The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project (BNHP) was a joint endeavor of the University of Baltimore and the Baltimore Regional Institutional Studies Center (BRISC). The stated goal of this local and nationally funded program was “to preserve and promote an appreciation of our pluralistic culture.” Local supporters included Baltimore City agencies, community representatives, and members of academia. From the fall of 1978 through the summer of 1980, the BNHP conducted approximately three hundred oral history interviews with longtime residents of four distinct Baltimore City neighborhoods: Highlandtown, Hampden, Park Heights, and Little Italy, as well as three City regions: West Baltimore (Sandtown-Winchester in particular), South Baltimore, and East Baltimore. Also included were a number of residents from areas near these sites.

In order to uncover the intersection of ethnicity and neighborhood history, interview topics included migration, immigration, racial and ethnic identity, national and local events, neighborhood living conditions, family life, work experiences, and religious practice. Interviewers also asked questions about housing, recreational activities, amount of contact with other ethnic groups, and one’s vision of America.

Many of the interviewees heard about the oral history component of the project from their participation in the BNHP’s Eating Together Program, a series of multi-site luncheons for senior citizen in and
near the targeted areas. In addition to documenting the oral history memories of selected senior citizen Baltimoreans, the BNHP included a traveling museum and a traveling theater. The Project also published a compilation of transcript passages and photos in the book *Baltimore People Baltimore Places* (PAM 11,014).

Originally in the custody of the Baltimore City Life Museum (closed in 1997), the tapes, transcripts, and other BNHP program information are held at the Maryland Historical Society and the University of Baltimore’s Langsdale Library.

**Sources:**


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**Administrative summary**

**Repository**

H. Furlong Baldwin Library
Maryland Historical Society
201 W. Monument St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
[www.mdhs.org](http://www.mdhs.org)
[special_collections@mdhs.org](mailto:special_collections@mdhs.org)

**Access restrictions**

Access to this collection is partially restricted. For more information, please consult the Special Collections Librarian.

**Use restrictions**

Permission to quote must be received in writing from the Special Collections Librarian.

**Provenance**

The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project Oral History Collection was acquired in 1998 by the Maryland Historical Society after the closing of the Baltimore City Life Museums (BCLM) in 1997.

**Processing note**

The collection was processed by Joni L. Jones, Jennifer Trentowski, Lindsey Loeper, Joseph Tropea, and Damon Talbot between 2005-2010.

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**Scope and Content**

The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project Oral History Collection contains paper records and audiocassette recordings from 1978 through 1980. The paper records are composed of the
files kept on each narrator (the person being interviewed) and the administrative needs of the project. Narrator records contain biography forms, interview notes, and tape indexes for approximately 212 narrators. The interview notes briefly describe the circumstance surrounding the interview(s) session. The tape index includes the name of the narrator, the name of interviewer, the number of tapes, the tape(s) length, and the primary subjects covered. Seventy-nine of the records include transcripts. Transcript length ranges from 8 to 65 pages. Some are single-spaced; others are doubled-spaced. The interviews range from twenty-five minutes to three hours in length. One file, #183, and its accompanying cassette(s) were removed from the collection.

Thirty-two interviewers participated in the project. Typically, the interviews were one-on-one sessions between interviewer and narrator; however, single interviewer and double-narrator situations occurred, as did three group “nostalgia” sessions. Most interviews were prefaced by unrecorded, pre-interview sessions that occurred days before the recorded interview.

Each abstract begins with the following information when available: the BNHP interview number; the name of the interviewer; the date of the interview; the place of the interview; the length of the interview; the number of tapes used; the length of the transcript; and the file contents, such as subject index, interview notes, and biography form. There is a note section for any idiosyncrasy. The abstracts follow the numerical order of the interview number. However, interview numbers are not consecutive, but site specific. That is to say, any omitted number within a site can be found in another site.

When controversial or outdated terms, especially those referring to race and ethnicity, are mentioned in the abstract, the politically-correct term is used and the term or terms used by the narrator has been placed in parenthetical (“”) quotation marks. Specific terms from the interviews and textual uncertainties are often placed in parentheses alone ( ). Maiden names of female narrators are placed in brackets [ ].

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**Site 1: Highlandtown**

Highlandtown was first settled in 1866 by Thomas McGuiness, a young Irish immigrant, who settled the area for its owners—the Philadelphia Land Company. The original name given to the neighborhood was Snake Hill. Prior to this year, the area had been closely associated with the neighborhood of Canton. It was also the location of Fort Marshall, a stronghold for Union troops.

Attracted to its large, thinly populated tracts, industries moved in before homeowners. The earliest companies included George F. Weissner’s Fort Marshall Brewery, Mickey Dorsey & Son’s Acid Factory (later becoming Geyner’s Lime Kiln), and the Schluderberg Brother’s butcher shop. In 1870, the merchant’s association renamed the community “Highland Town” because one could see all the surrounding countryside from the town central area. When Baltimore City annexed the area in 1918, the spelling changed to “Highlandtown” to avoid confusion.

The neighborhood was first settled largely by German immigrants of the Roman Catholic faith. Many found work in the town’s local industries, which now included slaughterhouses and packing houses. Others found work on the B&O Railroad or worked as “hucksters,” (street merchants) who sold their goods from cars and trucks. By the 1920’s, Highlandtown became one of the city’s major commercial districts.

At the time of the BNHP, the area was suffering from commercial decline due to the opening of shopping centers like Eastpoint Mall in the 1960’s; however Highlandtown merchants were working together to strengthen combat the problem.

The BNHP attempted to help foster that community bond. Some community members were a part of the Highland History Group, an offshoot of the BNHP’s “Eating Together” site at the Abbot Memorial Church in the neighborhood. In the fall of 1978, Linda Shopes, oral history consultant for the BNHP, trained the members in oral history interviewing techniques so that they could participate in documenting their own community. These participants conducted many of the interviews for Site #VII: East Baltimore.

**Sources:**


Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297  BNHP # 001  Browning, Jeanette [Volkmon]

Name of Interviewer: Jacklin, Thomas M.
Date of Interview: 3/17/78
Place of Interview: Abbott Memorial Presbyterian Church, 3426 Bank St.
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 57 pages
File Contents: SECO Neighborhood Heritage form, interview notes, tape index, transcript

Note(s):

Jeannette Browning was born in Baltimore in 1909 to a German father and Dutch mother. Her father had previously been married, but his wife died and he re-married Browning’s mother. Jeanette has seven sisters and one brother through both marriages. She began working at age 14 in factories (Virginia Dare Co., Crown Cork & Seal). She married Ed Browning at age 25 and had one son, Allen Wayne. She began a career as nurse after Allen’s birth.

The Browning interview provides information about German customs (family folktales, beanpots, Christmas gardens, Pancake Day) and anti-German sentiments during wartime. Economic roles in the family and care-giving roles (taking care of her mother) are discussed. She emphasizes the significance of church as a center of social and spiritual activity. Prohibition (beer making), Highlandtown as a rural area (slaughterhouse activities, herding pigs down Eaton Street), the Flu Epidemic of 1918, and economic and political strife in conjunction with the Great Depression (strike at American Can, union activities, cost of living) are other topics of interest.

OH 8297  BNHP # 003  Konigkremer, Lloyd

Name of Interviewer: Jacklin, Thomas M.
Date of Interview: 4/6/78
Place of Interview: Abbott Memorial Presbyterian Church, 3426 Bank St.
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 42 pages
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, interview outline, tape index, transcript

Note(s):

Lloyd Konigkremer was born in 1903 in Baltimore to a German father and Welsh mother. His ancestors settled in Cincinnati upon arriving in North America. He tells several anecdotes about growing up in Highlandtown; for example, he recalls how the street names in Highlandtown were changed during World War I, causing much confusion (street names were changed due to the expansion of the city), and he comments on how other ethnicities (German, Irish, Polish) came in and flourished as Germans were pushed to the side in the late 1800s. He worked as a
seaman, plasterer, diver, and crane operator over his lifetime. He married a widow with 2 children.

The Konigkremer interview offers insight into the rivalry between Canton and Highlandtown (kids would fight one another or play each other in baseball games), the importance of streetcars as transportation (allowed people to travel to work; United Railway and Electric Co. was the local streetcar franchise), and the beginning of unionization in the workplace in the 1940s. Recreational activities in Highlandtown (amusement parks, boat rides, ice skating, baseball games, sledding), the Canton Market, the German Evangelical Church (he describes the custom of calling churches by the name of old prominent ministers), and civic activities are also discussed.

OH 8297 BNHP # 005 Villella, Frank S.

Name of Interviewer: Shopes, Linda
Date of Interview: 3/30/78, 4/5/78, 4/12/78
Place of Interview:
Length of Interview: 4 hours and 51 minutes
Number of Tapes: 4
Length of Transcript: 95 pages
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index, transcript
Note(s):

Frank Villella was born in Sambiase, Italy in 1900 to Italian-Catholic parents. He immigrated to America in 1920. After arriving in St. Jeanne’s, Canada, he moved to Danbury, Connecticut; Brooklyn, New York; back to Connecticut; and then Baltimore (he returned to Danbury for 11 years, and then came back to Baltimore permanently). As a boy, he attended night school to study for American citizenship. He got married in 1923 and then went to work at Sparrows Point as a machinist. He opened a shoe repair shop during WWII. He devotes considerable time to speaking about child-rearing and the expectations he has for his children.

The Villella interview is a good source of information for comparisons between Italy and the U.S. during the Great Depression and both World Wars. Topics include the impact of WWI on the Italian economy, feelings on emigrating from Italy to America, adjusting to life in America (language barriers, socializing), as well as ethnic relations between Italians, Irish, and Germans and political development in Italy (monarchies) vs. the United States (democracy). He also discusses music, holidays, courtship in Italy.

He also talks about changes in Highlandtown, neighborhood life, and local politics (Vincent “Mimi” DiPetro, taxes, government spending).

OH 8297 BNHP # 007 Zwick, Ethel [maiden name unknown]

Name of Interviewer: Jacklin, Thomas M.
Date of Interview: 4/17/78
Place of Interview:
Ethel Zwick was born in Baltimore. Her grandfather fought in the Indian Wars and owned a store at Orleans and Bethel Street. Her father was a police officer. She worked as a phone operator until she married Lewis Zwick in 1930. He found work as a firefighter. They had 3 children: Louise, Ethel, and Jerry. She also talks of childhood family get-togethers at the Back River Shore.

The Zwick interview provides information about religion in terms of the Lutheran church compared to the Catholic Church (“they’re all God’s houses”). German cooking and customs (Blackberry Rolly Polly) are detailed. There is socio-economic information about financial hardship during the Great Depression (she was pregnant, her husband was out of work for 18 months), courtship during the “Roaring 20s,” President Roosevelt’s Works Progress Administration [W.P.A.] program, and the impact of shopping malls (Eastpoint Mall vs. Eastern Avenue shops).

Mary Palese was born in 1899 in Casalivichio, Italy. Her family moved to Highlandtown in 1909. She attended school until the 5th grade and then began working as a tailor, though she attended night school for a year after she was married. She married in 1917 and had 4 children. During the Great Depression, Mary worked while her mother took care of the children.

The Palese interview discusses topics such as immigration (living arrangements, reasons for leaving, patterns of family immigration, becoming a citizen), inter-ethnic relations, and neighborhoods in Baltimore assuming an Italian character. She comments on assimilating to American culture but still keeping her ethnicity in place (spoke Italian at home, wrote letter to Italy, father read Italian newspaper). Palese spends considerable time talking about her family, (raising a family, living arrangements, education, expectations), but mostly her children.
Grace DiMartino was born in Casalivichio, Puglie, Faggio, Italy, on May 12, 1906 to Catholic Italian parents. She attended School #215 until the 7th grade. She worked as a bookkeeper for the May Company and eventually became head of Accounts Payable. She married Michael DiMartino at age 24 and had 1 daughter (she is proud to says she raised her daughter liberally).

The DiMartino interview provides a comparison of living conditions and ways of thinking in Italy vs. America (life here is better; America is more modern and independent). She discusses ethnicity identity (inter-ethnic marriage, teaching children to speak Italian). World events such as Italy during World War II and the Great Depression (her family lost money) are discussed. She also talks about the Catholic Church (attending Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Pompei, sending daughter to Catholic school, socializing). Her daughter wanted to become a nun, but DiMartino forced her to complete her college education first (she ended up getting married and not becoming a nun). She recalls economic difficulties when her husband went on strike in 1949 and 1959, and how he refused to join a union for 30 years.

Helen Lentz was born in Westminster, Maryland. She began working at age 14 as a salesperson in a department store. She married at age 22 and moved out of her parents’ home. She spends considerable time talking about her family and growing up in Westminster, as well as the “neighborliness” between Germans, Italians, and Americans.

The Lentz interview provides information about the Baltimore Fire and conditions during the Great Depression (welfare work, personal impact), as well as life during World War II (worked with the poor, had a son that was overseas). She discusses transportation (trackless trolleys and buses); forms of entertainment, including movies, dancing, circuses, and picnics; and Highlandtown as countryside. She stresses the importance of religion (makes people happier to
know right from wrong). She discusses her interest and views on history (tradition, events, taking pictures).

**OH 8297  BNHP # 011  Mesologites, George**

Name of Interviewer: Shopes, Linda  
Date of Interview:  6/28/78  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:  45 minutes  
Number of Tapes:  1  
Length of Transcript:  19 pages  
File Contents:  biography form, interview notes, transcript  
Note(s):  

George Mesologites was born in New York, New York in 1916 to Greek Orthodox parents. His parents immigrated to America to “better themselves and bring forth their culture.” His father opened a restaurant in Sparrows Point with 3 other men. He has worked as a manager in the restaurant since 1949 (his father became ill and he stepped in to help. He eventually bought out the other partners and is the sole owner).

The Mesologites interview is a good source of information about many aspects of Greek life. Supporting Greece during World War I (civic organizations would send money and shoes for orphaned children), assimilating to American life as a Greek person (he faced some discrimination as a child and comments on how some Greeks changed their last names), and Greek traditions and customs are discussed. He tells of how his father helped sponsor a Greek School on Ponca Street in the 1930s. He talks about how the restaurant business has changed, including integrating blacks and whites in the 1960s, and changing from a sit down establishment to carry out.

**OH 8297  BNHP # 012  Anonymous**

Name of Interviewer: Shopes, Linda  
Date of Interview:  7/3/78  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:  n/a  
Number of Tapes:  n/a  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:  interview notes  
Note(s):  no tape available  

This informant preferred to remain anonymous. He was born in Canton. He is of German descent. His father died when he was a baby. His mother went to work to support the interviewee and his two siblings. The children were cared for by their grandmother, who eventually turned them over to an orphan home until the mother was remarried. The interviewee attended Sacred Heart School until the 5th grade. He went to work at age 14 at the Continental Can Company. He went on to work at Phillips on Lombard Street and a shoe store. He left
Baltimore for a short time and returned, finding a job at the Esskay Day Packing Plant, working in the meat freezer. He retired at age 67.

This interview provides information about working at the Esskay Day Packing Plant, including working conditions, ethnicities, social relations, and the Meatcutters Union.

OH 8297    BNHP # 013    Feehley, Mary [Kraus]

Name of Interviewer: Jacklin, Thomas M.
Date of Interview: 7/12/78
Place of Interview: 3203 Lombard St.
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 70 pages
File Contents: SECO Neighborhood Heritage form, interview notes, tape index, transcript
Note(s): Mary Feehley is the sister of Margaret Geraghty, interview #014. They were present at each others interviews.

Mary Feehley was born in 1899 in Baltimore to German parents. Her parents both spoke German and her father was an interpreter for the courts. She attended school until the 8th grade. She went to work at age 16, beginning as a typist and later working as a bookkeeper. She was a trained operator in bookkeeping, therefore making it easy to find a job at places like Schlutterberg’s and Burrough Business Machine Corp.

The Feehley interview provides information about German customs, the Catholic Church (was the only Catholic family on the block and met some unfriendliness, people were identified by the parish they belonged to, social activities), and World War II (donated hair to production of gun sites, the problems veterans faced upon returning to civilian life). She comments on ethnic relations, such as the fact that the Irish called Germans “dumb Dutch.”

OH 8297    BNHP # 014    Geraghty, Margaret [Kraus]

Name of Interviewer: Jacklin, Thomas M.
Date of Interview: 7/20/78
Place of Interview: 
Length of Interview: 2.5 hours
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s): Margaret Geraghty is the sister of Mary Feehley, interview #013. They were present at each others interviews.

Margaret Geraghty was born in 1903 in Baltimore to German parents. She grew up as a “tomboy.” She found work as a typist and bookkeeper at several establishments, including Calvert Bank. When she married (date unknown), her mother-in-law was opposed because
Geraghty was German and from Highlandtown (what she considered “the wrong side of the tracks”). After her husband’s death, she continued to raise her children and eventually became a Kindergarten teacher at Our Lady of Pompei School for 17 years.

The Geraghty interview provides information about home remedies, expectations of women in the workplace (single women were expected to work at Schlutterberg’s). She describes conditions during major world events, such as the Flu Epidemic of 1918 (her doctor prescribed whiskey for the flu); the Great Depression (she made aprons, there was scarce housing, especially for people with children); and World War II (children burned effigies of the Japanese). She talks about seasonal (mostly winter) unemployment in Sparrows Point, causing the need for soup kitchens on the eastern edge of Highlandtown. Geraghty also comments on being a Republican in a predominantly Democratic area, claiming that Republicans are ignored in Highlandtown. She ends the interview by proclaiming her views on growing old and the attitudes of people toward the elderly.

OH 8297  BNHP # 015  Piscopo, Vincent

Name of Interviewer:  Shopes, Linda
Date of Interview:  6/30/78
Place of Interview:  Next door to Mr. Piscopo’s barbershop in Highlandtown
Length of Interview:  
Number of Tapes:  6
Length of Transcript:  73 pages
File Contents:  SECO Neighborhood Heritage form, interview notes, tape index, transcript
Note(s):  Tapes 2, 3, and 5 of Vicent Piscopo interviewed by Linda Shopes were taken by Linda on 10/9/78. She reported the tapes stolen on 10/18/78.

Vincent Piscopo was born in 1917 in Baltimore to a Sicilian mother and Italian father. He attended school until the 8th grade and then began training to become a barber. He has been a barber since age 19 and owns Vince’s Barbershop, located at 410 Highland Avenue. He married in 1942 and has 4 children.

The Piscopo interview provides details about ethnic groups (where certain ethnicities settled, the social meeting place was Patterson Park pool, Italians were not very popular, Jews stuck to themselves) and discusses “inter-ethnic antagonism.” His Italian heritage is spoken of through anecdotes about holiday customs, the courtship of his non-Italian wife, and food. He comments on economic and social conditions (people worked hard for what they had, men would enter houses from the alley as to not drag in dirt) and discusses landmarks like McGinty’s Pharmacy, “Hog Alley,” Schluderberg Packing House, Wielands Furniture Store, and Epstein’s Department Store. He also elaborates on the economic changes in Highlandtown, focusing on the impact of Eastpoint Mall and the outward migration of specialty stores.

OH 8297  BNHP # 016  Porach, Louise [maiden name unknown]

Name of Interviewer:  Jacklin, Thomas M.
Louise Porach was born in Sparrows Point on July 2, 1909 to Czechoslovakian parents. She attended Sacred Heart School as a child. She spent a year traveling as an actress and returned to Maryland to manage her father’s tavern. After her father’s death, she worked at Epstein’s department store and City Hospital before training to be a dental assistant. She spends considerable time talking about her family and ethnicity in the neighborhood.

The Porach interview offers insight on life during the World Wars (couldn’t get white sugar, soldiers would be taken away by train and people would take them baskets of food), the 1918 Flu Epidemic (coffins piled everywhere, had to wear a block of camphor on her neck) and Prohibition (her parents made their own whiskey), as well as ethnic antagonism and Slovak customs. Landmarks like Epstein’s department store and St. Casimir’s Savings and Loan are mentioned. Crime, anti-Semitism, and political and civic activity, such as the Southeast Community Organization (SECO), are also discussed.

Myrtle Smith was born in 1907 in East Baltimore to natives of Maryland. Her family lived on Jefferson Street and was a student at the Jefferson Street School and Dunbar High. She began working at age 14 at a beauty shop, eventually opening her own shop. Ms. Smith married at age 18; her husband was drafted in WWII, but was never called for active duty.

The Smith interview provides details about life in Baltimore during WWII, as well as insights into segregation, and ethnic and cultural relations in the Highlandtown community.
This informant preferred to remain anonymous. Her parents were Protestant and born in Baltimore. She attended school until the 7th grade. She married twice and had 3 children.

This interview provides information about home medications and treatments, economic strife, the Flu Epidemic of 1918, recipes for baked beans and Sauer beef, raising children and running a household (“making meals out of nothing,” assigning chores), buying and fixing up a house, and the Eating Together program. She also compares life today to when she was growing up (children are privileged today).

OH 8297  BNHP # 025  Majors, Margaret [Goeb]

Name of Interviewer: Stricklin, Theodora
Date of Interview: 10/24/78
Place of Interview: 3402 Fait Avenue
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 1 hour
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s):

Margaret Majors was born in Baltimore to a German father and American mother. Her father was a fireman. She attended school until about the 4th grade. She married Leo Majors in 1940 and has 4 children, Leo, Bernadette, Michael, and Paul.

The Majors interview provides information about shopping on Eastern Avenue (“The Avenue”) around 1925. She discusses working conditions at Crown, Cork, and Seal and picnics at Back River. She talks about antiques in her home relating to her family (clothing, pictures, and furniture). She spends considerable time discussing her life as a senior citizen, including membership at the Senior Citizens Active Coalition of Waxter Center, the offering of the Back Street Clinic, and discounts from John Booth on arts and crafts.

OH 8297  BNHP # 026  Kuhl, Thomas

Name of Interviewer: Dashiell, Ken
Date of Interview: 10/25/78
Place of Interview: 3402 Fait Avenue
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 1 hour
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s):
Thomas Kuhl was born on April 15, 1909 in Baltimore to Catholic parents. He schooling ended after high school. He married Mary (maiden name unknown) in 1935 and has 3 sons.

The Kuhl interview provides information about Highlandtown (Kuhl recalls there was a movie theater, dairy, carriage shop, saloon, coal/wood shop, stationary store, dry goods store, home sewing, laundry, grocery, academy, fire department, bicycle shop, and hardware store). He remembers Highlandtown as self-sufficient, full of middle class workers. He discusses transportation changes (automobiles, street paving, street cars, and jitney buses). He also mentions sanitation, gardens, plumbing, ice wagons, farmers delivering goods, and hay trucks.

Regina Glaeser was born in 1893 in Baltimore to Catholic parents. She attended public school until the 8th grade. She got her first job at age 13 at Crown, Cork, and Seal. She married twice, first to Robert Jordon in 1913, then to George Glaeser in 1931. She had 5 children with Jordon.

The Glaeser interview provides information on her childhood, family, courtship (social groups, hayrides), and household issues (heating, electricity). She also discusses going on strike when she was 28 to increase her pay to $5 a week.

Mary Halenski was born on October 26, 1898 to Polish Catholic parents. Her family moved to Baltimore just before the fire of 1904. She attended Holy Rosary, #42, and #6 schools. She held
several jobs over the years, including positions at the Maryland Biscuit Factory, the Sewing factory, and the Crown store. She worked on sample pieces at the Industrial Building and on nursing uniforms for 8 years. She and her husband owned an unsuccessful truck business and then started a lumber business. She was also an elevator operator at the Romey King building for a short time. She married Frank Halenski (a prize fighter) in 1927 and had 4 children (2 died very young).

The Halenski interview provides information about world events, such as the Great Depression (her husband was a blacksmith but had to quit or he’d go blind; they started a lumber business), World War I (she’d get food from a Jewish market where she had friends), World War II (Lexington Market divided the food proportionately), and the Flu Epidemic of 1918 (her parents caught it, treated it with wine, honey, hot milk and butter, alcohol rubs). She also discusses the set up of the neighborhood (Russians, Germans, Poles, Italians, gypsies) and how she didn’t have running water (kids would bathe outside).

OH 8297   BNHP # 029   Flynn, Tilly [Reinsfelder]

Name of Interviewer: Stricklin, Theodora
Date of Interview: 11/2/78
Place of Interview:
Length of Interview: 30 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript:
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s): Due to difficulties with the tape recorder, the actual recording of the interview did not begin until 10 minutes into the conversation, and continuing until the last 15 minutes of side 2 of the tape. Also, the interviewer didn’t feel as though Mrs. Flynn was being honest about her opinions of Haussner’s restaurant (see tape index).

Tilly Flynn was born in Baltimore to a German mother and Catholic father. Her father was a pipe fitter. She attended Sacred Heart School. She married Joseph Flynn in 1919. She worked at Erlanger’s Sewing Factory, and at Haussner’s and Horn & Horn restaurants.

