

INTERVIEW WITH RUTH HUBBARD
December 2, 1900

Q. Tell me a little about yourself, You're 34 years old?

A. Yes, I'll be 85 in April.

Q. Were you born in St. Michaels?

A. Yes.

Q. But, you weren't born in this house?

A. I wasn't born right in St. Michaels either. I was born on a farm right outside of St. Michaels, But I've been in this neighborhood all my life.

Q. What was the name of the farm?

A. Well, did you know where Julian Hopkins lived? Go up the road here, ... Do you know where they have that vegetable stand?

Q. Yes.

A. On that lane right there. It goes right back to Solitude Creek. I need to go out there now and see what they're doing, They tell me they're building a million dollar home there. But I'm not going out in this cold weather. But that's where I was born. Lived here all my life, went to school right here.. .right through high school.
Q. And your maiden name was?

A. Evans.

Q. Any relation to the Evans of Black ...

A. Oh, Keith?

Q. Yes.

A. Yes, my brother's son. My nephew.

Q. And you went to school?

A. In St. Michaels, yes. The primary school was right back here. Yes, the old primary school. That's where I started with Ada Dean. She was a great old lady.

Q. That name keeps popping up.

A. Oh anybody whoever lived in St. Michaels knew Miss Ada Dean. She taught the first grade for I don't know how many years. I guess ever since she was able to start teaching. She was quite old where she died.

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Q. I must have run into about half a dozen people who knew Miss Ada DeLeon.

A. Yes, ~~he~~ lived down Grace Street.

Q. Apparently, she ruled with an iron hand, though.

A. She was good. From that, over to *the* high school. That was long before the new high school was built. The old high school over there. I was sorry they tore it down. It could have been made into something. Either a nursing home or a building for something.

Q. The building seemed structurally nothing wrong with it.

A. I don't know. They said it needed a new furnace and roof. But that could have all been done. And those rooms were large enough to make two apartments ... plenty big.

Q. I've heard others also say why did they ever tear it down.

A. Yes. And it was a good location. If you worked there, you could walk uptown to the post office or bank, or something. It's too bad they ever tore it down.

Q. You must remember the primary school burning.

A. I lived here [in this house] when the primary school burned down.

Q. When did you move here?

A. In 1934. My daughter was one year old. We moved here on her birthday, and that's the reason I remember.

Q. Were you around when it happened [the fire]?

A. I was working in the town office when it happened. It was one o'clock, and I had just gotten up there, when the sirens sounded. And someone said it's the apartment house. So I came back home. They had made apartments out of it by then. That was a big fire. In those days they didn't have quite as many firemen and equipment.

Q. I remember Alex Spencer telling me he was one of the firemen there.

I suspect so. Then they had moved the primary school over where the high school was. And built the new high school. It looked like he [who?? The owner of the building, I think] waited until the wind just was blowing it that way. It was a big fire. The sparks went way over on Chestnut.

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Q. I guess the local people were worried about their houses catching fire.

A. Oh my yes.. Everybody'was. They said he had the attic full of newspapers. And that he had get the fire. I don't know whatever became of him. He's from Maryland, I think. That was the second time he's been made to leave different places. He had three, four fires. He burned a yacht up down in Tilghman, now this one, and I think there was one before that.

Q. It must have been quite an event when it happened.

A. Oh yes it was. A man here in town bought it. Saved enough out of it to build a home out on Maple Avenue.

Q. So, some pieces of it are still around in other buildings? We have some photographs of that school ... early photos around 1908 with all the children about. It was a beautiful building.

A. It was a beautiful building.

Q. It always amazed me that a town the size of St. Michaels would have something like that for a primary school.

A. It was a beautiful building. Many's the time I sat on that front porch and played jacks with the rest of the kids.

Q. I don't think you'd be in this picture then. You were a little bit too young.

A. I guess. I didn't start to school until I was seven. I was born in 1904, so that would be about 1911, because I was sick. The doctor said not to send me school.

