



Interview with Harry Greenwood

Under the Auspices of the
Monmouth County Library Headquarters
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Harry Greenwood, present day

Ms. Cross: When did you come to Monmouth County?

Mr. Greenwood: I came to Red Bank in 1925, with my mother, my sister, and my dad. My father worked in the one and only diner in Red Bank at that time, which was called Callahan's Diner. It was up at the Railroad Station in Red Bank. And, of course, it was a very, very popular stop for all those coming and going on the train and local people. My mom secured a job right next door to where we lived, which incidentally was at the corner of where Boro Buses were, Globe Court and Front Street. There is a high rise garage these days, but at that time there were houses, and my mother's aunt and uncle rented us several rooms on the third floor. My first experience with Red Bank was bumping into a young man on a tricycle named Bobby Worden, whose dad ran and operated Worden's Funeral Home. Across the street was the famous Globe Hotel, a very large wooden structure. My mom secured a job there as a chambermaid, and I commenced my schooling around the corner at Mechanic Street School. And that was one of the two small grammar schools in Red Bank, the other being Oakland Street School.

Ms. Cross: What are your most prominent memories of Monmouth County?

Mr. Greenwood: I guess you could say the growth of the area. I can recall so vividly farmers coming in from the outlying districts and Colts Neck and bringing in their fruits and vegetables. Along side of that Globe Hotel, was a hardware store Hendrickson and Applegate. And alongside of that was Bray's, which was a

grocery store where these farmers would deliver their produce, located where Kislins is now.

Ms. Cross: Was this on Broad Street?

Mr. Greenwood: No this was on Front Street where Kislins is now.

Ms. Cross: There are old pictures of people in horse drawn carriages on Shrewsbury Avenue. Well, that was before your time.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, probably yes, although I do recall horses. As a matter of fact, I will tell you a cute story about Mr. Kislins: my mom told me this. Leone Kislins started his business in a pushcart with a horse, and he carried his wares around the town of Red Bank, and he would sell them from house to house. In time, he saved enough money and he bought a building, which is no longer there, which was adjacent to his present store. It is now a parking lot. But he was there for years. As a matter of fact, when I was a kid, Max Baer, the heavy weight champ of the world, was training in Rumson, and he'd come in for a pair of shoes, and I thought he was God almighty. He was about 6'6", and I was a little kid, but I have never forgotten that.

Ms. Cross: Do you have any other memories of famous people?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, we have a famous fighter named Mickey Walker, and they called him The Toy Bulldog from Rumson. He became the middle weight champion of the world, fought many times in Madison Square Garden, in Yankee Stadium, and he became an artist later on in his life, and he was really very famous, and a very nice guy. In addition to him, of course, there was Jacob Ruppert who built Yankee Stadium and the New York Yankees. Jacob Ruppert owned two world famous iceboats, and in those days, during the winter, the Shrewsbury River, which is now called the Navesink River, used to freeze. And when it used to freeze, it would freeze practically for a month or two, so they used to have famous ice boat races down there. And, one of the men who worked with my dad in Callahan's Diner was the pilot of one of the boats that Col. Ruppert owned called the Eskimo. And I had the thrill of being invited to take a ride in one of those huge iceboats down that river. And if you ever wanted to have your stomach in your mouth, that was a trip, I'll tell you. That must have gone close to 100 miles an hour in those days, just up on one keel going down the river. But, they were great days because the river would freeze, and they would have lights at night, and people would ice skate up and down the river. In fact, we had a very unfortunate thing happen that is well known in the area. A fellow named Jack Casey owned and operated the airport, off of Shrewsbury Avenue. And he had a plane.

Ms. Cross: Is that by the Airport Inn? There was an airplane on that roof.

Mr. Greenwood: That's correct, that's why they called it the Airport Inn. There was an airport there, and Jack Casey had several planes there. He even took some people to New York like a commuter taxi service. But he landed on the ice one time in Red Bank and unfortunately, he did not turn off the engine, and a man walked right into the prop and got decapitated. Oh, that was a terrible thing. I was still a little fellow, but I remember very closely.

Ms. Cross: Do you remember the Eisner Building?

Mr. Greenwood: Very well. They made uniforms there for the first and second World Wars. Mainly for the first World War though. Half of Red Bank worked in that factory. It was a sweatshop, of course, but the family was quite fair to their employees. In fact, one of the Eisners donated his home. It is now the Red Bank Library on West Front Street. It is called the Eisner Library. He's related.

Ms. Cross: Mike Eisner is his great grandson.

