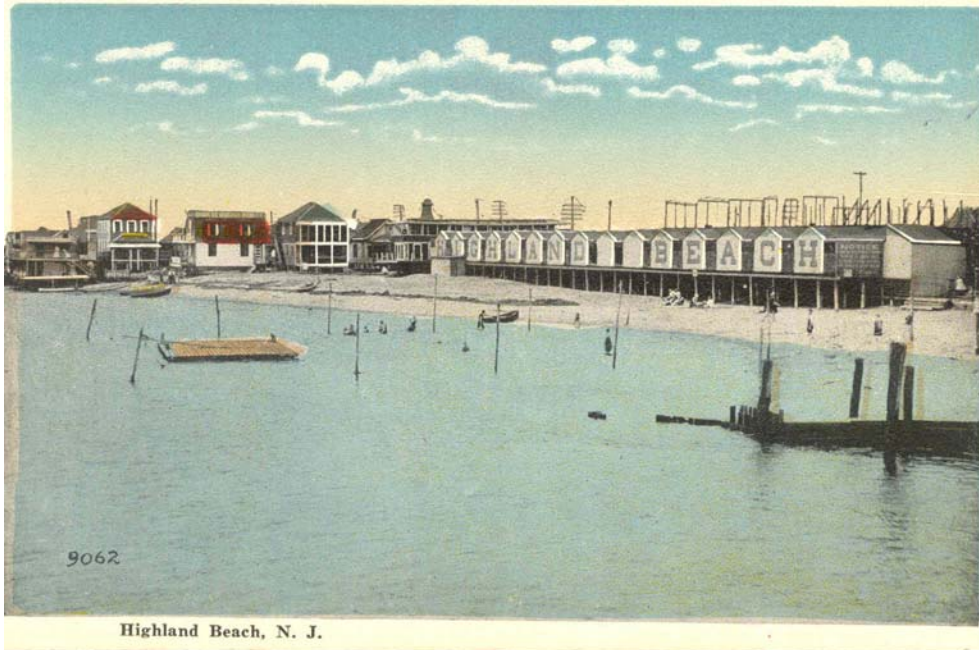


Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, National Park Service  
An Oral History Interview with John Mulhern  
1908-1927

This interview is mostly an explanation of a Highland Beach postcard collection.

Interviewed by Elaine Harmon and Tom Hoffman, NPS  
November 21, 1984, January 3, 1985 and February 27, 1985  
Transcribed by Mary Rasa, 2012



Photos courtesy NPS/Gateway NRA

Editor's notes in parenthesis ( )

(This interview talks about Highland Beach which was a resort area at the southern end of Sandy Hook run by the Sandlass family from 1893 until 1962. The postcards that are inserted throughout the transcript are the ones being described by John Mulhern. This interview also contains good historic information about Highlands, New Jersey. Attached at the end of the transcript is a research report on Highland Beach that explains the history behind the site as well as maps and images.)

EH: Is November 21, 1984 and we have the pleasure of tape recording Lt. Col. John Joseph Patrick Mulhern who has some recollections of Sandy Hook and the local Highlands area. We are going to be describing the postcard collection number 272 is the catalog number which is a series of 24 color postal card photograph from the estate of Paul Koepchem (spelling?). Paul Koepchem was a resident of Highlands, Highland Beach, excuse me 1907 to 1962 and in his estate through Emily Tepia, T-E-P-I-A, the executrix of his estate had collected these interesting photos of the Highlands area and donated them to the museum in November of 1975. We have sitting with us Tom Hoffman, Park Historian and Museum Technician Elaine Harmon. So if John Mulhern will go through the order of the postcard and describe to us what he sees for example in

272.1 of the series. He will be documenting his memories. Incidentally, for just for the record, John Mulhern grew up on Sandy Hook, 1908 to 1927 and currently lives at Shadow Lake Village, Red Bank, New Jersey.

TH: One thing I want to correct or get straight is I think the postcards date circa 1907 to 1962. Did your friend Paul, did he live at Highland Beach at that time?

JM: Oh yes.

EH: Okay.

JM: Oh yes.

TH: So, he was a native down there. Okay. But we'll start with the first postcard and we looking at the north tower of (Navesink) Twin Lights postcard.



JM: As I look at these postcards many thoughts come to my mind as about my living in this area, working in this area for all the years we were living here on Sandy Hook, 1908-1927. The postcards concern themselves principally with that area of the Sandy Hook peninsula at the south end of what is now the National Park Service responsibility of the area. They are all in that general location. The first of the group depicts the north tower of the Twin Lights and shows very clearly the little village of Highlands. As you look closely you can see a number of sailboats out in the water at this point. A bit of vacant land at the left end of the photograph which is the lower end of Water Witch, what is now called Water Witch or what was called Water Witch at one time or another. Highlands has grown up since this photograph was taken and the houses are just closer together. Every square foot of land apparently is being built up there. I often wondered how the town fathers permit this type of construction to go on. But it just seems to go on

continuously and if you ride into the area now down around Conner's Hotel which was nothing but marshland at one time or another condominiums are being built in that whole area down there. Either one or two story buildings but most of them are built on what was swampy land. In fact, some of them are built right on top of the spot where there used to be ponds where we used to go ice skating in the wintertime and also in the wintertime ice was cut from these very ponds and sold around the houses of Highlands or stored in icehouses. Some of the ice was stored in an ice house that was on the Sandlass property and that again is at the south end of the National Park Service property here. The water that can be seen in this photograph in the distance was somewhat shallow and every once in a while the steamboats that came down from New York would run aground on these shoals out there. And of course, they got off when the tide came up and re-floated them.

EH: Do you recall much about Twin Lights as far as who was, while we are looking at that, as who was the keeper in charge or any of the famous anecdotes?

JM: I remember a few of the people who were associated with Twin Lights, one particularly. A man by the name of Lucas who was one of the keepers there. I was very friendly with his son, Earl and Earl Lucas and myself got a ham radio licenses at the same time. It was 1919, and Earl had a great spot for his antenna. It was straight between the north and south tower of the Twin Lights. Earl stayed with the radio business I guess through all his life. And in later years became a chief engineer of WPAT and was the chief engineer of that radio station for many years until he passed away just a few years ago. There were several other keepers up in this Lighthouse. One was a man by the name of Anderson and I never had much contact with him. He was the chief lighthouse keeper in that configuration of lighthouses of those two the north and south towers of the Twin Lights. It was always a pretty spot. The grass in this photograph doesn't look like it is very well cared for but at most times it was. If you look towards the left center of this photograph there appears to be one of the supports or the anchors of one of the Marconi towers which was built just north of the north light and that in that location you can still locate a couple of the anchors that supported the tower which was built on the north side of the north light. In the lower right hand corner of the photograph is a Western Union tower. The tower is off the edge of the photograph but the little building is there is part of the structure that was the home of the marine observer who worked for the Postal Telegraph Company. His daughter lived in that house for many years and only passed away a few years ago. His daughter in her younger days was a teacher in the school at Sandy Hook.

EH: Who might that be?

TH: Pearl Murray.

EH: Oh I see she stayed then.

JM: The girl's name was Pearl Murray and of course her father was Mr. Murray and they ran the Postal Telegraph system there. And when I say marine observatory, you see this

all started long before the days of radio on ships. When ships came into the area, vessels from overseas I guess from Europe mostly they would be reported in by the marine observer at the Postal Telegraph tower and the Western Union Telegraph tower. Both of these installations had land lines that went into New York and they could contact the ship's agents and report the vessel as they went by. And all these men, marine observers kept 3 x 5 cards on which they had manually prepared the silhouettes of all known vessels that would come in and out of New York Harbor and they could tell by the number of bands on the stack of the vessel. They could tell by the number of stacks. They could tell by the number of masts they could tell by just the shape of the vessel what vessel it was. And they knew when to expect certain vessels and they could report them as they passed a certain point going into New York Harbor. All this contributed to providing for tugs and pilots to meet the vessels or to warn the ships that were coming in into their piers along the New York waterfront.

TH: I wonder that were people welcomed up there. Was it that Twin Lights?

JM: The Twin Lights was always opened to visitors. I am not so sure that really many people went up there to visit it. It was up to the keeper on duty whether you were permitted in the building or not. It wasn't a public park as it now is. Again it was up to the keeper whether he let you in or whether he didn't. The lighthouses, as long as I can remember there was only one operational light and that was the one at the south end of this structure. That had a revolving double convex prismatic type lens that turned the power supply by a cuckoo clock type mechanism. A cylinder about 8 inches in diameter extended from the top of the tower to the ground and in it was a weight just like the weights are on cuckoo clocks. This would have to be wound up one or more times a day and the power supplied by the descending weight operated both the clock mechanism and rotated the double convex lens which provided the signaling lamp towards ships at sea. If you stood alongside of this light while it was operating it looked like a beam of light was coming from it and that really was but if you go out 15 miles from shore on the periphery of the circle it was just a quick flash which you saw out there as the beam passed by. So to all intensive purposes it was a flashing light. The light in the north tower was a fixed light and I guess that the only time that would be turned on was when the south tower was out of operation. This Lighthouse carried out all navigation charts as an official operating arm of the government. In later years, it was carried on navigational charts with a notation, privately maintained and of course, the point of that is so that no ship owner is likely to sue now the state of New Jersey if he runs aground because the Twin Lights just happened to be out that night. And of course, they also have today all sorts of navigational aids, Loran and radar and ordinary old direction finding radio equipment. All this kind of thing so the Lighthouse would serve a purpose of maybe their usefulness is questionable. They are nice to have and nostalgically, it's nice to say, well, this is an old lighthouse.

TH: When you lived in Highlands back in 1917 to what was it 1919, was that when your friend was living who had rigged up the antenna?

JM: Yes. Earl Lucas lived up there in the Lighthouse at that time and lived in it for several years after and several years before. I don't know just exactly how long Earl Lucas and his father and family lived at Twin Lights. But we have some other photographs I think or there are some other photographs of the central section of the building which was the principle housing area. And then families lived in the north end of it and then the south end as well as in the middle two story section.

TH: Could you go up there because your house was right down the road from Twin Lights? Could you just freely, we are talking about a time when America was at war, I was just wondering if you could just freely walk up there?

JM: Yes. So far as I know there was no established security or any restricted area signs or any of that kind of business. I think it was sort of a different sort of a situation developed in later years when security became a big thing. There was a fence around the place. There was always a fence around the place but you couldn't get over it or under it for that matter and the gates were always there. The gates are there now. But I don't know if there was any restriction on people going in there. Now there might have been. As some time along the line there was considerable experimentation in the early days for instance of infrared signal. An infrared signal station was built right outside of the north tower and they were experimenting with the infrared. There were other stations established with one in lower Manhattan someplace or Coney Island and they would use this infrared signaling lamp here to signal the lamp on the other side. It was interesting for us to see that kind of thing and the operators would let you stand right alongside of them. There wasn't any problem with that. They also had fancy optical equipment with you could determine the character of the infrared signal that was being emitted across the water. The expectoscope was the name of the instrument and you could see lines in that and it would tell you what the metal was that was being heated like in the tungsten filament of the infrared lamp. And there was some way of determining the efficiency of the whole set up by knowing what type of metal was used in that incandescent lamp that was in the infrared signaling device. That some time later there were other signal experiments carried on up around the Twin Lights. I am sure that when any of those were in operation that traffic was restricted so to speak going through there, but all of these details I don't remember in great detail because after all we were kids then I guess getting involved in devilry at one time or another. If somebody said, keep out the kids, said keep out. If there were no signs that said, "Keep out," the kids probably went in. But I am not so sure there was as much devilry as there is today.

TH: Now looking at the photograph looking at the horizon we don't see too many landmarks like Staten Island or Brooklyn. Today, if we go up there you look and see the Verrazano Bridge and you see all of the skyscrapers of Manhattan. Were there any landmarks like if you would go up there during the period when you lived in Highlands?

JM: The Woolworth Building in New York could be seen. I don't know when that was built. That was there at that time. You could see the gas tanks at Coney Island. They were there from the beginning of time. I guess the Ferris wheel at that Steeplechase.

That had been there almost from the turn of the century. I don't know how long. I could imagine we could see that alright.

EH: How about the parachute jump at Coney Island?

JM: Yeah, well that was more of a Johnny come lately. That didn't come around until I think its World War II or later. It's probably World War II. You know this is when the aircraft became in use and also people knew about parachutes then that they didn't know about before and people think of getting out of planes with parachutes. That was probably an incentive for building the parachute jump. So to give the people some idea of what it felt like to fall out with a parachute.

TH: The parachute jump was built for the 1939 New York Worlds' Fair and after the fair it was re-erected at Coney Island.

(Inaudible)

TH: One other thing I notice in our world today we don't really have peace and quiet. There is always an airplane because we are in the metropolitan area with all these big airports there is always a jet plane or some kind of airplane making a sound up in the sky. Was it quieter or did you hear other sounds like early automobiles or would an old bi-plane fly overhead when you lived in the highlands or was it pretty quiet around?

JM: It was very quiet. I guess the only noises that were strange and they really weren't strange would be the train coming in and the train would whistle as it came through crossing along the way. There would be once in a while target practice at Sandy Hook and you could hear the guns go off. Once in a while there might be mine practice and conceivable you could hear the mines go off.

TH: The underwater mines.

JM: The underwater mines. But as far as general noise is concerned, I don't think there were really very many. Automobiles were I guess no noisier than they are now. And there were some around World War I of course there were automobiles and trucks and there were probably some of those that weren't very well maintained mechanically and they probably created some sort of a racket with it. In the very early days, of course when we were first around these parts there were a number of horse and wagon type things that were used around the Highlands. Some of the rich people that lived up in the hills would come down to the railroad station with the horse and buggy like John Van Kirk and the Trask family and probably the Hartshorne family. The people went long distances in those days in horse and wagon. Old Mr. Lindsmyer from Navesink, they used to come into Sandy Hook and pedal fresh vegetables here with a couple of horses and a wagon from here to Navesink is probably the best part of 12 miles more or less and everybody knew when he came. He was the man that had the fresh vegetables.

TH: Did he have like a little farm in Navesink?

JM: Yes he had a farm. He grew everything he sold on Sandy Hook I guess and the place is still over there. He had a few cows. I don't know if he sold any milk on Sandy Hook. He might have. But they had a few cows over there. One of them was called Strawberry and the other one was it could have been Huckleberry. I don't know. (laughter)

TH: Names like that. But I guess it was really like an isolated place back then. Down in Highlands, looking down in Highlands was the main business fishing and clamming at that time?

JM: The main business was clamming.

TH: Clamming.

JM: There was some business in fishing but I don't really think there was that much, certainly not much on a commercial basis. There were a few fish stores in the Highlands. Mrs. Mount had one at the corner of Valley Street in Highlands. It was right down where the public bathing beach is now. Mrs. Mount had the place down there and a couple of sons Bernie and Harry, and Bernie Mount is still alive. It's strange to me. He was older than I am but he is still making it. They were all clam diggers. They called the Highlands "clam town." Very simply put, "clam town" because that was what they did there. They clammed in the Highlands and the upper part of the Highlands was known as, "goat hill" and I don't know if there were ever any goats up there but that's what they called it. We called it, "goat hill." That was where the upper crust was. That was where we lived.

TH: The place, was it in the summer time a resort community?

JM: Highlands was bursting at the seams in the summertime. Just as soon as the kids got out of school in New York or Newark or Jersey City or Patterson or wherever they would be down to these little shacks that they owned in the Highlands. And there were a few entrepreneurs the Highlands that owned a few strings of cottages they were called and they were pretty well maintained. There was some downtown, right down near where those first apartment type buildings were built in the Highlands there as you come off the bridge in the Highlands. You go about four or five block north and there are some apartment houses in there on the left side of the street. Well, there were little cottages on the right side of the street at that point or just about the place now where the playground is, where the new community playground is. There were people by the name of Maguire that had a number of cottages in there and there were others up on hill in the Highlands in front of the slope of Twins Lights and they would be at the right side of this picture if you look at them. There were a couple of rows of those cottages up there. Nice spot for them. They were well maintained and people came to them that only occupied them in the summer time. On the front of that same hill up along this way to the right side of this postcard there were homes that were owned by wealthy people. There was a family by the name of Lichtenstein that owned a great big house on the east side of Portland Road. The very spacious ground that was always maintained like a movie scene. They were



always in great shape. It was a great big space. After the Lichtenstein's probably lost interest or died off or whatever the place became a restaurant and it was as an Italian restaurant and when that sort of petered out or lost interest or whatever then it became a nursing home and I haven't really looked at that in a good many years or even looked at the spot to determine if even any remains of the Lichtenstein mansion is there or not. Right across the street from the Lichtenstein mansion there were several other big homes. One was owned by Nelly McHenry Webster, a floradora girl, size three shoes. And her son lived right next door, Jack Webster and his wife (inaudible) Campbell Webster. Both of these families, mother and son and daughter-in-law were also Shakespearian actors and traveled all around the world and every once in a while when they were off on a long trip they might send me some little thing. They might send me a postcard. Some times where they would come home from trips they might have something for me. And we got acquainted with them by doing such things like weeding their garden and this kind of business. We knew them for a long time. We still have some of the things they gave us including a tall silk hat with a leather case and a silk handkerchief and a felt pad for cleaning the tall silk hat, still have them. Jack Webster and company and then there was a Rueff family and that comes down to the present time. The Rueff Oil Engine Company was a Mercedes Benz forerunner. They developed the oil engines the diesel engines that we call them in Germany and they were out here, the Rueff family. They had a magnificent big home up there on the hill and they always kept in great shape. They had a couple of children. The son was called Bobby and the girl became I forget at the moment. Anyhow, they were people really of means and when World War I came along they were suspected of being German spies and I don't know what action was ever taken on that kind of business but I don't think the Rueff's lived in Highlands after World War I. Just what happened, I really don't know but they were up there. Of course, one of our people from up here Florence Adair's mother lives up there in that very same area. Just about a half a block or maybe a block south of where the Rueff family lived. Their house is further up from where the Rueff family but all those things were meticulously kept.

TH: So, it was well to do a lot of well to do people living in Highlands.

JM: And it was farther around Portland Road where you went through the gates to the Hartshorne estate and you also went through those same gates to get to the Trask estate. Once you got in on the Hartshorne property if you kept in going in a north westerly direction you would get to the Hartshorne family holdings and if you went off in a southwest direction after going through the same gate you would get into the Trask family and that is back down around where Battery Lewis now is. Down around the south end of the Highlands, Middletown Township I guess it is.

TH: Called by the Army the Highlands Defense Site. It was just taken over this past July, the official transfer from the U.S. Government to the Monmouth County Park System was this July 1984. That was the Trask Estate back in there and also behind that is the Hartshorne Woods.



JM: And some of those Hartshorne houses are still there. I believe the Hartshorne house is still there and one of the outbuildings a large barn like structure has been converted to a residence.

TH: This is where we went that time that overlooks the Navesink River.

JM: Right. Wigwam Road.

TH: Wigwam Road and Claypit Creek, Navesink River. Now these rich people, they came down seasonally? The came down to... Okay, the train was perhaps the main transportation, mass transportation by train, also by boat? Would it be steamboat?

JM: Also by boat. They had side wheelers that came down into Highlands and also to Long Branch and Red Bank.

TH: Were there a lot of trains and boats running at that time?