The Flynn interview provides information about Haussner’s restaurant (the origins of the restaurant, customers, working procedures). She also discusses where she was born, her schooling and activities as a child.

OH 8297   BNHP # 030   Hubbel, Rita [Faulstich]

Name of Interviewer: Stricklin, Theodora
Date of Interview: 11/7/78
Place of Interview:
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 25 pages
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index, transcript
Rita Hubbell was born on September 2, 1918 in Baltimore to Catholic parents. She attended Sacred Heart School as a child. Her mother was a housewife and her father worked in his father’s bakery on Miller Street until he opened his own bakery on the 700 block of Highland Avenue. Rita worked there from 1933 until her mother’s death and subsequent closing of the bakery in 1956. She married Walter Hubbel in 1967.

The Hubbell interview offers a detailed description of the upkeep of her father’s bakery during the Great Depression. He made bread, wedding cakes (made them for people as far away as Ellicott City; delivered them by horse and wagon), specialty birthday cakes, buns, holiday cookies/cakes (fruit cakes, anise-seed cookies, Pfeffernusse), and pies. Her father worked in the bake house while Rita and her mother ran the counter at the store. During the Great Depression, her father didn’t have all the ingredients he needed to make his regular batches of baked goods, but they still got by. Her parents would roast turkeys and hams for the neighborhood in the bread ovens. She also talks about her family and holidays, and how she is related to Father Schenning of Sacred Heart Church.

Jeanne Horstman was born in Mtawa, Poland on July 4, 1901 to Roman Catholic Polish parents. Her family immigrated to London, England, before deciding to come to America in 1907 (they became citizens in 1912). She attended public grade school and high school. There wasn’t enough money for her to go to college, so she became a secretary at the gas and electric company. She worked for tuition money to attend the University Of Maryland School Of Pharmacy. She married Ralph Horstman in 1941.

The Horstman interview provides information about living conditions during the Great Depression (her family lost their house, her father lost his job, people helped one another). There is also information about retaining a Polish identity in America (her father belonged to the Polish Falcons, her sister was one of the first Polish dancers in Baltimore).
Nicholas Matthews was born in Baltimore to Greek Orthodox parents. His parents immigrated to America from Sparta, Greece. Upon moving to Baltimore they became candy makers. They opened a store in the neighborhood, where George worked until it closed in 1951. He went on to work as a hairdresser, then at the Esskay meat company and attended college at Eckles College (Temple University). He married Ann Stephans in 1956 and has 2 children, George and Stephanie. His was inspired by Dr. Schimunek to go into the mortuary business and became a funeral director.

The Matthews interview provides information about the ethnic identity of Highlandtown and his feelings about Highlandtown in general (believes his family is rooted there and will be there 100 years from now). He also talks about the mortuary business (clientele, customer service). There is some information about the Great Depression (his father gave things away, made bean soup for people, George’s family didn’t suffer much). He comments on politics (favors two-party system, talks about “crooked” politicians).

Margaret Thanner was born in Baltimore to Lutheran parents. She married Bernard Thanner in 1927 and had two children, Bernard and Shirley. Bernard worked for John Booth (motorcycle repair and sales) on Eastern Avenue and eventually opened a filling station.

The Thanner interview provides information about public schooling, motorcycle hill climbs, “the night riders” and club climbers, and John Booth (he entered the City Council, and his wife died).

Ida Jefferson was born in Baltimore to unknown parents. She married John Jefferson in 1919 and had two children, John and Shirley. John worked for the City of Baltimore (Park Commissioner) and eventually opened a filling station.

The Jefferson interview provides information about public schooling, motorcycle hill climbs, “the night riders” and club climbers, and John Booth (he entered the City Council, and his wife died).
Ida Jefferson was born in Baltimore to Lutheran parents. She attended the Canton School and School #230. She held jobs as a factory worker and an office girl. She married Leroy Jefferson in 1936 and had 2 children.

The Jefferson interview provides information about transportation (street cars, Mr. Jefferson’s car got 4 miles to a gallon). She talks about social activities, such as the cinema (5 cent movies, pins with actor’s pictures on them, vaudeville), the circus, bingo at the Fraternal Order of Eagles and The Knights of Columbus, and “I Wonder” Park. She mentions comfort stations, cattle brought in by train, and places such as the BVD Underwear Factory, Irving’s Department Store, and the Boy’s Club Building.

OH 8297  BNHP# 035  Renneburg, John

Name of Interviewer: Andreatta, Chuck
Date of Interview: 11/25/78
Place of Interview: Highlandtown
Length of Interview: 1 hour, 10 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 13 pages
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index

John Renneburg was born in Baltimore to Presbyterian parents. He went to college during the Great Depression in 1929. He was in the Navy for 2 years before working for the family business, The Renneburg Company, which was a metal-working shop.

The Renneburg interview is a source of information about the rise of business and industry (waterfront shipbuilding, tobacco and fishing), including changes like overseas expansion and economic hardship in Baltimore during the 1900s. He discusses the family business, which found work during World War I in the food processing industry, marine work, repairing boilers, and other areas related to the war industry. During the Great Depression, they had work overseas. During World War II, they went to Iceland to build a fish-meal plant (which had to be government sanctioned; they had to get help from the British, who needed fish oil for munitions). Over the years they’ve worked for the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Martin Marietta. He feels that Baltimore’s “industrial climate” is good. He also discusses the problems of the proposed East-West Highway (sympathy and empathy for neighbors; the route kept changing). There is a good anecdote about Renneburg befriending Richard Nixon in the Navy.

OH 8297  BNHP# 036  Matthews, Dorothy [Matthews]

Name of Interviewer: Andreatta, Chuck
Date of Interview: 11/27/78
Dorothy Matthews was born in 1899 in Sparta, Greece to Greek Orthodox parents. Her mother came to the U.S. (New York City) in 1900; Matthews’s father died of typhoid fever before she was born. She attended school until the 3rd grade. Her marriage to Thrasyboulos Matthews in 1914 was prearranged. They had 4 sons: Nicholas, Chris, Thames, and John. Her husband picked up candy making on his own and opened a candy store, which she ran from 1941-1953.

The Matthews interview discusses immigration, housing and living conditions before and during the Great Depression (cobblestone streets, no electricity, washed clothes on washboard, house was cold, candy sales were down) and the World Wars (supplies were scarce, sons enlisted, her husband predicted Pearl Harbor, she threw a bottle at a man who said he was sorry WWII was over). She talks about the Flu Epidemic of 1918 (lemon and whiskey as a remedy, deceased were put into wooden boxes, death was sudden). Matthew’s Greek ethnicity is explored through her explanation of customs and holidays (eating lamb, spinach pies, baklava).

Katherine Church was born on February 27, 1907 to an Episcopalian mother and Presbyterian father. Her father was born Maine and her mother was from New York. Her father built a house on Fleet Street. He worked for an ice company based out of the Weisner’s Brewery Building that was started by his father. Katherine is a graduate of the Teachers College at Johns Hopkins University. She taught at Baltimore City Public Schools after working as a secretary until 1969.

The Church interview discusses major events like the Flu Epidemic of 1918 (churches closed), and living conditions in her neighborhood as a child (neighbors played in the street). She describes people in Highlandtown as hard-working, honest, mostly Germans, with other nationalities (French, Polish). She discusses the Abbott Memorial Church (Dr. Jones, Dr. Hughes, relations with Catholics, friendship with Cardinal Gibbons).
Joseph Lutz was born in 1898 in Baltimore to Catholic German parents. His parents were immigrants.

The Lutz interview mentions many Baltimore landmarks, including several parks (“I Wonder,” O’Donnell, Fernwood, Shamrock, Oriole, Patterson and Annex), factories (Weiskittles; Veneer; Coal Piers; S. Atlantic Broom Works; Standard Oil; Crown, Cork & Seal), movie theaters (The Grand, Patterson, Arrow, Eagle, Comic, Open Air, Lord Baltimore), and hospitals. Other topics of interest include sleigh riding, Canton Pure Rye, Lutz’s hobbies, soccer teams, dancing, slaughter houses, breweries, feed stores, street cars, resorts, beer gardens, saloons, and the 1942 draft.

Kathleen Dannefelser was born in Baltimore to Catholic parents. Her father died while Kathleen was still a child, leaving her mother to raise 8 children by herself. Her family was poor but found ways to entertain themselves by playing games with neighborhood children and drinking watered down coffee and root beer. She attended Sacred Heart of Jesus School until the 8th grade; then she began working at age 14 at Lin Deco. She married Joseph Dannefelser on November 20, 1931 and had 3 children: Janet, Joseph, and Eileen.

The Dannefelser interview is a good source of information about economic hardship during the Great Depression. She describes recreational activities from her childhood (caddy, marbles, her father was a fisherman and hunter). She also discusses the changes on The Avenue (was a form of entertainment then, had different stores that aren’t there anymore). There is also contemporary information about the John Booth Center (she’s been there for 8 years, there are about 300 members now, do crafts, go on trips, have a new building facing Claremont Avenue and Eaton Street).
William Hoffman was born in Baltimore to Catholic parents. He attended St. Michael’s and St. Andrew’s schools. He married Catherine Hoffman in 1929 and had 2 children. He worked at the Maryland Biscuit Company for 38 years.

The Hoffman interview is a good source of information about the Boys Scouts of America. Hoffman organized a chapter in 1942 and discusses their activities in detail. He received the Scouter’s Key, General Eisenhower Medal, and Archbishop Curley Award, as well as the highest award for a scouter, the Silver Beaver. He also talks about the Old Timers League, a group of men that participate in competitive sports.

Edward O’Connor was born in Baltimore to Catholic parents. He attended school to the 10th grade. He has worked in the produce business, a shipyard, and in the police department. He married Catherine Brown in 1937 and had 2 sons.

The O’Connor interview provides details about poverty during the Great Depression (he was laid off and trying to find work, his furniture was repossessed, wore shoes with a hole in the sole). He also discusses his career as a policeman (patrol uniform and duty, he made friends with people on his post and they’d give him a meal) and recalls recreational activities from his childhood. He reminisces about his childhood (no autos, no pollution, everyone did chores and had table manners, going to the circus, tobacco chewing, selling newspapers, swimming at the Clinton Street Pier) and about Highlandtown (movie houses, Watermelon Wharf, produce market, “Hog Alley”).
Rose Borowski was born on August 8, 1906 in Baltimore to a Polish father and American mother. She attended St. Casimir’s school until the 4th grade. In 1919 she went to work for McCormick’s and Virginia Dairy. She also worked at Celmeyer’s; Lorillard’s Cigarette Factory; The American Cigar Factory; Crown, Cork, and Seal; and Blumenthal’s Sewing Factory before remaining at the Issac Sewing Company for 44 years. She never married and has no children.

The Borowski interview discusses women’s roles in the workplace and unfair business practices that lead to Borowski trying to form a union. There is a good description of summertime activities involving Borowski and her mother, including oyster shucking in Biloxi, Mississippi; packing tomatoes; picking strawberries; and husking corn. Borowski’s Polish heritage is also detailed.

Myrtle DeVaughn was born in 1895 in Baltimore to German parents. Her grandmother owned a grocery store. She attended school until 7th grade and was a member of the German United Evangelical Church. She married John Thomas DeVaughn.

The DeVaughn interview focuses mainly on the activities of the German United Evangelical Church, including the Strawberry Festival; Sunday School Picnic; sour-beef dinners; Pastors Batz, Schaeffer, Lehmann, and Rasche; the church’s “poor cupboard;” the Sunday school burnt down the year she was confirmed; burning the mortgage in 1961; and fund raising activities. She discusses changes in the church over the years (hymns have changed, lower attendance, older people are more loyal). She also comments on the anti-German sentiment during World War I and Highlandtown’s ethnic identity (she says anything with German in it was changed to something more Americanized after World War I).
Greg Zorn was born on May 26, 1951 in Baltimore City to a Lutheran father and Roman Catholic mother. He recalls that his relatives in Germany were in the garment industry until it was taken over by Adolph Hitler. They then immigrated to Baltimore, New York, and Philadelphia. He attended Sacred Heart of Jesus School for 6 years, St. Bernard’s for 3 years, Hamilton Junior High School for 1 year, and Merganthaler Vocational High School for 3 years. He recalls how Catholic Nuns warned students to stay away from anything associated with public schools. His past occupations include being a sheet metal worker, a machinist, a musician, and a clothing salesman.

Zorn discusses contact with other ethnic groups and hostilities among blacks and whites as a child (before 1961, ethnic groups got along). There is a discussion of the anti-black sentiment in Highlandtown in the 1960s, including memories of the race riots and blockbusting (claims that some sermons by priests were subdued racism, that the Knights of Columbus were racist, National State Right Party leader Joe Carroll was racist). Zorn says that blacks were at risk to be shot in Highlandtown and Little Italy; Klu Klux Klan activity was at the root of this. He also mentions drug dealing in the late 1960s (dope wars between black and white dealers).

Mildred Slechta was born on September 1, 1927 in Baltimore to an Irish father and American mother. She grew up in a predominantly Polish-Catholic neighborhood as an Irish-Protestant. Her father died in 1934, so her mother worked at Linqual’s Packing House to make money. She attended School 3230 and Patterson Park High School; she belonged to the United Evangelical Church. She worked as an Executive Secretary at Crown, Cork, and Seal for 20 years and was laid off; she then worked as a Church Office Secretary. She married twice and had one daughter.
The Slechta interview provides details about living conditions in Highlandtown during the 1930s (people were poor, kids would get scrap coal and bananas from freight cars). She gives a good description of people in the neighborhood being “house conscious” and tells why wooden steps would get turned over (because they had been painted and people didn’t want anyone walking on them). There is also good insight into the pros and cons of being in a union (she lost her job because she didn’t join one).

OH8297    BNHP#115  Griffin, Daniel

Name of Interviewer:  Tiranoff, Michael
Date of Interview:   8/1/79
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:   2 hour, 30 minutes
Number of Tapes:  3
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:   interview notes, biography form, tape index, transcript
Note(s):  

Daniel Griffin was born on October 17, 1924 in Baltimore. He attended school at P.S. 24, 47, 3, and 57. He held employment as a Rigger, Shearman, Coater Operator, Pressman and Air Conditioner Mechanic. Mr. Griffin worked at Crown, Cork and Seal and Revere Brass and Copper.

Mr. Griffin provides substantial information about life in Canton, specifically on topics such as race relations and his employment experiences and Union activities at Crown, Cork and Seal. He speaks in great detail about the discrimination towards blacks he witnessed growing up in Canton, as well as race relations at his job, providing many personal stories. As a member of the Union of Amalgamated Lithographers of America Union, he was involved in two strikes in 1953 and 1963, and discusses in great length the circumstances surrounding the strikes, specific Union activities he was involved with, and descriptions of day to day activities at Crown.

OH 8297     BNHP# 120   DiPietro, Dominic

Name of Interviewer:  Sweeney, Rosewin
Date of Interview:   7/27/79
Place of Interview:  DiPietro’s City Council Office
Length of Interview:   40 minutes
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript:  22 pages
File Contents:   biography form, interview notes, tape index, transcript
Note(s):  

Dominic DiPietro was born in 1905 in Abruzzi, Italy to Italian Roman Catholic parents. He went to school until 6th grade. He worked at the Bethlehem Steel Company for 18 years and then as a contractor, book binder, and for the City Council. He was married in 1966.
The DiPietro interview offers an analysis of the politics of Highlandtown, as seen by a politician of the era. He discusses Highlandtown as a Republican County in the 1920s, political clubs (such as the Italian-American Democratic Club), and how politics was affected by industry, “single issue groups,” zoning problems, improvement associations, and ethnic diversity.

OH 8297   BNHP # 146   Flynn, Gay

Name of Interviewer:  Tiranoff, Michael  
Date of Interview:  8/10/79  
Place of Interview:  3508 E. Lombard St.  
Length of Interview:  2 hours  
Number of Tapes:  2  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:  biography form, interview notes, tape index  
Note(s):  
Gay Flynn was born on August 3, 1901. He worked at Bethlehem Steel (wire-drawing) for 39 years. He married Ruby Flynn in 1925.

The Flynn interview provides good information about working at Bethlehem Steel. He discusses the formation of a union and how it affected the company, how people of different ethnicities and backgrounds got along, and filing grievances for more money. He recalls what Highlandtown was like in the 1930s (clean, mixed ethnicities). He discusses the Great Depression from a political point of view (Hoover is to blame), and compares being laid off in the 1970s to the Great Depression.

OH 8297   BNHP # 153   Kasiotis, Helen [Pelunes]

Name of Interviewer:  Monos, Dimitri  
Date of Interview:  7/19/79  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:  1.5 hours  
Number of Tapes:  2  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:  biography form, tape index  
Note(s):  transcript available at BRISC  
Helen Kasiotis was born on May 21, 1911 in the village of Rithi, Chios, Greece, to Greek Orthodox parents. She came to Pennsylvania in 1916 with her mother and brother. Her father had already immigrated for fear that he might be killed by Turks, but burned to death in his bakery (her mother was forced to remarry by her family). Helen was betrothed and married at age 14, but her husband left her in 1929. She married Emmanuel Kasiotis in 1934. She moved to Highlandtown because it was safe.

The Kasiotis interview provides information about economic and living conditions during the Great Depression. She devotes much of the conversation to her children and grandchildren (how they were raised, their education and careers), and Greek family life. Greek life in Highlandtown
is detailed, including the Greek American Democratic club, the intermingling of ethnicities, Uptown Greeks vs. Highlandtown Greeks, and immigration issues.

OH 8297    BNHP # 161    Redd, Bernard

Name of Interviewer: Peebles, Lucy  
Date of Interview:  9/17/79  
Place of Interview: 
Length of Interview:  1.5 hours  
Number of Tapes:  2  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:  biography form, interview notes, tape index  
Note(s):  transcript available at BRISC

Bernard Redd was born in 1906 in Baltimore. His education ended in 1923 when he graduated from Douglass High School. He worked at the American Smelting Company for 41 years.

The Redd interview is a descriptive recollection of growing up on Baylis Street in Baltimore (he disputes the claim that Baylis Street was part of a slave plantation). He gives an assessment of the lack of racial hostility in his neighborhood; the race riots of the 1960s; the changing attitudes of blacks and whites over time; and recreation in Highlandtown (Penna Avenue, comedy club, The Royal, 10 Pals social club, Brown’s Grove).

OH 8297    BNHP# 164    Podles, Joseph

Name of Interviewer: Tiranoff, Michael  
Date of Interview:  8/9/79  
Place of Interview:  829 S. Milton Avenue  
Length of Interview:  2 hours  
Number of Tapes:  2  
Length of Transcript:  34 pages  
File Contents:  biography form, interview notes, tape index, transcript  
Note(s): 

Joseph Podles was born on November 21, 1909 in Biloxi, Mississippi to Polish Catholic parents. His father immigrated to Baltimore in 1904, with his mother following 2 years later. He recalls that Poles would immigrate to Locust Point and attend church in Fells Point. As a child he shucked oysters with his family in Biloxi. He attended Holy Rosary School. He married Laura Helstowski on July 7, 1928, and had 7 children. He worked at his father’s grocery store selling wholesale sausage until he opened his own grocery store in 1933 and ran it until 1947, when he went into the billiards business.

The Podles interview is a good source of information for the plight of the Polish in Baltimore, and the role of working Poles in American society (oyster shuckers, farming, packing houses). He discusses his childhood (collecting wood for stove, parents insisted he learn to read and write,
wasn’t forced to work) and his Polish heritage (family would make pork and sauerkraut from scratch, learned to speak fluent Polish). He mentions the Great Depression, because his mother couldn’t afford to give him a wedding or pay him a wage at the family store. There is discussion about politics and the F.D.R. Polish Democratic Society (he was president of the F.D.R.P.D.S. from 1937-1939).

OH 8297    BNHP # 182    Young, Dorothy [Owens]

Name of Interviewer: Peebles, Lucy
Date of Interview: 11/7/79
Place of Interview: 933 Baylis St.
Length of Interview: 45 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript:
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s):

Dorothy Young was born on July 13, 1915 in Baltimore to Baptist parents (originally from Virginia). Her education extended to Dunbar Junior High School, but she did not graduate. As a girl, she worked in her mother’s restaurant (her mother owned the building), but as an adult also held positions as a seamstress and a master barber. In 1936, she married William Young (he died in 1959).

The Young interview offers a good description of life as a middle-class black woman in Baltimore during the mid 1900s. She describes her upbringing (her family didn’t endure economic hardships or the problems West Baltimore blacks came across) and life during marriage (she didn’t have to work, but did anyway). Her neighborhood avoided the race riots. She recalls recreational activities from her and her children’s youths (Brown’s Grove, Wonderland Park, baseball games, nightclubs).

OH 8297    BNHP # 198    Lee, Sirkka [Tuomi]

Name of Interviewer: Tiranoff, Michael
Date of Interview: 12/8/79
Place of Interview: 808 S. Umbra St.
Length of Interview: 1 hour, 15 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript:
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s):

Sirkka Lee was born on August 15, 1920 in Virginia, Minnesota to Finnish parents. Her father immigrated to Minnesota from Finland. Her parents met through a mutual interest in Finnish Theater. She attended Patterson Park Senior High School and was a member of the first graduating class. She also attended Peabody Preparatory, Carnegie Tech, Morgan State College, and Towson State University. She was a secretary in the Women’s Army Corps (WACs) from
July 1943 through October 1945 during World War II. She married Robert William Lee in Winchester, Virginia, in 1954.

The Lee interview describes the difference between Finns immigrating before World War I and after World War II. She talks about ethnic groups interacting with one another in high school with no problem, but some groups facing difficulty obtaining work after graduation due to discrimination. Formation of the CIO and the Steelworkers union is described, as well as why unions were necessary. She speaks of proposed freeway unifying the neighborhood. She also explains the differences between Highlandtown today and while she was growing up.

OH 8297 BNHP # 199 O'Connor, George

Name of Interviewer: Tiranoff, Michael
Date of Interview: 9/10/79
Place of Interview: 3411 Foster Avenue
Length of Interview: 1 hour, 15 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s): 

George O'Connor was born on May 13, 1946 in Baltimore to Roman Catholic parents. He attended Sacred Heart of Jesus School, Merganthaler High School, and the University of Baltimore. He went on to work at Baltimore Gas and Electric and Westinghouse Electric Supply. He married in April 1966 but has since divorced.

The O'Connor interview explores societal expectations, namely that young men were expected to pursue a Blue Collar lifestyle. Historical events like the threat of Communism and the Vietnam War are discussed. Considerable time is spent on race relations with blacks, including rallies in Patterson Park started by Nazi’s to provoke Jews and blacks, riots in Little Italy, integration, and blockbusting.

OH 8297 BNHP # 204 Pinter, Ellen [Lund]

Name of Interviewer: Tiranoff, Michael
Date of Interview: 1/30/80
Place of Interview: 1302 E. Belvedere Avenue
Length of Interview: 1 hour, 33 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s): The original handwritten tape index is in this folder.

Ellen Pinter was born on December 12, 1916 in Warren, Ohio, to Finnish parents. Her father immigrated to Butte, Montana, in 1907. He went back to Finland to find a wife, got married and returned to Mensin, Pennsylvania in 1914. The family moved to Baltimore in 1924 so that
Pinter’s father could work at Bethlehem Steel. She went to school until the 10th grade, and later she attended night school at the University of Maryland, Villa Julie College, and the Community College of Baltimore. She became a legal assistant and legal secretary. She married Frank Pinter on May 26, 1939 and had three children: Frances, Judith, and Frank.

The Pinter interview describes Finnish customs (putting on plays) and identity (Finns were “clannish”) in America. The Finnish Hall as a center of activity is discussed, as well as ethnic togetherness with the Czech’s, Lithuanians, and Russians. There is good information regarding the Great Depression and Hooversvilles in Highlandtown. The value of worker’s unions and how they were affected by McCarthyism are discussed, as well as Civil Rights movement and civic associations.

OH 8297   BNHP# 206   Foley, Joseph

Name of Interviewer: Tiranoff, Michael
Date of Interview: 1/24/80
Place of Interview: 1706 Imla Street
Length of Interview: 2 hours, 30 minutes
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 52 pages
File Contents: biography form, interview notes, tape index
Note(s): The original handwritten tape index and transcripts are in this folder.

Joseph Foley was born on February 10, 1907 to a German father and an Irish mother. His grandfather (mother’s side) was forced to leave Germany after an altercation with a soldier. He settled in Fell’s Point, and then brought over his wife and daughter. He attended St. Bridget’s School (tells some anecdotes), and after completing high school, began a career as a machinist that lasted 40 years. He married Catherine [no surname] on November 29, 1945

The Foley interview is a good source of information about how Germans came to settle and work in Highlandtown (Germans were industrial people, Baltimore was an industrial town). He discusses being German in America (German clubs and societies would hold “German Day” at an amusement park, but his mother wouldn’t teach him German) and prejudice (German workers were moved inland for fear of sabotage). There is some discussion of Prohibition and breweries in the area, the intermingling of ethnicities at the Catholic Church, and the Spanish Flu of 1918 (his family didn’t catch it, many caskets, public places were closed).

