

East Brandywine Township's Oral History Project

Interviewer(s): Alexandria Kochinsky and Carol Sinex-Schmidt

Interviewee(s): Robert and Joyce Arters

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Joyce: I'm Joyce Arters. I lived in Downingtown, in East Brandywine. I now live in Gap, which is in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Carol: What was your maiden name, Joyce?

Joyce: Lewis.

Robert: I'm Bob Arters. Grandson of William T. Arters. I also lived here for quite a few years, but live in Gap now. We moved there eight years ago and are adjusting to the surroundings.

Alexandria: Where did you live when you were in East Brandywine?

Joyce: 480 Corner Ketch Road. We lived there forty-seven years.

Robert: We built the house.

Alexandria: And what brought you to East Brandywine?

Robert: I lived here all my life. I was born in the house across from the Baptist church.

Joyce: Osborne Road and 322.

Robert: They have a big hedge in front of it now, but I used to trim that down to my knees.

Carol: And your grandparents had Green Tree Farm? (This is now referred to as Locust Knoll Farm-Thal residence)

Joyce: Correct. They bought that in 1909.

Robert: My grandfather was a tenant farmer up to that point. He'd always looked for a farm to buy that had a short lane. He didn't like anything long in the snow. When he found this one, it seemed to suit his purpose. There was a springhouse at the end of the roadway, and if you go over there now, all you see is a bunch of stones. That's where he kept the milk until it got picked up.

Joyce: The road used to be closer to the house, not where it is now. I think we have some pictures of that. 322 curved toward the house and came back out again. At that point, they had several accidents right there.

Alexandria: Now that you bring that up, Carol and I have discussed this before, but we've seen another house on the property that sits off to the side, which looks tricky to access.

Robert: There was a double corn crib off to the side. They parked wagons there.

Joyce: Where they kept the equipment had an apartment above it.

Robert: That came later.

Carol: But that's what I am thinking of.

Robert: That barn is a three-decker barn. It has a hay floor, a grain floor, and the milking basement floor. It had a work shed off to the side next to the silo. That barn had burnt down years ago when my grandfather had it. He suspected, and kind of knew, that it had been set on fire. But he never proved it. He rebuilt it to what it is today. There was a shed behind there that Manley built with an apartment and a three-car garage beneath it.

Carol: That's what we've seen.

Alexandria: Yes. We didn't see a separate entrance, and it threw us off a bit.

Robert: Manley built that. Across from it is another shed where they stored wagons, balers, all that kind of stuff. That shed was there when my grandfather owned it. He kept his cows there when he was building the farm. I don't know how many cows he had, but back then, ten or twelve was a lot of cows.

Carol: How many?

Robert: Ten or twelve. He had a chicken house right above it. I don't remember how big it was, but I remember going in there when I was a kid. I used to go down to Manley's to help them haul hay in. Before they started baling it, they had it all loose. I'd walk the horse in and out on the bridgeway to lift the hay into the mound and they'd fork it all in there and all around until they got the hay mound full.

Carol: Manley owned it after?

Joyce: Yeah. His grandfather was killed in 1930. He had a farm accident.

Robert: A baler—the block that separates the bales of hay. A plunger—a hook pulled one out and hit him in the head. From that, he wound up dying about a year later.

Joyce: We have a lot of old diaries from his grandmother. It is so interesting; she never had a bad day. There was always something she would write to focus on it being a good day.

Robert: It might've snowed a blizzard, but it was a good day.

Joyce: The house he was born in is a Sears and Roebuck house.

Robert: It was called Aladdin Homes. They were built in Bay City, Michigan and shipped them to Downingtown on the train. You went in there and picked it up on a truck. All you needed was a

hammer and know how to read the blueprints. All the parts of the house were numbered and lettered. I had the blueprint until we moved, and I don't know what happened to it.

Carol: Approximately what year was that?

Joyce: 1925 or '26.

Robert: On the plaster, right inside the door, it was written in pencil, "Built in 1926." My dad dug the foundation by hand. It had a low ceiling, because he couldn't dig down any further.

Laughter

Robert: He was a carpenter, and he worked at Conowingo. He put scaffolding up and stuff like that.

Carol: His name was also Robert?

Joyce: Robert Roy. He went by R. Roy.

Robert: Robert Roy is a Scottish name, but Robert Roy Edward is my full name. But I don't use Edward anymore.

