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Interview with Richard Trenton Beard

By Isabelle Chewning

[Items enclosed in brackets [] are not on the audio but are inserted for clarification, or to provide additional information.]

Isabelle Chewning: Today is October the 23rd, and my name's Isabelle Chewning. I'm going to do an interview today with Richard Beard who grew up in Brownsburg. We're at his house at 908 Grove Lane in Staunton, Virginia. Mr. Beard could you tell me your full name?

Richard Beard: Richard Trenton Beard.

Isabelle Chewning: Were you actually born in the Brownsburg area?

Richard Beard: I was born right near New Providence [Presbyterian] Church.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. At your family place [Ashbell Loop]?

Richard Beard: At my family place.

Isabelle Chewning: Were you born in a hospital?

Richard Beard: No, I was born at home.

Isabelle Chewning: What were your parent's names?

Richard Beard: My mother was Vivian [Strickler] Beard and my father was Trenton.

Isabelle Chewning: Had they lived there for a long time?

Richard Beard: That's where my Dad was born and it was his home place. When he married my mother that's where they lived. They used to have a tenant house, and they lived in that when they first got married, and when Dad's parents passed away, they moved into the big house.

Isabelle Chewning: Is the tenant house still there?

Richard Beard: No it burned down years ago, I expect; it was a long time ago.

Isabelle Chewning: How about brothers and sisters, how many brothers and sisters?

Richard Beard: I had two other brothers.

Isabelle Chewning: And their names were?

Richard Beard: Kenneth Beard and Donald Beard and my sister was Winifred.

Isabelle Chewning: Who was born first?

Richard Beard: I'm the oldest.

Isabelle Chewning: You're the oldest. And then?

Richard Beard: Kenneth.

Isabelle Chewning: And then?

Richard Beard: Donald.

Isabelle Chewning: And Winifred was last.

Richard Beard: No, I got that wrong; Winifred then Donald.

Isabelle Chewning: Okay so Donald was the baby?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: So your grandparents were still living when you were born?

Richard Beard: My grandmother lived one year after I was born.

Isabelle Chewning: So you don't really remember her?

Richard Beard: I don't remember her at all.

Isabelle Chewning: And so by then your family had moved into the big house?

Richard Beard: Yes.

Isabelle Chewning: So you don't remember living in the tenant house?

Richard Beard: No I don't.

Isabelle Chewning: So you grew up the whole time living in the big house?

Richard Beard: The home place.

Isabelle Chewning: Was your dad a farmer?

Richard Beard: My dad was a farmer.

Isabelle Chewning: What kind of farm?

Richard Beard: Well he raised sheep and yearlings, cattle. In fact, when your granddaddy [Madison McClung Sterrett, Sr.] went into the dairy business, he tried to get Dad to go into business at the same time and Dad wouldn't do it [laugh].

Isabelle Chewning: [Your] Dad knew how much work it was, probably!

Richard Beard: Well I don't know, but it was right interesting. I always called him Big Mc and he tried to get Dad [to go into the dairy business] and that's when Augusta Dairies made a good offer. So I told Dad, "You should have done it!"

Isabelle Chewning: When were your born?

Richard Beard: February the 9th, 1927.

Isabelle Chewning: When was it that my granddad tried to get your dad to go into the dairy business?

Richard Beard: It was right at the first part of the war, that's when Mr. Sterrett went into business. It was about the time the war started, and when I got out of the Service I told Dad I wish he'd have been in the dairy business, I would never have left the farm.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh really, you think you would have liked dairy business?

Richard Beard: Well he wasn't into dairy business then, when I got out of Service. But I had two other brothers, I said "Well I'm the oldest," so I went in the Service. My mother had remembered a couple boys, their parents kept them out on the farm. A couple of them had a wreck and killed themselves and Mother said, "I don't want that." So I told my mother, I said "I'm going to volunteer for the Navy because I want a dry bunk to sleep in at night." [Laugh] I didn't want to sleep in no fox hole!

Isabelle Chewning: You wanted to be on a ship instead of in a fox hole?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: So how many generations of your family had been there near New Providence?

Richard Beard: Well my [grandfather] Ashbell Beard, that was his farm. Ashbell Beard. And Dad was raised there and he was raised all of his life, and that's about as far back as I can go.

Isabelle Chewning: Who were your neighbors when you were growing up?

Richard Beard: [Rev. C. Morton Hanna was the minister at New Providence Presbyterian Church. The Hannas had four children, and Edwin and I were the same age. Sometimes, he would help me milk, then on Saturday, I would help to fold bulletins while Rev. Hanna worked on his sermon for Sunday.] The Wades, I call them the Wade girls.

Isabelle Chewing: Jen and Margaret, Kate?

Richard Beard: Yeah they lived down in the stone house – the stucco house [Castle Carbury at 34 Beard Road]. Zack Franklin used to work for them.

Isabelle Chewing: I've heard other people mention Zack Franklin.

Richard Beard: There was a whole big family of them, and he lived there right where John Swisher lives now, in that little house [3569 Brownsburg Turnpike]. It must have been about eleven of them or something. But Dan [Franklin] and I grew up together, putting up hay and stuff; we made a dam down the creek.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh did you in Hays Creek; is it Hays Creek that goes through there?

Richard Beard: Moffats Creek.

Isabelle Chewing: Moffats Creek.

Richard Beard: Oh yeah we used to get to swimming and worked together putting up hay and wheat and that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: Did Zack Franklin work for your dad?

Richard Beard: No, he worked for the Wade girls on that farm there; they had a big farm there.

Isabelle Chewing: Bud Martin told me he [Zack Franklin] was really good with animals, that if the animals were sick, Zack Franklin would go out into the woods and get stuff and he was good at curing animals.

Richard Beard: Well I never knew that.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, that's Bud Martin's tale!

Richard Beard: Now my dad [Trenton Beard] was good with animals.

Isabelle Chewning: Was he?

Richard Beard: In fact he wanted to be a veterinarian years ago, and he didn't get to finish high school. But he was good with cattle.

Isabelle Chewning: And the sheep too?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah he clipped his own sheep and everything. I guess he had over 40 sheep that we clipped.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you raise the sheep mainly for wool then or was it for mutton?

Richard Beard: Yes for wool. You didn't sell no mutton around here!

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah, I'd never eaten mutton until I –

Richard Beard: You went north?

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Yeah. So it was strictly for wool?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: But you raised the calves until they were yearlings and then?

Richard Beard: Dad just raised yearlings.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he take them to a market?

Richard Beard: No someone would come to the farm and buy them. In fact Houff Transfer in Weyers Cave – his father's son used to drive a big cattle truck, before he started a tractor and trailer

business. They were handling cattle and buying just like [Jerry] Swisher does at Fairfield, that's what they did.

Isabelle Chewning: What kind of cattle did he raise?

Richard Beard: White faced cattle. Don't raise them anymore.

Isabelle Chewning: No everything's Black Angus, yeah.

Richard Beard: Well they say Black Angus meat is better.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you think you could tell the difference?

Richard Beard: No, I couldn't the difference.

Isabelle Chewning: I don't think I could either.

Richard Beard: I couldn't tell the difference. Growing up my dad with his brother in Middlebrook and a couple of the fellows, they used to take turns killing a beef. And they would distribute around a certain portion when they killed it. Of course, they didn't have refrigeration, this type of thing. I can remember Daddy taking the back seat out of the car and everything to put the meat in and deliver it. Just being a kid. See, the good old days!

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah. How many acres was your farm?

Richard Beard: It was five hundred and ten acres.

Isabelle Chewning: And how many head of cattle did he [Trenton Beard] raise?

Richard Beard: You know, I can't tell you. We had what we call the back place up behind Wade's Mill, over that ridge, and he raised yearlings. From the creek, he had a raceway and he'd wash certain portions of the ground and the grass would say green and all that.

Isabelle Chewning: Is that the raceway that powers the mill?

Richard Beard: Yeah. I mean that creek does.

Isabelle Chewing: Does that creek have a name?

Richard Beard: You know, I can't tell you that. I don't know.

Isabelle Chewing: I don't think I've ever heard a name.

Richard Beard: I don't know, I can't tell you.

Isabelle Chewing: So your farm joined the Wade's farm?

Richard Beard: Yeah the Wade's farm back there.

Isabelle Chewing: And how about on the other side, was that a big farm on the other side too where Cloverdale is now [4216 Brownsburg Turnpike]?

Richard Beard: Yeah that's what we called the Slusser place.

Isabelle Chewing: So they were your neighbors, the Slussers?

Richard Beard: George Slusser, I want to school with him.

Isabelle Chewing: And Bruce [Slusser] was a lot younger?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, he was a lot younger. When George went into the Service – we used to run around together and he had to go in Service before I did. And he was shipped overseas and he was killed in a couple of weeks.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh really?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. Fine young fellow.

Isabelle Chewing: That must have been hard for everybody.

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. Mr. Slusser used to be in the lumber business, and he owned a farm up next to Lexington. He had a couple of farm hands.

Isabelle Chewning: Was Harry their brother too, Harry Slusser?

Richard Beard: Harry was Mr. Slusser's – no wait, that was one of his sons.

Isabelle Chewning: So it was George and Harry and Bruce?

Richard Beard: Yeah. And of course I think he's dead now, I think.

Isabelle Chewning: I think so.

Richard Beard: I remember going by the place where he built up there, on the farm up next to Lexington. Of course that'd been years ago.

Isabelle Chewning: So that farm was off of [Route] 39 [Maury River Road]?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: I assume you went to church at New Providence then since you were so close?

Richard Beard: And we walked, too.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you?

Richard Beard: Dad had to do the feeding and stuff and mother said "You children are going to be to Sunday school on time," so we walked, we did.

Isabelle Chewning: How much difference in age were you?

Richard Beard: Well Kenny and I – I was born in February and he was born in December, that's pretty close.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, so you were very close in age.

Richard Beard: Very close.

Isabelle Chewing: About as close as you can get!

Richard Beard: You're right, almost too close. [Laugh] So Winifred was about two years later and then Donald was about a year and a half later and so that's the family.

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember any of the Sunday school teachers you had at New Providence when you'd go there for Sunday school?