Q. This picture was taken about two years before. Although you might recognize some of the people. Most would be your contemporaries. They all look to be about seven or eight years old. Thomas Sewell took many of these photos.

A. I remember Thomas Sewell. He was in the bank for years and years,

Q. Yes. He had a house down on Cherry Street which is no longer there.

A. Now, he was the boyfriend of this Miss Ada Dean. Used to talk about it. Never got married. Never lived together like they do today.

Q. They had a long romance by the sound of things.

A. Yes, he was her boyfriend.

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Q. We have pictures of him and he has an old fashioned bowler hat and aa mustache. You mentioned about the family who was living in this house when you bought it.

A. Well, the people who built this, well, I don't know if they built it or not. But the people, we bought it from were only here a little while because he died and his wife moved back to Baltimore. But before that, people named Jefferson lived here. It wasn't Jefferson. The last people that were here was Jefferson. The people before that was Fairbank. They were the ones that had all the children, the 13 children. A common name around here.

Q. Do you remember the first names of the couple?

A. Well, there were a couple of them here in town yet._ One was named Clay. Milton. I don't remember. They're all over the place. Connecticut, one was out in California. A couple of girls. One of them married a Marshall. Florence, Marge [hard to follow] married Bob Marshall. I forgot the other one's name. They were mostly boys. Three girls, but I think there were only two. They all lived here. One of them told me this was the parlor, and she said they used to put that window up. They came here one time. "We'd put the window and we'd sneak out, and Mother and Dad would asleep when we got home. They didn't even hear us come in." She said we'd leave it open a little bit so we could get back in.

Q. Were you [when you moved in] married? And what was your husband's name?

A. Yes, we were married about six years. My husband's name was Hubbard, Martin Hubbard. We used to have the Hubbard's Apparel uptown. Where the antique place is ... Mr Barry, where the new bakery went in. That was our building. We sold him that building. We had that building built in 1948 I think it was.

Q. Was that his profession? What was he doing when you met him?

A. He was in the dry cleaning business. And he was in it for about 33 years. And then he had a heart attack. And his doctor said to him, "Martin, how do you feel?" He said, "Sometimes I feel good and sometimes I don't". And the doctor said, "Now let me tell you, now you can get out of this business and you can live for a long time. Or you can stay in the and live for about six months." Martin went rightt to the phone and phoned a fellow in Easton, McCord. He'd been wanting to buy it, but Martin didn't want to sell it to him. And he said, "Walter, I'm ready to sell." And before noontime, they had closed the deal. He came home and told me he'd sold out. He told me he'd sold out this morning, and then he told me what the doctor had said. And I said, "That's good, you should have done that a long while ago." So then, he sat around for a while and didn't know what to do with himself. He was in and out, in and out. I said, "If you don't sit down..." He'd go up town, come home sit and while, then go back. So he rented the front part of

the building to McCord's for a place for them to tab- in work, and he had all the back of it. So he came home one day and said, "Let's go, and I start a store --- men's clothing in the back." I told him I didn't know anything about that. He said we could learn and I agreed. We went to Baltimore. We didn't even know where there was a wholesale house to buy anything. People didn't know us, of course. We'd ask one, then they'd tell us about another. I remember just as well. We bought \$900.00 worth of men's clothes. We came home, fixed up the store in the back. It wasn't any time at all before we sold that out. We'd buy more, order over the phone. You'd be surprised. We didn't even have an entrance on the street--you had to go up the alley. We stayed back there for two years, because they had leased it for two years. So we remodeled it and moved into the front. It was really a great success. Everyone said, "Oh, Martin, you're just pouring your money down a rat hole." But Martin said Ok, but he was going to try it. My husband was one of those kind who didn't believe in charging a big price. He said he wouldn't charge anybody more than he would want to pay himself. He said if you give somebody a good deal, they'd come back. And you know we had people from all over--Annapolis, all over Delaware.