Joyce: Right after we were married, his father built the apartment for us behind the house. I loved that little place, but we outgrew it. He worked shift work at the time, and I'd be in the house.

Carol: Where was that?

Joyce: Beloit in Downingtown. So, being home, I'd sit and talk to his dad, which is how I knew so many of the old stories. His aunt, too. I wish I'd recorded those. She told stories of being on the farm.

Carol: Where did you grow up, Joyce?

Joyce: That's a good question. When I was young, we were living west of Coatesville, in Westwood. My family lived at Corner Ketch at one time. But I was farmed out during the war to a family that was not related to me, and it was a wonderful little experience because it was a little farmette. I learned to milk goats, I learned to sew, knit, and crochet. This couple took me under their wing as a little girl. I started school in Westwood, went there until fifth grade, moved into Coatesville—with my parents at that point—until eighth grade. Moved to Downingtown and finished school in Downingtown. It was always in Chester County.

Robert: I was born in the house across the street from the church, as I said; it was February. You didn't go to the hospital then if you couldn't afford it. My brother was born there too, Bill—William. He was named after my grandfather. We used to talk about things my dad did when he was growing up. In his late teens he ran a steam engine that belonged to my grandfather, and they did custom farming. They pulled a thrashing machine and a baler behind the steam engine. When he would tell me about it, in the summertime, we were out doing work on some of the farmers' milk sheds and barns. We'd put roofs on them and stuff like that. He'd tell me about his memories then: "I remember going up this hill when it was full of rocks, and the engine would start slipping on the rocks and we couldn't get traction." He'd get out, take a fence rail off the fence, and stick it under the wheels to get traction. I'd ask if the farmers objected, and he would laugh and say that they wanted their hay, so they were just thankful I was out there doing it.

Laughter

Joyce: His father had a gas station at one time, too, at the house. Remember, the road sat closer. When you come into the driveway, to the left.

Carol: I vaguely remember.

Joyce: The road was closer, because we mowed what used to be the roadbed.

Robert: It was a Pure Oil. Have you ever seen the sign? I still have the sign somewhere. I think one of the kids has it now.

Carol: We had Flying A at Lyndell.

Robert: There was a little store at ours too with ice cream and sodas and candy bars. Snacks, you know? Kids across the road at the industrial school would come over. We never had any trouble.

Carol: I did a lecture on the industrial school. There were a lot of good things happening there.

Joyce: When I lived in Downingtown, my dad worked at the paper mill, and he knew somebody connected to the industrial school, so we'd always go up for their dinner. Do you remember the Thanksgiving dinners? The kids served it. It was a neat experience.

Alexandria: I never heard about that.

Carol: I don't remember that. That's the first I've heard of it.

Joyce: Mr. Lemon was there then, and they'd have everything all set up.

Carol: My dad knew Mr. Lemon and liked him well.

Joyce: They worked hard to put the dinner together.

Carol: Yeah. I think it was towards the end that there were problems. Earlier it was very positive.

Joyce: Speaking of schools, we were talking about this earlier... the school I started in is torn down.

Alexandria: Which?

Joyce: Westwood Elementary. In Coatesville I went to Craig Ridgeway, in the west end; they tore it down. I moved to Downingtown, and they tore the row house down, which was by the paper mills. The church we were married in is now torn down (East Brandywine Baptist).

Laughter

Joyce: These buildings were never preserved. But that's history.

Alexandria: What year were you married?

Joyce: 1957.

Alexandria: How did you meet?

Robert: Roller skating.

Joyce: We had a mutual friend. The first gal that introduced herself to me when I moved to Downingtown, Roxanne Gibson, who lived on Wallace Avenue, asked if I went to church anywhere. I'd gone to church in Coatesville but hadn't joined anything after I moved. She said she went to Downingtown Baptist and asked if I'd join her on Sunday, so I agreed. We were friends from eighth grade on. She was in our wedding. But how we got to that point was that she'd told me she had a nice guy for me to meet. Of course, we went to the same school, and I didn't know him, but his brother was in my class.

Laughter

Joyce: She made arrangements for us to roller skate in Exton. So, that's where we met.

Carol: Did you realize that you'd get a membership card? You know why that was? So there were no blacks allowed.

Joyce: Is that why that was?

Carol: I didn't realize it at the time, but in our high school club, we had money and we'd planned to use it toward the roller rink. Two of the black girls in the club told us they weren't allowed there.

