

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNE BARTHOLOMEW

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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MONROE TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview in Monroe Township, New Jersey, with Anne Eichert Bartholomew on June 27, 2007, with Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Thank you, Ms. Bartholomew, for having me here today and for talking to us about this rich history that you have of New Brunswick and Rutgers and your experiences during World War II. To start the interview, I would like you to tell me where and when you were born.

Anne Bartholomew: I was born in Milltown on November 14, 1919.

SH: To begin looking at your family history, could you tell me your father's name and a little bit about his history?

AB: Well, my father was an immigrant from Billed, Hungary. He came to the United States in 1907. ...

SH: Did he come to work?

AB: He was single when he came. He was apprenticed in Europe as a tailor and that was his trade the rest of his life.

SH: Were there any other family members living in the United States when he came?

AB: I believe he had some brothers, but I don't know too much about them, and my mother; are we skipping over?

SH: That is fine.

AB: My mother came over about the same year. They didn't know each other at the time.

SH: Was she also from Hungary?

AB: She was from a place in Austria-Hungary, which is now Romania, and she had a sister who sponsored her, who lived in New Brunswick. Her name was (Clara Dill?).

SH: What was your mother's name?

AB: My mother's name was Matilda Bachman.

SH: Did she work when she came over?

AB: ... She came over and she worked at different jobs. She was a domestic for a while, and then, I believe, she worked in the rubber shop. She was seventeen when she came over and she never went back to her parents' place again in Europe.

SH: Really? Did any other members of her family come over?

AB: She had two brothers who came. I believe that she had another brother over in Europe yet when she came. She had three sisters. One was named Clara, one was named (Bertha?), and what was the other one?

SH: If we think about it, we can just add that later. Did your mom and dad talk about how they met in New Brunswick?

AB: No, they didn't talk much about their origins. I don't know why they were reticent about it, but we didn't really know too much about, you know, what they did there. I know my mother's father had a store in Folnak. Nobody can find Folnak on the map anymore, [laughter] and she didn't have a formal education. Her brothers did, but she didn't, because, I guess, she was needed in the store or something like that, but her father sponsored her trip to the United States. Evidently, he had some money to send them and he must have had a premonition that the war was going to happen [World War I], or something like that, because she came over and, ... soon after the, Franz Joseph, was it, who was executed or assassinated?

SH: Assassinated, right.

AB: Right. So, he sent them, sent the children over, those that he could, and, let's see, she worked in different places in the area, in [the] New Brunswick area, and, I believe that it was an arranged marriage. Her brother-in-law arranged this marriage.

SH: Okay. Were they about the same age?

AB: Yes, there was one year apart. He was born in ... 1888 and she was born in 1889 and they were married in 1907. Is that when I said they came over? They may have come over in 1905. They were married in 1907.

SH: This will be something that we can easily correct if we have the dates wrong. Did your father continue working as a tailor in New Brunswick?

AB: Yes, he did. ... I don't know who he worked for at first, but, ... when I was born, I know, he had a tailor shop in the house. ... He did his business there, but he didn't like being in Milltown, so, ... we moved to East Brunswick. We were there for several years, which was a very nice place. It was a farm, but it was small.

SH: Now was he still tailoring or was he farming at that point?

AB: No, he didn't farm. He took the trolley from East Brunswick to New Brunswick and worked there.

SH: Okay, so you had a shop in New Brunswick that he worked at.

AB: Yeah, he worked for someone else.

SH: Did your mother and father speak Hungarian in the home or did they speak English?

AB: No, they spoke German, and they spoke German to us and we spoke English to them, that's how they learned English.

SH: Oh, really.

AB: Some people just won't do that kind of thing, but that's how you learn. . . . My mother had a child in 1910; he died, he only lived a few months. Then I had a number of other siblings. . . . My sister was born first, and she was born in 1911. I have a brother, who was born in 1913 and another brother in 1915 and another brother in 1917, I was born in 1919, I had a younger sister, who was born in 1923, and a brother in 1925 and one in 1928 and that was the end of the children.

SH: Now was that eight or nine?

AB: Actually it was nine because the first one I forgot to count.

SH: That's a big family.

