrel pins or rubber pins, and they had them in Tolchester too.

K.F.: Like the duckpins?

P.B.: Yeah, they were duckpins with big rubber bands.

D.O.: Duckpins with big rubber bands around it, about that thick.

P.B.: If you hit the headpin, you pretty much had a chance of getting a strike.

D.O.: The bowling alley in Tolchester was cement.

P.B.: Yup. I have pictures of it.

D.O.: It had a place underneath here where you could stand, had a roof on it, and the pins had a roof on it, but in between that was all open. If it was raining, you'd throw the ball and it would go on the cement, and went through the water. Right?

P.B.: Yeah. I have a picture of the old one as they were tearing it down.

D.O.: Oh, have you?

P.B.: Yeah. And the other thing is that they had a back part of the dance hall was sort of open.

D.O.: Right.

P.B.: And they had chairs, and tables and stuit and that's where you sat out there and partied and all.

D.O.: And before that, that building out behind there was a moving picture place.

P.B.: Yeah, movie theater.

D.O.: No, it wasn't moving picture.

P.B.: No, it was silent when they had it.

D.O.: Silent movies.

K.F.: Silent movies.

D.O.: Yeah, all western pictures. All the kids used to go on Saturday night and watch the western picture. Cost you 10 cents to get in.

P.B.: Yup. Now what made, what made both Tolchester and Betterton famous -
(TELEPHONE - OFF RECORD.)

K.F.: Dancing, movie halls.

P.B.: Yeah. Then what made, why they were located and it was so popular is that when you come up the bay, the main channel went to the right along Tolchester and Betterton shore. That's why the big boats could go in there without dredging and everything. And that's why they made the piers. And then the boat, after we'd leave that, would go on up to Sandy Point. Not Sandy Point, Crystal Beach and then would turn around. And then sometimes, they'd go on up to the -

D.O.: Well one time, way back in there, they tell me, of course we had the two piers, we had the Erickson Pier (phonetic).

P.B.: Erickson Pier.

D.O.: And the Tolchester Pier.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Well the Erickson Pier was Philadelphia.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And Tolchester Pier was Baltimore.

P.B.: Right.

D.O.: They tell me a boat would leave Baltimore in the morning, stop at Betterton and at that time, that's how Betterton got all their groceries and things. Wasn't any cars or anything. So the boat from Baltimore would stop in Betterton, leave things off and pick up people, and go to Philadelphia. At the same time that boat was leaving Baltimore, one was leaving Philadelphia and would come to Betterton and pick up people and stuff and go to Baltimore. Then in the evening, late in the evening, the boat came back the opposite way and stopped in Betterton. Used to be four boats a day coming there.

P.B.: Right. All - we had a lot of orchards and a lot of other things in Betterton. And all the produce and everything, a lot of produce was shipped out by boat from -

K.F.: These are all steamboats.

P.B.: -- Betterton and Tolchester. More from Betterton than Tolchester, although Tolchester also. And I have a thing of the, all the different boats that plied the things, and all the things in here. And this was the schedule of the Chester River line and all the stops they made coming up the Chester River. And then I have pictures here of showing them getting off the boat at Betterton and Tolchester and coming in. When we talk of Betterton, you talk of Tolchester because they were sort of sisters. Because the boats serviced the same ones the same day, only about a half hour difference in their trips. So It was a

D.O.: Tolchester had a lot more amusements and all too than Betterton did.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: Betterton didn't have any Ferris wheel.

P.B.: No.

D.O.: Had bumper cars.

P.B.: Bumper cars and all. Yeah, it didn't have the merry-go-round and all that Tolchester had.

D.O.: People in Betterton even go to Tolchester.

P.B.: Yeah. This is the picture that we were talking about of the dance hall and everything was right there.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: You went up the steps to go in there. I forget what you paid. It wasn't a whole lot, 75 cents or \$1 to get in. And I can remember competing in the jitterbug contests they'd have, and they'd have talent nights down there. I remember playing the violin down there one time. Red Sails in the Sunset I played. I finished third. And I used to finish second all the time in the jitterbug, but there was another guy, Billy Boy Haddaway or another boy named Goose Gosnell (phonetic) --

D.O.: I was going to say, Goose probably was -

P.B.: Was a better dancer. And I'd always finish second or third in the jitterbug because he could out dance me.

K.F.: What bands would they have there?

P.B.: Oh, they'd have a band come from Baltimore, and -

D.O.: Five-piece band.

P.B.: Yeah. That's mostly black and white, isn't it?

D.O.: Yeah. I was going to say, these didn't turn out too good.

P.B.: So that was the major recollections. Now I can remember, I'd work on Saturday nights in a grocery store in Chestertown, and then I'd hitchhike - the store closed at nine, and I'd hitchhike down to Betterton, go to the dance, and time I got down there, cars were parked clear out, out of the - clear out of the town limits all the way down that main street. Cars would be lined up clear past now - past where the fire company is now, clear out that road and all, and down every street. And it was a big event.

K.F.: So people from all around these counties, then, would come to the dance on Saturday night.

P.B.: Oh, yeah, yeah.

K.F.: As well as the people who were staying in Betterton.

P.B.: Right. You had really two different types of people. You had the people that were going to do picnicking and dayhops and entertainment would go to Tolchester. And those that were going to go down to spend a week, or two or three days, Betterton was the place to go, and was more passive recreation. It was more of a family place where you would go to spend and eat. And they had three big hotels, you know, and they all had their dining halls and things like that. And my understanding was, and Don probably knows more about this, a lot of the people would move their families into one or two rooms and rent the rest of the place out the whole summer. And that would be one of the big livelihoods during the summer.

D.O.: Each big hotel had a list of people that had a spare bedroom. If they got filled up, they would call you, and they'd give you \$1 a head a night to let somebody sleep in your spare room.

K.F.: Oh, I see.

D.O.: You had to wash the sheets and everything when they left, but you got \$1, and some people may even - I know one woman said she bought her three kids' clothes out of that during the summer.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: Got them ready for school.

K.F.: So how crowded was Betterton on a weekend or during a week in the summer?

D.O.: Oh, you couldn't get in there.

P.B.: Well they had another nice interesting place. They had a stream that came out of the side of the bank, halfway up the boardwalk and at intermission with the dance, I can remember going down there and dipping your head underneath there you'd be so hot, and drink the water and everything like that. And everybody drank, we'd get bottled water out of the stream and all. And there's a nice postcard that I have here showing the old stream at one time where they had it closed in with like a little pump house, and where you would get that. And, of course, when I knew it, it was just a pipe running out of there, and you'd get it out of that. You remember that, don't you?

D.O.: Yes. Most I've ever heard them talk about on the dance floor; they had close to 600 people up there on Saturday night. And there was, before you got down there, here's where it was. This was a - here, this was a bowling alley, and this is the dance floor up on the top of it. That's how long it was.

K.F.: Okay.

D.O.: And just before you got into this downstairs, there was one of them old time sandwich shop and everything in there. And they really made good hamburgers. You had to stand in line to get one 'cause they were all beef hamburgers, and they were made right and cooked right. An old lady in there lived next door to me. She made up all the hamburgers. Nobody else would make them but her. And everybody knew that you could get a decent hamburger in there. And I don't know how many hamburgers they sold in there. Many times I've been called out of the bowling alley to go back up to the store and grind 20 more pounds of hamburger and bring it down, they were selling out.

K.F.: Well tell me about your family running the grocery store, and how that kept the town going.

D.O.: Okay. Well my father, my family was in Betterton. And my great-grandfather was born down there, and he's buried out Still Pond. And I just run across two second cousins three years ago I hadn't seen. I knew I had them in New Jersey, and he, getting into this, I don't know what you call it when they search your background, your family.

K.F.: Like a family tree.

P.B.: Genealogy.

K.F.: Genealogy.

D.O.: Genealogy. And he was into that. And I provide him with a lot of things that he didn't know about in Betterton, and he was down a couple of times, and he got pictures, and then he done this workup and sent me copies of it, and I got a lot of the family in Kent County now. And they've got copies of it that they didn't know anything about. But my grandfather lived in Betterton, and he run one of these boats. They used to have these, there was, I'd guess 8 or 10 little skiffs. And they would fish out of them during the winter. Then they'd pull `em up and work on `em, paint `em, clean `em up. Had posts on the back and the front, and they put an awning up there. They had pillows, put a pillow down on the seat and a pillow in back of it. And then during the summer, they would take you out for a boat ride. They'd take you up the river for an hour and back, so you got a two-hour boat ride for a quarter. So that's how they made their living during the summer. So my grandfather had that. I had a picture of him. I don't know whatever happened to it. Then they used to have on the pier, they had pillow boxes. Box used to have wall cloth on, keep `em dry. So they pulled the boats up there on the pier, by the pier, and we'd get in the boat and throw the pillows up to them. They'd put the pillows in the boxes for the night and lock them up. The next morning, you had to go down and, same thing. You had to unlock the pillow boxes and throw them to somebody in the boat. And there was 8 or 10 boats doing that. Some in these pictures are the same way too. And so my grandfather was there, and he had two brothers were there. Both of them were in the hotel business, and one of his brothers is the one that you saw in the picture that had the orange store down at the beach. And he had another brother that worked in the Hotel Chesapeake.

K.F.: Okay, this one here?