Site 2: Hampden

Hampden was already home to many of the water wheel mill workers along the Jones Fall Valley when it became a part of Baltimore City in 1888(Hare). The output from the flour and cotton mills led to the establishment of Baltimore as a major port city. This mill town was named by a developer named Henry Mankin who the name the area after 17th century British parliamentarian John Hampden. Most residents of this North Baltimore neighborhood were immigrants from
England, Germany, and Poland, but a significant number of American Indians found work in the mills as well (HVMA).

Soon the cotton duck industry predominated. Used for making sail sheeting, tents, and mailbags, “[b]y the 1890’s, Hampden-Woodbury [mill] produced almost 80% of the world's cotton duck and was one of the biggest mill sites in the country”(HVMA). Moreover, “[a]t the turn of the 20th century, the workers of Hampden-Woodbury made up one of the largest workforces in the nation (LBHC). It was not until the 1960’s that the mill industry saw a decline (LBHC). Most of the mills had closed by the 1970’s.

At the time of the BNHP, residents had begun to leave the area for the suburbs. Beginning in the early 1990’s, however, the area was reborn into an eclectic array of artist spaces, homes, businesses, and unique celebrations, like the Hon Fest (HVMA).

Sources:


Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297  BNHP # 043  Meads, Richard

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 4/6/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 45 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 20 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s):

Richard Meads was born in Laurel, MD, in 1910. His father, Benjamin Meads, was from England. Meads attended Schools #55 and #56, before quitting school at 14 to work in the mills, including Meadow Mills and Park Mill. He talks about the Rope Room, his position as a “doubler”, and describes the process of balling the yarn. He later went to the Chevrolet plant. He discusses in detail his time at Chevrolet, including his bosses, the pay, and the fight for unionization of the plant.
Meads discusses dating rituals, disciplinary action at school, and race relations. Meads focuses on the conflicts between Caucasian and African American (“black,” “colored”) residents in Hampden and at the Chevy plant, including interracial relationships, violence, housing integration, and government interaction. He uses personal stories to illustrate his opinions.

OH 8297   BNHP # 044   Reigle, Beatrice (Lewis)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview:  4/20/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:  1 hour 17 minutes
Number of Tapes:  2
Length of Transcript:  n/a
File Contents:   Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Beatrice Reigle was born in Baltimore, MD, in 1907. Her parents were both born in Maryland and her father worked in several mills, including Hooper’s Mill. Her husband Earl worked as a recreation director in Cayhill and Roosevelt. Riegle attended School #55 and Eastern High School until she had to begin working at the mill to help her family.

Reigle describes her parent’s and grandparent’s occupations, the way Hampden was before it was developed, childhood activities, dating rituals, church activities, a traveling minister, and how the church helped during the Depression. Reigle describes her children’s experience in school. Reigle talks about the community organizations she and her family participated in, such as the Camper Club, Social Club, Stone’s Pleasure Club, Hampden Businessmen Dinner, and the Women’s Cordiality Club. “The Avenue” as a place to hang out on the weekend, and the boundaries of Hampden now, are discussed, as well as a mill explosion she remembers when she was a young child.

OH 8297   BNHP # 045   Lytle, Winfield (Winnie)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview:  4/23/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:  1 hour
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript:  n/a
File Contents:   Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Winnie Lytle was born on Gorsuch Ave. in Baltimore. His mother, Lillie Mae Issac Lytle, worked at the mills as a weaver and attended the Mt. Vernon Methodist Church (Free Methodist). Lytle attended School #55 and the Woodberry School. Lytle worked for E.L. Stebbings contractors and the mills. He is a member of the Rod & Gun Club, Local 155.
Plasterers, the Masonic Order (Freemasons), and is on the executive board for his union; he
discusses the Freemasons in detail.
Lytle and other members of his family were involved with the police in some capacity, such as a
carpenter, breaking the horses, and playing on the Northern Police baseball team. Lytle describes
living conditions when he was growing up (heating systems, living with relatives), and the
conditions during the Depression for his family and the community as a whole. He discusses the
migration of “hillbillies” from the south during WWII, to places like Sparrows Point. Lytle
discusses the Rope Room, Sweatboxes, and Rat Hole at the Mt. Vernon Mill. Lytle describes the
perceived deterioration of Hampden: decrease of community activities, quality of retail, and
children’s respect for adults.

OH 8297       BNHP # 046  Lindsay, Helen (nee Reilly)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 4/25/78
Place of Interview: Recreation Center
Length of Interview: 52.5 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Helen Lindsay was born in 1914 in Baltimore, as were her parents, Robert Lee and Caroline
Miller Reilly. Lindsay attended School #11 (in Howard County), Gwynns Falls Junior High, and
Western High School. She worked as a Recreation Aide at Roosevelt Rec for 18 years. She was a
member of the Women’s Cordiality Club and she provides some history of the club.

Interview topics include her grandparent’s cultural heritage (German and Pennsylvania Dutch),
description on Hamden after the Depression, community activities (holiday parades, bay trips),
the change in attitudes after WWII as well as the change in Hampden as a whole since WWII.
Lindsay describes her job at the Rec Center in detail and gives a history of the organization.
Lindsay also discusses desegregation and the effect tolerance could have on all groups.

OH 8297       BNHP # 047  Worden, Hester (nee Sproul)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 4/27/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 1 hour 35 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 43 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s):
Hester Worden was born in 1903 in Baltimore, MD. Her parents, George W. and Catharine Elizabeth, were also born in Baltimore. Worden began working at the Meadow Mill as a tube winder when she was a teenager; she discusses the social life and working conditions of the mill.

Worden describes her grandparents’ occupations and her maternal grandmother’s horrific burn incident, which caused her death. Worden describes the social activities associated with the mill and the surrounding communities. She also describes funeral traditions, common parenting practices, dating rituals, and child labor customs while she was growing up. Worden describes in detail the stillbirth of her twin boys, including the doctor’s involvement in her childbirth and the funeral proceedings. She discusses the boundaries of Hampden as well as racial tensions in the neighborhood and how this has changed over the years.

OH 8297   BNHP # 048  Deitrich, Elmira Davis Harper

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 4/27/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 1 hour 12 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 28 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s)

Elmira Deitrich was born in Hampden in 1896. Her parents, Luther Edwin and Marietta Davis Harper, were both born in Maryland and were able to raise Deitrich in an upper middle class environment. She attended School #55 and Western High School, and she was a teacher for several years at School #55, School #49, and Walbrook. Her husband, Leo Everett Deitrich, was an engineer at the Gas & Electric before working for the U.S. Government.

Deitrich discusses her family history and the lifestyle of her family when she was growing up, including the descriptions of her house, the living conditions, and her mother’s responsibilities such as cleaning, canning, and sewing. She describes her own experience in school as a child as well as her experience as a teacher; she quit teaching when she married. She talks about local social and historical activities, as well as social activities at the local churches in Hampden. She discusses dating rituals and how children have changed since when she was younger, both socially and academically. She also discusses historical events, including the Depression, WWII, air raids during the war, and the evolution of television.

OH 8297   BNHP # 049  Burke, Carl

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 5/11/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Store
Length of Interview: 46 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
Carl Burke was born in 1935 in Baltimore, MD. His father was Carl Lee Burke, and his mother was Elizabeth Virginia Hampshire Burke Mercer. His parents owned a Heidelberg Press and put out the Hampden News and Views.

Burke’s grandfather and father both owned and ran stores in Hampden; he discusses the products available in these stores and their place in the Hampden social scene. Burke describes his father’s involvement in WWII and describes this era from a teenager’s point of view. Burke describes the political environment of Hampden over the years, including local associations, church groups, landlord and tenant relations, and the influence of minority groups in Hampden on Hampden’s political power within the City of Baltimore.

Myrtle Goznell was born in New Freedom, MD in 1900. Her mother was Sarah Walterman. Goznell attended School #55 through 6th grade, then she began working at Mt. Vernon mill #2; she worked for the mills for 39 years. She later worked for the Salvation Army store. Goznell married John Goznell in 1919.

Goznell discusses in detail her family life and living conditions when she was a child. She talks about the conditions of the house and the work her mother did everyday. She talks about the social activities in Hampden, such as shopping, neighborhood parties, and the 4th of July; she also discusses holidays and how they were celebrated in her household. Other interview topics include working conditions at the mills, unions, her husband’s involvement in WWII, the flu epidemic, and the Depression. Goznell also discusses childbirth and the death of one of her sons, including a description of his funeral. She also talks about the changes in Hampden and the physical boundaries of the neighborhood.
Mr. Arnold was born in 1917 in Hampden. He was drafted into the Army in 1945 and served for thirteen months. Prior to his service he worked as a floor layer with his father, and as a pipe fitter at the Fairfield shipyard. After leaving the Army he worked at the General Motors Chevy Plant on Broening Highway until 1977.

Mr. Arnold provides detail about life in Hampden, and talks a lot about the changes he has seen the neighborhood undergo over the years. He discusses how the disappearance of the movie houses effected small business in the area, forcing many people to leave, and former closeness of the community.

**OH8297       BNHP#052   Fletcher, Margie**

Name of Interviewer:       Hawes, Susan  
Date of Interview:        5/22/79  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:      1 hour, 25 minutes  
Number of Tapes:          2  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:            interview notes, biography form, tape index, transcript  
Note(s)  

Ms. Fletcher was born on December 28, 1900 in Hampden. She worked for the Salvation Army from 1917-1921, and the Bernie Hat Company from 1947-1956, and Noxema for a short time. She was married at age 18 and had one child.

Ms Fletcher’s interview provides information about life in Hampden: Halloween night on 36th street, Fourth of July parades, and how Hamden has changed for good an ill over the years. She also talks about her experiences during the Depression and World War 2.

**OH8297       BNHP#063   Chelf, Merle nee Martin**

Name of Interviewer:       Hawes, Susan  
Date of Interview:        5/23/79  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview:      1 hour, 32 minutes  
Number of Tapes:          2  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents:            interview notes, biography form, tape index, transcript  
Note(s)  

Merle Chelf was born on September 28, 1901 at 198 Sycamore (Poole St.) in Hampden. She attended School in the Meadow, School #55, and Western High School. She worked for 23 years as a stenographer at Pa. R.R. Freight Station, D.C. She married James Chelf in 1966; they have no children. She has resided at the same house on Roland Avenue since 1920.
The Chelf interview provides information on neighborhood life in Hampden, and Mrs. Chelf’s family life.

OH 8297  BNHP # 065  Bowers, Roland Leroy

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 5/30/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index (incomplete).
Note(s):

Roland Leroy Bowers was born in Baltimore in 1908. His mother Annie Marie Gover was a weaver at the Mt. Vernon Mill and his father Herbert G. Bowers worked as an engineer for the railroad. Bowers attended School #58, Woodbery Church, and the Christian Missionary Alliance. Bowers talks about his brief job at the Hooper Mill.

Important historical events include a ‘locust year’, prohibition in Baltimore, and celebration of Armistice Day. Bowers describes the historical set-up of streets and homes and how urbanization has changed the landscape, including descriptions of old parks and what they have become. Other interview topics include wedding and funeral ceremonies. The tape index included only covers the first tape of three.

OH 8297  BNHP # 067  Hare, Jean Isabel

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 5/24/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 1 hour 29 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Jean Isabel Hare was born in Hampden in 1925. Her mother, Fern Greene Hare, and father, Lawrence Vincent Hare, were also both born in Hampden. Lawrence Hare worked at the Continental Can Company. Hare attended School #56 and Western High School. Jean gives a detailed description of her ancestors Sally Cullum, the daughter of Grist Mill owner, and her maternal grandfather Charlie Green. The Depression did not affect her family as much as others.

Interview topics include the development of Hampden as a new neighborhood, Hampden Halloween Parade, Roosevelt Rec., and her reflection of Hampden as a place that takes in people in poor situations and in the working class.
OH 8297   BNHP # 070   Proctor, Mary Hall

Name of Interviewer: Harvey, Bill
Date of Interview:   4/18/79 & 6/1/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Mary Hall Proctor was born in Warrenton, VA in 1902. Proctor married Norman R. Proctor in 1921; they had three children, Vernon, Norman, and Isabelle. Proctor and her family moved to Baltimore in 1919.

Interview topics concerning Baltimore include her family’s work experience in the Mt. Vernon Mills, dating rituals, discrimination of African Americans, and the Depression. Mary spends a lot of time talking about growing up in Virginia, including working in the fields, her lack of schooling, her father witnessing the lynching of a slave, the relationship between whites and African Americans, and the Flu epidemic.

OH 8297   BNHP # 071   Hoshall, Fenton

Name of Interviewer: Harvey, Bill
Date of Interview:   4/13/79; 4/24/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 2 hours 5 minutes
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 53 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s):

Fenton Hoshall was born in 1909 in Hampden. His parents, Florence May Turnbaugh and Charles Ephrian, were both born in Maryland and raised Baptist. Hoshall attended School #55 and went to “Poly” (Baltimore Polytechnic Institute) for three years. Hoshall worked for the Baltimore Sun, the Hooper Mill, and was a Diamond Cab driver. He was married to Dorothy Robertson.

Hoshall describes his family’s migration to Baltimore in search of work. He describes his parent’s occupations and their wages at the time of retirement. Hoshall describes as Hampden as it was when he was growing up, including the streetcars, the area bars, the involvement of area churches, and the social attraction of “the Avenue.” Hoshall provides a detailed description of the Hooper Mill and the entire mill process on Tape 2. He describes how the cotton was sent to the mills, the poor work conditions and resulting physical afflictions (including “dust cough”), the hazards of fires in the mills, and the salary of the mill workers.
Lester Merryman was born in Baltimore in 1915. His mother, Mary E. Bohn, worked as a seamstress at Knothe Bros., where they made silk pajamas. He attended school in Westminster, including Westminster High, and went on to serve in WWII and work for the Department of Defense.

The interviewer notes that Merryman was a hard interviewee and was very bitter about the changes that have occurred in Hampden. He is dissatisfied with the government’s decision to fill in the Reservoir, and points to this as an example of how the government is not concerned with working class neighborhoods such as Hampden and Highlandtown.

Myrtle Talbott was born in Hampden in 1908. Her mother, Anna Julia Bunn Hamilton, worked at a mill and Talbott describes her mother’s experience there. The parents of Talbott’s father, William McLain Hamilton, emigrated to the U.S. from Ireland. Talbott attended School #57, School #55, and St. Paul’s Commercial School; she later worked at the B&O Railroad.

Talbott describes the Hampden community when she was growing up, including the 4th of July celebrations, church carnivals, and the retail stores. She talks about the physical boundaries of Hampden and how the neighborhood has changed, such as crime, obedience of children, and the economic stratification of the residents.
This is a dual interview with Richard and Hilda Meads. Hilda was born in 1911 in Clark County, Virginia; Richard was born in Laurel, MD in 1910. They both attended School #55 and Richard also went to School #56.

The main topic of the Meads’ interview is their experience working at the Upper Mt. Vernon Mill. They both held numerous positions within the mill, including spooling, doffing, spinning, drawing frames, and slupper minder. They talk about the social aspects of the mill, the mill strikes, and several of their bosses, such as Ed Goznell, Bud Streeter, Raymond Cook, and Ells Filmore. Richard Meads describes the Rat Hole and the Dust Room. Working conditions and the mill industry are discussed in detail. Richard also worked at the Chevy plant, and he compares the two environments. There is a lot of information in the interview.

OH 8297    BNHP # 079   Peregoy, Marvin Hauer

Marvin was born in 1897 in Fowblesburg, MD. He moved to Baltimore in 1914 and began working at the B&O Railroad. Peregoy was stationed at Fort Benjamin Harrison during WWI, and experienced the flu epidemic while there.

Perengoy discusses working conditions at B&O, including pay rates, and at the Transit Company United Railway where he worked later. He discusses the attempts at unionization at the Transit Company. After WWI, Perengoy joined the Odd Fellows, IOOF, a secret organization. He discusses the rules for getting into the organization, including restrictions on ethnicity and religion.

OH 8297    BNHP # 86   Litzinger, James Henry

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview:  6/27/79
Place of Interview:  Narrator’s home

James was born in Keswich (Baltimore) in 1896. He attended School #55, the Evergreen School, White’s School, and Baltimore City College. His parents met while working in the mill and had 10 children. His father went on to build houses in Hampden that Litzinger mentions by address.

Litzinger describes holiday rituals, community celebrations, and religious practices. He discusses the Depression and WWI and how these events affected Hampden. He gives boundaries of Hampden and Woodberry. He also provides several stories about rent collection, McKinley’s funeral, 4th of July celebrations, and the changes in the neighborhood.

OH 8297    BNHP # 087    Foreman, Loice (Cumar)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 6/26/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Loice Foreman was born in Laurel, MD, in 1893. Her parents, William and Myrtle (Wheeler), raised four children. Foreman worked at the Mt. Vernon Mill for three years before going to the Noxema plant in 1928, where she met her husband, Charlie Foreman. Foreman describes her son’s involvement in WWII; his name was included on a Mt. Vernon monument.

Foreman describes the work of a speeder at the mill and the community of children that worked there. She discusses funeral procedures, dating rituals, community activities, the physical boundaries of the neighborhood, and her neighbor’s occupations. She discusses at length her time at Noxema and what the plant did for the community; she discusses her bosses, Mr. King, Mr. Eaten, and Dr. Bunteny.

OH 8297    BNHP # 090    Cavacos, Lula G. (Clentzos)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 7/6/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 1 hour 22 minutes
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 44 pages
Lula Cavacos was born in Kythera, Greece, in 1901. Both of her parents, John and Eutrosyne Galatos Clentzos, were also born in Kythera. She moved to the United States in 1910, but returned to Greece for 6 years in 1914. Cavacos describes her return to the United States and her arranged marriage to her husband, Constantine Andrew Cavacos.

Cavacos describes her parent’s and grandparent’s lives, both in Greece and the United States in some detail. She also discusses her arrival in Hampden and how the community treated her and her family. She discusses her work in a general store and how she produced candles and chocolate. She describes Greek holidays, her interactions with the local Jewish community and other business owners, and the treatment of African Americans in the community. She discusses her involvement in the Greek War Resistance and her leadership in the Greek war relief. She also discusses her feelings towards Hampden, the United States, and Greece.

OH 8297   BNHP # 097   Thomas, Ruth (nee Ruby)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 7/19/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: n/a
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & transcript.
Note(s):

Ruth Thomas was born in Woodberry, Baltimore, MD, in 1908. Her parents were Talbert and Edith (Crawford) Ruby. Thomas attended School #58 through 8th grade, and then began working at Hooper’s Mill. She later worked at Martins Aircraft and Union Memorial Hospital. She married Walter Thomas in 1926 and they had six children. Thomas attended Woodberry Methodist and Hampden Baptist.

Thomas discusses her father’s career and political life. She describes her time at School #58, including subjects taught and teachers. She talks about her time at Hooper’s Mill, including how she worked around her pregnancies, the impact the mill had on the Hampden and Woodberry communities, and the lack of advancement for female workers. Thomas discusses the impact the Depression had on her family, and her involvement with the Roosevelt Recreation Center. Thomas discusses businesses in Hampden, including the different ethnic merchants; she also discusses the changes in Hampden and her feelings towards the racial makeup of the neighborhood.

OH 8297   BNHP # 099   Lewis, Roy

Name of Interviewer: Harvey, Bill
Date of Interview: 6/19/79 & 7/15/79
Place of Interview: Hampden-Woodberry-Remington Community Center
Length of Interview: 2.5 hours
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 86 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s):

Roy Lewis was born in a Clipper Mill house in Hampden in 1903. His father was Charles L. Lewis and his mother’s maiden name was Shipley. Lewis attended School #55 and a prep school on 24th St and Oak (what is now Howard St.); he gives detailed information about his time at both schools. Lewis worked many jobs, including positions at Meadow Mills, Hooper Mill, and the Transit Company before becoming a jewelry salesman at S & N Katz on West 36th Street. He talks in detail about his time at the mills.

Interview topics include social organizations such as the Masons, Church sponsored community activities, the business leaders in Hampden, and ethnic discrimination in the area. Lewis talks in detail about the political organizations and their power in Hampden; he mentions quite a few names of past political leaders in the Hampden area.

OH 8297 BNHP # 105 Roby, Frank Jr.

Name of Interviewer: Harvey, Bill
Date of Interview: 8/2/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Office
Length of Interview: 45 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 26 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Note(s):

Frank Roby, Jr. was born in Hampden in 1936. Roby served as the principle of Patterson High School. His father, Frank Roby, Sr., served as the Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas for Baltimore County from 1934 to 1970.

Roby discusses Hampden during the Depression and the neighborhood’s blue-collar resident base. Roby describes the political climate and weight of Hampden, as well as his father’s political campaigns and career. Roby focuses on the role of race and ethnicity in neighborhood politics from the 1930’s to the 1970’s. Roby also discusses redistricting and how this effected Hampden’s representation.

OH 8297 BNHP # 106 Frederick, Lura and Mary

Name of Interviewer: Harvey, Bill
Date of Interview: 8/10/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Lura and Mary Frederick are sisters; they grew up in Hampden but very other little biographical information, such as date of birth or parent’s names, is provided. Both sisters worked at the Best Cone Co., and then moved on to Hooper’s Mill, Mt. Vernon Mill, and Filterite.

The Fredericks give wage and work descriptions of the mills and Filterite. They worked many different positions in the mills and remember the bosses they had there. They also discuss work related injuries at the mills and the growing population of African Americans (“blacks”) in the mills and in Hampden that migrated from the South.

OH 8297 BNHP # 111 Butler, Luther Michael

Luther Michael Butler was born in Laurel Hall, North Carolina in 1913. His family moved to Baltimore in 1921. Butler’s mother and stepfather both worked in Meadow Mills. Butler attended School #55; he held jobs with Hampden Transfer and Storage, Martin’s Aircraft, and as an investigator for the Baltimore City sheriff’s department.

Interview topics include politics, racial discrimination and the KKK, and social stratification in Hampden. Butler was involved with Hampden politics and he talks about his relationship with Jack Pollock. Butler discusses his employment positions, extracurricular activities such as football, the changing attitudes of teenagers, and his attachment to the Hampden community.

OH 8297 BNHP # 118 Bullock, Helen (Baker)
Helen Bullock was born in Hampden in 1918. Both of her parents worked at Mt. Vernon Mills. Bullock attended School #55, Western High School, and City College. Her husband, James Gordon Bullock, Jr., worked in the Mt. Vernon lab. Bullock attended the United Brethren church in Hampden.

Interview topics include the mill’s impact on neighborhood social activities, her school experience, the impact of the religious community on Hampden, and how the community has changed over the years. She also describes the Depression and World War Two, including the migration of southerners during the war.

**OH 8297 BNHP # 123  Flax, Albert**

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan  
Date of Interview: 5/31/79  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Store  
Length of Interview: 1 hour 45 minutes  
Number of Tapes: 2  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.  
Note(s):

Albert Flax was born in Baltimore in 1915. His parents, Rebecca Charlow and Harry Flax, were both born in Lithuania. Flax attended School #55. Flax married Naomi Rombro in 1941; he later took over Flax Clothing, the shop his father opened in Hampden in 1915.

Flax discusses his parent’s experiences before and after their immigration, including his father’s career as a tailor. Flax describes his parent’s relationship and his experiences in Hampden as a child. Flax was raised Jewish and he talks about the Jewish culture in Baltimore, including kosher stores and local synagogues. Flax also discusses prejudice attitudes and the business and retail markets in Hampden.

**OH 8297 BNHP # 130  Tice, William A.**

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan  
Date of Interview: 8/10/79  
Place of Interview: Hampden Methodist Church  
Length of Interview: 1 hour 20 minutes  
Number of Tapes: 2  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.  
Note(s):

William A. Tice was born in Hampden in 1912. His parents were also born in Hampden and his mother, Clara Pearce, worked in the Meadow Mill. Tice attended School #55, School #56, and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. He married Lois M. Litchfield, also born in Hampden, in 1938.
His grandfather, John A. Tice, was one of the charter members of the Hampden Methodist Church, which was founded in 1867.

Tice discusses in detail his family’s role in the church, his personal involvement with the church, the role of the church in the community, and the characteristics of a Methodist doctrine. He also describes the membership base of the church in social and economic terms. Tice discusses the employment history of his father and his parents desire for him to continue with his education. He describes his education and his memories of the community as a child.

