

Interviewing of **Erwood Avery**

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Shadyside Road - Shady Side, Maryland
[Text scanned 11/09: [Avery-1984003002.doc](#)]

Q Mr. Avery, would you mind telling me, what year you were born.

A Nineteen hundred and six. [1906]

Q You were born in Shady Side?

A In Shady Side.

Q At home?

A At home, 23rd day of December.

Q Okay, would you mind telling me your age now?

A Seventy-seven.

Q Seventy-seven. . . . when you lived in Shady Side, with your parents. . . could you tell me exactly where in Shady Side you lived?

A I, myself, lived on Parrish's Creek.

Q Exactly where was it. . . did your parents have a farm there, a home, or . . .

A A home.

Q A home.

A They bought from the Bembes and since they bought it, they added on to it from the timber and the logs that came from Johnstown's flood.

Q Would you know what year their house. . .

A I cannot tell you the year. . . they additioned to it, but it was in - in my lifetime.

Q Could you tell me if there were brothers and sisters in your family?

A Only eleven in our family.

Q Could you, please tell me the names of your brothers and your sisters.

A Oh, you don't want all those names. . . it's too many.

Q Okay, but you do have brothers and sisters?

A I have. . . I'm the only old stag left and I have three sisters left.

Q Okay.

A Four. . . five of them were born in the brick house in Cedarhurst and my. . .

Q So, you lived with your parents in their home on. . . on Parrish Creek and then you moved to Cedarhurst?

A No. . . reversed.

Q Reversed, I'm sorry.

A My grandfather owned Cedarhurst. He owned about two-thirds of this village and he allotted that to my father and mother and they married and moved in as bride and groom. This property I'm on belonged to my grandfather Avery. My grandparents Crandell, my mother's family, is joining in the back here. And they're all from Dublin, England. . . .Dublin, Dublin. And. . . and my, my father moved here from Long Island, New York. . . .and, they brought with them some friends who came behind them a little bit later. And Long Island was never settled, only through property sales tax . . . still in the family's and heritage is going through it. And the Barber Steamship Line is on it now. My grandfather owned all of Long Island, I'm told. And it was. . . went through tax sale — I had one aunt that arrived at a nice piece of. . . piece of money from it. She's the only one that ever got any money out of it.

Q Well. . . if you grew up in Shady Side here, then you went to school in Shady Side?

A Went to first year high. . . as far as I went to school.

Q Okay, but you did go to school in Shady Side?

A Right. . . right.

Q Could you tell me who some of your classmates were?

A Classmates. . . well, we had a larger, class in the later years that was in the village which were twenty—two in number. And, we started out and I would start out with twin girls, Ruth and Clara Hallock. . . Stella Bast and ____ Raymond and, ah . . oh, I can keep on. . . .Rogers girl, Jesse Rogers. . . Luther Lee, Alvin Joyce, Johnny Griner and, keep on, I can get them all named. . . the Leatherbury. . . but I may miss a few. But there were twenty-two and there are only two males left.

Q Who?

A Johnny Griner and myself.

Q And. . . would you mind telling me who your teachers were?

A Well, we started out with teachers. . . Mrs. Mamie Bast used to live up here on Dent's Road, and. . . her husband used to drive her to Shady Side School. . . and, then we had a lady from Mayo, Mrs. Helen Dawson and. . . Miss Helen Dawson, and we had a. . . we had a Bassford woman, too, was a teacher in here. And Mrs. Andrews was. . . and I guess that's most of them.

Q Could you tell me a little bit about your home life and growing up?

A My home life and my life are. . . I've been so happy with it. We've had a lot of sickness, lot of misfortunes and we'll all be together and. . . when I was nine years, I was a janitor of St. John's Church.

Q That was the first job you ever had?

A No. The first job I ever had was milking cows and. . . and slopping the hogs in our home. . . and, you had to do that before you went to school.

Q I mean, the first job that you got paid for. . .

A Yes. . . three dollars. . . three dollars a month and that's we were, that's what I was paid. . . we mostly had a wood fire but the greatest thing out of being a janitor of St. John's Church was walking to meet the preacher, whose name was Robert Mayo, lived in Owensville Rectory. . . Christ Church Rectory and walked to Galesville West River. . . ferried across West River by rowing him, sailing him, ice skating him, pulling him and then when he got to this side and he was carried most of the time by Captain Oscar Hartge and after he got to this side, then he had to walk up to St. John's Church and there was no blacktop roads. The ox cart had the wheel ruts and the holes like that and I used to meet him. . . and, he was a very, very well spoken man and he was a preacher and he was up there about twenty-five years. And then we had another man who was, we have a memorial in there to him. . . Mr. James. . . Dr. James Cheston, he was a Sunday School teacher. But he used to drive and always a white horse and it has the blanket over him and I used to meet him and tie his horse up for him.