JM: Oh sure. You have a schedule of the trains in the Museum.

TH: Coming through every day.

JM: Many trains came down this way every day.

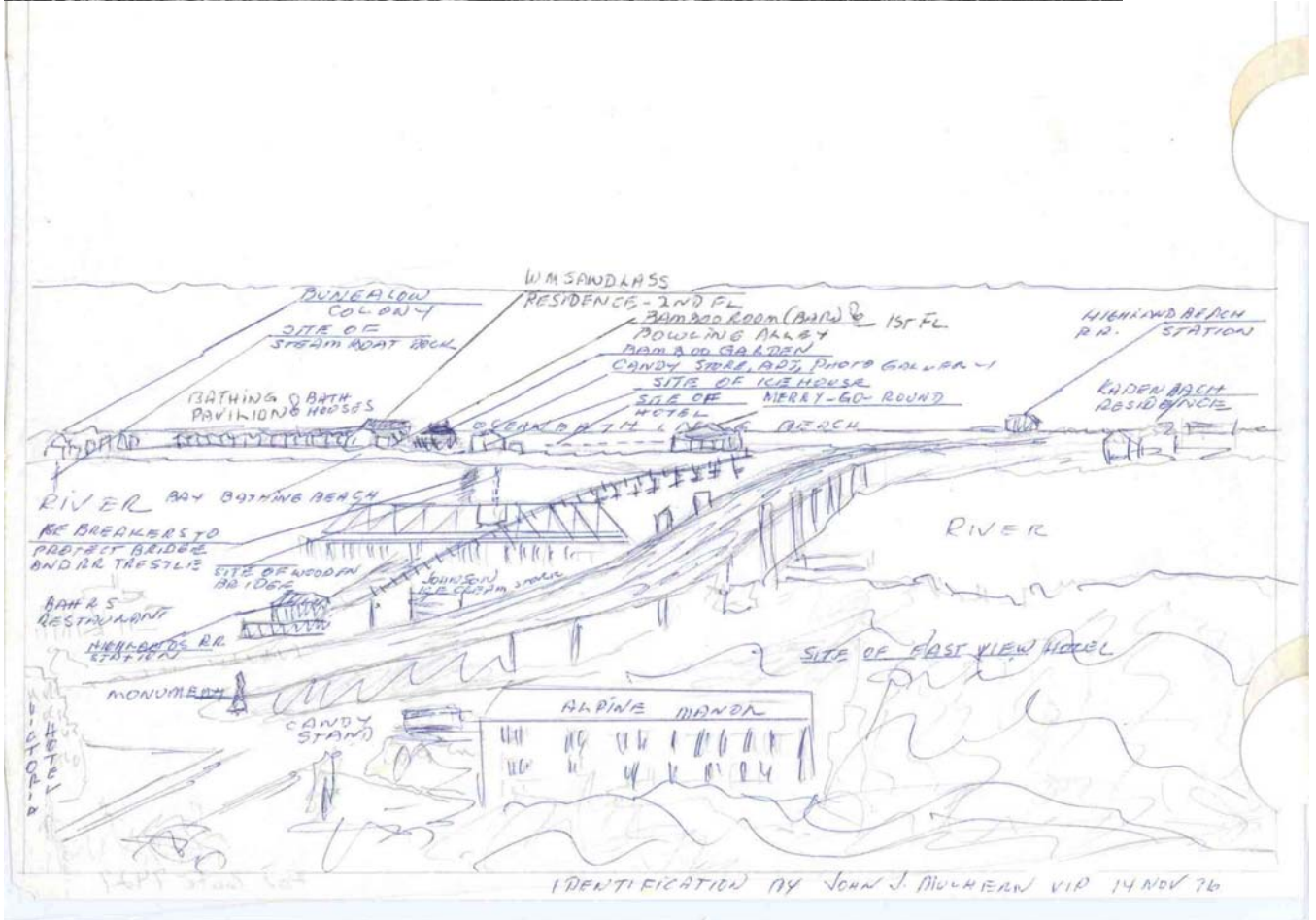
TH: That must have been neat to hear the either the train whistle or the steamboat whistle.

JM: The train whistle in the wintertime on a cold winter's night at 11 o'clock when that train came in that was eerie but not eerie railroad it was just an eerie sound.

TH: What, the long blast?

JM: The all the crossings and then the bell. You know, all the locomotives had that good sized bells on them that you could hear from some distance.

HIGHLANDS BEACH, C. RR. N.J. SWING BRIDGE AND NEW HI-WAY BRIDGE - SCENE FROM TWIN LIGHTS  
HIGHLANDS, N.J.



John Mulhern drew a key to the above postcard in 1976.

TH: We'll move on. We will go to the second postcard that shows where it looks like we are standing right up there in front of the north tower of the Twin Lights looking down at the bridge. Now this postcard was probably, there is no date on it but it does show the 1933 bridge, the present concrete bridge that is there but along side of it on the north side is still the older bridge with what was that the turntable, the drawbridge. We could see things there like the going from the left right here, the far left of the photograph where Fort Hancock's main entrance would begin and there's houses, the bathhouses saying Highland Beach. Maybe you could tell us a little bit about maybe any adventures on that old bridge.

JM: Well, in the photograph of course, are all of the cottages at the north end of the Sandlass property. The people didn't own the land. They built cottages on them and they paid rent to Sandlass for use of the land in there, then the bathhouses and that whole arrangement. In this photograph, you can even see the remains of that old railroad trestle. Originally the old railroad trestle was built on poles like telephone poles and that was there for a good many years. Then some time along the line and I don't remember the date or that kind of thing it was decided that was a little unsatisfactory. So the Jersey Central, Central Railroad of New Jersey decided to put concrete piers under the trestle and they built these cofferdams at pre-arranged spots engineered to take care of all the concrete that was poured in there and it was quite exciting or a thrill for us kids to stand on the old bridge and look down in the cofferdams which were originally going to become the supports for the railroads. As far as the traverse for the railroad was concerned it remained just about the same for when the concrete foundation was put in as it was when the poles were there. The poles took care of that. The trestle went into what was known as Highland Beach Railroad Station which I don't seem to see on this photograph. It may have been eliminated in the meantime. Anyhow it continued on down the beach to all those little villages and sections that go all the way down to Long Branch. The drawbridge that you see here is in the open position at the present time and every time a boat came through that bridge had to open. When the bridge was in the closed position the trains would go across the bridge on tracks that were provided for the purpose and alongside going east or on the south side of the bridge there were two roadways that vehicles could go over and on the north side of the bridge there was a walkway that people could walk over, pedestrian traffic and that continued on across the bridge to the Highlands. And in this photograph there is a building that appears to have a tall smokestack on it. The building at this point and that's where the old bridge came in. The old bridge came in right alongside of the Sandlass icehouse. That I think is right there. South of these the new bridge for instance there were a couple of buildings. One of which originally was on Sandy Hook and it was moved out to that spot for a fella by the name of Cattonback, Cary Cattonback who now lives in Middletown Township and still comes up to this part of the country. Then there were several other houses along that strip of land. I think there were three houses that moved out of there or were demolished at the time that the new highway was built.

TH: You mean the 1933 bridge there? Yeah, for right of way. We have discussed that before about that bridge about what it did to Highlands. It took away a lot of people now

that they had direct access at what is now Route 36. People could go very quickly right over that bridge and go down to Sea Bright. Right, John?

JM: That's right and that's of particular interest to the chambers of commerce of these little villages along the way. And not only was it the Highlands but villages farther north along that roadway felt the impact of this rerouting of the road, the rebuilding of the road and the improvement of the road. There were those who were sorry to see the traffic passing through their town and there were some that were probably happy to see them passing through their town. But it provided a lot of problems for the Highlands people in the matter of traffic control, policing the area, parking and the things that are living with us today. They have the very same problems today. They are accentuated by such things as Gateway National Recreation Area that is here at Sandy Hook. The people want to park their cars in the Highlands if they can't get into Sandy Hook. There are all kinds of associated problems that always go with the building of a new roadway, always.

TH: That made it a lot easier because with the new drawbridge you had as you mentioned it was really for the railroad for trains to go over yet they still had vehicular and pedestrian walks there and you know with the drawbridge constantly opening and closing with boats going back and forth it made it a lot slower than you know trying to get across the river than even with the bridge you have now.

JM: It is the mainland side of the bridge, this little business in here that is the continuation of the bridge that came right across from Sandy Hook. The it is interesting to remember that the railroad, the trains crossed the vehicular roadways on the bridge right after, this was a fixed arrangement but as soon as you got past this part of the drawbridge then the vehicular road when in that direction.

TH: Split.

JM: Then that road in that direction so there was always that kind of a little hazard too.

TH: It was literally an X arrangement and that really slowed everything down.

JM: Yeah. You could also skid on the railroad tracks if you went over the bridge on a wet day.

EH: Wow.

TH: Were there ever any accidents or anything? Nobody in the drink? (laughter)

EH: The radio announced that the Verrazano Bridge is 20 years old today.

JM: Is that right?

EH: And think of how the Verrazano changed and developed Staten Island.

TH: 1964.

EH: They mentioned that today is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and that is another instance of massive change after that bridge, the same thing with Highlands Bridge and any kind of development.

JM: Well, that bridge hasn't done any favors to Staten Island.

EH: Yes. That is true.

TH: We are looking at the third postcard in that series and we are still are in front of the North Tower but our view has swung towards the narrow neck of Sandy Hook. The narrow beach and the south central part of what today we call Plum Island but years ago it was called Island Beach from looking at old maps. But we are looking, we have a good view of Highlands in the foreground and there's a lot of boats anchored out in the Shrewsbury River near the Hook, near the beach there and we can see the train tracks running on the narrow neck of Sandy Hook. Did you ever get out that way? Hang out on the south end of Sandy Hook in that area?



JM: Did I?

TH: Yeah. Did you ever?

JM: Sure. At Sandlass. I worked there.

EH: Did you know Mr. Sandlass? Do you recall briefly?

JM: Oh sure.

EH: I have been trying to phone the daughter and son to try and tape record them also and perhaps seeing these historic photos from Sandlass

JM: Did you have any luck?

EH: I called them twice and the day I phoned she was moving believe it or not. (Tape stops and restarts.) Can you describe Sandlass tribe?

JM: (Inaudible talking)

TH: Yeah, because we are going to try and hit the Sandlass Beach and a lot of the postcards. I am wondering about it being so narrow down there. They had the railroad, right?

JM: Yeah.

TH: Running there. Can you describe that? Was there a road there?

JM: Yes.

TH: Okay.

JM: I can well remember the road that went from the Guardhouse in Sandy Hook to Highland Beach and it was a one lane gravel road. And you can still find some of that gravel in that area yet of which that road was built. During World War I, a one lane concrete road was built on top of that. It was wide enough for two vehicles but it was just a single strip of concrete I guess un-reinforce concrete because it wasn't there anytime when it started to fall apart. Of course, it was beaten by the hard rubber liberty trucks that used to traverse the thing from Sandy Hook to the Highlands and where ever it might be going. And then that was on let's say the bay side of this isthmus and towards the ocean on the ocean side of this roadway now is where the railroad was from oh I don't know a quarter of a mile south of Plum Island I guess almost all the way to the guardhouse at Sandy Hook now was on a trestle. There was a trestle that the train used to run on. Because during the winter, every once in a while during the winter the sea would come up the low rock wall that was there. There was a sea wall but I think that if it was 8 feet higher than the surrounding terrain it was a lot. So frequently the sea would come across there and every once in a while it would inundate, wash away the gravel road so that the only access to Sandy Hook at that time would be by train across the trestle and I don't remember the details of them repairing the road or that kind of thing. And it was many, many years later that the rock seawall that you see now was built. Again for many years that train came over that trestle of the old guardhouse to the Sandlass Beach. The train ran several times a day. A couple of trips in the morning to bring the people to work who worked at the Ordnance Proving Grounds down here at the point of the Hook and

then to take them home in the afternoon and the shopping trip every day at 1 o'clock that would go to Highlands and be waiting there so that when the kids were coming home from school at Leonardo they could come back home around 4 o'clock or whatever time it was and then there would be a couple more trips with the train to take the workman from the Proving Ground out of Sandy Hook. Principally the Proving Ground back and forth to the Highland and from wherever else after that. When you see all these small boats out here there were several sailboats and a number of powerboats. That was no longer in the channel. That was on the east side of the channel where the water intended to show off a bit. The channel at the time that this photograph was taken was close in on the west side of the river. You can see all of those docks that had been built out there for this kind of thing. It looks like, this photograph almost looks like the location where Jack Bahrs now is.

TH: The lower right hand corner.

JM: Yeah.

TH: Yeah. Very close to it. Right down there.

JM: I don't see the railroad tracks in this picture but they are closer in.

TH: Yeah. I think the tracks are hidden by all the trees in the foreground here. But the, what's interesting is what you are saying about the Army gravel road and the railroad bed. That wasn't protected by any seawall?

JM: Yeah, there was a low seawall. As I said I don't think it was 10 feet above the level of the normal ground at that point.

TH: So, there were rocks there but much lower.

JM: Oh yeah. The rocks had been there forever. The rocks were probably put there when the Atlantic and Seacoast Railway or whatever it was had their termination down there at Horseshoe Cove and went down the beach to Long Branch. They were probably put in at the same time as the jetty was put in.

TH: But you still mention about the wash overs?

JM: Yeah...

TH: You still happened where the water, where the ocean waves would come over.

JM: It would probably, you know the water would probably splash over the rocks under the place of the trestle and if it got high enough some over there. The sea never beat in on the road.



TH: Okay. Looking at this view you mentioned all those little pleasure boats, sailing boats and power boats. That's still Army property. Would anyone be allowed to land down there and picnic or anything or were they shooed away by the soldier guards?

JM: No. You see Sandlass' property was right in here.

TH: Yeah, right.

JM: Starting right in there. And Sandlass maintained those couple of docks out on his property. Showed in one of the other photographs the steamboats coming in and that was a convenient place for these boats coming to tie up, anchor or whatever and get out stopping or whatever they wanted to do. I don't think that anybody objected. That was supposed to be a private wharf there that went down between the Sandlass cottages from the road down to the water but it was never shut off that I know about. I don't think that the people relished strangers docking at their dock but if they docked, what are you going to do.

TH: Would those folks in those pleasure boats that we see in this postcard view, would they be like doing everything from fishing to swimming there or clamming would you think? Or were they just laying around?

JM: I think they would just come and stay on the boat. They all had little tenders of one kind or another. There was a (inaudible) on that one. They would come ashore and go bathing. The Highlands wasn't the kind of place to go bathing. You know the people who would come on boats or yachts like these, they wouldn't want to rub elbows with the unclean Highlanders. (laughter) Clam diggers.

TH: Would anyone like picnic or camp or do whatever on what is now called Plum Island?

JM: No.

TH: Really? I wonder if the Army ever used it for anything?

JM: No. The only use that I ever know that the Army had for that was when in 1927, 1926 when the Army built a sub-station on Plum Island. And that was when Plum Island was connected to the mainland. They had a substation on Plum Island and they built the isthmus on there to the mainland and that's where they had a high tension pole line coming in. that tied into another line of poles that were on Sandy Hook proper. Many years later that whole operation was discontinued and I don't think we were (inaudible). Anyhow they decided to eliminate that business. You see the power line had to come across the river as submarine cable from the Highlands at the foot of Miller Street.

TH: Underwater from Highlands.

JM: Submarine cable.

TH: Under the Shrewsbury.

JM: And came out to the substation that was on Plum Island and went onto the pole line that was built on the isthmus and came into Sandy Hook.

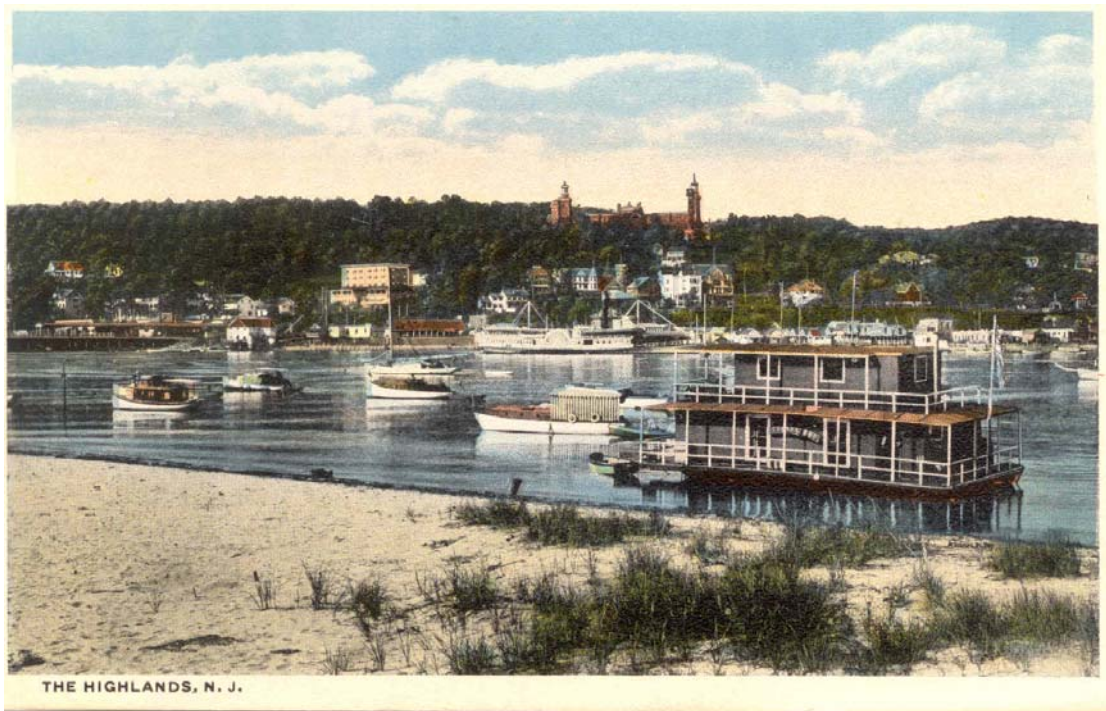
TH: And you have always told me this about when they filled in the area between Plum Island and Sandy Hook was about the time when you graduated college, about circa 1927?

JM: Yeah. 1927. 1926 I think they started that work. I think 1927 they discontinued the generating station at Sandy Hook and the use of the substation out at Plum Island and they built a substation right alongside of the water plant. Then sometimes subsequent to that we saw that record, that they took all the machinery out of there, the generators and the steam engines and all that kind of business and then they built another sub-station the big one that they have now at Horseshoe Cove at the water plant both indoor and outdoor type. That was 1927.

TH: Our next view is really interesting. We are right down on the beach. We are right near would that be....

JM: The south end of Sandy Hook.

TH: The south end of Sandy Hook. We are standing on the beach and we are looking back up. We are looking at Twin Lights and all of Highlands there. What is interesting is right on the beach at Sandy Hook is a houseboat.



JM: Can you read the name on there?

TH: On the houseboat?

JM: Yeah. Is it *Nancy May*?

TH: Oh it is so small I can't even make it out.

JM: Get a magnifying glass.

TH: It's kind of very blurry and broken up by the dots on the taking up the color on the postcard.

JM: (inaudible)

EH: It's hard to tell. Really hard to tell.

TH: But there was a house boat named *Nancy May* down there?