Richard Beard: Right off hand, I can't think of any.

Isabelle Chewing: But you were the oldest so you were responsible for getting them there on time?

Richard Beard: No! Let me see I think there was a lady who used to work with the young folks; we went to Massanetta every summer. But growing up, the youth -- I don't know whether my brother ever went or not to Massanetta Springs. We used to stay in the Timber Ridge Cottage.

Isabelle Chewing: Who all would go? Who was in your crowd of friends?

Richard Beard: Well I think Louise Wiseman [Stuart] went. Mary Katherine Blackwell. I can't remember all their names. Dad always said, "Well schools out, we've got to cut hay and cut wheat." And I'd go to Mother and [say] "I want to go to Massanetta." [Laugh] And I went through my senior year in high school.

Isabelle Chewing: So you'd go for a week?

Richard Beard: For a week. And you know, we'd have Bible studies and all this kind of stuff. I really enjoyed it. And I still know people today that I went to Massanetta with, like from Tinkling Spring Church [in Fishersville, VA], and this type of thing but I can't recall their names. But I remember the faces.

Isabelle Chewing: But that was your vacation in the summer?

Richard Beard: Yeah, that was my vacation.

Isabelle Chewing: How old were you when you had to start working on the farm?

Richard Beard: Oh, I was just a tiny thing, going to school and everything. Dad used to raise chickens, and Kenneth and Donald would work the chickens and I'd help Daddy. We'd milk eleven or twelve cows. I'd help him milk, but they had the easiest job. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: [Laugh] I don't like chickens, I'd rather milk, I think.

Richard Beard: But it never hurt me, you know.

Isabelle Chewing: Then how about field work, when did you start working out in the field with hay?

Richard Beard: Just when I was a child. I remember one time, I called it the back place, and I was plowing with a team of horses. I hit a bumble bee's nest in the ground, the horses went one way and I went another! They was pulling the plow behind them. That was quite a time before I finally got them.

Isabelle Chewing: You finally caught the horses?

Richard Beard: I finally caught them. But them bumble bees, them great big old black ones, that was something.

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember when you got your first tractor?

Richard Beard: The first tractor Dad got was a John Deere tractor on cleats. An old tractor and I can't tell what date it was.

Isabelle Chewing: But you worked a lot with horses?

Richard Beard: Oh Dad had, he had twelve horses.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. And he had a hired hand. And I used to drive the horses when I was tiny. When they was trained well, you didn't have any problem with them.

Isabelle Chewing: So did specific ones always work in a team?

Richard Beard: Yeah they usually worked a couple of teams, then sometimes you'd have four together, pulling a big harrow and all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: What were your barns like; did you have a bank barn?

Richard Beard: No, you've seen the big barn, haven't you?

Isabelle Chewing: Yes.

Richard Beard: That's the biggest barn we had. And on the back place was big barn, too. Then we had what we called the granary, where the grain was. Then Daddy had a blacksmith shop of his own.

Isabelle Chewing: He knew how to blacksmith?

Richard Beard: Yeah, he could make horseshoes.

Isabelle Chewing: He did?

Richard Beard: And he had two riding horses. And he'd shoe them horses himself. Nobody could suit him. He'd shoe them horses himself. Now his workhorses, I used to take them into Brownsburg to [Henry] Potter's place [2610 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewing: Down on the south end of Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: Yeah south end on that curve right there. I'd take two horses in at a time, and then I'd have to stand there with the bush to keep the flies off of them while Mr. Potter shod the horses.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he pretty fast?

Richard Beard: Yeah he was fast, he was good. But you've got to be a strong man to handle all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewning: Gosh yeah. Yeah. Was your dad a good horseman?

Richard Beard: Yeah, oh he used to have his riding pants and leggings.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, liked to wear a bow tie.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he show the horses?

Richard Beard: No he didn't. But Ruritan Clubs used to have shows there at the school.

Isabelle Chewning: In Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: In Brownsburg. Now Kenny's wife, Ruth [Wade Beard], and I, we used to ride in the pairs classes.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh you did?

Richard Beard: Back in those days you didn't have to dress up, but now you've got to dress up, this day and time. But we would ride in the pair class, and we had two three-gaited horses. I'd ride single, and all that. I liked to ride horses. That goes back to when I said I wish Dad had been in the dairy business before I finished school, you know, and this type of thing, because I like working with horses and everything. In fact, I got married when I was 20, and Dad had to sign for me to get married. One of the horses had kicked him, and he had his arm in a sling and they always kidded me that I broke his arm to make him sign. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: That's a good story anyway!

Richard Beard: Yeah that's a good story.

Isabelle Chewning: So you had to be 21 [to get married]?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: I didn't know that.

Richard Beard: You just found out something?

Isabelle Chewing: I sure did! Yeah, yeah.

Richard Beard: But that's what it was.

Isabelle Chewing: How about school in Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: I started the first grade. Have you ever heard anybody say anything about Joe Fitzgerald?

Isabelle Chewing: No.

Richard Beard: Now he started in the first grade too, he lived right behind Brownsburg out there. Of course he's passed on, and his brother has, too. But I remember Joe Fitzgerald, Louise [Wiseman Stuart], and I started in first grade together and finished up together.

Isabelle Chewing: No, I hadn't heard anybody mention him.

Richard Beard: Well he was a good boy too.

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember who some of your teachers were?

Richard Beard: Mrs.[Elizabeth] East. She taught English. [Jen Wade (who married a Heffelfinger) was my third grade teacher. During that year, I had scarlet fever and was quarantined for three weeks. Jen helped me at home to keep my lessons up. Mrs. Herbert Brown was a substitute in the lower grades. Osie Trimmer taught English; Dorothy Furr was a history teacher; Mary Lauderdale taught Phys Ed, and John Layman taught Agriculture.] And Rosenell Patterson, she taught algebra. She was good too.

Isabelle Chewing: I've heard she was a really good teacher.

Richard Beard: Always, I always made a good grade, 'cause she'd give you a little test every morning.

Isabelle Chewing: Every day?

Richard Beard: Every day she'd give you a test. She'd give you three examples to work. And I made a darn good grade in that, but I could have done better in a lot of others. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: [Laugh] So you liked the math and the algebra?

Richard Beard: Yeah. So when I was a junior in high school, I took five subjects. I said, "Well, when I get to be a senior I won't have to take but three."

Isabelle Chewing: Did it work that way?

Richard Beard: No! The only way you could do that if you failed one grade. So I had to take four. That wasn't very smart was it? [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: [Laugh] I guess not, that's too bad.

Richard Beard: It didn't hurt me.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you like school?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah I liked school. In fact, I liked sports but we didn't get to-- we played a little basketball. Now Miss Osie Trimmer was in charge, in the war, you know. I graduated in '44.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, so you were right in the middle of the war?

Richard Beard: Yeah '44. And she wouldn't -- well, we might go to Fairfield, or Spottswood, or somewhere to play. And I said "Miss Osie, it looks like," I said "My dad can get all the fuel you want."

Isabelle Chewing: Oh because he had the farm?

Richard Beard: Farm, yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: But did she think that was unpatriotic?

Richard Beard: Yes she did. She did. And one year we started to try to have football, and one boy got his collarbone broken. Then wouldn't nobody sign up. And we played down at the creek at Frank Patterson's old place [2843 Brownsburg Turnpike], down there in that field, that's where we'd play. When I was young, I wanted to play football. I had an uncle who was principal at Natural Bridge, and he wanted me to come and stay with him and play football in high school. Well, his wife was the English teacher. But I didn't want to leave home anyway.

Isabelle Chewning: Were they Beards?

Richard Beard: No, Strickler.

Isabelle Chewning: Strickler. That was your mother's –

Richard Beard: Brother. He was principal up there and I just couldn't see it but he wanted me. I said "Well no." His wife would make me study that English at night. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Just wasn't worth it?

Richard Beard: Wasn't worth it. No, I just wouldn't leave home, but that's just what happened.

Isabelle Chewning: So how did you get to school in Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: Well we had a school bus. Ruth Patterson [Hogshead] used to drive the school bus, has that been mentioned to you?

Isabelle Chewning: No. No.

Richard Beard: Lived in that house right down there at the creek. [2843 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: Ed's [Patterson] sister right?

Richard Beard: Yeah. Ed's sister. Now she used to drive the school bus. And I'd drive it some for her. And then if we practiced basketball after school I'd walk home.

Isabelle Chewning: That's a long walk.

Richard Beard: Oh I think it's 2½ miles.

Isabelle Chewning: 3 miles?

Richard Beard: I was thinking 2½ maybe even 3.

Isabelle Chewning: Well you know better, you walked it, you know better than me.

Richard Beard: I walked it many a time. I was driving the school bus one time, I was over in Pisgah and got stuck. I had to call Kenneth, my brother, to bring the tractor over to pull me out.

Isabelle Chewning: How did you get word to him to come and pull you out?

Richard Beard: Well they had the telephone line back then; one of them telephone lines that had 10 or 12 people on.

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah, party lines. But you drove the bus some for --

Richard Beard: For Ruth, yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Was she a lot older than you all were?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, yeah, she was a lot older.

Isabelle Chewning: How old were you when you were driving the bus?

Richard Beard: I don't know, 16, 17.

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Not like today, wouldn't be letting a 16 year old drive a bus I don't think.

Richard Beard: And then, Miss Osie Trimmer – someone would get sick at school, she was always getting me out of class to take them home. Had to take them to Bustleburg, or Rockbridge Baths --

Isabelle Chewning: Did you drive somebody's car?

Richard Beard: Drove her car!

Isabelle Chewning: You must have been her favorite, then, if she let you drive her car!

Richard Beard: [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: Sounds like you were her favorite!

Richard Beard: I didn't want to tell you that! [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Well it sure sounds like it! You said a minute ago "Miss Osie," and I never heard anybody say anything but "Miss Trimmer."

Richard Beard: Osie Trimmer.

Isabelle Chewning: But you called her "Miss Osie"? Did you call her that to her face?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: You did? You were her favorite!

Richard Beard: She was a good lady.

Isabelle Chewning: So I've heard. She just sounds like a remarkable person, all the things she did.