D.O.: Yeah, uh-huh (Affirmative). He worked in there. And I had another one, the hotel - Royal Swan. So all my family were from Betterton. In fact, they say one time Betterton was nothing but Owens's, Crews, Smiths and Brices (phonetic).

P.B.: That's about right.

D.O.: Now there's one Crew left, there's not a Brice down there, and my son and I are the only Owens's down there. And, I guess, there's only one Smith. Because now we're getting a lot of outside people are moving in, buying condos and that kind of thing. And back in those days, everybody stayed in Betterton. Smith married a Jones, and the Owens's married a Brice, and the Brices married the Crews, and you stayed right there. Nobody moved, went out of town. And then Betterton really changed after the war when people got riding more, and things changing, the people wouldn't come on the boat. And most of the boat people that you got then were poor class of people. And they would come over and bring the picnic basket in one hand, and a thermos bottle in the other hand, and they wouldn't spend any money. So they got fighting over the boat. The guy owned the pier. He said the boat come in that damaged his pier, he wanted some money. So he

told the boat wanted to charge them \$600 to tie the boat up. The boat said well we can go any place we want to. We don't pay \$600. That's between you and your people down there. They're the ones making the money. Let them pay the \$600. So they tried to collect the money from the people in Betterton. In fact, while I had the store, they came up to me. I said I don't get any money out of the boat. People bought the boat don't come up here and buy pork chops or box of frozen lima beans. I don't get anything out of the boat. Your people down there in the hotels and all pay it. So finally, they ended up the boat stopped coming.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: So there was two, three groceries stores at one time in Betterton, and one, the fellow died and his wife and mother tried to run it, and they just couldn't do it. And it went up on public auction in 1939. And at that time, my father, I was born '27, they were married in '26, and my father worked for his uncle in the Owens store down at the beach. And he left there when he got married and went to work for the American Store in Chestertown. And he was in there about a year, and the superintendent took a liking to him, and he came to him one day and asked him, he said I just had a manger job that's open if you're willing to move. And I've heard daddy tell it many times. He said you think you can manage a store? Daddy said I wasn't going to lose that chance. He said, yeah, good as anybody you got. He said all right, I'll see if you can or not. So he took a store in Harrington, Delaware. He was there about a year and a half and then he was offered a store in Middletown, so that's where he moved, to Middletown, and that's where I was born, in Middletown, Delaware. So he was there 14 years. That was in '25. He took that job before he was married. And he was manager up there 14 years when this store came up for sale, so he came down, he just built a house in 1937, we'd only been in it two years, so he was having a time trying to get it paid for, so he didn't have much spending money. I had a sister born '37, 10 years after I was, I was 10 years old. So he went down, and he saw the store and everything, auctioned off for \$910 for the property, the ground, the building, the stock, the fixtures and everything. So he bought it, and he said he had \$10 in his pocket, and he took it out of the cash register, he borrowed it from the register when they went down there. So he went to a fellow he knew down there who was a director in the bank. He said, Mr. Brice, I'm in trouble. He said why? He said I just bought that store. He said I ain't got but \$10 with me, and he says that belongs to American Store. He said don't worry about it. They took him on into town to the bank, signed the papers and got his money. And when he went down and looked at the store again, they took 12 Coca-Cola signs off of the floor. The floor had so many holes in it, and they just kept tacking signs overtop of it. So he'd done a little bit of carpentry work, my father did, and his grandfather done - his father done some. That was the first thing they done that night. They worked till 3:00 tearing the floor up and putting a new floor in. So my father run it from there until 1950. And I got married in 1950, and then I took the store over, because he was offered a job, and he took it, as manager of five liquor stores in the county. The county closed up all private stores, and they run a liquor store in each town, each incorporated town had a liquor store that was the only one could sell it. And he was a supervisor over the five stores. And he took that job, and then I took over his store in 1950. And then I left in '53 and moved to Cecilton for seven years, and I got married. And then when I came back in 1961, I came back with three children. And then

in the next five years, I had two more. So that's when I lived in the apartment upstairs that we had lived in when we run the store from 1939 to 1950. So we lived up there, and then I made an apartment out of the store downstairs. And then I got in the insurance business. I worked 28 years with Prudential, and then retired.

K.F.: Okay, okay. Now did your family's store supply, you know, like you were just mentioning, the hamburger to some of the places. What else did they supply to the hotels or

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: That was the store he's talking about.

K.F.: This one here.

P.B.: Owens store.

P.B.: Well it used to be a lot of local farmers and all come in there and bring their vegetables and stuff that they would grow. And they'd go around door to door selling it. And they'd go to the hotels and sell it. So they could buy fresh stuff right from the farmers. And it was always 8 or 10 different farmers' wives came in, and they would bring in eggs. And they were selling fresh eggs. I had one lady, she wasn't too bright, she would bring eggs. She'd call on the phone on a Saturday. What are you paying for eggs? Twenty-five cents a dozen. Okay. Well she'd come in and go all around town and sell eggs for 25 cents a dozen, what she couldn't sell, she'd bring them into me, and I'd give her 25 cents for what was left. So she spent all that time and money running around town for the same price. She wouldn't charge more. I told her, I said charge a nickel, ten cents more. Oh, no, I can't do that. I said why don't you bring them in here to me? Well they want them. I said charge them. No, they wouldn't do that. And her husband, said you sold the egg, she going to buy me an ice cream cone? I ain't buying you any ice cream cone. So he'd reach in his pocket and get a nickel and he'd say okay, give me an ice cream cone. That's what it was, nickel for an ice cream cone. And they'd argue over that nickel whether she was going to buy him an ice cream cone or not.

P.B.: That was Crews store there.

D.O.: Yeah, that's down on the corner.

P.B.: Yeah. That's the store he's talking about are those pictures.

D.O.: Owens store.

P.B.: Owens store next to -

D.O.: And this is where the post office building here.

P.B.: Right.

D.O.: And then this is Charlie Brice's.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: All this burnt out.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: I don't remember that. That's going way back. Palm?

P.B.: Pavilion.

D.O.: Palm Pavilion.

K.F.: Here's a wonderful note on the back of this post card. It says having a fine time camping down here, water is fine, dancing every morning and night.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

K.F.: Even in the mornings, huh?

P.B.: Well they had a jute box, didn't they? Didn't they have a jute box?

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

K.F.: Oh.

P.B.: See that's his store he was talking about, the different views of it.

K.F.: Yeah, these are nice.

D.O.: The bowling alley over there -

P.B.: That was the only place you could buy anyplace - anything down there.

D.O.: The bowling alley over there burnt down in 1937. It had a place over there, well it was as big as - as long as the bowling alley, and as wide as the bowling alley. And they used to skate and dance in there. In the wintertime, they stored bateaus and canoes in there. Then on the other end of it, they had 12 pool tables in there.

P.B.: Yeah, billiards. Yeah.

D.O.: I don't remember that. That was before my time.

P.B.: That's before my time too.

K.F.: What is that?

P.B.: That was down where the Owens store used to be.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: It burned down.

D.O.: This burned down?

P.B.: I think so, a lot of that stuff-

D.O.: I don't remember that.

K.F.: Wow, that's a big store.

P.B.: Yeah, I can show you pictures here -

D.O.: But this is going up Main Street.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Okay.

P.B.: And there's pictures here where the - where these are the different cottages people stayed in. Very difficult to find post cards of the old cottages. There's the Southern that was real popular, the Emerson.

K.F.: What type of people would come and stay for a week or -

D.O.: The woman down the street from me, Mrs. Sykes, hers were mostly I would say 85, 90 percent Jewish.

K.F.: Really?

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

K.F.: From Baltimore and Philly?

P.B.: Professional. Lot came from Philadelphia too.

D.O.: But like I say, they could come down there, they come on the boat and that probably cost them, what, 50 cents, 75 cents.

P.B.: Yeah, yeah.

D.O.: And they could stay in the motel, or what do you call them, rooming house.

P.B.: Rooming house.

D.O.: Didn't call them hotels, these were little places, call them rooming houses.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And they could stay in there and, like I say, get three meals a day for about 12, \$15 a week.

P.B.: And that was about 20 of those.

D.O.: Yeah, quite a few of them.

P.B.: Plus the three big hotels.

K.F.: Big hotels.

P.B.: Rigby, Betterton and Chesapeake were the three big hotels.

K.F.: Okay. And what were the names - did the rooming houses have names too?

P.B.: Oh, yeah, everyone of them. And they were real famous too. There's people wouldn't stay any place but the same ones. You had the Fleetwood, and the -

D.O.: Fern Cliff?

P.B.: Fern Cliff, and the Maryland, and there's Owens.

D.O.: This the Owens cottage here and the annex.

P.B.: Yeah. Got a lot of it. And then you had Jewel.

D.O.: Atlantic, Southern.

P.B.: Atlantic, Southern.

D.O.: Jewel.

P.B.: Knollwood, Belmont. I mean that was really big business. Maryland. Maryland was one of the prettier ones. Fleetwood, Price.

D.O.: Price.

P.B.: This was Bayside. That was up on top of the hill.

D.O.: That's Royal Swan.

P.B.: Royal Swan, yeah.