Joyce: Well, I can remember my brother graduating from Downingtown in 1952. Jim Sweeney was a wonderful friend in this group of nice kids. After graduation they were going to go to Atlantic City, and my mother wasn't going to let my brother go. My dad told her she had to cut the apron strings sometime. So, he went, but Jim wasn't allowed to go. Because blacks weren't allowed to stay in a hotel. I just can't believe that was our generation. I worked in Caln Township at a restaurant, and they weren't allowed to come in and sit down at that restaurant. John Hicks. Did you know him? He lived off of Township Line Road. He worked for Lipkin in Coatesville. He would come in; he was friends with the owners. But he'd get his meal and get out.

Carol: I've often thought that I wished I'd done something at the time, but I didn't.

Joyce: I think we just accepted it as a way of life. We didn't know differently.

Carol: So much has changed for the better. I often tell my granddaughters how different it is even for women today than it was when I was younger.

Joyce: I just read about a thing where they gave two boys rotary telephones and they couldn't dial.

Alexandria: I saw it! It was so funny.

Joyce: They could not figure it out! I can't imagine.

Alexandria: And they were 17. If you look at kids even younger than that, they don't even know what a house phone is. Everyone uses cell phones!

Joyce: In a way I think that's what happened to our generation with segregation. At least when we were young and didn't give it enough thought. We weren't to the extent here that there were different drinking fountains; that was the south. My sister moved to Georgia and experienced that.

Carol: So, what restaurant did you work at?

Joyce: The Gizmo. It's where the laundromat is now.

Alexandria: In Caln/Coatesville? Next to McDonalds?

Joyce: Yeah. And the brothers split, and one built on the other side of Olive Street. One went to Third Avenue in Coatesville—the Town Gizmo. I worked there through high school.

Carol: I remember seeing a picture in East Brandywine's history book of Arters standing in front of a farm. She said there were ghost stories of the farm.

Joyce: Maybe when it was a tavern.

Carol: Yes!

Alexandria: When would that've been?

Joyce: Before they bought it. Before 1909.

Robert: There's two doors on the front of the house and a double staircase. One went in from the kitchen, and the other went in from the living room. They entertained guests there, and I guess had a little tavern for them. There was a bedroom upstairs, which is where the staircase went. The other one from the kitchen went to the rest of the house.

Carol: That's when it was known as Green Tree Inn, when they'd serve carriages coming through.

Joyce: And then it was Green Tree Dairy. But that was the main highway. Coming out of Downingtown was where the toll booth was.

Robert: They tore that down, but it was a stone house.

Carol: I'm glad you said that. A sign outside of a house says it was a toll house, but that was not the toll house.

Alexandria: Where?

Joyce: Coming out of Downingtown, when you turn around the bend, where Edges Mill Road goes off, it's right in that area.

Carol: And it's gone. On the left, there's a house sitting with a high fence. It's just as it goes to two lanes. They've got a sign out there calling it the toll house, and the realtor promoted it that way when they sold it.

Joyce: Oh! No.

Alexandria: Now, there's a little brick building down that way, on Edges Mill Road.

Joyce: You're talking about the Huey Pollock place?

Carol: I think so.

Robert: Coal and blacksmiths.

Joyce: You're saying that was the toll house?

Robert: No. It's not still standing. But when it was, it had a gate and a pole across the street.

Carol: Was it on the same side as the place we're talking about, or was it the opposite?

Robert: It was across from the barn and house. There was a blacksmith shop, too. With living quarters upstairs.

Joyce: 322 used to go back.

Carol: The Old Horseshoe Pike.

Joyce: Evidently, at one time there were a lot of curves. I guess because of the grading and horses, they couldn't go straight.

Robert: I'm pretty sure a piece of the old road is still there. The little stone house above where Thomas' lived? A family lived at the bottom of the hill—the Thomas'. I was friends with their kids. Right up the road there was an elevation for a little stone house, and it dipped back down. There was a farm there that Henderson owned. I don't know who had it before that. But the road went down and made turns and stuff.

Joyce: The ground that the new church (East Brandywine Baptist) sits on used to be part of the farm.

Carol: Oh. I thought it was part of the industrial school.

Joyce: No. Our church bought it off of Manley.

Robert: 11.3 acres; something like that. Included the pond.

Joyce: We were grateful to get it so that it was adjacent to the cemetery.

