

Interviewee: **Karen Kemper - Nicholson**
Interviewers: **Ernest Demby, Julie Hawkins-Ennis, Linda Moore-Garoute, Noah Waters, Ryan Craun**
Date of Interview: **January 21, 2020**
Location of Interview: **Eagle Harbor Community Center, Eagle Harbor, MD**
List of Acronyms: **KN= Karen Kemper Nicholson, ED=Ernest Demby, JE=Julie Hawkins Ennis
LG=Linda Moore-Garoute, NW=Noah Waters, RC=Ryan Craun**

[Begin Transcript: 00:15]

ED: Let's start off by stating your name.

KN: Karen Kemper Nicholson

ED: Thank you for doing this interview, Karen. We appreciate it.

KN: You're welcome.

ED: I guess we start by... What was it like growing up in this area?

KN: I didn't grow up in Aquasco – I spent summers in Aquasco. So I grew up in Washington DC, I went to school in DC. When school was out every summer, the very next day my sister and I were sent to Aquasco to spend the whole summer up on the farm with my aunt Marianne – which was Marianne Beatrice Adams. And we spent the whole summer there, every summer, and we would go to St. Dominic's Church or St. Michael's. We would go back and forth. We would go at picnics at St. Dominic's, we would go picnics at St Peter's. We would go to Grimes Store every single day, seven days a week. And during the summer as I got older, I would sometimes have a job up at Orme Elementary School to work for the summer. We also when they put in Bayden Recreation Center – we used to go up to Bayden Recreation Center to play. When I got older, a couple of times we went but we are not supposed to go, we were supposed to be going to the bowling alley in Waldorf. And we decided... because aunt Marianne was very – she could tell what you were thinking. And even we were on church on Sundays, if we got ready or we were getting to talk you would here...(clears throat). That meant that she was watching us from the back and we could not. So there's one particular time we were dying to go to Moonlight Inn and we were not supposed to go there. And so we told her that we were going to the Bowling Alley, and we did go to the Bowling Alley but it was my idea because she was so keen and so wise. I said we can't lie to her. So we walked in the door, walked through it and out the backdoor. So that way if she asks, yes we did go to the Bowling Alley. Well, we did not know that when we got to Moonlight Inn, just like what we would do at St. Peter's picnic when she was not around, we would wait until she's not around and would put on some lipstick and change what we had on a little bit. Not knowing that because it was so closely knit down here that it was going to get back her. So we went over to Moonlight Inn, we had a good time that night, and when we arrived up on the farm, because we were given a car when we just turned 16, we had our own car, one of our cousins had called and told her the girls are over there. So she was waiting outside with the switch that used to have three leaves at the end of it and it wasn't nice.

ED: It wasn't pretty?

KN: No

ED: Did she put you to work on the farm? Did you ever do any farm work?

KN: When we would come down on a summer... I have a love for gardening and it comes from her. Every summer my job was up on Aquasco Farm Road. Her whole flower garden up there would be bricks, so my job every summer was to paint those bricks white. Okay? And then my job is also was to go out and cut, she had roses all around there and the prettiest one was the red and the yellow rose bush that they don't even have anymore because I have been trying to search them. The biggest yellow roses and my job was to take the rose, cut them, put a little string around them and make little bouquets. And then they would fill them up in a basket and then we would go over the St. Peter's to the original cemetery, because St. Peter's had two cemeteries. We would go to the first one and the second one and put flowers on all of the relatives.

ED: Do you have any more family around here?

KN: The people that just interviewed this morning. You just interviewed Sharon Banks – Brown and Brenda Taylor Bell – their grandmother was NeNe Walls – Banks. NeNe Walls-Banks was the sister to my grandmother Florence Elizabeth Adams – Gilbert. They were raised in Aquasco, they were born in Gallant Green, Maryland. And how the Adams' came here – they came from Gallen Green because "Papa Joe" Joseph Adams, purchased all the land in the area. And what he did was he divided the land... Well he left the land to his wife which was Georgiana Bruce – Adams. The Turner's that just left here, that would also be their great grandmother. Georgiana had three sets of children. She had Liles, she had Turner, and she had Adams. So when Papa Joe died, Papa Joe left everything to Georgiana, then she divided everything up. And I have the deeds and all the appropriate papers were signed. And they distributed parcels of land to families. Papa Joe was a avid person of Baseball – that's the Adam's love for Baseball, he loved it. That's where that field came from. So then Nene Walls – Banks inherited that from Papa Joe. My grandmother Florence, the reason why we ended up in DC, she never liked the county. She had experienced up on the farm were one of the chickens something plucked her when she was playing with them and she said "I don't like this place, I don't want to be here". Papa Joe from history had two homes in DC. So she was given one of the homes in DC. Aunt Marianne was given one of the homes up on Aquasco Farm Road and then Uncle Harry was given were Cousin Edna lives – so it was all divided for each one of the children from Joseph Adams. I've recently owned a land up until a year ago that he also owned in Aquasco that used to be a hall in Aquasco and that was a part of his land. And right there now is one of the Adams' descendants are living there now.