AB: It was a big family. We were pretty healthy most of the time. I think my older sister had a touch of polio when she was quite small, but she overcame it, and my youngest brother, I remember, was born at home, and he's living down in Florida now, and so was the next to the youngest, was living, is living in Florida. He's been quite ill recently. He had two wives, the first one he married in nineteen. . . . I have to think about that.

SH: Okay. It's hard to remember other people's wedding dates that's for sure.

AB: I'm telling you. During World War II he was in service and he had been seeing this girl in Florida, and corresponding with her for quite a while, and when he came back, he got married, in 1947, I believe. He came home, packed up, went to Florida and got married, and she died about . . . He's got two marriages, so I got to remember which one the first one was. They were married over fifty years, . . . but she was diabetic and she had several amputations from her diabetes. About six years later he married this other woman, whose name was Rae. The first one's name was Fran, I mean, they had got married and they lived in Jacksonville, Florida first, then they moved to Orlando and they were there for many years, and when his first wife died he was, I guess, several years before he married again. Her name was Rae, but she just died not too long ago. She was disabled but she did everything. She had a lot of trouble with her heart and lungs, so she was making the bed and he was taking the trash out, when he came in she had fallen on the bed and she was dead.

SH: That is too bad. Those are the only two siblings that you have left?

AB: No, I have three brothers left. I have two in Florida and one in Edison.

SH: Okay, so you must get to see him often.

AB: No, he's kind of stodgy; he doesn't like to go anywhere.

SH: [laughter] What was it like growing up in a house with so many brothers and sisters, because you are kind of like in the middle?

AB: Yeah, I was about the fifth one I think. It wasn't bad, but I just am amazed now that we had this house full of people, we had one bathroom. Now, for the two of us, we have two bathrooms.

SH: [laughter] And it's sometimes just right, right?

AB: But the first ones that we had had been outdoor bathrooms because that was way back in the '20s, early '20s.

SH: What do you remember doing for fun as a young girl? You are growing up then in East Brunswick at that point, when you very first can remember.

AB: That's my first memory, yes. We worked around the yards and had to work around the garden, and stuff like that, and we went picking berries and we picked fruit in different places at different times. My mother was a very good cook and she could make something out of nothing, because we were quite poor.

SH: So most of your playmates were your brothers and sisters, or were there neighbor children?

AB: No, they lived a little distance away; everything is within walking distance that we did. There was a, it was just a brook at the time when we moved there, but since has become Farrington Lake.

SH: [laughter] Was your family involved with the church at all as a young girl growing up?

AB: No, and I didn't start school there until; I didn't go to school when we lived in East Brunswick. We moved to South Brunswick, I think it was, and the first school I went to it was at Adams Station, it was a one- room school house. I didn't do much then, and everything there, and we moved to another place in New Brunswick and I went to Hamilton Street School, and from there, let's see, we went to, I've been to so many schools. My graduation certificate said New Brunswick Junior High School. It was always Roosevelt School, as far as I know.

SH: Well, sometimes I think they have an umbrella name maybe.

AB: I think right now it's a middle school.

SH: What was your favorite subject?

AB: English.

SH: Now where did you go to high school?

AB: New Brunswick High. I was graduated from there in 1937.

SH: What do you remember about the Depression and how it affected your family?

AB: It was rough. My brothers, well, the older ones, they went around house to house they were selling different things, you know, trying to make money and my father still had his job. He was a tailor for Michael's and for Rodney Clothes, which is in New Brunswick; and we always had a garden where we lived, and my mother planted a lot of stuff, tomatoes and most of my summer was helping to can stuff, wash the tomatoes, peel the pickles, all that stuff. We always had something to eat; we never were hungry. We didn't have very nice clothes, but that's part of the deal.

SH: Your father being a tailor, did he make any of your clothes?

AB: Strangely enough, he didn't.

SH: Really? Because I thought maybe they were special costumes that he would make for you.

AB: No, he liked his friends more than he did his children I think.

SH: Now what activities were your parents involved in?

AB: My mother just kept house, and he, I think he went bowling but he was sick for quite a while and, I think, that's when we moved from Milltown to East Brunswick. He had some kind of stomach trouble, so he didn't work for quite a while. But we had nice neighbors; we could walk every place. Didn't have to be afraid of anybody in those days, either.