D.O.: That was one that -

P.B.: This was the one where the woman, the Emerson, the woman, her parents owned this or something, and she was, she named all these people in this photograph. See the big thing is that a lot of people would come out and get photographed for that week, who was staying there.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: And they may make these photographs, and they'd also make postcards of these photographs, and they'd send them to their friends. And a lot of the early postcards were black and white. But then they colored them in. Artists would color them in, and then they took pictures of those.

D.O.: You could tell the difference.

P.B.: Oh, yeah. The Atlantic was a nice one. But these, these were all the history of this. The thing is about the history of these is that while I'm going to be getting rid of a lot of my stuff, the people of our age are the ones that were really into this. And they're the ones that are going to want to buy the stuff and get stuff So in another 10 or 15 years, the only people that will be interested in this will be the historical-type people.

D.O.: Right.

P.B.: Will not be the people that lived it and that went there as children.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: Or young adults, or married people and so forth.

D.O.: We're getting a couple of these people now are moving in from out of, you now, knew nothing about Betterton at all. Couple of them down there are getting interested in it too.

P.B.: Oh, they buy - you wouldn't believe the number of cards that they buy from me. I mean they've gone right through this book and picked the book, you know, 30 and 40 cards and framed them.

D.O.: Come down, bought these condos and all and retired, and I guess they've taken these things and saying this is what this looked like 100 years ago.

P.B.: They have one day down there called Betterton Day, and I usually sit up there and a lot of other people sit up there, and by the end of the day, I'm hoarse from telling these people where this hotel was, and where that was, and where that was and all like that.

And then they got a condo overlooking that. It was all like that, all like this, you know, and what the boardwalk was like then. Of course, the boardwalk was a nice place. See, it had, you could crawl underneath of it.

K.F.: Okay.

P.B.: A lot of us crawled underneath the boardwalk.

K.F.: What did you do under the boardwalk?

P.B.: Well, we talked.

K.F.: Okay.

D.O.: Here's this pier here over on the other side, and it all burnt out in '37.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: My father rented it one summer.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: When he was manager of the American store in Middletown, he rented that and had his family and different people running it for him, and he come down at nighttime and come down on the weekends and run it on Sunday.

P.B.: All these pictures were color postcards.

D.O.: yeah.

P.B.: And what he did was run these off on a just a copier.

D.O.: And underneath of the counter there, my grandfather built me a rack-like in there and put a pillow in there. I could sleep on it.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: And I used to sleep under there.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And these boys over in the bowling alley, they're setting up pins, they put me up to steal me cigarettes, you want to know what we're doing under the boardwalk. So I'd steal a pack of cigarettes. I was about eight and nine years old yet, I'd steal a pack of cigarettes out of the case, we'd go underneath the boardwalk, and all these boys were smoking, they'd give me one. That's how I started smoking when I was about eight or nine years old, stealing cigarettes from my father out here, and he couldn't figure out at the end of the summer why after he paid his rent and everything, he lost \$900. (Laughter.)

P.B.: Well we used to go underneath, we used to go underneath there and look through the cracks.

D.O.: Yeah.

P.B.: As they'd promenade along.

K.F.: All right.

(Laughter.)

D.O.: **He's** being honest now.

P.B.: We'd come home, your eyes were all red and everything. Your mother would say what's a matter with your eyes? I'd say I guess down there swimming all in them. What it was was sand falling through the cracks.

D.O.: This is like the commercials on television. (Laughter.) On the television now. I don't now who it is, they're selling curtains.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And it shows these three boys on their bicycles, and they're looking, and the alarm clock goes off. Have you seen it?

K.F.: Huh-uh (negative).

D.O.: Alarm clock goes off. And this girl gets up out of bed in her bra and her panties. And these boys are all, they're watching, and she stands up in front of the window, and no curtains. And these boys are standing there watching, you know. So it says curtains, we sell curtains starting wit \$6 and something a pair. And they're telling that girl to buy some curtains. (Laughter.) Have you seen it?

P.B.: No.

D.O.: What's the furniture place, I-K?

P.B.: I don't know.

D.O.: I don't know. But that's their commercial showing these three boys on their bicycle looking up at the window, and then the alarm clock goes off, and she gets up in her panties and her bra.

P.B.: Here are the bathing beauties that used to come down there.

D.O.: Yeah. (Laughter.)

K.F.: Now were there bathhouses and stuff for people to change?

D.O.: Oh, yeah.

P.B.: Oh, yeah. I've got pictures of bathhouses here.

D.O.: That's what they done with this movie up here when they done away with the movie, they put bathhouses in there too.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

D.O.: And over on this other side, I was telling you, it burnt down. My aunt and uncle run it three or four years, and they had a lot of bathhouses in there.

P.B.: That was the stream I was telling you about where you drank water out of.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: Now that fellow that took that picture was a well-known photographer, and he was way ahead of his time in photography at that time, and he always posed his child and his wife into the - in the pictures a lot of time. That's who's in that particular picture.

D.O.: Here, remember that came out in The Shoreman?

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Talking about that was an upper shoreman magazine that came out, looked like this.

P.B.: Did I give you those Owens cards? Did I get them back?

K.F.: Yeah, I gave them to you.

P.B.: Okay, must've put them back where I got them from.

D.O.: They used to put some stuff in there about Betterton. There's the old fishermen working on the old, pulling their nets up on the pier, working on them.

P.B.: This shows -

K.F.: In the wintertime, there were working fishermen throughout Betterton?

P.B.: Oh, yeah, fishermen, that was a big fisher -

D.O.: Oh, yeah. I was about to say, they had these boats, and they worked them. They'd fish during the winter, and then take parties out during the summer.

P.B.: The pier you're looking at now was the excursion, was they called excursion pier where they brought their produce down and loaded it on the boats and all.

D.O.: There's one of Jack's pictures here last night showed some of the skiffs used to be out here.

P.B.: Yeah, I've got some pictures of that. Here's one. Now here, this really shows them loading the stuff there and all.

K.F.: Oh, right.

P.B.: See, that was the working pier here, like this.

D.O.: No, he's got that - here it is, harbor.

P.B.: Yeah, that's the same one. But -

D.O.: There's that one too.

P.B.: Yeah. They used to - there was a bottling plant here too that we used to take, make coke and root beer and stuff like that and take them down to the beach there, and milk and all from Chestertown. There was also a taxi running from Chestertown down to Betterton and Tolchester.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

D.O.: One running from Betterton too.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Old Man Dagget (phonetic) run one.

K.F.: What were, what were some of the foods that were sold on the pier besides the hamburgers?

P.B.: Oh, anything. You had like funnel cake type stuff, you had popcorn, you had cheese sandwiches, hot dogs, ice cream, all kinds of stuff. They used to make, make these - oh, ice cream sandwiches, you know, with the - and, of course, at the restaurants, I mean there was a restaurant there down at the bottom.

D.O.: They had some things, had milk bottle stand.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: And shooting gallery.

P.B.: Shooting gallery.

D.O.: Well over on the other side, they had a bingo - there used to be 12, 15 different things in there.

P.B.: Yeah, you had bingo all the time.

D.O.: Yeah, there's three bingo stands.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And one time, the guy was down there and he had a boxing ring, and he used to stage boxing matches.

P.B.: Yeah, boxing matches.

K.F.: And who would box?

P.B.: They'd come over from Baltimore.

D.O.: Different ones, local ones, and everything -

P.B.: Oh, yeah, we had a lot of them here from Chestertown boxed and all. And they'd be some big matches down there -

D.O.: A lot of people.

P.B.: -- money bet. It was a ready place.

K.F.: Okay.

P.B.: And horse racing was real big around here at that time too.

D.O.: Not in Betterton.

K.F.: Tell me about that.

P.B.: But there'd be a lot of horse racing and all.

D.O.: Round Chestertown.

P.B.: Chestertown, Worton. They had several racetracks here.

K.F.: Where were the tracks at?

P.B.: Well there's still one down there by the Armory in Chestertown here where they used to race, and then there's - there was one now where Dixon Valve's place is now, there was a racetrack there.

D.O.: I don't remember that.

P.B.: Then there was a racetrack out at the campgrounds, which is out by Langford Road. There was one out there. They had racetracks around.

D.O.: I was telling you about them fishing boats.

P.B.: Right.

D.O.: Taking parties. Here's three or four of them tied up here at this pier.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

D.O.: You can see here's one of - one, two, three, four, five, six, seven of them out here tied up at this pier. That's what they were. They were, what, about 16, 18-foot longs?

P.B.: Yeah. Here's a good picture of them bringing produce and stuff in. Look how active it was.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: So Betterton was multi-faceted as to what it did.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: It was an industrial place, it was a produce place, it was a fishing place, it was a recreational place, and it was a residential place for the citizens that lived down there. It was very much like a lot of the Eastern Shore communities that were very tight knit, only four or five families. You go to St. Michaels, you go to Oxford, you go to all the ones down in the lower part of the shore, you know, there's only five or six families that - the population in there. It was inner-marriage all in there. Everybody ended up as a cousin. Second cousin, third cousin, fourth cousin.

D.O.: You wouldn't date say anything about anybody 'cause -

P.B.: No, 'cause -

D.O.: -- talking about somebody else's cousin.

P.B.: If you said something, you were talking about family if you weren't careful.

D.O.: Here's a good picture of the old Erickson Pier that he's got here. This is looking in the shore, and his is looking out.

P.B.: Yeah, yeah.

D.O.: And it's got the end of the pier out there, and it's no longer there. The pier fell down, but they left the cement foundation, they got buoys and stuff around it so people don't run into it.