Richard Beard: A lot of those girls would get together before school, taking Latin. I said “If Miss Osie Trimmer didn’t get y’all a test every day, all of you would probably fail.” She’d give them a test every day. Latin’s hard. Did you take Latin?

Isabelle Chewning: I took Latin.

Richard Beard: But now you speak a lot of different languages?

Isabelle Chewning: No, not really, I took Latin and then I took a little bit of German in college.

Richard Beard: Oh, really? I thought your job in Washington –

Isabelle Chewning: Well it was with immigration, but I didn’t speak very much Spanish.

Richard Beard: Oh you didn’t? Oh, okay.

Isabelle Chewning: I needed Spanish a lot of times a lot of time, but I didn’t have very much.

Richard Beard: Oh. Well, that was just my understanding.

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah I worked for immigration but I stayed mainly in Washington rather than out on the border anywhere. I took a lot of trips out on the border but my Spanish wasn’t very good. Neither was my Latin, and neither was my German! [Laugh]

Richard Beard: Well, when I was in the Navy I was on an aircraft carrier in the 6th Fleet in the Atlantic. And then you’d get in Italy and you wanted to talk, they’d said “Me speaka no English.” I know they could understand words.

Isabelle Chewning: They spoke a lot more English than you spoke Italian probably!

Richard Beard: Right.

Isabelle Chewning: Were you conscious at all of the fact that you were growing up during the Depression?

Richard Beard: Not really. Now my parents worked hard. My mother used to get and help to drag down ground.

Isabelle Chewing: What did she have to do?

Richard Beard: Drag the ground.

Isabelle Chewing: What does that mean?

Richard Beard: With horses, a team of horses. Level the ground off, drag it.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, I see.

Richard Beard: And she raised chickens and she raised eggs to send to a hatchery in Stuarts Draft. She had to count them and everything at night in the basement. They had to weigh so much, and you had the candle light through them and all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: What was that for?

Richard Beard: Well you could see anything in that egg.

Isabelle Chewing: And then you had to keep them warm?

Richard Beard: No, no you didn't have to keep them warm. But you had to count them, and they'd come and pick them up. Of course as we were later on – well, I don't know. It was right during the end of the Depression.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you have a big garden; did she work a big garden?

Richard Beard: Oh she had a big garden, had a big garden and had spring water. She watered it all the time.

Isabelle Chewing: There was a spring?

Richard Beard: Yeah, it's a spring right down in the flat. Down at the creek where the bridge is, water come in from [??] on that turn. Had two big rams there and water was pumped and the rams you can't cut the water off, it's kinda running continuously. So we had plenty of water to water the garden.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you drink the spring water or did you have a well?

Richard Beard: No, we had spring water. Oh it's good water, always good and cold, good and cold.

Isabelle Chewing: A couple of springs down there have dried up. I don't know about your farm, but a couple of people have mentioned their springs have [gone dry with the drought].

Richard Beard: Oh several people. Well, that spring down there, you can just see the water bubbling up out of the ground. It's that much.

Isabelle Chewing: Is there a spring house there?

Richard Beard: No, Kenny just put a cover over it. It just used to be open. But the old ram would get a little grit in it and it'd stop up and you had to work on them all the time. But we had plenty of water, good cold water.

Isabelle Chewing: And you had to carry it up to the house?

Richard Beard: Oh no, we had running water in the house. And it just went in through the springhouse, and it just run all the time.

Isabelle Chewing: So did you have a bathroom in the house?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: You did?

Richard Beard: We certainly did. A lot of people didn't have bathrooms, but we did. When they moved down there, they had a bath put in, which was nice.

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah that was nice for you, so you don't ever remember outdoor –

Richard Beard: No I do not.

Isabelle Chewning: Wow, good for you. Was there always electricity, do you remember?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: You all were pretty progressive, the Beards! Running water and electricity.

Richard Beard: Well pretty lucky I guess. Evelyn [Mr. Beard's wife] always said I was lucky. [Laugh] But mother put in a swimming pool for us.

Isabelle Chewning: A swimming pool? I didn't know that.

Richard Beard: You didn't?

Isabelle Chewning: No.

Richard Beard: We used to work in the summertime putting up hay and stuff, and come in for lunch. Dad always liked to take about an hour off for lunch, and we'd go out and get in the water. And oh, it felt so good! That old dusty hay, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: How was it built, was it concrete?

Richard Beard: It was concrete.

Isabelle Chewning: Was the spring water feeding the swimming pool too?

Richard Beard: You got in, and it was cold water! Dad made us a diving board and one end was 6½ foot deep, too.

Isabelle Chewning: Good grief.

Richard Beard: And mother would never go swimming. And then when we had left home or all got married, she said none of her grandchildren were going to drown in her swimming pool. So she had it filled up and made a strawberry patch. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: Well that's why I never knew about it, I guess, because maybe it was filled up?

Richard Beard: Oh it was filled up, oh yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: You had a swimming pool.

Richard Beard: I enjoyed it -- we enjoyed that.

Isabelle Chewning: I'll bet you did.

Richard Beard: And plenty of cold water.

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah that must have felt really good on a hot day.

Richard Beard: It was right hard to keep it clean. Just right against the cement, stuff -- that moss started growing right quick like. We didn't put no chemicals or nothing in it. But that was really nice.

Isabelle Chewning: So when did you graduate from high school?

Richard Beard: '44.

Isabelle Chewning: Right in the middle of the war. What are your memories of the war? Do you remember blackouts or anything?

Richard Beard: Oh, yeah. We had blackouts and I remember standing watch at Brownsburg in the high school. It was George Slusser and I. We'd stand together, and we had a little hot plate and we'd have cheese and baloney.

Isabelle Chewning: So was this at night?

Richard Beard: Yeah at night.

Isabelle Chewing: And you were sort of on guard at night?

Richard Beard: Yeah, on guard. And we'd take turns.

Isabelle Chewing: And what were you watching for, planes?

Richard Beard: Well, planes. Or if we'd see anything strange or anything.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you ever see anything?

Richard Beard: No, we never did see anything.

Isabelle Chewing: Was somebody there every night?

Richard Beard: Almost every night. Well George Slusser and I just worked together all the time.

Isabelle Chewing: Were there blackouts where you had to cover the windows and everything?

Richard Beard: I don't remember that. I know we didn't. But at the time being out in the rural area, made it a little different. Whether it was right in Brownsburg I don't know. I don't remember if it was. But oh yeah we stood watch.

Isabelle Chewing: What school building were you in then?

Richard Beard: We was up in the building, the stucco building. They tore that down –

Isabelle Chewing: It's still there.

Richard Beard: But they tore the other part of the school down, yeah. Now the old agricultural building. I don't know whether they ever took that down or not, I don't know.

Isabelle Chewing: I don't think so.

Richard Beard: Did they?

Isabelle Chewning: Did you graduate when you were 17?

Richard Beard: No, 18.

Isabelle Chewning: Eighteen. And then did you go right in the Navy?

Isabelle Chewning: Well mother and I discussed it, and I signed up in August. And they didn't call me until the first of the year in '45. I finished boot camp the day President Roosevelt died.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, you'll remember that always then won't you?

Richard Beard: I'll remember that always. Our company was the E Company and they dressed us up to go to march for the burial. But they changed their mind at the last minute, I don't know.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did you go to boot camp?

Richard Beard: Bainbridge, Maryland.

Isabelle Chewning: And then how much time did you spend in the Navy?

Richard Beard: I got out in '47 so it wasn't long.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you spend any ship time?

Richard Beard: I was on the ship all the time.

Isabelle Chewning: That's right you said an aircraft carrier.

Richard Beard: Yeah, I was on an aircraft carrier.

Isabelle Chewning: Pacific, Atlantic?

Richard Beard: I was in both. I've been through the Panama Canal five times. Of course, when I got out of the Service – I was out a long time – then I had to go back in the Korean deal.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh they called you up?

Richard Beard: I belonged to the Naval Reserve.

Isabelle Chewing: Of, in the Reserves.

Richard Beard: There was a fellow, a Chief, a good friend of mine downtown. Talked me [laugh] into joining him. I only belonged eight months, and I was gone 22 months in the Korean deal.

Isabelle Chewing: Where were you then?

Richard Beard: I was a pipe fitter. They put me on a tanker, a seagoing tanker. It was a good duty but you couldn't put into port nowhere because of the fuel. People talk about – "Well I don't want to use this kind of fuel, and I don't want to use – " Well gosh, we pulled in like ESSO, all different kinds of fuel and loaded it on the ship, and it didn't make no difference.

Isabelle Chewing: They're all the same?

Richard Beard: Might have another little different ingredient in it for color or something, that would be all. But I remember one time we were coming in Norfolk port and we had to muck the tanks out. Now seamen had to do that. But one lifeboat broke and hit the bottom and one boy was blown out of the hole. It blew him out in the water, but it didn't hurt him.

Isabelle Chewing: It didn't?

Richard Beard: No but he had a goatee and all that kind of thing, and it burnt that off. And he was in the sick bay, he was crying that he had wanted to go home with that goatee. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: So it's not like it is now where you can't have a beard or a moustache?

Richard Beard: I don't know, I can't answer that. But anyway, I remember that too. It was just lucky he didn't get hurt.

Isabelle Chewing: So you got out of the Navy the first time and then got married?

Richard Beard: Yeah I got out of the Navy.

Isabelle Chewing: When you broke your dad's arm to sign the papers for you? [Laugh]

Richard Beard: Yeah in '47. But this Chief talked me into joining the Reserves and I did. Made a mistake.

Isabelle Chewing: Was your wife from around Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: No she was from near Fishersville.

Isabelle Chewing: How did you meet her?

Richard Beard: Well [Wallace] Strickler – mother's brother – lived in Fishersville and we used to visit a couple of weeks during the summer. And their boys would come up home. And this girl lived right across the street from them and we kinda got to knowing each other. And I dated her a little while, and then I got Evelyn [Mr. Beard's wife]. Mc [Sterrett] was with us a couple of times.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he?

Richard Beard: Yeah [laugh]. So we were walking down the street in Waynesboro and I was kinda lagging behind, I said "Well, Evelyn, I think I want a date." "I'm not going to bother with you, who're you going with?" [Laugh] But she didn't wanna cause no trouble! I just knew her through vacations and stuff. Yeah we were driving down-- I think Mc [Sterrett] and Ed [Patterson], I think it was six of us in the car one Sunday. We had to turn and knocked a light pole down. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: What did you do?