SH: Now were any of his brothers around that area that you were in?

AB: Yes. Well, they lived in New Brunswick. We had an outdoor bowling alley and, in the summertime, all the relatives came, you know to, the farm; everything is free because, so they all came for the bowling alley and the picnics and dancing and we whipped down the yard, so that they could have fun. [Editor's Note: To "whip" the yard means to use a sickle to cut the grass down.] Everybody had good time there.

SH: Now who played the music for the dancing?

AB: One of my uncles had an accordion. He played the accordion. When we moved from there, we moved to a house in South Brunswick, I guess, Adams Station. It was a terrible place; no indoor plumbing, no indoor water. We didn't stay there too long because it was really eehuh. My father bought a car, which he didn't know how to drive, and every once in a while we had to pull him out of a ditch.

SH: [laughter] When you were in high school, was he still working as a tailor?

AB: Yes, he always did that. That's when he worked for Rodney Clothes, in New Brunswick.

SH: Did any of your brothers go on to college or did they also finish high school as well?

AB: My sister, my older brother didn't finish high school. My sister had to go to work. It's a big family; we didn't have much income, and my brother he finished eighth grade, I think, but after he got older he got his certificate and the others all finished high school. My youngest brother worked for Prudential Insurance and he met his future wife, there. They worked in the same office and when they got married they moved out to Texas. They were in Texas for quite a while till they moved to Missouri and then to Florida. I think everybody is retired by now.

SH: Well, that's good. Did you talk to any of your friends or did any of your family take part in the CCC camps, the Civilian Conservation Corps or any of the WPA projects that Roosevelt had set up during the Depression?

AB: No. My oldest brother was in the service and my, the one next to me was in the service and then my first younger brother, he was in the occupation afterwards and my husband was drafted in (1943?). He was away for three years.

SH: Maybe this is a good time to tell me how you met your husband.

AB: Well, he was in service and he was a friend of some, one of my girl friends, so when he came home she introduced us and we got married.

SH: Now was he from New Brunswick as well?

AB: Yes, he lived on John Street; you know where John Street is? ...

SH: Where is John Street?

AB: Up from Memorial Parkway. It used to be Burnett Street and then it was John Street, Neilson Street in that area.

SH: So you had not met when you were in high school.

AB: No. I wasn't allowed to date.

SH: Oh, really?

AB: My mother said, "If you want to go out with anybody, go out with your brothers."

SH: [laughter] Were you involved in any extracurricular activities in high school?

AB: I think I worked in the library for a while, but I took two languages so I kept busy doing that so I didn't have time for much of the other stuff. But my younger sister, who was three years younger than I, she got married in 1942, and she was married for about a year; she had a baby.

The baby was all right but she had complications and she died when she was twenty-four. So that's the only really tragic thing that we had. She was very smart.

SH: Did someone in your family take care of the baby then?

AB: My mother and my oldest sister took care of her till she was three years old, then her father remarried; he had a (gravel coming out?).

SH: Since you weren't allowed to date in high school, obviously, did you go to the movies or did you go to the school dances?

AB: I went to the movies. One of my brothers and I used to go to the movies about every Sunday, when we were in high school, and my mother used to give us money, a quarter. We went to the movies, we saw double feature and the news.

SH: You said you graduated in 1937, what did you do then after graduation? What were your plans?

AB: I stayed at home for a while because my mother needed a help with the big family and she was getting older and I got a couple of jobs. I worked for Turner Tubes for a couple of years. During the war I worked for, it was called Richardson's, but it was a battery factory at one time, but I was counting washers. I sat at a table and you counted, and you had to see if there are any bad ones; you threw them out.

SH: That was Richardson's in New Brunswick?

AB: It was in New Brunswick on Joyce Kilmer Avenue, and then I got pregnant and I had Roger, our son. Then we had Karen four years later.

SH: I'd like to back up a little bit and talk about the years before World War II began. You talked about working at home and helping out there, were all of your siblings still living at home at that point, or had any of them married before World War II began in '41?

AB: Well, two of them were in the service, but they were at home; they weren't married or anything.

SH: Did your mom and dad talk at all about what was going on in Europe ? Were they involved in any war support activities?

AB: Not involved with anything.