JE: What's the name of the hall?

KN: I just know it was the hall – I don't remember the actual, I just knew it was the hall, but its right there. One of Lisa's nephews is living there, that was all Papa Joe's land. And one next to it, I owned inheriting down. It went from Papa Joe to Georgiana to Aunt Marianne to my Aunt Ryley Gilbert to me. And I just got rid of it the year before last and gave it to the May Adams.

JE: Who is Papa Joe?

KN: Papa Joe was Joseph Adams. That's where the Adams... What happened is there are seven Adams. We're coming off of Richard Adams from 1822 to 1886. What happened is the Adams came from England and they left there and went to Fauquier County Virginia. We found the will in Fauquier County Virginia where they designate. They gave all the land to one of the sons in Charles County Maryland. That's where the Adams are coming from. And so you have John Adams and Catherine Littleton in England and end up with John Adams and Thompson in Charles County Maryland. So you went John Adams and Catherine Littleton, John Adams and Elizabeth Nailor, John Adams and Elizabeth Burrows to John Adams and Thompson. So then they had children. We're coming off from Richard. There was not much history at all on Richard and that is probably because Richard ended up with mullato woman, that would be my great great Grandmother Maryjane McKey – he had seven by her. They were in Gallant Green which is not that far from here. Then, when Richard died, I have his

will in 1886, he left everything that he owned to Maryjane McKey. She could not read or write so she did exes. Their names were McKey – we were not Adams at first. So then when he died and after his will in 1886, each one of our relatives is listed, my great grandfather is there – Joseph Adams, and then all of his siblings are there. After his death, I don't yet how it happened, that's part of my research – they were all then changed to Adams. And the documentation for that are wills and deeds. So you can in the deeds where it would say "Currently known as Joseph Adams, formerly known as Joseph McKey, by the way of Maryjane McKey, by the way of Richard Adams" and that's how you document and keep the research. And that's how it does to all of the different... and what she did was because the Adams owned slaves, they owned slaves in Fauquier County Virginia, they owned slaves in Charles County. So then, she could not read or write, but what she did they had different lands like Nottingham, Treo – different names. I have them all documented. And so what she did for all the she inherited from him, she start to each one of her seven children will given land and that's how the Adams were able to stretched out and obtain land by way of Richard Adams.

JE: And of course they couldn't marry because...

KN: They could not marry but at the end after he died, even on her death certificate they list him but her son in law filled that out as being her husband. What I'm doing in my research is, I'm trying to find out how is that after the death your names are all then changed – because they all changed to Adams. But if you're going to do your research, you're not going to find them. You'll have to look for McKey. And that's why I always say Joseph McKey Adams, James Henry McKey Adams. And James Henry is the last of the McKey's of Richard Adams and Maryjane McKey's children to changed their names. His family currently lived in Bethesda, but they lived as White. They do not interact with us but they are listed as my second and third cousins. And then coming after James Henry Mckey Adams which is that's with the Gardaneers come in.

ED: Do you think that's why he came here?

KN: What was that?

ED: Because of his wife and his family situation? Do you think it was a breakaway for him to...

KN: Who? Richard?

ED: Yes

KN: No. Richard came here because when they.. the will that was in Fauquier County Virginia, at that time the Adams owned land and slaves here in Charles County. They owned land and slaves. So, Richard was born here in Gallant Green, Charles County; Port Tobacco and so that's they were born here. Richard, his family, his brother George, Eleanor, all of them. Eleanor end up with the Stamps, Fowlers and the Wilkinson's and the Turner's – they all spread it out throughout the Maryland, and Richard and George in Gallengreen, but as they had their children for instance, Maryjane McKey's children started branching out and that's when "Papa Joe" Joseph Adams, he then lives in Gallant Green and then comes to Aquasco, Maryland. But then other Adams did the same thing, because if you go to the Bowen family, there's a guy named Phil Brisco. He was like, Well how do I connect with you? Through Jane Adams. Where does Jane Adams connect to... There were two Adams's brothers that were together. The two Adams brothers then married two Gibbons, which is called often John Adams and Stacey Gibbons that were in Fauquier County Virginia and it branches out from there.

ED: Wow, that's a big tree.

JE: Going back to the Banks' field.

KN: Banks' field that was Papa Joe – Joseph Adams.

JE: So he liked baseball.

KN: He loved it. I don't like baseball up to this day. There are two things I don't like, baseball and cards. And that was because my Adams family. My aunt Marianne did baseball every weekend no matter where her nephews are playing we had to go. She has a nephew named Farley Banks. Farley Banks played for the Washington Senators.

JE: Who are the Washington Senators?