Q Could you tell me a little bit what your brothers and your sisters and yourself used to do for entertainment at home?

A Entertainment at home? Well, we had an old organ and we didn't have much light and we. . . my mother and sisters, we would have to have a schooling of one lamp. . . which I still have the lamp here and, we play up and down trees and skated and, sleigh ride and swim and. . . we had. . . we, as boys, we used to. . . summertime, we used to catch fishing worms and. . . and make fishing bobbins, we'd have eels all during the summer evenings so we'd catch eels and make crab bait. And that was part of our. . . what we obligated to do.

Q Mr. Avery, when you were a little child living in Shady Side, who do you recall as being the oldest person living in Shady Side at that time?

- A Well one of the oldest. . . one of the oldest people that I would remember living in here right off. . . always, I never knew him too well but always respect him as being an old man. . . Mr. Jack Prout. . . and the only other man was Peter Kirchner.
- Q Could you take a guess of what age these gentlemen were?
- A Oh, they were. . . they were quite old. . . they were what I am now.
- Q Do you recall where they lived in Shady Side?
- A Well, Peter Kirchner was part of. . . lived off on Woods Wharf Road. . . and Mr. Jack Prout, he was the father of one of the Hallock ladies. And are you speaking about. . . I'm speaking about where he lived. . . they used to be a big pond off of Idlewild, which that was all enclosed from the bay, there was no such thing as open like it is today. There was a reef of sand there and a big sand bar. . . and that was called Cedar Pond. And no inlet. . . outlet on the one track about as wide as this table is long, and we used to. . . and the water would rush in and out because it was a larger property and we used to swim there but you had to be a swimmer in order to cross that because the water was running so fast and that was between the two Hallock homes. . . and that was called Cedar Pond which today is all gone and that used to be a big sand bar reef up there. . . used to keep the fish nets and all on it and later years, that was the only channel in Parrish's Creek and it ran almost up to that sand reef bar. Cedar Pond. . . you don't even hear of it today. Go ahead.
- Q When you became an adult, could you tell me what occupation you had?
- A You wouldn't want to hear of all. . . when I. . . I left home when I was fifteen and I've been from one to the other. . . and if I told you all, you said you got to be 150.
- Q Well, what was your main occupation?
- A Well, I been in the printing business, the Baltimore Sun. I know how to make. . . work D-Line Tire Company. I worked in shirt factory. . . I drove a taxi cab. . . what I hadn't done and all goes along with it. But my greatest thing, we had a grocery store.
- Q Where was your grocery store located?
- A Right up here. . . but we had a. . .
- Q Where was it located here in Shady Side?
- A On the corner of Cedarhurst and Shadyside Road. We built it.
- Q You built it. what year was it built??
- A What year, hon? [background voice: '38] What year. . . '38. . . that's the year we got married. . . laid the foundation the day we got married.
- Q And. . . and how many years did you have this store?
- A Three or four, wasn't it, Elizabeth?

- Q Now, Mr. Avery, I know you can answer this question because I've asked a lot of people this question and somebody says, well. . . they just don't know. Now, I'm sure in your store, you had a little pot-bellied stove and people sat around that stove and talked. Could you tell me some of the things they talked about.
- A Well. . . the pot-bellied stove, that. . . I used to have to go the grocery stores and there were two pot-bellied stoves, the one I remember very well, was in the old post office which was owned and run by the Nowell outfit and the Owings' outfit.
- Q Did you have one in your store?
- A No.
- Q Did people stand around and talk in your store?
- A It had gotten away from that. Previously, they used to but not in later life. I used to go the store in the. . . in the summertime, we'd row up the creek to the wharf, to the pier, wherever you got on and walked up to the stores and, then, they sat around and lots. . . lots of gab and always a game of pitch. Pitch. . . you had to be the winners of the pitch game and I learned to play cards then.
- Q Could you tell me some of the things that they talked about. . . did they talk about working on the water or what. . .
- A Well, it would. . . it would come in, definitely the water would be the main topic, see, and the. . . the body of water. . . I used. . . my father bought and I used to keep tally for them buying oysters and I'd come home from school and get in the boat I still have here. . . and go keep tally for my father. . . workboat, and out of it, why, the price of oysters were most of the time, two bushels for twenty-five cents. And we, and the watermen loaded my father's boat. . . I used the word "on the cuff" because there was no market for oysters and they couldn't sell them and, the picture you see of my father's boat with all the. . . Virginia has that picture, and that was all and that was before gasoline engines, it was all log canoes and we used to take as many as four of them out. . . boats at one time.
- Q Can you tell me what you recall of some of the early boat builders down here?
- A Well, I can go back to early boat builders. I go back earlier boat builders, early as any of them, was an old German over here in Idlewilde, Mr. Charlie Smith, which you hadn't heard that but, he. . . he was a big part and built some boats with my father and, then we got hooked up with some of the other ones in later time but. . . old man George Proctor, he built log canoes and. . . and Mr. Charlie Smith, then. . . then he got. . . he got hooked up with Mr. Will Lee and he brought in old Captain Ed Leatherbury, as time went on.
- Q Did you ever go down and watch them build boats?
- A Watch them? I helped them.
- Q Oh, well tell me what you used to help them do.
- A Everything. . . rub it, scrub it, clean it, paint it. . . never stopped work. . . work.