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 8/16/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: n/a
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Margaret Doyle was born in Baltimore in 1927. Both of her parents, Edna Dietry and Joseph Emmet, were born in the Baltimore area. Doyle attended St. Cecelia’s in Walbrook, Trinity Preparatory, Mt. St. Agnes, and Johns Hopkins University. She was a teacher at School #56 at the time of the interview, and she had at that time worked there for 19 years.

The primary focus of the entire interview is Doyle’s experience as an educator. In particular, she talks about work conditions, children’s schooling, parent-teacher relations, vocational schooling, teacher’s attitudes, and student activities and trends.

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 8/15/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 59 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Ernest Ruby was born in Woodbury, MD, in 1920. His parents were Edith Crawford and Talbert F. Ruby. Ruby attended School #58, School #56, and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. He was an apprentice mechanist at the B&O Railroad and as an inspector for school machinery. Ruby was a member of the American Legion, the Masonic Temple, the Shane Boumi Temple, and the Woodbury Community Association. His wife is Mildred Ruby.
Ruby discusses the political power and geographical boundaries of Woodbury. Ruby discusses his work with the Woodbury Community Association and Woodbury’s relationship with neighboring towns like Hampden. Ruby’s father was involved with neighborhood politics and Ruby discusses many of the key politicians of the time. Ruby also describes his childhood and his educational decisions.

OH 8297   BNHP # 137  Bauers, Carrie May (Riston)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 8/15/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: n/a
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Carrie May Riston was born in Remington, Baltimore, MD, in 1916. Her parents, Lottie May Weaver and Thomas Riston, were both also born in Baltimore. Bauers married Roland Bauers in 1933. She attended St. Phillips and James school, School #55, and School #56 (Robert Poole). Bauers worked several places, including Hooper’s Mill, Rustler Iron and Steel, Eastern Aircraft, and Mercy Hospital.

Bauer discusses both her mother’s and her own experience working at Hooper’s Mill, including working conditions and the union presence. She also describes the differences between working at Hooper’s Mill and Eastern Aircraft. Bauers discusses changes in the neighborhood over the years.

OH 8297   BNHP # 202  Douglass, Parker B., Jr.

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 1/18/80 and 1/25/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 2 hours and 14 minutes
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, interview summary, & tape index.
Note(s):

Parker B. Douglass, Jr., was born in 1879 in Franklintown, MD. His father, Parker Burkeley Douglass, was a former slave. Douglass held many occupations, including being a grocery store owner and a butler to Robert Poole. He married his wife, Martha Mae Sheet, in 1905. Douglass attends the Trinity Baptist Church.

Douglass describes in detail the work experience of both himself and his father. Douglass describes the school opportunities that were available to him growing up. He describes in detail
his experience as an African American man living in Hampden and the racial divides in the neighborhood, and Baltimore City as a whole. Douglass describes seeing the Baltimore Fire. He discusses the development of his neighborhood and how he remembers it being.

OH 8297   BNHP # 205   Daiker, Ruth Eileen (Baker)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 3/18/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 1 hour and 7 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Ruth Daiker was born in Hampden in 1936. Her parents, Doris Smith Pruitt and Arthur Baker were also born in Hampden. Daiker attended School #55, School #56, and Clara Barton (school?). Daiker was involved with the PTA for both School’s #55 and #56. She married Richard Daiker in 1964; her first husband was Ernest Wayne Hurley.

Daiker discusses her experience at Mt. Vernon Methodist Church as a child and her interactions with Arch. Ford. Daiker describes the socio-economic divisions among Hampden families, and she includes geographical markers in her description. Daiker describes growing up in Hampden and the social activities of the children and teenagers; she is candid about sex and how the subject was handled by teenagers and parents. She is also candid about presence of the KKK in the neighborhood and she discusses overall race relations.

OH 8297   BNHP # 207   Pruitt, Doris (Smith)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview: 2/27/80, 4/2/80, and 4/9/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Doris Pruitt was born in 1918 in Hampden. Her parents, Martha Corbin and Arthur Payne Smith, were both born in the Baltimore area. Pruitt attended School #55 and the Odd Fellows Home public school in Frederick, MD. She has held several jobs, including a position at the Mt. Vernon Mill. Pruitt attended the Salvation Army Church. Her eldest daughter, Ruth Daiker, is featured in interview #205.

Pruitt describes her childhood and her mother’s employment and parenting choices. Pruitt discusses her involvement with religion, her childhood experiences, race relations in Baltimore,
and how Hampden as changed in regards to social activities. Pruitt spent 7 years at the Odd Fellows Home in Frederick, MD, and she describes her life there, including living conditions.

OH 8297        BNHP # 209    Spurrier, Margaret Louise (Piper)

Name of Interviewer: Hawes, Susan
Date of Interview:  2/15/80 and 2/29/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s Home
Length of Interview:  n/a
Number of Tapes:  4
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Note(s):

Margaret Spurrier was born in Westminster, MD, in 1909. Her parents, Ester C. Grabbe and Arthur Piper, were also born in Carroll County. Spurrier worked in several area mills, including Hooper’s and Hampden Mills. She married Bernette H. Spurrier in 1933.

Spurrier describes her experiences at the mills in detail, including information on pay, her superiors, and working conditions. She also describes the time before the union and the decision to join the union; she includes descriptions of the organizer’s roles and union meetings. Spurrier as very involved with the union and eventually held the position of union president. Although the bulk of the interview is focused on Spurrier’s mill and union experience, she also discusses her childhood, her children’s experiences at school, and race relations in Hampden.

Site 3: Park Heights

During the time that the BNHP was underway, the Northwest Baltimore neighborhood of Park Heights was bounded by Northern Parkway, Greenspring Avenue, Wabash Avenue, and Carlin’s Circle (LBHC). It was and remains home to Pimlico Race Track, which is world famous for The Preakness Stakes—the second leg of horse racing’s Triple Crown.

Primarily a residential area, the homes consisted of both free-standing units and row homes with porches set among tree-lined streets. This all-Jewish neighborhood changed with the influx of mainly middle-class African Americans for the period of the late 1960s and early 1970s. During this period, “homes deteriorated when economic and social shifts de-populated this and many other neighborhoods” (Hines, p98).

Around the time of the BNHP, old and new residents were participating in “Pilot Black,” a substantial urban renewal project. It provided 2.5 million dollars in federal community development block grants. Under this program, forty-six homes were either renovated or newly constructed.

Most of the narrators lived in senior housing in the neighborhood and socialized at the Jewish Community Center. This “Eating Together” site is also the site for the bulk of the interviews.
Allen Berger (BNHP #062) participated as both narrator and interviewer. He conducted nineteen of the twenty-eight interviews.

Sources:


Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297 BNHP #055 Fishman, Morris

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview: 5/30/79
Place of Interview: Jewish Community Center
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 20 pages
File Contents: Release, Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s): File contains photocopies of seven original poems (United Nations, test tube babies, self-reflection) by the narrator.

Morris Fishman was born in Besarrabia, Russia on February 25, 1900 to Jewish parents. His schooling consisted of private tutoring. He recalls how the Russians persecuted his father and ruined his business. Faced with being drafted by the Russian army, the narrator’s father sent him to live with his uncle in Brazil. He arrived in the United States in 1922. In 1924, he married and his son was born. He was married twice to two sisters. Fishman worked as a ship fitter’s helper in the Fairfield Shipyard until World War II during which he worked as a welder. He also talks about his writing aspirations.

The Fishman interview provides information about the political conditions for Jewish people in Russia at the time of the Russian Revolution, living conditions during the Great Depression, and global politics. It also offers details about the intersection of Jewish identity, social class, and neighborhood formation. There is also some discussion about interactions between Jewish Americans and African-Americans (“blacks”) in the Park Heights and the Reisterstown Plaza areas. It concludes with the narrator’s support of woman’s liberation, and other liberation movements.

OH 8297 BNHP #058 Dubeck, Gertrude [Schiff]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Gertrude Dubeck was born in Minsk, Russia on March 24, 1910 to Jewish parents. To avoid being drafted by the Russian army, her father moved the United States in the early 1920’s and sent for his family in 1923. During the Depression, her father lost his business; she and her brother went to work part-time. She married in 1937 and worked in retail sales until her retirement in 1977. She does talk about neighborhood changes in the 1960’s, specifically the influx of African Americans (“blacks”) to the neighborhood.

The Dubeck interview provides contemporaneous information about living conditions for seniors, the Eating Together program, and the impact of neighborhood integration.

Allan Berger was born in Kovno, Lithuania on June 15, 1908 to Jewish parents. Living first in Philadelphia, the narrator and his mother joined his father in Baltimore in 1912. Being somewhat well-off, that narrator recalls that his family had an African American (“black”) maid.

Berger’s first job was to wait in line at the public baths and then sell his place in line. He attended Baltimore City College from 1926-1929 and the College of Commerce from 1929-1932. He worked as a post office clerk from 1933-1934 and as an office manager at Berlin & Lewis from 1934-1936. He operated his own dry cleaning business from 1936-1973. He and his wife Bernice, a stenographer, married in 1941 at the home of Rabbi Pilchuk. The two had two children. Raised in an Orthodox home, the narrator is proud of his Jewish identity. He also discusses race relations in terms of his appreciation for the “black plight,” he and his father employment practices, and of his continued discomfort with interracial marriage, especially in light of religious differences.
The Berger interview provides detailed accounts of living conditions (markets and outhouses) and neighborhood life in East Baltimore with comparison to West Baltimore, in particular. He recounts his parents' hunt for employment, children at work and at play (“city springs,” vaudeville shows at the Palace Theatre, picnics along the wharf), and the importance of access to transportation (Riverside Park, Tolchester beach, Betterton beach). There is also some talk of the unifying nature of work for people of different races and ethnicities.

OH 8297  BNHP #064  Roseman, Molly

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 6/17/79  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home in Locus Point  
Length of Interview: 120 min.  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: 17 pages  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript  
Note(s):

Molly Roseman was born in Baltimore in 1899 to immigrants from Lithuania (1885). To escape persecutions such as pogroms, her grandparents immigrated also. She mentions that her grandfather’s original last name was Hyatt; he changed the family’s name to his son-in-law’s last name after being naturalized. The narrator attended nursing school and worked at the Leroy Sanitarium from 1932 – 1935. She left Baltimore to attend New York University in 1935 and returned to Baltimore in 1950 to work at a nursing home in Fairmount Park. Roseman never married. She was a member of Albermarle & Lloyd Street Orthodox Synagogue since its founding and also attended Har Sinai. She was also very involved in multiple cultural activities.

The Roseman interview provides excellent details about neighborhood life in Park Heights, about social and family networks, and about experiences as a registered nurse. She also discusses work life as the only Jewish person on staff. There are deliberations on interracial and interfaith social relationships as well.

OH 8297  BNHP #068  Nackman, Beverly [Cohen]  

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 06/14/79  
Place of Interview: Office at the Association of Jewish Charities  
Length of Interview: 30 min.  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: 8 pages  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript  
Note(s):

Beverly Cohen Nackman was born in Baltimore on March 15, 1931. She earned a B.A. at Goucher College and a M.S.W. at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. There is
little biographical information about the narrator; instead, she discusses the work she does for the Association of Jewish Charities.

The interview explains how the Association of Jewish Charities operates and who it assists. In particular, in details how the social service agency assists Jewish people from the Russia (Soviet Union) acclimate to the Park Heights area.

OH 8297 BNHP #069 Minnie L. Conn [Levy]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allan  
Date of Interview: 06/20/79  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home  
Length of Interview: 45 min. (approx.)  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: 15 pages  
Note(s):

Minnie Levy Conn was born in Baltimore on April 4, 1908 to a Russian-American mother and a Lithuanian-American father, both of the Jewish faith. She attended P.S. #63 for grade school and P.S. #40 for three years. She graduated from Eastern High School, married and took over her husband’s paper distribution business when he died in 1953. She also took in foster children.

The Coon interview provided details about middle-class life for Jewish-Americans in the lower Park Heights area, especially living conditions and business struggles (foreign language paper distributions in Baltimore, The Baltimore Sun). There is also an assessment of the Eating Together program.

OH 8297 BNHP #075 Mendels, Gertrude [Scheuer]

Name of Interviewer: Adams, Janet  
Date of Interview: 07/31/79  
Place of Interview: Jewish Community Center  
Length of Interview: 60 min.  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: 26 pages  
Note(s):

Gertrude H. Mendels was born in Framersheim, West Germany on February 5, 1915. Both of her parents were of the Jewish faith. She attended the lyceum for ten years and one years of college with a business emphasis. She married Herman Mendels in Utrecht, Netherlands. The couple arrived in Baltimore from Holland in 1946. The couple had three children. She worked as a bookkeeper for forty-five years and sporadically as a translator. The narrator was active in the 1952 Democratic campaign of Stevenson. She was also involved with the Red Cross from 1954-1955 and with the Girl Scouts from 1962-1966. The narrator was also heavily involved in faith-
related celebrations, groups, and activities (Chanukah, Purim, Rosh Hashanah, Hadassah, Har Sinai).

The Mendels interview provided great details about German and German-American identity struggles, about the close ties in a mixed Christian and Jewish neighborhood, and about the Baltimore Jewish population’s reaction to Zionism. It also offers an assessment of Baltimore during the 1940’s and 1950’s from a person with a European perspective.

OH 8297 BNHP #85 Weinberger, Ingeborg “Inga” [Cohn]

Name of Interviewer: Adams, Janet
Date of Interview: 06/11/79
Place of Interview: Jewish Community Center
Length of Interview: 100 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 26 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Ingeborg “Inga” Weinberger was born in Leipzig in Saxony, Germany on November 23, 1920. In Germany, she completed ten years of public school and one year of special courses in physical education. While actually on her way to Chile, she married her boyfriend, Hanse Weinberger, in Baltimore on March 3, 1939 to bypass the German immigrant quota. The couple had no children. The narrator held many positions including physical education teacher, salesperson, ward clerk, telephone censor, and accountant. She was also very involved in a number of service organizations including Hadassah and the Conference of Jewish Communal Service.

The Weinberger interview provides many details about the immigration experience, growing awareness of her Jewish identity, and anti-Semitism in relation to housing and hotel accommodations. There is also some discussion of historical events such as the Holocaust, World War II, and the United Nations.

OH 8297 BNHP #88 Sapperstein, Sol

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview: 06/19/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 60 min
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 14 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s): File includes a nine-page letter dated April 1, 1978 from “Lorodo Toft” to “Scott” regarding their family ancestry.

Sol Sapperstein was born in Rinian, Russia on October 18, 1899 to parents of the Jewish faith. Some of his schooling included advanced studies in the Talmud. After his mother’s death, his
father moved the family to Philadelphia in 1913. He married Ida on May 31, 1931 in Baltimore. The couple had five children.

The Sapperstein interview provides information about the immigration experience, (anti-Semitism, language barriers, schooling), Rabbinical College, and interactions between people of the Jewish and Christian faiths. There is also some discussion of neighborhood life in the Park Heights Area, including Pimlico, from 1925 to 1979.

OH 8297 BNHP #093 Land, Shani [Haberman]

Name of Interviewer: Adams, Janet
Date of Interview: 06/10/79
Place of Interview: Jewish Community Center
Length of Interview: 180 min.
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 98 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Shani Haberman Land was born in Baltimore on June 8, 1933 to a Lithuanian-American mother and a Polish-American father—both of the Jewish faith. After high school, she attended Catonsville Community College for two years, McCoy College for one year, and Hebrew College for two years. She married Henry M. Land on November 14, 1953 in Baltimore. The couple had three children. The narrator worked as a dental assistant for four and a half years, as a credit correspondent for Sear & Roebuck for two years, as a secretary for one year, and at her husband’s shoe store for two years. The narrator volunteered for Hadassah for fifteen years. She was also a member of the Liberty Jewish Center Synagogue for twenty-four years.

The Land interview provides extensive details about the narrator’s growing sense of her Jewish-American identity against the backdrop of local and national history. National events are discussed, including the Great Depression, the Holocaust, Pearl Harbor, and World War II, and Vietnam. The interview provides excellent descriptions of the narrator’s family and their immigration experience, their living conditions, their customs (Yiddish language, Sabbath, mitzvah) and their perceptions of people of other races and faiths. The bulk of the interview explores what it means to be a Jewish person in the United States.

OH 8297 BNHP #107 Zager, Aaron

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview: 08/02/79
Place of Interview: Jewish Community Center
Length of Interview: 40 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 16 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):
Aaron Zager was born in Baltimore on June 25, 1912 to a Rumanian-American mother and a Lithuanian-American father—both of the Jewish faith. After high school, he attended Baltimore City College in 1931. His first job was as a window dresser; he started working at Bethlehem Steel in 1932. He served in WWII with the “4F.” Zager married Frances Snyder on March 26, 1944. The couple had one daughter. In 1957, he began working at the Mrs. Ihrie’s Potato Chip plant, where he was wounded in a hold-up in 1974. He worked at the plant for twenty years.

The Zager interview offers some information about interracial interfaith relations in his neighborhood along Appleton Street and Westward Avenue. It also describes family life during the 1920’s and 1930’s. There is some discussion of the impact of the influx of African Americans (“blacks”) to the Park Heights area as well.

OH 8297    BNHP #108    Kadish, Robert

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview:    1st Sessions: 07/19, 07/30, 07/3179; Session 2: 02/06/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: Session 1: 60 min.; Session 2: 40 min.
Number of Tapes:    1
Length of Transcript: 24 pages
File Contents:    Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Robert Kadish was born in Baltimore on July 5, 1903 to Russian-American store keepers of the Jewish faith (Amalgamated Clothing Workers of Baltimore). His father was a member of “the largest Jewish fraternal organization in the world”: the Workman Circle. At the age of nine, the narrator became one of the early members of the Jewish Educational Alliance—an educational and athletic program. Kadish participated in many sports both there and in the neighborhood. He represented City Springs Park in the Public Athletic League Championships. Later he was active in the Socialist Labor Party. He never married.

The Kadish interviews are a very good source of information about Jewish immigration of the 1880’s and ‘90’s (Golderna Medina), about Jewish-American business enterprises, about labor in general, and about life in the lower Park Heights area—especially racial misperceptions and religious tensions. There is detailed information about politics during the early to mid 1930’s, especially the Sacco-Vanzetti Case (anarchists) and the American Socialist Party.

OH 8297    BNHP #114    Hackerman, Barbara [Sachs]

Name of Interviewer: Adams, Janet
Date of Interview:    08/03/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes:    1
Length of Transcript: 30
Janet S. Hackerman was born in Baltimore in 1937 to Jewish Baltimoreans. After graduating from high school, she attended the University of Maryland for one year and Catonsville Community College for one year. She worked at a youth director for five years and was the site manager for the Jewish Community Center. She married Benjamin Hackerman on August 30, 1959 at the Beth Jacob Congregation. The couple had two children. The narrator was a member at the Ner Tamid Greenspring Valley Synagogue and was part of the Ner Tamid Sisterhood (1967-1979).

The Hackerman interview offers a comparison of the neighborhood where she grew up (Mondawmin area) to the neighborhood where her children grew up (Park Heights area), especially in demographic terms of race, schools, and transportation. There is some discussion of interracial business and social relationships also.

OH 8297   BNHP #119   Beaty, Harry

Harry Beaty was born in Baltimore on June 28, 1902 to Lutheran parents who move to the area in 1895. He attended school (P.S. #s 13, 77, and 83) through the eighth grade (1908-1916). In 1917, he began his printing apprenticeship and later became a linotype operator. He married Rose on September 20, 1923 in Ellicott City. The couple had one child.

The Beaty interview provides descriptive information about the first neighborhood in the Park Heights area (“blacks, Bohemians, and Jews”). There is also some discussion of the Great Depression, the Bank Holiday, World War II and his volunteer work for the Red Cross.

OH 8297   BNHP #132   Levy, Lester

Lester Levy was born in Baltimore in 1901 to Jewish parents who move to the area in 1899. He attended school (P.S. #s 9, 13, and 77) through the eighth grade (1906-1916). In 1917, he began his printing apprenticeship and later became a linotype operator. He married Rose on September 20, 1923 in Ellicott City. The couple had one child.

The Levy interview provides descriptive information about the first neighborhood in the Park Heights area (“blacks, Bohemians, and Jews”). There is also some discussion of the Great Depression, the Bank Holiday, World War II and his volunteer work for the Red Cross.
the Maryland Historical Society.

Lester Levy was born in Philadelphia, PA on October 22, 1896 to a Jewish-American mother and a British immigrant father also of the Jewish faith. In 1918, the narrator attended Johns Hopkins University and worked as a hat manufacturer from 1919-1959. He married Eleanor Kohn at the Hotel Belvedere on October 18, 1922. The couple had three children. At the time of the interview, Levy had been working as a writer and lecturer since 1959.

The Levy interview provides extensive information on the history of the Park Heights area from the 1920’s to the 1950’s (Mt. Washington 1925-1932). The narrator also assesses the differences between orthodox and reform Judaism. There is also much information about the Jewish Community Center and the Association of Jewish Charities.

OH 8297   BNHP #133   Levy, David

Name of Interviewer: Adams, Janet
Date of Interview: 08/07/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 55 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 23 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

David Levy was born in Edinburgh, Scotland on November 11, 1896 to a German mother and a Lithuanian father, both of the Jewish faith. He attended public school in 1907 until entering private school in 1911. From 1911-15 he received business trading from his father, a picture frame maker. He moved to Baltimore in 1915. From 1915-1918, the narrator worked as a marine draftsman for Baltimore Drydock and Shipbuilding Company; from 1920-1945 owned and operated a store (clothing, jewelry, furniture) in West Baltimore. He married Ann Turow on May 19, 1918 in Baltimore. The couple had one child. Levy was a member of the Ethical Society and served as president of the Tuesday Club from 1949-1965.

The Levy interview provides details about discrimination against Jewish people and anti-Semitism, social and living conditions for African American West Baltimoreans in the 1920’s, and business practices from the 1920’s-‘40’s. It also provides a comparison of life in America to that in Scotland. There is discussion of interfaith interactions in the Mt. Washington neighborhood (Christian Science, Judaism, Roman Catholicism) as well.

OH 8297   BNHP #136   Kramer, Lee [Labovitz]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview: 08/22/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Lee Labovitz Kramer was born in Baltimore on July 12, 1905 to Jewish immigrants, a Polish mother and a Lithuanian father. She graduated from P.S. #8 in eight years, and then attended Strayer Business College. Throughout the years, the narrator worked as a bookkeeper, stenographer, office manager, credit manager, and buyer. She married Philip Kramer in June 23, 1929 at the Shaari Tfiloh Synagogue. The couple had two children. Kramer was a member of Beth Tfiloh Synagogue for fifty years and was very active in many clubs and organizations, including the Azoans (sponsor and first president), Jacob Labovitz Auxiliary, the Miruim Lodge, and the Beacan Chapter of the Eastern Star.

The Kramer interview provides details about local and national events, such as the flu epidemic, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Bank Holiday. It also provides details about daily life during the 1930’s and 1940’s (food rationing, courtship practices, and married life). The interview offers many of the fine points about Jewish customs as they were practiced in her neighborhood (learning and speaking Yiddish at home, Passover, bar mitzvah).

OH 8297   BNHP #147  Freeman, Gertrude [Rappaport]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview:  09/01/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:  50 min
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript:  n/a
File Contents:  Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):  

Gertrude “Goldie” Freeman was born in Baltimore in August of 1906 to Russian-Jewish immigrants. After serving in the Russian army, her father married and moved to Baltimore. The narrator attended P.S. #s 2, 78, and 11. She married Joseph Freeman in 1924. She was active in many social activities, including the Queen Esther Social Club. She was also a member of the Liberty Jewish Center.

The Freeman interview provides information about home and family life in the Park Heights area during from the 1920’s through the 1940’s. There is also a discussion about the hardships dealt by the Great Depression and about the influx of African Americans to the area in the 1960’s.

OH 8297   BNHP #154  Goldsmith, Belle [Miller]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview:  09/13/79
Belle Miller Goldsmith was born in Baltimore on May 29, 1916 to Jewish-Latvian parents. Her father remarried and brought the family to America at the age of 21. After years of struggle, her father opened his own ladies clothing business, but lost everything in 1929. The narrator had to quit school and get a job. She married Samuel Goldsmith July 14, 1940.

The Goldsmith interview offers information about social customs during the 1930’s (employment hardships, courtship, and marriage). The focus is on her father’s struggles in the workplace.

OH 8297    BNHP #159    Bluefeld, Louis and Bluefeld, Philip

The parents of the narrators Louis and Philip Bluefeld lived in Russia and left in the early 1900’s to escape anti-Semitism. They were in the grocery business and had a stall at Lexington Market. Their father also became very successful in real estate and thus the family was unaffected by the Great Depression.