Carol: Joan Miley told us that on her part of 322, that it was level with the road for a long time.

Joyce: Yep. They set that house down when they redid the road.

Robert: Manley had to hire a contractor to move the bank and dirt in front of the house. He leveled the dirt on that side of the road.

Joyce: If you see an old picture of the church, the road used to come over, almost to that sign.

Carol: Oh! Wasn't there a—the thing to get on a horse. What were they called? We're talking about the old picture of the East Brandywine Baptist Church, which is a building that no longer exists.

Joyce: Here's the stone wall. Here are the trees.

Carol: I don't know if this is right, but I was told the reason for the two entrances is one side was for men and the other was for women. Is that correct?

Joyce: That's exactly right. There's a board in the middle that goes all the way to the floor. Men sat on one side and women on the other.

Robert: Quaker style.

Joyce: The old Mennonite, those still using horses and buggies, their churches have the two front doors for the same reason. I don't know if you want information on the church or not, but I brought these materials for you. Jack Williams' father is one of those veterans of WWI.

Robert: I was Korea.

Joyce: The one in the center is deceased; he was killed in action, I think. Anyway, this is the original stone. Brandywine Meeting House.

Alexandria: Did it have Quaker roots to be called a meeting house?

Joyce: It was from Windsor Baptist in Eagle. We are a daughter church of theirs, because somebody that worked at Bondsville came over here. We're a mother church to Downingtown Baptist and Coatesville Baptist.

Carol: Early in the speaker series, Joyce gave a wonderful presentation on the church.

Joyce: Before they tore the church down, of course, he went past every day from work, but he saved one of the old pews. When they redid the front of our church, a gentleman took it and saved it. He repainted it with a plaque. It was a board wide, and short, and you had to sit so rigid and prop your feet. To be pregnant sitting on that!

Laughter

Robert: That's so you wouldn't fall asleep!

Joyce: Here's a picture of the groundbreaking of the church. There's Jim Manley, Irene Manley.

Alexandria: When was this?

Joyce: 1967. These are Mary Emma Arters, Alice Arters (Springer), Grace (Mendenhall).

Alexandria: (Page 9 of This Historical Sketch of the Baptist Church.)

Joyce: Our pastor now did that.

Carol: Are the Arters who lived on Hopewell Road related?

Joyce: His cousin. Their father was one of the boys. There were three girls and two boys; his father, and Dan Arters. They lived out on Conestoga Road, toward Fairview.

Carol: Do you remember those ghost stories?

Robert: Well, there was one from the house, that it got manufactured somehow. When you went to sleep, you'd see people walking around. I never saw it, but I was in the attic once and there's a room up there where they kept the meat—a smokehouse.

Carol: In the attic?

Robert: Yeah, it was awesome!

Alexandria: That wouldn't have been lower?

Joyce: Not always. My grandmother had a house in Harmonyville, and she smoked her meat in the attic, too. Lower would've been the cellar, which is where the vegetables were.

Robert: Most had dirt floors, so they'd keep pies and cakes and things like that there, too.

Joyce: My grandmother didn't have a refrigerator.

Robert: The guy who bought it from Manley—Franklin—took the roof off of the house, replacing it. That did away with the meat-keeping. But they'd see this person walking around, and they'd try talking to him, but he never paid any attention to them.

Carol: The book said something else, too. A murder?

Robert: Yes. It was supposedly his ghost wandering around.

Carol: And bloodstains on the floor. Do you remember that?

Robert: No. I don't know anything about that.

Carol: That's when it was an inn. I guess it got a bit rowdy.

Laughter

Carol: Do you remember The Buck? Was that still a tavern?

Robert: Oh, yeah. It's an apartment now. But I remember that.

Joyce: In school he was called "Buck."

Robert: That was my nickname. Because I lived near it. I never liked it, but that's what they'd call me. I went to school on the hill for first and second grade.

Carol: Buck Road. We discussed making it into a historical society, but it was too much to manage.

Robert: They consolidated the following year and did away with that school. You then had Hopewell for second grade and went down to Lyndell for third and fourth grade. We came over here (Guthriesville) for fifth and sixth.

Carol: Lyndell School was on Corner Ketch Road, on the left.

Robert: Rebecca Pray was my teacher. She was also my cousin.