KN: That was a baseball team in Washington DC. They're now on the nationals. There's a history as to how they changed. When Papa Joe had the field, they had teams of black baseball players. And the reason why I'm interested because when I went to do my research, there were no black books – books on blacks playing baseball. But I knew as a little girl we had to do baseball every weekend. So Papa Joe had that land, he gave it to Aunt Nene. Well it was given to Georgiana and then given to Aunt Nene and the love of baseball continued. So Farley Howard Banks played for the Senators and then before that back in the day. Sharon even has pictures. I have them in one of our books of the team – Aquasco had their own team. Just like Bayden had their own team, and Brandywine had their team.

JE: Was that part of the Black Negro League?

KN: I don't know if you will consider it as part of that. All I know is that locally they wanted a sport and so they formed later these teams. You got to be careful with what you use, because I show someone some pictures and they want to get on whether you want to say how where they will classify. But there were teams. Brandywine, Baton, Aquasco had a team. In the books there were no Blacks but we have pictures of our Aquasco family members wearing Aquasco across their uniforms. My aunt is married to someone who played for Brandywine but he would come down here to play because he wanted to see her. So baseball has been around a long time.

ED: I'm not for certain. But you can honestly say that some of those players probably eventually made it to the Negro Leagues which in turn can open up a door for the major leagues.

JE: Yes

KN: And see one of my relatives married one of the guys who left in this area and ended up playing for the Detroit Tigers. And then the other thing I don't like is cards, and that's because cards was every weekend. And even though my grandmother were devout Catholics, they would have Poker games on Friday and Saturday nights. It would be Poker, and doing the day would be penuckle on tonk. And Poker would be, you would have old fashioned cigar box and that means whose ever house you at, would do a cut. That means, the house would get a percentage. My grandmother would have the box and she entrusted me to hold the box. They would fix dinner in the kitchen, fried chicken and hot fresh fish and the house would take a cut. They would play Poker on Friday nights. Everyone would go up on a hill on Aquasco Farm road. Saturday the same thing. Sunday, my grandmother Florence Adams and Marianne Adams would get up, they would go to church. Either at St, Dominic's or St. Peter's. They would go to Grimes then come back, cook breakfast and then sit back at the card table and begin to play penuckle or tonk and then by the end of the day on Sunday my grandmother Florence, my mom, and us would head back to DC and Aunt Marianne will stay here. She'd stay on the farm until she got to the point where she couldn't... we had to take that red car from her. And the only way they got that from her is one of her nephews. My mom told one of the nephews to go and take the battery out and she

couldn't go when she went out to start it one morning. She was on the wrong side of the road going in Waldorf. When we used to go to Waldorf, the only thing in Waldorf was.... What was that store? The only thing in Waldorf was AMP and a laundry mat. So we would go to the laundry mat and then she got a washing machine. The old fashioned washing machine were you had to run clothes through and ring them. And another thing I don't do – I do not iron. I send my t-shirts and everything to the dry cleaners because of her. Because once we left the laundry mat, we had to stand there with the old fashioned iron – those things that were real metal heavy. We would have to iron every single thing at that day and then fold everything and put it away. I don't iron, I don't play cards and I don't like baseball.

ED: No spades were involved in this card games?

KN: Space was later. But there were Poker, Penuckle and Tonk.

ED: This next question is about Papa Joe.

KN: Joseph Adams.

ED: Was he a tobacco farmer?

KN: Yes, he was. They worked for themselves. They did tobacco. So Aunt Marianne never worked. Aunt Marianne had tobacco and Sharon's uncle James Walter Banks, they would all go and work on the farm for her That's Aquasco Farm Road.

ED: Where they basically a family trust you could say? I guess you could say where the financial backing was.

KN: It was tobacco. And also I remember, because I am younger than the first person spoke, we would go I remember to Upper Marlboro to the tobacco house to sell tobacco. For the summer we would go down to Maribel's for the crab cakes and slot machines.

JE: Where was that located?

KN: Maribel's was in Benedict. You would go for Maribel's for the crab cakes and slot machines. Although my family was devoted Catholics, they like to gamble. We did Wilmer's Park for entertainment.

ED: Do you remember any musicians? I've heard so much about this place.

KN: I'm a little younger.

LG: James Brown

KN: James Brown would go there and Fats Domino. Fats Domino would go to Can't Find It Bar. So, Fats Domino would be there. Also, one of the Adam's boys, Walber Adams... Because Papa Joe had, brothers and sisters. So, one of his brothers had a family. And that family was Walber Adams. In fact there are two or three homes now, built in Aquasco that's made of stone. Walber Adams did that. He did construction and that was his trade. And also one time he owned a bar there. I have people who remembered that bar but nobody can remember the exact name. His second wife was Inez. They lived in Aquasco, his repast was in Aquasco. But I don't name of that bar just yet.

JE: I actually heard, I think I've read that at Wilmar's Park, there's a mural, there's a painting there by a black artist that is kind of well-known but I don't know his name. He's from this area.

KN: I'm not sure. I don't have information of that.