Q So you really worked down there for them at different times?

A You know, right down to where you living and. . . that cove, you know the cove down in there, just below you, all right. Off of that Wagner's Point, there was a house, land and a railway. . . and the man just died that I worked for, Packard Trott, and there was a home and there was a railway and we didn't have a road to it, we could walk to it by walking. . . going by old Mr. Billy Wagner's property. We walked out there and there was a home there, and that's just below you. You never knew it was there. . . railway and a house out there, erosion carried that away.

Q That's down near Preston Owings?

A What. . . it's below. . . it's across from the Wagner's house on the point. . . joining the Wagner's property. We used to walk down to it and Packard Trott was running it as an oys--- . . . as a marina.

Q Do you remember a sawmill in Shady Side. . . or did you hear people talk about it or do you recall it?

A Oh yeah. . . . sure. . . my uncle ran it, two uncles run the sawmills. One back of me, here, on part of my mother's property. . . Captain Dick Trott, that's Packard Trott's father. . . and he got the daughter-in-law lived back there, Esther, lived back of you, he had a sawmill in the back here. And my other uncle on my father's side, he had the Price's. . . that was old man Bob Price, that had the sawmill and that was at up beyond the. . . up there next to where the big building is which was owned by a Doctor Bennett, which was our local doctor here.

Q Could you tell me what you know about the Shady Side Beverage Company?

A Very little ever hear. . . I knew all of it, went into it. . . they used to have homemade ice cream and all this into it. And old man Murray Leatherbury started it. And. . . some of the boys picked it up a little bit. . . and few of the bottles left around but they made it and fixed it up. But old Mr. Murray Leatherbury was the backbone of it. And he. . . he had three boys or four boys, he had them helping around there a lot, including the ice cream and was a little parlor.

Q They used to make the ice cream right there?

A Sure. . . the ice. . . the ice that they used most the time, it used to come in on. . . from Annapolis, bring it down on a boat. . . in the harbor and freighted in by the case.

Q Other than the store that you and your wife had, could you tell me something about some of the other stores in Shady Side?

A Well, I clerked for Leatherbury. . . I clerked for Siegerts and all. . . and then we got to a point to come up and build our own on it and. . . round that time. . . tell you, run out time, I yap too much. . . but, the store we had, we had lots of hard work in it and the day we got married, we got into it, didn't have even a toilet in it but we made up. Opened spot up there, we didn't walk through it, did we? But. . . we had. . . we had a first of lots of things in the store locally.

Q Like what?

A Well, we had the first. . . fresh vegetable bins and we had a sprinkler system on it and. . . then we used to carry ice cream into it an awful lot and, of course, that was the time we have to carry lard by the fifty pound cans and all. . . and, but. . . we had. . . we had a full line store. . . we had a lots in the store, we had an apartment over top of it.

Q That's where you lived. . . and, when you gave up this store, where did you go to live in Shady Side?

A Just below you. . . rented apartment at the end of Bast's Road and. . . right across from you where Mr. Wallace Owings used to run a grocery store.

Q And, could you tell me when you moved into this home?

A Maybe. . . maybe five years after we left the store. . . was it that long? How far away am I?

[Elizabeth: We left there in July and we moved in here in November. . . and that was three years.]

Q You had this home built for you or did you purchase it?

A No, we had it built.

Q You had it built.

A All the lumber off this house came in in one truckload of all the framing from Virginia and dumped right in the yard, one time.

Q Do you and Mrs. Avery have children?

A Yes.

Q Would you mind telling me what your children's names are?

A Well, the daughter, who is now in Massachusetts, and her name is Clyta. . . C-L-Y-T-A. . . Clyta Elizabeth. And her married name, now, is Jackson. We have a son whose name back from his. . . from his uncles and his name is Allen Alonzo and he's in the ministry and he's now in Winchester, Virginia and he's a musician. He spent five years in the University of Maryland and Clyta, my daughter, got her schooling from Fleet's Business School.

Q So you have two children? Do you have grandchildren? You have three grandchildren. . . do you have any great- grandchildren. . . you do not have any great-grandchildren.

A No, ma'am. . . no. . .

Q Well, could you tell me some more about Shady Side?