SH: I didn't know because they still had family there when Hitler moved into Poland and all of that. I wondered if there had been any discussions that you overheard?

AB: No.

SH: You were already out of high school, so I wondered how you got your news and how the community reacted, because it was such a large Hungarian population in New Brunswick as well.

AB: Well, we used to hear second hand about my grandmother, my mother's mother, over in Europe, but the last we heard from her, she was eighty-one years old and she was in a house that was billeted by the Russians. I never knew when she died, or anything like that, no communications.

SH: Do you remember where you were when you heard about Pearl Harbor being attacked?

AB: It was on a Sunday afternoon, I think we were coming home from someplace or other when we heard it. It was just a big shock and, of course, my brother volunteered right away. My oldest brother volunteered right away and one of my other brothers, my brother Frank, he was the next to me, he wanted to join but he was classified as 4-F but he fought them and he got inducted anyhow. But he was stationed in the States, he was in Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico. He was working there. He worked for the Air Force there.

SH: Where was your older brother sent?

AB: He was in the States for a while. He sent for his wife. He got married in, before I did, no, after I did, anyhow, they were married for quite a while. She went down to Mississippi to be with him when they got married and then he was sent overseas, finally, and he was in Germany. He saw the Auschwitz Camp, went through that and he said, "It was terrible."

SH: Now when you met Mr. Bartholomew, he was home on leave?

AB: No, it was in 1938. Let's see, I was nineteen when I met him so.

SH: This was before World War II began. Was he in the military at that time?

AB: He had been in the military. He's the one that was in Panama and I didn't know him then.

SH: Okay so he joined the army out of high school.

AB: Yeah.

SH: Did he graduate from New Brunswick High School as well?

AB: No, he went only through grammar school.

SH: Okay, and then he joined the military?

AB: It was the Depression and he figured if there's one less mouth to feed, he'd be someplace else.

SH: We hear that often. He had come home on leave and that's when you met him, or had he finished his service?

AB: He didn't finish, he was discharged.

SH: He was discharged at that point. What was his job at this time? This would have been mid-1938 when you met him. You said you were nineteen.

AB: Yes. I was doing odd jobs and I was helping out at home.

SH: Was he able to find work when he was out of the military?

AB: Yes. I don't know whether he was painting; he was doing odd jobs.

SH: When were you married then?

AB: 1941, May 1941.

SH: This was before Pearl Harbor. Where were you living?

AB: We were living in New Brunswick. We're living on Guilden Street after we got married, then we moved to Ellen Street in New Brunswick.

SH: On Ellen Street. Were you still going home and helping your mother or did you have a job at that point?

AB: I had a job at that point. I was working for Turner Tubes and then I went over to Richardson after, when we got into the war.

SH: So you were with your husband when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

AB: Yes. We were together when we heard it.

SH: Did he go then and re-enlist, or was he called back?

AB: No, he was waiting. He was waiting to be drafted, and he wanted to re-enlist, but he was inducted on October 12, 1943, and then he was away until 1946 when the war was over.

SH: Where were you married in May of '41?

AB: Trinity Methodist Church in Highland Park.

SH: Was his family from Highland Park?

AB: No, they lived in New Brunswick all their lives.

SH: What did his family do, what was their occupation?

AB: Well, his father was a tinsmith and his mother was just a housewife, kind of having a lot of kids.

SH: They have a lot of kids, as well?

AB: They had eleven.

SH: They had eleven, more than you. That must have been a huge family wedding.

AB: We had a lot of people there.

SH: I mean, if you just had the families. Talk to me, if you would, about New Brunswick and what you remember as a young married woman and now World War II; tell me some of the changes that you saw after Pearl Harbor and World War II and Camp Kilmer and some of the different places in New Brunswick that I'm sure the activities changed quite a bit.

AB: Well, there was a bus. I lived on Ellen Street and there was a bus that ran from New Brunswick to Highland Park and for a nickel you got a nice ride, and there was a supermarket on George Street, the Big Bear, and that burned down, and two of the furniture stores, at different times burned down, the Zimmerman Furniture and Rice Furniture. They were on Neilson Street I believe, and we had, how many churches in New Brunswick? Well, five I think. One of the churches burned down after World War II. It's now an African American Methodist Church.