JE: But I also see that there's a lot of African-American's in this area that are Catholics. Because generally when I left Southern Maryland nobody understood that black's were Catholics. So that seemed to be with more Catholics in this area.

KN: You're going to be Catholics here because that's we used to George Town 272. The Jesuit Priests are here. And that's why we have family everywhere is because of the the Jesuit Priests and they would take the slaves here and in Southern Maryland, and they would sell them in Louisiana and in different places. So, we were Catholics because of the Jesuits. That's what they were here to do. They left England. Because people will ask, How do you become Catholics ? Because we were in Southern Maryland, that's what you were.

LG: Because Southern Maryland is the only...

KN: And when they talked about Yolanda and Brenda and Father Trout coming to Aunt Nene to say that you didn't sit in the right place, everyone knows that you had place to sit and it was usually by your race or complexion. One of my new cousins would tell me that Aunt Nene and her daughter Louise which is Brenda's mother, they would come and sit, and people couldn't tell whether they were White or Black. Because the early part of my family is more like my great great grandfather Richard. So, Papa Joe and his brothers, if you look at his brother's military records and things their race changes. The military, their wedding, their death, the census. Whenever your race changed like that, that means you can pass. And a lot of the Adam's guys when they went into the service they passed. They listed as White so they could be treated better. And when they got back to get married it goes to Black. Early on they were listed as Mullato and that's why Papa Joe was White and Maryjane McKey was Black.

ED: Well, that explains it.

KN: And the story was that at one time when... Because my mom and Aunt Peggy who lives in St. Louise right now, they remembered Georgiana very well. In fact, Georgiana, my Grandmother Florence, Sharon's grandmother husband Delbert Banks – they all died at Papa Joe's house in DC. He not only owned land all through Aquasco. He owned two properties in D.C.. One on 16th Street and at 1341 Wallach Place. And I can track down... What happened is since there were no hospital down here, you will see when you research that a lot the folks left here and went to DC to stay with different relatives. Even the turner gentleman that left here, my great grandmother second set of children were Turner's. That's what he comes under. So her children Clarence and all his brothers they would be all at 1341 Wallach Place. If you check their military records, it will say what address are you using? 1341 Wallach. It will say who is your next of kin? Florence Gilbert, that's Florence Adams Gilbert, because Papa Joe owns those properties. There are there two.

ED: It was amazing. What do you want to see happen in this area?

KN: What you all are doing today. Because 10 years ago I wanted to start to document the Black History of Aquasco and that's because in 1997 when I started researching, when I went up to look Adams, I could not find anything on Black Adams. I could not find anything on Black ball players. I wanted to document it. So right now we have two books, I have them on file at Southern Maryland Community College because I wanted to document our history. Right now to ancestry, there's been research that there's no truth to John Adams and Katherine Littleton. It is? Because right now to ancestry, we now have cousins in Wales they're coming up

from Katherine Littleton and I can trace John Adams all the way down to us to Richard Adams here in Gallant Green Maryland. And like my Grandmother Florence and her relatives, we all thought that they were born in Aquasco. No, they were born in Gallant Green, and then they came to Aquasco which is only back then on canoe or walk. Horse and buggy. Georgiana used to be one of Proctors and Watsons. There was my Great Grandmother Georgiana who's married to Joseph Adams. She would go to one of his relatives. He had a sister and there was some kind of dispute and disagreement in the family. So she would go up to Brandywine with horse and buggy, take my mother and my aunt and have the back of the wagon covered with a blanket and under it would be Christmas gifts, candies, cakes and pies and everything. And one of the relatives shared that with me before she died. That would be your Watson and your Proctors who married Adams which was one of Papa Joe's sisters. And that's where B. Tignor if anybody thinks about politics, and anything in the country, that where to B. Tignor comes under. B. Tignor's great grandmother wrote a story for me for my family reunion book. And I'll never forget. B. Tignor was into politics in Maryland. And what happened is her brother, when we did shirts for the family reunion, I'll never forget... One time, Sharon Banks Brown said to me "why is something's buying our family reunion t-shirts, what is he to us?" I said, because his grandmother is Papa Joe's sister.

ED: Right

KN: So I got B. Tignor. I sent my data to her, she knew I had it. She wrote a story for me because I ask each person to write a story for me for our book. And she wrote a story on her grandmother which was Papa Joe's sister. And Adams married in to the Watson's and Proctor's family.

ED: Wow

LG: So from most of the family is just integrated.