The Bluefeld brother’s interview is a good source for information about Lexington Market during the 1930’s, about establishing a synagogue in Baltimore, and about neighborhood life on Anoka Avenue. There is also much talk about the strong work ethic among Jewish people, and about the Bluefeld catering business.

OH 8297    BNHP #165    Kovitz, Rebecca [W_]
Rebecca W. Kovitz was born in Poland on February 14, 1897. Her father brought the family to America in 1907. After some schooling, she worked as a dressmaker. The narrator married Benjamin Kovitz on November 11, 1916. She was also somewhat involved in the Zionist movement.

The Kovitz interview provides some information about the impact of the Great Depression (child labor, money shortages, and husband’s health problems). There are also some details about the family during this time, such as older children caring for younger children and wife’s workload. There are some details about Jewish customs (weddings), especially foods (Gefilte Fish, matzo balls).

Leon Sachs was born in Baltimore on April 4, 1907 to Lithuanian-Americans of the Jewish faith. He was educated in the Baltimore public school system from 1913-1924. He attended Johns Hopkins University for his undergraduate (1924-1927) and graduate (1927-1931) education. From 1927-1931, he then attended the University of Maryland School of Law during the evenings. Sachs spent the summer of 1927 at the University of Geneva and taught at Johns Hopkins University from 1929-1941 and then became the director of the Baltimore Jewish Council (1941-1975). Sachs was also a labor arbitrator starting in 1942. He married Shirley on August 20, 1931 in Washington, D.C. The couple had one son.

The Sachs interview is an excellent source of information on Jewish-Gentile relations in Baltimore during the 1930’s and 1940’s (Anti-defamation League, housing discrimination, work discrimination).
Note(s):
Prudencia Fontanilla was born in the Philippines on April 28, 1927. He went to public school until grade seven; he then went to a private high school from which he graduated in 1941. He met Keiko while stationed in Okinawa. They married on March 1, 1957. The couple had one son. While the year he came to Baltimore is unclear, the reason he chose Baltimore was due to a job offered to him by Londontown MFG. Fontanilla attended the University of Baltimore from 1972-1976. His military career consisted of twenty-four years in the U.S. Navy.

The Fontanilla interview provides information about family life and living conditions such as childhood games, children’s chores and work opportunities for adults in the Philippines during the 1930’s and early 1940’s. There is also some discussion of immigration difficulties, of military life, and of adopted American customs.

OH 8297    BNHP #185    Sampson, Ruth [Ezekiel?]  

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 11/05/79  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home  
Length of Interview: 45 min.  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index

Note(s):
Ruth Sampson was born on a forty-acre farm in Mt Olive, North Carolina on October 22, 1919. She attended segregated schools for African Americans through high school in North Carolina; she attended Baltimore’s Morgan State College from 1959-1960, Coppin State College in 1968, and later Towson State College. She was married in Alexandria, Virginia on March 27, 1940. The couple had one child. The couple opened a restaurant, which they operated for twenty-seven years.

The Sampson interview provides information about growing up on a farm such as discipline at home, farm chores, and the importance of education, and about school segregation, especially about being bussed passed schools for white children. There is some discussion about the differences in the school facilities and about the celebrities who frequented the Sampson restaurant.

OH 8297    BNHP #192    Kalman, Olga [Feher?]  

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 11/16/79  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home  
Length of Interview: 90 min.  
Number of Tapes: 2  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

Olga Kalman was born in Miskole, Hungary on April 2, 1911 to Hungarian Jews. She recalls a mostly happy childhood, but experienced Anti-Semitic comments from her playmates. She was educated up through two years of evening college in Hungary and completed a wide range of courses in medicine, engineering and wasing once in the United States. Her parents wanted her to leave Hungary for the United States out of fear over the rise of Hitler. She married her first husband in Hungary in 1936; the couple moved to New York City where the narrator worked as a dress designer. All of her family but one brother died at the hands of the Nazis. The man who would become her second husband was also brutalized by the Nazis while in a concentration camp.

The Kalman interview provides much information about Nazi barbarism. There are also some comparisons of life in Hungary to life in America, of the racial composition of her neighborhood, and of the benefits of being involved with the Jewish Community Center.

OH 8297 BNHP #201 Fisher, Anita [Grossblatt]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 01/03/80  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s office at the Jewish Community Center  
Length of Interview: 60 min.  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index

Anita Fisher was born in Baltimore on March 13, 1928 to Russian immigrants of the Jewish faith. She attended P.S. #27, P.S. #40, and Eastern High School. She had a very strict religious upbringing. The narrator was married twice and had four children. At the time of the interview, she worked for the Jewish Community Center.

The Fisher interview provides good information about the social adjustment faced by immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century (lowering in social status for educated immigrants), ethnic shopping venues on Baltimore’s Eastern Avenue, and Jewish religious training for children. There is also an assessment of the Eating Together Program.

OH 8297 BNHP #208 Landay, Clara [Trompeter]

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen  
Date of Interview: 05/25/80  
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home  
Length of Interview: 60 min  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript: n/a  
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):
Clara T. Landay was born in Toronto, Canada on May 1, 1911 to Austrian-Canadians of the Jewish faith. Her parents moved first to New York and then Newport News, VA where her father continued the family business of baking. She attended high school and two years of college. She was married in 1934 in Roanoke, Virginia. She and her husband had two children. The year the family came to Baltimore is unclear; however, her husband worked for Epstein’s Baltimore Bargain House. The narrator was very active in social activities in upper Park Heights.

The Landay interview provides details about living conditions in two states, about the flu epidemic, and about courting practices during the 1903’s. This is one of the few interviews in this neighborhood that state that the Great Depression had no impact on the narrator’s financial situation.

OH8297   BNHP#213   Tucker, Joseph

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allan
Date of Interview: 3/9/80
Place of Interview: 
Length of Interview: 60 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: interview notes, biography form, tape index
Note(s)

Mr. Tucker was born on February 18, 1910 in Baltimore, and lived for much of his childhood on his family’s farm. He was an employee at Bethlehem Steel for 27 years.

OH 8297   BNHP #216   Hackerman, Irvin

Name of Interviewer: Berger, Allen
Date of Interview: 08/06/80
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 90 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s): First letter of narrator’s last name is unclear (N?).

Irvin N. Hackerman was born in Baltimore on December 23, 1914. His parents immigrated to Baltimore to escape mistreatment by the Russians (Pogroms) and chose Baltimore because his mother had relatives already living in the area. He attended school through two years at the Maryland Institute. He married Ruth Rosenberg on June 20, 1937. The couple had two children. At the time of the interview, the narrator was president of the Nathan Hackerman Lodge, which was named after his family.
The Hackerman interview provided many details about social venues in Baltimore from the 1930’s through the 1950’s, especially Pimlico Race Track. There is some discussion of impact of the Great Depression (child labor, labor unions, strikes), and there is a comparison between the upper and lower Park Heights area as well.

**Site 4: Little Italy**

Begun in the early 1800’s, the influx of Italian immigrants to the United States increased dramatically during the Gold Rush of the 1850’s. Little Italy is a byproduct of that era. Founded in 1849 (LBHC), Italian immigrants, attracted to its proximity to the harbor and its departing ships, came to this area as a stop over before heading West to Sutter’s Mill. (Sandler, 57) A railroad station was built at President and Fleet Street in response to this need. Other evidence of this intention by Italian immigrants to only stay in Baltimore temporarily is illustrated by the early residences consisting of temporary housing, namely hostleries.

The early immigrants were from Genoa. They were joined by others from central Italy, mainly Naples, at approximately the same time that some of the temporary residents decided to make this area their permanent home. They took jobs as cooks and laborers in the hostleries and the growing number of restaurants in town (Sander, 57). The most significant signal of this new permanence was the building of St. Leo the Great Roman Catholic Church and school in 1880 on the corner of Exeter and Stiles streets (Churches).

Local lore has it that the Great Fire of 1904 spared the community when its residents prayed to St. Anthony. Every year since, the neighborhood holds the Festival of St. Anthony to commemorate its deliverance (LBHC).

At the time of the BNHP, Little Italy consisted of twelve square blocks of row house, small shops, and several restaurants. All were owned by members of this proud all-Italian-American community.

**Sources:**


Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297  BNHP # 053  DiCicco, Michael J.

Name of Interviewer:  Gordon, Holly  
Date of Interview:  5/29/79  
Place of Interview:  St. Leo’s Church Hall  
Length of Interview:  45 minutes  
Number of Tapes:  1  
Length of Transcript:  29 pages  
File Contents:  Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.  
Note(s):
Michael DiCicco was born in Baltimore in 1892. His parents, Loretta and Cosimo DiCicco, were both born in Italy. DiCicco attended St. Leo’s Church and was a member of St. Leo’s Holy Name Society. He married Eleanor Caroselli in 1947; they had two children.

Interview topics include his early work experience in factories and construction, the 1904 Baltimore Fire, his relationship with George Nitzel, a Baltimore police officer, Centennial Week in 1912, the courtship of his wife, social activities for teenagers in the neighborhood, and his time in the Army during World War One.

OH 8297  BNHP # 054  Rossini, Nick

Name of Interviewer:  Gordon, Holly  
Date of Interview:  5/1/79  
Place of Interview:  Narrator’s home  
Length of Interview:  1 hour  
Number of Tapes:  1  
Length of Transcript:  25 pages  
File Contents:  Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.  
Note(s):
Nick Rossini was born in Vigo, Italy in 1890. His parents, Andrei and Antoinetta Rossini, were also born in Vigo, Italy. Rossini immigrated to the United States in 1910. He married Angelina Pompeii in 1921 at St. Patrick’s; they had three children.

Interview topics include work conditions, racial tensions on the job, his positions at the Baltimore Drydock and the Jerkwater streetcar, his wife’s immigration, their experience with an Italian matchmaker, his work as a plumber and other interests in mechanical home repair and roofing, his family’s experience during the Depression, and the parenting roles of his household.

OH 8297  BNHP # 078  Esposito, Ida (Cipolloni)

Name of Interviewer:  Gordon, Holly  
Date of Interview:  6/28/79
Ida Esposito was born in Baltimore in 1917. Both of her parents, as well as her grandparents, were born in Abruzzi, Italy. Esposito attended St. Leo’s School and Eastern High. Esposito attended St. Leo’s Church and worked as a volunteer there for 29 years doing publicity. She as also a member of the Mother’s Club, St. Leo’s PTA, the South Eastern Community Council, and St. Gabriel’s Society. She and her husband, Armond Esposito, a welder, married in 1940 at St. Leo’s Church.

Esposito provides the history of her family while in Italy and the story of their immigration; she also includes information about the Baltimore Fire and the early years of St. Leo’s Church. Prohibition, the Depression, the WPA, and her family’s involvement in WWII are discussed. Esposito talks a lot about neighborhood life in Little Italy; she includes descriptions of her childhood home, geographic boundaries, musical evenings, and neighborhood bars and markets. Esposito discusses the structure of her family and parenting roles, such as the “godfather system”.

Ms. Cucino was born on April 28, 1916 and lived on S. Exeter Street for most of her life. Her husband, Sam Cucina, worked at Crown, Cork, and Seal as a machinist. They had 4 children.

Ms. Cucino’s interview provides information about life in Baltimore during World War 2, and details about her Father’s business as a Tailor. Of particular interest is the description of Sicilian family life, and the cultural differences Ms. Cuchino experienced with her husband’s family.
Larry Marino was born in New York in 1916; his parents were both born in Italy near Naples, in Provincia Gazette. Marino attended St. Leo’s School, St. Mary’s Industrial School, and Vocational Aisquita and Baltimore. Marino worked on the waterfront, driving trucks for the Bull Line and working on Pier 4. Marino was a member of the Moose Club, the American Legion, the American Turner, the Boxing Association and ILA A29.

A main topic is Marino’s school experience and recreational activities such as boxing, pier dances, and youth gangs. Other interview topics included union activity, Prohibition and bootleggers, and the ethnic identity of the neighborhood. Marino spends a lot of time on the gangs in the neighborhood and their interaction with other neighborhoods such as Hampden.

Guilia DiPietro was born in Pianella, Teramo, Italy, in 1885. Her interview is in Italian, with Frances Vitale serving as a translator. DiPietro immigrated to Baltimore in 1921 with her mother and two children; her husband Tomaso moved to Baltimore in 1917 for work. DiPietro worked from home and in a factory doing tailor piecework.

DiPietro describes the immigration experiences of both her husband and herself. She mentions the names of many of her neighborhood friends and people she worked with. She describes her husband’s city band performances as well as his experience with Tuberculosis, which caused his death. DiPietro describes the work experiences of her and her husband, and she discusses some of the neighborhood clubs, such as the Sons of Italy. She gives a lot of information about the neighborhood, including predominant employers, descriptions of the houses, and how the neighborhood has changed.

Anthony Schiavo was born in Pianella, Teramo, Italy, in 1885. His interview is in Italian, with Frances Vitale serving as a translator. Schiavo immigrated to Baltimore in 1917 with his mother and two children; his father moved to Baltimore in 1916 for work. Schiavo worked from home and in a factory doing tailoring piecework.

Schiavo describes the immigration experiences of both his parents and himself. He mentions the names of many of his neighborhood friends and people he worked with. He describes his family’s city band performances as well as his experience with Tuberculosis, which caused his death. Schiavo describes the work experiences of his family and he discusses some of the neighborhood clubs, such as the Sons of Italy. He gives a lot of information about the neighborhood, including predominant employers, descriptions of the houses, and how the neighborhood has changed.
Anthony Schiavo was born in Baltimore in 1928. Her parents, Pauline Mary Cirelli and Samuel Schiavo, were also born in Baltimore.

Schiavo’s maternal grandfather, Charles Cirelli, was born in Genoa but worked as a dock worker and hurdy gurdy man in Baltimore. Schiavo discusses Cirelli’s immigration and life in Baltimore, including his employment, in detail. Schiavo also discusses his mother’s employment in area restaurants. Schiavo describes language in Little Italy, particularly how some people only speak Italian or English. Schiavo talks about his various uncles and brothers and how they make a living in Baltimore and elsewhere. The focus of this interview is Cirelli.

John Pente was born in Baltimore in 1910. Pente’s mother, who died in 1912, was born in Avellino and his father, Joseph Pente, was born in Chieti, Abruzzi, Italy. Pente attended St. Leo’s School and Calvert Hall. He worked as a machinist at Western Electric for 30 years. Pente was a member of the Sons of Italy.

Pente discusses his family’s immigration. Pente describes the jobs his family members held, including saloon owner, shoemaker, junk dealer, musician, and instrument repairman. Pente points out where his family lived in the neighborhood and describes some of the businesses in Little Italy, including a soup kitchen that was run by the Maccioca family out of their home. Other interview topics include Prohibition, bootleggers, the ethnic make-up of the neighborhood, jobs and social activities available to teenagers in the area, and the migration of families out of Little Italy.

John Pente was born in Baltimore in 1910. Pente’s mother, who died in 1912, was born in Avellino and his father, Joseph Pente, was born in Chieti, Abruzzi, Italy. Pente attended St. Leo’s School and Calvert Hall. He worked as a machinist at Western Electric for 30 years. Pente was a member of the Sons of Italy.

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Notes:

Josephine Santoro was born in Baltimore in 1904. Her parents, Nora Dechess and Joseph Lancione, were both born in Scanno, Italy. Santoro attended St. Leo’s School and later worked at the A&P Warehouse on Gay Street. Her husband, Nicholas Santoro, worked at a pumping station.

Interview topics include her parent’s marriage and immigration, her family’s home, her parent’s experience in opening and running a local bar. Santoro discusses local boarding houses and the prevalence of organ grinders in the neighborhood. Santoro describes her arranged marriage, social events, and church activities. She describes the Depression and its effect on the neighborhood families. Santoro describes the boarders of Little Italy, the change in the area surrounding the neighborhood, and the migration of families to other parts of the city or county. Santoro also discusses the process of purchasing a home and securing a loan.

OH 8297    BNHP # 113    Schwartz, Louis

Name of Interviewer:   Stern, Doris
Date of Interview:     7/21/79 and 7/27/79
Place of Interview:    Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:   2 hours and 45 minutes
Number of Tapes:       2
Length of Transcript:  24 pages
File Contents:         Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Notes:

Louis Schwartz was born in Richmond, VA, in 1914. Both his parents, Mathila Winaker and Morris Schwartz, were born in Russia. Schwartz attended the Bank Street School, Schools #215, #47, #203, #40, and Poly High School. Schwartz attends the Oheb Shalom Bethel synagogue; he is a member of the Lions Club, the Masonic Lodge, and the J.E.A. Schwartz worked as a tailor and his wife, Beatrice Freedman, works as a manicurist.

Schwartz’s family moved around Baltimore when he was a child, and he speaks about many of the different neighborhoods from his perspective as a child. Schwartz discusses the ethnic groups in Baltimore and areas of the city where the different groups lived; he remembers a lot about the Italian communities. He also describes the migration of these groups out of the city.

OH 8297    BNHP # 116    DeAntoniis, Reparata Castagua

Name of Interviewer:   Scarpaci, Jean
Date of Interview:     7/21/79
Place of Interview:    Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:   1 hour and 45 minutes
Number of Tapes:       2
Length of Transcript:  n/a
File Contents:         Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Notes:
Reparata Castagua DeAntoniis was born in Atri, Abruzzi, Italy, in 1908. Her husband, William (Guglielmo) DeAntoniis, was born in Toramo Nuovo, Italy. She moved to Baltimore as a child when her mother died while her father was serving in WWI.

DeAntoniis describes the immigration of herself and her husband; she also describes her husband's employment experience and his service in WWII. Her aunt kept boarders in the neighborhood, and she talks about the process and cost of renting. DeAntoniis talks about union presence at local employers and how workers needed union protection. Other interview topics include the influence of the church on the neighborhood, religious social events such as the St. Gabriel Society Feast, geographic and ethnic borders, local stores,

OH 8297    BNHP # 117    Vaccarino, Joseph G.

Name of Interviewer: Ogren, Kathy
Date of Interview: 7/21/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s grocery store (Sol D’Italia)
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 20 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcripts.
Notes:

Joseph Vaccarino was born in Baltimore in 1910. His parents, Rosaria Cannizzaro and Isidora Vaccarino, were both born in Riposto, Cardegna, Sicily, Italy. Vaccarino attended St. Leo’s School and School #2 through 9th grade. Vaccarino was a member of the Italian American Civic Club, the Rivera Pleasure Club, the Melbourne Pleasure Club, and the Overleaf-Fullerton Recreation Council; he helped form the Rivera and Melbourne clubs. Vaccarino owns a wholesale grocery store, the Sol D’Italia.

Interview topics include his parent’s immigration and employment history, social club membership of his family members, Italian pride in neighborhood, trips to the Eastern Shore, and the formation of the several neighborhood clubs. Vaccarino describes his life as a business owner and his attempt to organize local groceries. He describes differing views of war among members of his family, and his courtship with his wife.

OH 8297    BNHP # 125    Caplan, Betty (Smith)

Name of Interviewer: Stern, Doris
Date of Interview: 8/7/79 and 8/14/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 30 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Notes:
Betty Caplan was born in Baltimore in 1907. Her parents, Sarah Pumpian and Louis Smith, were both born in Kovna, Russia. She married her husband, Jesse Caplan, in 1926 in Baltimore. Caplan worked in her father’s lunchroom and her husband’s meat market. Caplan was a member of the High St. Shul and Denmoreavb Petach Tivka.

Interview topics include her husband’s butcher shop, including what he sold and customer preferences, and other markets in the neighborhood, the ethnic makeup of customers, and various neighborhoods she has lived in, including Park Heights.

OH 8297 BNHP # 138 Lo Grande, Vincenzina Buscemi

Name of Interviewer: Scarpaci, Jean
Date of Interview: 8/23/79
Place of Interview: n/a
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.

Notes:

Vincenzina Buscemi Lo Grande was born in Baltimore in 1911. Her mother, Maria Buccheri, was born in Palermo in 1892; her father, Carmelo Buscemi, was born in Calaseibette, in 1883. Lo Grande attended Schools #73 and #93. She began working at the Muskin Shoe Factory as a teenager, and later worked at the Borden Ice Cream factory and the Hecht Company. Her husband, Dominic J. Lo Grande, had a fruit stall in the Belair Market.

Lo Grande discusses her friendships with people of other ethnicities, including Jewish and African American, as a young child and teenager. She describes the Belair Market, and other area markets and restaurants, as she remembers it as a child. Lo Grande describes her parents marriage and her parents family and history in Italy. Her uncle and husband were both involved in the fruit industry, and she describes how her uncle would ripen his fruit to make it ready for sale. She also describes her father’s various jobs when she was a child, and how she and her siblings would help him when they could.

OH 8297 BNHP # 139 Sergi, Joseph

Name of Interviewer: Scarpaci, Jean
Date of Interview: 8/21/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 70 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.

Notes:
Joseph Sergi was born in Philadelphia in 1908. Both of his parents, Mary Fidi and Antonio Sergi, were born in Messina, Sicily, Italy. His mother gave birth to 21 children; 15 lived and he is the seventh born. Sergi attended St. Leo’s School and School #2. Sergi’s main job was at Baltimore Gas and Electric. He attended St. Leo’s Church and is a member of the St. Gabriel Society and the Moose Lodge.

Interview topics include his parents immigration to the United States and Baltimore, his parents employment, birthing procedures and the role of midwives in the community, his experience in both parochial and public school, interethnic marriages, social activities of kids in the neighborhood, and the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood, both religiously and racially. Sergi describes many of the jobs his father, his brothers, and other neighborhood men held throughout the city, from selling ice to boarding horses in Little Italy. Sergi gives a lot of detailed information about locations of businesses and important landmarks in Baltimore, including names and boundaries.

OH 8297    BNHP # 140    Pastore, Mary (Garofalo)

Name of Interviewer: Scarpaci, Jean
Date of Interview: 8/21/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 2 hours
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 74 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Notes:

Mary Pastore was born in Baltimore in 1907. Both of her parents, Teresi and Vincent Garofalo, were born in Palermo, Italy. Pastore’s father was a stonecutter and he did a sculpture outside of the city hall in Palermo. Pastore attended St. Leo’s School and School #43. She began working at the Coca Cola Building at age 12, and later helped in her family’s store. She married Frank Pastore in 1920.

Interview topics include her parent’s employment history and their immigration, the prevalence of home work for neighborhood women, her father’s grocery business, her childhood friends, the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood, expectation of sons and daughters, and area schools and markets. She also discusses her grandfather’s retirement, her sister’s wedding, religious activities and customs, and her children’s employment and families. Pastore describes many area landmarks and neighborhood boundaries.

OH 8297    BNHP # 141    Marocco, Raymond

Name of Interviewer: Scarpaci, Jean
Date of Interview: 8/24/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s office
Length of Interview: 1 hour
Number of Tapes: 1
Raymond Marocco was born in Baltimore in 1920. His parents, Rosa D’Ecerelle and Pio Marocco, were born in Guarcino, Italy, near Rome. He has two siblings, Pio Marocco and Josephine Lazzati.

He includes information on other companies his father worked with on large projects and refers to these companies by name. He describes benefits for his father’s workers and how the workers helped each other out, and his father’s involvement in the St. Anthony Society. Marocco describes the social activities in the neighborhood, in particular Sunday afternoon visitations. He also discusses geographical boundaries of Little Italy and other ethnic neighborhoods in the city.

Sister Ursula was born in Pittsburgh in 1909. She received her bachelor’s degree in education at Carlow College in Pittsburgh. Sister Ursula taught at St. Leo’s School, beginning in the late 1920s.

Interview topics include the early years at St. Leo’s, the construction of the school building, the neighborhood backing of the school, family and community support for children, the churches help with the ill, changing ethnic dynamic in the neighborhood, the dwindling school enrollment, and the May processions.

Sister Ursula was born in Pittsburgh in 1909. She received her bachelor’s degree in education at Carlow College in Pittsburgh. Sister Ursula taught at St. Leo’s School, beginning in the late 1920s.

Interview topics include the early years at St. Leo’s, the construction of the school building, the neighborhood backing of the school, family and community support for children, the churches help with the ill, changing ethnic dynamic in the neighborhood, the dwindling school enrollment, and the May processions.
Julia Poggi was born in Baltimore in 1909. Her parents, Elizabeth Margaret Galli Poggi and Gabriel Poggi, were also born in Baltimore. Poggi attended the Institute of Notre Dame, the College of Notre Dame, and the pharmacy school of the University of Maryland. Her family owned a pharmacy and she worked there her entire life.

Interview topics include her grandparent’s immigration from Italy, her grandfather’s work at the pharmacy (which he later bought), family histories in the neighborhood, her mother’s education at the Baltimore Art School, factory work, ethnic boundaries of Baltimore neighborhoods, schooling, learning Italian as a second language, and the roles of the children in the family. A main topic is her family’s pharmacy, including the history of the store, her family’s involvement in it, Prohibition and the practice of writing prescriptions for alcohol, homeopathic methods of curing diseases passed down through the generations, the process of making pills, and how the store has changed over time with the changing of the neighborhood.