A Well, lots about Shady Side, I may miss you and forget you and all but, during the 1917, that was the coldest year I ever knew of. . . and that whole west. . . I mean, the whole

Chesapeake Bay froze over. Even rode. . . they could take a sailboat and sail. . . iceboat and sail across the Chesapeake Bay. And, during that time, they used. . . they used a propeller boat, previously used to be sidewheeler which was the Emma Giles and then the other one was. . . on my tongue of the other boat, that was a propeller kind and they go on that in ice.

Q Did you used to ever ride on the Emma Giles?

A Oh, sure. . . I . . . my brother-in-law was captain on it.

Q Your brother-in-law was the captain of the Emma Giles? What was his name?

A Woolford. . . and that's how my. . . my sister met him, on that. . . but during that time in 1917, that was a very, very cold year, and I lost my brother that time in a very misfortunate accident, duck hunting, and, but that was the year that they. . . the boats. . . Susquehanna, that's the name of that boat, and they would deposit food on the ice and the horses and wagon would pick it up and bring it ashore the mouth of West River. And I walked and skated and when they done it, I seen them and Mr. Will Owings was one of the bigger ones and Mr. Al Owings was one of them that was very in the store now where Brevnik is. . . and that's the only way we got our produce, something to eat, and it didn't come in a ten pound bag of flour or five, it came in barrels, wooden barrels, weigh some hundred pounds and the men would handle that, put it on that wagon and two horses and the ice helped them. . . 1917, that's the toughest year I remember. . . was the coldest.

And my brother Lonsie got his misfortune, was duck hunting with a boat on the ice, off of Idlewilde and, that. . . that was cold, cold, cold, cold times. Then the whole place was froze over and no food, no oysters and they'd saw a hole in the ice and stand on the edge of it and get some up so you could have something to eat off of and the few they could sell, and they'd sell a few of them right to. . . shucking house, just before you get to your house, on the left, the Bast's oyster house, Henry Bast and Mike Hartge. And they shucked the oysters and they used to bring them in from off of these planting grounds by sleds. . . right there in Parrish's Creek, I shoved ice around, seen it around, throw the oysters ashore and get them and Henry Bast Oyster House down there to the left of you, next to the Kirchner property and they shucked those oysters in there in 1917. . . Henry Bast. . . and that was wintertime.

We used to skate from Parrish's Creek to Galesville to play prisoner's base. Now, I was always too small, I wasn't a good skater but I skate. . . first thing, I never had a very good pair of skates but I made a. . . had a lot of fun. . . and there has been, now I did not make the trip, but they did go, that same year, all the way up to the old wooden bridge in South River, took their skates off and walked to Annapolis and back, skated home. . . true. . . South River, wooden bridge, skated up and skated back. . . walked to the city and come back. . . do the same thing. . . and done the same thing over again.

But we used to have a lot of fun. . . prisoner's base, with our two villages. . . but I was never that good a skater, I. . . to sorta' watch a little bit, you know. I skate about as good as most of the ladies and that's about. . . that let me out.

Q Who were some of the people that you used to skate with, Mr. Avery?

- A Well, . . . the greatest skater I knew in this village, in my times, was Mr. Perry Rogers. And he had a crippled leg and that was the boat builder of the Princess. He was the best skater I ever known. And the other people, Ralph Lee, Rob Lee and Nieman. . . John L. Nieman, George Proctor and Robert Atwell and keep on down, you'll find them all there down the line that you could catch up with them. . . all the people that lived in here natively. . . Crandell. . . three families, the Crandells were in here. . . some of the Trotts. . . but lots of people didn't have skates out of it.
- Q Did you ever used to go to the dances that they had down at the hotel?
- A No. . . never danced in my life.
- Q Did you ever used to go down and watch them?
- A No.
- Q No. . . never did.
- A No. . . never had the money, never had the clothes, never had the time. . . not saying didn't want to.
- Q No, of course not. . . course not.
- A We didn't have. . . I had to work.
- Q What did your. . . what was your father's occupation?
- A My father's occupation was a oyster buyer.
- Q Oyster buyer. . .
- A And he shipped them as far as Baltimore. And, I have a pair of oar-locks here that his boat had no power on it and I did have one of the oars, the oars I do not have now but I have the pair of oar-locks that we used to row his boat with. And the brass oar-locks are right in there. . . are they too close, far away, Elizabeth? Are they too far away for you? Go off a minute, honey. That was used off the Louisa to run the 24-foot oars and I have helped the oars. . . I couldn't row them but I helped keep them from sliding overboard and, there's another set of these which my sister has and this is the pair that went on that sailboat and. . .
- Q It was a sailboat. . .
- A Sailboat. . . no engine, no motor then.
- Q How long was this boat?
- A Sixty—five feet. . . had 1400 bushel of oysters. I've sailed with her up and down the Bay and all that went with it and then occasionally he'd go to Rappahannock River which I went with him and hauled and freighted wheat back to Baltimore. And we used to put these oysters out a Long dock which now is a big build-up of the harbor in Baltimore,

that's where we used to sell them most of the time. And the guy that used to buy them was named McGee. . .