Richard Beard: Hit a light pole.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, I haven't heard this story.

Richard Beard: You haven't? [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: Who was driving?

Richard Beard: I don't know who was driving.

Isabelle Chewning: Where was the light pole that you hit?

Richard Beard: Right there in Fishersville, around that old road right there where it's a 4-way stop. Across from that little shop; it's a big apartment house down on the road there a little bit. But we didn't hurt nobody. No, I don't know who was driving.

Isabelle Chewning: And if you knew you wouldn't tell, right?

Richard Beard: Well I don't know, I don't remember. I might have been driving.

Isabelle Chewning: But you were having a good time.

Richard Beard: Oh yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: How about cars, who had cars? Did your family have a car?

Richard Beard: Yeah, I used Dad's car. Well, Louise's [Wiseman Stuart] brother [Carl Wiseman] had an old Model A and we used to go up to Rockbridge Baths on a Sunday afternoon to go swimming.

Isabelle Chewning: In the river?

Richard Beard: Yeah, in the river down below the bridge. And Louise's brother was Carl. And he come out, and he had a little gas tank on it, and we got it good and warm – Dad used fuel for the tractor – you'd switch it over on fuel oil. As long as you got the motor good and hot, and then you'd put it on fuel oil, and it'd run a whole lot better.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh it did?

Richard Beard: Oh, yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: And was fuel oil cheaper too?

Richard Beard: Fuel oil was cheaper.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, that's good. [Laugh]

Richard Beard: But we used to have a lot of fun with that too. He'd come by out at home and fill it up with fuel oil. We got up at Rockbridge Baths one Sunday, and we didn't have any gas. We begged a guy that had the filling station there, I forget what his name was. But he gave us enough to get it started and get it warm so we could get back to Brownsburg. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Oh, that's funny! Sounds like a lot of good times.

Richard Beard: Yeah we had a lot of good and then of course I ran around with Sam Patterson, too.

Isabelle Chewning: Was he a little bit older than you?

Richard Beard: Yeah, I think. Mc [Sterrett] is one year older than I am, I think.

Isabelle Chewning: He was born in '25 in November.

Richard Beard: Oh '25?

Isabelle Chewning: In November of '25.

Richard Beard: Well he's 81 then. See I'm 80. He's still strong at 81, isn't he?

Isabelle Chewning: Pretty much. And I guess Sam [Patterson] maybe was a little older than he was.

Richard Beard: I think Sam was older than he was.

Isabelle Chewning: But Sam might have been younger than Ed [Patterson]? I can't remember who was older.

Richard Beard: I can't, I can't.

Isabelle Chewing: I can't remember. I know they all hung out together, I just don't know. Did your family have a car when you were real little?

Richard Beard: Yeah, we had a car.

Isabelle Chewing: So did your parents drive to church?

Richard Beard: Yeah, Dad and them, they'd come and drive to church.

Isabelle Chewing: Your father was pretty active in the church wasn't he?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, and when it come time to push snow and all, he done all that around too.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: Back in those times the snow plows were made out of wood and the horses pulled it.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh they were?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: So he'd get his team of horses up there to clear out parking places?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: Seems like it snowed a lot more then than it does now.

Richard Beard: Oh back then yeah, I can remember when a couple of times snow clear up as high as a fence post, clear up to the horse's tummy.

Isabelle Chewing: So were you ever in the dairy operation or you were gone by then?

Richard Beard: No, I was gone. Dad didn't go into that until after I started working with the telephone company.

Isabelle Chewing: So after the Korean War you came back and started with the telephone company?

Richard Beard: Well I started with the telephone company in 1950, and they had to excuse me. In fact, I made more money in the Service than I did working for Telephone Company. But I was just gone 22 months.

Isabelle Chewing: And so you had your job waiting for you when you got back?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, they had it waiting. But my oldest daughter was a little over 2 and then Dickie was born. I think he was just 2½ months when I left. That was hard.

Isabelle Chewing: And you didn't see him again until he was two?

Richard Beard: Oh no, we come into port about every 3 months.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh good. And did you come into Norfolk mainly?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: That's where your base was?

Richard Beard: That's where our base was. And of course another little story: When I was in the Navy the first time on an aircraft carrier, we were on our way to Japan – I'm jumping ahead. We trained pilots from San Diego to Hawaii and back. And then we got orders to go to Japan, and we was on our way to Japan when the war was over.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh you were?

Richard Beard: So we got orders to come back to the East Coast and they took all the planes off the aircraft carrier and the hanger deck; they built bunks five high on the hanger deck. We took prisoners from Norfolk, Italian prisoners from Norfolk, took them back to Italy.

Isabelle Chewing: What time of year was it? Was it summer when they could be out on the deck?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. And then we were to bring Army people back; we made two trips.

Isabelle Chewing: Prisoners over and soldiers back?

Richard Beard: Soldiers back. I've been across the Atlantic when it was just like a pasture field, and I've been across that thing [the Atlantic] -- Today I don't think I could make it. Well we've had water fly clear over top of the deck on top.

Isabelle Chewing: I wouldn't want to be out there.

Richard Beard: You had to walk right into it to go around the walk.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you get seasick?

Richard Beard: You know, I never did. But for some of them Army guys it was terrible. You know, you'd be eating and the ship would go into a roll, and plates would fly everywhere. It was terrible sometimes. Some of these young people don't know.

Isabelle Chewing: But you didn't have to be in a fox hole!

Richard Beard: You're right, that's the reason I told my mother I'm volunteering for the Navy because I wanted a bunk to sleep in.

Isabelle Chewing: Was she upset?

Richard Beard: No. She said "I'd rather you go in the Service. I don't want to take a chance you saying your dad needs you on the farm," and this kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: But that must have shaken everybody up when George Slusser got killed.

Richard Beard: Oh it did. He was a fine young fellow, and we were good buddies all the time.

Isabelle Chewning: And did you know George East? He was probably older, he got killed too I think.

Richard Beard: George East, oh yeah I know who you're talking about. Yeah George East. I just knew him – I can't say that I didn't know him, but I knew where he lived and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: And was it his mother who taught you or was it a different Mrs. East?

Richard Beard: No it was a different East from over in Pisgah.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh okay.

Richard Beard: You know, I think Mrs. Whipple substituted some when I was going to school.

Isabelle Chewning: Mollie Sue?

Richard Beard: Yeah Mollie Sue. Now Louise [Wiseman Stuart] probably remembered all that for you.

Isabelle Chewning: She has a good memory.

Richard Beard: Whatever she told you is right!

Isabelle Chewning: And Marjorie Ann Chittum, do you know her?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah she used to go with my brother Kenneth.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh she did, did she?

Richard Beard: Yeah for a good long while. Yeah I know her. Of course she got married and then she went to college at Mary Baldwin and then she taught school.

Isabelle Chewning: So you call them Kenneth and Donald, and everybody else called them Donnie and Kenny.

Richard Beard: Yeah they do. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: But you always called them by their full names?

Richard Beard: Well no. I called Kenny and Donnie, really. I thought you --

Isabelle Chewning: Oh for the tape, we're being official for the tape! [Laugh]

Richard Beard: Yeah. But I called them Donnie and Kenny and, you know, that's what we called them.

Isabelle Chewning: Let me check my questions.

Richard Beard: Well I can remember Supinger's Store there, and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Is that where your family would go to get groceries?

Richard Beard: Yes, and a lot of times the farmers would meet in there on Saturday night.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you go to Brownsburg on Saturday night?

Richard Beard: Yeah I'd go with Dad on Saturday night. Sometimes we'd go to Supingers and then sometimes we'd go up to Whitesells. It was Supinger and then I think later on [Carl] Swope took it over.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. And did people just --

Richard Beard: Mingled together.

Isabelle Chewning: Mingled and hung out.

Richard Beard: And talked about the work they did during the week and all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewning: Did it go on pretty late on Saturday night?

Richard Beard: Yeah. Dad was always late. Mother said she knew when it was Ruritan dinner because Dad would quit work and go. And all the other times he didn't know when to quit.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he a charter member of the Ruritan Club?

Richard Beard: Yeah, and I joined in '43 myself.

Isabelle Chewing: You did?

Richard Beard: A junior in high school.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh really. So were you a charter member?

Richard Beard: No, I wasn't a charter member. But I got a whole lot time in the Ruritans. I just got my 40 year pin last year. But if I'd had the time back then --

Isabelle Chewing: Which club do you belong to?

Richard Beard: Beverly Manor. And Mc [Sterrett] still goes doesn't he?

Isabelle Chewing: He does. He sure does.

Richard Beard: Yeah I talked to him up there at the funeral not long ago for a little while.

Isabelle Chewing: Were you working for the funeral home?

Richard Beard: I work at Henry Funeral Home, when they need help.

Isabelle Chewing: I know I've seen you out there [at New Providence] at a couple of funerals.

Richard Beard: Last week we had one up in Newport, and one at New Providence. I've been helping them ever since I retired in 1990. Well, my first cousin worked – I call him W.F. Strickler. And I was in charge of the Strickler Reunion and I went by one Sunday to talk to him after church and – well, I brought Evelyn along home, the I went back and talked to him. And they had three

bodies there and the other mortician who worked there said, "We need help." And he said, "W.F., your cousin will help, won't he?" He said, "Well I don't think so." But I did. I started and I've been helping ever since. I think some people said that after Evelyn passed away – I think a lot of people think I'm crazy, but it's good to get out.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, yeah. You don't want to just sit around all the time.

Richard Beard: And you get to know a lot of people. Oh, I knew a lot of people in the area from working with the Telephone Company and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Which company was it?

Richard Beard: C&P of Virginia. AT&T. They broke it up in '84, that's the worst mistake that was ever made. Because when they broke it up in '84, your telephone bill doubled. It doubled.

Isabelle Chewning: How did you spend your summers when you were little, you were working?

Richard Beard: Working. I had chores to do. I used to have to dig thistles in the pasture.

Isabelle Chewning: Picking up rocks and digging thistles.