SH: What were some of the activities that you were involved with as they related to the war? You talked about working at Richardson, but were there things like Victory Gardens?

AB: We had a Victory Garden and we canned some of the stuff from it. Well, you know, they turned the clocks back two hours, turned them ahead two hours during the war.

SH: Oh, did they?

AB: Yes. Had to get up real early, it was dark. ... Watching movies, went shopping. I used to walk downtown, that was a good mile to go downtown, and when World War II ended, I put Roger, my son, in the carriage, went down to George Street, and everybody was celebrating down there.

SH: If you could, talk a little bit about the rationing and how it affected you as a young wife and mother.

AB: It was rough. When I got pregnant I had to be careful what I ate. But rationing you're only allowed so much sugar per month and meat was very scarce. I lived on eggs, mostly, because they weren't rationed. But I lived in the second floor apartment and the people downstairs were very good to me. The wife died when she was quite young, and I was living there then, but the

daughter and I got along very well. We had no car. We had a car before we moved there I think, but somebody ran into the back of us at Highland Park. We got rid of the car. Nobody got hurt.

SH: Well, that's good. Your dad wasn't driving, right?

AB: No, my husband was driving, but we stopped for the light at the top of the hill, and somebody assumed he was drunk, and he ran into the back of us. I didn't go to the USO, but my neighbors did and we used to donate cakes and things like that.

SH: Were there a lot more servicemen on the street during that time because of Camp Kilmer?

AB: Quite a few in Kilmer.

SH: How did people in town react to the military? Were they welcoming to them?

AB: Yes they were. They had this USO for them, met every week, and I used to be a block warden, make sure people had their blackout shades drawn.

SH: Did you? You were the blackout warden.

AB: Had to blow the whistle, tell them to close up the light.

SH: Did you have to do that often?

AB: No.

SH: Did you take turns, or was this a job that you had the entire time?

AB: Yes. But there are a number of people who did it. But we used to; when we heard the bombers take off from McGuire and fly over.

SH: Everything would shake.

AB: Oh, gee. It was scary.

SH: Was it really? Were you expecting the Germans to make it to the United States with a load of bombs?

AB: No.

SH: You were pretty confident they would not?

AB: I had a lot of confidence in our country. I think it was managed a little bit better then.

SH: Did you ever go down to the Jersey Shore, or did you hear stories of people going there?

AB: That was kind of blacked out, too. We went down, I spent, when Roger was a baby, he was only a couple of weeks old, I went down to the Shore, at Beach Haven I guess it was, and we stayed there a couple of days, but we couldn't do too much, everything was restricted.

SH: Now were you friends with other women whose husbands were in the military as well?

AB: Not too many, though. I keep forgetting how many have gone.

SH: What about Rutgers during this time?

AB: I wasn't affiliated with anything with Rutgers.

SH: But as a young woman living in New Brunswick, how did the people in New Brunswick look at and consider the young men at Rutgers, or the women at Douglass?

AB: I really don't know.

SH: There was no friction between the two groups?

AB: No, no. I know a lot of my friends, well, not a lot, those who had money, their daughters went to NJC, or Douglass, and I had some friends who went there. Turned out pretty well.

SH: We have sometimes heard stories of a little bit of animosity between the antics of the college kids as opposed to the those who were not in school.

AB: There's always that.

SH: I'm sure you know about that on the other end as well. Was there any time that you were able to join you husband after he was called back, in '43?

AB: No, he was in Europe.

SH: He was sent immediately to Europe?

AB: No, he was up in Maine for quite a while, then he was shipped over to Europe and he was in Belgium for the rest of the war.

SH: Did you exchange letters with him often?

AB: Oh, yeah. He wrote letters and I wrote letters and we had free mail.

SH: Did you use the V-Mail as well?

AB: Yes.

SH: How did that work for you? Did you write a regular letter and take it somewhere and it was turned into V- Mail?

AB: I don't think I wrote the V -Mail, I think he may have sent me V- Mail.

Karen (Kip) Bartholomew: He went AWOL before he shipped out, because my brother was born and they would not give Dad leave; tell them about that, Mom.