OH 8297    BNHP # 167    Molino, Angela (Culotta)

Name of Interviewer: Gordon, Holly
Date of Interview:    9/5/79
Place of Interview:   n/a
Length of Interview:  1 hour
Number of Tapes:      1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents:         Biography form, interview notes, & tape index.
Notes:                Narrator’s husband, John Pasqual Molino, participates occasionally

Angela Molino was born in Baltimore in 1918. Both of her parents, Maria Ilardo and Antionio Culotta, were born in Cefalu, Sicily, Italy. Molino attended School #2 and School #40 until she was 14 years old. Before marriage, Molino was a tailor; later in life she worked with her husband, John Pasqual Molino, as a lithographer. They married in 1942 and had three children. Molino attended St. Leo’s Church and was a member of St. Gabriel’s, St. Leo’s Sodality, and the UPIU (AFL-CIO).

Interview topics include her childhood growing up in the neighborhood, her father’s employment, religious rituals and customs, social activities with the church and school, the Jewish groups in the neighborhood, traditional meals, courtship rules, and neighborhood politics, including her interaction with Thomas D’Alesandro.

OH 8297    BNHP # 168    Scherbuk, Mabel (Rifkin)

Name of Interviewer: Stern, Doris
Date of Interview:    9/25/79
Place of Interview:   Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:  1 hour 30 minutes
Number of Tapes:      2
Length of Transcript: 57 pages
File Contents:         Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript.
Mabel Scherbuk was born in Baltimore in 1920. Her parents, Lillian and Harry Rifkin, were also born in Baltimore. Scherbuk attended School #2, School #40, and Seton High School. She worked as a clerk for the I.R.S. and City Hall. Scherbuk attended St. Vincent’s Catholic Church and was a member of the 3rd Ward Democratic Club and the Mount Royal Democratic Club. Her husband, John Scherbuk, was a radio operator in the Merchant Marines and at a radio station. They married in 1931 and had two children.

Scherbuk came from an interethnic marriage; her father was Jewish and her mother was Irish. She discusses the ethnic make-up and tolerance of the neighborhood; she also discusses her family’s history in Little Italy. Other interview topics include her education, her interest in politics and her father’s connection to local politics, including Thomas D’Alesandro, her family’s experience in the Depression, marriage and childbearing experiences, her friendship with Sister Ursula, the renovation of their house, the changes in the neighborhood, and the Baltimore race riots.

John Cuba was born in Calaseibetta, Sicily, Italy, in 1898. He moved to Baltimore in 1923. Cuba held jobs with many area businesses, including the street car company, Emerson Hotel, Rustless Steel Company, Gas and Electric Company, and in the ice business.

Interview topics include Cuba’s immigration to the United States, the family support he had in Baltimore, Belair Market, immigrant social groups including one that connected immigrants from Calaseibetta, the activities and structure of the immigrant groups, religious ceremonies and feasts, parades, the building of the group’s headquarters, and visits to see Italian prisoners of war at Fort Meade.
Benjamin Apicella was born in Baltimore in 1926. Both of his parents, Clara McGeeney and Albert Leo Apicella, were also born in Baltimore. His father was in construction and later became a contractor.

Interview topics include his grandparent’s emigration to Baltimore, family relations among his father and grandfather, his father’s construction company and the many other positions his father held (including positions constructing the Jones Falls Expressway and as a bookkeeper with a bank), the influence of the union, and many different aspects of the construction business. Apicella also describes his role as the bank he worked for, including describing the process of securing a loan. Apicella describes the relationship between realtors, the banks, and the construction companies. Other interview topics include family relations, his education at La Salle, the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood, and neighborhood politics.

Catherine Mancuso was born in S. Andrea Tomio, Italy, in 1920. Her parents were both born in Calabria, Italy. Her family immigrated to Baltimore when she was 10 years old. Mancuso attended Schools #93, #2, and #40 in Baltimore. She has attended St. Leo’s and St. Francis Churches, and is a member of St. Leo’s Mother’s Club and the Italian American Historical Association. She was married to Joseph Seminoyzi in 1936, and Gregiano (Gus) Marcuso in 1970; Gus Marcuso owned a barber supply shop.

Marcuso describes her experience moving here as a child, including the Americanization classes she attended at School #93. She describes her role in the family as the oldest daughter, her mother’s family history, her parent’s jobs, her arranged marriage, area stores, family oriented social activities, and her family’s adjustment to life in the United States. She also describes the political climate of the 1930-1950s, including collecting for the Catholic churches, local hospitals, and the NRA, involvement of the local unions, and a local politician named D’Alesandro.
Frank Pagliara was born in Baltimore in 1926. His mother, Concetta Salvo Coluzzi, was also born in Baltimore; his father, Joseph Pagliara, was born in Naples, Italy. Pagliara was a member of the Air Force in 1944, and he currently works for the City of Baltimore as a building inspector. He attends St. Leo’s Church, and is a member of the Knights of Columbus, the American Legion, and the Local 155 Plasterers Union.

Interview topics include his family’s immigration and employment, living conditions, his mother’s job and her experience as a widower with children, prevalence of alcohol in the neighborhood, the ethnic composure of Little Italy, the differences in the local row houses, the economic stratification of the church. Pagliara names many specific area stores and their locations. He describes the ethnic orientation of several neighborhoods.

Rosa Vaccarino was born in Riposto, Sicily, Italy, in 1896; her daughter, Frances Caliri, was born in 1920 and served as Vaccarino’s translator for the interview. Vaccarino’s husband, Carmelo Vaccarino, was also born in Riposto, Sicily, in 1891. Vaccarino and Caliri immigrated to the United States in 1930 to join Vaccarino’s husband, who was already here working.

Interview topics include the family’s immigration, work experience, Caliri’s experience as a child immigrant, the Depression, expenses and costs of items, role of the church in the community, Caliri’s marriage, movement of families out of the neighborhood, ethnic stores and community boundaries, special occasion meal plans, and community social events.

Eleanor Apicella Lancelotta was born in Riposto, Sicily, Italy, in 1896; her daughter, Frances Caliri, was born in 1920 and served as Vaccarino’s translator for the interview. Vaccarino’s husband, Carmelo Vaccarino, was also born in Riposto, Sicily, in 1891. Vaccarino and Caliri immigrated to the United States in 1930 to join Vaccarino’s husband, who was already here working.

Interview topics include the family’s immigration, work experience, Caliri’s experience as a child immigrant, the Depression, expenses and costs of items, role of the church in the community, Caliri’s marriage, movement of families out of the neighborhood, ethnic stores and community boundaries, special occasion meal plans, and community social events.
Eleanor Apicella was born in Natick, Rhode Island, in 1920; her family moved to Little Italy in Baltimore in 1935. Her parents, Elvira Lombardi and Giocchino Lancelotta, were both born in Fornelli, Italy. Apicella attended St. Leo’s School and the Institute of Notre Dame. Her husband, Alphonse G. Apicella, runs a store with his wife’s help. Apicella attends St. Agnes and is a member of the Solidarity of St. Leo and the Sons of Italy.

Topics include Apicella’s memories of the neighborhood as a child, children’s household responsibilities, Jewish presence in Little Italy, grocery options and markets, her school experience and discrimination encountered, parental roles and influences, her mother’s employment, interethnic marriage, her feelings about Little Italy, and the migration of family’s, including her own, out of the neighborhood.

OH 8297   BNHP # 210   Bruni, Joseph J.

Joseph Bruni was born in Baltimore in 1915. His mother, Virginia Lavazza, was also born in Baltimore, and his father was born in Carrarra, Tuscany, Italy. Bruni attended St. Leo’s School, Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, and a vocational school located downtown. Bruni married Anna Pasquariello in 1941. Bruni has worked for the City of Baltimore, the Pennsylvania Railroad, and as a foreman for Baltimore Gas and Electric. He attends St. Leo’s Church.

Interview topics include his father’s immigration and employment history, ethnic differences within the neighborhood, Bruni’s employment history, his military experience, retail options in Little Italy, community activities including the May processions, and the involvement of the churches in social activities. He talks in detail about is family’s experience during Prohibition; his father was a bootlegger and he explains how he helped his father make wine and beer and the systems that were established to distribute the products.

OH 8297   BNHP # 212   Tarasco, Francis
Francis Tarasco was born in [indecipherable], in the northern part of Italy, in 1912. His parents, Picrina Martinazzi and [indecipherable] were born [indecipherable]. Tarasco was educated at the University of Turino and later became a teacher.

Tarasco describes the village he was born in and his family’s ties to that area. Another area of interest is his description of his experience in the Italian military, including time he spent in Africa, his capture by the English military, and his experience as a prisoner of war in Scotland and the United States. He describes living conditions in the P.O.W. camps, propaganda produced by the United States military, and the work he performed as a prisoner. He was eventually housed at Fort Meade, in Maryland. The tape index is incomplete.

**Site 5: South Baltimore**

In 1979 the recognized boundaries of South Baltimore included the neighborhoods of Brooklyn/Curtis Bay, Cherry Hill, Federal Hill, Locust Point, Riverside, and Sharp-Leadenhall. South Baltimore residents were from many races and ethnicities. The numerous neighborhood schools, worship services, and gathering halls reflect that diversity. At the time of the BNHP many of these neighborhoods were struggling with the aftermath of various urban renewal projects.

Of particular note is the neighborhood of Sharp-Leadenhall, which some accounts put its founding as 1790 (Jensen, 2005). Located between Federal Hill and Interstate 395, this small community, begun by free African Americans, stretched to where the Baltimore Convention Center now stands. Other sources note that the most significant vestige of that community is the “Little Montgomery Street Historic District.” Through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, working class German and Irish immigrants, and freed blacks lived side by side and competed for work on the railroads and at the port (Commission 2004). According to the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation: “By the 1890s, the twenty-four blocks of Sharp-Leadenhall were a thriving residential-industrial community with three churches, three public schools, a police station, and dozens of major and minor manufactories (Commission 2004).

In the early 1970’s, large portions of the northern half of the community where marked for the “dollar house” urban renewal program. Today it has the Sharp Leadenhall Planning Committee, Inc—a coalition committed to community revitalization.

**Sources:**


Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297   BNHP #056   Boss, Helen [Granger]

Name of Interviewer: Krupchyk, Areta
Date of Interview: 6/4/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 1 hr. 35 min.
Number of Tapes: 3
Length of Transcript: 29 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Born April 14, 1896 to Catholic parents, Helen Boss lived in South Baltimore all of her life. There is little discussion of her ethnic background. The narrator attended St. Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic School from grades 1-6 (1902-1907). She worked sporadically outside of the house for companies such as the National Enameling & Stamp Company (1908 or 9), NESCO(?), Star, Net & Twine Co.(1911), Ellis’s Cigarette Factory(?), and Tin Decorating (1918-1919). She married Henry Boos in 1914; they had three children.

Her interview provides excellent details of domestic life for women, work life for women, and how women socialized together; for example, with the Public Athletic League. There are brief anecdotes about racial encounters between whites, blacks (“coloreds”), and Chinese. There is one story of a white child’s first encounter with racial difference. Other major topics covered include Baltimore industries (shipyards, slaughterhouses, etc.), Prohibition, Patterson Memorial Hall, female laborers, city life in the early twentieth century.

OH 8297   BNHP #057   Doyle, Mary [Bush]

Name of Interviewer: Green, Christine
Date of Interview: 5/22/79
Place of Interview: Allen Center, South Baltimore
Length of Interview: 55 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Born in May 22, 1896, Mary Doyle grew up in South Baltimore of Irish heritage. She was raised Catholic, and was a member of St. Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic church. She experienced the Baltimore Fire of 1904 and a flu epidemic; she also talks about her grandfather working on the Hanover Street Bridge. She married fireman Joseph Doyle in 1922; they had no children. The narrator worked outside of the home at National Enameling and Stamping Company (1910-1920) and then at P.S. #4 and P.S.#84 as a school custodian for thirty years. She discuses the loss of her fingers in a work accident and her fear of seeking compensatory damages. She also recounts her husband’s lengthy mental illness.

Her interview provides details about Catholic schooling, men and women working together especially (National Enameling & Stamping Co.), working conditions, child labor, marriage, the Great depression, mental depression, and childlessness.

Olivia Lombardi was born March 9, 1911 in Denver, Colorado to Italian immigrants. When and why the family came to Baltimore is unclear. Raised Catholic, his interviews reflect the intersection of religion and social class in his life. Work was also of importance, especially his time at Federal Tin, a tin factory (1928-1943) and later as Assistance Chief Deputy of Circuit Court #2 (1946-1977). He provides information about the politics of job seeking and job security.

On Tapes 1 and 2, he discusses growing up in Baltimore during the Depression and his family’s general living conditions (housing, clothing, food). His education was cut short by the Depression and by poor relationships with teachers (feelings of alienation and discrimination). Later, he pursued an education and graduated from night school in 1942.

The narrator believed that he did not have the opportunity to get training as a skilled laborer; he also felt discriminated against by his Irish coworkers and the Irish church members. On tapes 3 through 5, he discusses his own ethnic identity and his interactions with other racial groups. He refers to his African American friend as “Sambo,” explains that “Blackhands” was a nickname for Italians, expresses his feelings of solidarity with a childhood Jewish friend, and talks about
his fear of Gypsies. On the second session tapes, he discusses his views of social class and how they impacted his life. He also talks briefly about bootlegging.

The Lombardi interviews are especially good at providing details about the multiple ethnic identities that made up South Baltimore from the 1930’s to the 1970’s.

OH 8297    BNHP #061    Manning, Joseph

Name of Interviewer: Kupchyk, Areta
Date of Interview: Session 1: 5/31/79; Session 2: 6/13/79; Session 2: 7/9/79
Place of Interview: Allen Center
Length of Interview: Session 1: 80 min.; Session 2: 60 min.; Session 3: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 31 pages
File Contents: Interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s): Transcript pages II: 1-2 are missing. Session 2 begins on Tape I, Side II

Joseph Manning was born in 1914. An alter boy at age seven, he learned Latin and how to serve the priest at mass. From 1921-1924, the narrator would go with Polish-American children to work as a vegetable picker on farms.

Manning provides a wealth of details about many facets of life in South Baltimore, especially neighborhood life in Locust Point. He retells a ghost story known as “the Ghost of Baltimore City.” According to his version, the ghost was a headless rider that used to ride through the swamp area behind PS#76. He also talks about how the neighborhood was first settled by German seamen, then Polish, and later Italian immigrants. In addition to very detailed accounts of social activities, he talks about activities from childhood, such as picnicking at Fort McHenry, crabbing behind Latrobe Park, and swimming near an old World War I ship. He explains the working and housing conditions for the Polish-Americans (starting at age nine) who worked as season “pickers. As a young man, the narrator identifies himself as part of the “Lost Generation.” The interviews conclude with the narrator’s reflections about the narrator’s current living conditions and how attitudes and values have changed since the 1940’s.

The Manning interviews provided extensive details about child labor from the 1920’s – 1940’s, the competition for employment during the Great Depression, the varied tasks of farm pickers, and social life and customs in the neighborhood (Jack Flood, Prohibition, streetcars). The interviews also discuss ethnic tension among German-, Polish-, and Italian-Americans.

OH 8297    BNHP #077    Dermont, Tessie Helen [Katofski]

Name of Interviewer: Kupchyk, Areta
Date of Interview: 6/28/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 40 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 29 pages
Tessie Helen Dermont was born November 10, 1912 and educated in Scranton, PA. Her Polish parents had originally settled in South Baltimore, but moved to PA find work in the coal mines. Dermont returned to South Baltimore in 1936 with her husband. The couple bordered with her aunt and both secured work in South Baltimore despite the Depression. They had no children. When the couple bought a home, the narrator worked outside the home in addition to keeping house for herself, her husband, and the borders they took in. Her jobs included bean picker, kitchen worker, hosiery clerk, charwoman, and later supervisor of charwomen. She attended St. Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic church for 43 years. Here she discusses interaction with other ethnic immigrants, particularly Irish and German church goers.

This interview provides details of the social conditions of married women who maintained home and worked outside of the home. It also discusses the extended family (kinship) network of borders and gives examples of different forms of community support.

Viola Davis was born in South Baltimore June 12, 1903. Her Methodist parents were also born there. She attended P.S. #28 from 1908-1914 up until the sixth grade. Then she attended P.S. #84 from 1914-1919. Davis held many positions outside the home including, candy factory worker at John Dockman & Sons (1917-1918), telephone worker at C&P Telephone (1918-1920), pajama factory laborer (1920-1921), and saleslady at Sear, Roebuck, & CO. (1941-1960).

She married her first husband, welder John Morrissey in 1921. The narrator converted to Catholicism after marriage. They had three children. She married Maryland Biscuit Company worker Walter Davis in 1952.

On tape 1, she discusses family excursions, social life, neighborhood composition, and religion. Here she talks about family picnics at the cemetery where her father was buried, “pound parties,” (everyone brought a pound of any food item), and how all her relatives lived on her same block. She describes how she went on “The Last Ride”—a bus ride to Cedar Hill Cemetery. Also, she participated in church shows with her father at Cross Street Market (1909-1910). She also provides an account of a big tent revival meeting featuring Billy Sunday preaching at what is now Key Highway. On tape 2, she continues her discussion of religion and also talks about education and housing. She recounts Sunday school picnics at Fairview Beach, a bonfire on
“Clay Hill” to celebrate the win of a favored local politician, and roller skating down Battery Avenue.

This interview provides extensive details about social life and religion in her neighborhood during the 1930-1950’s. It also offers some discussion of how the ethnic composition of her neighborhood changed in later decades.

OH 8297  BNHP #083  Redell, Thomas

Name of Interviewer: Green, Christine
Date of Interview: 6/21/79
Place of Interview: Allen Center, South Baltimore
Length of Interview: 25 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

Thomas Redell was born March 8, 1907 to Catholic parents. He attended P.S #84 (“Johnson Heath”) and St. Mary’s Star of the Sea (“Fort & Battery”). Redell worked as a candy packer at Dockman’s Candies, as a truck driver, and ran the whiskey machine at Pikesville Whiskey. He also worked for Star Net & Twin Co. The narrator married Lillian Hoffman in 1931; they had two children and eight grandchildren. He and his wife attended St. Mary’s Catholic Church. His wife died in 1969.

This interview is a very personal account of family, social, and religious life. He provides many details, such as street names and social gatherings (Hippodrome, Holy Name Society). He also provides many details about how his life changed after he married.

OH 8297  BNHP #121  Block, Harry

Name of Interviewer: Green, Christine
Date of Interview: 7/19/79
Place of Interview: Back room of Mr. Block’s store
Length of Interview: 112 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 57 pages.
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Harry Block was born on November 22, 1904; both of his parents were from Lithuania. He attended schools #10, #17, and #70; he graduated from Baltimore City College in 1922. He married Reba Frahm in 1938; they had two children. Block worked as a general storekeeper in South Baltimore. His wife worked as a saleslady. He was very active in social clubs, such as Knights of Pithius, the Premier Club, the Spartan Club, and the Altruman Club.
The narrator talks about growing up in South Baltimore as a Jewish person in terms of both acceptance and of discrimination. He talks about friendships with Gentiles and many other fond memories, especially of school. Block explains what it was like to operate a business within one’s community. He gives an account of some of the difficulties he faced as a Jewish merchant with non-Jewish customers. He also offers his opinion as to why Jewish residents left the area.

This interview provides many details about neighborhood life in South Baltimore, the Jewish community in South Baltimore, the benefits and challenges of operating a family business, and social activities in South Baltimore during the 1930’s and 1940’s.

OH 8297    BNHP #127    Buhrman, Melvin

Name of Interviewer: Green, Christine
Date of Interview: 8/10/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 37 pages
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, tape index, & transcript
Note(s):

Melvin “Bowser” Buhrman was born in Baltimore on August 3, 1909. His mother was from Germany; his father was from Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. He attended School #28 (Battery & Gittings) from first through sixth grade (1915-1921), and School #76 (Fort & Decatur) until age 15. He married Rose May Foraker on June 23, 1934 in Christ Lutheran Church. The couple had no children, but raised Rose’s sister. Buhrman worked for several business: as a packer for Applegarth’s and Frankie’s (1927-1929), as a driver of an electric truck for a sugar refinery (1929-1931), as a laborer for C.M. Pitts, and as a machinist for Mangles & Harole Co. At the time of the interview, he was still operating the tavern had purchased in 1937, sold in 1939, and bought back in 1946.

This interview provides information about coming of age (family values, dating, working teenager) during the Depression and daily life during the 1940’s, especially in terms of work, housing, and social activities (Jolly Pleasure Club). The narrator explains his contact with other ethnic groups (especially Irish-Americans and German-Americans). He provides a very frank discussion of his view of African Americas (terms used: “niggers,” “black people”). He also expresses his attitudes about having to open his tavern (“stag bar”) to woman in 1976. There are many details about the challenges of being a small business owner as well.

OH 8297    BNHP #128    Cunzeman, Marie [Burns]

Name of Interviewer: Green, Christine
Date of Interview: 7/31/79
Place of Interview: Home of a relative to the narrator
Length of Interview: 80 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Elsie Marie Burns Cunzeman was born July 28, 1908 in Baltimore to a Methodist mother and a Catholic father. She attended P.S. #28 (Battery & Gittings) to the seventh grade. Burns discusses four jobs she had outside of the home: Baltimore Paper Box Factory (1925-1929), John Dockman’s Candy Company (1922-1925), Cavaleir Shoe Polish (10 years), and Mangles and Harole (“King Syrup) (1954-1970). She married Earl William Cunzeman on June 29, 1929; they had three children. The narrator attended Grace United Church of Christ for fifty years.

The interview provides a highly detailed account of neighborhood life, including what it was like to live in a community primarily composed of one’s relatives. Burns provides recollections of her grandparents and her parents. In particular, she recalls her father helping other families build their homes off Curtis Bay. She goes on to describe typical chores for children, games played as a child (Home Sheep Run, Hopscotch), neighborhood block parties, and early dating experiences. The interview also provides some discussion of race relations at the workplace.

The group session was composed of the following four narrators: Grace Emanuel (born December 25, 1918), Lola Roach (age 65; sister to Grace Emanuel), John C. Clash (born March 9, 1900), and John Boyd (born March 8, 1906).

The group shared memories about their old neighborhood, the types of jobs they had, and what they did for recreation. Of particular note is their discussion of amateur baseball.
Agnes Callum was born in Massachusetts in 1911 and moved to South Baltimore in 1926 to live with an uncle. Her parents lived in Virginia, but were born in Cuba and possibly had been slaves. The narrator has great recollection of the fire in 1954, which burned homes along an entire side of West Street. She worked for thirty years for the Federal Tin Company. Due to an accident at work, Callum had to have a finger amputated. Her husband, who worked for a chemical plant, was also an amputee.

The interview offers of many details about neighborhood life on West Street.

OH 8297    BNHP #150    Whitney, Beatrice [Crutch]

Name of Interviewer: Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:  9/13/79
Place of Interview: Narrator’s home
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

Beatrice Whitney was born in Elizabeth City, North Carolina to African American Methodists. She attended school through the seventh grade. She married Burley Whitney on Christmas Day in 1925 in Baltimore. The couple had two children. Their son died at the age of five. The narrator worked for Federal Tin and attended both John Wesley Methodist Church and Ebenezer AME. Her husband died in 1969.

The Whitney interview is a good source of information about neighborhood life in the Sharpe-Leadenhall community.

OH 8297    BNHP #151    Lighthard, Madeline

Name of Interviewer: Peebles, Lucy
Date of Interview:  9/17/79
Place of Interview: Sharp-Leadenhall
Length of Interview: 30 min.
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

Madeline Lighthard was born July 2, 1919 in Virginia. She moved to Baltimore in 1947 and married in 1948. The narrator worked as both a domestic and lunch room cook. From 1972-1974 Lighthard was actively involved in an integrated (“white and colored”) community action group
in her neighborhood. The Tenant’s Union Group worked to get landlords to upkeep their properties by putting rental fees in escrow until the repairs were completed. She also talks about riots that occurred in South Baltimore.

The Lighthard interview is an excellent source for information of race relations in the early 1970’s.

OH 8297    BNHP #152    Brown, Carrie

Name of Interviewer:  Peebles, Lucy
Date of Interview:    10/17/79
Place of Interview:  Narrator’s home
Length of Interview:  60 min.
Number of Tapes:
Length of Transcript:
File Contents:        Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

Carrie Brown was born in Scotland Neck, North Carolina on May 31, 1923 where she went to school through the tenth grade. While the year she moved to Baltimore is unclear, she had lived in several of its neighborhoods before her current residence of fifteen years. Brown raised seven of her sister’s children and one of her own. A major portion of the interview concerns her poor living conditions and the resulting landlord-tenant problems.