[End of Side 1 of tape]

A . . . getting to part of Shady Side, let's go up part of Cedarhurst. Cedarhurst was. . . when my parents lived there, there was an area of cornfield, apples and peach orchards beyond the present land that is there is now. . . it all washed away, eroded away, out of it. And, where my father was born and now over on East-West Shadyside Road, that old homeplace, which was handed down to my Uncle Andrew Avery, from his father, that house had been moved three different times from erosion from the bay. . . and the rivers, and moved back to keep from washing out in the rivers. . . and that's the old. . . the old homeplace of that. . . the Avery family, in there, of Captain Salem Avery, the old man. And he's buried right there on that same property in.

Q What year did the Averys come to Shady Side?

A I'd have to look more than I could tell you off. . . I cannot tell you exactly. I have some history of it that could tell you more about it but I would not tell you the year, no. But there were houses that were in there belonged to my grandfather and they're still there in one of the older buildings in the village that. . . and Larsen, around the point, they were all in here together, same time. But the village as a whole hasn't changed too much.

We used to not be able to get out of here as for any transportation, sometimes we couldn't even get out as a. . . with a horse team on account of where the present bank is, Maryland National Bank, was a hog park. Go look at the reeds and the bushes and the rashes up there, you will see the after-effects of it and when the cars and all came about, why, my mother became president of the road building program. . . . why we used to have to go up. . . and go up Petherbridge's Hill through Deale and we couldn't go through where we going today on account of the hog park and many time that I drove around with them, we had to go around, couldn't go through it with a buggy and. . . and I have also. . . a little ahead of my story what I am speaking now, but I also had a old car that I bought, paid \$65 for it and drove it from Baltimore to here and back.

Q What year was that, Mr. Avery?

A Oh. . . well, I was. . . before I was married when I was working for the Baltimore Sun.

Q Could you tell me what kind of car it was?

A Old Model. . . Model "T" Ford touring car. . . and we used to drive up, go up Petherbridge's Hill and occasionally we couldn't get up there and some good neighbors would have a double-team of horses and pull us over the hill. Then my mother and them got busy in the road association, she happened to be president of it, and. . . this road, they had. . . is changed from the original road. The original road ran. . . ran behind the present post office and crossed back where the fire department is. . . and came up and then when it came on up, it went on up and where it is at the Columbia Beach is a cemetery there now. And Witt Simms and them are buried there. Every time you go up this road, you run over top of them.

But the shells that this road was built of it of came off of the frontlines of the shore and

most of it was off of the Cedarhurst property. . . small oyster shells. Then that was trucking time. . . they had truck equipment and they had two phases of trucks, two names of trucks that was hauling in and out of here. . . and, one was the International and the other one was a Relay. . . Relay, most people never heard of the name. . . it was brought up by the International and taken off the market because Relay could run all around them and. . . and pull out the International when they got stuck and what happened with the Relay truck, it would relay its load, shift it from one close body to the other. You have relays today but not in a truck form and that was taken off of the market.

But all the basic amount of shells was on this road was put there by trucks off of Bay Shore. There was few oyster shells and the larger oysters, but these were from the. . . from the smaller oysters that washed up on beaches, which today, you don't see any.

Q What. . . what year did they have oysters. . . did they put in oyster shell road down here?

A Well. . . you got me for time. . . I. . .

Q Do you know what year they put paved roads in down here?

A Oh, no. . . they. . . they patched them up a little bit at the time from oysters to gravel shells, to gravel and then they put in what paved roads they have here now but, year, I'm sorry.

Q Do you recall a carnival that they had down here to raise money to put a paved road in down here?

A Sure.

Q Could you tell me a little bit about it?

A Well. . . one of the. . . one of the better parts that I personally remember of that carnival was that. . . Gilbert Leatherbury took cables and made from one tree to the other, downfall slide and we used to climb the tree and get in that and they'd give us a pull and down the chute we would go. . . down that cable wire. And that was one big part of it. However, the other big part of it was. . . remember, if we could get five cents to buy a cookie, at a penny apiece, that's what I got going to the carnivals.

Q Five cents for what. . . I'm sorry, I didn't quite get that? Five cents for what?

A Buy cookies. . . penny apiece cookie. And the money that he raised came from different activities and all that went on, which was limited, when this was. . . yes, it was held right here where the Fire Department and all is right now, in that property. And joining that property is part of the old Lerch property, which this is part of it, was. . . and joining that was a sheep park. And the sheep park was at the head of this creek.

Q Who owned it?