K.F.: When did people start arriving for their summer holidays?

P.B.: Oh, they'd start, what -

D.O.: Not that many come down now.

P.B.: Well in May.

K.F.: Well when did they use to?

P.B.: They'd come in May, some of them do.

D.O.: A lot of them come down in May.

P.B.: May.

D.O.: The hotels would open up on - a lot of them opened up on Mother's Day. That was an opening day for them.

P.B.: Yeah. Is that what it was? A lot of people, too, would come over, go to Baltimore and they'd leave their cars and they'd take the boat over to Baltimore, and then they'd come back. So they had places where they would park the car at both Tolchester and Betterton.

K.F.: Okay. So that's interesting that, you know, the locals wanted to go to Baltimore to have fun, and -

P.B.: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

K.F.: -- people in Baltimore wanted to come here.

P.B.: Well we were used to Betterton and Tolchester. But, man, to go to Baltimore was the big event. You know. A lot of them never got out of the state.

D.O.: That was something else to go to Baltimore.

P.B.: Oh, big time.

K.F.: Well what was it like then to go to Baltimore.

D.O.: Go on the boat, wasn't that bad.

P.B.: Well, you know, you go to Baltimore. And, of course, Baltimore, at that time, was in the zenith of downtown Baltimore. I've got - you know, because see, they had a lot of these boats that ran all over the place. And they would come out of Baltimore. I've got pictures of Light Street where all the boats were.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). Right.

P.B.: And that was -

D.O.: Here's one - to the Belmont.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: That wasn't the Belmont then. That was the Fleetwood House. That's when Fleetwoods took it over. That was later.

P.B.: That would make you a good article sometime, the floating theater.

K.F.: Well tell me about that. Where was that at?

P.B.: Oh, that used to come up and ply the whole bay, and pull into different places, and they'd put theatrical acts on. And would come up the Chester River, come to Chestertown and go to all these stops, and go as far as Crumpton. And then they'd go on down, and they'd spent three or four nights, and that was - they'd put plays and stuff on, and everybody would turn - you'd dress up. That was a big night to go to the theater for a cultural event. We didn't have many cultural events around, you know, to go to. And

they'd have this great singing star, and have the great comedian. And, of course, mistrals were very popular at that time, had a lot of mistral shows. And that was the entertainment. You had horseracing, those things like that. Card playing was a great pastime by people on the Eastern Shore. I wrote a paper on that one time when I was in college about entertainment on the Eastern Shore, and I researched all the different horse racing, and theatrical groups, and bands, church choirs and singers like the Avalon Theater in Easton and how it grew, and it was a great center there. That was a great, one of the great stops when you came across the bay on the boat and stopped and they'd pick you up and take you on down to Ocean City. Or a lot of times, they stopped in Easton and stayed at the Avalon Hotel which was right across from the Avalon Theater now. Now where the big hotel is now, there was another hotel there called the Avalon. And that was a great stop.

D.O.: There's a - they had Betterton Beach advertised. That had to be in the late 40's.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Because I was going by the Clover Farm Store on there. My father remodeled the grocery store in 1946 after the war, and then they joined this Clover Farm association, so that was in 1946 or '47. So this had to be in 19 - in the late 40's. That was the businesses, and the hotels and the rooming house.

K.F.: So there was a yacht club there too?

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

K.F.: Oh, I haven't heard anybody talk about that. Did people - were there people who actually would sell their yacht - their -

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: That's what they look like waiting to get picked up. If you were on the boat looking at the, down on the pier, ready to go.

D.O.: More copies of that if you want one.

K.F.: Yeah, that'd be great.

D.O.: I took this over to the town office, and she didn't know where they were. So I wrote down, we got street names and numbers now in the town.

K.F.: Oh, right.

D.O.: So I wrote down for the name of the name of the - number and the name of the street where these places are.

P.B.: Yeah, I never could remember where all the different boarding - that shows the Baltimore Harbor and where all these boats that went came to - that's where they would come from Baltimore to go to Tolchester and Betterton and all, and all the places. They were all a lot of different boats. Now B. S. Ford that was - that owned the Emma Giles, the Emma Louise, the **B. S.** Ford was my relative, and he was the one that had one of these boat lines.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: And they were getting ready to run a rail line that would run to Tolchester, and they would bring cars and stuff over on barges and then load them on this rail line and supply the Eastern Shore. But they went broke, and they didn't do that, although the railroad bed was laid on the way to Tolchester. If you walked back in the woods, you

could still see the old bedding that they put in, but they never did put the rail line in. I have studied the rail lines of Eastern Shore. That's a interesting story too.

K.F.: Yeah, it is.

P.B.: Because that was the life blood of the Eastern Shore at one time.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: The boats and the rail. That's the way you traveled.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: Only way to travel at that time.

P.B.: That's right.

K.F.: And that's how you got to Ocean City really was on rail.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: Yeah.

K.F.: If you came over on the boat in Betterton.

D.O.: I mean that was a long ride in an automobile. That was the day too.

P.B.: Yeah. Yeah. But just to take the book and walk through it and tell the pictures, I mean Donald could take this book and walk through on each postcard. Now this was a great picture here. This was the porch on the Hotel Rigby. And that was a great place to sit and rock and watch what was going on in Betterton.

D.O.: You could look out at all the bay, and the entrance coming out of C&D Canal.

P.B.: Yeah.

K.F.: Wow.

D.O.: You know, there's five rivers that empty into the Chesapeake Bay.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: Did you know that?

K.F.: Yeah.

D.O.: At Betterton.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: My grandfather had -

D.O.: You could sit here on this porch and watch all five of them.

K.F.: Wow.

P.B.: Oh, yeah. And sit there and rock, and tell stories. And a lot of them had, that would come down and spend their week, Miss Clara, she had her rocking chair, and that week, nobody messed in Ms. Clara's rocking chair. She rocked there every morning. And they had their table that they sat at, and they, their waitress or waiter that took care of them, and they didn't write stuff down, they stood, and you told them what they wanted and they remembered it and brought it to you.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: And that was - but the Rigby was, I guess, called the top drawer one, wasn't it?

D.O.: Oh, yeah. That was a top hotel.

P.B.: Yeah. And then you had the Betterton and the Chesapeake. And the Chesapeake was more of the younger crowd hung around, right? Little bit more drinking and carousing. Kept down on the beach -

D.O.: They kept changing hands. And the more they changed hands, the worse they got.

P.B.: Yup.

D.O.: I remember one year, the Betterton girl next door to me worked down there. And she come back. She said I couldn't believe what they've done down there. Their mother said, why, what are you talking about? She said we served dinner today when the boat came in, and she said when they cleared the table off with the rolls and stuff, you know, food they had, said the guy told us anything hasn't been touched, put it back in the thing -

P.B.: Sure

D.O.: -- roll they didn't eat, put the roll back in there.

P.B.: Yeah. That was the Betterton, and they had houses back here where a lot of the people stayed that worked there, that would come down and work for the summer. And they also -

D.O.: -- in Ocean City.

P.B.: And they also had -

(END SIDE A.)

(BEGIN SIDE B.)

P.B.: They'd look at you like you were crazy, you know. We were brought up to speak to people.

D.O.: Well that's like the guy used to - I forget his name up on - Sassafras River Bridge.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Used to have abridge tender. He had to raise the bridge for all the boats going through. He sit out there along the - on the bridge thing. Every car went by, he'd wave to him. Somebody told him - I can't remember his name now. You don't know all them people. He said, I don't know any of them. Well what in the world are you waving to them for? He said don't cost anything.

P.B.: That was the style of living at that time. And you never locked your doors.

D.O.: Nope.

P.B.: And I lived on County Street in Chestertown, and I didn't know what a ghetto was until I went away to college. And I said well I was born and raised in one of those o County Street. (Laughter.) Because we were poor.

D.O.: We had a time, we'd go down in the morning and open up the store, the door never been locked.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Talking about the store, I told you my father bought it for \$910 back in 1939. And when he went in, I told you about the floor, how it was heated, there was a great big old wood stove sitting right in the middle of the floor, and around it, two by sixes around it was a sandbox and a bench sitting there.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

D.O.: These people used to come in, these old fishermen come in nighttime, you know, they sit there on the bench and spit tobacco juice. That thing went out the next week too. And throw their stumps and cigarettes in it, so you didn't have room to put a stove out there. You wanted a room, so my father put an oil burner in the back room. The stove sat out there, and the pipe run all the way back to the back where the chimney was in the back of the place. So you had a back room, so he put an oil burner in there, cut a hole in the partition between the back room and the store, put a fan in there and it blew the heat out. That's the story they told on Bruce Wilmer. You remember Bruce, don't you?

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: Bruce had a place down there on Idlewild. Had a little shack, it was about eight by eight, he lived in, nobody but him. And he used to buy Kerosene, gallon at a time, feed that stove. Somebody told him one day, said Bruce, that place is not big enough for a stove that big. He said I don't worry about the stove being in there. He said how you - you can't turn it down that low. He said, no, he said I got the stove sitting outside, and the pipe runs through. I get the heat out of the pipe. (Laughter.)

K.F.: Well tell me about some of the other folks who lived in Betterton.

D.O.: Some of the what?

K.F.: Some of the other people who lived in Betterton.