Laughter

Joyce: When my mother and daddy lived at Corner Ketch—do you know where Sarmento lives now? That's the house my mother and dad lived in. My brother was in first or second grade, and he went to the school past where we built. At that time, if you did something you shouldn't have, you wore a dilly-dally sign. My brother had to wear it home. He hid it in the culvert on the walk home, and thought he'd pick it up the next day to bring back to school. Evidently there was a storm or something that washed it away. Of course, it never got home and never got back to school. I think he got in trouble. How humiliating, though!

Alexandria: That's like a dunce cap.

Joyce: I know!

Laughter

Carol: Do we know when that house was built?

Joyce: I was born in '38. My parents lived there 1940 to 1941. They moved from there into Coatesville because of the gas shortage during the war. Thirty-six houses hooked together, and a friend of theirs had moved there. The house beside them was vacant, and they were going to look into renting. So, that's what they did.

Alexandria: What would've impacted it enough to move?

Joyce: During WWII, there were rations. Sugar, leather, gas, rubber, and you got stamps. You could only get, depending on what your job was, you were able to get gas. Otherwise, you didn't. Not only that, but my dad went into the service. My mom drove a Capital Bakery truck—it was in Westwood. All the men were drafted, so the women went to work. She took a man's job and delivered bread to

stores in the Coatesville-Unionville area. That's when women went into industries, like Lukens in Coatesville.

Carol: They worked in Lukens?

Joyce: They did. And that's where they got the nickname Rosie the Riveter, because it was the first time women took men's jobs. I remember the air raids, and we'd have to pull the curtains down. If you had lights on, you had to turn them off. Where I lived in Westwood was near railroad tracks, and the troop trains went through, and the 'fellas had their hankies, and they'd wave them off to war. I don't think any war has affected people the way WWII did. After that, we've not gone without, basically. But you did then. You got one pair of shoes, and they had to do whatever you wore shoes for. My dad joined the Navy and worked on docks in Norfolk.

Carol: Bob, did you serve in Korea, or serve during the time of Korea?

Robert: I was drafted during the Korean Conflict. I had two weeks to finish my engineer training. They signed a ceasefire agreement. So, they changed our orders to go to Europe. I ended up in Germany for a year and a half.

Carol: Frank, my brother, graduated at the same time. He ended up in London.

Robert: The country's terrain was supposedly similar to what we trained on. Mountains and valleys and so forth. They called it "Little Korea."

Joyce: In Missouri!

Carol: Were you married then?

Joyce: No.

Robert: I knew who she was, because I had classes with her brother. But she didn't know me.

Joyce: School was so different. We had 106 in our class. We knew everybody ahead of us and behind us. I have lasting friendships from high school because of that. Our children don't have lasting friends from high school because they have so many classes where they might not even see those kids again the rest of the day.

Carol: The only exception might've been that the boys went off to the industrial arts and the girls had home economics. Or business.

Joyce: What year did you graduate?

Carol: '65.

Joyce: You were ten years after me. By then, it'd already gotten bigger.

Robert: My dad used to go deer hunting. My grandfather headed up a group with a relative of his, and they'd collect money to get food and hardware, would box it up in wooden crates, take it to the railroad station, and ship it up to the mountain where they'd hunt a couple of weeks ahead of time. The guy who had the store up there at Slate Run had a team of horses and a wagon. He'd load the boxes onto his wagon when they got there and would take it to their campsite. I have pictures of all that. The latest was from the '50s. There was a fairly new car parked in front of one of the houses they rented. Back in the '30s they had old cars that were new to them. Big fenders. They'd put the deer on the fender and brought them home. What else was I going to tell you?

Joyce: Well, it's interesting that we graduated from Downingtown and all five of our children did. It was a big decision to move or stay. Of course, taxes were rising with more property. Friends in our development told us our house was going on the market. It's a nice little rancher. Very convenient.

Robert: The old house that we built was sufficient to take care of our five children. Too big to maintain now.

Joyce: It was part of Dilworth's farm. The field went from one road to the other.

Carol: How close were you to Laird's?

Joyce: Right next door, originally. But then Mull's built between us. I loved Mrs. Laird. She helped me with sewing. I worked with the 4-H with Mrs. McCausland and her.

Carol: Do you remember the grange in Lyndell?

Joyce: Not as a grange. But that's where 4-H met. Mary McCausland.

Robert: I have an aunt in her hundreds. She still goes out on Bondsville Road by herself.

Carol: What was her name?

Joyce: Kay (?). She was a Kennedy.