A Lerches. . . and that was the beginning and carrying of, I'm told, handed down of the tick fever and the University of Maryland, Maryland Department of Agriculture and all, they experimented in that quite a bit. We lost a number of people here from tick fever. They

never had anything to help you with it, I think two of the Swinburns died of it and the sheep was carrying of it because they stopped them. . . kept them round it. Yeah. . . the sheep park in back of Centenary Church and the Fire Department. And they got the water from down to the head of this creek down here is where they got their water. . . that's part of the Lerches farm property.

Q When they. . . when did they start the Fire Department down in Shady Side?

A You'd have to go back and get that off the records. Mister. . . Vito. . . Vito, who bought in most of Avalon Shores and Dr. Johns, school of Johns, he was a MD and he was very much interested in both and definitely the Rescue Squad. . . he was the backbone of that and Vito's. . . they have the dates down there, I cannot give you the dates but I. . . I know what they've done and, later on, we got into water and got into some sewer and I put all the sewers in there for them and got. . . well, we had water through it all and, I'd like to mention one more thing pertaining to Snug Harbor.

Snug Harbor, when we were coming along, the Lerches owned that and the big building . . . the big building down in there. And that is one of the older buildings down here and. . . other that building and joining that, we used to go down there and my uncle was there. . . a workman for Mr. Tommy Lerch and he used to carry him duck hunting out there in the bay. And he used to take a case of gun shells and go out there and shoot until they got tired. And joining that property, on that property, and there was an ice house. And, . . . many times I played into it, many times I run around it after it was taken down or went down, but the fresh water in the pond, they used it and filled it up and made ice for the year in. . . in off of Flag Park on a ice house. . . and they used to cover it with straw. You had to be careful once in a while. , we as boys would. . . we'd jump down in there occasionally you got a little damp. But we used to. . . years, for many times, run around playing afterwards, you know, worn out but that old house down there, on the shore and hunting, whatever, some part of this village. . . Mr. Tommy Lerch enjoyed it and . . . keep on.

The erosion has been so hurtful to me that they hadn't done enough to it that I think should have been done. And it's near as bad, some sections of it and because they don't even want you to repair today. And they'd rather see it wash away some today then would let some people repair it, because it really's not healthy. We got a piece of property. . . no, I better not say that, but we had plenty of property that eroded away today. And I tried to get our County official to come in to just buy it so we have. . . make a nice park out of it but I haven't been able to do that and it still eroded away. Sold very reasonable. . . at public sale. . . between Columbia Beach and Cedarhurst. . . public sale, \$73,000. . . they could have taken the dirt off of. . . off of the sewer systems that they bootlegged the dirt around and filled it up and made a nice park. . . at no cost.

Q Are there other things that you can tell me about Shady Side?

A Well, yeah. . . I can keep telling you all the stores and businesses and schools and the changes in schools and they done this and they moved this around.

Q Well, tell me what they moved around and. . .

A Well, they changed one school, the old original school, that used to be down the end of the

yard, next to where. . . where the back end of it was and then they built this new one in there where now the Eastern Star is. . . that's the one I came out of.

Q The old school. . . did they tear it down or was it moved?

A No. . . it was torn down.

Q It was torn down.

A Well. . . you know, it deteriorated down so much but our Fire Department and things are all new to the back end of it, but we had a lot of fun seeing them being built. And all must have needed it, too. But I hate to see them hesitate from what they hadn't done. . . of what they could do to save this little bit of land we have left. I don't know what else to say to you but. . . any questions you want to ask. . .

Q Any. . . any stories you would like. . . oh, I know, could you tell me some stores that perhaps your parents told you about Shady Side when you were growing up?

A Not too much. . . my mother. . . my mother was part of a school teacher. She lived in back of me here when Eldridge Road run right through here and you walked down but, . . . not too much. . . they were. . . told me a few things about their life and all but. . . not beyond that too much.

Q Well, it must have been terrible down here in Shady Side when it was just dirt roads?

A Yeah. . . you'd be better off with a scow. . . boat than you were with a. . . shoes and as our deeds says now, the Great Swamps, which is here on this deed is Great Swamps, and the other deed was my mother had back there in Great Swamps. And so designated by a landing, this property here and the property where my mother and. . . was all on and they had a log cabin they lived in back there.

Q Had a log cabin?

A Right. . . a log cabin, which is gone.

Q Did your father build it?

A No. . . not. . . that was my mother's father. . . into it. They always had stock, farm. . . they picked tomatoes back in there in the Great Swamps. Of course, today, you can't walk through it for growing up.

Q Why do you think they named this whole area the Great Swamp?

A Because it was just what it said.

Q It was a swamp?

A Yeah. . . and then, and then. . . they raised a garden, vegetations and crops. . . and tomatoes and corn and wheat and. . . and they hand-dug or used a scoop and oxens and horses and cut ditches and drained all this land. . . and cultivated, that's how they survived in this area.

Q All the early settlers?