D.O.: Well we used to get a lot of characters down there. One thing I got down there, we had an old ice box, ice - case. It was, oh I don't know, about four or five foot high, and about eight foot long, and it had an ice bumper in each end. That's what you done. You kept your meat in the middle, and you'd put ice in each end of it. And the top of it was square with glass in it so you can look down on the meat. And nighttime, after that, got the stove out of there and they couldn't throw the cigarette butts and all in there and spit in it, they used to stand up on both sides of that meat case, and they'd play pitch every night till 9:00 when mother hollered down, come on, it's time to go to bed. So they stayed there in nighttime and played cards. And mother used to holler at my father. Why don't you close up there and come on up here and rest. Them guys got to have some place to go. Let them go home with their - with their wives like you're supposed to do. (Laughter.) And an old fellow lived across the street, they used to tell all kinds of stories on each one. I wished I had a tape recorder at that time. I'd love to tape some of that stuff. And this guy used to tell about old man up there put his name on there, I guess. But he always had a pipe, any time you saw him, he always had a pipe in his mouth. This guy sit in there one time, guy came in, bought a can of tobacco one night and went out, said Jim smokes that pipe all the time, doesn't he? Guy said yeah, he's getting ready now to go to bed. Said he's got four blankets on his bed, so he even cuts a hole in the four blankets so the pipe can go through it, and he even smokes his pipe during the night while he's sleeping. (Laughter.)

So that's the kind of stories they used to tell on one another. And they used to talk about the stores down there. There used to be three meat shops in Betterton at one time. And a lot of old people couldn't get out even to walk to the store. And when I first went down there in 1936 or '37, before we moved down there, my second cousin was driving the truck for his uncle. He had a meat store, and he used to drive this truck, had a panel truck. And they would put meat in the back of that truck and run all around town, come up to your house. If you wanted a steak or a pork chop, they'd go out to the truck, cut them on a board and bring them into you. You'd give them a plate, and they'd put them on there. Put them on an old scale and try to weigh them. I don't know how - maybe that's how some of them people died so young down there. (Laughter.) No refrigeration.

K.F.: Right.

D.O.: You ever remember seeing meat trucks ride around, I think they had them in Chestertown, with no refrigeration in them?

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Cutting meat in the back of them. (Laughter.)

P.B.: What do you want?

D.O.: Don't make any difference to me.

P.B.: Help yourself. Whichever one you want.

D.O.: I'll take whichever one you don't want.

P.B.: Well I got plenty more in the refrigerator.

D.O.: Okay. Well I should've started on Diet Coke 40 years ago.

P.B.: Do you want diet?

D.O.: No. Don't want it. (Laughter.) Little too late, Pat.

P.B.: Yeah. Tell me about it. If you want to eat that, you got to have something -

D.O.: Do you remember meat trucks running around town?

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Here selling meat out of the truck?

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: And no refrigeration in them.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: I don't need that.

P.B.: Yeah, you do.

D.O.: Yeah, you're eating Diet Coke and eating - get out of here. (Laughter.)

P.B.: You want a cookie?

K.F.: Thanks, I gave them up for Lent. So -

D.O.: We got a firehouse down there, here make me feel better. What are you trying to do, shut me up?

P.B.: No.

D.O.: You want me to feed my mouth so I'll shut up.

P.B.: No, just always did my best work when I was eating. (Laughter.)

D.O.: So we had the firehouse down there in 1939, 1940. So they didn't know how to get the fire cars through. Nighttime, they had a fellow two doors down, so they run a wire from the firehouse to the siren over to his house in his hallway. So at nighttime, his phone, his phone would ring, his own phone would ring during the night. He would know it was a fire call. So he would get up and go answer the phone, he had a book in there, he could set the siren off. So he had to get ready and go over and tell everybody where the fire was. So during the day, we didn't know what to do. So we used to take the calls a lot of time in the store. I'd go up and blow the siren, and then I'd have to wait there and tell them where the fire was. So we figured out, somebody figured it out at the funeral home, at Still Pond, somebody has to be there 24 hours a day. So we rigged the phones up, and run a wire, a telephone wire from Betterton at the firehouse, to the siren, to Still Pond to the funeral home. So if you called Betterton Fire Company, you got the funeral home. There was always somebody there 24 hours a day. If he left, he had to get somebody come in and stand by for him. So he'd take the fire call, and he'd write it down where it was, reach over and blow the siren so he first one up to the firehouse, the phone was ringing when you got there. So you picked up the phone, somebody in the funeral home told you where the fire was.

K.F.: Well how many big fires did you all have in the area?

D.O.: One year -

K.F.: Do you remember?

D.O.: We thought we was going to break a record. We had 13 fires that year. We didn't have too many big fires. I don't - we had a house burn down about three months ago, or gutted, and it was an old summer home that a single woman lived in, but I don't remember, I don't remember when the last time was we lost a house in Betterton.

K.F.: Well you were telling me about a fire that took out some of these buildings in the post cards.

D.O.: Well took out all that other side over there, like I say, over the bowling alleys, and the skating rink, and the pool tables, and penny arcade, about 150, 180 bathhouses, and it was all kinds of spin wheels, you'd throw darts at them, and a bingo stand, a beer garden, a pier.

K.F.: That all burned?

D.O.: That all burned down in '37.

K.F.: Wow.

D.O.: And this beer garden, they had a birthday party for a fellow on Saturday night. They claimed they run the jute box so much, the jute box caught fire. And, of course, there's nobody lived around there, and they had a right good start on it. We didn't have a fire company, had to call a fire company from Rock Hall and Chestertown. Time we got there and the wind was blowing, and it didn't have a chance, so they lost everything. That was really the, that was really the start of the damnation of Betterton, wasn't it Pat, '37 when that other side burnt out.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And then the war finished it off.

K.F.: The war?

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

K.F.: World War II?

D.O.: People got going to Ocean City for a day, and Betterton for a day. Instead of coming down and staying for a week, they were going someplace a day at a time.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: Are you familiar with that book?

K.F.: Huh-uh (negative).

P.B.: That's all about Betterton. Shows the hotels. All that was written -

D.O.: Where did that come from? I've never seen it.

P.B.: You've never seen that book?

D.O.: Huh-uh (negative).

P.B.: It's a great book. It was written by a crew, I think, or -

D.O.: Larry -

P.B.: -- down on Betterton days. Foreman. Got all the old parts of Betterton, the public landing and all the layouts. All this is about the crops and unloading of the boats when it was first laid out, original property owners and all this. And it was written by this girl that grew up there. Betterton Waterfront.

D.O.: Foreman?

P.B.: Yup. Look, here's the main street when it was all laid out - John Henry. You've never seen this book?

D.O.: Huh-uh (negative).

P.B.: Weave Owens (phonetic) and all that.

D.O.: Kit News (phonetic) came out with one about five, six years ago, and it was all old post cards.

P.B.: Yup. Four Turner Brothers.

D.O.: Howard and -

P.B.: Yup. But this, if you want background -

D.O.: That's going back to old times.

P.B.: -- get the title of this, and check it out from the library.

K.F.: Yeah.

P.B.: Where do you live? Where do you work out of? I mean where do you live? Where do you work out and live - work?

D.O.: Her office is in St. Michaels.

K.F.: Well I'm in St. Michaels, so -

P.B.: Oh, well you need to get that book.

D.O.: Where did you get it from?

P.B.: I bought it -

D.O.: No, I thought you run over next door and got it.

P.B.: No, I went in my library in the house. I got every book that there is around here on the history of stuff

D.O.: He's the one. I'm glad I got him today. (Laughter.) Well mark probably hasn't got any pictures that you haven't got, has he?

P.B.: Well he's got more post cards than I've got.

D.O.: He's got more of the old coupons and bingo coupons and that kind of stuff, hasn't he?

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: He's got cups, and souvenir things. I don't - you should know about this -

D.O.: Used to buy a lot of things, tickets like, give a kid \$1, and he'd go down and get 25 cent tickets. Whatever he wanted to buy, he'd just give a ticket so he wouldn't lose his money.

K.F.: Oh.

D.O.: He had a lot of them. He's got the coupons that the bingo stands give out. Used to have it, play bingo, maybe win one game, then you'd get a - something worth three cents.

K.F.: Right.

D.O.: So you wouldn't, you'd save them. After maybe all summer, you had 20 tickets, you might get yourself a nice lamp or something like that. But they were making money. You spend a nickel, and they claim at that time, the coupons were worth 10 cents, and they wouldn't play unless they had 10 players. So they were getting 50 cents and giving out a 10 cent coupon.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: So this guy's got a lot of them, but he works in the hospital, and he says just -he said I can't get off during the day.

K.F.: What's his name?

D.O.: Mark Nussam. And Larry Crew, he's got a lot of stuff, and he was telling me he had a bunch of corks. We were talking about these, these fishermen up on the stand working over their nets.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: Fishing was a bit thing during the winter. And what they'd do, they'd put these nets out and to keep the nets from sinking, they had cork they put on them.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: They were made out of cork, but about that big around, about that thick, they had a hole in them, and they would, not saw it, knit it onto the net. That would make the net float. And then they'd put sandbags on it, and that would go down to the bottom.

K.F.: Right.

D.O.: So this net was drifting. That was a driftnet. Trying to explain to her about the driftnet when you had sandbags on the bottom and corks on the top. Right?