KN: They did. You weren't going but from the farm to the other, and you only have a foot and a horse and buggy. So you all went. And see, and my Grandmother Georgiana brings us together, because her first son is William Ezekiel Liles, that's the Liles family in Southern Maryland. He's buried at St. Peter's. And how his grand daughter wanted to know how do you know where his buried. Remember I used to cut roses and make bouquets. And I will go the different graveyards and tell you where they are. Just recently his head stone just disappeared which I'm getting ready to contact with Catholic's Cemeteries for. Two of her other children who are buried at the original St. Peter's. That where you have the Mudd family and all of them. Well my great grandmother's family is there and two of her children, Seebright and Suge, their stones are falling over to the ground. And some of those stones have been removed and put in the woods. That's how you lose history. But I knew from going there as a little girl where they were and where they are located. So, her first child was William Ezekiel Liles and what we found was an article in the archives in Pennsylvania. We also found a lady who used to run a brothel who remembered him. So we had pictures of him and his body was shipped back, and we have it documented, to Georgiana Adams, shipped and buried St. Peter's Church – so that was her first set of children. Then she had a second set of children right here Bowen Road where you have this church right here, where the White families live – the Turners are in there. There's a White Turners named John Turner who was married and had a family. While my great grandmother had a two children by him named Clarence Turner and Daisy Turner, it's documented. So then after that, she meets Joseph Adams and then she marries Joseph Adams and has seven children and end up in Aquasco.

JE: So there's a lot of blended history in here.

KN: A lot of blended history. And you have farms and you have people going in and out of front and back door.

ED: I don't have any more questions for you. That was fantastic.

LG: I still like kind of puzzled behind the Catholic religion and the United Methodist religion down here. How did that break apart?

KN: I don't know. All I know is that my family is Catholic – that's all I know. I do know where we coming of Richard Adams because they were White. They were not. I cannot find where they were buried. I am trying to see to see if they were buried on their own properties here. I don't know. I think they were more Episcopalian but we, all I can remember and traced back... Like I said great Grandmother Georgiana, the reason why I was able to document so much stuff, is because we were Catholic and I was able write to St. Peter's to get Baptismal records. That's how we were documented, through baptismal records. And between St. Peter's, you can go and find history at St. Mary's at Bryantown, but most of our families are at St. Peter's, St. Dominic's and St. Michael's.

And the thing with St. Dominic's , the story was is that at one time Georgiana felt as though her children, my Grandmother Florence and Aunt Marianne, who did not look Black. They could sit where they want to because at the time it was said years ago that she used Papa Joe's money to provide a stove in that church. And she donated a large amount of money to that church so felt like she could sit where she wanted to sit. And that's why Aunt Nene had a fit with Father Trout, because they felt more elevated because they had made contributions to the church, and the baseball field for picnics.

ED: Wow

KN: But it all comes around to the Jesuit Priest selling us it off to different places so it all makes sense.

NW: So was there mentioned at Benedict because it was predominantly Black on this area.

KN: From my family? The only thing I remembered of Benedict is going to Maribel's for crab cakes and slot machines. That's the only thing I remember right now.

LG: Going to where?

KN: Maribel. They call it Maribel's, and that's where you go at Benedict on the water and she was famous for crab cakes – that was the crab cake of Maryland and to play slot machines. That's what we did.

NW: Those were Black owners.

KN: Yes. Black owned establishments .That's were blacks went. And they went to Moonlight Inn ,GG's, Can't Find It Bar. The thing on top they were all there and those were the Black's went for entertainment. Cars Beach, Sparrows Beach, Segul Beach. And I remember on a radio every evening Aunt Marianne would have Poppy Adams.

JE/LG: Yes

KN: Poppy Adams on the radio.

JE: So we pretty much sustained ourselves.

KN: Bingo. Bingo was the thing for Catholics in Southern Maryland. For Aquasco,Bingo. St. Dominic's and St. Peter's if ever there's going to be a picnic, there was going to be a room for Bingo.

NW: I have a question. Because you see, gentrification is happening on Benedict, you see it in Washington DC. It's pretty much fear that happening here. So as a younger part of this group, what do you suggest would attract younger generations?

KN: I'm glad you said that because you're not looking at a youngster but I'm taking that.

NW: What do you suggest to attract young involvement in the town? Because it seems that gentrification, there seems to be a relationship properties passing down.

JE: Selling it all.

NW: Yes. Selling it all to losing tax sales. They're not stepping up, I guess they don't have the vigor that was involved to obtain the property.