AB: Well, I don't remember too much about that, that I want to remember about it. He was ready to be shipped overseas and he was at camp and he came home to see us. He wanted to see his son. He wanted to see the baby, because he wasn't born yet, but I went to the doctor and we explained it, and he gave me castor oil I had to take, so it induced labor early, and he saw him when he was born and I think I kept getting letters from the officials, "Your husband is AWOL he's in serious trouble," and all that stuff, but it turned out okay. He got fined a months' pay, which we could ill afford. That was it, and I brought Roger home. He was a pretty good baby, but he cried a lot.

SH: Did you have any help from your family with the baby?

AB: No, no, because everybody had their own problems. But I used to, . . . go to, my mother lived in Highland Park. When I used to go over there every Sunday I'll call a taxi, take a taxi over there, couldn't very well take him on the bus.

SH: Do you know what your husband was doing in the military, what was his job?

AB: He was a, you can say it out loud.

KB: He was a driver.

AB: No, he wasn't a driver. No, he was a . . .

KB: In Maine he was a guard.

AB: He was a guard of a prisoner of war camp in Belgium.

SH: Oh, in Belgium? Was he an MP?

AB: No.

SH: Part of the military police, or his unit was guarding the prisoners of war?

AB: And they, the Red Cross, used to sponsor trips and things for them and he went to a couple of places; he went to Switzerland, he went to Paris. He sent a lot of letters, though.

SH: As a young mother with a baby to take care of, what were your activities and what were you doing to keep busy?

AB: Taking care of the baby mostly. I did my own housework. I wasn't working. Like I said, I'd go over and see my mother sometimes and, one time, I walked over to Highland Park, that was a long walk from Ellen Street. That's about a mile from George Street, then another mile from where she was living, but we got along well. Roger was a couple of months old and his daughter [the landlord's] insisted that he not run after us anymore. Winter was coming so he said that the oil was going to be too expensive that I would have to move. ... I lived with my mother for about two months and then I got another apartment from, my husband's sister, had an apartment vacant so I moved there and was there for ten years, till we moved to Milltown.

SH: That worked out nicely, because that's what I was going to ask, did his family, because he too was from a large family, were you able to visit with them or be more social with them?

AB: No, not very much. Because my sister in law lived downstairs, we saw more of her than we did of any of the other family. But they all got married eventually.

KB: Every Sunday we spent taking care of both grandmothers, every Sunday, until the grandmothers passed.

SH: I can imagine. Now when did your father pass away?

AB: Before she was born. He died in 1948 and she was born in '49. He died of too much wrong kind of living. He smoked a lot. Our house always smelled like Camel cigarettes.

SH: Really?

AB: Terrible. It's a wonder I don't have a lung disease.

SH: Now did you also sing in the choir?

AB: No.

SH: When your daughter was born, where were you living?

AB: Living on Guilden Street, that's before we bought the house. She was a real good baby. She was an easy baby to have too. I went in the hospital about seven o'clock at night and she was born about ten o'clock.

SH: Well, that sounds like ...

AB: And the cab driver was so anxious to get rid of us.

SH: I can imagine. When your husband came back, you talked about taking Roger in his carriage down to celebration on George Street, were there, a lot of military people there or was it mostly civilians in the celebration?

AB: Mostly civilians you know celebrating.

SH: How long after the war ended was it before your husband was able to come home?

AB: He came home in June 1946, the war ended, they had to wait their rotation time. But the neighbor next door had a telephone, we didn't have a telephone, she came home and she said, "Your husband is coming home." We waited and he came. Roger was a year old and they didn't take to each other right away. He was strange, first time you see him. We went to the park a lot.

SH: Was there any difficulty readjusting to being back together again after the separation?

AB: No, I don't think so.

SH: He didn't suffer any nightmares or anything like that? Did he come back to a job, or did he have to find a new one?

AB: He was doing some painting for a contractor, something like that, and then my brother in law, who lived downstairs from us, he worked for Paulus Dairy and he got him a job there and he got that job for practically the rest of his life.

SH: What did he do at Paulus Dairy?

AB: Deliveries. Not home deliveries, commercial deliveries.

SH: Now was he using the horse, we have a picture here of a beautiful white horse and a wagon

AB: No, he didn't drive a horse; he had a truck because he had these large cans and stuff to carry. That was a good job. The Paulus people were very nice to him. We used to have a picnic every, big picnic, every summer in one of the parks.