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: And Larry told me he's got a lot of these driftnets, I mean corks that they use on these driftnets. That's the one I was talking about that Kent News had.

P.B.: This?

D.O.: Yeah, I got one of them.

K.F.: We might have that one in the museum library.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: And Larry said he's got a lot of these corks got numbers and initials o them.

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: And like Alford Smith, they have an A. S. on them so you could tell whose nets they were, whose corks they were.

P.B.: That shows all the different resorts on the bay.

D.O.: Yeah, the Kent News put that out about four or five years ago, and I got one of them and this cousin I was talking about up in Pennsylvania, he wanted four or five of them, so I called the Kent News, and they said they sold like hotcakes. They were gone in no time.

P.B.: Yeah, they were -

K.F.: I bet.

P.B.: This is one they put out in Baltimore.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

P.B.: *In* color. It shows some of the waterfront scenes of when they were coming to Baltimore, I mean in Tolchester.

D.O.: So I asked Kent News, I said any chance you're going to put out anymore? He said not for a while. So I give him this guy's name and address up in - you know where he lives? Dickelson, Pennsylvania. I told - I said I didn't know they had a place up there named after you.

P.B.: We'd though about doing a book on Betterton and Tolchester like that. But getting that kind of photography and that kind of production, you're talking about books.

D.O.: They're probably wouldn't be that many people interested in it right now.

P.B.: No, I guess not. Well we're putting out calendars now, you know. There's a Crumpton calendar, and a Chestertown calendar, and all of that -

D.O.: Wade was telling me that he was putting out one. The fellow just died here about a month or so ago. He called me and said he had done one for Rock Hall and the Lyon's Club sponsored it.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Said he sold, I think, over 2000 of them.

P.B.: Uh-huh (*Affirmative*).

D.O.: And he said he had one wit Betterton that he couldn't get anybody interested in it, so he took some out to Betterton store, or Still Pond store. He took five out there, and about two weeks later, I saw in the paper where he died.

P.B.: Well with the advent of the copy machine, everybody's into it, you know, with computers.

D.O.: Right.

P.B.: So now did you want to get any pictures of anything?

K.F.: Well, yeah. I'm wondering, our curator should probably come up and take a look at some of these post cards and see which ones she may want to like borrow to blow up in an exhibit. And I'll have to see how they want to handle it because usually people have old photographs, we borrow them, we shoot them, and then we send the original back to the owner, and we have the negative and a print that we can then use. I don't know what they're going to want to do with these. I guess they'll probably treat them like photographs and just shoot them.

D.O.: There's one they've been selling down at Betterton Day, 25 years ago. Taken in four different -

K.F.: Uh-huh (*Affirmative*).

P.B.: They might want something like some of these shadowboxes too.

K.F.: Yeah, that's what I'm thinking too. I should bring her back up here. So what I might do is just shoot some of the shadowboxes today and then -

P.B.: That's what the pictures look like straight back there behind you.

K.F.: Yeah, she's going to want to blow them up though like the size of that wall, you know. And that - it'll be that huge, and then the displays and stuff will be in front of it. So I have to find out how they want to handle that.

D.O.: I told her, everybody's working, and if she wants to get in the town office and get with some of the stuff that they got in there, that would have to be during the day, another day for her.

P.B.: Yeah. What - I would recommend this, I would recommend you get that book there, this book here -

K.F.: Yeah, think we have this one.

P.B.: I mean Roland.

K.F.: This one.

P.B.: And you can get a lot of historical background there that's been researched and all.

D.O.: Is it available?

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: You can find it.

K.F.: Yeah, you can find it.

P.B.: **Do** you know the book store on the way down to Easton on the left down there called -

K.F.: Yeah.

P.B.: I'm sure you give them the title, you can go on the Internet and get it.

K.F.: Right. See what they're doing with these tapes is they may take a couple of your stories and actually put them in the exhibit so people will come over and put headphones on

P.B.: And they'll listen.

K.F.: And they'll hear you guys talking about, you know, Betterton and going to the dances and that kind of stuff

P.B.: And going under a pier.

K.F.: Going under the pier. There you go. (Laughter.)

D.O.: Dirty old man, you don't even -

P.B.: Yeah. (Laughter.) Well you probably could tell much more stories down there than I can. Don't go sitting there like you don't know anything. (Laughter.)

K.F.: Yeah. You didn't tell us anything about you getting in trouble.

D.O.: Yeah.

P.B.: Yeah, that would be -

D.O.: Working, I didn't get a chance to get in too much trouble. You know, all the time I've been to Betterton, I think I've been swimming five times maybe.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: The water just never appealed to me.

P.B.: Are you going to do anything on Tolchester?

K.F.: Well we could talk about Tolchester. They've haven't quite decided which one they're going to do yet. I think probably, you know, they'll do Betterton, but talk about Tolchester, you know.

D.O.: That lets me out.

P.B.: Well if you do Betterton, that's a good one to do because they were entirely different, yet similar in many ways. They were serviced by the same boats and all, and a lot of the same people went there, although Betterton was, it was more of a residential type thing, you know. More people stayed by the week, and there was only the one hotel on it in Tolchester.

P.B.: That's why you have so many, that's why you have so many postcards. You don't have, postcards are much harder to get of Tolchester because people that would stay there that would write every day cards to people back home, you know, this is Monday, and tomorrow we're going to go into Chestertown and visit. That was another big trip for them. And or it rained for two days and we've been down here, you know, and all this kind of stuff And they'd send these cards like when you go away to Ocean City. Florida now, you know. See back in those days, postcards was the way you communicated.

D.O.: Oh, yeah. For a penny.

P.B.: And it's just unbelievable.

D.O.: Didn't have cell phones in those days.

P.B.: Oh, my, no.

D.O.: Or even telephones. But wasn't that many people stayed in Tolchester.

P.B.: No, no. They only had -

D.O.: Wasn't anything to do.

P.B.: You only had one hotel there.

D.O.: Right there on the beach.

P.B.: And they had two, two places out in the country there where you could stay.

D.O.: But what would you used to stay in down there? All they had was the ride. Well my God, they had Carlin's Park and everything else over in Baltimore.

P.B.: Yeah. Yeah, we'd go over there to go to Carlin's Park and not go to Tolchester sometimes.

D.O.: But most of the people in Tolchester, I think, used to come just for the day, or stay overnight maybe and go back the next day. But they didn't stay by the week.

P.B.: No.

D.O.: Or for the summer like they did in Betterton. Tolchester was a day hop mostly. We had places back on - well further up the beach, clear back the end of Betterton.

People own -

P.B.: Well they camp back there.

D.O.: Thirteen cottages.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: And they used to rent them by the week. And you'd come down there - there really wasn't a hotel. If you want a hotel, you had to change your bathing suit when you got ready to go in and eat. You had to get dressed to go in and eat.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

D.O.: And you had to eat at a certain time and this kind of stuff. So a lot of people liked to go down and take their stuff with them and rent a cottage. And mom used to holler you're down here on a vacation, you're going fishing, you're going to the beach, I still got to clean the place up and do the cooking. It's no vacation for me. So that was - used to do. But these people got so they fixed them up nice, and they were doing the same thing like they were for the rooming houses. When you left, you rented your cottage for this week for next year. You paid for next year's rent. Then they got so they got renting them by the season. People were renting them by the year. Now then that's what they do.

Most of them are rented by the year.

P.B.: Yeah. See they would be, that would be the week's people that were there for that week, and they'd all get a photograph, you know.

D.O.: Was that the cottages, first of them?

P.B.: Yeah, cottages.

D.O.: Evergreen Knoll?

P.B.: Yeah, I've got one here of Evergreen Knoll someplace.

D.O.: That's what I was talking about, Evergreen Knoll.

P.B.: Yeah, but everyone of these, almost everyone of these other cottages they'd stay at, they'd get a photograph, if you look through there, of people that would stay there would be out in front getting their picture taken. And then in the evening, lot of times in the evening, they all get out on the porch, sit out on the porch and then see, but that was the big thing. And a lot of them made friendships that they would meet each other every year, these different families would go together, you know, and the kids grew up knowing each other and all that.

D.O.: And what they do, they pay their rent for the next year for that same week, make sure they got it.

K.F.: So it was unique, a unique way of vacationing. I mean it was like another world. You made friends with, you kept up with, you know, your whole lifetime. And almost all

your old, all your old postcards of your cottages, they always had people, they took a photograph of the cottage and the people that were there. And then these people would, they'd go sell these pictures to them, and then you had professional people that made postcards would go around and get these, and then, and then make up your postcard.

D.O.: I'm looking at that stamp, still a one cent stamp. So that's a real old -

K.F.: So I guess there had to be a photographer in Betterton who was running around taking all these pictures, or was it just the people who owned the houses?

D.O.: Somebody come in -

P.B.: Yeah, did that. See you'd have a guy that would go in to do all Chestertown, do all Centerville, and they were professionals -

D.O.: Come in, take pictures and then sell the postcards.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: You had these companies. See if you look on the back of these postcards, you got three major companies that made almost all your postcards. Your postcards originally got their big start in Germany. They were the one that published most of the postcards.

Americans didn't publish them or print them because the Germans were so much better.