Mr. Greenwood: And then the other brother donated his home, and it is now the United First Methodist Church on Broad Street. And then we have a Supreme Court Justice, William Brennan, who just retired about five years ago. He lived in Rumson, and he belonged to a club that I belonged to called the Root Beer and Checker Club. It was a luncheon club. The business men in Red Bank would all meet down at the Root Beer and Checker Club, which was right down at the corner of Broad and East Front Street, upstairs. We had a little meeting place and we'd have lunch there. Mr. Brennan was a member of that. He was an attorney, of course, and then he became a judge, and then he was appointed to the United States Supreme Court. He left Rumson, of course, and moved to Washington. He since retired and passed on, but he was one of our famous ones.

Ms. Cross: Did you ever live anywhere else except Monmouth County?

Mr. Greenwood: I did, indeed I did. When I was in the eighth grade, my mother had a brother who passed away out in the state of Washington. That was during the Depression. My grandmother was named the executor of his little estate, so she was going to go out to Washington, but she asked my mom if she would accompany her, so naturally, my mom took my sister and me out of school. We took a Greyhound Bus and started out; ended up in Chicago. We stayed two days there to see the Great World's Fair, which I will never forget. And then from there we went to the state of Washington, which was a gorgeous country.

Ms. Cross: But you missed Monmouth County?

Mr. Greenwood: Well, I only stayed out there a little over a year, but I met a lot of great people in Washington. Spent a school year there, and it was a blessing to me, because I was a little shy, but the teacher insisted that I get up and tell

everyone about the East and Red Bank. So, I learned to speak before people. And then, of course, when I came back, the same thing applied, and the teachers asked me to get up, and the next thing you know, I'm elected president of my class in high school, and so I remained to be president in the eleventh and twelfth grade.

Ms. Cross: What high school?

Mr. Greenwood: Red Bank High School. I was also president of the Student Council. I was captain of the basketball team, so I was very, very active in school. From there I started in the bank, which was called the Merchant's Trust Company, at 28 Broad Street, in Red Bank.

Ms. Cross: Oh, my God.

Mr. Greenwood: Which is where Murphy's Restaurant is now on Broad Street in Red Bank. I went to night school at Monmouth Junior College until the War broke out and then I went in the Army Air Force and ended up over seas with the 9th Air Force as the crew chief on a P-47 Fighter bomber. Went all the way through Europe, through D-Day. And that was in 1944. I will never forget it. My plane flew seven missions that day over that English Channel.

Ms. Cross: I am surprised that Tom Brokaw didn't get in touch with you.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, that book is a marvelous book about our generation.

Ms. Cross: Yes, they are going to try and get a monument....

Mr. Greenwood: Which is duly needed.

Ms. Cross: Tell us how you were treated in Monmouth County when you got home.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, ironically, I had an opportunity to finish college, but Mr. Kenneth McQueen, who was president of the bank, called me and insisted that I please come back to the bank where they promised a promotion because I was one of the very first ones out of the service. I was one of the first because once Germany capitulated, we were on our way to Asia, to fight the Japs, and low and behold the A-Bomb was dropped, and the War ended, and they did not know what to do with all of us. So when they shipped us back to the States, I ended up at what was called McGuire Base now, but then it was Fort Dix. It was close to a million GIs there, and they didn't know what to do with us. But they finally did it by points. I was overseas so long that I had a lot of points, so I got out in September, 1945 and got back to Red Bank. And you know I had the joyous reunion with my family. My mom, and sister, and all my friends. But the boss at the bank called me and asked me, "What are you going to do?" And I said, "I

haven't any plans yet, but I'd like to go back to college." And he said, "Well, why don't you come back to the Bank, and then you can go to school at night, and we'll pay your tuition. We direly need you, because all the other fellows are still in the service." So I went back to the bank.

Ms. Cross: You were in the right place at the right time.

Mr. Greenwood: That's right.

Ms. Cross: You ended up as a Regional Vice President, right?

Mr. Greenwood: Regional Vice President, yes I did.

Ms. Cross: How long did you work for the bank?

Mr. Greenwood: Forty years. I retired in 1983, and I still stayed on as a consultant for awhile, but then PNC, which is the name of the bank now, came along now and merged with Midlantic, and so I stepped down, but I have been very active all these years since I retired. I have done a lot in the county. I do income taxes through VITA, which is Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. In fact, we used to meet right here to get updated, and then I worked at the Red Bank Library filling in, and I had a little practice of my own. In fact, I have been laid up physically for several things, bleeding ulcers and this and that, so the doctors have decided that I should slow down. But, I still love to help people. I have powers of attorney for several people at the nursing home here in Red Bank. And I am very, very active in the Red Bank Lion's Club and the Red Bank Welfare Association.

Ms. Cross: Do you have a church you belong to?

Mr. Greenwood: The Red Bank Methodist Church. I am not as active as I used to be.

Ms. Cross: You play golf.