Richard Beard: Yeah and that type of thing.

Isabelle Chewning: How much of your farm was pasture land, and how much of it was crop land, and how much of it was timber and?

Richard Beard: A lot of it was pasture land, and I can't tell you – there was a lot of woodland too. But I do know from the house going west is exactly one mile, it come right over next to the Reese place where you turn up to Pisgah. <inaudible> And going east it was exactly one mile.

Isabelle Chewning: It was a big, big farm.

Richard Beard: Yeah it was a big farm. And the little farm behind us was owned by McManaway [McManama?] and it wasn't too much acreage in there but they always parked there above the barn walked in because it gets so muddy, they couldn't get in through their right of way. Up around the woods. Mr. McManaway [McManama?] come down one day and said, "Dick, I'll sell you this

property for \$3600 today.” And I said “Dad, you know, that sounds pretty good” and he said “Son, it’ll be an awful Depression.” But I made an awful mistake because it sold – a few years later after it sold for \$90,000.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh that was a mistake.

Richard Beard: You’re right, terrible mistake but that’s water over the dam.

Isabelle Chewning: Right, can’t go back and change that, can you. Did you go into Lexington very often?

Richard Beard: Yeah we’d go to Lexington; well see that’s where Dad did all the business, was in Lexington.

Isabelle Chewning: The cattle sales business?

Richard Beard: Well, the farm papers and all that kind of stuff. But they shopped mostly and everything in Staunton.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh you went more to Staunton than Lexington.

Richard Beard: Yeah we went to Staunton more.

Isabelle Chewning: Who lived in the tenant house after you moved into the big house, did you have a tenant farmer?

Richard Beard: No, they rented it out to her brother [Wallace Strickler].

Isabelle Chewning: To your mother’s brother?

Richard Beard: Yeah. And shortly after that it burned down. I can remember what it looked like somewhat, but it burned down. And the little tenant house over there that looks so bad now, the Withrow place. Dad bought that and that big house burned down.

Isabelle Chewning: There was a big house there?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah it was a big house and it burned down. A lot of things happen sometimes. And Dad sold off a lot of timber and everything, over the years. So he worked hard.

Isabelle Chewing: They really did work hard then. Did you get a newspaper?

Richard Beard: Huh?

Isabelle Chewing: Did you get a newspaper or have radio or --

Richard Beard: Well, we had radio, and we got a newspaper, the Staunton paper. Now I can't tell you when we started getting it, but I imagine we got it then, I'm sure.

Isabelle Chewing: What people do you remember most, growing up?

Richard Beard: Well I remember all of Zack Franklin's whole family. Because there was a whole slew of them. And the Slusser family, and the Reese family where you turn in and go to Pisgah.

Isabelle Chewing: Is that R-E-E-S or R-E-E-S-E?

Richard Beard: R-E-E-S-E.

Isabelle Chewing: E on the end.

Richard Beard: And then there used to be a Lotts [Jess Lotts] who used to be custodian down at the church [and lived on the church property]. And then Lowrie, Bud Martin and them, I knew them. And then Dad's brother [Porter Beard] used to own place right across from where Donnie lived [3475 Brownsburg Turnpike], the Martin place there.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: Yeah he used to run a threshing machine and everything. Clover seed huller and all that kind. And then he'd saw lumber in the winter time.

Isabelle Chewing: Did he have a saw mill?

Richard Beard: A little saw mill behind down next to the creek.

Isabelle Chewning: Where was it?

Richard Beard: Behind the house down over the hill, down next to the creek, there was a little creek back there that was just a tiny branch.

Isabelle Chewning: Am I thinking of the right place [49 Harvest Lane], where Raphine Road comes into [Route] 252 [Brownsburg Turnpike]?

Richard Beard: Yeah it's right back there now. I forget those people live down in there.

Isabelle Chewning: I don't know their name.

Richard Beard: I don't even know them either. But it was further back in there and he had a little saw mill back in there. In fact I used to get off the school bus there sometimes. I was a right big boy, and I'd carried the slabs off.

Isabelle Chewning: What does that mean?

Richard Beard: The slabs when they cut the edges of the timber, the slab would be about this wide [demonstrates width] and mostly bark and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you get paid or were you just helping?

Richard Beard: I never remember getting paid, I was just helping him because I was a right big boy.

Isabelle Chewning: Because he was your uncle?

Richard Beard: Yeah he was my uncle, Porter Beard.

Isabelle Chewning: Porter Beard.

Richard Beard: Porter Beard.

Isabelle Chewning: I'd forgotten that, but now I do remember that name.

Richard Beard: Porter Beard had a threshing machine, a clover seed huller, and little saw mill. And he'd thresh around the barns and all this and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, he was busy too. Did he have children?

Richard Beard: No, he didn't have children. But he was –

[End of Side A]

Isabelle Chewning: I have just turned the tape over, and we were talking about Mr. Beard's uncle Mr. Porter Beard and how the three boys [Richard, Kenneth, and Donald] helped him out a little because he didn't have any children. But mainly this Mr. Beard, Richard Beard is the one who helped him the most.

Richard Beard: The one who did the hard work! [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: And I'd asked him about going into Staunton. And you were saying that your parents would leave you in the grocery store.

Richard Beard: Mr. Shultz was working in the grocery store, and they'd go down the street and they'd just leave me a little while.

Isabelle Chewning: While they did their shopping.

Richard Beard: Shopping.

Isabelle Chewning: And if you had to go to the doctor, where did you go to the doctor?

Richard Beard: Well, to Joe Williams.

Isabelle Chewning: So you would go to Brownsburg for the doctor?

Richard Beard: Yeah. Now before he was there, we used to go to Dr. Kennan at Raphine. Now I know you've heard of Dr. Kennan. But when Dr. Joe Williams came to Brownsburg – of course I don't think he stayed but a couple of years, because he brought all four of my children into the world.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: Because he was down here in Staunton. That's how I got-- I knew him before he come to Staunton.

Isabelle Chewing: Well was your family pretty healthy?

Richard Beard: Pretty healthy.

Isabelle Chewing: You just had the normal childhood diseases?

Richard Beard: Yeah and Mother used to, you know, you'd have a cold, she'd mix up a little Whiskey drink and all that to help out. [Laugh] And she'd make mustard rolls for you to put on your neck if you had a cold and all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: Wonder how you did that, I don't even know what you put together to make that.

Richard Beard: I can't tell you, but I know she tied a cloth around, and it was solid.

Isabelle Chewing: But it worked?

Richard Beard: It worked, these home remedies.

Isabelle Chewing: They work sometimes.

Richard Beard: You're right, they were home remedies then, it worked!

Isabelle Chewing: Did she have any other home remedies?

Richard Beard: If she did, I've forgotten.

Isabelle Chewing: Was she a pretty good cook?

Richard Beard: Oh, one of the best.

Isabelle Chewing: Did she have a specialty?

Richard Beard: Well, I can't say she did, but she was an excellent cook.

Isabelle Chewing: Did she bake a lot, she made bread?

Richard Beard: Oh, she made bread. And I remember she used to make a cake and put caramel icing and us children would fuss over the end of the pan to lick it.

Isabelle Chewing: To lick the icing, I remember that from growing up too, my mother made caramel icing.

Richard Beard: So that was some good old days I tell you.

Isabelle Chewing: Well did Brownsburg get kind of rowdy on Saturday nights?

Richard Beard: No, I don't remember that it did. I can't say that it did. But I know a lot of the farmers just gathered in there on Saturday night and shoot the breeze.

Isabelle Chewing: Yep, everybody talk about what they did for the week.

Richard Beard: [referring to his notes] I wrote a few things down here, but I can't even read my own writing.

Isabelle Chewing: Does anything stand out in your memory as something really significant that happened in Brownsburg while you were growing up?

Richard Beard: There's one thing that sticks out. We had a big play, and Miss Ocie Trimmer had it at Newport in the grade school over there. And I don't know why that-- it stuck in my mind all these years and someone jumped down out of the attic or something on the stage and I don't know why that sticks in mind!

Isabelle Chewning: Were you in the play?

Richard Beard: No I wasn't in the play but I was in the audience and I do remember that. And Rosenell Patterson. I remember her real well; she was excellent, sweet lady.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did she live?

Richard Beard: You know, I was thinking it was pretty close there to where those other Pattersons lived. Sam Patterson, along in there somewhere. [She lived at Sleepy Hollow, 2645 Sterrett Road.] Because he worked in Staunton, her husband worked in Staunton. But I thought they lived right close there together.

Isabelle Chewning: So in Brownsburg then?

Richard Beard: Yeah. But other than that I can't remember.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you know any of the other black folks except the Franklins?

Richard Beard: Not really. You probably knew some in there better than I did. Can you recall any names?

Isabelle Chewning: Well the ones I remember growing up were the Porterfields, the Shoultz's and then on our farm [William] "Dude" Haliburton worked on our farm.

Richard Beard: Now I remember him. Of course, I remember him helping Dad some.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you?

Richard Beard: But mostly the Zack Franklins because they just lived out there where I was.

Isabelle Chewning: And then I've heard people talk about someone [named] Pitt Pleasants who worked, I think, at the Strain place.

Richard Beard: Yeah I remember him too, now that you mentioned it.

Isabelle Chewning: But your main interaction with the black folks was playing with Dan Franklin, damming up the creek and swimming?

Richard Beard: All that kind of stuff and we worked in the fields together and all this while we was going to school.

Isabelle Chewning: Did Dan and his brothers work for your Dad, too?

Richard Beard: No Dan never did work for us. They worked down the Wade place. After he grew up and left home he went to work here in Staunton Dan did. He worked for Hugh McNutt. Hugh McNutt kind of went in the building business, or done some work for the State Highway Department or something. That's where Dan started. Now when I built here I roughed in for a bathroom downstairs and then he [Dan Franklin] partitioned off later for me.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: Yeah. Oh, Dan's done a lot of work for me. Dan, he was a good person, and he was active in the church down here and he used to sing in their choir and all that.

Isabelle Chewning: I had heard him sing before at Asbury [United Methodist Church in Brownsburg]. You know, you go to down to Asbury Methodist sometimes if they're having music?

Richard Beard: You've heard him?