D.O.: Dan Becker, with Mr. Crew, remember tended bar down there with him two, three years, two, three summers? When you walked out back, there's a shelf up overtop, and they had them just about like that, like an envelope box. I guess they had 500 postcards in there, and must've been four, five boxes up there -

P.B.: Unbelievable, unbelievable. But they - I mean average postcard now, Betterton, Tolchester, if you can get it for \$5, you've got a steal.

D.O.: That was one I had there, but the rest of them I give to the town office. I got three, or four, five, something out of each one of them boxes up there. I didn't realize what I had.

P.B.: Yup. I mean you just go through some of these ones here.

K.F.: Well what made you start collecting all these postcards?

P.B.: I collect anything that moves. I collect stamps, I collect baseball cards, music -

D.O.: Poker players.

P.B.: You name it, I collected it at one time or another.

D.O.: Tapes.

P.B.: Oh, I've got the old tape, I've got the old tape of the Merry-go-round down to Tolchester, the old tape that played.

K.F.: What tape played?

P.B.: The old tape that played when the Merry-go-round -

K.F.: The music?

P.B.: Yeah, the music.

K.F.: You do?

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). Got it on tape.

K.F.: Can I hear it?

P.B.: If I can find it. It's in here someplace with all these tapes. What I was doing was interviewing people, getting, you know, verbal histories.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: And I was going to write them, you know, write them up, you know. I was interviewing this guy on trains, and he knew every train stop and the history of every train

station here in Kent County. And then I kept putting him off from coming back, and he died on me before I could get the history. I was so sick. And Bill Baldwin, I've been interviewing him. He knows all the houses and everything 'cause he was a plumber. He worked in every house, and he's got recall that's unbelievable. I mean names - oh, I mean he can tell you anything. I mean I've gone house by house in Chestertown. He's told me every person and who their mother and father was, and what business was there and what they did. Unbelievable, the recall.

K.F.: What are you doing with these tapes?

P.B.: Well somebody should interview him. One of these historians, you know.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: I could, I could - and just doing what we've done -

K.F.: Yeah.

P.B.: I've done this with - and I've got a guy from Tolchester, I sat down around the table and picked his brains because he worked on the train down there, his father ran the boats down there. Gave me a lot of history of Tolchester. And, you know, somebody like you, you're invaluable to get a verbal history. They should sit down with you and show you every one of these postcards, and you'd have a story about everyone of them.

D.O.: Well Jack's more than I am, see. Jack was born and raised there. I didn't go down there.

P.B.: If they took you, and they took Jack, and they took Crew, and they took a couple others -

D.O.: Roger Camper (phonetic) was born there too.

P.B.: Roger, yeah. And just walk through here and just tape. And then -

D.O.: Somebody would have something to say about some part of it.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: Well you remember the story people diving off here and breaking their neck. I mean there's a story about everything. I can remember my buddy getting knocked down the stairwell there at the dance, you know. He was up there flirting wit some girl. Well he got kicked down at the bottom of those steps, blub, blub, blub, blub down the steps. I got him. I said, Jack, don't go back up there. That man's going to kill you. Oh, I'll get him. Goes up the steps, gets knocked down the steps again. (Laughter.) This time his watch is tore up, his pants are tore. He's trying to get up, you know, he's half drunk. He's going back up there again. I said you haven't laid a glove on that guy. That guy's going to knock you down these steps twice. You going back up there, you dummy? He starts up, and then Bartus (phonetic), rolls up, the sheriff Pulls out his blackjack. Says look, Jack, you go back up, I'm getting ready to rap you on the head and put you on the car, and he finally got him away. But there wasn't that much fighting or scrapping down there, really. But there'd be a little bit of a hustle when somebody'd be hustling somebody else's girl.

D.O.: You talking about - breaking your neck, I remember I was down there one, I guess it was Memorial Day, Labor Day, day after Labor Day. And the last boat was leaving, that was - they were leaving for the season. So somebody hollered to this guy, he was out there swimming, said come on. Said you got to change your clothes and get ready to go. He said all right, one more dive, and he dove off the pier right there -

P.B.: To the side?

D.O.: Tolchester pier. Hit one of them rocks out there, and he never came up. They had to dive for him. So his parents came off of the boat, and they had to stay there, they sent the boat on back. They finally got him. One last dive, last day of the season. Hitting rock with his head.

P.B.: Yeah. You didn't want to go off the side. That was shallow water.

D.O.: Oh, yeah.

P.B.: Piers, old stuff in there. I can remember going down there at the end of the season and you threw the baseball at the milk bottles -

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: And I knocked them down, and the only thing they had was a cigar left at the end of the season. And it was - and I didn't smoke at all. And I said okay. So I got this cigar and I lit it up, and I walked out. And that was where they had the place out on the pier, you know, where you danced and everything, and ate crabs and all that on the end.

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: I got out there. By the time I got out the end of that pier, I was staggering all over the place. And I was dizzy, and I almost fell overboard. And about two, three or four days later, my mother said Pat, you don't drink, do you? I said no - I forbid you don't drink. I said no, I don't drink. Said somebody saw you staggering all over the pier down to Betterton. (Laughter.) And I forgot about this cigar, and I was staggering all over the pier from that cigar. But that was all they had left at the end of the thing, you know, with these cigars knocking these milk bottles then. And I did, almost fell overboard down there. But it used to be fun to go down there and watch them dock the boat and throw the ropes over and tie her up. That was a big thing.

D.O.: They would hit that pier right good sometimes.

P.B.: Oh, man - she was - the other thing is, was a great thing down to Betterton was in the winter storms that tear everything up, the ice would come down there. And it would just, just wreck everything. You've got pictures there of -

D.O.: Yeah. Jack's had some of them in here.

P.B.: And it would take out, see, you just couldn't protect, you just couldn't protect the pier and all. It would tear the pier up.

D.O.: This is lately. This has been in the last five years.

K.F.: That's amazing.

D.O.: This is after the county went in there and put this in.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: This is how ice would pile up. Tom and Steve used to have to rebuild their pier about every three or four years.

P.B.: And it would freeze, and you could - ice breakers used to have to come up and break them up to get through there. And it would pop the poles up and take your pier out.

D.O.: Excuse me. And you see them like this in the summertime.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Instead of ice on the shore, it was boats

P.B.: Yup.

D.O.: Storm come up, and some of them people didn't know anything about them. And old northeaster come up, boats would break their lines out on the pier, and the first thing you know, they were beaten up on the shore.

P.B.: Yup, yeah.

D.O.: I've seen 8 or 10 boats up on the shore -

P.B.: And then when that other stuff would float down from the dam up there, Susquehanna, come down the river after these great big hurricanes and stuff, there'd be whole trees and stuff floating by and floating up on the beach.

D.O.: Haven't you got pictures of that in the Kent News? They used to put them in there. Happens every spring.

P.B.: Yeah. We'd have to clean up that pier, beach, when I was down there.

D.O.: The Conawingo Dam and all that stuff behind it comes down. It all piled up on the beach.

K.F.: Agnes did quite a job on the beach.

P.B.: Oh, man, it did. Yeah.

D.O.: I think Jack's got a picture in here of when they burnt the Hotel Chesapeake.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: They piled it up on the beach.

P.B.: Buried it. 'Cause it took us a long time to get all that glass and stuff out of that sand, combing it and everything trying to clean that beach up.

D.O.: I thought that's what it looked like. He's got three piles of wood out on the -

K.F.: They just burnt it right out on the beach?

P.B.: Yeah, they pushed it down.

D.O.: Took bulldozers down there, dug the beach out, tore the hotel down and put it out in the beach, this hole where they dug, and burned it and then covered it back over again.

P.B.: You've got people coming down there -

D.O.: That's -

P.B.: Yeah. Yeah, I've got that. That's the old one. Then there was another one there that's shaped like that, and then you had the one with just the four pillars, Tolchester.

D.O.: Here's Tolchester boat.

P.B.: Yeah, I've got all those. Here are these boats they used to rent that you were talking about.

D.O.: Yeah. There's them little skiffs that they used to fish out of.

K.F.: Oh, okay.

D.O.: Then they had a pole here and one back here, and they just run a curtain on it, an awning up there they'd call them.

P.B.: Right.

D.O.: And take people out for -

P.B.: Yeah, I've got that one, awnings too.

D.O.: He's got a picture here, inside of the Rigby Hotel.

P.B.: There you do. There's one with awning.

D.O.: Yeah.

P.B.: Yeah, inside the Rigby Hotel when they were tearing it down.

D.O.: Was that what it was? When they were tearing it down?

P.B.: Tearing it down, yeah. It's got a couple there. That was -

D.O.: '8 1. They didn't tear it down in '8 1.

P.B.: I don't know when they tore it down.

D.O.: I don't know what they were doing there.

P.B.: They were renovating or something.

D.O.: There's the old Francis T.

P.B.: Yeah, that was a good one there. Evidently, evidently they were having some kind of a meeting or something, or somebody drowned, and they were trying to rescue them or something there. They all gathered around in that one. That's the Chesapeake. Now that roof burned out. It caught fire, and they put a new roof on it, top floor, 'cause you see it wit the old roof, and then you see it with the new roof.

D.O.: Yeah. Five floors, then you see it with four.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: There's some, this is later, this is one of the bigger boats that were later.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: That thing is 40-some foot long. That's how they used to take parties out. Got them sitting up on the roof.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: That's a picture of the old bathhouses down there.

K.F.: Oh, right.

P.B.: That goes back a while.