Mr. Greenwood: I love golf. I played yesterday, which was Sunday, and hope to play Thursday. I play at Old Orchard. But, I have seen a lot of growth, a lot of changes.

Ms. Cross: Tell us, tell us about some of the changes.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, even as far back as when I started with the bank. There used to be only two banks in town. The bank that I started it was called the Merchant's Trust Company, and the other was called the Second National Bank, and that's the famous marble building on Broad Street.

Ms. Cross: Did you see that go up?

Mr. Greenwood: Well no. It came to Red Bank just about ten years before I was born.

Ms. Cross: That was a formidable building.

Mr. Greenwood: At that time, it was a bank. When I came back from the state of Washington, the stock market had crashed and there was a depression. The other tall building down on Broad Street was called the Broad Street National Banks. That was one of the banks that went under in the Depression. The Bank Holiday they called it.

Ms. Cross: What do you remember about the Depression? What impact did it have on the people on the street?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh my yes, even around this area. And you see, there was no such thing as food stamps or helping people. There was no such agency.

Ms. Cross: There was something called Relief.

Mr. Greenwood: Well there was Relief, yes, but they were more or less soup kitchens and you'd stand in line to get what they called soup or something like that. They were hard times. They were very hard times, I tell you, when we were out in the state of Washington. My uncle had worked at the Northern Pacific Railroad, and he died, but he had a little, little bungalow that we stayed in. And the trouble was, what little money he had was tied up in a bank. And my grandmother was the executor, but it took forever and a day to try to settle the little things, sell the little house, and so on. It took a whole year. That's why I spent a year out there in school.

Ms. Cross: And so when you came back, was the Depression still on?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, indeed, it was.

Ms. Cross: Were there a lot of boarded up stores?

Mr. Greenwood: No, there were not. I won't say that, no. No. There were stores there, although the banks were closed, and some of the stores were closed, but they weren't boarded up or anything like that. But gradually, thank God for FDR. As we all know, he was elected and he started the Bank Holiday. Then the Depression was getting near the end, so he instituted many things, such as WPA, the Work Progress Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Ms. Cross: Now, tell me what you know about down at the ocean.

Mr. Greenwood: Long Branch and Asbury Park.

Ms. Cross: Yes, and Sea Bright, and Monmouth Beach. They were fishing villages.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, they were.

Ms. Cross: And Sandy Hook. Did you have any dealings with that?

Mr. Greenwood: Well, the only thing I can recall with Sandy Hook was Fort Hancock. Fort Hancock used to send their high school children on a bus to Red Bank High School where I was going to school. As a matter of fact so did Fair Haven, so did Colts Neck and Holmdel. They'd bus children there because there were no high schools in those areas, you see. They only had the one high school. So, we had quite large classes. In fact, we had double sessions. Double sessions of school because they had so many children coming in.

Ms. Cross: Because Red Bank was sort of a hub.

Mr. Greenwood: That is right. Even Red Bank Catholic had only St. James Grammar School, so even all those children in those early years came to Red Bank High School until Red Bank Catholic was built and started. And that was back in the early 1930s, I would say, when Red Bank Catholic School became into fruition.

Ms. Cross: And how about the hospital?

Mr. Greenwood: I was a patient in Riverview with appendicitis when I was a boy. That was a wooden home down at the same location where it is on the river, and oh gosh, I can remember Dr. Walter Rullman. He came from a prominent family around this area. He married a woman named Fields and she was well known in the area too, but that was the one and only little hospital other than one in Long Branch called the Hazard Hospital.

Ms. Cross: I don't remember what Riverview was called.

Mr. Greenwood: It was called Riverview.

Ms. Cross: It was always called Riverview?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, it was to my knowledge. There was a woman called Throckmorton. She was the head nurse and administrator, and she was there for forty or fifty years. But I saw the growth of that hospital and now the Blaisdell Wing. Bud, who owned Blaisdell Lumber Company, just passed away about five or six years ago. But he was the chairman of the Board of Trustees, and he raised a lot of money to put the addition on. And, of course, the property that they

expanded was called Irwins. Irwins Yacht Works is down below. But, Captain Irwin's home was right on the top of that gorgeous hill on a beautiful white home, and Old Cap Irwin used to have a white sailor cap that he used to wear and sit out there. Washington Street was a beautiful area at that time. I did a lot of fishing and crabbing there, and we'd go down there for shiners, so we could use them for bait to catch blue fish. We used to have what we called the Steamboat Dock. There used to be steamboats.

Ms. Cross: How far up did they come?

Mr. Greenwood: They come to the Steamboat Dock, which is now Marine Park, and then they would go all the way to New York and back, sure. In fact, years ago, they used to catch a lot of oysters. The Irwins used to love to tell this story. They used to get oysters in this river and they'd take them almost daily up to New York on the boats and sell them to the fish markets.