A Sure, I . . . I can walk you over and show you each and every ditch, hand-dug. Today, with all the equipment, you got everything flooded and they don't drain it at all. I can show you. . . in. . . they cradled wheat, hand-cradled wheat, that's a scythe.

Q Now. . . now, would you explain that to me.

A That's. . . well, the wheat was growing and they would take scythe. . . hand-scything, cut it down and they'd get a armful down and put a batch of string around it. . . that's cradled, bundled wheat. Then, Uncle Bob Price would come down the road with his thrashing machine and he was a very joyful-type man, when he wasn't mad, and he'd blow the whistle. And he had a son in there, Robert, was firing it up and they used to use wood to get their steam up and they would thrash wheat. And the Weems' farm, that. . . all farms that needed it. . . Wildes needed it, Weems' needed it, needed it back here, and they had pitched that in and they blow the straw out. . . and. . . which I have taken. . . they take a log and put horses and hooked on to it with a piece of rope and the straw would get piled up. You'd have to go in these racks and rack off the straw before it piled up too high but that didn't stop you from getting the straw back. And that was hot, sweaty time and you'd go on through and let the straw fly on you. . . cover you up if you didn't move because that's the way they were thrashing wheat. That's where we got our wheat crops.

Q And everybody went around and helped everyone else do that?

A Sure. . . then you. . . then in later years, later time and little bit later in the year, we'd save that wheat and they carried it up to Mr. Rob Price's and get it ground, we'd have flour. That's where we got flour a lot of times.

Q You took it to a mill?

A Sure.

Q Where was the mill?

A Right up. . . .Doc Bennett, up here to Prices, one I was telling you about.
[Background voice: Swamp Circle Road]

Q On Swamp Circle Road?

A [Background voice: Before you get to it.]
Where I told you where Doc Bennett was.
[Background voice: She don't know.]
Well. . . other side of. . . where we was talking about it the other day. . . going up the road beyond the Health Department.

Q Oh, yes sir, okay. . . I know where you mean.

A And he had, later years, old Dick Trott, he had a grinder, too. . . he used to grind corn. . .

Q Down here. . . in Shady Side. . . just where. . . where. . .

A Grind corn and all. . . white corn, feed.

Q Where was it in Shady Side?

A Uh. . . right, if you go down Cedarhurst Road and turn left on Lake Avenue, it would be part of. . . on this side of Lake Avenue in Cedarhurst, in the. . . that was. . . in the. . . they would raise their wheat, hold it, corn. . . and grind it for the feeds. . . that's the way we survived. And nobody. . . nobody got any great pay, as you say, people helped each other.

Q So, okay, okay, go ahead. . .

A They. . . they, what has grown and what's happening in Shady Side, which lots of people don't realize, today, what is Hopkins Cove, I picked string beans down there for ten cents a basket and they were raised there and, . . . the basket definitely had to be rounded up because they'd settled and if wasn't, you'd have to go back and get some more before you'd get your ten cents. And they were raised at the property which is now Hopkins Cove. . . and, as much. . . much unknown that Shady Side had a farm that raised string beans, but that today is Hopkins Cove. . . but we have so many things that we could know of and do, but I can't single all of them.

Q When do you think all of the. . . the new people started moving into Shady Side. . . I don't. . . I mean the outside people, if you want to call them that? When would you say that. . . when would you say they started moving to Shady Side?

A Well, we go. . . they kept coming in partially on account of the water and water rights. . . of course, one of the first subdivisions was Cedarhurst. . . and then the next one was Avalon Shores and Idlewilde. . . Idlewilde and Avalon Shores. . . and then. . . begin so much in difference, they opened up Columbia Beach. . . that was it, but the oldest one. . . one of the oldest ones I think of right now would be Cedarhurst, Idlewilde. . . Avalon Shores. . . and Felicity Cove all came along with it.

Q But the majority of the people that moved down here then, in the early days. . .

A That's right. . . and the children stayed.

Q . . . really had summer homes?

A Yeah. . . Oh yes, yes, definitely. All were summer homes, were not any. . . only ones that would be, like. . . as your 10 or 12 children, out of a family, why they would stay here and they'd eventually get hold of a piece of property. . . just. . . just like I'm looking across Cedarhurst Road, there's four houses right over there, now, handed down from the children. . . right there, one, two, three, four of them. . . and this is what is happening, that the families would spread out into. . .

Q Well. . .

A . . . I would, . . . tend to tell you about Sommervilles. . . we met them through the grocery store business and they were very beautiful people and then along came all of their children. Now they commuted down here from Washington but they finally made it their home of

some of the families, which I think some of the families still here. And just like you're going to get into get into the Wagner family down on the Point. Their children are here and. . . Hintz and. . . all the names down there, one's about and what have you and they've rebuilt that whole Point up down there, one of the. . . they all married in and stayed into this area. . . they married the Wagner girls and Stutler's one of them. . . he's over on the other side over there, but. . . who else what it. . . oh, Mangle. . . Mangle and Harold.