EH: We are looking at the 4<sup>th</sup> postcard by the way in this series.

TH: There's pleasure boats and that squarish, very square houseboat.

JM: Well, there were a number of those around. There had been a number of those around from time to time. When I spoke about *Nancy May* that was one that was owned by Captain Dows who was the captain at #2 Life Saving Station and his wife was *Nancy May* so they called the house boat *Nancy May*. He used to take that down to Highlands every year and put it at the south end of Sandlass Bathing Beach. The houseboat used to come right in here at the north end of the bathhouses but right in there. The houseboat used to come ashore and Captain Dow's rented space from Sandlass to park that boat.

TH: There is the dock there like the, you mean the wooden bathhouse that with the words Highland Beach on it.

JM: Yeah. Yeah.

TH: Well, there's the dock at the north end. That was probably we are looking at skipping real quick to postcard number 16 shows the dock going out in the water.

JM: Well, the houseboat was on this side of the dock on the south side of the dock.

TH: Okay. South side.

JM: It didn't stop at the dock. Well, there were a number of those anyhow and Captain Dow used to keep the houseboat at Sandy Hook at the Coast Guard Station probably down here at #1. And he used to move that back and forth every year spring and fall until

one year when he had it out at Sandlass' place and the Coast Guard said he couldn't move it again. It was unseaworthy even for a trip from there to Sandy Hook. So then he rented space south of the bridge and just south of the bridge where Arnold Hess lives over there south.

TH: Okay.

JM: Anyhow, he pulled the boat up on the beach there right this is Arnold Hess' house down here someplace.

TH: Just off, yeah.

JM: There is another name for that restaurant. Anyhow...

TH: Well, it used to be called down sea but now...

JM: Yeah. Dow Sea Beach and it used to be called Dow Sea Beach because of Captain Dow.

TH: That's where they have the go go girls now. Remember you pointed it out yesterday? That's the restaurant.

JM: Yeah, well that's right next door to Arnold Hess. They pulled a boat up on the beach there as far as they could get it and left it there for that winter and then later maybe the next year or sometime subsequent to that escapade they moved that houseboat up much closer to the road. Right it was up almost as far as Hess' house was you know or maybe off Hess' porch and looked into the Dow Sea place which had a reputation for being not a bad place to have a drink but maybe a good place to bring a bad girl. You know that kind of business. That went on for a long time and *Nancy May*, *Nancy May* who owned the place down where the cottages were was always suspected of providing a resting room for people who needed it for an hour or two. (laughter) That's the *Nancy May*. Anyhow, as a result.

TH: Did he stay in the Coast Guard? He was serving...

JM: He was a captain of #2.

TH: #2, Spermaceti Cove Coast Guard Station, the Life-Saving and then Coast Guard Station. But that was his quarters like his floating house boat, the house boat the *Nancy May*?

JM: He must have had a house over here someplace. There wasn't any quarters down at the Life-saving Station.

TH: But he owned the houseboat.

JM: He owned that houseboat.

TH: Oh okay.

JM: Or *Nancy May*. Anyhow, this is an interesting photograph for a number of reasons for the different types of boats that you see here. The different types of sail boats, the different types of little boats like this which might have had a little steam engine in it or might have been a gasoline engine. And this is another sailboat and apparently the mast is out of that. The next group in the background there which is a (inaudible) sailboat and a pretty good size there and its little tender and here is another one of these things which might have been a sailboat. It looks like a sailboat hull but there is no mast on it which is entirely possible and these little rowboats were to get from the *Nancy May* or this houseboat into the shore. This must be Sandlass' beach in here or it could be part of Sandy Hook.

TH: Tied up right at Highlands in a side wheeler steamboat in that picture. It would just be north because there is the bridge over there Bahrs is right in here now very close to where that steamboat is tied up.

JM: That must have been the Patton dock. And over here must have been the Red Bank dock. That's at the Jackson House, the Jackson Hotel not far from well just some little distance from the Conner's Hotel. But it is up at that end of Highlands like the foot of Miller Street just south of where the Highlands Public Beach is now but south of there is where the (inaudible).

TH: The other the Patton line came in where the wharf is now?

JM: About there, no, no that's where the Red Bank boats came in. They came in just a half a block from Jack Bahrs Restaurant.

TH: Yeah just north of the Bahrs restaurant.

JM: Yeah that's where the dance hall, that the Kruse Dance Hall used to be too.

TH: What's the name of that?

JM: Kruse, K-R-U-S-E.

TH: You mean they would get right off the boat and have a good time?

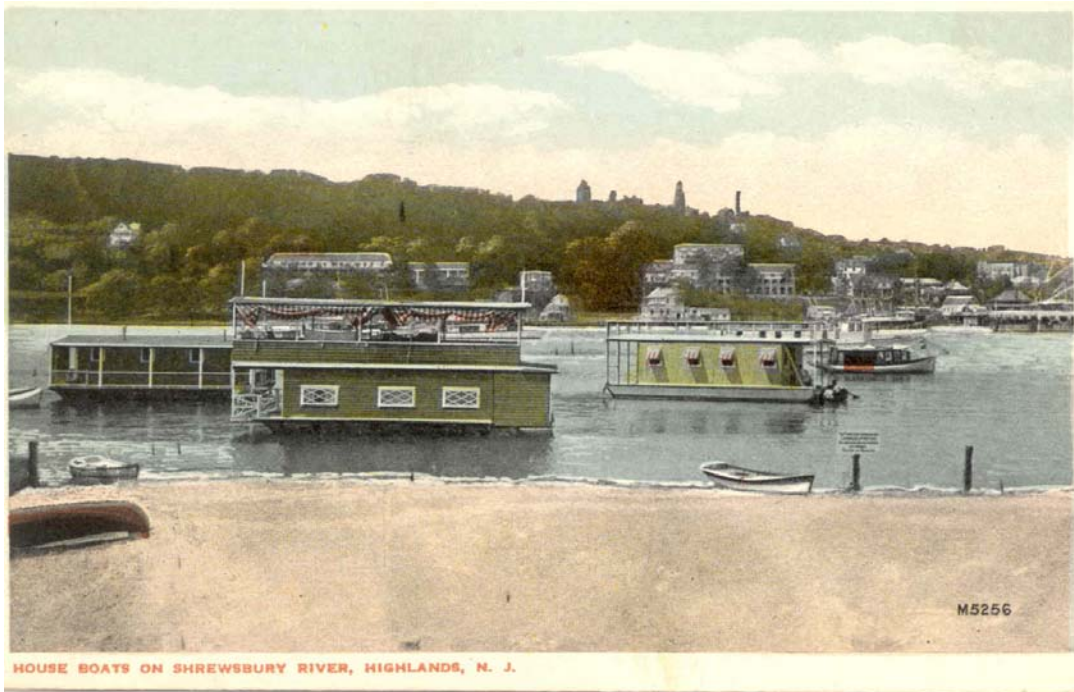
JM: This must be it. This must be Kruse Dance Hall, right?

TH: Ah huh, with the red roof just to the left of the steamboat.

JM: Jack Bahrs is just down in here. Of course Jack Bahrs only ran a pile driving business at that time, pile driving and dock building business. He didn't have a

restaurant. As time went on he sold hot dogs or something like that as well as the gasoline he sold at the end of the dock that came out. This was to keep his work boats. Is that the same boat?

TH: I am going onto number five, postcard number five because this is way down the beach. Number four would be way up the beach and this is now we are almost opposite yet a little bit south of the Twin Lights up on the hill and now the bridge is over to the right. Here's hotels, you can see large houses and hotels in Highlands. We are looking at view number five now.



JM: Yeah this is south of the bridge.

TH: Yeah. South of the bridge but we are still on the beach looking west towards Highlands and Twin Lights and here are some really fancy houseboats. Much larger and fancier looking and colored green, tinted green.

JM: I see that. There is another one of the little launches there just east of the hotel.

TH: Would that be a steam powered launch?

JM: It could well be. This almost looks like a little (inaudible)

TH: Yeah. You mentioned the East View houses just below Twin Light.

JM: Well, it's just below the Hotel Martin, the Hotel Martin or later it was called the Alpine House and...

TH: It burned down.

JM: This is the, that is interesting. Now we have McHenry's house. You know where McHenry lived?

TH: That one house the white house by itself on the left side in postcard five.

JM: Yes and Jack (inaudible) house was right along side a little kind of a green color and the Rueff house was right in here. You probably can't see that because the front of the Rueff house was with dark shingles like weathered shingles and the only bright spot on it was the columns that supported the roof of the porch and they were about 10 or 12 inches in diameter I guess and always varnished. Everything was spit and polished at the Rueff house. That's where they lived.

EH: You call it Roof, R-O-O...

JM: R-U-E-F-F.

EH: R-U-E-F-F. The German family you were discussing. Okay.

TH: Those very pretty house boats, would those be once again seasonal people you think.

JM: I would imagine so. People only used those things in the summer time.

EH: It was probably an annual migration I would suspect.

JM: Probably so. I never looked to see (inaudible).

TH: But they are made of wood. That would be a lot of I think maintenance but somebody would have to be rich enough to afford it.

EH: What was the Webster Family about? I mean was there any reason why you remembered the house, the Webster?

JM: Yeah. I used to, yes, I used to work in their garden weeding their garden. Sometimes I used to cut some of their grass but these were great big estates. That was a big job for me. I only cut the grass close to the house. Somebody also did it elsewhere also that was in the early days of radio. The Jack Webster was always interested in things scientific so we talked about radio. He knew about my having a license back in the hill. We lived right across the hill. So I agreed to build him a crystal radio. So I had the necessary where with all, probably a Quaker Oats box to wind the coils on and another box to wind the equipment in and another place to mount the crystal detector and all that kind of stuff. Jack Webster thought that was great. Here he could now listen to broadcasts and he was one of the very few people in Highlands that even had a crystal set. That might have been 1918, 1919. Anyhow, we remember them very well and for years and year we used to hear from them from the Webster family. Mr. Webster, Mrs.



Webster would write every once in a while and Mr. Campbell would write every once in a while and those Webster's are buried over in that little church in Navesink in that stone church.

EH: All Saints.

JM: I have seen them buried over in that graveyard over there. But they were, you know they were English people and they spoke like English people and everything was just perfect.

EH: Proper.

JM: And they always dressed, fit to kill everyplace they go. And whether they were home in their houses or whether they were out on the street they were always they looked just like they stepped out of (inaudible) and that was all three of those people. And Jack's mother Nelly McHenry Webster was about she might have been 5 feet tall. She might have been five feet tall. She was about as round as a whiskey barrel. She was really quite a buxom little lass.

TH: Rotund.

JM: Yeah. She had built in water wings of great size and the other side of her was the same kind of thing. You know they used to draw pictures of the school teacher. This is the front view. This is the back view. Or don't you remember those things. Anyhow but Nelly McHenry was always on the go even when she became quite elderly she got out and walked and she was the one that had the size three shoes. Here all this weight on little shoes that were about this big. And you see here go down the hill of the Highlands down towards the railroad station walking down to the Post Office in the Highlands which was down about where Shrewsbury Avenue and Bay Avenue get together. That's where Adairs' Post office was.

TH: May I have something or say something here? It seems at this time in history people did a lot of walking to do their little errands and things, correct, in the town. That's how you remember certain people because the car was just introduced to American society. It was more of a novelty, correct when you were a young boy?

JM: Ah huh.

TH: And to get things done here people went by horse and wagon or they walked. So you get these impressions of the different town characters walking around.

JM: You spoke about the Highlands in the summer time as a summer resort. Yes, in the daytime the Highlands in the summer time you could hardly find a place on the sidewalk. And people didn't push each other off either. They were reasonably well behaved I guess grownup and kids for that matter. And in the night in the evening it was the same arrangement. The streets were just crowded at night and the place was lit up like a

Christmas tree. At night, everything in Highlands would be lit up. Now there weren't many neon signs at that time. That was just a little bit before the advent of neon signs. But there was all sorts of incandescent lighting around in all different colors too and all kinds of little businesses along Bay Avenue. I can hardly believe they are all gone but they are. And you know shooting galleries. Places where the wheel of fortune, places where you could throw a ball in at a doll or something that was in a little backdrop. You hit the doll you got something for it. There were even Orientals running those shops. There was a couple of Japanese that had a little shooting gallery south of the bridge in Highlands but it was a shooting gallery with an air gun and it fired a cork and the corks would hit some sort of an object that was on the shelf there and you got a little doll for that.

EH: Cupie doll, wasn't there a Cupie doll type of phase?

JM: Yeah. That's right. But I remember seeing those guys there and being friendly with them now how that happened I don't know but I was. When I would be coming home from Sandlass' at night I would have to walk across the bridge and up the hill there over up and around towards the lighthouse back where we lived on South Peak Street up there and every once in a while I'd stop there and have some chat with them and there was another game that had a bunch of springs that went up through the ceiling in the place and they were tied to little objects down there and a whole lot of places down there where you could pay five cents to pull three strings or whatever and you would think that you were watching your string or whatever to get what was over there and when you pulled it something else came up or nothing came up. There were several hot dog stands along there and several ice cream cone stands right at the end of the bridge, the west end of the bridge. GB Johnson, Grandon B. Johnson had a very lovely ice cream parlor, not an ice cream store, an ice cream parlor with the little wire chairs and the fancy little tables and it was right out over the water on the south side of the Highlands Bridge. Then farther up on Bay Avenue on the east side of Bay Avenue just past Kruse's Dance Hall, now you know exactly where that was, right past Kruse's dance hall there was another GV Johnson Drug Store. That was a drug store and an ice cream parlor. And all this kind of things were up...

TH: Right on the Main Avenue?

JM: Right on the Main Avenue. Right across the street from that Johnson Drug Store was the place where the coal yard was in the Highlands. And it was also a place that sold beer and I guess liquor there. And when they brought the 16-inch guns into the Highlands they brought them in the siding right there on the railroad and then they trucked them off there. Now, they got them on the hill where the guns were finally set. That was right in that very same spot and that's also right in back of that apartment house right there on the west side of Bay Avenue. It's about two or three blocks from the bridge going down. And the set back is just a short distance from the road. All that mechanism went on back in there. The coal yards and the liquor store and the ice. There was an ice facility there, an ice house of some kind where you bought it twenty five cent piece whatever it was.

EH: A block you mean?

JM: A block of ice not the 300 lbs cake but a small little piece. What else? And the merry-go-round. There was a merry-go-round there too. In that exact spot where those apartment houses there was a merry-go-round there.

TH: Which apartments?

JM: There's about 6 apartments there. They are all tied together. They are about 2 ½ stories high or whatever they are right there. All of those things are right there. We could go out there and put your foot on the spot where those things were if you want to do that.

TH: When we drove down Bay Avenue one time you told me that it was tree lined. Was it tree lined? Was a section of it, was it or was it lined with all these stores?

JM: There were all these stores along there. That's all there was. There wasn't any place for anything else.

TH: It's so different now.

JM: Even the tailor shop, Phil Harbor's Tailor Shop in Highlands was there since World War I. Still there and Phil is still running the thing, one of the Harbor's, the best tailor in town and farther down the Highlands it was all the same kind of thing. It was just one little shop after another on Bay Avenue including Jerry's (inaudible).

TH: What about the two, these hotels or restaurants, John?

JM: Yeah. This is the East View Hotel. That's a very long place and it had a big open pavilion on it so if you wanted to go there and bring your own lunch that was okay with them. But you know it would be nice if you bought a pitcher of beer there too, can of beer or something. The Hotel Martin up here that was a real swank place. That was about a three story building. A great big approach, a great big semicircular driveway that went up to the place and that was where the wealthy people came to the Highlands. Not the ones, you know, the didn't have homes and over in here was the Victoria Hotel and the Hotel Monmouth and Monmouth House and the Mount House and then down the you can't see it in here and maybe its not even in this picture but there was another building in here. It might have been this one the Brach Cottage. That was a boarding house type thing and that building is still there.

TH: Was there, you mentioned the sweeping driveway of the, what was it called?

JM: The Hotel Martin.

TH: The Hotel Martin. Was there anything elegant about them? Was it good accommodations? The best in the...

JM: Oh sure. That was the best in town. The others were second rate compared to that. The Hotel Martin you were it. It had to be.

TH: All these things have disappeared.

JM: It burned down.

TH: Yeah but I meant the truly golden age where you had these nice place to stay. You had all these things going on Bay Avenue.

JM: Oh sure.

TH: Was it once again was it the bridge that changed things? What changed things in the town?

JM: Prohibition. That was the downfall of the Jersey shore. All these people who were called gangsters or bootleggers or whatever they were infiltrated the area. It was a good place to have your agents. It was a good place to have your boats come ashore. It was a good place for adventurous types of people that liked to be bootleggers. And every once in a while you know there was a shooting on the beach here down in the Highlands and down in Long Branch and over in Keansburg and places like that and nicer people don't like to rub elbows with that kind of thing. In support of these kinds of activities there was another group of people that moved in all these kinds of things at one time or another that people just didn't like to rub elbows with. And the nicer people just stopped coming a lot of them to this place and the people who lived around here for years and years a number of them will tell you basically it's the same kind of thing. And there may have been other. See the new road and all that kind of business was long after the days of going fishing all this road development and the new bridge and all that kind of stuff. Because when was prohibition? 1924, 1925 or 1926?

TH: 1920.

JM: 1920. Anyhow I know when I was going to college we used to go to speakeasies once in a while and that was 1923-1927 in New Brunswick and elsewhere.

TH: John, you didn't?

JM: Yes. I did.

TH: Because everybody else was.

JM: We used to go to the smoke shop over in Red Bank where all the boys and girl could dance and have a great time. And that was just south of the railroad tracks in Red Bank

going south down towards Shrewsbury down that way and that was a hot jumping place. And the building is still there. Now, I think it is a cloth store or a clothing store or something. Just as you cross the railroad tracks it's on the right side of the road. It's not the pancake shop.



TH: We are going to move onto Number 6 and that's a familiar site to you.

JM: Yes this is (inaudible). The picture is the location of the Sandlass business office and the exclusive bathhouse and the place where people could sit for free and watch the bathers. These doors that you see up here are really private bathhouses. That is somebody leased them for the season or some such thing.

TH: You mean on the second floor on that balcony up there.

JM: Yeah. On the lower floor was Sandlass office space back in here back from there on into the street was Sandlass office space. All the bathhouses that were down from the left of this installation they were they could be rented daily. Anybody along the line could rent the bathhouses for the day and there was nothing very fancy about them they were just big enough to squeeze into I guess. Maybe two people could squeeze in. They were all they had duckboards you know for the floor so if you came in wet the water would go down through the floor.

TH: This is the place you are talking about the long wooden series of bathhouses with the Highland Beach painted on the...

JM: Yes. Highlands Beach.

TH: Okay.

EH: How big are the letters in reality. I have always wondered what is what would be the dimension of those big letters stretched across that.

JM: You can measure this woman that is standing right here on the sand right under the edge of the bathhouse and it looks like she could be about the same size as the letter.

EH: Five feet maybe.

JM: Or six.

TH: About six feet. Six foot tall letters and maybe almost maybe as wide because they are pretty wide too, pretty big.

JM: Well, they were well painted. They were nicely, it was a nicely painted sign. You could pick out somebody else standing on the edge and with your calipers measure how high the letters were.

TH: Yeah.