Ms. Cross: Did Atlantic Highlands do a lot of that?

Mr. Greenwood: That's right, Atlantic Highlands, of course, which was even closer to New York than Red Bank was.

Ms. Cross: But they came all the way up to Red Bank.

Mr. Greenwood: Absolutely. Let's see, one was called the Blue Bird, oh, and the Albertina. That was the other one.

Ms. Cross: The bridge was there though in the middle.

Mr. Greenwood: They didn't come that far. See they just came right to this Marine Park over there.

Ms. Cross: What were the different trends and fads in your life?

Mr. Greenwood: You know, we were so innocent in my day.

Ms. Cross: Tell me about the radio.

Mr. Greenwood: When I was in Philadelphia before I came to Monmouth County, I still remember, even though I was three or four years old, my dad had what they call a crystal set. That was a thrill. And then when we came to Red Bank, I remember we had a Sears and Roebuck on Monmouth Street and a J.C. Penney. That was a big store where Monmouth Street connects with Broad. That was very popular. And Sears came in and expanded onto White Street. They were there for many years. I saved money from my paper route for a radio. I used to deliver the Red Bank Register, which came out every Thursday, and that was the popular paper. Long Branch had a paper called the Long Branch

Daily Record, which is no longer. They were the only papers that I recall. But, I saved my money, and my mom allowed me to buy a little Silvertone radio from Sears and Roebuck, and I think it cost me something like four or five dollars. That was a lot of money in those days, sure. That was a thrill.

Ms. Cross: And movies?

Mr. Greenwood: And movies? We had the Carlton Theatre, which is now the Count Basie Theatre on Monmouth Street. And we had the Strand Theatre, which is The Merrill Lynch building, right on the corner of Linden Place. Incidentally, talking about the Count Basie Theatre, I told you I went to school at Mechanic Street School. Well, further down by the Mechanic Street School is where Bill Basie was born and raised. Of course, that was a generation ahead of me, but I recall Count Basie's dad; he was a janitor. He used to clean the buildings of Quinn & Doremus, McQue, and Russell. And Count Basie's father was such a great old gentleman; he had a little account at the bank. I never saw Count Basie to my recollection until he became famous and he'd come back to Red Bank and he'd bring the band back and play occasionally.

Ms. Cross: What were the demographics mostly on the west side?

Mr. Greenwood: The west side was pretty; it wasn't quite minorities like the blacks at that time. There were some, but it was a lot of Italians, and a white element. As a matter of fact, my mom, before she got married, and her sister and my grandmother had an apartment up on Shrewsbury Avenue. They were working at Eisner's at that time. The west side has changed somewhat, but it was pretty predominantly Italian at that time over there. It gradually became more, what in my day we used to call "colored people," you know. But now they are African Americans. And I had a lot of friends who were colored people. I played basketball on the high school team with two or three Blacks. In fact, one of them is Dr. James Parker.

Ms. Cross: I know him.

Ms. Greenwood: Do you know James Jimmy Parker?

Ms. Cross: He goes to the Unitarian Meetinghouse.

Mr. Greenwood: A great gentleman. Yes. I was a sophomore when he was a senior, so I had the thrill of playing with him. I consider him a friend to this day. The father of the owner of the Child's Funeral Home and I went to Mechanic School together. So there were a lot of nice Black people.

Ms. Cross: Was there a socialization between you?

Mr. Greenwood: Sure there was some. Not too much, but I can remember Johnny Child's dad. We had a little basket up on the garage that I used to shoot baskets. He'd come over after school and once in a while Mom would say, "Can you stay for a bite to eat," you know, and he'd come on in the house. So, I never thought anything different. You know?

Ms. Cross: That's very nice.

Mr. Greenwood: No segregation to speak of. And as I said, there were only the two banks at the time.

Ms. Cross: Do you remember the first movie you saw?

Mr. Greenwood: I wish I could. Something rings the bell that it was something like Tom Mix, the cowboy.

Ms. Cross: Oh, the afternoon serials. Did you go to those?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh, yes, I did. And what was that Pearl White. There was a Pearl White, I think, that gosh, there was always a bad guy that would get her and they'd tie her to the railroad tracks and somebody would come and rescue her. But, you'd have that continuation from one week to the next.

Ms. Cross: Was Red Bank a safer place in those days?

Mr. Greenwood: I don't know of any girl that ever got raped or had to leave school because she was pregnant or anything like that in my day, you know. And, believe me when I tell you that all the way to my graduation, I never drank. I was a sports nut, you know. But most of my buddies didn't drink, either. And I never smoked until I came out of the Army, believe it or not. And then I started to have a few beers and stuff. It was a different lifestyle, you know. It really was. We had dances at the YMCA, sure we did. The YMCA has quite a history in Red Bank.