SH: Now were there different dairymen bringing their product to the dairy where it was then distributed, or did Paulus actually have a dairy farm?

AB: No. They didn't have a dairy farm. It was picked up in big milk cans, like forty gallons, or something like that.

SH: Now you said you moved to Milltown in what year?

AB: '55.

SH: In '55 and when did you begin working at Rutgers?

AB: '67.

SH: So you stayed home while the children were in school.

AB: Yes, I didn't have to go to work until . . .

KB: You worked at Personal Products.

AB: Personal Products; I worked there for about three years part-time special. They used to send out things, you know. Quite cool. Anyhow, while I was the mail person there for a while, I used to sort the mail and stack it, and they let me take off any stamps I wanted. I have quite a few stamps sitting around in boxes.

SH: So you were a stamp collector?

AB: Not really. But maybe someday I would. But that was a part-time job and I used to go to there in the evening and work for couple of hours, typing labels and stuff like that, and then I was going to go to work for, oh, I had interviewed at Rutgers once and I was just about ready to go into another job when they called and said, "come on down for an interview." I got the job that was supposed to be part-time. I worked there part-time one day and then they got kept me on permanent.

SH: [laughter] I've heard that story often. When your children were growing up, what were some of the activities that you were involved with, what was of interest to you?

AB: Oh, we did Cub Scouts, we did choir, we did Boy Scouts, we did Brownies. and we did Girl Scouts.

SH: Before we started recording you talked about being the choir mother for seventy-five children.

AB: Once a week, well, after service, too, I'd take care of the youth, their, robes, and take attendance and plan a picnic every summer for them.

SH: So this is at the Milltown Methodist Church?

AB: Yes, we had to leave St. James because we couldn't get connections for transportation on Sunday, because Marty worked on Sundays and had to have a car, so we'd stand on the corner waiting for a bus. One of the fellows sometimes would pick us up and take us home, otherwise, we had to wait for the bus.

SH: Now St. James is now the McKinney House at Rutgers on the corner of, Hamilton and Easton.

AB: It was a real close church. It was fairly, not small really, but they had secret mothers in the choir and all that kind of thing. That was a very friendly place. We had a lot of suppers and we had a bazaar every year. Karen still has a couple of things left from those things.

SH: Now had your family always been Methodists?

AB: No. My parents were brought up Catholic, I think, but they didn't continue with the religion, so we kind of forged our own.

SH: Had your husband been brought up Catholic as well?

AB: He attended Catholic school for a couple of grades and then he went over to Lincoln School. I think, on Lincoln School they were two sisters, twin sisters, and one used to play the harp. We used to love to hear her. I think one of them has died. I don't know whether they're both gone or not.

SH: Did you play any musical instruments?

AB: I played the violin for a while. I was in the second orchestra in junior high school, but I hated to practice.

SH: Now why the violin?

AB: Because we had one in the family. My brother took lessons for a while and then the violin got put aside so I took it up.

SH: Were there other activities besides the church, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts that you were involved?

AB: Well, Silhouettes, that was a marching outfit with their twirling things, and I used to bowl once in a while. From school I used to go to the YMCA and bowl. I don't do that anymore. I like to cook, I like to bake. We always had a big Thanksgiving dinner, when it was not at my mother's house, it was at my house. I think one time we had seventeen people, that was a big dinner.

SH: That is, just to find enough chairs for everybody when you have seventeen people is tough, never mind the cooking.

AB: We had more furniture then than we have now.

SH: Where did you first begin working at Rutgers?

AB: 1967.

SH: But what department were you working for?

AB: Alumni records, and I was there for six or seven years and then I, you know, you couldn't just go out and look for a job there. If it wasn't posted, you couldn't do it, otherwise, you would get nowhere, I had that kind of boss. So I knew somebody who worked in personnel and she asked me if I wanted this job working for the English department. No, it was posted and I applied, and she got it for me. Her name was Harris.

SH: So this was in the English department and were you like the secretary for the department? What was your position there?