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah.

Richard Beard: Yeah he would sing a solo and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah I heard him sing.

Richard Beard: I forget the young lady he married there in Brownsburg. A real attractive young lady and I can't tell you what her name is.

Isabelle Chewning: I don't know her name.

Richard Beard: They moved to Staunton.

Isabelle Chewning: Is she still living?

Richard Beard: Both of them are gone, she died years ago. I think Dan's been dead a couple of years, but he did well. He did a lot of work for Dr. Joe Williams and Dr. Joe got him a lot of jobs too.

Isabelle Chewning: So did your dad have help [on the farm] or did he do everything all himself?

Richard Beard: No he had a hired hand. In fact, sometimes he had two.

Isabelle Chewning: And did people stay for a long time or did they --

Richard Beard: He had one man who stayed for years and years, and he lived up in the woods behind where the old watering trough is between Rockbridge and Augusta County. He lived way back up there in the woods, and he used to walk down to the farm every morning.

Isabelle Chewning: What was his name? That's a long walk.

Richard Beard: Yeah it was a long walk. Norcross. Wilby Norcross. He worked for Dad for years. His brother worked for Dad some, and he lived over in the tenant house. Lyle. The one who worked for the Highway Department, a good man.

Isabelle Chewning: So Lyle worked for your dad before he worked for Highway Department?

Richard Beard: Yeah, well you probably knew him.

Isabelle Chewning: I knew him, yeah, and some of his kids.

Richard Beard: You probably know Lib Norcross and went to school --

Isabelle Chewning: I don't think I do.

Richard Beard: I don't know whether I've helped you much or not.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh you've helped a whole lot! Did your family celebrate Christmas very much?

Richard Beard: Well we had it there at the house.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you go out and get a Christmas tree?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, cedar. And worst thing about it, Mother put it in the fireplace and then lit the thing one day. It about to do it in, too! [Laugh] That caused a lot of work there just in a few minutes. Of course it would have burned the house down if she'd have been by herself. But I remember, you know, money was tight then, but Kenny and I, they got us a bicycle. We took turns riding from the house over to the barn and back. Now it's my turn to ride, I hit a corn cob, and that thing threw me, and I hit the gravel over there at the barn. I was careful from then on.

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Did it do any damage to the bike?

Richard Beard: No, just me! [Laugh] Scarred me up a little bit. When we were tinier, Dad would take us walking down towards the spring and then Mother would holler "Santa Claus has come by!" Well, oh man, we'd rush back to house. So that's the kind of trick he had to play. I've done that too.

Isabelle Chewning: I bet you have yeah, four kids, you've probably pulled a few tricks!

Richard Beard: Anne and Sue [two of Mr. Beard's daughters], one night I couldn't get them to go to sleep, and I said "Now listen. It's time y'all go to sleep, and y'all are not to snoop around either." Well it seemed like between my second and third it was almost the same year, you really had two families. Anyway we made it.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you mother's Strickler people come over at Christmas and Thanksgiving and visit?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, Christmas we'd go to their place. Went to down to Ocer Beard's in Middlebrook. He had a garage in Middlebrook. We'd go down and visit.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he your dad's brother?

Richard Beard: Yeah my dad's brother, he had a shop there and they had a cider mill there in Middlebrook. And then they had a barn where they used to put baled hay, and we used to make tunnels. We'd go down and visit on Sunday and make tunnels and crawl through the bales of hay. We were lucky it never fell in on us.

Isabelle Chewing: Lucky no snakes in there got you, too.

Richard Beard: We didn't worry about that, I guess.

Isabelle Chewing: Snakes didn't bother you?

Richard Beard: Then we went to her [Mrs. Beard's] brother's at Christmas too, and all that.

Isabelle Chewing: The Natural Bridge brother?

Richard Beard: Yeah. So we all got together and I can remember – of course this is going back to the summertime when we were threshing at the home place. Mother cooking dinner for the men. Well, even Mc's [Sterrett] been there.

Isabelle Chewing: I'm sure he probably has.

Richard Beard: And then they ate so much they couldn't work for a while.

Isabelle Chewing: [Laugh] They all had to take a nap out under the trees?

Richard Beard: Almost! My mother was a good cook. Oh gosh, she'd have three or four cakes and Zack Franklin would come in with the hands, and she'd feed them in the kitchen. But she didn't really want to but she did. But anyway, they were nice about it, and she fixed up a good meal, no question about that.

Isabelle Chewning: Then did she make a big meal at night too?

Richard Beard: Yeah, oh yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: So she cooked 3 big meals a day. That's a full time job.

Richard Beard: You're right it's a full time job; you don't do it this day and time.

Isabelle Chewning: No.

Richard Beard: Now like myself now, I just have cereal, and my orange juice and a cup of coffee, that's all I need.

Isabelle Chewning: Me too. We're not working hard like they were working then either.

Richard Beard: You're right.

Isabelle Chewning: You burn up a lot of calories doing that hard work.

Richard Beard: You're right. And I'm just getting over the gout in my big toe.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh I've heard that's awful.

Richard Beard: It's the first time—well, when Evelyn and I went to Branson, Missouri about five years ago, I got it in the big toe. Oh, it was miserable for two days, but this has been for a couple of weeks. I went to the doctor and he said, "I'd rather not give you any medicine for it, if you can stand it." Now I don't know why. But there's something they can give you. But I had a doctor's appointment this morning.

Isabelle Chewning: So you had it while you were down at the lake [Smith Mountain Lake]?

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh that's too bad.

Richard Beard: It was better, but the week before it was terrible.

Isabelle Chewing: I understand that's pretty painful.

Richard Beard: I even helped with a couple of funerals and stuff; I had no business even walking on it, probably. But it hurts, I mean it really hurts. But anyway, I'm better.

Isabelle Chewing: Good. How about your notes that you wrote down, have we talked about everything, the notes that you made?

Richard Beard: Well we did pretty well.

Isabelle Chewing: Did your parents or grandparents have any stories about the Civil War?

Richard Beard: No. Now, Dad was in the Service.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he in World War I?

Richard Beard: In World War I.

Isabelle Chewing: Where was he? Was he overseas?

Richard Beard: No, I didn't think he had to go. He wasn't in long. But he's got a marker over there at his grave. See, he was the youngest of the brothers, there was five of them.

Isabelle Chewing: What were their names?

Richard Beard: Ocer, Dewey, Clarence, Trenton, and Porter and then they had a sister.

Isabelle Chewing: And none of the other brothers --

Richard Beard: Had to go to Service.

Isabelle Chewing: But none of his other brothers wanted to farm the farm?

Richard Beard: They all went somewhere else, Dewey went down here above New Hope and he married a lady from down there and they had a farm. And Ocer lived in Middlebrook.

Isabelle Chewing: And he had a garage, you said?

Richard Beard: He had a garage and had that big house right across from the school -- old Fire Department's there now. And then Porter had his home there close to Martin Place [3475 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewing: Where Ann [Beard, Donnie's widow] lives?

Richard Beard: Yeah where Ann lives. And then Clarence lived in Stuarts Draft, and he worked at the nursery there in Stuarts Draft. Now it's called the Waynesboro Nursery.

Isabelle Chewing: I was back in there the other day, that's huge back in there.

Richard Beard: But he was the manager back then, and he had a little farm over there, too. So I guess them Beards liked to farm.

Isabelle Chewing: They must have.

Richard Beard: And I told my Dad if, you know, if something had happened to Kenny or something, I'd come back on the farm. But I can remember we had a wooden silo and he says "Son, when I get rid of this old wooden silo there'll never be another one here." Because they'd get air in the side and the ensilage would rot.

Isabelle Chewing: Spoil.

Richard Beard: Spoil and he said -- and now I think, what is it, seven silos up there now, I think?

Isabelle Chewing: A lot of those nice blue ones too! Don't they have some of those good ones?

Richard Beard: They're expensive too.

Isabelle Chewing: Yeah, those are.

Richard Beard: Did Mc [Sterrett] have one of them?

Isabelle Chewing: No.

Richard Beard: But they're expensive, they have to crawl up under them things to work -- you wouldn't catch me up under that auger, crawling in there to work on one of them.

Isabelle Chewing: Farming is dangerous.

Richard Beard: I think when Kenny called the fellow [the silo salesman] in Charlottesville, I think it was \$500 just to come over there.

Isabelle Chewing: Wow! Gee, yeah, that is expensive.

Richard Beard: You're right. But I wish we didn't have all <inaudible>

Isabelle Chewing: Sometimes I think if my Granddad saw the thistles that are growing up on our farm he wouldn't like to see that either.

Richard Beard: I know it took a lot --

Isabelle Chewing: A lot of labor, a lot of manpower to --

Richard Beard: I remember taking an old drag out in the pasture field and mowing the cow piles down and spreading them out and this type of thing. But my dad was lucky; he used to get the horses in the pasture field in the morning. And he was lucky finding four-leaf clovers. He'd find one nearly every morning when he was going to get the horses in. I always thought that was remarkable, he'd always be carrying in—"I found a four leaf clover."

Isabelle Chewing: Good eyes I guess. So the horses stayed out in the field, then he'd bring them every day?

Richard Beard: Bring them in.

Isabelle Chewning: Did they work every day or did he rotate them and some of them would have a day off?

Richard Beard: Sometimes we'd work all of them. I can remember later on we used to plow corn, and we had these riding plows, you probably know what I'm talking about. And you work it with your feet, you know. And the horse and I would -- and Dad would start five or six rows up above me and he'd say "Son, watch what you're doing! You're plowing out my corn!"

Isabelle Chewning: Uh oh, that's bad.

Richard Beard: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: How high was the corn?

Richard Beard: Oh it was just like this. [Demonstrates]

Isabelle Chewning: A foot high?

Richard Beard: You had these little fenders on them when the dirt went, and I wouldn't be watching what I was supposed to.

Isabelle Chewning: What kind of horses were they?

Richard Beard: Draft horses, they wasn't no --

Isabelle Chewning: Pretty big?

Richard Beard: They were big horses but wasn't no purebred, purebred stuff or nothing like that. The main old horse we had was named Sam, and he knew how to go. He knew where he was going, didn't even have to bother about it.