Ms. Cross: Tell us.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, my first recollection of the Y is a little house that they rented on the corner of Hudson Avenue and Branch Avenue. It is now a doctor's office. And that was where you'd go to the Y. We called it the High Y Club, and we had an advisor, and they had a ping pong table in there, which is probably the dining room of what the house was originally. And you had meeting rooms upstairs, and we had maybe twenty, twenty-five members, and maybe once a month we'd be taken down to Asbury Park where the YMCA had a swimming pool. And there was a natatorium, which had another swimming pool on the boardwalk in Asbury Park.

Ms. Cross: You'd go to the Boardwalk in Asbury?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh my, I'll say. And back then, there was something that I recall so vividly: the sinking of The Morro Castle, the famous luxury liner that burned and ended up right on the beach at Convention Hall. You could throw a stone to it.

Ms. Cross: How old were you?

Mr. Greenwood: Well, let's see. The Morro Castle sank in 1934, so I was fourteen years old. And one other thing that was so prominent about that event. I had an uncle who had a touring car. Nobody had cars in those days, you know, but he did. He grabbed my mom, my sister, and me and drove us down to Asbury. And while he parked and we're walking towards the Convention Hall to see this huge ship out there, I see this giant walking down the Boardwalk. And, all of a sudden, I recognized who it was: it was Prima Canero! The heavyweight champ of the world from Italy, and he was training. There was a famous promoter named Mike Jacobs. He was like this guy King is today and he controlled all boxing. He lived in this huge home in Rumson and had a place down there where he'd bring these boxers, and they'd work out and train for their fights. And that's where Canaro was, and he wanted to go and see the ship wreck, too. Then, I also saw the Hindenburg the day it crashed. It flew right over my house in 1937. Prior to that, the Graf Zeppelin used to come over us many, many times. I tell you, I tell my children and my grandchildren, you had to see it to believe it. It was so huge. So big. Yes, we saw that Hindenburg, that very day and, of course, the weather was so bad, it kept flying around, because it couldn't land, you see. They were afraid just what did happen would happen. And, of course, the story goes. You see static electricity. With all the hydrogen in the thing, it blew up. And it was sad.

Ms. Cross: Did you ever go to the Paramount? What were some things that you went to?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, oh gosh, and the theatres in Asbury Park, The Mayfair Theatre. Oh my gracious that was a thrill. Just to go to Boardwalk in Asbury, there were so many things going on there, it was exciting.

Ms. Cross: What did you do when you graduated from high school? After the prom.

Mr. Greenwood: The night that I graduated, we had a dance, and we ended up in Asbury Park in The Rainbow Room. That's exactly where we ended up that night. That was the place. Sure it was. Oh, Asbury was so beautiful.

Ms. Cross: It's very sad.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, it is sad.

Ms. Cross: Please tell us about your family. Did you meet a local girl?

Mr. Greenwood: I met a local girl in Long Branch after I got out of the service. We married in 1950, and we had three children. And, I had the unfortunate experience of losing my wife when she was only forty-seven years of age to cancer. It's a long story, and I don't want to go into it. Our youngest was only thirteen at the time.

Ms. Cross: And you took over.

Mr. Greenwood: I took over. My wife was a great gal, an Italian gal, from a great family. In fact, to this day, my brother-in-law and I are not only brother-in-laws, but we are good friends.

Ms. Cross: Did you ever remarry?

Mr. Greenwood: I remarried, but it didn't take. She was a lovely woman and we are still very compatible, but I had to mesh two families together, you know. It didn't work.

Ms. Cross: My son is going through that. Blended families are tough. They call them blended families today. They have a name.

Mr. Greenwood: That's right. Different words. They have names for everything today. Our first child was a boy, Bruce, and he lives in Little Silver. He is married to a lovely girl who works for Lucent. And they have two children. The young lady is now thirteen. She just became a teenager. And the boy is about twelve. They are Ashley and Andrew. They go to Little Silver School, of course. And then my daughter Donna followed me in my footsteps, she is a banker. She is an assistant vice president and manager of a new bank called Two Rivers Community Bank in Middletown. She has been with three or four banks and moved along. And she is married to a great guy from Long Branch who works for Civil Service over at Fort Monmouth. And, she's got a son who just got out of college. She's got a daughter who just graduated the other night from Shore Regional.

Ms. Cross: So your family has stayed around you.