AB: Well, my first title; Tom was the only one, he was the head of the English department, and I worked for him and that's all I worked for, but then I got changed around. Then everybody had a little niche. So we moved from Union Street; we're in Scott Hall; we're in another building there, it used to be a dean's office. It was down in the basement and it had lots of creepy crawlies on the floor.

SH: Where was the alumni office, I'm jumping around here, I'm sorry, but where was the alumni office when you began working for them?

AB: Union Street.

SH: It was on Union Street as well.

AB: That was nice; he was a very good boss. Well

SH: Do you remember his name?

AB: Tom Edwards.

SH: Tom Edwards that was also the English department chair?

AB: Yes, and then I worked for him until Karen went into, too. George Levine, he took over; that's when we went over to Scott Hall, I think. We moved around quite a bit.

SH: How large was the university when you began in the '60s ?

AB: I have no idea. Of course, they didn't have a lot of buildings that they have now.

SH: That's what I was going to ask, what kind of changes did you see before you left?

AB: Well, I had the new Student Center and it took over Morrell Street and Bartlett Street and used to go to the Commons for lunch. Of course everything is different now.

SH: I'm sure, I'm sure.

AB: Wouldn't even know it. But George Street has become so "honky- tonk."

SH: You think so? With the new buildings?

AB: The new buildings, and everything deteriorated. It used to be, it didn't have quite that ethnic quality that it has now. But P. J. Young's was a lovely store. We used to go there all the time and then over to Bon ton and Rosenthal's and a couple of jewelers.

SH: Now they were all on George Street or on Albany?

AB: They were mostly on George Street and Nelson Jewelers was on George Street, too. We used to go there all the time; they were a good jewelers.

SH: Now along Albany Street, you have the Ferren Mall, had that just been smaller shops before? How has that area changed?

AB: Yes, and it used to have a monument, the Monument Square, . . . what's that new building? Ferren Mall and there are dormitories there, too, I think.

SH: This is down George Street then on George and Livingston Avenue?

AB: Now it used to have the YMCA, which is taken over by Rutgers I think, and we used to have a Arnold Constable on Livingston Avenue, we used to park on the roof.

SH: Oh, really?

AB: Yeah, it was fun.

KB: Right next to the State Theater.

AB: That used to be Cesar Brothers down there, too. They're a warehouse -type place and they used to have a good sweater shop, Rosen's Sweater Shop. There used to be a bookstore, Reed's Book Store and Clarke's took it over. They were on the other side of the street and there was a music shop and I thought of (Lynn West?), but I didn't think to write it down. We used to go there for our records and stuff all the time.

SH: Where there a lot of parades and activities like that going on in New Brunswick?

AB: Whenever there was a circus, or something like that came to town they would have a parade down to Easton Avenue, and down around, and the teachers would let us stand at the window and watch it.

SH: What about the Memorial Day parade, was that a big event in New Brunswick?

AB: I'm trying to think, yes, I guess they did have a big parade not as big as the one that North Brunswick puts on now though. North Brunswick puts on a Memorial Day parade and Milltown puts on the Fourth of July parade, and that's something to see.

SH: Is it?

AB: The kids did a lot of stuff.

SH: I was just going say, were your children involved in some of these parades?

AB: Oh, yeah.

SH: Part of these organizations they're involved with.

AB: Scouts. Oh, she was Miss Congeniality one Fourth of July. Karen, I got to give you her name.

SH: I was just going say, I should say that Karen whom we know as Kip Bartholomew is here with us today as well. Talk a little bit, if you would, about the change in administration at Rutgers. How did that affect you as someone who was working closely with the head of the department? What were the discussions around Rutgers becoming co-ed in 1972?

AB: Well, I guess probably some of them might; they seemed to get a little bit more lax in some ways.

SH: Really?

AB: When I worked on Union Street, when I first started, that was amid all the frat houses. They weren't very nice people, some of them. Once upon a time, they used to have house mothers and that was much better controlled than it is now, because one of our friends was a house mother and they used to call up Davidson's Market and they'd bring out everything that they needed. They had it nice and the boys were well dressed, they had to dress for dinner, they really enforced some of the rules.

SH: Do you remember which fraternities she was the house mother for?

AB: No, I don't remember which one. ...

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Reviewed by Julia Hatzidais 2/15/08

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 4/15/08

Reviewed by Karen Bartholomew 7/8/10