KN: They don't. I don't have the answer. Because I'm a witness that I have a problem because my mom had two sets of twins in the same year. That runs in the Adam's family. It goes back to the Adams that were in Fauquier County of Virginia. They would have triplets and twins then. I have a twin sister whose two minute's older than me and our disagreement was selling of the farm up on Aquasco Farm Road, because I did not want to do it. When I got a word that it was going to be done, I was in Louisiana at workshop and I just went off. And for a long time, she knows that I was very angry about it. Just like our house DC, 13-41 Wallach Place that Joseph Adams owns. I did not want that to go. But when you have that other people involved, you have more than one sibling and you don't make the decision, there's not much that you can do. And I see it as a problem and youngsters don't have the same interest. They don't have the interest in maintaining and keeping... The land that I just go recently in Aquasco, I let it go because I'm 63 now, I'm not going to come back. And the reason why, when Papa Jo had that land then it went to Georgiana his wife, then it went to Aunt Marianne who then left it to my Aunt Ryley Elizabeth Gilbert, who then left it to me. Out of all the different things that she had, she left that because she said she knew that that was property that I would keep. And my goal was if my husband had lived, we were going to build our summer house there. But he died, then grandmother died, Aunt Marianne died, and most of my family that I was going to see also died. So then I decided to let it go because I'm by myself now. But youngsters don't see. Like right now, I just went up in my attic. I'd been in my house for six years and I knew there was a box I was looking for. So someone just help me go up in the attic and I found it. I have the actual shaving jars that my great Grandfather Papa Joseph Adams used and one of them is engraved. The Turner guy that just left here, how we are connected, Because Papa Joe married Georgiana, because we have to prove that we are all connected, there's a cup that's even engraved and she has it. She calls him Uncle Joe at that time, and in actuality it was her stepfather. But if you look at the census at that time, he put them down as his children because that was Georgiana's second set of children. Well she has his actual shaving mug and she has on there "To Uncle Joe, from Daisy, Merry Christmas, 1906" And I have three of his shaving creams. I have two other antique jars that Grandmother Georgiana had in there. And one the other shavings jars, I saw one similar in the antique shop down in Hughesville, they were asking \$80.00 for it. So I just put mine at the attic and I'm going to have them in case. Also, there were some eggs that like Easter Eggs, and I got to call my Aunt Peggy to find the history. Supposedly there was some kind of history were everyone got this Easter Egg but because of the time, all of the hand painted writings and pictures have faded off on them.

ED: Are they like fabegre eggs?

KN: No, this one wasn't the Fabergé, but they're about this big in glass. And I got to remember the story behind them, but at least the one with engraving, I still have and I just put it out.

JE: Now would you say, and I think with more younger people, let's say the Y Generation had the amount of history you have about the land, that's a lot of history, that's a blended history. I think people would be more at keeping their property. Do you think that's why... We've been trying to find information about the slaves and the Black and White connection. And of course, I'm part of your family too, and I'm finding that you don't find a lot harsh history, and do you think that's because we're blended? Because our descendants are White?

KN: I think that. Because I heard you have mentioned slavery. This is what the uniqueness is of... Because I'm on ancestry.com and with over 6,000 names on my database. And what's so interesting with so many people are one of the ladies in Delaware she was like "when we test you and we look at you, you have so much European in you" and I think it goes back to Richard Adams – 1822 to 1886. My great grandfather. Because if you look at Maryjane McKey, we first found her as a servant to Richard's brother George in Port Tobacco. But after that census, she then owns her own house up until she dies. And then she's having children every year by him. And if you look at the military records and all of that, their races were changing. So even in census. Whoever came to that door looked at them. So one year you're a Mullato, one year you were Black, one year you were White. So I think that they were treated differently because remember in his will, he left her everything. And that's why on the front of our reunion book, we put what he quoted, he left her his land. Land is how you ate. Land is what you made with your money because you worked. And then all of his parcels of land he gave her and then she using an X because she could not read or write and gave to each one of those seven children. So you are talking about Adams that own their own properties. So they worked for themselves. So that was not us. So what I am having trouble with is going past Maryjane McKey to find out the slavery part. Because all of my matches on Ancestry are White's. And you're going to the Claggett's and the Wilkerson's and they are all up in Upper Marlboro. One of the Adams went there. Nottingham. But we did have a cousin named Billy Michael, who's two daughters and his wife live here in Aquasco. They reached out to me yesterday and I told them they should come down but we don't have him. He was one of the gentlemen who was the only male that worked with us in 1997 to start this history. He has the one who had the memory of slaves coming to the waterfronts here. Also the Indians. He knew all of that but he's deceased now.

LG: Could you say that again?

KN: He had memory of the slaves and the Indians at the waterfront – waterways down here. And how they were pulled up. How the cargo would bring in tees, food and things. He had memory of that. He also told us that his thinking was is that the slave part our family have been come in through Baltimore and then come out. But now people like him are no longer here and he was the only gentleman that worked with us. And that's why when we did our second book, we put his picture on the front. And he had stories but there's no one else here to tell the stories. Like one of our relatives that is supposed to come down here, her father just shared with me about how there was a big party here in Aquasco. Why, because one of the residents here was going to leave Aquasco and go down to... I don't want to say Allen's Fresh but I got to find of him. One of the those areas – Hilltop or one of them. And they were like " why would you go there?" They came out of Aquasco Farm Road with animals, horses, parties and all kinds of things to celebrate with him leaving Aquasco to go down the road to relocate. They remembered that they called Papa Tom and Mama Lou. They all are telling me that Papa Tom and Mama Lou were slaves. I'm thinking that is why I cannot get their history right now. I'm at a standpoint. But they were saying that they... and I've had two different people, Ms. Estep, that's were Everland Estep comes in. I'm going to get see. She's coming under Papa Tom and Mama Lou. She's in that household. And they do remember that they were slaves. But the people that actually tell me, passed that, haven't or they've left. Because Billy Michael had he could remember them coming up and bringing in cargo.