Mr. Greenwood: Oh yes. Their youngest daughter, she is eleven going on twenty. One of those, she knows everything, you know, and a character. But my youngest boy, who was only thirteen when Betty died, is a minister up in Providence, Rhode Island. And he is married to a lovely wife and they have two children. And, I am leaving Friday to go up there because they are having a big celebration for him in church. It is his fourteenth year as a minister. He is a

minister at the Church of Boston. It is a Protestant denomination. Yes, he's quite a young man. He went to the University of Massachusetts and became a mechanical engineer working for the government. And low and behold, he got the call and called me up one day and said, "You sitting down, Dad?" And I said, "Yes, why?" He said, "I am leaving my job. I'm going to go back to college and becoming a minister."

Ms. Cross: Wonderful. Its nice that you have your family.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes.... I have five of my grandchildren around me.

Ms. Cross: How have the schools changed between the time you came and went, your children, even your grandchildren? You could expand on that a little bit.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, that's right. As a matter of fact, what is now known as the middle school in Red Bank, which is on Harding Road, was the high school in my day. That is where I graduated from. And then, of course, everything changed with the growth after the War. The Parkway got built, and people found that Monmouth County was a beautiful place to live, so the population just exploded and, of course, they built the regional high school to include Little Silver, and it's a beautiful place. In fact, I am going there tomorrow morning. I'm very active as I told you in the Lion's Club, and we give out scholarships. One of the recipients is a young man I am going to interview tomorrow morning.

Ms. Cross: That sounds nice. There must have been a lot of vacant land that's no longer vacant.

Mr. Greenwood: Oh, my goodness yes. And in Little Silver particularly. The famous Lovett family had nurseries all over creation in this county. And little by little, I have seen it sold off and sold off and houses and businesses built.

Ms. Cross: Have you seen the new Sickles?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, I have.

Ms. Cross: That's amazing, yes. What interests me is how much money there is around. Was this area always affluent like this?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh, well, yes, the Rumson area. It was always Rumson, you know. That was the money place because Red Bank was always a big commuting center, see. You know, to New York City. Even when it was just steam engines. I remember that. We used to have one called Blue Comet, and gosh, we'd go up to the railroad just to watch it come in, you know, when we were kids. I lived maybe three or four blocks from there. There was the family called the Russell Family that owned Boro Buses, and that was very, very

prominent. There must of have been forty or fifty buses that toured the whole county. Don't forget, there weren't a lot of people who owned cars in those days, you know. In fact, we never even had a telephone in my house even when I was working in the bank, for heaven's sakes.

Ms. Cross: When did you get your first phone?

Mr. Greenwood: I would say, believe it or not, it was close to 1950.

Ms. Cross: And people sat on their porches a lot?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh yes, especially in the evenings in the summertime, and naturally you didn't have any air conditioning. But it was neat, because the kids would all be playing. There again, you didn't worry about a lot of traffic because there weren't too many cars around. When we were young we used to have mail delivered twice a day, and we used to have the iceman come everyday. They were two colored fellows from Westside, the Green brothers, and they had an ice company, see. They'd bring the ice. We didn't have refrigerators, but you had an icebox, so you put the ice in there. The fruit and vegetable man would come around with the bananas, too.

Ms. Cross: People came then, peddlers came to the home.

Mr. Greenwood: Exactly. The peddlers came, exactly. It was kind of fun to look forward to them everyday.

Ms. Cross: It was colorful.

Mr. Greenwood: We used to have only a coal stove upstairs and then, I forgot what year it was, my mom rented a house that had a little furnace downstairs, and the coal man would come and he put the coal down the chute to the cellar. You had a little section where the coal would go in. And you used to have to go down and bank it every night and get up in the morning and get it started again. You'd sift the coal, you know, to make sure you got it all. It was the only way to heat the home. And of course, you had a big stove in the kitchen that mom used to keep shined with shoe polish, for heaven's sakes. But you did all the cooking on it. Those were fun days. I think families were much, much closer than they are today in that regard.

Ms. Cross: What about some of the medical practices when you were growing up? Did the doctor come to the house?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, they would come to the house. I vaguely remember even in Philadelphia, my sister always got the diseases much more severely than I did. I'd just get a light case of whatever she had. We got diphtheria in those days. They'd quarantine the house and you couldn't go out and people couldn't

come in except the doctor, and they almost lost my sister. I can remember to this day they talked about that.

Ms. Cross: Tell us about the quarantine.

Mr. Greenwood: They would put a sign on the door. No one was allowed inside that house because there was diphtheria there. It was very contagious. We lived in a row of tenement houses with one attached to the other in Philadelphia. I wasn't even allowed to go out. We had a little tiny back yard. In fact, we had an outhouse back there. We didn't have indoor plumbing in Philly at that time. So, I can remember the doctor coming and he'd go upstairs and go into sister's bedroom and doctor her. Finally, she pulled out of it.