The interview provides information about housing issues in South Baltimore during the 1970’s.

OH 8297    BNHP #156    Evans, William

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:    9/17/79
Place of Interview   Sharpe--Leadenhall
Length of Interview:  60 min.
Number of Tapes:      1
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents:        Biography form, interview notes, & tape index
Note(s):

William Evans was born in Fortune Virginia; his birth date is not provided. This African-American man came to Baltimore in approximately 1956. He shared his apprehension about white people “taking over” the area.

The interview offers some discussion of about Baltimore’s defacto neighborhood segregation policy and about race relations in general.
Octavious “Otis” Chisholm was born in Chester, South Carolina; his birth date is not provided. After serving for two years, 1953-1955, in Germany and in the Korean Conflict, he came to Baltimore to find work. A barber by trade, he worked for another barber in 1955, and then opened his own shop in 1956, the same year he married Mannie Smith. The couple had six children. With his earnings, he acquired several pieces of property. Chisholm expanded his employment into refrigeration services, and merchandise delivery. Later, he opened what he calls a “junk shop,” (“Odds and Ends Shop”), which he operated simultaneously with his other business ventures. At the time of the interview, Chisholm lived in northeast Baltimore.

The interview provides an excellent account of African-American (“black”) businesspeople during the mid-1950s and 1960s. It also provides information about industries in South Baltimore in general during that time period.

Annie Mae Wilson was born in Manning South Carolina. At age 18, she migrated to Baltimore to find employment and moved in with her cousin. She later met her husband there. She first found work taking care of a baby; later she worked at different rag factories. Wilson supplies many details about how hard her extended family members worked, and that her nephew owned his own business. She also details some of the typical day-to-day activities of neighborhood life (Cross-Street Market, Goldfield Movies). She remembers how the Fire of 1954 destroyed the homes on one side of her street.

This interview provides information about Landlord-tenant relations, the strain that financial problems put on a marriage, and both the pleasant and the dangerous aspects of living in South Baltimore.
Born December 27, 1895 and the child of German immigrants, the narrator talks about growing up in a mostly African American (“black”) neighborhood. She attended P.S. #92 for eight years. She also recalls stories about German school. At the age of fifteen, she was a millinery apprentice. She worked as a federal clerk until 1926. She also worked as a salesperson for Stewart’s, Hutzler’s, and The Hub. The narrator lived in South Baltimore until the age of 23 (1918). At the time of the interview, she lived in northern Baltimore.

The interview provides a good recollection of her ancestor’s life in Germany, of emigrating from Germany, and of the search for employment. There are details about her sense of her German-American identity, of the role of Catholic religion in her life, and of the work conditions for the packing houses (Odorless Excavating Association). It also provides a discussion of an outsider’s understanding of color caste discrimination among African Americans.

Alease Hutchinson Winston was born January 28, 1907 in Portsmouth, VA. She competed her schooling in that state through the seventh grade. In 1924 she married a boat oiler whose vessel traveled between Portsmouth and Baltimore. It is unclear when they moved to Baltimore. The couple had a son in 1924. Winston worked as a domestic during World War II and later at a bakery. Her husband died in 1966. The narrator was a member of Leadenhall Baptist Church. The narrator appears to have been African-American, but does not explicitly identify herself as such.

The interview provides details about how labor was divided among racial lines, about going to Negro Baseball League games, and about pleasant experiences she had living in South Baltimore.
Florence Jackson was born April 8, 1909 in Gastonia, North Carolina. This African-American woman came to Baltimore at age 23. For the next 30 years, she worked for the Federal Tin Co. as a machine operator. Before arriving in Baltimore she had worked as a domestic in North Carolina and had also married and divorced. She met her second husband there and followed him to Baltimore. The two wed at Ebenezer Church in 1943 in South Baltimore. The couple had no children. While she considered herself a Catholic, the narrator went to both St. Peter Claver’s Church and Leadenhall Baptist Church. She explains why she did not attend St. Monica’s, a black Catholic church in South Baltimore.

This interview provides extensive details about working conditions at the Federal Tin Company. There is some discussion about the intersection of race and religious practice.

Josephine Purdy worked at National Enameling and Stamping Company (NESCO) during the 1920’s and 1930’s. This interview provides information about women entering the labor force during WWI, unionized labor, and local politics. There is some discussion of local politics and neighborhood life.
Joseph Thommen was born March 19, 1903 in South Baltimore. His Catholic mother was born in Ireland; his Lutheran father, a silverchaser by trade, was born in Switzerland. Thommen attended St. Mary’s Star of the Sea from 1909 – 1917. He also received training at the University of Baltimore during World War II. The narrator worked as a records clerk for the B&O Railroad from 1919-1968. He married Cecelia Ferdinandina Thuman in Holy Cross Church on August 17, 1927. They had four children.

This interview discusses the impact of the B&O Railroad on the Riverside neighborhood during the Great Depression, especially a program called B&O Relief (reduced mortgages). It goes on to explain the role of building and loan associations throughout South Baltimore. It then provides the narrator’s view of how the two world wars affected the overall living conditions of Baltimoreans. He makes mention of neighborhood activities like block parties, yard parties, and recreational sports. He also talks about the general move by city dwellers to the suburbs. The Thommen interview is a great source for details about growing up in Riverside and about South Baltimore social politics in general (the intersections of Catholic church, police, and social groups like the Holy Name Society and the Democratic Club) from the 1930’s – 1950’s.

Bessie Shade Acton was born in Westminster on January 10, 1914 to a Scottish immigrant mother and a Baltimore-born father of German descent. She attended PS # 76 for nine years; she attended night school at Southern High for two years. Acton participated in a work study program through the Hecht Company and The Hub department store. She worked part-time at Hecht Co. from ages 14-20, and then full-time there until aged 22. She married George Action at Lansdowne Lutheran Church on February 4, 1934. The couple had two children.

The interview provides good information about neighborhood life in Locust Point, especially about its conflicts with other South Baltimore neighborhoods. It also provides details about daily struggles during the Great Depression and about the neighborhood impact of World War II. There is also interesting information about married life during the 1930’s and 1940’s.
Mary Frances Garland was born May 6, 1934 in Baltimore, as were her Catholic parents. She worked as a secretary for twenty-seven years, and she attended St. Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Church. Garland was involved in community organizing since 1970. She graduated from Loyola College in 1979 with a B.S. in Political Science.

Albert Logan was born August 27, 1943 in Pennsylvania to Roman Catholic parents.

Lowell Thompson was born on July 25, 1932 in Minneapolis Minnesota to Lutheran parents. The narrator attended the University of Minnesota from 1950-1956 and Lutheran Theological Seminary from 1956-1960. He worked as a Lutheran minister from 1960 -1979.

Harry Kremer was born on February 2, 1908 in Baltimore. He attended PS #92 from first through fifth grade. He has an excellent recollection of employment history, especially of his work in shipping (oil tanker, freighter, Maryland Drydock, and Bethlehem Steel). He worked: as a file clerk for Keen & Hagerty in 1924; for General Chemical Company; for National Enameling and Stamping Company (NESCO); as a look-out man for the Baltimore Chesapeake & Atlantic Line in 1930; as both a mess boy and wiper on a oil tanker; as a deckhand on a freighter traveling to England and Ireland. Of the thirteen jobs he describes, he worked at the following for the longest period: U.S. Army, 1942-1945; and Glenn L. Martin Company, 1951-1965. He and his wife, Mildred (married at St. Luke’s Lutheran parsonage on February 2, 1944) had one child.

This interview provides many details about job opportunities in many industries from the 1930s – 1950s. The narrator explains employee and management relations, workers and foreman relations, and the impact of women working in the shipyard. There is also some discussion of the racial tension between blacks and whites in South Baltimore.
Site 6: (Old) West Baltimore

During the 1970’s, the main neighborhoods in West Baltimore were Edmondson Village, Walbrook, Sandtown-Winchester, Harlem Park, Lafayette Square, and West Arlington. The majority of the BNHP interviewees from this site lived in Sandtown-Winchester.

The neighborhood’s name derived from two sources. The first part was a result of sand deposits from the number of wagons hauling sand from the sandpits to the glass quarry and asphalt sites (Ryon 110). The second part was from George Winchester, a president of the Baltimore Susquehanna Railroad. The neighborhood was first a white, middle-class neighborhood; by the end of World War II, it was Baltimore’s largest, solidly African American neighborhood. Some of the highlights of the neighborhood included it being the first sites of the two institutions that would become Morgan State University and Coppin State University; it was the location of Frederick Douglass High School—the first city high school for African Americans. This school received a visit from Eleanor Roosevelt in 1923.

At the time of the BNHP, Sandtown–Winchester was, like several Baltimore City neighborhoods, part of an urban renewal program. The focus here was to renovate, rather than demolish the homes. It also led to the construction of Harriet Tubman Elementary School in 1976.

The BNHP records for this site sometimes label the cassettes with the term “Old West Baltimore.” One interview, # 002: Inez Royster, is misidentified on the tape label as being a part of Site #VII when in fact actually should be included in this site.

Sources:


Interview Abstracts:

OH8297 BNHP#019 Anonymous

Name of Interviewer: Shopes, Linda
Date of Interview: 6/15/78
Place of Interview:
Length of Interview:
Number of Tapes:
Length of Transcript:
File Contents: Interview notes, Biography form
Anonymous was born in 1913 in Baltimore to Polish immigrants. She worked at a canning factory as a young girl, and was primarily a housewife as an adult. Many of her childhood years were spent on a family farm in Baltimore County, and she provides great details of life on a farm.

OH 8297     BNHP #037     Tumstall, Mary Elizabeth [Bond]

Name of Interviewer: Griffin, Joyce
Date of Interview: 12/06/78
Place of Interview: 1820 East Ave.
Length of Interview: 40 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 3 pages
File Contents: Biography form and tape index.
Note(s):

Mary Elizabeth Tumstall was born December 18, 1893 in Baltimore County, Maryland. Her father, Frank Bond, was from Harford County, Maryland and her mother, Mandy Taylor Bond, was from Sparrows Point, Maryland. Mrs. Tumstall had three brothers: James Emory, Clarence C. and Frank Jefferson Bond. She attended Back River (Neck) School, a segregated black school. Mrs. Tumstall was married twice and had a total of six children. First, she married Richard D. Bowman with whom she had four children. She later married Benjamin Tumstall and had two more children. The Tumstall interview seems to have large portions of blank tape. The tape index is incomplete. Please refer to the audiocassette for more information.

OH 8297     BNHP #059     Grant, Coleman D.

Name of Interviewer: Brown, James
Date of Interview: 06/01/79
Place of Interview: 833 Bethune Road
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 25 pages
File Contents: Interview notes, biography form, tape index and transcript.
Note(s): Page 14 is missing from the transcripts.

Coleman D. Grant was born in Hagerstown, Maryland in the early 1900s or 1910s. His mother’s name is unknown, but she was born in Maryland in 1883. His father, David Grant, was born in Pennsylvania and worked as a truck driver. After living for many years in Philadelphia, Coleman D. Grant moved to Baltimore and in 1930 he married his wife, Rose. The Grants had nine children: Richard, Marvin, Rose, Thomas, Sylvia, Donald, Patrick, Wayne and Marian from 1931 through 1949. While Mrs. Grant was a housewife, Mr. Grant worked in various vocations such as porter, dishwasher, shoeshine, night-watchman and janitor.
The Grant interview is rich with information about living conditions for African-Americans during the Depression era as well as black life in Baltimore. The interviewer considered him an excellent informant with vivid recollections and recommended further consultations with Mr. Grant. Topics include the Great Depression, discrimination, social life, occupational experiences, politics as well as attitudes and values of African-Americans. Political discussions range from national, (FDR), to local, including Tom Smith, a local black politician. Particular attention is given to black entertainment in Baltimore that centered on and around Pennsylvania Avenue. Mr. Grant speaks of seeing the likes of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Louis Armstrong to name but a few. Other entertainment topics include the Baltimore Black Sox, Brown’s Grove and Wonderland Park.

OH 8297   BNHP #084   Perkins, William

Name of Interviewer:  Crowner, Keith
Date of Interview:  07/12/79
Place of Interview:  Unclear
Length of Interview:  180 min.
Number of Tapes:  3
Length of Transcript:  26 pages
File Contents:  Interview notes, biography form, tape index, one page of handwritten notes and transcript.

Note(s):

William Perkins was born in Pittsburgh in 1917 and raised in the rural outskirts of Pennsylvania. His father William Perkins, Sr. was a coal-miner and his mother, Agnes Perkins, was a housewife. Both parents died when William and his four siblings were young, which resulted in them being raised by their grandmother. His schooling consisted of four years of high school and one and a half years at Lasalle in Chicago, Illinois studying “commercial art.” In 1939, Mr. Perkins married his wife, Mary, and in that year they had their only child, Ann Perkins. In 1943, Mr. Perkins joined the armed services in which he served for two years. After his military service, the Perkins family moved to Baltimore, where Mr. Perkins found work as a carpenter.

The Perkins interview provides information on a wide variety of subjects from the differences in African-American lifestyle in a rural setting to an urban environment to the political and social conditions of African-Americans over several decades in Baltimore City. Topics range from housing, unions and discrimination to shopping, entertainment and Jewish-black relations. Specific details of his experience and attitudes of African-Americans toward WWII as well as the “Don’t buy where you can’t work” Boycott are discussed in this rich and valuable interview.

OH 8297   BNHP #092   Jackson, John W.

Name of Interviewer:  Murel, Victor
Date of Interview:  07/24/79
Place of Interview:  827 North Arlington Ave.
Length of Interview:  30 min.
Number of Tapes:  1Length of Transcript:  20 pages
John W. Jackson was born on February 18, 1897 in Maryland. He spent his formative years moving back and forth between the Eastern Shore, where he lived with his mother, Western Maryland, where he lived with his father and Baltimore City, where he lived with other relatives and eventually settled. At the time of this interview, he was unable to recall the names of his mother, father or his spouse. Mr. Jackson was able to recall living in Baltimore around the time of the Baltimore Fire of 1904. He attended Princess Ann Academy on scholarship and served in WWI.

The Jackson interview provides information on living conditions and neighborhood life in both East and West Baltimore. He recounts his employment for an ice cream company that later became the Borden Ice Cream Company, memories of the Fire of 1904 as well as details about African-American social life, particularly at the Royal – Baltimore’s “first black bowling alley.”

Anonymous was born in 1909 in Baltimore to parents born in Charles County who were Roman Catholics. The interviewee also has a brother and sister. She remembers spending summers on her maternal and paternal grandparents’ farms in southern Maryland in Charles County. She was a member of the NAACP and taught at Dunbar High School for 36 years, from 1932-1962.

The interviewee mentions riding the streetcar with no segregation, shopping at Lafayette Market and also mentions belonging to various clubs and names different dances. Also mentioned are entertainment and businesses found on Pennsylvania Avenue. The subject discusses the names of black-owned businesses and racism in the city, including discrimination at Hutzler’s, Stewarts, O’Neils; Hochschild Kohn and the Hecht Company were more accepting.
William Tyler was born January 23, 1895, in Conway, Anne Arundel County, Md. to Fletcher Tyler and Hattie Parker, Methodists, also born in the same county. An older brother died young. He attended very little school, however, he was taught to read and write by his grandmother. Mr. Tyler moved to Baltimore in about 1915. In 1927, he married his first wife, Marie Tyler. After she died in 1947, Mr. Tyler was remarried twice. Mr. Tyler worked many different jobs, but the one he held the longest was at the Bethlehem Steel blast furnace in Sparrow’s Point.

The Tyler interview provides details about living conditions for African-Americans during the Great Depression and World War II eras as well as black life in Baltimore. He speaks extensively of his experiences working at Sparrow’s Point and belonging to the union. Other interview topics include work experience, entertainment, Pennsylvania Avenue and segregation, specifically Pennsylvania avenue, baseball at Westport, Carey Street Movie before the Royal was built, and the 1967 riots.

Ellouise Smith Harrison was born April 28, 1889 in Bowie, Maryland. Her father was Richard Green, a farmer and carpenter from Charles County, Maryland. Her mother, Louise Colbert Green, was born in Bowie. She worked the farm with her husband and was a domestic worker.

The Harrison interview contains many fragments of details on a variety of topics including the transition from rural life to urban life, the Great Depression and World War II. However, the interviewee often wanders off of the topic of the interviewer’s questions.
Charlotte Elizabeth Harper [Holsey] was born March 8, 1920 in Baltimore, Maryland. Her father, Augustus Jameson Holsey was from Athens, Georgia and later worked as a mailman in Baltimore. Her mother, Estelle Peaker Holsey, was born in Baltimore and worked as a school teacher and hairstylist. Ms. Harper attended Booker T. Washington Junior High and Frederick Douglas Senior High School. She then attended Morgan State College and Johns Hopkins University, where she received her Master’s Degree in education. Ms. Harper’s career in education as teacher and school principal lasted over thirty years. In 1943, Ms. Harper married Charles Harper, Jr. They raised two daughters, Cheryl and Sharon.

The Harper interview provides excellent details and accounts of upper to middleclass African-American life in Baltimore. Vivid recollections from her childhood on topics such as entertainment, neighborhood life and education make this a valuable interview. Other topics of discussion include her occupational transition from teacher to school principal, marriage and family life, World War II, segregation, religious life, voting, and the 1968 riots. The interview concludes with Ms. Harper’s thoughts on what in her life would be worth remembering in one hundred years.

OH 8297    BNHP #104    Carroll, James Francis

Name of Interviewer: Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview: 08/01/79
Place of Interview: Mr. Carroll’s residence, 611 Cumberland Street
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 16 pages
File Contents: Interview notes, biography form, tape index and transcript.
Note(s): Transcription incomplete.

James Francis Carroll was born on September 18, 1894 in Baltimore, Maryland. His parents, Frank and Elizabeth Carroll, were farmers originally from St. Mary’s County, Maryland. They moved to Baltimore and had a total of nine children; four boys and five girls. Mr. Carroll was married twice. With his first wife, Ms. Shipley, he had a daughter named Sarah Carroll. After his first wife passed away, he was remarried to a Ms. Johnson.

The Carroll interview contains many fragments of details on a variety of topics including relations between blacks and whites, occupational experiences and experiences with the Catholic Church.

OH 8297    BNHP #110    Perkins, Lucy Priscilla
Lucy Priscilla Perkins was born in Baltimore, Maryland on July 13, 1894. The Perkins interview provides information on African-American life in Baltimore particularly through the Depression era. Ms. Perkins speaks on a range of topics from her employment history to the migration patterns of African-Americans within Baltimore.

OH 8297     BNHP #112     Shell, James

James Shell was born in Oxford, North Carolina on May 22, 1900. At the time of this interview Mr. Shell did not recall specific information about his parents or siblings. He was raised by his grandparents who were sharecroppers in the South. The Shell interview contains many fragments of details on a variety of topics including rural life, farming, as well as Mr. Shell’s time spent serving his country during World War II.

OH 8297     BNHP #122     Newton, Edna [Bowen]

Edna Newton [Bowen] was born in Baltimore, Maryland on November 1, 1890. Her mother, Martha Ann Thomas Bowen, was born a slave in St. Mary’s County. Her father, George T. Bowen, also born a slave went on to start his own catering business. In 1924, she married
Chapelton D. Newton who worked as a waiter. Ms. Newton attended one year at Coppin State College, but had to stop attending when her father died. She went on to work first as a substitute teacher, then as a full time kindergarten teacher.

The Newton interview provides details and recollections from Ms. Newton’s childhood and neighborhood life. She discusses topics ranging from school experiences to politics and religion. Of particular interest, she mentions her experience as a student during the Baltimore Fire of 1904.

OH 8297 BNHP #126 Newman, George

Name of Interviewer: Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview: 08/06/79
Place of Interview: Mr. Newman’s residence, 1203 Etting Street
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: Interview notes, biography form, and tape index.
Note(s):

George Newman was born in Talbot County, Maryland. His family moved away from the Eastern shore to Baltimore when his father found work in the city. Mr. Newman married in 1939 and had nine children. One of his sons was killed in the Vietnam War. The Newman interview discusses topics such as occupational experiences, entertainment venues, neighborhood life and the need for unity in the African-American community.

OH 8297 BNHP #129 Terry, Florina

Name of Interviewer: Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview: 07/23/79
Place of Interview: 1219 Argyle Avenue
Length of Interview: 30 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: Interview notes, biography form, and tape index.
Note(s): Tape index is incomplete.

Florina Terry was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1906. The Terry interview was ended when it became evident that the subject was not comfortable being tape recorded. The interview was ended at her request.

OH 8297 BNHP #135 Miller, James

Name of Interviewer: Murel, Victor
Date of Interview: 08/16/79
Place of Interview: Mr. Miller’s place of business, 1615 W. Eutaw Street
James Miller, Jr. was born in Greensboro, North Carolina on May 29, 1914. His parents moved their family to Baltimore when Mr. Miller was two years old. As a young man instead of attending high school, he worked at a race track as a stable-boy. Later, Mr. Miller became a longshoreman. He kept this unionized job for twenty-five years. In 1943, he was drafted into the military in which he served in the Navy until the war’s end.

The Miller interview provides detailed information about living conditions for African-Americans before and after the Second World War as well as black life in Baltimore. Topics include the segregation, the waterfront, service in the Navy, sports, Pennsylvania Avenue and politics.

Mary Randall was born at Maryland General Hospital in 1920. At the time of the interview, Ms. Randall chose not to divulge information about her parents or spouse. The Randalls had three children, two girls and one boy. All were born in the 1940s. Her husband passed away in 1975 and she attended night school at Douglas High School during the 1970s. Despite a reluctance to divulge personal information, the Randall interview provides information on topics such as segregation, Jim Crow, Pennsylvania Avenue, the Great Depression and ethnicity relating to various Baltimore neighborhoods.

Annabelle [Brooks] Hayward was interviewed on August 30, 1979, at her residence in Baltimore.
Annabelle Hayward [Brooks] was born on October 16, 1888 in Talbot County, Maryland. She was the oldest of eleven children born to her parents, Sarah Frances Brooks [Grace] and William H. Brooks. After growing up on the Eastern Shore, the family moved to Baltimore where they lived with relatives. After her first marriage failed, Ms. Hayward married Samuel D. Hayward, an employee of the Afro-American newspaper. Ms. Hayward had no children.

The Hayward interview is particularly rich with details about life in Baltimore for African-Americans before and after the Great Depression. Ms. Hayward lived in a number of neighborhoods in both east and west Baltimore, which gives this interview additional value as a comparative view of the city’s neighborhoods. She discusses her occupational, religious and social experience. Ms. Hayward attended many different churches and participated in many organizations. Other topics include her husband’s fatal illness, labor strife, ethnic relations, and family.

OH 8297   BNHP #145   Williams, Bernadine J.

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:   08/28/79
Place of Interview: Ms. William’s residence, 1730 Carey Street
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1

Bernadine J. Williams was born in May 1925 at 1701 Carey Street. She lived the majority of her life in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood. She attended St. Peter Claver’s School, St. Francis Academy and Douglas High School from which she graduated in 1945. She worked for the Maryland Cup Company as a machine operator for 30 years. Ms. Williams’ father served in World War I, worked for Butler Brothers in South Baltimore, and owned his own barbershop.

The Williams interview provides details on topics such as segregation, black owned businesses, Pennsylvania Avenue and both World Wars. The interviewee mentions Druid Hill Park, Brown’s grove, segregation, and the Royal Theater. Ms. Williams also talks about popular undertaker Kelson, and Shipley-Truesdale as the only black caterers.

OH 8297   BNHP #155   Reed, Mary [Burton]

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:   08/30/79
Place of Interview: 1230 Etting Street
Length of Interview: 30 min.
Number of Tapes: 1

Bernadine J. Williams was born in May 1925 at 1701 Carey Street. She lived the majority of her life in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood. She attended St. Peter Claver’s School, St. Francis Academy and Douglas High School from which she graduated in 1945. She worked for the Maryland Cup Company as a machine operator for 30 years. Ms. Williams’ father served in World War I, worked for Butler Brothers in South Baltimore, and owned his own barbershop.

The Williams interview provides details on topics such as segregation, black owned businesses, Pennsylvania Avenue and both World Wars. The interviewee mentions Druid Hill Park, Brown’s grove, segregation, and the Royal Theater. Ms. Williams also talks about popular undertaker Kelson, and Shipley-Truesdale as the only black caterers.
Mary (nee Burton) Reed was born circa 1898 near Cape Charles, Virginia; her mother was a Baptist. As a youth, Mrs. Reed worked on a farm. Her parents made the children, all seven of them, work. Mrs. Reed came to Baltimore during World War I at the age of 20, was a member of Metropolitan Methodist, and did day work as a domestic. Her mother and father eventually moved to Baltimore, too, had a clothing store on Pennsylvania Avenue, and sold clothes all over Baltimore on wagons.