Q. How long did the business last?

A. We stayed there 10 years. Then he wasn't feeling good again, and he thought he'd better quit, so he got a young man from Easton to run it. He leased it to him. He stayed there a while, got a swelled head. Spent too much money, more than he could afford. So he just... The people came back on us for the bills. So we had to close him up. Then we sold out to [?] Stein. He didn't do anything. Finally we just closed it out and sold the building.

Q. What year was that?

A. When he first went in there, it had been about 20 years. And he was there about 10 years. Must have been about '78, '77, something like that. And he could have really made a fortune today if he had stayed there and done that because of all the people we have in town. In those days we didn't have all those people. It all worked out. We got rid of the building.

Q. Well, you certainly live on a nice street. I've always liked Water Street..

A. When we first came here the whole street was full of trees, but they've all died out. There was a great big one there, over here and a big one in the back. All the other side was full of trees. It really was pretty. They made an arch.

Q. I think [Boston?? can't understand the name] mentioned to me that there used to be a store in her house. Was that going when you...

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A. Yes, the other side of where she has the little television room. But the store was way back in the 1800' s. Her house and Ethel Schultomz were the only two on that side of the street. That was a beach over there. It was just a little track where carts and thing,...

Q. But, all these houses were all here when you moved here then?

A. Oh yes, they were all here. They're better than 100 years old. We took that porch off of this house. We got two truck loads of oyster shells. Underneath. I guess it had made land.

Q. You said the porch on this house was not original.

A. No. This was the kitchen out here and it had two front doors. If someone came to this one, I'd say they were living next door. They'd go to this door I had to explain a little better than that. There were two doors and we had that one taken out and a window put in. But this was a porch all across the front. It had great big scallops, a very fancy thing. So I said to my husband, let's take that porch off there. It's a dust catcher in the summertime, and snow catcher in the wintertime. So we got someone to take it off. When we moved here and bought this house, we paid \$1,750.00 for it. It cost us more to put the heat in. When we first moved here, before we put the heat in, it had on of those big things they called a "Hea.trola". It was like a victrola. It was a big square, like a piece of furniture, big, but it wasn't black like a stove. It heated the whole house, fired by coal. When my husband got sick with his heart attack, he couldn't lift the coal, so I did it. The next year, we put the heat in. I carried nine ton of coal, and I said, "I can't do that!" That summer we got the heat put it. But that thing did make a nice warm ...all upstairs. But it was a big thing, Coal buckets full of coal, but it would last all day and all night.

Q. One question I would like to ask is, from your earliestt recollections, what were the businesses you remember?

A. We had the Fairbanks Meat Market where Shaw Bay is now. On this side of it was Mr. Saul Kaplan's [I think] dry goods store. Then there is Dr. Hope, where the Sailor is. Yes he lived there. Then in that little tiny building, there was a candy store. Next to that, there was a milliner's shop. Two maiden ladies made and sold hats. Next to that, the Packers, Jewish people, had aa store where the St. Michaels Hardware is [In 1996 this is now Blue Swan Christmas Shop]. They had a dry goods store .and lived in the back.

Q. That building looks like it's changed quite a. bit. Then you go across the little alley way...

A. Across the alley ... In and out of there, there were a lot of different things. When I went to school, there was a grocery store there. Then came the parsonage to the Methodist Church. Then the church, then a little store where the Hodge Podge is.

Q. You mentioned the parsonage for the Methodist Church. That's no longer there. There's a parking lot. When did that disappear?

A. Oh, I guess about 20 years ago. A frame building, and they said it got so bad, and they needed parking space too. And they wanted to buy the building on the corner, but Fox's store bought that. They were going to buy the whole thing and make it into a parking lot. They remodeled the church a lot since then. Then there was a little store, a man named Burns. Used to go up about four or five steps to a little store right there. That's an antique place or something right there. Can you find it?