JM: Good idea. This place where the people could sit was covered so you know in the high sun of daylight the sun wouldn't be shining on you but as the sun sets of course the light would come in under the eaves of that thing. And it had a use at night time. The boys used to take the girlfriends there at nighttime. That was a great place to go with the girls.

TH: The back porch there.

JM: Yeah. Nobody be likely to bother you. And there really wasn't very much light there. You didn't need much.

TH: Young people didn't do that years ago, John (laughter)

JM: I know they did. I read all about that in books. This is part of the bamboo, this is the outdoor section of the Bamboo Garden. This was all open. There was a roof over it.

TH: Was that like a porch too?

JM: It was a pavilion.

TH: A pavilion.

JM: It was a big thing. I think a hundred people, oh a hundred people or more could be seated in here and in the summertime they would. The Bamboo Garden was just a dance hall. That's all that was. I don't remember that there was anybody that ever sat inside the Bamboo Garden but they would have the dancing inside under this great big cupola

that was over the thing and then go outside and sit at their table out here on this pavilion in back of the thing for drinks or eat or what they do. Although, it wasn't basically an eating thing. It was basically a drinking thing. If you wanted anything to eat in there you either had to go across the street to the Sandlass Hotel which was across the bridge just across the width of the bridge to the other side there to the kitchen at the restaurant but people didn't eat they just sat there and drank and never got drunk. You know they would just sit around. People came...

TH: Social.

JM: Only nice people went to the Bamboo Garden. The hoyballoy didn't go there.

TH: That could be one of my questions. To your knowledge down there did any of the soldiers from Fort Hancock stop there or was it off limits?

JM: I don't think they did. It wasn't off limits but I don't think they went there. They went to the other place. They went down to where Johnson Sandlass had the bowling alley and the bar and tables around the place and I suppose that 50 people could be seated inside the place and where the barroom was in that.

EH: Were you the person that mentioned some time ago to me that the Bamboo Room was so named because Mr. Sandlass bought a truckload of bamboo.

JM: A railroad car load.

EH: A railroad car load, ah, of bamboo at one time.

JM: Big bamboo.

EH: Yes. You were the person. Do you remember what year that was vaguely?

JM: Oh it was maybe 1900. It was before my advent to that place in 1911 because it was a going concern then.

TH: Was it named after the décor of that bamboo?

JM: Yeah. Bamboo Gardens. Everything inside of it was bamboo.

EH: Right because we have a couple we have a black and white postcard from Rose Ryan showing the interior of the Bamboo Room which is all vertical bamboo you know cross sections around the whole wall.

JM: The Bamboo Room is not the Bamboo Garden.

EH: Yes. I know but was that was the main reason for the name that it was given.



JM: Also that bar where Johnson Sandlass had where people could sit and where the bowling alley was that was the called the Bamboo Room. But it wasn't called the Bamboo Room when we were there. That's after the fact thing. That was probably after the Bamboo Garden was eliminated.

EH: Did the Bamboo Garden actually have you know the bamboo in it. I mean was it surrounded in a...

JM: Oh sure. That constituted the walls and it went all the way to the ceiling except for these little towers, you know. Now this is the Bamboo Garden is where these are. This is Johnson Sandlass' office this thing here.

TH: Okay wait. We are skipping to postcard number 12 and the building on the right is Sandlass' office.

JM: Yeah. His office is on the first floor right there.

TH: Okay, the first floor, right there and then the building in the middle. Now that is the green building with two peaked roof towers on either side is the Bamboo Garden.

JM: Right. There are four. You can't see them all.

TH: Okay, yeah. Two in the back and two in the front. Okay.

JM: And then the next thing is the candy store.

TH: The candy store is on the left and right in the middle of this postcard number 12.



JM: Yeah. That's right. This whole thing is the candy store. From there to there.

EH: Is that Horton's.

JM: What's that?

EH: Is that Horton's.

JM: Yes.

EH: Okay, Horton's because I remember you telling me.

JM: Ice cream used to come down on the boat from New York on the Patton boats. That was the nearest boat to us.

TH: And here on the left hand side is a sign, this is on postcard 12, "Bamboo Garden. Rector's Famous Band Now Here for the Season. Cabaret and Dancing."

JM: Every Saturday night that place would be bouncing at the seams too. Saturday night I would have to work, excuse me, the ice cream store to 1 o'clock, 8 o'clock in the morning to 12 or 1 o'clock the next morning. And then Sunday, I had to be back there at 8 o'clock in the morning and work 'til 10 o'clock at night.

TH: Sunday?

JM: Yeah, because on Sunday, every Sunday there would be excursions that would come from Jersey City or Elizabeth or Bayonne and there were ten or twelve car trains would come in there. 10 or 12 car trains. They would back in on the siding there and all these people would get off that train and they would all run into the bathhouse or the ice cream store to the bar.

TH: Now, this is what I want to, these are people from city area.

JM: Yeah Bayonne, not from New York.

TH: Was there any feeling like there is now, especially with the park the National Park, you know, the people from the city are going to come down here, was there an anti-feeling back then or were they more welcome?

JM: They didn't have the same kind of people. They were all white.

TH: There is a definite prejudice against the ferry boat system in Gateway.

JM: Once in a while a colored person would come in, but it was the Elks, the Women of the World, the Redmen, the Shriners', Independent Order of Odd Fellows IOOF, Knights of Columbus. These are the kinds of people that came in, the Redmen. These are the kinds of people that would come down on excursions and they would bring their own, they didn't bring any dogs. They didn't bring and blaring radios with them. They might have brought squawking kids but they didn't. The whole family would come and they would rush into the place and they were just as acceptable as anybody. And they would be on the beach or they would be in this place that I talked to you. You can eat your sandwiches or you can buy fish or whatever you want to do a restaurant type of thing. That big, this building right in here that was all open and this was the hotel and the kitchen was down at the end of it. And this is the ice house that our friend Rose Murray seems to know so much about. Right alongside of it was Colemar Photo Studio. Not Sandlass Photo Studio, Colemar Photo Studio.

TH: We are looking at, we skipped to postcard number 23 about the things you are talking about. I think the best thing to do is we get the postcard 23 we xerox this and then pencil in which is which because you can see very clearly all the buildings and we will Xerox that. I want to get back to by the way when people came down they had to pay. They either came mostly by train, right?



JM: Oh yeah sure.

TH: Or by boat. You had to pay a fare to get down and then like to use Sandlass' Beach. You had to pay also, correct, to get on the beach?

JM: No, to use Sandlass' bathhouse.

TH: The bathhouses were the charge.

JM: There was no place to get dressed except in the bathhouses. So you had to hire the bathhouses.

TH: Roughly how much would the cheaper, the wooden...

JM: Oh, he really used to nail the people. (laughter)

EH: How he made his fortune I guess.

JM: I suppose he might have even charged five dollars which was a raft of money.

EH: For day use?

JM: Yeah.

TH: Back then? Was this for a family or for a person?

JM: He rented, you could put as many people as you wanted in the place but it was only about they were about four times the size of a telephone booth I guess or something like that. I can just picture these things like I am in one right now, you know. The thing about this square about this size I guess.

EH: About 3 feet by 3 feet maybe?

JM: Probably something like that and a little bench where you could sit.

EH: Would that be called a cabana or what was?

JM: Bathhouse.

EH: Bathhouse was the term.

JM: That's the only thing the only name for it then.

TH: What intrigues me or let's pick a year like 1911, 1914 for someone to come down like I say I was born and raised in Newark. So, I am coming down by train from Newark. How much would this cost me back then?

JM: I don't know. It used to be about a dollar.

TH: To get down by train.

JM: Yeah.

TH: And then I would rent a...

JM: Bathhouse if you wanted one.

TH: If I wanted one. And then if I didn't bring any lunch with me I would come in and have you make me some...

JM: Or you would go to that restaurant over there that big pavilion thing and you'd probably have a ham and cheese sandwich with no butter. You know, and the bread sliced thin and the ham sliced thinner and the cheese sliced thinner and that would probably cost you 50 or 75 cents.

TH: Was that above the average price?

JM: Oh sure.

TH: That was a lot of money.

JM: A bottle of soda water, you know, these bottles of water now this size they were 50 cents then. In the interim, you know, those things have been a dime. At that time too, a bottle of soda like that was worth about a dime. But Sandlass got 50 cents for them. And he never got less than 10 cents for an ice cream cone. Everybody else was selling ice cream cones for a nickel. Not Sandlass, ice cream soda's were twenty cents made by a professional. (laughter)

TH: Was this because he was a seasonal business?

JM: Certainly.

EH: What was he like? I mean we really have not described Mr. Sandlass, was it Henry Sandlass?

JM: William.

EH: Okay, William Sandlass was the main entrepreneur. What was the family tree if you could quickly?

JM: Well, his mother, they were German. His mother, his little old mother used to come down there in the summer time too. She lived in New York. The family, his mother lived in New York. And she was like that other girl that I described, Nelly McHenry Webster. She was only about five feet tall but she wasn't as big around as Nelly. Anyhow, she was very inquisitive, very authoritative and very everything. She was really a smart little old lady. In summertime on Sunday, she would be around all the time. Very often she would be running the hot dog stand or she might be selling orange juice or grape juice. You know mostly water and color, dishing it out in very sanitary fashion. Johnson Sandlass, Bill Sandlass was the boss. Johnson Sandlass ran the bar. He ran the bowling alley and he ran the Bamboo Room I guess it was called at that time, that kind of thing.

EH: Was that a brother, Johnson?

JM: Brother, yes.

EH: Johnson.

JM: And Helen, Sandlass' wife who was Sandlass' second wife, she was on everything all the time. I think she knew everything that was going on in that place. She could walk like she was jet propelled. She was a terrific person, Helen Sandlass. Then there were other, Helen had a couple of sisters, Marie and a couple of others and they used to be around on weekends. One of the sister's husband worked for American Express or something. He had a money business on weekends. But your question about the Sandlass family, I knew little old Mrs. Sandlass and I knew all the rest of them and Bill was the operator of the place. Now Bill Sandlass was about 6 feet tall and slender. He always was strictly business. When he was walking around that place and whatever else

was going on Bill Sandlass was there. In the summer time, invariably he was dressed in a cream colored Palm Beach suit. He always wore a straw hat and he was always smoking a cigar. He would walk around there like King Tut. He was the boss of the show but he never said anything. He never said anything to anybody. He never told anybody what to do. Never. He would get a hold of his wife Helen and he would say, well, you know, you better do something about cleaning the windows in the ice cream store. Or you better do whatever, and Helen would do that. And as I said before she had her fingers on everything that was going on in that place. I don't think I ever saw Sandlass socializing. I don't think he ever did with anybody. And every year, the family would come there. Sometime during the summer, the rest of the family would come and I think there were three or four brothers and they were all doing something worthwhile. One built pianos as a profession. One worked out in the railroad yards out in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Another one I guess mostly racehorses. Sandlass owned a big estate in Virginia and every year Bill and Helen and Henry would go down to this estate for the winter where they had racehorses and other horses. They were racehorse interested. But you can see all these people on the beach in Highlands, Highland Beach in the summertime going around where they were but you could also see Sandlass because he was a good six feet tall and he always wore this straw hat. As I said before he was always dressed like (inaudible). He was really, really a well dressed individual. Sometimes if the family was visiting and a meal was concerned and they were going to eat they would eat, they would eat in the Sandlass apartment which was up over the bowling alley and up over the bar and up over all the rest of the thing and across the street from the Sandlass' office over there at the bathing pavilion, that' what they called it the bathing pavilion.

EH: Was he considered quite wealthy?

JM: He was considered quite wealthy.

EH: Imagination would say yes.

JM: He didn't own the property. (This is explained in the report at the end of the transcription.) He leased the property from the Central Railroad of New Jersey. It was a 99 year lease. He, I often heard him speak about it. I shouldn't say often but I heard it mentioned the 99 year lease or maybe his wife Helen would know about such things or Johnson, Johnson Sandlass who was the most, (inaudible) He was like the rough and tumble member of the family. He did all this business with the bar and all that kind of stuff. I think he would sell all this kind of stuff that they would concoct. They would make it out of probably grape juice and grapefruit juice and orange juice or something. They always had a big glass jar about this big on this little counter where they dished out all this stuff. And there was always a great big chunk of ice, you know, block of ice. Probably came from those ponds, you know, over at Conner's Hotel at Water Witch after the people skated on the ice.

TH: Hence the famous ice house.

JM: The famous ice house.



TH: That's where they kept the ice.

JM: I know all about that ice house. Anyhow...

TH: What happened there at that ice house? (inaudible)

TH: There's something else that happened there.

JM: I sweated more than one time there on weekends getting the ice out of there. It was about a three... Do you know what an ice house looks like?

TH: Not really. No.

JM: Well, this building was about, well I guess it was about 30 feet square I would say.

EH: 30?

JM: 30 feet square at least I would say 30 feet square and it was about three stories high made out of wood. Thick walls insulated with cork and it might have been more than 30 feet square well whatever it was anyhow. And they would get the ice. This ice would be cut off the ponds at Conner's Hotel, Conner's ponds as it was called. Did you ever see anybody cut ice?

TH: With the saw.

JM: With the two handle saw.

TH: Yep. I have seen it.

JM: Like this.

TH: I have seen people do it yeah.

JM: And the ice would be cut in cakes, the same size cakes that come from the ice plants where they manufacture ice. A three hundred pound cake about standard about that high I guess and about that wide thick just like the Knickerbockers' Ice Company does to sell to all the peddlers in Brooklyn. But anyhow they would truck this ice bring it in wagons over to Sandlass and they had a block and pulley on a beam when you come out of the house, the ice house. So they would hoist the ice up and swing it into the ice house and put it on the bed of cork and they would stack the cakes up just like this and if there was any space between them the cork went down between the cakes of ice. That kept them from you know out of contact with each other, preserved them. And after that first layer was filled then they would put another layer of cork in there maybe this thick.

EH: If they didn't have cork would it fuse together?

JM: Granulated cork.

EH: Yeah. Would it fuse is that it?

TH: The ice would come together and fuse?

JM: Because when you wanted to get the ice you had to sweep the cork away. Anyhow, this was just until the icehouse was full 'til the end of the season when there was no more ice. And then they might buy it from an ice plant and fill up the rest of the building with that. And then when you wanted ice you had to go in there. Sweep the cork off and grab a hold of the keg of ice with ice tongs. You know what ice tong are. And then pass it onto a rope. Pull it up like this. Get it out to the beam and lower it to a little cart, a little push cart. You know a 300 lb cake of ice was a lot for me to haul up like that.

TH: For anyone.

JM: I was a littler at that point in time. Littler than now. Then they lowered this push cart which was this little thing about four feet long or whatever it was. It was about that wide. It had a couple of iron wheels. Wheels about this big in diameter. You wheeled this ice cake around to whoever wanted this. The bar or the ice cream store or whoever wanted it in Highland Beach. It was all part of the Sandlass operation. And that would go on until all of the ice was gone and there was usually some left at the end of the summer because there was sufficient insulation in there. It didn't melt. They usually had an ice man to do this kind of business. A guy who worked there, George was there for several years but George might be drunk that Sunday morning, you know, and you needed ice so you, Johnny Mulhern, you were going to fish the ice out of the icehouse.

TH: The ice would be used to keep the drinks cold?

JM: Sure to put the ice in the drinks.

EH: All your food though I mean.

TH: Food. Preserve food

JM: For the icebox. Sure. Ice cream, chop up the ice and put it in the container where you serve the ice cream or in the wooden tub and two of these five gallon cans of ice cream would come in a wooden bucket with salt and ice in there. Break it up and pack it down. Keep the ice with enough salt on it so it would lower the temperature of the melting ice to the point where it would freeze the ice cream. Keep it frozen. That's all from the ice house out there. That wasn't funny on hot summer days getting that ice out of there.

TH: It actually was cool in there.

JM: No hot.

TH: Really?

JM: Reasonably hot. No air moving and the ice had all covered with cork you know. Usually there were hot places with no air moving.

TH: By the way, well I just wanted to get back to the restaurant. What about seafood? Wasn't seafood a big thing to eat because you mentioned a ham and cheese sandwich? You know, I wouldn't come from Newark all the way down to Highland Beach for a sandwich. I would come down for some fresh seafood. Wasn't that a big thing?

JM: A big thing was, the big thing was broiled bluefish except the bluefish was always mackerel. And bluefish and mackerel resembled each other in their general appearance but they sure don't taste the same. As a matter of fact, broiled mackerel tastes better than broiled bluefish. It's not that oily. It tends to be oily but it's not that oily. And it's a different, and the mackerel, you know, don't get that big you know. The mackerel that they would get would only be about a medium sized mackerel. You know, they were sliced on both sides and then broil it. They always broiled in, that always made it taste good.

TH: Broiled is always better.

JM: And the guy would order bluefish and he would get mackerel and the waiter would ask him you know, "How was the bluefish?" (laughter) Now at Sandlass' place, didn't I talk to you about the waiter? Did I tell you about that?

EH: The waiter?

JM: Yes, at this restaurant over here, you know, you have a thousand people dumped in your lap at 11 o'clock in the morning and they have just had an hour and a half ride on a train and they are all hungry and they are all thirsty and they dash to this pavilion. So you have got to have somebody to take care of them. So, they had about three or four or five waiters there that were there all the time. (Sentence removed because of derogatory terms for African Americans. This does explain that there were southern African-Americans as both waiters and chefs working for Sandlass.) And doing a great job and on weekends when Sandlass knew there was two excursions coming in, that meant 2,200 people. He would need more waiters. So evidently there was a hiring hall or something in New York because he had a contact with this place. He would say, "Send me 10 waiters." And they had a place for these guys to sleep overnight in at Sandlass' Beach and I don't know where that was. I never knew that. (Section removed for derogatory terms for African-Americans. This explains that the waiters that were hired from the hiring hall in New York were African-Americans from the Caribbean Islands and did not get along with the regular wait staff.)

TH: They didn't get along.

JM: (Section contains racial overtones that are not relevant to the interview and were removed.) Of course, they worked on the pavilion too but in the Sandlass Hotel they had a real nice restaurant. Nice tables and white tablecloths and all that went on in this building where the restaurant was across the street from the ice cream store.

EH: Did the waiters have uniforms? Did they have aprons or...

JM: Most of them did. Most of them did. I think they all did.

EH: What was it?

JM: They used to have a white coat and they had a black coat.

EH: A short formal jacket, is that what?

JM: I guess so. Like a white coat anybody wear the white coat anywhere.

TH: With all of these people arriving in mass, they must have flooded the restrooms. Did they have restrooms at the restaurant?

JM: I suppose they did. They had to have someplace. They had them on the train too, you know.

TH: Really? Even back then.

JM: Yeah sure, there was always a place. I don't even remember where the toilets. I know there was a couple over in the bar, the Bamboo Room.

TH: I ask because I wonder if there was any sewerage back then.

JM: At Sandlass', of course not. Whatever it was went out in the river, out in the ocean. Nobody worried about that kind of stuff then.

TH: The ocean would take care of it so with the tides. I am wondering because you know it was a public eatery. A place to eat and after you have had so much whatever soda pop or beer, punch...

JM: I am sure that in the hotel I am sure there were restrooms in the hotel, the hotel proper. I never had any reason to go to that.

TH: I could just see the restrooms. You go in there and it's a hole down to the sand. (laughter)

JM: What's the matter with that?