Carol: Did she work at the mill?

Joyce: Yes.

Carol: We learned she was a former employee there who still lived in Bondsville, but I didn't know her name.

Joyce: Thorndale. On Bondsville Road. Her son lives around here too—Mike.

Robert: The eldest is Jimmy.

Joyce: He's in Lewes, DE. We just went to see her. She was born in 1912, but still sharp. Mike was there, and she had a little plate of food made for us, coffee. They were good friends with McCausland. She was friends with Olive Lang; she was a McCausland. She still plays bridge!

Laughter

Joyce: One of our sons recently drove by and called me, concerned, because there were a whole bunch of cars there. We called, and here it was her bridge club.

Laughter

Joyce: She was all dressed up, too. She had black slacks and a sweater on. She had black earrings on. She had a necklace. She has a cane. She has a walker too, but she wasn't using it.

Robert: It was sitting in the middle of the floor, and she steadied herself to turn around and walk somewhere.

Joyce: Another time we stopped by and she was making coleslaw just because she felt hungry for it.

Laughter

Alexandria: Sharp as a tack.

Carol: Did you know John Hershey?

Robert: Yeah.

Carol: We had a speaker on John Hershey not long ago. I learned all sorts of things.

Joyce: Nut Tree Nursery.

Carol: He came up with a lot of ecological theories. He was ahead of his time. There's a group that wants to preserve some of the trees he grafted. Apparently, he was in Downingtown before that, but that's gone to development. I had no idea!

Joyce: I once went to a place that grew perennials, got to talking, and that fella used to work for Hershey. Of course, he talked. You find out so much! I had a really neat experience within the last week. My daughter-in-law who lives in Lancaster said someone on Facebook wanted to get in

touch. I couldn't imagine who it could be. Well, my sister moved to Arizona. She had a son, and he had a daughter. She was only six months old when my sister passed away. But she knew the last name and had my sister's obituary. She realized I'd be her great aunt, and that's the only clue she had. She found me through that. I was able to give her some pictures, a family history—it's neat how technology has connected us.

Carol: Following WWII, there was a house on Creek Road. It had a little turret stone thing—a spring or something. It would've been before the corner of Whiteley's farm. It's gone, but there was a turret for lack of a better word. Somebody told me somebody returned from WWII, she'd cheated, and he'd shot and killed her there. Do you know about that?

Joyce: Is it Reeds or Crawford, where Joyce Edwards used to live?

Robert: Where Oars (?) lived? Crawford, I think. Reeds was partly a dirt road. It came down where the Bullers used to live.

Joyce: You talk about who's related to who? The McCauslands, the Manleys, the Bullers. This one's married to that one, and this one's married to the other. Shirley Ladley married his cousin, so we've got the Arters with them, too. The Bullers and Manleys are related. Seems to me George Buller's mother was a Manley—Jim's sister.

Robert: They lived at the other end of town. A little village.

Joyce: We get on the phone every once in a while. You know, our class reunions are like big family reunions. We get together every year. It's pretty neat. My daughter just had her 20th, and she didn't want to go. It's different.

Carol: My sister's class gets together every year. Sometimes more than once. I have a silly question that came to mind. When you were growing up, what would you have been afraid of? Was there crime?

Joyce: When I lived in Coatesville, we lived on S. 1st Avenue. There was no crime that I can think of or anything I was afraid of.

Carol: I didn't have locked doors or cars.

Robert: You could park anywhere on the street, leave the car unlocked, and an hour later it was still there.

Joyce: It wasn't anything for somebody to wander up the alley and come into your house by mistake. Especially if they weren't in the right faculties on a Friday night.

Laughter

Carol: Entertainment? There was the theater in Downingtown.

Joyce: What was the old guy's name that took care of that?

Robert: Woopy Dick. That's the name the kids gave him.

Laughter

Joyce: There again, a segregated place.

Carol: That's right. You know, I think this area had a lot of ignoring that it was happening here.

Joyce: I think you're right, but it definitely did. I can remember that night like it was yesterday that my brother and those guys got to talking about Atlantic City.

Alexandria: We heard an early story about a teacher in the Guthriesville School over-punishing a black student. Did you notice that from your teachers?

Robert: No.

Carol: Just past the school, the road veers left—McFarland.