D.O.: That time, Jack didn't take them for any quarter.

P.B.: No. He probably got \$2 for that ride. Remember that? Turner's Pier and moving picture place?

D.O.: I remember the movie place. This is Robert Long that done these pictures for that.

P.B.: Yeah, I know.

D.O.: I called him. He's working today.

P.B.: Yeah, I know.

D.O.: We picked a bad day, that was a while we picked it. (Laughter.) Have you got pictures of, piles of the Chesapeake out on the beach?

P.B.: Piles? What do you mean?

D.O.: When they were tearing it down.

P.B.: No. No, I don't have that. Look at this one. This must've been, they must've had exercise.

D.O.: Exercise. (Laughter.)

P.B.: Look at that. They're all out there doing that.

K.F.: A daily dozen health exercises on the beach. Do you all remember seeing this?

P.B.: Nope.

D.O.: I don't remember it.

P.B.: I don't remember that.

D.O.: Huh-uh (negative). Good time, good place to do it, I guess.

P.B.: Well it had to be a right good while, because it was all those old black bathing suits.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: And that's what they *rented*, was those old black bathing suits.

K.F.: Oh, so you didn't have to bring your bathing suit then, you just rented it?

D.O.: Well, some. Some brought them. I had an aunt and uncle run a bathhouse down there for a while. That's what they rented, all one-piece bathing suits.

P.B.: See now this -

D.O.: Built some sand castles out there at one time.

P.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). This is when he and I were in our zenith right here.

K.F.: Okay.

P.B.: This is about when what we remember most about, right?

D.O.: There's a top floor off the hotel.

K.F.: Right.

D.O.: After it burnt off, then they put a roof on it.

P.B.: Right. See this is when we were going down there more, about that time. That's in the 40's.

D.O.: Well this has even got the cottages up here.

P.B.: Yeah, the cottage is still there. That's, what, 50's?

D.O.: He took them out of there - no, he took them out of there later than that.

P.B.: He took -

D.O.: He took them out in the 60's.

P.B.: Later than that.

D.O.: Huh?

P.B.: Later than that, wasn't it?

D.O.: Yeah, I guess it was.

P.B.: 'Cause this was all gone. Yeah.

D.O.: This was a barber shop underneath here.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Here's another one.

P.B.: See I can tell the time by the type of card.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: There's four different types of cards that came out different periods of time, undivided backs and backs, that's a whole other history.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: History of picture cards. But -

D.O.: I don't remember anybody doing any sand sculpture in there either. Do you?

P.B.: No. Only thing I never did was fool with sand. We weren't too interested in any sand down there.

D.O.: Must've been a religious bunch. They got one of the bible, they got one - cross on it.

P.B.: Yeah. Look at that one. Isn't that a great one?

K.F.: Oh, that's great, all the people swimming.

P.B.: Look at the costumes. I used that to, to paint some of my old - some of my swimmers. I've got swimmers here. Here's - here's one with my swimmers painting. That one. These boats -

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: This was the movie theater, and the bowling alley and all this.

K.F.: And was this the Hotel Chesapeake, like the corner of it?

P.B.: Yeah, the Hotel Chesapeake.

K.F.: Okay.

P.B.: Hey, you're getting to know that stuff. The boardwalk went the whole length here.

K.F.: That's a lot of people to be in such a small town.

D.O.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: Well, yeah.

D.O.: Well we had 250 people down there during the winter. And during the summer, probably had -

P.B.: See the porch we were showing you?

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: That's where they sat. It was up on a hill.

K.F.: Okay, right.

P.B.: It was a high spot, high spot, I guess, in Betterton, wasn't it?

D.O.: I say, we probably had 250 people during the winter, and 4th of July weekend, we'd have 3,000.

P.B.: That's right.

K.F.: Now you were telling me that some folks would sleep on the beach?

D.O.: Sleep on the beach.

P.B.: Oh, yeah.

K.F.: And that was okay? Nobody cared?

P.B.: Oh, no.

D.O.: Huh-uh (negative).

P.B.: This is when he's getting ready to take her out to the evening dinner at the Richard's (phonetic).

D.O.: They'd have to keep their clothes on. Then Pat would be down there, come out and run underneath the boardwalk. (Laughter.)

P.B.: I was very shy then.

D.O.: Yeah, I bet you were. I was. I was very shy. Where did the - I just looked at this thing last night 'cause I just got it from him.

P.B.: What are you looking for?

D.O.: That pile stuff on the beach. I know I saw it in here. It's got to be in the back. That's the later pictures.

P.B.: Well what you want to do then is set another time? Get some pictures -

K.F.: Yeah, if we can get some of these other folks together, I'd like to talk with them too, but what I'd like to do is talk to the curator and see when she can come up and see some of your stuff, and I know she's going to want to hear the tape of the music from the merry-go-round and look at some of these postcards. And then - because I'm running sort of like an oral history program down at the museum. I'm curious what you're going to do with the tapes that you've recorded already.

P.B.: Yeah, well I've got to find them. Mine was just hit and miss.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). Still, they're something on tape.

P.B.: I interviewed this guy in Chestertown here down at the lunch table down Ellen's. Everybody's talking, and we're at the lunch table, and everybody's breaking in, you know, this was very -

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: --incoherent what we were doing today really. (Laughter.) To sort through all that, to type up something that would, or splice together stuff

D.O.: See the reason he didn't want to pack everything up and bring it to Betterton?

K.F.: Yeah.

D.O.: I couldn't get a hold of her. I waited till the last minute to see what Jack was going to do.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: `Cause I didn't want Jack -

P.B.: I told him, I said look, you know, I don't know what you want and all. I said why don't you come where I am, you know, got a place we can all sit around.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: I got all kinds of books and stuff, you know.

K.F.: Right.

P.B.: Bring your stuff, and I knew I had more stuff than what they did.

K.F.: Running around.

P.B.: As far as all this stuff See, `cause that's all Betterton, Tolchester, Suddlersville, Centerville. All of those books are just full of postcards blown up.

K.F.: Okay.

D.O.: And see, I volunteer up here in Hidden Treasure.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: Brought the stuff in. I'm up there every Wednesday. So I didn't get much chance yesterday to do anything.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: So I stopped on the way home to see how Jack was. Waited till the last minute to see what kind of shape he's going to be in. And I thought maybe I might be able to get him, maybe he'd say well, you know, I'm not able to do it. He's walking with a walker. He's lost three toes on one foot, and the other one's all bandaged up. He came in here the hospital, and the doctor told him wanted to do some tests on him to build his feet up for the future. They done these tests on him, they started bleeding, and the blood running out and other stuff, water running out of him.

P.B.: What's that, sugar diabetes?

D.O.: And he ended up - huh? He had diabetes for years.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: He can't see. So they ended up taking three toes off. So I said you going back to Chestertown? He said not on your life.

P.B.: You better get him while he's still alive.

D.O.: I thought maybe he could, you know, might be able to go to the firehouse.

P.B.: Yeah.

D.O.: He wouldn't be able to come inhere. But he's going back to the hospital today for another week.

P.B.: Yeah. You better go to him.

D.O.: So I started to call her last night, and I said well she's not in the office now. I'll wait till 8:00, maybe she'd go in, she'll stop in on her way before she comes up here.

K.F.: Yeah. Nope. No, I left at 8:30.

P.B.: I built a shadowbox of the lighthouse that's down there up on the beach.

K.F.: Which one, the Hooper's Island?

P.B.: Yeah.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: And I've got, I blew it up, and I got some people that stand in front of it. And you took the, they got the gazebo from Tolchester that's down there, bandstand.

K.F.: Oh, really? That's the bandstand that's there?

P.B.: Yeah, that's from Tolchester.

K.F.: I didn't know that.

P.B.: Yeah. That was it on the -

D.O.: What is your last name?

K.F.: Feltault, F, as in Frank -

D.O.: Oh, F.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

D.O.: I was looking in the S's.

K.F.: No.

D.O.: I was looking under S-U-L, S-O-L.

K.F.: No. F, as in Frank, E-L-T-A-U-L-T.

D.O.: I wasn't even close.

P.B.: You better write it out there for me.

K.F.: Better, I'll just give you one of my cards.

P.B.: Yeah, that would help.

K.F.: And that will take care of it.

P.B.: Now you need to get the name of that book.

K.F.: I did write it down.

P.B.: Okay. And copy write and all so you can get the code?

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).

P.B.: Okay.

D.O.: Here's how they were burning the thing. I knew there was another picture in there.

K.F.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). Oh, that's the hotel?

D.O.: They piled up in piles and then burn it. They said they still had trouble with nails working their way up through the sand.

P.B.: Oh, yeah. Yeah, it's still working up. I'll bring out the good stuff now. That had - I don't get the card players.

D.O.: Don't you?

P.B.: No. (Laughter.)

D.O.: They don't come with their \$2, huh?

P.B.: No. Well if you give me some bit of time there, I'll find those tapes.

K.F.: All right.

D.O.: What else you got, besides the merry-go-round? Got the bowling balls going down the cement alleys?

P.B.: No, no, no. But I got, I got a lot of nice Tolchester stuff

D.O.: I knew I had to get him, 'cause he's got the stuff You'd been gone a long time depending on me. (Laughter.) I didn't know he had this much stuff I didn't know he got into this.

(END OF INTERVIEW.)