Isabelle Chewning: So did your father raise horses, too, or when he needed one, he'd just go buy it somewhere?

Richard Beard: Buy it.

Isabelle Chewing: And did he have to train them how to do what they needed to do?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. Now his one riding horse, he'd trained her, you know, to get the cattle and stuff in. He'd go right out, and the horse knew how to go up to gate and open the gate and all that kind of thing. And he lost one horse, a riding horse. It went over a fence and the pole was sharp and the throat of the horse, killed it. But he liked his riding horses. Well like I told you he had riding pants and leggings.

Isabelle Chewing: So he got really dressed up.

Richard Beard: Oh, he really got dressed up. But mostly he used the – he used to take the horses to the back place and round up the cattle and all this kind of stuff. Like I said, it's a lot of hard work, long hours and that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: You talked about crawling under the bales of hay in the barn.

Richard Beard: When I was down at my uncle's down there at Middlebrook.

Isabelle Chewing: So did you have loose hay or did you have bales?

Richard Beard: We had loose hay. I always liked it in the summer time, when there'd come a storm, and get up in the hay mow with the green hay, and lay down, take a nap. Oh, it was good.

Isabelle Chewing: You could hear the rain, smell the rain.

Richard Beard: Tin roof, oh my goodness, it was something else. Unloading hay, we used to have the hay fork and the rope and pulleys to run over, and I used to drive two horses to pull on that, unloading at the barn. And one time the thing tripped and threw Dad up against the walls of the barn.

Isabelle Chewing: Were you in trouble?

Richard Beard: Didn't hurt him, but he was kind of sore for a good while.

Isabelle Chewing: How many people did it take to do that [put the hay in the barn]? One with the horses?

Richard Beard: I drove the horses, and then he stuck it on the wagon, and then he had a man in the mow to spread it. Of course, Kenny got to where he could help, too. Oh, Dad kept us busy!

Isabelle Chewing: I bet he did yeah. How about the farm animals? Your dad, you said, was really good with them and he treated them mainly when they were sick?

Richard Beard: Yeah he'd give them medicine and stuff himself.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you vaccinate them back then?

Richard Beard: Yeah. My father used to sell fertilizer. And you said [referring to the list of questions] something here about the railroad track. Okay, we picked up the fertilizer in Fairfield, down over the hill from Bud Martin [146 McClure Boulevard]. And we'd pick it up on the wagon, and he had four horses hitched to the wagon. And the fertilizer comes in 200-pound bags.

Isabelle Chewing: 200-pound bags?

Richard Beard: 200-pound bags. And it was Weaver Fertilizer Company, and it was shipped in here on the train.

Isabelle Chewing: And who did he sell it to?

Richard Beard: Well just the people around. Of course a lot of it he used for himself, but he sold it around to everybody.

Isabelle Chewing: Was he a pretty progressive farmer?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: Sort of up on the latest.

Richard Beard: Dad was a good farmer. But now I wanted Dad to get into [crop] rotation. Well see, I was learning this in school. If you rotate then that saves your land from washing and stuff. But he said "I don't like this." But the government would help you on the pay and stuff. Why he didn't do it, I don't know. But anyway, he didn't do it. But I made a note that when you said something about the railroad track. He used to take a big wagon, four horses to the wagon, loaded down with fertilizer.

Isabelle Chewning: 200-pound bags, that's a big bag.

Richard Beard: Well, he must have sold a good little bit because as far as I can remember, we'd make about five trips unloading that thing. And you had to unload and get it off the [railroad] car right away.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you know a shortcut to get over there?

Richard Beard: No we had to go out by the road and over to Bud Martin's place.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you go through Brownsburg?

Richard Beard: Yeah, that's the way we had to go.

Isabelle Chewning: Ervine's Hill must have been-- well I guess you were coming down the hill when it was full.

Richard Beard: I've got [in the notes] about going to Sunday School. [Referring to notes:] that's the fertilizer there. Now I've got a note here where Miss Ocie Trimmer wouldn't let us play much sports because she didn't want to use the gas. We've already covered that. And about working with Zack Franklin and Dan, we've got that [on the tape already]. And I've got a note here about Santa Claus coming while we were at the spring.

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] That was a good trick!

Richard Beard: And that's about all I had down there [in his notes].

Isabelle Chewning: Alright. Well, I really appreciate your time. I really enjoyed hearing your stories.

Richard Beard: You know, a lot of people say "Where is Brownsburg?" I said, "Well we got a Main Street, we got lights." We had, I think it was three or four filling stations and a funeral home, a barber shop, a bank.

Isabelle Chewning: A Post Office.

Richard Beard: Post Office.

Isabelle Chewing: A doctor.

Richard Beard: Dr. Joe Williams. And Harve Matheny, you hear anything about Harvey Matheny? Used to live in a little trailer. Did Mc [Sterrett] ever say anything about him?

Isabelle Chewing: I think I've heard the name but I don't remember.

Richard Beard: Harve Matheny, he used to take warts off. He could take warts off your hand.

Isabelle Chewing: And how did he do it?

Richard Beard: Just a certain time of year he could do it.

Isabelle Chewing: Did he ever do it for you?

Richard Beard: Well, I never had any. I think Kenny had a couple but I never had. But I can remember old man Harvey Matheny. He lived in a little old trailer behind the store there, Bosworth's Store on the left hand side. Well, I can remember when we had a hardware store. I think -- what's the boy who's got the automobile dealership in Lexington, what's the one who got the Buick and Pontiac?

Isabelle Chewing: Woody?

Richard Beard: Woody. Now he had a store there in Brownsburg.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh really? And it was a hardware store?

Richard Beard: I think it was a hardware store.

Isabelle Chewing: Where was it?

Richard Beard: Right there on the corner from Bosworth's Store where the antique shop [Old South Antiques] is.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, okay. Okay. So it was Bosworth's Store before it was Supinger's Store? Or are we talking about different places?

Richard Beard: No we're talking about a different place. I meant Supinger's Store right across from the corner. Then Pete Carwell had a garage back there, I know you know that.

Isabelle Chewning: I remember that. Well, I think I remember that, that it was Mr. Pete Carwell.

Richard Beard: Then you know Mr. Carwell, the house he lived in was ordered from Sears and Roebuck [2669 Sterrett Road]. I know you know about that. What's the lady who bought that and remodeled it?

Isabelle Chewning: Her name was Cathy Coyle, but she sold it, they've sold it and now --

Richard Beard: They divorced didn't they?

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah.

Richard Beard: Now she and her sister opened up a little shop here in Staunton.

Isabelle Chewning: A flower shop, right?

Richard Beard: A little flower shop right where WTON used to be, right above the Trinity Church there. I was helping with a funeral down there one day, she hollered me and I didn't know who had hollered. Because Evelyn and I had been up there [in Brownsburg], and took a tour of the house when they had the tour of Brownsburg.

Isabelle Chewning: I thought that house looked really nice the way she had it done. I thought she'd done a really good job.

Richard Beard: She did a lot of hard work there.

Isabelle Chewning: She did.

Richard Beard: But it's been some beautiful homes built in that area. We've been through a couple.

Isabelle Chewning: I just met the people who bought the house and they seem really nice too.

Richard Beard: Oh someone just bought it?

Isabelle Chewning: Somebody bought it, he's an architect, and they're doing a little work on it. They have moved here from Richmond, and they're renting a place in Lexington now while they work on the house. But he's an architect and he does a lot of work down at Smith Mountain Lake. So they thought this would be kind of a-- he still has a partner in Richmond in the architect firm. But since most of his work was down around Smith Mountain Lake it seems sort of central.

Richard Beard: That's only what about 2½ hours drive and I don't know how he goes.

Isabelle Chewning: I don't know either.

Richard Beard: I usually go 81, then go down but depends on what side he's on.

Isabelle Chewning: But they seem really nice.

Richard Beard: But there's some nice homes up there at Smith Mountain Lake.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh I bet.

Richard Beard: Now I got a couple of pictures around here, Evelyn's sister Annabelle was married to a Jones and they bought a little place and built. It wasn't – it was a nice home, but the first time we went up there, still your dirt roads, you could see how they went; dirt roads all through there.

Isabelle Chewning: Not anymore?

Richard Beard: There's 500 miles of shoreline. And when they started, where the shoreline was supposed to stop, they trimmed back where the water was going to be, they left all the trees and everything. That was a mistake because they floated up and caused some accidents. They didn't

sink down like they thought they were going to. I love going up there and water skiing. I had a hernia operation and I couldn't ski for a long time after that. I tried to slalom but I never could slalom.

Isabelle Chewning: I could barely get up.

Richard Beard: I got up the first time.

Isabelle Chewning: It took me a few times, and I can get up and go around a little bit but I get tired.

Richard Beard: Oh it wears you out.

Isabelle Chewning: You don't think it looks that tiring watching people do it.

Richard Beard: Jones would get out there and start going around in circle. How fast did he go – I could stay a while but I just had to let it go, that was just too much.

Isabelle Chewning: If you can't think of anything else to tell me, I'm going to turn this off.

Richard Beard: Okay.

Isabelle Chewning: Thank you so much.

Richard Beard: I don't know whether it was worthwhile or not.

[Temporary break in audio]

Richard Beard: What Louise [Wiseman Stuart] told you should be straight because she lived right there in Brownsburg. So we started school-- in fact she was my first girlfriend.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh she didn't tell me that.

Richard Beard: She didn't tell you that?

Isabelle Chewning: No, no she didn't tell me that, I don't think she confessed that!

Richard Beard: She didn't?

Isabelle Chewning: No, I don't think so.

Richard Beard: But I confessed!

Isabelle Chewning: Yep and I got it on the tape too!

Richard Beard: Yeah she was a nice girl.

Isabelle Chewning: Yes. She was a lot of fun to interview because she just remembers a lot and she lived right in Brownsburg.

Richard Beard: Well I can remember faces some, but the names slip me.

Isabelle Chewning: She talked a lot about that Mrs. Morris who had the church there in Brownsburg. She had a little Quaker church there. She talked about her.

Richard Beard: Now I don't remember her now.