LG: From which side?

KN: I don't know. I can't say because he's no longer here with us. And at that time we weren't eager about that. At that time we were trying to find so many things. And he had told us before he died like "when is the next reunion, you got one before I leave" and we did not get the second one before he left. But his family is still here. His two daughters are right here up in Aquasco with his wife.

ED: Maybe they have the stories

NW: Was your ancestries are Native American?

KN: DNA is funny. Because my twin sister and I both tested, she may pick you up, and I don't. Her daughter may pick you up and she and I don't. That's how tricky it is and we are seeing that. So mine does not. But they're changing it to base on how many people doing DNA now. For instance, up until two months ago, I have 40 percent Irish and I've now dropped to 4. And I thought my 14 percent is coming up from McKey's, because remember my great grandmother is Maryjane McKey. So right now, it was rumored that Georgiana was Indian. But I do know that one of her sister's was not. Because my Aunt Peggy is living, and Aunt Peggy knew very well that her sister was not Indian – but it was rumored that Georgiana is. Do I have any testing of it right now, I'm not showing any from me.

NW: We talked about and asked you about youth and as Obama instituted the stimulus to save the country. I mean big corporations too big to fail. Do you think listening to all the conversations about the economic involvement of the families shocked, there was money exchanged. Way to pay their bills, there was economic component. Do you think going forward, that part of the need was for the young people to become involved. That there's an economic component. As in, what do you they have in terms of economic component. With that being said, do you think that part of the answer to draw young people in is to develop some type of revenue source in this town.

KN: That's the only way you were going to be able to do it. I remember one of the girls I went to school with, we went to Catholic School in D.C., Sacred Heart, and I never forget her name is Pam Patton, and she's in her family home on Jefferson Street on DC., but when her father retired. And that's what I need to go and find out from Pam. Her father came here to Eagle Harbor and purchased a home here and I think one time he might be listed as... I don't know, the mayor or something. He was something here on the board on this hall.

LG: Commissioners?

KN: And I have to find out from Pam, because his house was still in Jefferson Street, why did he choose Eagle Harbor to come to? And I've been always waiting for Eagle Harbor to come out as a beautiful place, as a resort for Blacks with the history associated here and that's one of the things that I was hoping to see before I left here that they would come alive. Because, even one of the Adams girls associated to the Adams family whose know deceased, I spoke to her before she died. She owned a bar restaurant here in Eagle Harbor. The Troy Family is coming up from the Adams. That would be Papa Joe's brother, George Adams. George Adams is also buried at St. Peter's Church, the second St. Peter's cemetery. And I spoke to Ms. Elvie before she died but she told me that she was up of age and she says that she's not interested in that right now. And she said "who are you baby?" and I said "my grandmother is Florence" she said "are you Florence and Marianne's child? That girl had twins" and that's my mom Constance. But I wanted her because she owned a restaurant or a bar or combined right here. The one that Elvie Troy had back in the day was right here in Eagle Harbor. To Cedar Haven and over to the right. She was an Adams and I wanted to interview her about it but she said she's old

and not interested. And she was very nice about it and shortly she died after that. But my mom and Aunt Marianne had told me that Ms. Elvie owned that she's coming off from George Adams which would be the sister for Papa Joe, Joseph Adams. And that was right here in Eagle Harbor, that's here family. And she had that here, and that shows you again, Blacks having another type of business and outlet for people to participate in.

NW: And that's young people were, because you were involved. It's not like today to attend meetings, it's usually the older group. But I guess I'm asking you the businesses, where they a good mix as far as young and old...

KN: I don't know. I was younger. I only came down during the summer and then by that time everything had like...

NW: But you were like younger...

KN: Yes. I was younger and things had changed. I remember I was thinking about right now, because Papa Joe looked White, they sent him to the hospital. They took him from Aquasco to come to his house at Wallach Place. But he was able to go to the hospital. Whereas Georgiana his wife died at the home place. And then Papa Joe, I have his actual funeral booklet. His undertaker is Grimes. This old building up here is Grimes Funeral Director. And I have the actual paperwork were they even bought the casket and the lining from Andrew Grimes. It was a funeral home back then. And the old place is still there. I went up one summer there's a light in the window and I'm like, someone's playing games with me. Why would there be a light in that old... Because there's a cemetery at the left of it.

LG: But you know, they are clearing off that place now. Because at first it was just covered by all... A lot of people buy homes now in this area. You know, the older homes.