Q. These maps are a little bit older. There was another Methodist Church farther down that had a parsonage.

A. Yes. Down here. That's what they called a Southern Methodist. This was a Methodist Episcopal, and this was a Southern Methodist. It was right across from Lighty's [The Village Shoppel. Where the library was.

Q. The parsonage is still there, I understand, as a ...

A. Yes, it's a store or a flower shop now. They've remodeled all those houses and buildings in there.

Q. Where Lighty's is now, there must have been an older building there.

A. There was an old store there. That went up too, three or four steps. It looked like it was about to fall over. It was there when I was a tiny kid. They finally tore it down when somebody else from the Marshall ... Charlie Spencer I think married Norman Marshall's daughter and he built him that store, and set him up in business. Then there was a big building on Lighty's parking lot. I don't think it was much of anything. The man just built it. I don't know what his intentions were. The same man that owned the store. Wright was his name, Howard Wright. Well, I think one time they had a big room downstairs, and they had a kindergarten in there. He lived upstairs, but I don't think it was ever any business or anything.

Q. What kind of business did Mr. Wright have?

A. Grocery store. The floor was so old, you thought you were going through it.

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Q. Coming back up town across from Lighty's, there' that house on the corner.

A. That house was there. That's an old house. Years and years ago, they tell me, that was the farmhouse when that was all farm land. Miller, I think was the name.

Q. Yes, Dr. Miller's farm.

A. Then several doctors have been in there. Dr. Glascot., Dr. Wilson, several doctors had offices there. It's a shame they tore the end off. It had aa round end on it. But I guess she wanted to rent it as apartments. It had a little round room (one story) on this end of it. Rita Reeser rented apartments, and it didn't go so good, so I guess they tore it off.

Q. What are the other business you remember going uptown on that side of the road?

A. Hope's Hardware was there where the flower shop is. That was a high step, too. Because he lived across the street, where Clifta Hope lives now. At one time, when you come on up, there was a Chinese laundry, Chinamen. I can hear him now, when I went in with my mother, "No tickee, no shirtee." The St. Michaels Bank was on the corner where the gift shop is.

Q. Oh, you mean the brick building.

A. And it was in another little building here in town before that. Where the Maryland National Bank is, that was a residence.

Q. Do you remember... did they put those pillars on ... Do you remember when they put those pillars on the front of that building?

A. Oh, yes, That was a lovely old home. Years ago, people named Theirs [spelling??] lived there, then Dr. Lied [??] he was a dentist, and then Dr. Wilson bought it from him. He lived there a long time until he died. The daughter lived there for a while, and then I think they finally sold it to Maryland National Bank.

Q. Then we get to the post office.

A. That wasn't a post office. People named Sepp [spelling??] lived there, and there was a building, another little barbershop on the corner right where you turn in to the parking lot of the post office. Robert Sepp. The dwelling was two story.

Q. And that disappeared when they built the post office?

A. Yes. Do you know Dorothy Wales ... Jimmy Wales? Well, that's where Dorothy lived. She lived there until she got married, I guess. Christ Church was always there.

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O. This was probably way before your time, but I'm talking about the hitching posts that used to be along... [This side of the tape runs out mid sentence. Side 2 begins with Mrs. Hubbard:]

A. Always had a omer. Guess it's 60 or 70 years.

O. I wonder what happened to the horse trough that was around here.

A. I don't know. Now they talk about preserving St. Michaels, they should have left something like that! It could still have water in it and everything. That would really have been an antique.

O. I understand they took it out because it was in the middle of the road, and they widened the road,

A. I understand that it was, but it seems they could have done something to move it back.

Q. Someone told me the pump had some kind of silver decoration on the top, a horse's head or something like that.

A. I don't know, but I suppose it did. It was nice for the horses, and I suppose a lot of people got a drink out of that. Pump the pump and get a drink.