TH: Underneath the building.

JM: And filter. Sure.

EH: Could be just briefly finish the Sandlass family? I am sorry. We have established William Sandlass, Johnson Sandlass, Helen the second wife. Can you just briefly fill in?

JM: And their two children.

EH: Okay, Henry.

JM: Helen had two children. Helen she only had one child and that was Henry. They adopted Rita, Rita Smith. Mrs. Smith this was Sandlass' sister and she had three girls and one boy I guess. So, one of those girls went to Mr. Sandlass, Rita. I think her name is in my book there. Mrs. Smith, Rita's mother stayed out at the Highlands nearly all summer. She lived in the hotel with Rita and the other children she might have with her and that one, this is Sandlass' sister now, her husband would come down weekends. He worked for I don't know American Express or some bank or something. He used to handle all the money at that time there Sunday afternoon, Sunday evening straighten out all the stuff there. So that Sandlass would take it all up in a bag I guess the next morning down yonder or someplace. Let's see. I told you about the three brothers. They used to visit once in a while and the one sister. Mrs. Smith had one sister, Catherine, Catherine Lynch. Mrs. Smith, Helen Sandlass was Helen Lynch and she has a sister, two sisters, Catherine and, let' see. Catherine never got married and she used to come down and visit with Sandlass over the weekend. I guess Johnson Sandlass who wasn't married always had an eye out for any girl. Good, bad, indifferent, young old, green, pink, orange, a great ladies man. Anyhow that's basically about the family. Now Sandlass had the, by his first wife another son, William, also William and William Sandlass owned the bathing pavilion in Sea Bright. That was known as the Sand Lass, two words. It was Sandlass but it was Sand Lass. And he owned that for years and years. I guess that had passed on out of existence too. Whether he had any children or not, I don't know.

EH: What became of the first wife by the way? Do you know what became of, she died or?

JM: She died.

EH: Okay. Henry is still around in this neighborhood.

JM: No. Henry passed away.

EH: Oh is he?

JM: It's probably his son.

EH: So, Henry the second, excuse me is the one that I caught just in moving.

JM: He lives on Avenue of Two Rivers. They built a great big house on Avenue of Two Rivers. As soon as you turn off Rumson Road to the right that first great big place in there or maybe it's the second was the Henry Sandlass house. Henry built that. Henry himself the young boy. But they (inaudible)

TH: This had a name didn't it?

JM: I don't know.

TH: But this is the place that had that famous name.

JM: Yes.

TH: Okay. I notice what's interesting is people are bathing the bathing beach here is on the river. That's the Shrewsbury River.

JM: That's only one of the bathing beaches. They also bathed in the ocean.

TH: Over on the other side. Over on the east side. So there was ocean, well the rope for safety because we know when that tide is coming in or going out the Shrewsbury River is very swift. Did people, they didn't venture too far did they, John?

JM: No. They had the diving board. These are the ropes. This is the same beach. This is this beach, right here.

TH: Yeah looking out. Looking out. First we are looking in and the people have their by today's standards old fashioned bathing suits. What were they made of?

JM: Cotton.

TH: Cotton bathing suits.

JM: And wool.

EH: And itchy wool too, people tell me.

JM: That's right. Wool.

TH: Well, let's look at, "Bathing in the River." This is number 7 and you can see the lines coming out. That's the bathing platform in there?



Bathing in the River, Highlands, N. J.

JM: Yes. It was a spring board.

TH: Yeah they had a springboard on the...

EH: Is it like a floating raft?

TH: Yeah. Anchored to the bottom.

JM: Oh yeah.

TH: But it's floating.

JM: It's tied here. You see this? Not to the bottom.

TH: Oh yeah. That's right. Yeah it's tied to poles.

JM: Tied to poles on all four sides. Harry Myers was the lifesaver.

TH: Harry Myers was employed by Sandlass?

JM: Every year. He used to go to Florida in the wintertime and he would come back to Sandlass in the summertime. He was about 6 feet tall. He was about as fat as that pencil and pad over there and he was always in the water and he was always out and he had eyes like an eagle. He could see everything that was going on all the time. I am not so sure that I am not sure what the crew was of lifeguards but I think that they had one other lifeguard and I think that was a girl that lived in one of Sandlass' bungalows.

TH: A girl lifeguard?

JM: A girl lifeguard.

TH: Even back then?

JM: Yeah.

TH: Boy, nothing new.

JM: Oh, she was a terrific girl.

EH: Maybe a championship swimmer probably.

JM: Yeah. I guess so. And always wore a very tight bathing suit, you know. Not like a rubber bathing suit and she was a Red Cross approved lifesaver, lifeguard or something. She had that big life ring on her chest or her top.

TH: Gee, I thought you had come a long way baby. (laughter)

EH: By the way, above the letters Highland Beach, what are those? Clothing poles?

JM: Yeah. That's where the bathing suits dried.

EH: Okay. Because I wondered in that postcard number what are we on 7?

JM: There was no real laundry about this. There was just big tanks that they would slosh the bathing suits around in.

EH: To get the salt out and then hang it above on the roof of that building.

TH: Was that provided by Sandlass?

JM: Yeah sure. There were walkways up on the roof. You can see the walkways right there.

TH: Like a little catwalk.

JM: Yeah catwalk right where these poles were.

TH: So, after people were done bathing they could go and dry out their bathing suits up there.

JM: They weren't their bathing suits. There were the ones that were rented to them.



TH: Rented ones.

JM: That was part of the thing. If you had your own bathing suit you had to take care of that yourself. But most everybody I guess rented bathing suits. They had a million bathing suits, bathing suits and towels.

TH: Also I notice people underneath the highland beach bathhouses there amongst the pilings I guess to get shade?

JM: Yeah, I guess so. Now if some wet bather came in up above and took his bathing suit and wrung it out and you were sitting down below you might get wet. (laughter)

TH: Of course because the water could run like you said.

JM: Now through the floor they had board that were about 3/4 to 3/8 of an inch apart.

TH: So you had those spaces.

JM: So if you were real curious, a real sightseeing type you could get under those bath houses too.

TH: Is that why you are so well off because you found all those nickels dimes and quarters underneath there?

JM: Yeah.

TH: I can imagine people really dropped a lot of change though because you know you had the changing...

JM: Well, people used to go out looking for coins on the beach. They still do.

EH: Certainly they do.

TH: Sure. This house here this is postcard number 7, the house on the way left hand side. Was this house Sandlass or....

JM: Yes.

TH: Boy, he owned the whole strip.

JM: Yeah, well he did. He operated the whole thing.

TH: Would that be like a private home to your knowledge?

JM: It must have been or a boarding house. (inaudible) Kelly lived in one of those. He had a reputation for entertaining people.

EH: The scandals.

TH: Really? Is that true?

JM: (inaudible) Kelly had a house that was bigger than the rest of them and she would rent a room to anybody who wanted to stay. A lot of people came for the weekend to this cottage, to all these cottages. Most of them were privately owned. You know, they were one family establishments. But many of those families were good sized families like Paul Keoptchem people. I don't know how many people would come. They might have a dozen people come to stay with them over the weekend in this little bit of a house which was the last house on the dock. I can't see the houses. They must be right behind this one. The house was right behind this one. It couldn't be that one either.

TH: Was this the house, John? Here is Highland Beach.

JM: No. No. It was on the other side.

TH: On the other side of these.

JM: Of these houses.

TH: I don't think we have a view.

JM: I have a black and white picture of this house.

TH: They would, would they rent out their spare rooms? Is that what you are saying?

JM: Yeah. (inaudible) Kelly had this house. It must have been 8 or 9 or 10 rooms.

TH: They were big houses.

JM: It wasn't you know it was a one story place but it was enough so that they had space to rent out.

TH: Did people, what did they do? Did people do what they do today, splash around in the water? Just about the same mannerisms?

JM: That's the same so far as I know. I don't ever remember as much ball playing and that kind of thing on the beach then as you see now. And there were no fisherman at any of these beaches.

TH: Yeah. This was strictly bathing. How about, but people came to cool off though, really wasn't that the prime...

JM: I guess they came to get away from the city.

TH: Yeah from the heat and the smell of the city. This was real enjoyment to go ocean bathing.

JM: And then if you came on the train, see that was very little effort. They came with a group that they knew. See this was the Elks or the Firemen of the Women of the World. Whatever they were but they were neighbors and friends and all that kind of thing. So, it was like taking your whole party to the beach with you. That could be very pleasant.

TH: Because moving onto Postcard number 8 once again its entitled, “Bathing in the River, Highlands, New Jersey.” This is the Sandlass Beach in the foreground there are a whole lot of people and there’s the houses with the dock going out.



JM: It’s behind this house.

TH: Is where Paul lived?

JM: Yeah.

TH: Well, that was a whole series of houses then over there on the north end of the Sandlass property up there.

JM: Oh yeah sure there were probably 25 houses in there.

TH: Well, Paul’s house was very near the Fort Hancock Military...

JM: It was the last one. The fence, the Fort Hancock fence went right along side of Paul's house. Sure, I remember that just like it was yesterday. All of those things were in that same boat. Thank you, young lady.

TH: Moving onto postcard number nine, is still about the same thing, an awful lot of boats out there. A whole variety off shore. They never to your knowledge lost anybody bathing there? People stayed kind of within the roped in areas? Because that Shrewsbury River is really the current if very swift there.



JM: This must be Fanny Horn's boat.

EH: Fanny Horn.

JM: Yeah. Two mast sailboat.

TH: Why do you say that?

JM: She lived on it. Her brother was a Navy officer and their boat used to come down every summer. Every summer they used to come down and anchor the boat there and the boat would stay there all summer and Fanny would be on the boat most of the time or she would be in the ice cream store. And he brother would come down weekends and her father. Her mother would stay on the boat all summer. Her father would come down weekends. And they were all come ashore to buy ice cream two or three times a night.

TH: Ah the life. I notice a lot of these picture when your bathing suits those bathing suits got wet did it weigh them down?

JM: I don't think so. There wasn't you know woolen even the woolen bathing suits weren't an awful lot of weight. And then the women wore all cotton. All those fancy things you see with all the long skirts and all that.

TH: I notice that no one in all of these postcards has any floats or anything like little rafts or you know like toys to play with.

JM: Like life preservers?

TH: Well, you know things to float on. Everybody is on their own.

JM: This one might have had water wings. You know what they are?

TH: Yeah the old, early primitive. (laughter)

JM: They were just cotton too.

TH: Really?

JM: Yeah. And you blew them up with your mouth. They fitted under your arm. They just stayed there by themselves. You know they weren't fastened on any way. It was just under your arms and they were on your back. These things would be on your back and that's why they called them water wings I guess. That was about the only kind of life preserver that they had for bathers at that time. This business with rings and all that kind of stuff sometimes once in a while somebody would show up with their inner tube.

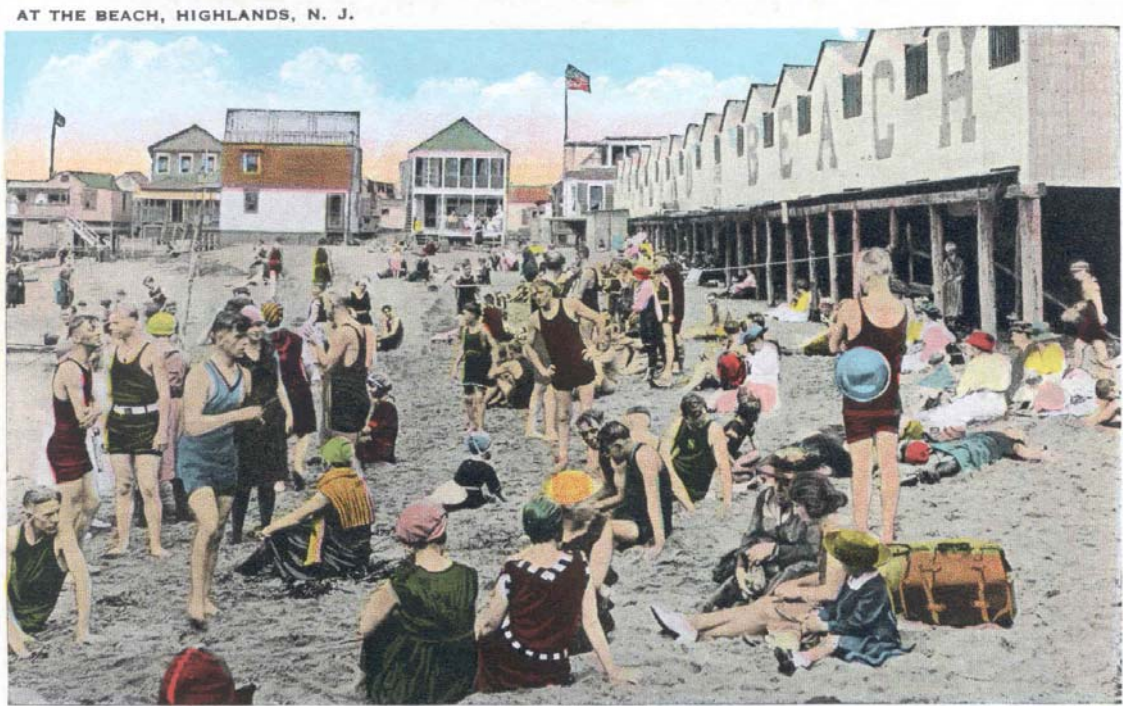
TH: Moving on to Postcard number 10. It is very interesting if you could see all of the expressions on people's faces. There is a guy in the lower left left hand shoulder looking back. I wonder if he is looking at any of the eligible girls.

JM: Or looking at an ineligible girl.

TH: An ineligible girl, right. But its...

EH: Girl watching on the beach.





TH: But the style of bathing suits what the people are doing. There is quite a scene. There is a lot of people there, easily 75 people. I notice, look at the suitcase.

JM: Suitcase, a Gladstone bag

TH: A Gladstone.

JM: That's a Gladstone.

EH: What was it?

JM: That's a particular brand.

EH: A big satchel type of...

JM: Gladstone bag.

TH: Throw everything in that and head for the Jersey Shore. That is quite a mob scene.

EH: Amazing, incredible.

TH: I guess the guys back then would go up start talking with young ladies and see if they...

JM: I don't know about that. Probably been done. They told me Adam and Eve did that. (laughter.)

TH: Moving onto the ocean side. Now we have got to leave the Shrewsbury River and go over to this is postcard number 11. "Sandlass Beach and Boardwalk, Highlands, New Jersey." There is the rock seawall.



JM: The ocean yeah. That's the ocean and the rock.

TH: Now they had a...

JM: You see how high they are? They are not very high.

TH: Yeah. They had a wooden boardwalk with a sunscreen up there. Benches for people to sit under a wooden sunscreen and a wide boardwalk. Was that on top of the seawall or partially so off to just behind it?

JM: It was just behind it. It was behind the seawall.

EH: So, it would be a long boardwalk with...

JM: That was about two blocks long because pretty soon when you got up this way a little bit you came into the railroad tracks and the Highland Beach Railroad Station.

TH: Now he had rights out there, Mr. Sandlass owned the beach on the ocean side? That's where people could go?

JM: Sandlass was the proprietor. He owned riparian rights.

TH: I notice the beach umbrellas. Were those rented too?

JM: I don't know whether they were or not.

TH: Did they have lifeguards out there? I notice a buoy ring. There is a white buoy ring on the stair going down to the beach here in postcard 11.

JM: There were lifeguards. I don't know how many.

TH: Would people venture out far back then? You always have somebody daring enough to have to be...

JM: Well, I would say they went out 50 yards from the water line that would be a long distance.

TH: So, what do you think people favored back then? Did they like the riverside better or, because they had a choice here.

JM: The river was always about 4 or 5 degrees warmer than the ocean and also some people didn't like fighting with the waves and every once in a while it would get rough in the ocean side. But the river except for the current and right close to shore there wasn't that much current. See that was shallow water and the beach curved in at this point where the bathing where the diving board is. The beach kind of curved in there from the upper end of the Sandlass houses.

TH: Over on the riverside.

JM: On the riverside. See this beach curved in like this. And it curved out along this way.

TH: You still see that curve somewhat.

JM: Yeah. Sure and looking at this you are looking at this in an angle now so it doesn't look like very much of a curve but if you were looking right down top of it, it would be quite a curve. Anyhow.

TH: You know one of the tragedies of our modern society is broken glass. Did people get hurt any?

JM: Yeah. People used to get their feet cut on the glass.

TH: Even back then?

JM: Yeah.



TH: It was inconsiderate even back then. That's one of the things. I think that is one of the biggest first aid or accident cases that we have here at Sandy Hook.

JM: Is that right?

TH: Is cut feet or cut hands from broken glass.

JM: This is the ice house here. See, that's almost as high as the ice cream store. See, the ice cream store is right behind the ice house right there. This is the Bamboo Gardens was there. That was three stories (inaudible)

TH: We will mark that. We have two postcards, number 12 and number 13 are the same postcard but number 12 was printed darker than number 13 which is a lighter color print. Yeah what is interesting is your, what is that?

JM: Awnings.

TH: Well, the awnings are still the same but look at the different paint scheme on the second floor is white on number 13 and that is what the candy store?

JM: Yeah.

EH: Horton's?

TH: Horton's Candy Store.

JM: Horton's Ice Cream. Sandlass' Candy Store.

TH: Yeah.

JM: But Horton's Ice Cream.

TH: Okay. In number 13 the top part of the building is painted mostly white with brownish trim and then it is all brown, two shades of brown in number 12.

JM: That certainly could have been. It's the same people right out in the street though. (tape ends and new tape starts)

EH: This is the second tape in the series of questions with John Mulhern discussing the 272 collection of the Koepfchum estate of color postcards, photographs collection of 24. We are up to number 14.

TH: 13.

EH: 13.

TH: 12 and 13 are the same.



EH: 12 and 13 are the identical postcards showing Horton's Ice Cream Parlor and Sandlass' Candy Store and Tom Hoffman, park historian was re-marking that what is it that there are nets?

TH: It's a wooden framework like for grapevines or flowers over on the left hand side of the photograph.

EH: It might have been an arbor.

TH: Yeah. Arbor type.

EH: And there are brightly colored awnings, horse and wagon, no excuse me an early car, vintage car but the big sign on the left side of this postcard says, "Bamboo Gardens, Rector's Famous Band, Now Here for the Season, Cabaret and Dancing." The structure is interesting because it had many turrets almost, you know, it's like dormers actually on the building but if you look at it all together collectively it's sort of like all these little peaks above the buildings and this is the main, I guess the main street as you would call it. People walking along. I am curious. What are all these projections? Are these flagpoles along the top? We will have to ask him.

TH: Probably for pendants.

EH: Because it's kind of a fairy tale photo of sorts and it gives you that impression in fact.

JM: They are flagpoles and every once in a while they would have quite a display of flags and it was really a very colorful sort of thing when they had that. I don't remember that they ever had any signs that said that this is Sandlass' or this is the Bamboo Garden. I think they were just multi-colored flags of one kind or another decorative kinds of things. I don't think the American flag was ever used as a matter of decoration although in his office which he may have had an American flag at one time or another but I don't know.

TH: It seems to me like once again on the left hand side of the arbor like in front of the arbor is a fence like screen.

JM: Yeah, screened in there what they used to paint every year paint it white. They just didn't want people moving around in there if the place was not in use. This gate was generally locked.