KN: But right now, I don't see people coming to stay here. Because there's nothing right here. Even today, I was on Facebook and I put before last year I said "I just went to go to Grimes, it was open yesterday and today it was closed" and somebody says "Grimes' is not closed" and then two days later they come back and says "Grimes is closed" and that's what we did every single day. But I don't what they are going to do. And it's like everywhere even in DC. Because I'm looking at my family in D.C., who own property in D.C, and everybody wants to sell things off. And I think the reason why I did history is because when we were younger, every weekend we had to come to Aquasco. And my aunt at one time was working for the State Department and while she was working for the State Department she had a little Volkswagen. And people could not believe, because sometimes its eight of us in there, it's like "how could eight people got in Volkswagen" to come here to spend the summer and we couldn't figure out how could do it. But we all came here, that were all our memories are and I like the fact that my grandmother would say "where is that child?". And where would I be? I would be down the hill doing apples, blackberries and peaches. And she knew when I came up from the kitchen she would take my blackberries and she would stew them down and put over biscuits. If we were go fishing and we come back, it was a routine that my mom would go out in a yard, clean the fish, come in and cook it. And I would go to the garden up on Aquasco Farm Road and get the tomatoes and slice them with fresh fish. And I could not go out to play because I was having nosebleeds at that time. We all had kinds of games. We had badminton and croquet. Horseshoes was a big thing and Papa Joe, not only Baseball is his thing but Horseshoe is his thing. A big thing back in the day. They could get in a fight because of the Horsehoes. They would all be playing and I could not go out and play because at that time I was having nosebleeds. So I will sit and listen to them talk. And like when we go to St. Peter's Cemetery, I knew there was something there. Like I know now that Georgiana had three sets of children. I knew there was something there because when we go to put the flowers, then my mother and my great Grandmother Marianne they would say "go

away” and they would stand and talk but I was not to hear. But then that’s how I got so many pictures. I have a wooden postcard that the Turner guy that just left here and Daisy Turner sent my Aunt Butter. She used to call her Mutt, her name is Raney Elizabeth Gilbert. She was staying with Aunt Nene. Sharon Browns aunt and Brenda’s grandmother. She was staying with Aunt Nene up the road here in Aquasco and Aunt Daisy was staying on D.C. on T Street because she had a beauty salon there. And her beauty salon is where she would go into Garfinkles and by all the perfumes, come back and put on her beauty salon because we Blacks could not go in to Garfinkles. So that’s what Daisy did because you couldn’t tell what Daisy was. Daisy one time called my grandmother and said “you tell Peggy that she did not speak to me downtown in D.C.” and my Aunt Peggy told my grandmother “I thought it was Aunt Daisy but then I thought it was a White lady and I was like I shouldn’t do it”. But it was amazing.

JE/LG: It was amazing.

ED: It’s bold to know that your complexion can get you by with something but you still do it, anyway?

KN: Yes

ED: That’s risky.

KN: Yes. And I remember in D.C., we were born at Columbia Hospital in DC which is no longer open. And one time my mom was at Columbia Hospital and I was with my grandmother on the... What do you call it? The things that they put in back D..C...

JE: Trolly

KN: Trolly, the tracks. And I remember when I got on the bus with my grandmother, this White guy that said to her “Why did she just called you grandmother, why do you allow her to call you grandmother?” then they went to Columbia Hospital and my mom was there. So she was working with a White girl named Susan Rish, and she picked up my Grandmother Florence and me. And we went over to Columbia Hospital and those were the only two I remember as racial things. They assumed that my mother was Susan’s mother but it wasn’t. “Why is she calling her grandmother, why don’t you stop that?” and that’s when my grandmother spoke up. You could tell her sister Nene Walls Banks because they weren’t lost for words.

ED: Right

JE: You know anything about Mayor Bowser? Her house is in Eagle Harbor.

KN: I never knew that her house is in Eagle Harbor.

LG: Her relatives at the top of the hill.

KN: No, I look into and I did not know.

JE: And it has a name.

KN: What’s her association to here? I’ll find it.

JE: Her family. I think they came down during the summers as well.

LG: Absolutely.

KN: Okay

KN: You had your different beaches and your different... I can't think of them right now. Because there's a couple more one down for Solomon's. There are several beaches where we would leave in DC to come.

LG: And this was the place to stay overnight.

KN: Like I told you there was even a restaurant over here back in the day.

LG: And there was a hotel.

KN: Yes, a hotel.

ED: It's a strange hearing this story because it sounds like besides medical needs, you had everything.

LG: Yes. And if you noticed a lot of death certificates when you're doing research, you're going to see that everyone from this area came to D.C. and they died there. And you'll the length of stay, sometimes it says nine months or nine weeks, unless you know if the person was sick on a long period of time or whether the person is sick in just a short period of time. Because like Papa Joe, they took it from the farm here, and took him back to D.C., Georgiana took him and went back. And that's when Sharon's brother asked me she says "my dad's name is Mason" I said "it wasn't, your father's name is Delbert and your great grandfather's name is Mason" and then I pulled the records for them. And Aunt Nene took her husband from here in Aquasco and took him into D.C. because Garfield hospital was there and that's the hospital that a lot of them started using.

ED: Thank you. Appreciate it.

[End Transcript: 58:29]