Q. They had a cup attached.

A. Then, we used to have a man that went around at night and lighted all these kerosene lights.

O. Someone was talking about that, possibly Lena Fairbanks.

A. Probably so, I'm sure she remembers that.

O. She remembers waiting for him.

A. I suppose so. He'd go all around town. Of course, the side streets didn't have many, maybe one or two. It was mostly the main street, Talbot Street. It was a quaint little town.

Continuing on the street, to where the St. Michaels Bunk now I know there was a large three storey brick building there,

A. Yes, took the whole top off. And right next to that, in the same building, an old lady had a little grocery store, Miss Adie Borrison,

Q. Was the store, the grocery part of it, as you're looking at it on Talbot Street, was it to the left?

A. If you_.' re facing the bank, say, it was on the left of the bank, and there was just a. little narrow place. It was long, she lived in the back. There was a house there, too.

Q. In the large brick building, there was a. business there, too.

A. There was a furniture store there, then there was a dry goods store there. People named Klein. People from Easton had the jewelry store. He married a Klein. They have a jewelry store across from the courthouse. Shearer. He married the Klein's daughter. Now this man , Shearer's father, married Hattie Klein. And her father was the one that had the store there. This is going back a couple of generations.

Q. I think the blacksmith shop was near there, too.

A. Oh, in the back. In the back, where the parish house is. I remember my father taking the horses there to get them shoed. I wonder if anyone does that anymore. Times have changed, haven't they?

Q. For the better or not?

A. Well, there's a lot of things around town here that aren't for the better.

Q. Well, going up the road.

A. Where the bank just took that part in.... there was a drug store there. There was the house, a dwelling, and the drugstore were right together.

Q. Yes, I can see it on the map. We're getting close to where the hardware store is.

A. Yes, now, but that used to be a candy kitchen. Used to make all kinds of taffy. They made ice cream, like an ice cream parlor. The owners were Greeks, and I can't remember their names. Where Hope's is now. And that house that sits back next to it, as far as I know it's always been there for years and years. When I was a kid, people named Tidings lived there.

Q. Then there's another house...

A. The next one would be the Ma.rshails.

Q. Then we're coming up to ...

A. The next would be a hardware store again. People named Harrison, Tommy Harrison, had a hardware store in there. Four or five steps you had to go up. All these buildings had steps. I don't know why they built them up so high.

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Q. Now this is not on the large building on the corner, is it?

A. Well, it's the same building, the three story, but they've remodeled it, of course. There was always aa hardware. store on the first floor,

Q. Someone told me there was a general store above the hardware store.

A. Not when the hardware store was there. Later on there was a man named Denson had a dry goods store, all kinds of clothes and everything. There was aa little place on the corner where they printed the COMET, the newspaper.

Q. Yes, we have a few copies at the museum. In that same building they printed it?

A. Yes, same building, but just in a little part of it toward the alley.

Q. I always wondered what happened to the printing presses.

A. I don't know. Then, later on, last 25 or 30 years, there was another little paper here in town. I guess they called that the COMET,

Q. Yes, the COMET has been around for a while, just under different ownerships. Then, across the alley, Carpenter Street...

A. That was aa bank.

Q. Underneath, the telegraph, phone operator...

A. Phone operator was upstairs.

Q. I've heard a lot of funny stories about that.

A. They only had one operator at a time, and she knew everybody's business in town. You didn't need a. number. You'd just say, "I'd like to speak to so and so", and she'd connect you. She was there for years and years. Then, what was next to the bank, was the post office, where the restaurant is now.

Q. The interior, the wooden boxes, counters and panels were given to us and are in storage.

A. I guess when they built the other postoffice, they gave new boxes. Then they tell me that it used to be across the street from that too, but I don't remember.

Q.. Yes, the post moved quite aa bit.

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A. Quite a bit... There use to be a doctor's office across the street, too. Right where the Christmas Shop is [in 1996, this is Yesteryear's Restaurant], e lived there. The house and the office all went together. Dr. Davis.