TH: On the far left there is a gate that is open yeah.

JM: This was principally a weekend sort of thing unless it was scheduled for use during the week for a party or something.

TH: And you worked in this building. The building right in the middle of the postcard view.

JM: Yes.

TH: The candy store where they sold the ice cream.

JM: Everything from where you can see that mark there that whole building that whole bottom floor was the ice cream store.

TH: What about the second floor?

JM: That's where people lived, the Smith's sometimes were up there with their family. There were two or three apartments, small apartments up there.

TH: And you would be very busy especially when trainloads of people...

JM: Yes, indeed.

TH: And you worked very hard from 8 am in the morning until....

EH: How old were you at the time?

JM: I must have been about 11.

EH: 11 wow.

TH: And how much was it again? A dollar?

JM: A dollar a day.

TH: A dollar a day.

JM: (inaudible)

TH: Did you just wear regular clothes?

JM: No. I wore an apron, kind of a coverall apron like a jumper like you call a girls jumper over my clothes. It was white like a butcher's apron.

TH: You have one at home.

JM: You know it sits on the upper part.

TH: Yeah on the chest.

JM: And you tie it with a string.

TH: Behind you. Was local soda sold like Crates?

EH: Crates.

TH: Crates soda.

JM: And we used to buy concentrated syrup from the manufacturer. Concentrated strawberry, concentrate lemon and cherry and all that kind of stuff. And then the chef over in the kitchen would boil up a simple syrup that would make a what do you call it a concentrated simple syrup it was called like you know when you cook something not a super saturated syrup but a thick. You would boil up as much sugar as the thing could hold. And then that would be quite thick and that would be used to dilute the syrup and that would be for chocolate and all the good flavors. So you would add like one part of concentrated syrup to four parts of simple syrup. Simple syrup is a sugar water combination. And then put that in gallon bottles and we used to have bottles about this size of strawberry, pineapple, cherry, whatever about this big around and that's what the syrup was in and take the bottle off take the cap off the thing and dump this much syrup in the glass and put the bowl of ice cream and (sound of fizz) your ice cream sodas.

TH: Did they have, well Coca-Cola's been around for a long time. Was that sold or popular at the time?

JM: Yeah that was sold. That and Hire's Root Beer and that came in a wooden keg about a five gallon wooden keg about this big and that was concentrated syrup too and we had

an automatic mixer for that. You know you connected up a ten gallon, a 15 gallon tank of carbonated water to this mixer gadget and then when you turn the thing on it would come out with soda water and come out together because it was mixed. And that was the only way it was served. The Coca-Cola came that way and Moxy came in a tin can, the concentrated syrup. Moxy came in a tin can.

EH: What is Moxy?

JM: Moxy is something like Coca-Cola, a little more bitter and Moxy was the one that had the sign over the ice cream parlor with a finger pointing this way. Moxy for you or something like that and no matter where you walk the eyes and the fingers always followed you.

EH: Followed you. How funny.

JM: And the Hire's Root Beer. That was another kind of concentrated syrup.

TH: How much was this one?

JM: Ten cents for a small drink.

TH: Because you were on the beach. You were saying everybody else would...

JM: Charge you a nickel. Ice cream sodas were 20 cents. Sundaes were 20 or 25 cents.

TH: Was the candy more too at the store?

JM: What did you say?

TH: Was the candy, would they charge people more?

JM: No usually a five cent Hershey bar was a nickel. But the sodas were different and the ice cream sundaes were always a dime everywhere else. There it was 20 cents.

TH: And on hot summer days I am sure you were swamped with customers. Did they leave a mess back even back then?

JM: I don't think so. They would only come in for an ice soda (inaudible)

TH: I should say we weren't that much of a throw away society back then.

JM: No. We weren't a throw away society. (Inaudible)

TH: I guess we will stop there. (Tape stops and restarts.)  
(Interview continues on January 3, 1985)

JM: Tom Garrity, he was a peculiar sort of guy. Somehow or other he was paid pretty well for working for Sandlass in the Bamboo Garden putting on these cabaret shows which was principally singing and then he was always broke some how or other. He would come around looking for basically a handout like. Have you got a dollar John. He would say I will pay you back and of course he didn't get very many dollars from me because I didn't have very many dollars and the end of the season came and Tom Garrity disappeared and so did all my dollars. I never saw him again.

EH: He was sort of a local character?

JM: No. He wasn't a local character he was a character from New York City who was associated apparently with Rector's Famous Band. Whether Rector's Famous Band has anything to do with Rector Street in Manhattan, I have no way of knowing. Anyhow he didn't quite wreck my finances because there was always a limited distribution.

EH: What about the women in that postcard by the way wearing, they are pretty well dressed. Is that the way people in your memory would arrive at the Bamboo Garden? Were they always fairly dressed up?

JM: That's the way they would arrive. This was the day BN, before nakedness. So people who went out on the street always were reasonable well covered. They certainly were at this time.

EH: That looks pretty formal is what I am saying.

JM: Pardon me?

EH: That look pretty formal.

JM: I don't think so. I think it's the ordinary long skirts. Of course, they had a hat and in those days everybody did wear a hat. And of course. this was summertime and hot, hot on the beach, no shade unless you got under the awing or something.

EH: How about parasols? Was that....

JM: There are none showing in this photograph.

EH: Was that a fashion style?

JM: Parasols are not a common thing in the United States and have never been in my lifetime. Of course, if you travel overseas to numerous places you will find the people wear parasols as they travel around. Not necessarily to keep the sun off as much as to protect their makeup. Particularly it's true in the far east where they wear a lot of artificial makeup at times and you will see those girls on the street frequently carry a parasol. Not necessarily keeping from getting a sunburn but keep from upsetting the makeup. The vehicle that is in the foreground is interesting. I don't know exactly what it

is. It could be a Buick station wagon or truck in this picture could be something like a Buick or GMC of some kind. It's certainly not a Ford and it looks like it has barrels in the thing and it could conceivably be the express wagon delivering the ice cream that came from Horton's Ice Cream Company of Fulton Street in Brooklyn. It's a fairly heavy truck. You can see the Horton's Ice Cream sign where the soda fountain was in this great establishment.

EH: Did, would visitors arrive by car, automobile? Where would they park?

JM: They would have and they would park just across the street from this building alongside of the railroad tracks but sufficiently far away so that when the train came from Sandy Hook. It wouldn't run into the automobiles and then some of the postcards that we have of this series there was pictures of the parked cars alongside of the railroad tracks. The whole line of cars parked from the entrance of the bathing beach which is on the right of this photograph all the way up to the Highland Beach Railroad Station which was the equivalent I guess of four or five city blocks. And there would be cars parked the entire length. That was the only parking space there was there. Sandlass didn't like parked cars alongside of his bathhouses.

EH: Is that right? Was that one of his pet peeves?

JM: Pet peeves of the time and I suppose parking cars there restricted the flow of traffic on that road that was very narrow. It was barely two lanes except for a little walking place and not a sidewalk right up against the bathhouses. So, the only place to park really was across the street from the candy store right alongside of the railroad tracks to Sandy Hook.

EH: We are looking at postcard number 272.14. By the way this is a continuation of our meeting in November, but today is January 3, 1985. We are looking at a clipping here.

JM: I don't remember what we said of the photograph at that time. The two marine observatories stand out in clearly here at the upper part of the picture. The Postal Telegraph tower being to the right of the Twin Lights and the Western Union tower is just barely to the right of the south tower of the Twin Lights so that can identify the position of those towers long since gone. There is a slight, shall I say a relic or an indication of where the tower was there is a little cottage there now at the foot of what was the Postal Telegraph tower and it's presently occupied by the husband of one of the girls whose father was the chief operator at the Postal Telegraph tower. Below the south tower of the Lighthouse which is the one of the left if you look at this picture about halfway down the hill is what was then the famous Hotel Martin. It was where the best people stayed when they came to the Highlands in the summertime. Every year at the end of the season an affair called, "The Twin Light Ball," was held at that place and that's when all the fine ladies in all their finery and their escorts in the best that Roger Speed had to offer would be there dining and dancing. There might have been some drinking but there was dining and dancing and it really was a sight to behold. To the right of that Hotel Martin there's another apparently three story building for what appears

to be a mansard roof was the old Victoria Hotel. That building is still there and is still used as a hotel. Down below that and sort of slightly to the right and at the water's edge is a little white building with some docking facilities in front of it. That is the Jack Bahrs establishment. Bahrs Restaurant is now there. Jack Bahrs originally was a builder of docks and bulkheads and that kind of thing and his barges, working boats would come in at that little docking space and on the beach and eventually he built a little shed on the end of that dock where he sold gasoline to boatmen. Following the gasoline, I guess came hot dogs and following the hot dogs probably came hamburgers and following the hamburgers probably came the beginning of the Bahrs Restaurant which is now quite a good sized establishment. To the left of that Bahrs Restaurant and one can see the part of the swing bridge and as we used to call it the drawbridge there where the bridge would swing around over that structure and it was sort of stabilizing thing to support the bridge in case anything went wrong with the mechanism. The little house at the end of the structure is the place where maintenance parts were kept where lights for obstruction lights for the bridge were stored to be for the convenience of the people who had to put them out at night. At the left of the picture as you come this way presuming you are walking across the bridge from the Highlands to Highland Beach and in the water there are some telephone poles that are fastened to some other poles that are driven down into the ground. Those telephone poles provided ice breaking facility, ice breaking protective devices to reduce the damage any damage to the bridge. If you look closely at the bridge you can see itself it supported on what looks like telephone poles. At that time I guess....



EH: What do you mean by ice breaking? Do you mean that it acted like a first line of defense yet for the bridge?

JM: If on an incoming tide large pieces of ice floated in from the bay as they got close to that structure the big piece of ice, the flat piece of ice presumably would slope up on



those telephone poles and break into smaller pieces. Small enough so that they wouldn't damage the pilings which were under the bridge at that time. At the time that this picture was taken the trestle for the railroad train and cars that went south to Sea Bright and Long Branch and on south from there were supported on a structure, the trestle structure was supported on telephone poles. It wasn't until, oh I don't know it must have been around the '20s or thereabouts that that railroad trestle was replaced by another railroad trestle supported by concrete foundation and the foundations are still in the river and may be seen north of the present highway bridge over the river there at Highlands. On the upper Highlands here at the upper part of this photograph to the left of the bridge it looks like it's all woodland up there, but actually there were several good sized mansions that were built on that forward edge of the hill at that point. One of them was owned by a fellow, a Shakespearian actor by the name of Jack Webster, (inaudible) Campbell Webster and right next to that was another big house and that was built there too. It was owned by Nelly McHenry Webster the mother of Jack Webster. Alongside of them was a house owned by the Gougannon family and the Gougannon family by occupation were dress designers with fancy shops presumably on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York. And still farther to the left and you can't see these houses really in the foliage of the trees was a magnificent somber house that was owned by the Rueff family and the Rueff family was the descendants of the Rueff Oil Engine Company. Finally the Mercedes-Benz Company and during the (World) War (I) they were presumed to be non patriotic and be aiding and abetting the enemy, acting as spies as one might say and the family suddenly disappeared from that house and I don't know whether they ever came back again or not. But that was a very, that was really the fancy place in Highlands to live if you wanted to live with the upper crust in the Highlands you had to live on the west side of Portland Road.

EH: Was the Trask mansion in that complex?

JM: The Trask mansion was behind this hill that you see now. You had to go around the south end of the hill and then in a sort of a north westerly direction out to where the Hartshorne estate is still identifiable and then go to the left of where what is not the Army Air Force early warning system and the Trask house was located around the I guess the south west corner of that hill.

EH: One time did you tell us about was John Van Kirk connected to the Trask's?

JM: John Van Kirk was the coachman.

EH: Okay.

JM: And his sister still lives in the Highlands.

EH: His sister still lives in Highlands? Do you know her name offhand?

JM: I was going to say Gloria Van Kirk and it might be.

EH: How old can she be? My gosh.

JM: Well, she is older than I am.

EH: Perhaps in her 80s maybe.

JM: And still the last time I saw her was several years ago one day when we were over there looking at our property up on the hill which was almost next door to hers we were talking to her for a few minutes and she is still sharp as a tack as she was then and I presume she still is and she might be a good person to talk about considering the environs of this part of the world.

EH: That would be interesting. You said there was a little cottage of a woman who was connected with the Western Union towers. Much earlier you were remarking that that person still lives there. Did I get that right?

JM: Are we talking about Bessie Philips? Bessie Philips who lives over in St. John's home over in Keyport now her father was chief operator in Western Union tower and we had some newspaper clippings of her and you have them in your collection of pictures of her father Sam Philips standing in the tower looking out the telescope. I don't know whether you are thinking about somebody else.

EH: No, actually that name popped up in a letter today from Mr. Manning, Landon Manning the donation of one particular photograph, Mr. Manning. He said he had a wonderful chat with Tom Hoffman who has fond memories of Sandy Hook particularly of marine observer Philips. He mentioned that in the letter.

JM: That's him. Sam Philips is his name.

EH: That name came straight you know just out of his....

JM: That is some correspondence that you got today?

EH: Yes. And it was just acknowledging his donation. This man of Saratoga Spring, New York who greeted Tom in the Museum a while ago. His name is Landon Manning. An unusual name and I acknowledged his donation. It was a reproduction photo and I thanked him in the donation letter I thanked him for the afternoon they had spent with Tom and how enjoyable it was and he responded by sending back the donation form with a personal letter.

JM: You know there was a Miss Manning who was the library in the Marine Laboratory over here about 10 years ago. Miss Manning.

EH: Librarian Mabel...

TH: No. That was the older woman.

EH: Oh, Edith Manning.

TH: Edith Manning.

JM: That's the one who told me you know that I should get in touch with you.

TH: Really?

JM: That's how it all started, yeah.

EH: Really, Edith Manning. Is she still hanging around?

JM: I don't know.

TH: I haven't seen her.

JM: She lived in the Highlands I think.

TH: It's a good possibility you know but it might be the connection.

EH: She was a volunteer here for a while.

JM: Right.

EH: With a young woman who passed away.

JM: One day we were down here with my Brother Tommy, the mosquito chaser was here in this part of the country and he wanted to go to the library in the marine laboratory to check out some stuff that he understood was available in the library or having to do with mosquitoes I presume so while I was just standing around doing nothing I got talking to this Edith Manning and I mentioned the fact that we lived here for all these years and she said, "Do you know Tom Hoffman?" I said, "No. I don't know Tom Hoffman." She said, "Well you ought to know him." She said, "He is the historian down there now and he would probably like to meet you and you ought to meet him," and that's how all this started. You know this Hoffman-Mulhern combine.

EH: I didn't know that. I thought you stumbled into the Visitor Center just one day randomly.

JM: No. I rarely stumble.

EH: Just a quick question, there are two little structures right on that bridge and what is that boat because that is a strange model if ever there was one?

JM: No. It's a type of launch that was common in that day and it was either a steam launch or a motor driven launch. I presume since there is no smokestack it's not a steam

launch and it was probably the type of vessel that they called a one lunged engine with make and break magneto ignition.

EH: Make and break magneto?

JM: Yeah. They had good size flywheels on them and you would open the pit cock to the cylinder and spin the flywheel a couple of times until it got moving a little bit and then it would close the pipcock on the engine and then the gasoline would come under pressure and the make and break ignition would hopefully fire and that's about it.

EH: And what's on the bridge. I am not familiar with those two little white structures. Was there a bridge tender?

JM: The little house that is on the right is the place where either they kept maintenance equipment or where they kept the light to illuminate the bridge at night time, obstruction lights. But the little house that fits right in the middle of the drawbridge, that's where the bridge operator stayed and this bridge would swing around. It didn't raise like a jackknife bridge does and this little house at the end of the bridge is for the person who manned who stayed at the gate for closing the gates and at the other end of the bridge there must have be another little house where the operator of that side could open and close the gates.

EH: I see.

JM: Because they were mechanically operated by long rods that went through the whole (inaudible) and also the semaphore signals that were on the Highland Beach side, those signals were operated by the operator who stood in this little house which was the left end of the drawbridge. And he was the fella who would signal the locomotive engineer as to whether he could go through the drawbridge or not. At the other end of the bridge in the Highlands there was another operator there who controlled the traffic gates at Bay Avenue in Highlands. There was a gate that used to close there just north of the west of the station and that same man that was at that station operated the semaphore lights that went down towards Miller Street in the Highlands that operated the lights at nighttime, arms in the daytime. The locomotive engineer could see to tell him if the bridge was clear or not.

EH: Was there ever a catastrophe that you know somehow the lights didn't work of the signals got goofy and somehow some incredible thing happened.

JM: Not that I am aware of.

EH: Not that you can recall. Was there ever any derailment that you know or some really amazing thing?

JM: Well, you know, in those early days there was good maintenance of the right of way. And they always had the road bed gang. They would propel themselves around either on

the hand operated handcar or else they had a little car that had a gasoline engine in it. It would ride them up and down the rails and they just did so much maintenance every day. They knew exactly how far they should travel and it was usually about four or five men in the rail maintenance gang or the road bed maintenance gang. Probably a foreman and three other little men, all husky little men who could you know hammer the spikes back in if they were coming out or tighten the fishplates on the side of the rails they always had the tools necessary either on the handcart or on the other little gasoline propelled car that was used for maintenance vehicle.

EH: So there was constant care without a doubt.

JM: But they were, they were professional men and most of them were Italians. They did this work and they did it very carefully. (Tape stops and restarts) And at the crack of dawn the grandfather who was on the railroad maintenance gang would be out at the crack of dawn to get to meet the guys who were gonna be on that section of the railroad going through Netcong and his son who was Tony's father would also be out on that gang of the road gang but it was mostly Italian workers in those days.

EH: Who did not speak English?

JM: I am not sure if they spoke, they wouldn't have to speak English. They really didn't. They were professionally to the job to be done and they just went about doing the job and there just wasn't any if ands or buts about it.

EH: We are looking at Postcard number 14 in the series 272.14 and this shows a lot of interesting things here. It shows two buildings, a locomotive is approaching the track and there is a big boulder rock wall. Do you know anything about the building of that wall? Where the rocks were quarried from?



JM: I don't know for whence they came but they came on railroad cars from wherever the quarry was and they were unloaded with a crane into the seawall which you see here. This part of the seawall must be up close to the Highland Beach Railroad Station because the people that you see in the background, the people bathing look so much smaller than the man who is fishing off the rocks. So beyond the rocks that you can see here and as a matter of fact if you look at the top of this picture you can see an accumulation of people there and they are undoubtedly the people who are sitting on the boardwalk which was at the end of these rocks. These were all granite stones, roughly granite rock and almost every year some maintenance would be necessary on these and the locks would be brought in on a low sided freight car and the crane would pick them up and drop them here wherever they were supposed to be and the people who operated those cranes were also artist of a kind. They knew how to put the rocks in so that the rocks wedged each other and they weren't about to tumble off. As a matter of fact, when Margaret's (Mulhern) father came down here he got a job for Howland operating a crane that was used to build jetties out of these kinds of rocks.

TH: Was Howland in that business of just sort of building the...

JM: Seawalls, docks.

TH: That was his like a construction but on the Jersey shore he really specialized in that sort of thing.