Isabelle Chewning: She lived in the house that Dick and Betsy Anderson live in now [2671 Brownsburg Turnpike] across from the Whitesells [2664 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Richard Beard: Now Mrs. Anderson is in the same historical group that Evelyn was.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, the DAR?

Richard Beard: DAR. In fact, when they had the service up at the cemetery [Evelyn's funeral service], she was the one that called me and told me what they were going to do and everything. I've met her before and well, I've been through her house and everything. Isn't that the one where Swopes lived at one time?

Isabelle Chewning: Right, exactly. No, Lou had a lot of good stories

[Tape stops momentarily]

Isabelle Chewing: We're talking about silos now.

Richard Beard: Silos. In the fall of the year, the time to fill silos, I used to go to help Frank Patterson and them and fill their silo. Ruth Patterson [Hogshead] would come out and pick the corn off and she would can it—ensilage corn. Now I wouldn't want that type. But now they'd have somebody cutting the corn, and lay it down in a pile. And I was a big boy, so I had to pick that up and load it up on the wagon to haul it into the ensilage where it was ready to put it up in the silo. They used to feed us. Well I helped out at Mc's [Sterrett], his mother [Edna Morton Sterrett] used to feed us there. I'm forgetting now what we were threshing. I'm forgetting now what it was. I know at one time it was—well, this is changing the story a little bit now. We were down with Zack Franklin on the Wade place, they had a flood down there, and the barley got wet. So they put it in the barn and then they threshed it that winter and they blew the straw back in the barn. Now you're talking about something dusty. And I was feeding the machine. One of the boys said "Well Dick you ought to take a chew of tobacco." Well, that's all I needed. I swallowed a little bit of that juice, I got sick as a dog, and I laid out there under the tree, didn't have to work the rest of the day. [Laugh] I don't know why I did it, but it was dusty, just terrible. But it had washed down through the field and you had to wait 'til it was dry and everything. We had some good times, dirty work and all that kind of stuff.

Isabelle Chewing: But you had barley and wheat?

Richard Beard: We had barley and wheat.

Isabelle Chewing: And rye?

Richard Beard: No, we didn't have rye. Now what I'm talking about at Zack Franklin's, he had barley and wheat, too.

Isabelle Chewing: I ought to know this but I don't, what's the difference?

Richard Beard: Between wheat and barley?

Isabelle Chewing: Yeah. I mean why did you have both kinds? Did one animal eat one, and one eat the other?

Richard Beard: It was just a different type of grain.

Isabelle Chewing: Different nutrients?

Richard Beard: Yeah it's just different type of grain. Wheat you make your flour out of and barley was for feed.

Isabelle Chewing: So the wheat mainly was for the people to make flour out of rather than to feed the animals?

Richard Beard: That reminds me about Wade's Mill over there. Dad used to take two horses and the wagon and they'd grind up corn and wheat and make flour and stuff, had them big pulleys all the way up to the top. And that was something to watch too.

Isabelle Chewing: So your mother used cornmeal and flour and everything from Wade's Mill?

Richard Beard: Yeah, we went over there right regular.

Isabelle Chewing: Would you just take enough to last you for a while and then when you needed some more you'd take more?

Richard Beard: Yeah, take it over.

Isabelle Chewing: Was the wheat stored in the granary?

Richard Beard: Yeah. Dad had big bins, oh they were wider than this [demonstrates]. And the bin, I don't know whether it was five or six boards high and about that wide. And stored it in. And Dad used to make his own harness for his horses.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh he did?

Richard Beard: He had a machine; he made his own harness for his horses.

Isabelle Chewing: What did the machine do?

Richard Beard: Well it was just like a sewing machine, sewed your leather and stuff.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he buy the leather?

Richard Beard: Yeah, he bought the leather.

Isabelle Chewning: So he shod the horses and he made his own harness?

Richard Beard: Yeah. And then it was the blacksmith shop if you need to sharpen a mattock and all that stuff, he'd do it right there. Did his own butchering and everything.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you have hogs too?

Richard Beard: Yeah, oh yeah, we had hogs. They'd usually kill twelve or fifteen every year, had to help with that too.

Isabelle Chewning: And then did you sell the meat?

Richard Beard: No we ate ham and shoulder. The side meat, you would take it to Staunton and trade it for bananas. You know, the whole stalk of bananas, you've seen the whole stalk? Well he'd trade it for a whole stalk of bananas and bring them up and hang them in the basement where it was cool.

Isabelle Chewning: And they would last a while?

Richard Beard: Yeah, they'd last a good while. I wouldn't want them that soft myself, but Dad liked them, and that's what he traded his side meat for.

Isabelle Chewning: And so did you salt cure yours?

Richard Beard: Sugar cured it. He had a big old barrel, sugar cured ham and shoulder. It was good eating too.

Isabelle Chewning: I like ham.

Richard Beard: I love ham but I can't eat ham, it's too salty. I don't need the salt.

Isabelle Chewing: I probably don't need it, but boy, I love it.

Richard Beard: You see, I went somewhere not long ago and I said well I'm going try a little ham but it was so salty I couldn't eat it. I've got an irregular heartbeat and I take a Cumidin tablet, thins your blood, and I don't need salt. But I never had any trouble with anything. In fact I went to the Hospital in Waynesboro to a specialist. I couldn't tell it, never could. So I went to a specialist down there and laid on the table three quarters of the day and it never missed a beat. Isn't that something? And that's been years and years ago, right before they moved to AMC. I've been volunteering at the hospital ever since I retired from Telephone Company in 1990. I started at Kings Daughters [Hospital].

Isabelle Chewing: And what do you do?

Richard Beard: Escort, wheel chair, and you know, I'm real proud of this. I was the first auxiliary, you know, Staunton used to have-- they had five different auxiliaries. Then they went to the hospital and they combined them all in one, which was not good. But a couple of years after we moved here, I was first man President of the Auxiliary.

Isabelle Chewing: That's quite an honor.

Richard Beard: It was an honor and you got to go to a lot of the hospital meetings and their outings and everything. I ran it four years. Evelyn enjoyed it too.

Isabelle Chewing: I bet she did, yeah.

Richard Beard: I enjoy helping people, I really do, and that's one thing I still help them at the funeral home. I used to play golf with several of the guys that volunteer at the hospital. Some of them are pretty good; I'm not very good.

Isabelle Chewing: I'm not very good either.

Richard Beard: Do you play some?

Isabelle Chewing: Yeah.

Richard Beard: I'm left handed. I can tee off good, but you never know where it's going after that.

Isabelle Chewning: Did they try to make you be right handed when you were in school?

Richard Beard: Oh no.

Isabelle Chewning: They let you be left handed?

Richard Beard: No, no wait a minute I was right handed but I played ball left handed.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh so you write right handed?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah, I write right handed.

Isabelle Chewning: And is that because they made you do that in school?

Richard Beard: No it's just me.

Isabelle Chewning: Because my dad's that way. He writes right handed but it's because they didn't want -- He bats left handed.

Richard Beard: Well, I bat left handed.

Isabelle Chewning: But he's right handed because they made him in school, be right handed. They didn't --

Richard Beard: My son's left handed.

Isabelle Chewning: And Mary's [Sterrett Lipscomb] the same way, his sister Mary.

Richard Beard: Mary?

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah, but she probably just gave up and she's left handed [except for writing].

Richard Beard: Well now she's down in Sunnyside [Retirement Community in Harrisonburg, VA], isn't she?

Isabelle Chewning: Yeah.

Richard Beard: I haven't seen her for a long time. Is she doing pretty good?

Isabelle Chewning: She had a heart bypass surgery this past spring, she's getting a little better. It's taken her a long time to recover from that but she's getting better.

[Tape stops momentarily]

Isabelle Chewning: We're back on the tape and Mr. Beard remembered a story about the gypsies.

Richard Beard: The gypsies come by the farm right at New Providence Church and they parked right down in the area where you turn into the Wade farm [the intersection of Beard Road and Brownsburg Turnpike]. They stayed overnight down there, and we stayed up and watched the machinery stuff that night because they camped down there for the night.

Isabelle Chewning: And was everything okay?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah everything turned out okay.

Isabelle Chewning: Was it just that one time?

Richard Beard: Just that one time.

Isabelle Chewning: And did they have covered wagons?

Richard Beard: Yeah, and it was just that one time.

Isabelle Chewning: How many of them were there?

Richard Beard: There was a whole slew of them, now I can't tell you how many.

Isabelle Chewing: Could you look out and see where they had camp fires and things?

Richard Beard: Well I didn't pay any attention to that. I'm sure they did.

Isabelle Chewing: Where were they from, nobody knows?

Richard Beard: Nobody knows. Well we didn't know, but they just stopped there overnight.

Isabelle Chewing: Did they get permission to spend the night?

Richard Beard: No, that's just where they stayed. And then another thing I remember: WPA built that highway through there.

Isabelle Chewing: What is it called?

Richard Beard: WPA.

Isabelle Chewing: It stands for?

Richard Beard: Government workers.

Isabelle Chewing: Work Projects Administration?

Richard Beard: Yeah WPA they called it, and they worked on that roadway there or something.

Isabelle Chewing: Which road?

Richard Beard: [Route] 252. They were under government works stuff, I remember that too. I'm just sorry I don't remember everything.

Isabelle Chewing: You remembered a lot, you did really good.

Richard Beard: I just thought of that about the gypsies.

Isabelle Chewing: That's interesting; yeah I've never heard anybody talk about that before.

Richard Beard: Oh yeah?

Isabelle Chewing: No.

Richard Beard: And you hadn't heard them talk about Harve Matheny in there either, did you?

Isabelle Chewing: I remember that name but maybe it was Bud Martin who mentioned him.

Richard Beard: Did he?

Isabelle Chewing: Somebody mentioned him; I can't remember who it was.

Richard Beard: Yeah well I'd written that down.

Isabelle Chewing: But he was a character?

Richard Beard: Oh yeah. Well, I didn't know much about him, but I just know he took warts off your hand.

Isabelle Chewing: Did he have a job?

Richard Beard: I don't know what he did. Mc [Sterrett] ought to know.

Isabelle Chewing: I'll have to remember to ask him.

Richard Beard: You remember to ask him.

Isabelle Chewing: I will. Harve Matheny, I'll remember to ask him.

[End of Side B]

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