Ms. Cross: Did they do that here? Did they quarantine here?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, they did. They quarantined in this area, too. As they say, you only had the one little hospital in Red Bank, but then, you had doctors that were just so patient. You could go in there and you could talk with them. Today, it's a factory as you probably know.

Ms. Cross: What did you pay them, and how did you pay them?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh, my gracious. Well, let me think. You had to pay by cash, of course, but if you didn't have it, why you'd give what you could. But I forget really how much it was, but it was very, very nominal. I can recall even when I came out of the service, I was pretty well shattered. I was very nervous. I just couldn't settle down. I guess after being overseas all that time. And, I wanted to go to Dr. Rullman. So, I went and, of course, his wife was just a tremendous woman. All of us, all of us young men had been together. We had a sailing club down at the river, okay. She lived on the river, so she knew all of us. And we went in the service, we wrote letters back to her, and she, in turn, would write to us. And, I can recall we had a reunion. We called ourselves the Bare Foot Yacht Club. Okay, we had about thirty guys and a couple of girls too, good sailors. When we'd come home, we'd have a reunion. And that woman, Mrs. Rullman, had a book, and I wish I could tell you how big it was. She had every single letter that every single guy wrote to her through the war. She had them encased. There was a lot of closeness, you know, which has somehow disappeared. Even in the YMCA, which graduated from that little YMCA I told you about. They built a YMCA and put a gym downstairs. They had a couple of rooms, weight rooms, and you could do a little gymnastics. I grew up with a Y and as a matter of fact, when I came back from the service, I started helping at the Y. I went to work there. Didn't get paid, but I ran gym classes, basketball classes, Saturday mornings for grade school kids.

Ms. Cross: Well, you were somewhat of a hero too, when you came home.

Mr. Greenwood: Well, too modestly, too modestly. I was in the Air Force. I was a crew chief. I took care of the fighter bomber. I had about six people under me that were what they call armourers. They'd put the ammunition in the guns, and then I had a photographer who watched the camera that was going to go on. We went all the way into Germany, you know. It got to the point where, like I say, I just saw too much of the war and I came back nervous. I went to see Dr. Rullman and he said, "Harry, God, it's so great to see you, but you know, I'm the head honcho now at both Riverview Hospital and Monmouth Medical Hospital. So I am not taking any patients, but right across the street there is a young Jewish doctor. He just had his first patient yesterday. He just got out of the Army and he married a local girl, why don't you go over to him?" And that's what I did.

Ms. Cross: What's his name?

Mr. Greenwood: His name was Elias Long. Dr. Long. When I got married and my children came along, if they got sick, my wife would pick up the phone. He'd get out of his bed, and he'd come right over to your house. That was the type of doctor he was. There were other doctors that did the same thing around here.

Ms. Cross: That's a change.

Mr. Greenwood: That's a big change now.

Ms. Cross: If you could describe your life as a road map, with a rocky road, virgin path, downhill slide, how would you describe it?

Mr. Greenwood: Well, a rocky start because my mom and dad divorced, which was very, very unusual.

Ms. Cross: Very unusual. How was she treated in this town? Was she accepted?

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, she was accepted, yes, but it was tough on her, because you know, unfortunately, my dad was an alcoholic. And when he was sober, he was a great guy. But he wasn't always sober. So, she went to a lawyer and got a divorce. She worked in a steam laundry up on White Street. There was Leon's Laundry and there was another called Smock, Harvey Smock, and my mom worked in both those laundries. I can remember after school going up there. And I'm telling you on those summer days, it was hot. Here they are, putting sheets through the mangle, and oh God, it was hot. My mom was a tremendous woman. She lived to be ninety-seven, and she lived in Red Bank, in her own little home on Waverly Place. She died in her own bed at age ninety-seven. My sister, who became a widow, broke up her home in Freehold and came down to live with my mom the last three or four years. So, between myself and my sister, we did what we could for Mom and we had nurses come in and help.

Ms. Cross: Well, that's a change.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, indeed.

Ms. Cross: No nursing home.

Mr. Greenwood: No, no, no nursing home.

Ms. Cross: And she was able to get around?

Mr. Greenwood: Well, right up until the last two years she was. Even until I'd say the last year, we used to get her up, and she could walk upstairs in her little house, but she couldn't navigate the steps on her own.

Ms. Cross: And she had all her faculties?

Mr. Greenwood: You bet. But what a tough life she had. I guess that's what made people strong. It really did. My closest friends all were able right after high school to go to college, and I couldn't. But that didn't leave me without friends. Everyone of them respected me because, as they said, I managed to be the president of my class, president of the student council, but we just had no money for college, so after I started in the bank, I started going to Monmouth Junior College at night. And, then I went to what they called AIB, American Institute of Banking. I graduated from there and actually became an instructor years later.

Ms. Cross: You did alright....