JM: That's right docks and seawalls, jetties and there were a couple of others, Powers I guess was another one down there in Sea Bright and we were at the Howland shops at the, yeah Jessie Howland shops.

TH: Jessie Howland on that side street in Sea Bright.

JM: Right. Now, when I talk about the man who sold the orange juice and the grape juice, the man who had the bowling alley, the man who had the bar and who had the little sitting room where people could drink and maybe get a ham sandwich worked on the first floor of this building and the Sandlass family lived on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and they occupied the entire second floor.

TH: That's the building right in the middle of the photo.

EH: Very square.

TH: Well, was it a greenish tint an aqua colored roof?

JM: It had a window, a big window on it.

TH: Yeah with aqua color.

JM: Yeah that was the Sandlass home and that was quite a long building. It doesn't look very long here but it is.

TH: Where they lived, was that year round?

JM: No. They owned a big place in Virginia and every year they would go down to Virginia where they kept and raised horses and they had whatever facilities there are and they were great racetrack people and they followed the races around this part of the country to the next part of the country as well as owning this farm, this horse farm in Virginia.

EH: Just for purposes of orienting us that location in that post card is just south of the park entrance today if we were to stand there and try and pinpoint?

JM: This building is about a thousand yards south of the park entrance, maybe not quite but that park entrance, see is not the same place where it was for many years. That little building that is off to the side there that little building just to the west of the road is one of the old guard buildings. I don't know how old, but it is one of the original buildings.

EH: It was an MPs building.

JM: Yeah. So everything south of that until you go to where the new bridge touches land again was the Sandlass property, 99 year lease from the Jersey Central Railroad. The Jersey Central Railroad was the owner of the property the whole property.

EH: Originally.

JM: Because they need that for their when they, south, Southern Jersey Railroad is that the one?

TH: Southern, yeah it was Southern.

JM: That ran from Spermaceti Cove and later from Horseshoe Cove down to Sea Bright and Long Branch.

TH: Yeah. Well, it was the Long Branch and Seashore Railroad Company which was bought by the Southern New Jersey, Southern Jersey Railroad is what they called it and then the Southern Jersey Railroad was bought and became part of the Jersey Central.

JM: You have that history book I gave on that?

TH: Yeah.

JM: Not detailed but adequate. You can see the two types of tracks that went from Highland Beach Railroad Station into Sandy Hook and they also had switching facilities at the Highland Beach Railroad Station so that they could get in on the Jersey Central

Lines. And that's how freight used to come in and when soldiers were moved out of here early on. They were generally be moved by train and the cars would come in from some place or another and be shuffled down in here to Sandy Hook and they would load them on and take them to get back onto the tracks to go up to New York or wherever they went to get on their way. Someplace or another. You asked about where the cars were parked.

EH: Yes. That's my answer.

JM: That's look like about the engine and it probably is the same engine that's buried down in Horseshoe Cove the one that I told you about a couple of times.

TH: Near the Pumping Plant.

JM: Right on the curve there back of the Pumping Plant.

TH: I wonder which side of the curve John. Was it the ocean side? It would the east side of the curve.

JM: Yeah.

TH: The inside of the Hook.

JM: On the inside of the curve.

TH: Okay. It's buried there.

JM: You are going down this way to get on the main line. So it's on the inside of the car.

TH: I just wonder I know Clarence (Moore) telling me one time that you know he led me into this he said that, "You know they buried a gun barrel out here." I forget if it's a 12 inch gun barrel or 14 inch. He said they buried a gun barrel out here. Johnny Simpson helped to bury it. I said, "Really, really let's get the shovels out." He said, "No. No. No during the scrap drives of World War II Johnny took the Army authorities back when they had heavy equipment during the scrap drives and they recovered the, what was the gun barrel laying in the ground out here and it was scrapped for the metal." I am wondering because you and I did an extensive search right on the spot. Didn't we?

JM: Maybe not extensive enough.

TH: Yeah, right but we didn't come up with anything but I wonder if that might be another possibility.

JM: Of course it could.

TH: If they had recovered that too for scrap metal.



EH: Did you witness the burial of that locomotive?

JM: Yeah.

EH: You did. Okay. How old were you then roughly?

JM: I was going to school here.

EH: So if you are 80 now how old were you at the time of the burial?

JM: I didn't start to school until I was about 8 years old so I must have been 10 or 12. I know in the morning of that eventful day the crane was down there and they were little locomotive was sitting right on the curve and they were busy digging out the hole when we went to school in the morning and they were getting ready to jack the engine up so it would fall into the hole and when we got home from school that day the whole job was finished. The hole was filled in with sand and there was no locomotive.

EH: So that could be around 1915, 1916 in that neighborhood.

JM: It was one of the locomotives that was no longer economically repairable. So they just dumped it. But you know that gun barrel that's a I don't think I ever mentioned it to you either on Atlantic Drive and it must have been some where between I am not sure either between the little powerhouse that was built in 1904 commemorating my birthday you know on Atlantic Drive when you pass the little battery down there Battery Gunnison.

TH: Gunnison, yeah that little concrete building right where there is a traffic island.

JM: That's right. Now I don't remember whether it was south of that or north of that but for many years many years there was a gun barrel in the sand there. It was standing upright like that for many years it stood there and it was a gun apparently that exploded and the whole front end of the muzzle went off someplace landed there in the ground so the front end of the barrel the muzzle end of the barrel was above ground and where the thing widened out was in the ground.

TH: So the breech end the rear end was buried in the ground.

EH: How high was the area above the sand?

JM: About five feet.

EH: Gee.

TH: Was it a real large caliber?

JM: It must have been 10 or 12-inch. It was a good sized gun.

TH: It probably could have sailed from the Proof Battery. Oh yeah.

EH: It's a distance.

TH: And since we are on this subject in 1912 a 14-inch gun burst that they were proof testing at the Proof Battery did 300 dollars worth of damage to Battery Richardson which is at the south end of 9-gun battery. You can still see a dent in some of the iron framework. Did I ever show you that?

EH: No.

TH: You can see a dent from part of the breech block of the 14-inch gun and I am wondering if you recall anything like that or guns bursting or...

JM: I don't know but I remember seeing this gun that was buried.

EH: Did you play in this gun near Gunnison? I mean was it something that the kids all climbed on this 5 foot barrel sticking out?

JM: You saw lots of them around so it was no novelty. I mean lots of gun barrels around.

EH: Ah huh, something that was vertical looked pretty strange.

JM: It was only about 5 feet high. I often wondered what happened to that and maybe what you said is what happened. Maybe Johnny Simpson came out and recovered that thing. It would be interesting to know. This was right alongside of Atlantic Drive, right off the edge of the road.

TH: Do you recall speaking of metal things remember we were very lucky in recovering that cast iron street, the two street markers that was down by house number 1 there at the intersection. Were there others when you were here do you recall offhand?

JM: Street markers I don't remember anything street markers at any time.

TH: Because we have no information as to when these very heavy cast iron street signs you know they are in cast iron were put here. We definitely know they were here in '41 because a veteran had some photographs. One photograph there is in the background you can see one of those street signs, cast iron street signs.

JM: Well, I sort of think that those sort of things were Johnny come latelys. After World War I or around the time of World War I when there were so many buildings on Sandy Hook that was the first time there were a great number of buildings on Sandy Hook. All of it was here what you see now.

TH: Yeah just the permanent.

JM: The permanent structures that was all that you saw. So, I wouldn't be a bit surprised that when the War came along that they didn't put up some street signs showing the newcomers how to get around from one place to another. Because the number of barracks that they built here was a tremendous number you know back of the old gardens over there and over by Battery Potter. There was a whole flock of buildings in there and down...

TH: At Horseshoe...

JM: At Horseshoe Cove there was a bunch of buildings down in there. Incidentally, did you come across that picture of the prisoners camp.

TH: Its right here. This is it. That's the postcard.

JM: Yeah that's the one. That was probably down at Horseshoe Cove.

TH: It certainly was. These were the prisoner, the disciplinary barracks.

JM: The disciplinary barracks. I guess prisoner of war.

TH: One thing I have noticed that the streets when you get down to the streets what they were named after Union and Confederate generals. Magruder Road is I mean...

JM: Here on Sandy Hook.

TH: Yeah. Magruder Road, several are confederate general names.

JM: Of course, Magruder is a recent signal officer around here too and I think he still lives in if he didn't die off lives in Little Silver and he is a violin bug. He repairs violins.

TH: This would be you know we had the 1967 fort site map that gives all the street names and that's as of at least 1967.

JM: I am sure there were no street names posted when we lived here.

EH: The street sign that we retrieved said Kessler and Kearny and then there's McNair, Magruder, gosh there are so many names.

TH: There's a bunch. We never even listed them down something we should make note of just something to make a list of the street names.

JM: Kessler was an Air Force name.

TH: Yeah, but there was also if I can remember correctly back in the Civil War once again every time you look for a general its got to be general Philip Kearny from New

Jersey for Kearny road right over here. But I was, that's very interesting. I bet you it was like America's entry maybe from the time they made the street here might be the World War I period like 1917, 1918 and definitely 1941 because we have got the photographic proof in this one snapshot of a man taking his pictures in 1941. They are all dated 1941 and you see the cast iron street signs so we know now somewhere between the wars they named.

JM: I am sure that's when it happened. It must have happened then because you didn't have to know a street name when we lived here. There weren't that many streets.

TH: That's right.

JM: There was no Atlantic Drive then. Gunnison Road had a name and a the cinder road had a name it was cinder road going down where we lived down there through the woods from the hospital to our house.

TH: You also remember though what I would like to see brought back here is the cast iron light poles that used to be around the main fort area correct?

JM: With oil lamps.

TH: Oil lamps. They have in an old picture here they have it looked like a large ball glass top.

JM: There might have been some of those too but the ones that I remember the lamp was about that high I guess. Like the old gas lights in Brooklyn that kind of thing. I don't know whether you come across any pictures like that. I don't know who lit the lamps. Probably some soldier because there was never any gas on Sandy Hook.

EH: That's right.

TH: I have got to, we are getting off the postcards but I am starting to think of things. Was the Post policed well, like no cigarette butts?

JM: Oh sure.

EH: Immaculate.

TH: It's an era when the mules you know you told me how the mules would take a cart with coal along Officers' Row and of course, you know, what mules did like horse did plop in the road. I am sure whoever had fatigue detail came along and made sure that...

JM: It probably went all to Coly Brown's garden right down behind NCO quarters now.

TH: But I am saying everything would be policed.

JM: Oh sure, that's what they did. They only worked a few hours a day like from 7 o'clock in the morning to 11:30 and then from 1:30 to 4 o'clock or something and that time they took care of the roads and they policed the area and they delivered whatever they had to do and they gun details that were sent out to the guns kept them all polished and shined and greased and all well lubricated. Us kids could move those 10 and 12-inch guns you know they had big wheels on them like steering wheels on a ship you know and a couple of us kids would get on and pull the spokes you know and see the enemy out there but nobody ever worried about that and we never wrote any pretty things on the side of the gun barrel any of that kind of stuff never did any damage that I know about except stealing the copper tags off the cable.

EH: Stealing copper tags.

JM: Yeah. I must have told you that. Up there is the cable testing tag. I think it told you. Up at that cable testing tag. You know where that is? That's up right front past the maintenance with those buildings that are falling down.

TH: Building 516 the big warehouse, where the overhead railroads are.

EH: The monorail

JM: On a chain whatever and the hoist and that kind of business. That's where they used to put these cables. They would get a half a dozen rolls of new cable. This is mine cable now. This is the stuff they are laying out in the ocean the steel armored cable, you know. Its wired and they would put a certain number of rolls of each shipment of cable in that testing tank and the testing tank would have saltwater in it that was pumped in it from the ocean and one day I think I was up there with you and showed you where those big pipes.

TH: Yeah.

JM: That water could be brought in that thing. Anyhow when they get a new shipment of cable in they would get a hold of both ends of the cable and put identification tags on each pair of tags at each end of the cable. I guess on the other end I guess they probably tied the other ends of the cable together.

EH: So this was a purpose of identification of the cable.

JM: Yeah, of the cable for testing purposes and then they would send down the post electrician with the test equipment and he would check out the cables that were in the testing tank for voltage breakdown for leakage for continuity for all that kind of stuff and they would put little brass tags on each side of each cable pair to identify the cable pair that was being tested so they had one cable pair within this large cable that was bad they could identify that and say don't use this cable when you are using it in the minefields and all the good pairs they could use. So we had, a couple of us kids were out I guess for lunch or whatever it was it must have been lunchtime because it wasn't very far from the cable testing tank to where our school was and we got in there and it was all open just

like it is now and we saw all of these nice bright copper tags attached to the end of the cables. Well, that didn't mean anything to us. They were nice and bright and shiny. So we all decided that we would have a handful of nice and bright and shiny copper tags. So I guess we each had several, you know. We went back to school in the afternoon anyhow and sometime during the afternoon somebody dropped one of these copper tags and it rolled out on the floor and I am sure Miss MacDonald was fit to be tied. You know, wanted to know where did these come from. Where did you kids get these tags and whatever, and of course what could we do but tell her. We were innocent children then. We didn't know enough to lie. We couldn't have found them out in the road then as now. Anyhow Miss MacDonald wanted to know about it. So we told her finally and she probably got in touch with the post electrician and told him that it was some of her kids that had taken the tags off and the wanted the tags back, of course. Then they had to retest all those cable bearings to make sure that they were alright and retag them again. So that's about the only, that's one of the few pieces of devilry that I remember about them when we were kids here at Sandy Hook. Most of the time we knew it was an Army Post, you know. Don't touch, you know. It's not yours. Leave it alone. But I remember that brass tag, copper tag whatever they are.

TH: I don't know if on our first half of the tape about the postcard collection, if we can return to the postcard collection...

JM: Yes.

TH: If I asked you the question about that seawall being built up gradually with stones. You mentioned how they placed them carefully that there it was an art to the placement of the stones.

JM: It was never very high this seawall is only a few feet high. I don't think that this seawall is more than five feet above the level of the ground here on the land side and the other side where the rocks had worked down into the ocean probably the hypotenuse of that triangle was probably a lot more than five feet where that wall was over the side.

TH: Now we are talking about Highland Beach. Was there more because the photograph doesn't show the beach was there a lot of beach on the ocean side of the wall at that time? Is there much more beach?

JM: Well, you can see it looks like the tide is fairly high here.

TH: Yeah. I can see bathers.

JM: So, there was some beach all the way to Sea Bright there was beach some beach because we used to go out frost fishing on that beach in the wintertime and walk all along that thing all the way down to Sea Bright so there was generally some kind of beach there but there were always jetties there and every year almost every year on the railroad contract the railroad would provide the stone and the capability.

TH: Because they had to protect their line going down Sea Bright and Monmouth Beach.

JM: Right of way. Right. Right and they did a pretty good job of it and of course on Sandy Hook they kept a pretty good jetties too because they needed an impact area for firing the shells down the beach from the Proof Battery down there. On the target practice, of course, the targets were out in the ocean. There was no problem there. There was an impact area on the beach and on the beach south of Proof Battery and probably half a mile south of the Proof Battery more or less they had these great big steel cubicle on the beach and they were about they must have been 30 feet cubed and they had these big steel plates on those things that were probably 8 by 10 feet or 10x 10 feet.

TH: Armor plate.

JM: Armor plate that simulated the armor plate or they were examples of the armor plate that were on battleships so they were mounted on something like on 12 x 12 or heavier timbers that constituted the framework of these things and these things were either bolted or fastened onto that framework in some way.

TH: Well, getting back now skipping to your house where you lived on Horseshoe Cove by the Water Pumping Plant, that's an impact area east of you right there that near one of those you must have heard, did you ever hear the impact?

JM: Yeah. We could hear the guns going off but we didn't know. You know, the time element from the discharge of the weapon to the impact on the cubicle would only be a split second to be heard one big boom. That was probably it.

TH: That's a real small area. Did your mom ever, because your mom was home most of the time, correct?

JM: Sure.

TH: Did that ever shake the house? Did she ever maybe make comments about it?

JM: Oh sure we would get a telephone message for instance in the Pumping Plant for dissemination of news throughout the area down there in Horseshoe Cove that there is gonna be target practice tomorrow from 10 to 12. We recommend you take the pictures off the wall, take the glasses off the shelves and we did that religiously. If we you know knew a gun was gonna be tested or they would have target practice we would go through that operation because we didn't want the pictures to fall.

EH: How often, roughly are you talking about?

JM: Oh I don't have any idea.

EH: Once a week?

JM: Maybe so.

EH: Really.

JM: They did the target practice business that was all done in the summer time because they had to tow the targets out in the ocean out there the large rectangular targets that they towed out there for the coast defense weapons and the pyramidal targets that they towed out for the minefield. The mine fields were all out the bay. That's where they used to explode the mines.

TH: Right over here.

JM: Yeah.

TH: From the tip of the hook over a little bit.

JM: Yeah. Now when the harbor was mined for protection purposes of course the mines were laid out in the ocean, up in the narrows of New York and down here off Sandy Hook right into the steamship channel. That's where they expected the German Battleships to come but they didn't. Anyhow they were all controlled from the mine casemate. Have you ever been inside mine casemate?

TH: Yeah, we got in back in May with that bunch of fort buffs and historians that came down May 18<sup>th</sup>.

JM: What's in there now?

TH: Well, some part of it we couldn't into it because the Navy Reserve uses the old mine casemate for their under seas warfare stuff that they do now. But we did go up they took us through one of the inner rooms. A workshop definitely a workshop and then there is a stairs that goes up into what was the...

JM: Observation point.

TH: Yeah but there's a name. Underwater mine commanders station or battery commander, under water mine battery commander station, something like that where you finally get up to the top of the earthwork facing Brooklyn and the ocean. It's a concrete like a battery commander station you see on the disappearing gun batteries but it still has all the glass in it because no vandal can get up in there because...

JM: Like in the mortar battery.

TH: Yeah yeah. And it just comes up out of the earthwork, the slope of the earthwork and only about two or three feet of that square concrete roof is above the earthworks. It's got all the windows intact and it's very clean inside and its in very good shape. It's got all the wiring in there and everything works all, the large oblong...



EH: Really?

TH: Oh yeah. Because Navy Reservist kept it up all these years.

JM: When we were here there was a little building inside of that.

TH: Yes its there in the courtyard.

JM: In the courtyard and that's where all the equipment was. The switchboard was in there.

TH: Right.

JM: The indicator lights, the switches, everything and there's probably a battery room in there too.

TH: Yeah that's there.

JM: To energize the cables that went out and the switchboards were there that weren't very big. The switchboard I guess was about as big as that wall from there to there as I recall I think for the different positions they had for the mine field and there were a number of switches with the lights and they could either set the switches so that the lights could go off on contact if a ship got close to them you know disturbed the water the mine would automatically go off or they could have manual firing. The man up in the tower would say you know I think the target is in our area now and fire the mine. And they could control them there from that mechanism for the mine casemate and I would like to see the inside of that thing again.