Q. There were a lot of docto s

A. Quite a few. Didn't hav them all at one time, but aa lot of different ones.

Q. How about the little building, gift shop, that's next to the Carpenter Street Restaurant?

A. That. used to be a. milliner's shop. A lady named Levin. When the post office was there, she was right next door. After that, it was real estate, insurance office. It's been several things.

Q. Then we come to the...

A. The hotel where the town hall is now. It wasn't too big, but she used to board some of the school teachers. I think you could board for \$4.00 or \$5.00 a week. She served good meals. In those days, travelling salesmen would come into town, probably have a horse and carriage. And there wa.s a livery stable across the street, not where the ACME is, but where the parking lot is. The stable man kept horses, and you rent a horse and a carriage and drive out for the day or something.

Q. Do you remember that livery stable? Was it quite a large building? And fronted right on Talbot Street?

A. Yes. It was large and was right on Talbot Street. Of course the streets weren't as wide as they are now. And it went back quite a. ways. They used to have a lot of horses. I remember that when we would drive into school, my two sisters and myself, we would leave our horse up there. Then after school, we'd gear him up to the carriage and go on home. If kids had that to do today, they'd have a fit. But, they were the good old days, I guess.

Q. If we leave the town office, there's a lot there now. But I think there was a house.

A. Two houses.

Q. Then they built that new building [Bleachers?]

A. There were two houses there. I think one of them burned. And then they tore them down. And the Women's Club used to be up there. The Women's Club was right next to the hotel.

Q. That next building which is now a shop was a residence. Where Shaw Bay used to be.

P` ,

A. That was a dwelling where Miss Norma Marshall lived. She lived there for a long time. When she died, they opened that store. And right next to that was where Dr. Lockey [I think] had the office on the corner, and dentist.. And he lived where ... Blue Heron Realty [the Gingerbread House]. The ice cream place used to be his office. It's kind of cozy. I said to my husband one day, "Harry, let's go in there and have lunch". They don't serve too much lunch. The old tin ceiling was there Dr. Lockey was there. That was the first place I ever went to the dentist.

Q. Then we cross Cherry Street.

A. On that corner, Mr. Curt Sewell had a grocery store, and he lived there too. [This is now the Broken Rudder store]

Q. Maybe you know, speaking of Curtis Sewell, there were some Sewells living in town until recently. Is that the same Sewell family?

A. Well, there's one still over on Mulberry Street. He was the grandson of, not Tommy Sewell because he was never married, but ... can't think of it. But the Sewells have always lived in the Mulberry Streett house for as long as I can remember. The third house up on Mulberry. That's the grandson of the man who owned it. Walter Sewell. He was a brother of Thomas.

Q. How about between there and Mill Street, or the museum street?

A. There used to be a big house there, and the man was a boat builder. Mr. Jones. He had a little place in the back where he built small boats, but he had a place over here where the hotel is where he built big boats.

Q. He had a little railway there.

A. Yes. Good sized house there. I don't know why they tore it down, There have been several things there... flower shop, plants. After Mr. Jones died. His wife was a dress maker. From there on down, it was all colored people.

Q I'm surprised. Because where Mr. Jewett lives, it's quite a. substantial house, the house with the green shades.

A. A lady used to live there, and she used to keep boarders. Mrs...

Q. Was it a. Hambleton?

A. I forgot her name. I think she always had an extra room or two if someone came in for the night, she could take them.

Q. You mentioned Mr. Jones, the boat builder. Were there any other boat builders that were active that you first remember?

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A. I don't remember any.

Q. I know Robert Lambden...

A. Used to build over here where Buster or Apple's place. Maybe it was over here at Buster's place. They built boats at both place=.