Mr. Greenwood: Yeah, I did okay.

Ms. Cross: That's interesting, though, that at that point in time somebody would divorce. Because it was almost unheard of.

Mr. Greenwood: It was almost unheard of.

Ms. Cross: And people treated her alright.

Mr. Greenwood: That's right. She had quite a few friends that she associated with, and she loved to play cards, so there were neighbors that she played cards with. Even went to the movies with them. There were a couple of things like some of the Senior Citizen groups that they have today, you know. She would go on a couple of trips with them on the bus, so she had a little social life. Naturally, when my sister got married and had children, my mom was the focal point of our family even then. The kids loved her, and she loved them. When I got married and had children, well they all called her nana.

Ms. Cross: She must have helped you out with your children.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, she did. Yes, she did, yes she did. There was never much money around in our family, there really wasn't, but you never missed it because you never had it, you know, and what you did have you'd appreciate, really.

Ms. Cross: What do you think when you walk down the street, like yesterday after the River Fest. When you walk down the street in Red Bank, what do you feel?

Mr. Greenwood: I have mixed emotions, I do. I think it's wonderful for Red Bank because it's a booming town. You know, I saw it grow. I became very involved in it, because of the banking part of it. I was on the Chamber of Commerce, of course, and I saw Red Bank grow, but then I saw it start to go down hill, too, when Monmouth Mall got built over there, and some of the stores were closing, and it got pretty tough. Then the Grove got built, and that hurt the business area in Red Bank, too. And it got to the point where you did get concerned. But then, it has made a tremendous turn around.

Ms. Cross: What do you think did it?

Mr. Greenwood: I will give the Mayor and the Council all the credit in the world. There again, his dad and I are the same age, and his dad and I went to grammar school together, but then, he was a Catholic and went on to Red Bank Catholic High School. So, we separated that way. He was my dentist until the time he retired, his father, and I think his son has done a great job as mayor, I really do. He has the foresight to bring in outside personnel, and they became what they call the River Center. That is a separate entity, which hired them to come in and just take an inventory of the town and see what they thought could be done to bring it back to where it was at one prior time. So, River Center is alive and active, and I give them all the credit in the world, too. I think also they brought a lot of business into Red Bank, gave them a lot of incentives, and tax abatements to start with. They fixed the front of the buildings up, and things like that.

Ms. Cross: Katherine Elkus White was a good mayor, too.

Mr. Greenwood: Oh, she was a good mayor at one time.

Ms. Cross: I think she was the one who kept Red Bank from going like Asbury Park and Long Branch.

Mr. Greenwood: Yes, indeed, that's right. You're right, and we were blessed with several good mayors. We had some great mayors. In fact, one of them just retired last week as the Superior Court Judge, that's Dan O'Hern. Dan O'Hern became seventy, and he had to retire. Well, he was our mayor at Red Bank. And Judge George Gray, he was another one who became mayor after Katherine Elkus White. So, we have been blessed, yes, we have.

Ms. Cross: In what way is your life now different from what you thought it would be when you were young?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh my, well. I guess I'd have to put it that I have been blessed. I thought when I was young that I'd advance just so far in the bank and that would be it, and as it turned around, I became pretty successful in that way. Consequently, I became quite well known in the area, and I think even to this day, you know, I'm still flattered when I go somewhere, people say, Oh, you're Mr. Greenwood, or you gave me your first mortgage, or, gosh I remember my dad brought me in, and you gave me a car loan. You know, those kind of things. So, I can't complain. I've done well.

Ms. Cross: Do you see a difference in banking?

Mr. Greenwood: Oh yes, yes. Banking has changed drastically. Naturally have more banks than there ever was; there is a bank on every corner.

Ms. Cross: There is no friendly banker anymore.

Mr. Greenwood: That is true, and you know, I don't talk about it too much, but it's true. People come up to me and say, "I can always remember coming in and even if you were busy, you'd raise your hand and say hello." Nobody talks to customers anymore. They're all just a number, and they want you to use ATMs and drive ins. But there are some little community banks that are still trying. I'll give them credit. You take the Shrewsbury State Bank, that has done very well staying independent. Now my daughter is with a new bank.

Ms. Cross: I know some of the Board members.

Mr. Greenwood: Oh do you?

Ms. Cross: I almost bought stock, but that's too much money. They wanted a big block of money.

Mr. Greenwood: I bought some only because of my daughter, because she's a manager. Now they are going to come back to Tinton Falls, did you know that?

Ms. Cross: No.

Mr. Greenwood: Well the bank bought Tinton Falls Bank out. Its called Commerce. We'll see. They're building.

Ms. Cross: I lived around there. Well, thank you very much for this enjoyable and instructive interview.

Mr. Greenwood: My pleasure.