Mangle and Harold is the KDB Ranch and. . . they used to run a boarding house there, too. And I worked in that old boarding house for them when they were running it. Now, the man that originally owned that property was named Neimeyer. And he passed along and then comes the marriage and they married into the King Syrup family and the Mangles. . . and then we just lost one of the daughters, granddaughter. . . Fox. They were into that family. . . into. . .

And the original house. . . the boarding house is still there, the big house. . . two big houses there, the original one on. . . that's right there on the bay and that was Mangle and Harold and. . . King. . . the syrup people and some of those were the plumbing people. . . Washington and, . . . Wagners. . . he was a mechanic-type man and he fixed guns for me and he repaired all through the village and he occasionally used to come through here and get in here by boat, come from Annapolis and get in by boat. Later years, he also was. . . came to Upper Marlboro. . . Mr. Harry Hallock used to get him and bring him over here with teams. . . that's the man on Wagner's Point. . . that's the old gentlemen.

Q He was like a gunsmith, then?

A Yes. He fixed my gun for me and. . . uh. . . but, uh. . . this was beginning to break in and then we get into a different developments of everyplace you turn, there were different groups would be settling. . . . the Griffiths oil people, they bought the old Hartge property down Steamboat Wharf Road and then you go into Cohen, on down there where Virginia and them lived, that's the granddaughters. . . and then you. . . I forget the name of the original old tract of land on the left going by your home. . . Hayes. . . well, he was a lawyer and he had a son was in the field of lawyers and that's been. . . they were in here and that's been sold, you know, changing around and changing hands and all.

But you get into the Neimeyers and the Wagners and the Sommervilles, these are people that were moving in. . . into the villages and building it up all the time, into it and you had a family named Lawton which was a older family into this area.

[Background voice: Felicity Cove.]

Huh?

[Background voice: Felicity Cove.]

Felicity Cove, yeah. . . well, they bought into it really before it was Felicity Cove was built and we had a big insurance man down here, I forget his name, but he used to walk around with a telephone wrapped around his neck.

Q He did. . . he did what?

A He'd walk around with a telephone wrapped around his neck, to the point of. . . so important that he should be reached in case of emergency. . . so I hope I haven't overdone it to you.

Q No, indeed. . .

A . . . and I hope I haven't missed too much. . .

Q Well, there's plenty more I'm sure you can tell me. . . we have about ten more minutes. . .

A And we have lots and lots of people and lots and lots of colored people which I have been associated with all my life and, . . . they. . . the old colored lady, Aunt Becky Boyd, lived down there on Snug Harbor Road near where the brick school is. . . and many a good meal I've eaten with her and sandwiches and stuff. And vice-versa, those boys would do the same in my home. . . our home, my mother. . . and, . . . that was Aunt Becky Boyd and her family is still scattered around. And the Grosses are somewhere there. . . still scattered around.

Q There was the black lady who lived in the community who was the mid-wife also.

A Oh, that was Carrie. . . no, Nick. . . no, Bill Nick's wife.

Q And she delivered all the babies in Shady Side?

A Yeah. Lady of early life and, . . . Nick. . . Bill Nick's wife.

Q Could you tell me what you know about the black boarding houses in Shady Side?

A Polling. . . ?

[Background voice: Boarding house.]

Boarding houses? Well, that was. . . there was one at Alec Dennis', along. . . .Dennis had and that's on Atwell Road, down there where now Browns have, one there but, occasionally, but they would. . . they would. . . what boarding houses that I can remember of would be almost like in the home where the rest of the family was at. . . not particularly in a particular boarding house. But there was one. . . the Carters. . . .was owned by the Carters and she was the daughter of. . . the Dennis. . . and they used to take a few people in but there wasn't a big strand of colored people boarding houses in here that I can recall, they'd come in here but not. . . not to any great extent. We had lots of colored people develop down this road down here, some wealthy people. . . undertaker out of Washington.

Q Down West River Road?

A Yeah. . . yeah. . . briefly came in and he built up. . . had big places of business and about six down there where the Hallocks used to live back in. . . but our old. . . our old colored families in here, why they were and how they came, why it was just good luck where they came everyone else. . . you know, wasn't too many of them.

Q What's . . . thank you, Mr. Avery, we appreciate it very much. You have been very helpful, you know that?

A Well. . .

Q Thank you.

A Varnell. . . I referred to him into this. He's one of the oldest colored families. Then you go into the. . . the Dennis', definitely. . . Julius Dennis' grandparents. They are old and we have a older bunch of Hollands' in here too.

[Background voice: . . . and Crowners. . .]

Crowners. . . yes, Crowners, yes. . I may have missed one but that's the big part of your original . . .

(End of Interview)