Mrs. Reed mentions the social life at the American Legion Hall/Home on Druid Hill Avenue and describes the places she lived.

OH 8297      BNHP #163    Wilson, Cora [Fax]

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:    08/30/79
Place of Interview:  Ms. Wilson’s residence, Watty Courtt
Length of Interview:  95 min.
Number of Tapes:      2
Length of Transcript:
File Contents:        Interview notes, biography form, and tape index.
Note(s):

Cora (nee Fox) Wilson was born March 10, 1895, in Baltimore, Md., to Florence Green and Charles Fox; Florence was Catholic, but became Baptist, like her husband, after marriage. Mrs. Wilson was one of eight children. Her maternal grandfather was an Indian with long hair, who was a slave and eloped with a white woman to Howard County. In her 20s, she opened a nursery school/boarding school on Vincent Street, although no teaching was involved. She had an “experience meeting” (spiritualist).

Mrs. Wilson talks about being a member of Macedonia Baptist at Saratoga and Vincent Streets (later moved to Fremont and Lafayette), Eastern Star, Morning Glory Christian Association (East Baltimore group on Monument Street), and the “Order of the Reindeer” (The Elks), The Nazerites (sp). Also mentioned is Brown’s Grove, courting at Greenwood Electric Park in Catonsville, dancing at Warner’s Park in South Baltimore, getting lost in Druid Hill Park. She also mentions Pennsylvania Avenue as a bad, evil place.

OH 8297      BNHP #166   McCrimmon, Mamie [Brooks]

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:    08/21/79
Place of Interview:  Ms. McCrimmon’s residence, 1203 Winchester Street
Length of Interview:  30 min.
Number of Tapes:      1
Length of Transcript:
File Contents:        Interview notes, biography form, and tape index.
Note(s):
Mamie McCrimmon was born in North Carolina and has a Baptist background on her mother’s side. She came to East Baltimore in the 1940s and later lived on Pennsylvania Avenue. The interviewee attended Lafayette Market Baptist Church in Sandtown.

OH 8297   BNHP #172   Rach, Eleanor

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:   10/08/79
Place of Interview:  Possibly Ms. Rach’s residence, 435 Watty Ct.
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: Biography form and tape index.
Note(s): 

Eleanor Rach was born in Portsmouth, Va., on March 6, 1893. She was one of six children. Her father Amos and mother Nellie (Burrel) Rach were Baptist. One of her brothers and his wife brought Ms. Rach to Baltimore, where they lived on Lee Street in South Baltimore. She was never married.

Ms. Rach talks about her education, religious background, awards, diplomas, and family. The interviewee also talks about going to the movies on Pennsylvania Avenue, picnics and recreation at Brown’s Grove, Tom Smith Hotel on Druid Hill Ave. She notes that when black people went to the theatre, they had to use the upstairs balcony.

OH 8297   BNHP #176   Jones, Gloria

Name of Interviewer:  Callum, Agnes
Date of Interview:   10/16/79
Place of Interview:  Possibly Mrs. Jones’ address in Sandtown-Winchester
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: Interview notes and tape index.
Note(s): 

Gloria Jones was born in 1926 and lived on the 1300 block of Stricker Street, where three generations were born in the same house. Affiliated with St. Gregory’s, her grandmother lived in Sandtown, with both she and her mother being born in St. Mary’s County. Some members of her family are Indians and white. Mrs. Jones lived near and went to Douglass High School.

Mrs. Jones talks about the bustling life on Pennsylvania Avenue, where she was an usherette in the Royal Movie Theater. She talks about Schmidt’s Bakery, the music group the Orioles and the Ink Spots, and Dirty Alice who had a variety store. Also mentioned are Sugar Hill, a jitterbug joint, and various businesses in the area. Carey Street and what areas were opened to black people and black businesses in Sandtown are also discussed.
OH 8297    BNHP #177   Lee, Hester

Name of Interviewer:  Peebles, Lucy V.
Date of Interview:    10/14/79
Place of Interview:  718 N. Carrollton Ave.
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Number of Tapes: 1

Hester Lee was born in Acamac County, Va., one of nine children. She grew up on a farm and
had interesting duties as an upstairs maid, and unique relationships with the two families she
worked for. Her husband was a cook who worked with her.

Mrs. Lee discusses her work as an upstairs maid for the Requardts of Guilford, their Chateau, the
promotion of her husband to work at the Requardt’s Taxi Cab Company, and how her marriage
was discovered three years into working for the family. Mr. Lee later had a High’s Ice Cream
store. She also discusses her duties with the Bonnell family, the popularity of Shipley Caterers,
and going to the races at Pimlico.

OH 8297    BNHP #178   Shields, Joseph

Name of Interviewer:  Peebles, Lucy V.
Date of Interview:    11/01/79
Place of Interview:  1102 Druid Hill Ave., A409
Length of Interview: 120 min.
Number of Tapes: 2

Joseph Shields was born January 1, 1912, on Etting Street and was one of five children. His
father Richard Shields was Baptist and his mother Cora Harris was Methodist, later Baptist. He
entered show business at the age of 12-15 and, through the Royal Theater, gained access to many
entertainers and interesting experiences, traveling worldwide.

Mr. Shields often went to the Royal Theater and knew one of the Brownskin models, a
vaudeville act. He performed his first show at the Roof Garden at the Southern Hotel (now
Goldberg’s) at Charles and North Ave. (where he later worked during WWII) and was later
contracted with Vanderhurst for the Hippodrome in New York. He played white clubs (e.g. the
Century [Theater?]) in Baltimore and recalls desegregation. Other things of note: Hendler’s Ice
Cream, Charles B. Cochran Follies, retirement from Fader’s Cigar, moved to Druid Hill, and
singing at Pimlico Hotel, Club Rio Rita, and Summit.

OH 8297    BNHP #181   Carr, Walter R., Sr.
Walter R. Carr, Sr. was born August 4, 1913, in Baltimore, Md., one of two brothers. His parents Walter Wamon and Adele Agusta Diggs Carr were Methodists. He worked for his grandfather Josiah Diggs at the Dunbar Theater, leaving during WWII for more money and also taught swimming at the YMCA. He left Baltimore, in 1945, returning in 1961.

Mr. Carr discusses the evolution of schools for African Americans in Baltimore and other black businessmen in Baltimore. He also discusses segregation in Baltimore, including Douglass High School as the first black high school for all children in the city and Baltimore County. He mentions Western High School; his grandfather Josiah Diggs, who purchased Dunbar Theater in east Baltimore; the Druid Hill branch of the YMCA; and the Black Literary Academy. Also mentioned are the Sphinx club, the first private black club; his weekly publication *The Nite Lifer*, detailing liquor distributing info and liquor companies that did not hire blacks.

Clarence Fairfax was born November 9, 1905, in Baltimore, Md., one of four children, and lived on Rice Street. His parents were Clarence and Elizabeth Davis Fairfax and who were Methodists. He went to Waesche Street School #110. Mr. Fairfax studied music under local teachers and taught music for 30 years.

Mr. Fairfax describes various jobs held in the city, including managing a building where he worked with several local white engineers. He was one of the first black families on the block in a predominantly white neighborhood and mentions some incidents when African Americans moved into the area. He mentions working at the B&O Railroad, Towson Grace Hat Manufacturing Company, A & X Glue & Paste Company, and the Baltimore City Recreation Department among others. Also mentioned are the Royal Theater, desegregation, the 1968 riots, and playing for the Baltimore Choir (Luther Mitchell, conductor).
Benjamin Perry was born in 1940 to a farming family and describes the ethnic and racial mixture of his family, including Indian, Irish, and Dutch and how some members of the family “passed” for white. Originally from Anne Arundel County, his family has lived in Southeast Baltimore since the 1870s. Mr. Perry’s father was involved in bootlegging and later got a job in Sparrows Point. He shares his views on race and work discrimination (at South Baltimore General Hospital in 1964; at Union Memorial Hospital in 1970) and racial tensions and racial incidents in mid-1950s Baltimore.

Mr. Perry mentions First Branch lane Church on Ritchie Highway, Hutton Street Methodist, and recalls theater and music at the Royal Theater and seeing The Orioles and The Ink Spots among other Baltimore groups. He also mentions family and social life on Pennsylvania Ave., “high” cultural events (i.e., poetry reading by Yaki, a black poet), segregation, the 1968 riots, and the names of several Baltimore clubs, including Alhambra Club, Club Casino, York Club, The Strand, The Spot, The Millionaire Club, and Duck’s Bar. Mr. Perry also mentions the following theaters: Lincoln, New Albert, Carver, Royal and Regent.

Samuel Ware was born September 1, 1891, in Baltimore, Md., one of three children. His parents William W. and Fannie E. Holmes Ware were Baptists. He went to Carey Street School and later attended Hampton, a trade school. Mr. Ware left Baltimore, but came back to help his family and look for work. He joined the Army in 1915, which had four black regiments. He is retired from the U.S. Civil Service.

The interviewee talks about African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and well-known preachers. Mr. Ware also discusses his life in the Army and his work in Washington, D.C., and
the church he attended, called Trinity A.M. He also talks about black voting, working during the Depression, and the change from dirt to brick streets. He notes that his was the first black family to move to Myrtle Avenue.

OH 8297   BNHP #194   Briggs, Eleanor R.

Name of Interviewer:  Peebles, Lucy V.
Date of Interview:   October and 11/12/79
Place of Interview:  603 N. Carrollton Ave.
Length of Interview: 180 min.
Number of Tapes:  3
Length of Transcript:
File Contents:   Interview notes, biography form and tape index.
Note(s):

Eleanor R. Briggs was born October 30, 1908, in Baltimore, Md., the younger sister of Howard S. Hicks. Her father Robert Moses and mother Ella Wilson Hicks were Methodist and Catholic, respectively. Mrs. Briggs’ grandmother Queen Georgiana Hicks supported a large household at 123 21st Street, where the interviewee was born. Her grandmother was a spiritualist who catered to whites and blacks; her Uncle Henry Reid was also a spiritualist. Mrs. Briggs’ father went to pharmacy school and wrote poems and songs. As a young girl, the interviewee lived with her father in Washington, D.C. She attended theater and jazz shows in various theaters and clubs in Baltimore and knew many well-known jazz musicians and vocalists.

Mrs. Briggs’ father worked at Fennel’s Drugs and sold snowballs at Carver Vocational School, where students proclaimed “Happy Day” Day. After her grandmother died the family moved to 1707 McCulloh Street. Her Uncle Howard was in the 9th Infantry that had a connection with Pancho Villa. She says that only African Americans used the Lyric Theater, located at Eutaw above Franklin Street. At a Charleston Contest, her dancing partner was Paul Tucker, alias Snake Hips. Mrs. Briggs mentions the New Albert, Regent, the Royal Theater, and Baltimore social clubs. She befriended jazz musician Chick Webb before he was famous and attended his funeral. She also joined the Brownskin Models dancing troop. Also mentioned are Cab Calloway, the Astoria, the Pennsylvania Hotel, and her encounters with other jazz musicians and jazz vocalists. Some other topics include ILGW, Golda Meir, Fred Waring, Jack Pollack, Chesapeake Club, Marie Burn Smith, and Tom Smith’s Hotel.

OH 8297   BNHP #195   Walker, Alma

Name of Interviewer:  Peebles, Lucy V.
Date of Interview:   12/11/79
Place of Interview:  709 Dolphin Street
Length of Interview:  60 min.
Number of Tapes:  1
Length of Transcript:
File Contents:   Interview notes, biography form and tape index.
Note(s):
Alma V. Walker was born in 1915 to Charles Dorsey and Sadie Murray who were Baptists and also teachers. She is one of five children. She was schooled at Henry H. Garnet #103. Mrs. Walker liked the city life and worked at places such as the Neighborhood Youth Corp and the Welfare Department. She also belonged to the Upton Planning Committee.

The interviewee discusses welfare, bread lines, the Depression Sandwich, Pennsylvania Avenue, and the Red Light District. She mentions attitudes of educators to children at Western High School and her mother’s appointment by Governor Ritchie to Board of Censors’ Movies as the first black movie censor. Also mentioned are the Royal Theater, The Strand, the Pennsylvania Hotel, and placed owned by blacks. Mrs. Walker also talks about the 1968 riots, desegregation, and places she worked, including Fort Howard, Hecht Company, Maryland General Hospital, and Western Electric.

OH 8297 BNHP #196 Jackson, Carrie D.

Name of Interviewer: Peebles, Lucy V.
Date of Interview: 12/12/79
Place of Interview: 3310 Liberty Heights Ave.
Length of Interview: 120 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: Interview notes, biography form and tape index.
Note(s):

Carrie D. Jackson was born in 1908 in her great grandmother’s house in Arbutus to Sadie Murray and Charles Dorsey, both Baptists. She was one of five children. Her schooling including Biddle and Division Street Schools, Douglass Colored High School and Morgan State College. She taught math, English and French.

Mrs. Jackson mentions Union Baptist Church, Rev. Harvey Johnson, NAACP, German Social Hall on Howard Street, and the Richmond Market and Armory. She mentions teaching city school for 40 years and taking students in Cherry Hill to New York on weekends. Also mentioned are discriminations of African Americans at such stores as Hutzler’s and Stewarts. Other areas mentioned include Dolphin Street, Druid Hill, Liberty Heights and teaching at Dunbar (1932-1943) and Harvey Johnson in South Baltimore. Also mentioned are the Royal Theater, Sphinx Club, Bill Dotson’s, Sportsman’s Lounge, Pimlico Jr. High, and Harlem Park.

OH8297 BNHP#200 Brooks, Estella

Name of Interviewer: Murel, Victor
Date of Interview: 1/23/80
Place of Interview: 
Length of Interview: 35 minutes
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 
File Contents: interview notes, biography form, tape index
Ms. Brooks was born on July 24, 1894 in Washington D.C., and was raised in Harlem, New York City. In 1923 her family moved to Baltimore, but her father died shortly after, and her family moved back to New York City the same year. She remained there until 1973, when she returned to Baltimore.

Ms. Brook’s grandfather, Nathaniel Monroe Carroll founded the Carroll Home, today called the Carroll Manor, in 1873. The Carroll home was the first home for elderly blacks in Baltimore. Ms. Brooks provides some information about the facility and its history. The bulk of the interview pertains to Ms. Brooks time in New York City. Her Father was minister of St. Mark’s Cathedral. She discusses life in Harlem, and the changes she Witnessed in the neighborhood over the years she was there.

**OH8297 BNHP#211 Betts, Sgt. Roosevelt**

Name of Interviewer: Murel, Victor  
Date of Interview: 1/24/80  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview: 60 minutes  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents: interview notes, biography form, tape index  
Note(s):  

Sgt. Betts was born on September 10, 1901 in Denton, Md. He was the first black State Policeman in Maryland.

**OH 8297 BNHP#214 Anonymous**

Name of Interviewer: Crowner, Keith  
Date of Interview: 6/79  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview: 60 minutes  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript:  
File Contents: tape index  
Note(s):  

**OH8297 BNHP#215 Anonymous**

Name of Interviewer: Crowner, Keith  
Date of Interview: 11/79  
Place of Interview:  
Length of Interview: 60 minutes  
Number of Tapes: 1  
Length of Transcript:
Site 7: East Baltimore

During the early twentieth century, East Baltimore became home to part of the city’s growing Polish population. This group was joined by immigrants from Germany, Italy, Lithuania, and African Americans migrating from the South. At the time of BNHP, several neighborhoods in this area were undergoing urban renewal.

The Hampden neighborhood is located in East Baltimore. Some planning districts locate Highlandtown in East Baltimore (HMA); others place it in Southeast Baltimore (BN). During the BNHP, members of the Highlandtown History Group conducted many of the interviews for those participating from this site.

Most of the interviews were conducted by the Highland History Group—an offshoot of the BNHP’s “Eating Together” site at the Abbot Memorial Church in the neighborhood. In the fall of 1978, Linda Shopes, oral history consultant for the BNHP, trained the members in oral history interviewing techniques so that they could participate in documenting their own community. According to the program files maintained by Shopes, the quality of the interviews suffered from this lack of professionalism. For example, she states that “questions posed to interviewees are frequently loaded…. the structure of the interviews themselves is generally fragmented, jumping from topic to topic without sufficient probing.”

Some interviews were conducted at the Family and Children’s Center Saga Project on East Federal Street.

Sources:


Health and Wellness Council of the Baltimore Area, Historical Analysis of Baltimore’s Inner City (Baltimore, 1964). (HN 80. B3 H47)

Interview Abstracts:

OH 8297   BNHP #002   Royster, Inez (Carrington)

Name of Interviewer: Butler, Stanley
Date of Interview: 04/01/78
Place of Interview: 201 N. Broadway
Inez Royster does not appear to have been born in Baltimore. The Biography form and tape index are extremely vague on the details of her interview. She may have moved to Baltimore from North Carolina with her parents William Carrington and Martha Ann (Bredmaiden) Carrington. She married Shawbert Royster. In this interview she discusses topics such as her childhood, employment at Eastern Overall Cleaning Company and Southern Service, the Great Depression, WWII, TV, the NASA moon landing, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy and segregation in Baltimore. For more specific information please refer to the audio cassette.

OH 8297      BNHP #004    Spencer, Mattie

Name of Interviewer: Griffin, Joyce
Date of Interview: 04/10/78
Place of Interview: Family and Children’s Center Saga Project
Length of Interview: 110 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: 48 pages
File Contents: Tape index and transcript.

Matttie Spencer was born on 20 October, 1900 in Charlotte County, Virginia. She was the youngest of eight brothers and sisters born to David and Delsey Spencer. Much of her interview involves Ms. Spencer’s recollections of growing up on her family’s farm and of African-American life in general. Never married, she attended two years at Virginia State College in Petersburg and went on to teach elementary school in Virginia and Baltimore.

The Spencer interview provides details about lower-middleclass African-American life in Baltimore and rural Virginia from the 1900’s through the 1970’s. She discusses a range of topics such as her recollections of childhood with her parents, brothers and sisters to her move to Baltimore after her parents passed away, her political beliefs and civic activity as well as her later years she has spent living in the Douglas Projects.

OH 8297      BNHP #006    Proctor, Margaret Goldie (Temple)

Name of Interviewer: Butler, Stanley
Date of Interview: 04/14/78
Place of Interview: 2011 Royal Garden Drive
Length of Interview: 100 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form & tape index
Margaret Goldie Proctor was born 13 April, 1904 in Elizabeth City, North Carolina and was the thirteenth of twenty-eight children born to Oscar and Fannie Temple. She was married to Lee Proctor. In this interview she discusses topics such as childhood, her parents’ occupations, courting and married life, employment at a produce factory as well as a cannery (Lord & Motts), the Great Depression, WWII, TV, the NASA moon landing, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy and segregation in Baltimore. For more specific information please refer to the audio cassette.

Name of Interviewer: Griffin, Joyce
Date of Interview: 08/14/78
Place of Interview: Mrs. Thomas’ home, address unknown
Length of Interview: 42 min.
Number of Tapes: 1
Length of Transcript: 3 pages
File Contents: Family data questionnaire, interview notes, artifact release forms, photocopied artifacts & tape index

Note(s):

Odessa Thomas, an African-American, was born in Baltimore on August 20, 1911. Her mother, Dane Offer, was originally from North Carolina, but Mrs. Thomas did not recall where her father was born. Arthur Offer, her father, worked long hours as a stevedore while her mother stayed at home. While still in grade school Mrs. Thomas’ mother suffered a nervous breakdown which caused young Odessa to go and live with relatives for the duration of her school age years. She graduated high school in 1933. At night school Mrs. Thomas gained skills in nursing, typing and as a beautician. Her beautician skills eventually enabled her to open her own beauty shop. In addition, she worked as a domestic for 35 years, 10 years at the Dunbar Community School, taught Sunday school at her Baptist church and was at the time of the interview serving as Assistant Director of Citizens for Fair Housing. At age 40 (“or so”) she married Leroy Thomas and had 2 children.

The Thomas interview provides accounts of neighborhood life in East Baltimore. For example, Mrs. Thomas recounts being one of only 3 African-American families in a mostly “Bohemian” neighborhood. A note from the interviewer indicates that Mrs. Thomas though a “willing and cooperative interviewee,” did not or was not able to recall much of significance about her neighborhood.

Name of Interviewer: Griffin, Joyce
Date of Interview: 08/09/78
Place of Interview: Family and Children’s Center Saga Project
Length of Interview: 60 min.
Beatrice Hawkins Bailey, an African-American, was born in Baltimore on April 6, 1895. She was the youngest of seven children. Her father, Leander Hawkins, was originally from Texas. He worked for North Brothers and Strauss. Her mother, Francis Sullivan Hawkins, was from Annapolis and was a stay at home mother. Mrs. Bailey attended the E Street School and then High School #101 on Caroline and Jefferson Street. At the age of eighteen she married Bernard Bailey. Mrs. Bailey worked at the Maryland Country Club for approximately thirty years, while her husband worked in the Post Office. Mr. Bailey passed away in 1964. At the time of the interview, Mrs. Bailey lived at 1408 Odessa Thomas Court.

The Bailey interview provides many details about lower-middleclass African-American life in Baltimore from the 1900’s through the 1970’s. There is much detailed discussion of her strict disciplinarian parents and the enjoyment of her childhood. She discusses topics such as: family moves, salaries, religion, race relations (“she was once mistaken for an Italian and her brother a white”) and segregation. Coming from one of only two African-American families living in her neighborhood, she recalls the ethnic diversity present in her neighborhood (Jews, Germans and Bohemians.) Also discussed are occupational experiences and her thoughts on how things have changed.

Anita Estella Horne, an African-American, was born in Baltimore on February 16, 1918. Her parents, Edward and Josephine Proctor, had seven children. She attended the E Street School, Orleans Street Elementary and Dunbar Junior High but had to leave school at age sixteen due to her family’s financial situation. Mrs. Horne married at age twenty-six and had two daughters.

The Horne interview provides details about the hardship her family suffered during the Great Depression. She discusses various community landmarks and the condition of her old neighborhood. She provides many details about her daughters as well as her own childhood.
Lucy Jane Cox, an African-American, was born in Greenburg, Virginia on November 24, 1900. Her parents Charles and Mary Alice Neal moved their family to Baltimore in 1914. Mrs. Cox attended Dunbar Junior High through the eighth grade when she had to quit school due to her mother’s illness. Her father worked at Sparrow’s Point and her family seems to have lived in company housing for much of their time together. She had two brothers: Floyd and Alphonso Neal. In 1927 Lucy was married. She and her husband moved to New York but split up. When she returned to Baltimore in 1931 she was married again possibly to Alfred Cox. Mr. Cox appears to have died at Sparrow’s Point, his place of employment in 1949. Mrs. Cox only mentioned one husband by name.

The Cox interview provides many details about African-American life in Baltimore. The interviewer notes, however, that Mrs. Cox seemed apprehensive about certain topics so a decision was made not to press her. Lucy Jane Cox discusses issues such as: Sparrow’s Point (her father and one husband employed there), owning her own business (her and other husband owned a shoe shop), childhood recollections, obtaining credit, family moves, race relations and segregation.

OH 8297          BNHP #023 Queen, Harry

Name of Interviewer: Griffin, Joyce
Date of Interview: 09/28/78
Place of Interview: 1618 North Dallas Street
Length of Interview: 95 min.
Number of Tapes: 2
Length of Transcript: n/a
File Contents: Biography form, family data form, artifact release form & tape index.

Harry Queen, an African-American, was born in Baltimore on June 20, 1901. His parents, John H. L. and Mary (Hazelton) Queen had three children. He attended the E Street School (#105 near Lexington) and #101 at Caroline and Jefferson Streets until the seventh grade. At the age of twenty-one, Mr. Queen married Bessie Queen. They had seven children together.

The Queen interview includes much information added by Mrs. Queen. The interview includes biographical information on her life. Mr. and Mrs. Queen speak extensively on topics ranging from dating, their parents involvement in their dating and other family and neighborhood life to
Mr. Queen’s specific employers (Sam Kahn Co. and F.A. Davis), his work as a chauffer, holidays and childhood experiences.

**Container List**

**Box 1**  
Narrator Files: Sites 1 & 2

**Box 2**  
Narrator Files: Sites 3, 4, & 5

**Box 3**  
Narrator Files: Sites 6 & 7

**Binder 1 & 2**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 1

**Binder 3 & 4**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 2

**Binder 5**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 3

**Binder 6**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 4

**Binder 7**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 5

**Binder 8 & 9**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 6

**Binder 9**  
Narrator Transcripts & Tape Indexes: Site 7

**Oral History Tape Cabinet:**  
Narrator Tapes: 24 cassette drawers; 325 tapes