Robert: He was a Colonel in the Army. In the summer he'd run maneuvers over the farm. My dad was a carpenter, and he hired my dad to do some work on the barn. He wanted it as original as he could get it. They had boards in the house, pegged with wooden pegs. My dad knew a stonemason in Downingtown. He had him up there rebuilding his fireplaces. Every room had a fireplace.

Carol: The last time I passed it, it didn't look in good shape.

Robert: He had two sisters who rented it out for a while. Renters don't take care of anything, and it got all messed up.

Carol: So, he was a Colonel. In WWII?

Robert: Yeah. Wallace McFarland was his name.

Carol: The farm's older than that. I wonder who owned it before him. I thought it had a Civil War connection, but I could be wrong.

Robert: Summertime I would go down with my dad when he worked on the house. I'd carry lumber for him.

Joyce: His brother, Bill, still lives on Jefferis Road. We used to argue in class growing up—P.O.D. class. I had Miss Phillips. She was gone before you got there. She ran a tight ship.

Carol: I had Mr. Caskey.

Joyce: I saw him give a kid a paddle one day in class. I'm telling you, he made them bend over the blackboard—*whack!*

Carol: I had him my third year. He used to take the boys out when he was a football coach. We sat there watching football movies. He was also the baseball coach. He'd take the boys out in spring to get the ball diamond ready. Then he'd give us a standardized test.

Joyce: I had him for ninth grade civics, tenth grade world history, and eleventh grade American History. Miss Phillips we had for Problems of Democracy and Economics. Everybody in twelfth grade had her. The classes were so small.

Alexandria: You said everybody in your brother's class went to Atlantic City after graduation. Was that the tradition?

Joyce: Yeah, they didn't take spring break like they do now. I don't even think we got spring break. The big thing was to go somewhere after graduation.

Alexandria: So, they were eighteen? Could they gamble, or was it for the beach?

Joyce: My brother was only seventeen. But they didn't have gambling then.

Alexandria: Oh!

Joyce: It was about the beach, the boardwalk, and the girls. I went down with a girlfriend the summer after I graduated. We went by train and thought we were bigshots. That's when you got dressed up for the evening with high heels and skirts and dresses to walk the boardwalk.

Alexandria: The Atlantic City boardwalk looks a little different these days.

Laughter

Joyce: Oh, I know! There were more standards than what people have today. Easter, you dressed a certain way. For a wedding, too. Church, you dressed a certain way. Today, anything goes. Going for an interview—we were taught in a class how to dress.

Carol: You either took business or academics. Academics is if you were going to college.

Joyce: I kept a lot of papers from high school. I have a picture with the Mayor and the Council; the kids took over for the day. It was a great way to learn what was going on.

Carol: The Pancoast farm. I remember it being a horse farm.

Joyce: It was. The maternity ward was across from us, with the new moms and babies.

Carol: This is on Corner Ketch-Lyndell Road, behind what's now Echo Dell's development. Fill me in—my memory is that they raised racehorses.

Joyce: And they'd take them to Florida in the winter—Ocala. Arula Fingers used to work for them.

Carol: What did she do?

Robert: Secretary.

Joyce: I guess that type of thing. She also worked at Croppers at one time.

Carol: I think she was a member of Hopewell.

Joyce: Could be. She lived past Laird.

Carol: I'm curious about Guthriesville. We talked about the store and the luncheonette. You could go there for lunch from school, which surprised Allie.

Joyce: Flossie Bryant was a very good friend of Catherine McMullen. She's originally from Parkesburg.

Carol: They had dancing, too.

Joyce: Square dancing. Back in the early '70s, Cliff Irons was our mailman. We got a card that said, "Aunt Joyce and Uncle Bob, RD 1 Downingtown." This is before we had a real street. And we got it in our mail! Today, if you have two letters wrong on your letter, you don't get it. But Cliff knew and the RD 1 was his route.

Carol: I told Allie that the gas station on the corner was Krappie's—George Krapf's.

Joyce: Our boys cleaned buses for him.

Carol: He started the bus business from that corner. Next to that was the doubles. Hannah Horner lived in one. I don't know who lived in the other.

Robert: Ruth Ann Murcky.

Carol: Across the street they voted at the building that's there.

Joyce: That's the old church parsonage. Who owns it now?

Carol: Deke Inslee, I think. Did you have Mrs. Inslee for a teacher?

Joyce: No.

Carol: I liked her a lot.

Joyce: Where did Hazel Miller live?

Carol: Hazel Laird.