Q. Yes, was he still alive when you...

A. No.

Q. Lena Fairbank can just barely remember.

A. She would remember better than I would because she was right here in town.

Q. You might remember the filming of "The First Kiss."

A. Oh, yes, 1928! I was married in 1928. We saw some of the filming. Remember, my husband was in the dry cleaning business, and Faye Ray fell overboard. She was trying to row this boat, she didn't know anything about rowing a boat. She came up to my husband's place, they said she had to get other clothes. So they put something on her, took her clothes, dry cleaned them out, put on other clothes and started the filming all over again [Clots of laughter] Then they tied a rope on the boat, which wasn't in the film. And they pulled the boat, but she made out she was rowing it. I saw the film after it came out. I saw this one they made last fall, too. Clara's Heart. It was sad, but real good. With Whoopi. She's very good. Good views of Perry Cabin. I really don't remember much about "the First Kiss", but when it came here, I think everybody went to see it.

Q. Did you ever go aboard the floating theatre when it came here?

A. Oh, my, yes! Used to come in here where the Town Dock is [now the St. Michaels Crab House] and used to stay here a week. Came on a Friday and stayed until the next weekend. Everybody went to that, you know. It was the only entertainment we had except for the movie. Where we had movies was right next to the drug store. Five cents to go in and five cents for a big bag of peanuts. We didn't have popcorn.

Q. Was this the Mirada. Theatre.

A. Yes. Later they built a bigger one where the Acme is, but the first one was right next to the drug store. Old wooden building. The old Town Hall was a part of it, but it was just a small place. I don't think they ever cleaned up the peanut hulls from week to the other. When you went in, you crunched over these peanut hulls. And Miss Lena Fairbank played the piano. That was a treat to go to the movies.

Q. What about the floating theater?

A. Oh, it was good. I guess you wouldn't call it good nowadays, but it was good. I guess you'd say those were the good old days.

Q. Yes, and sometimes they weren't always so good.

A. Yes, nothing was done easy. You didn't have anything easy to work with. Nowadays, you get a meal and just press a button. I remember my mother used to have to dress a chicken, and we always used to have a ham.

Q. I'm sure remember the lovely house with the windows where Longfellows [Town Dock restaurant] is now.

A. Oh, yes. Senator Dodson lived in that one when he came here. Then Mr. McEuckley[?] lived there. Then they moved away, to Florida with their daughter. He died when they were down there. She came back and got an apartment in this house over here, and she used to come over here quite often. She came from Connecticut, I knew her ever since she came here. And she said to me, "Ruth, I think I'm going to buy myself a car. I can't get around without a car." Of course, he always had a car, and I told her, "I think you should." She said the man was coming down to demonstrate it to her. I asked if she knew how to drive and she said she did, although it had been a long time. I said I'd go out with her to get a little experience. Bethene was her name. She said, "I'll let you know how I make out." He came down, she got in the car and dropped dead. Too much excitement for her I guess. I don't know. A lovely person. Her daughter is still in Florida.

Q. Did you ever go in the house?

A. Oh, yes. She had an apartment upstairs, with one of these chairs put in because she couldn't walk upstairs very good. There were about three apartments over there. She had a big apartment, very nice overlooking the river. Of course that all burned. Probably 10 or 12 years ago. The Longfellow was there. A man and wife and they had two children. It was early morning, 4 or 5 o'clock, a terrible blizzard. I looked out the front window and all I could see was this awful blaze. They managed to get out. It was right after New Year's, I think it was, and they had fires in these fireplaces. They said the bricks were cracked and the sparks got out. They had two fireplaces. The house had all these English boxwood gardens and flowers. It was beautiful. Everybody was sad to see that go. It had crepe myrtles all down the side of the street. I guess that's what you call progress.

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Q. Fire, I think was a very common hazard.

A. Oh, terrible. One of the worst. Excuse me, I think Teddy wants to go out.

Q. Sure. We're almost done here.

Mr. Hubbard lets Teddy out of the house.

Transcribed by Molly Gaylord, March 1996

Note: I have used brackets [] to indicate words I cannot understand and to update current business locations on the sites Mrs. Hubbard mentions in the interview*.