Joyce: Yeah.

Carol: In the house next to me. I was curious if you knew who lived in my house.

Joyce: Beams. Married Kenworthy? Pauline Beam, Tucker Thomas' wife. Blanche Foreman was a Beam.

Carol: Somebody said it was apartments at one time, but I'm not sure. I've lived there for forty-five years.

Joyce: We were just in our old house. The people living there now just had a baby. They tore the partitions out so the living room's now a bedroom. I came out and realized it definitely wasn't our house anymore.

Carol: I know! The house I'm in was going for auction, and my dad bought it with the idea they'd retire there. Well, when I moved up from Virginia, I took over. She had a lot of gardens, and I wished I'd known so I wouldn't have lost plants.

Joyce: We took loads of pots of plants from our house to Lancaster because there were no perennials where we were going.

Carol: I took my mom's irises for sentimental reasons.

Joyce: We have a peony bush that probably came from the farm. It was his aunt's.

Carol: Swarner lived in the next house. There were apartments upstairs there.

Alexandria: Was your dad working at Lukens? I'm trying to place some of the names tossed around.

Joyce: No. When we moved from Corner Ketch to Coatesville, originally he was a farmer and worked for a contractor. I wasn't living at home, I was in Westwood. The only reason I moved home is because the people I lived with, the man passed away. She was going to work then. The idea was that I'd return home, which was difficult, because I'd lived as an only child for years, and moved back with three siblings.

Carol: How old were you when you went there?

Joyce: I was so young I don't remember going there. I was born in '38.

Carol: So, how did this work again?

Joyce: They were friends with my parents. I never quite knew the connection. At one point, my parents lived in Westwood. I went to stay for a week and wound up staying.

Robert: We both had dysfunctional families but didn't know anything about that.

Joyce: It was a way of life. My younger sister and brother came to Westwood in the evenings during the war, because my mother was working. It was like they were coming to the country. I have a picture of my dad helping Pop Baer put siding on the house. I mean, it wasn't that I was with strangers. I worked, I helped. She sold butter.

Alexandria: Were they older, or you just called them Grammy and Pop Baer?

Joyce: Older than my parents, but not elderly. Somehow they knew my parents in Pottstown, because we'd go up in the truck to get hay from my grandfather. I don't know why I was the one chosen, but it worked out that way. My older sister lived with our grandparents for a while. I mean, I feel I was better for it. The ones in town were shifted back and forth with an aunt who came down. The whole lifestyle during the war was different. My father's sister had a son, but her husband went off to war. Well, they came and lived with my mother to help care for the kids while my mother went to work. People just did this, they had to in order to survive. It was a whole different life.

Carol: We moved to Lyndell when I was two. Mrs. Shock owned the store.

Robert: It's familiar, but I don't know.

Carol: Well, it goes back to our neighborhoods. If you lived in Lyndell, you wouldn't know people.

Joyce: And you didn't drive like we do today.

Carol: And you sure didn't get taken on playdates, did you?

Joyce: Whole different life. Here, it was probably the Guthriesville group, the Lyndell group, the Bondsville group, the Fisherville group.

Alexandria: It seems that way. Growing up, we drove around and it was different. But as people have talked, I realize that I didn't even really know much about the other villages outside of Bondsville and Guthriesville. It was just my pocket. It's a little more fluid now, but still.

Robert: Have you heard anything about the greenhouse in Lyndell? My father did work for somebody who owned it—Carl Bauss.

Joyce: They grew carnations.

Carol: He was a character. He and my dad would banter.

Joyce: That's how it was. You were friends with your neighbors. Now we've got friends everywhere. And church was basically the same way; it was a community. It was your social life. The youth got together, and the girls would make a luncheon in a basket. One of the boys would pick one of the baskets and that's who'd you'd match up with. That was their social time! Now our church has people in West Chester, Exton, Coatesville. It's not based on your physical community, but wherever you want to travel.

Carol: Youth group was an important part of life. It's what teens did to get together.

Joyce: A lot of church couples come together and their families continue to marry.

Carol: There's not many youth groups getting together anymore.

Joyce: Our new youth pastor taught at Downingtown. He just gave up his teaching job.

Carol: I go to First Presbyterian in West Chester.

Joyce: See! You travel!

Laughter

Joyce: And we come from Lancaster now. Every generation probably feels this way, but I feel that we lived in the best of times. We had enough, but not extra.