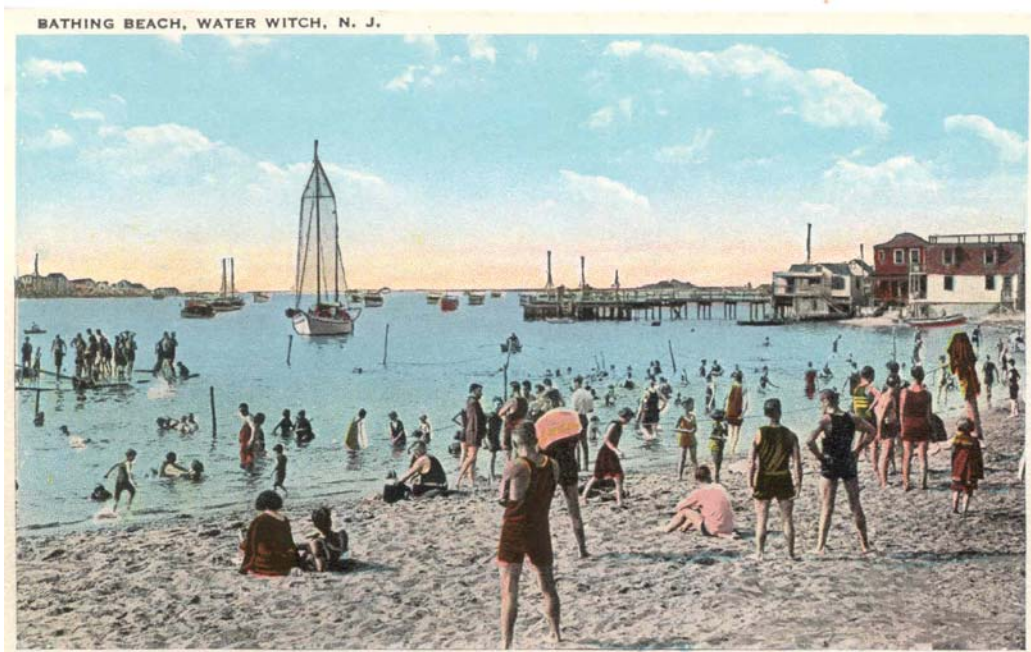
TH: Well, let's go in there sometime. We do have a contact with the Navy Reserve.

EH: You have to make special arrangements.

EH: (First sentence is cut off.) ...Tom Hoffman, Park Historian. Tape recording John Mulhern once again. We believe we are up to post card number 16 in the series of the 272 catalog number collection of the Keptchem estate. We discovered that our tape was erased when I was trying to add the information about karin (spelling?) oil. And the famous sunburn that John Mulhern had managed to get with his fair skin. Karin oil in the dictionary was used for treating burns of workmen of iron works in Scotland. It was a lotion of equal parts of linseed oil and limewater applied to burns and scalds, also called lime liniment and before talk about number 16 can you review again how you got this terrific sunburn and how you were wrapped like a mummy with karin oil and bandages?

JM: Well, it was a very simple matter of acquisition as far as sunburns were concerned. All summer long I had been working in Sandlass' ice cream store while everybody else was out swimming out on the beaches, picnicking, having a great time and there I was a

slave of the public selling ice cream cones, ice cream sodas, ice cream sundaes, candy bars and all those things that go with an ice cream candy store. During that summer, I had become acquainted with a little chippie that lived down on the dock and then we had planned after I had stopped working for the summer we would picnic for one day on the old schooner that was down just south of Plum Island. So the fateful day came. She brought some lunch. I brought some lunch and we rode out to the schooner. Well, I was a lovely day and we were on deck most of the time I guess. I really never cared too much about swimming. She loved it and was in the water half the time. Anyhow, during the day I had acquired a very good sunburn. At that time, it really didn't bother me that much. But when I went home to my father's house, my mother said where have you been all day? So she knew I was going out on the schooner out in the river. Well, that night wasn't a very happy night and, of course, as the night wore on the sunburn became more effective. The next day I was scheduled to go to Aunt Mary's house in Brooklyn. That was another part of my one week vacation after Labor Day at Sandlass' bathing beach. And I did. I got on the government boat here at Fort Hancock. Probably the steamer *Ordnance* or the *Harvey Brown* and went on up to New York and my father probably took me over to Aunt Mary's house. Well, when I got there the skin was red and tight and hurt and whatever. So, she was kind of perplexed. None of her children had ever done anything like this. But there I was for a week's vacation and certainly a potential patient for a week. So, she I guess got out some of her home remedies for sunburn and called doctor Murphy and he came by and he said, "Oh my goodness we better wrap that boy up in soft gauze and karin oil," and I was at Aunt Mary's house for about a week in karin oil and soft gauze. And eventually most of the skin stayed on and by the end of the week I was in fair condition to come back to Sandy Hook. But I can tell you fair skinned people sun burn is nothing to play with. And I don't know if karin oil is available anymore or not but I am sure there are other remedies. However keeping out of the sunburn trouble is probably the best policy for fair skinned individuals.



EH: Okay, could you go back now to our post card collection with # 16 and talk about the, "Bathing Beach at Water Witch?" You were talking about the dock outside of the Keoptchem.

JM: The card is erroneously titled.

EH: Right.

JM: This is the bathing beach at Highland Beach.

EH: Right. Right.

JM: The southern extremity of what is now the National Park Service property Sandy Hook and the whole area that you see here was property leased from the Central Railroad of New Jersey by William Sandlass for something like 100 year lease. The people who are on the beach in this particular photograph if they stayed there long enough and enough of their skin was exposed they will probably enjoy a karin oil bath too one place or another. Sandlass Beach was a fair sized piece of property. A large part of the area was devoted to a Bamboo Gardens, to a pavilion, a dining pavilion to the hotel to the bathing houses or bath houses. I suppose about five or six acres maybe of the property was devoted to small cottages that were owned by the people who built them. The people who built the cottages rented the land from Sandlass. In this particular photograph you can see about a half dozen of those cottages and extending out into the bay is a dock in which the steam boats used to land. Many years ago steam boats used to pass from Sandy Hook Bay between Plum Island and Sandy Hook proper then come up to this dock and then come through the drawbridge into Highlands. The water is good right off that dock at the time right where this photograph was taken. A number of people who lived in the cottages had little motor boats or little row boats. A number of people fished off the end of the dock. There was some clamming went on in the area north of the dock. Some of the people who lived in these cottages were people of some of this world's goods of some earthly support and some of them lived in fine homes in metropolitan New York and elsewhere. One of the characters that lived in one of these buildings or one of the families lived here was the family of Minister Koeptchem who was an evangelical Lutheran Minister and had his church on 45<sup>th</sup> Street in New York for many years. He had four sons, one of whom was a minister and the one I knew best was Paul Koeptchem, the fella who donated all of these postcards we have in this collection and which we are chatting about today. Paul died several years ago and his estate through his estate I came by way of all of these postcards. Interesting to have them. Some of them go back to around 1906 and most of them are later than that. (Tape stops and restarts.)

EH: We are talking about clam chowder now.

JM: The only clam chowder that I really remember around these parts and even in Brooklyn years later is what we now call Manhattan clam chowder. This is the clam chowder that has an overriding taste of tomatoes. However, clam chowder is more than tomatoes and clam. All kinds of things went into the clam chowder. For instance

potatoes, celery, always salt pork or bacon, bacon that could have been fried out maybe and the bacon juice fried up and crackled bacon went in the clam chowder. To this very day, anyone who offers me clam chowder without having some fried out bacon or bacon juice in it is not doing me any favor. When I make it from home and I do it from time to time starting with the clams and sand and going up from there I would generally add the salt pork or bacon to the mixture and then cook it until you might say the cows come home. The longer you cook clam chowder the better it gets. And probably the second day around is even better than the first day but I don't get a lot of sympathy when I say we got to add some bacon to that clam chowder because bacon as a lot of you know is verboten from many people's diets.

EH: Do you recall when you lived down on Sandy Hook the great expectation of having, or was it a big event to have, or a common occurrence to have a clam chowder made by your mother.

JM: In our house clam chowder was not a very, a very common product. When we had clams and decided what kind of clams we wanted and what was gonna be done with them we generally had steamed clams and the usual white shell soft clams that you find in the area and generally just steamed clams and if it happened that my mother wanted to make clam fritters or fried clams we would go to the area in Horseshoe Cove where we knew the large black shelled clams with real luscious yellow meat grew in the ground and these were soft clams that would measure probably anywhere from 2 ½ to 4 inches in length. To eat a steamed clams, they weren't that delicious but to be chopped up to make clam fritters or to be deep fried they were very, very palatable morsels. About I don't think my mother made clam chowder very often but I am sure that when she did it was as I had previously said that we'd be cooked until the cows came home. Of course we, all the cooking was done on a coal range in the kitchen. A coal range that had six stove lids on it and it was alright to get the clam chowder basically cooking and then push it off to one of the other stove lids and just let it simmer until you had the urge for clam chowder whether it was that day or the next day. In the matter of steaming clams as done for us was a novel arrangement. When we went to dig clams and Mary or myself or maybe my father and myself went to dig clams we would generally collect them in a five gallon oil can. That was a can that was square in cross section and about 18 inches tall I guess. So we would feed the clams into that, bring them home, wash out the can and the clams with a garden hose and then take the can full of clams over to the pumping station boiler room where my dad worked and pipe down into the bucket of clams, cover the bucket of clams with a couple of burlap sacks and then turn on the 120 lb pressure steam. Well, that steam at 120 lbs pressure is mighty hot and it wouldn't take very long for those clams to pop open and all the clam juice that was in the clam shells would be in the bucket. So in a matter of minutes in the steaming of clams the job would be done and the five gallon bucket, oil can would be taken back to our house and my mother would serve the clams and whatever else was to be done with the clams. Now when you got clam broth out of that bucket believe me that was real clam broth. That wasn't water in which people sometimes cooked their clams. This was real concentrated clam broth. I don't know whether we had that every Friday in Lent or not but I know we had it every once in a while.

TH: You also mentioned something I would like to point out is the coal burning stove. This is at your house down by the water pumping station? That's an interesting...today we take it for granted that either a gas burning stove or an electric stove. With a coal burner you would have to start from scratch, right? Your mom would have to make a fire in it to keep it going. Is there any trick?

JM: My mom or my pop or myself and I was the oldest of the four children so it became my job to bring in the kindling wood and start the fire when it was necessary. But starting a fire was a rare occasion. The fire just kept on burning all the time. You only had to build a new fire if somebody neglected to shake out the ashes or forgot to put the coal on or forgot to tilt the lids on the stove at nighttime so that air could get into the chimney without going through the coal. It was like a check damper in a furnace that most of know about I guess. When you open the check damper the coal burns very slowly. If you close the check damper the thing fires up (inaudible). The same thing happened with the kitchen stove. The kitchen stove had a damper on the bottom below the firebox and it had a damper in the chimney where you could shut off the gas going up the chimney too and if you wanted to slow down the fire still more at night when the fire was banked you would simply tilt the lids on the top of the stove and that would allow cold air to get in there and sort short circuit you might say the normal air passage to the chimney and the damper in the chimney would only be partly open. But I am sure we were always cautious enough that none of us were suffocated with carbon monoxide and I am not even sure we knew about carbon monoxide.

EH: Did we talk about what this item is in the center, not in the center but off to the left side of the postcard is this odd looking frame sticking up into the air and I don't think we mentioned it before.

JM: Well, I am sure to most seagoing folks this would be recognized as a sailing yacht. Apparently there are two masts on it and it's either a catch or a yawl. But this still could be Fanny Farmer's Yawl. Fanny Farmer and her brother who was in the Navy and the family spent a lot of their time in the summer on this yacht. The name of which was *Lantana*. L-A-N-T-A-N-A. This picture goes back a long time during, I guess World War I probably or thereabouts and many years later, many years later. I was down in Annapolis with my brother Leo, my younger brother who kept a boat in the Annapolis area and said come over here I want to show you something and we walked over and sure enough here was this very same *Lantana* after many, many years and it didn't look the same kind of a boat as when Fanny Farmer's family had that yacht but it was being rebuilt at that time. It was still that fine looking yacht that it was when Fanny Horn was on it. I guess I got carried away with the candy. It was Fanny Horn that was the owner of the boat, her father and family so you can make that correction when you are going over the transcription, Fanny Horn. Fanny Horn was an excellent swimmer, one of the star swimmers at Highland Beach at that time.

EH: Okay should we move onto Number 17? Number 17 in the series is captioned river front at Highland Beach, New Jersey and it's really accentually a brown and white postcard with the letters strung at Highland Beach.



RIVER FRONT AT HIGHLAND BEACH, N. J.

JM: I guess in later days we would probably call this a sepia tone.

EH: Right.

JM: Well, this is the scene that we certainly all saw a great many a times those of us who lived around these parts. The beach in almost its entirety the bathing beach may be seen in this card. On the very foreground are the ice breakers that were put there to protect the railroad trestle and the bridge that went from Highlands to Highland Beach. Ice would come into the river, it would go up onto this construction here and the case of ice would break as they moved up on the cakes of ice and then in smaller parts would flow under the bridge. Just beyond the ice breakers is one of the docks, one of the Sandlass docks and some of the fancy come in their yachts there was a dock at which they could tie their boat if they weren't mooring in the river and walk into the Bamboo Garden. As a matter of fact, at the very end of the dock now at the left end of the dock there apparently is a launch that is coming in and very likely to tie up at that dock. I guess anybody who tied up there was expected to either go ashore and buy a glass of beer or an ice cream soda or a cocktail or maybe have lunch on the Sandlass pavilion. Parts of the Bamboo Garden are visible at the right hand corner of this picture in the upper foreground I guess it is and when the sun would get around to the west sometime canvas screens and sometimes bamboo screens would be rolled down to protect the people who were sitting at the table in that section of the bamboo garden from the hot west summer sun. Normally, that would be all open to the weather. Towards the right hand upper half of the card you see the roof of the Bamboo Garden. To the left of that is one of the cupolas on the bathing beach. The tall tower that's higher than anything else in the picture housed the offices of

the Sandlass Company. The large building just to the left of that is where the private bathhouses were and just below that is a sort of a grandstand for those who enjoy looking at the bathers to be shielded from the sun. To the left of that whole business and bearing in nomenclature Highland Beach are the bathhouses which were rented out to whoever wanted to rent them out. On top of them, on top of the bathhouses are catwalks and poles which supported clothes lines so that after the people were finished using the bathing suits that they had rented for the day they would be sloshed around in a tub they had for the purpose and hung up on the clothes lines on top of that section of the bathhouse that is marked beach to dry and be ready by the next day for the customers that came. And in those days I think that nearly all the bathing suits that were rented were always woolen bathing suits so I guess they, bathing suits dried out reasonably well I suppose unless it happened to be a damp day but they would be ready for the next day's customers in any case. So if you went to Sandlass without a bathing suit you would hire a bathing suit and for the cost of hiring a bathing suit you would also have a couple of towels and to all intensive purposes they would be returned to Sandlass when you were on your way out of the bathhouses. All of the bathhouses of course had floors like duckboards so that any sand or any water that might be on your feet by the time you got it there would just go down through the cracks in the floor onto the beach below. You might be lucky enough if you were under the bathhouses I suppose at sometime or another to find a nickel or a dime or a quarter that dropped out of somebody's trousers while getting dressed or otherwise. I never found any gems of the Madonna there or anything like that. The left end of this row of bathhouses is one of the cottages that we spoke about before on the beach at Sandlass'. I suppose it could have been Monday in this picture because I can see the family wash hanging out on the line outside of Julia Kelly's cottage. Julia Kelly was the one that had the first cottage at the north end of the bathhouses. It was a cottage was one with many rooms which she would rent out for a weekend or whatever to go to who wanted to use her space. There are some people on the diving boards here just beyond the dock. If you look closely again just beyond the launch coming in to the dock you can see seven people, six or seven people standing on the diving boards. Even some people I can see in this photo appear to be carrying sun umbrellas. Evidently it was a bright and sunshiny day.

EH: Which were rented? Umbrellas could be rented at Sandlass Beach? Okay. You talked about laundry before. Actually how did people wash clothes around 1908 to '27 that you can recall because that's a question we have come up with? Did they use a scrub board? What are your recollections of laundry?

JM: They used a washboard.

EH: Right.

JM: A washboard.

EH: Okay. What was the soap? Was it the brown Kirkman's soap?

JM: Kirkman's or octagon.

EH: Okay, I have to buy that.

JM: The same product that is now used for such products as mosquito as poison ivy...

TH: Poison ivy, yeah.

EH: What about Borax? I thought that was as old as the hills?

JM: It is. But I don't know if that was ever used in washing somehow or another. The washboards, some of them were made out of wood. Some of them were made out of galvanized iron and some of them were made out of glass and the glass ones were the best of all. They were relatively strong. They were ribbed just like the galvanized iron washboards and the person who was doing the wash put the washtub up on a couple of chairs and the washboard was on the edge of the washtub and they just rubbed the clothes on there until they got clean. Sometimes they would have two washtubs. Sometimes they would have two washtubs and a wash boiler. So that if some of the clothes were particularly dirty the clothes would be put in this wash boiler which was big enough to cover two lids on the coal stove and they would just simmer away there in whatever soap the Madame of the house had convenient and let the clothes boil in there and every once in a while they would be stirred with a some sort of a convenient stick so that they really didn't rest on the bottom of the washtub, of the wash boiler. And among the things that you have in the Museum at Sandy Hook and I guess still there is the bottom of one of those wash boiler which I found down behind the location of our old garden. Down behind the house there at Camp Lowe.

EH: The boiler, the bottom that you found is a long oval piece. What would the boiler look like?

JM: It was oval also and it was about that high.

EH: Which would have high walls like a two foot high basin, basically.

JM: Two foot high or 20 inches maybe.

EH: And very long.

JM: The same length as the bottom. Oval. And once in a while you see those in antique shops. Once in a while.

EH: Did the people use the bleach in your memory and bluing? Most of the things that I thought were standard.

JM: For bleach they used chlorinated lime. Chlorinated lime is still available in the market. It comes in a box about that size, a canister about that big because chlorinated lime was corrosive. So when that was used in washing a very small quantity of it was



used and it was kind of a dangerous project. The chlorine was released from the chlorinated lime very readily in a water solution so you could smell it. The wash was cooking on the boiler or in a wash tub you could still smell it. And it was a dangerous commodity and once in a while somebody in a fit of anger would throw like a handful of chlorinated lime at somebody and if the person eyes happened to be open they just might be blinded by the chlorinated lime. Hazardous product. Also it was sometimes used for clearing for cleaning out sink drains and stuff. It is still used for that purpose.

EH: It's that lye?

JM: Chlorinated lye or lime. Chlorinated lime is what it is called. I think it is still called that. Anyhow that can be confirmed but in using that it was always possible that while you were using it for cleaning purposes you might drop a couple of drops of water into the open can of chlorinated lime and if by any chance if you closed that can of chlorinated lime and if sometime later you tried to use it and pried it open there just might be an explosion of chlorinated lime out of the top of that can. So it was a dangerous product. But that was the only kind of bleach that I can ever remember being used.

EH: With the scrub board and the brown soap was there also a scrub brush to use? Was there an actual small scrub brush to like clean collars or anything like that?

JM: Not that I can remember. They just got the treatment on the ridges and in the wash board. The wash tubs and once in a while you see those were about 30 inches in diameter I guess and they were about 12 or 14 inches high. Always made out of galvanized iron. Always made with two handles, one on each side. Those tubs were used not only for doing the family laundry in but they were for use for the Saturday night baths for the family. So the kids would get in the bath tubs or the grown ups would get in the bathtubs or the washtub and that constituted the bathing facility.

EH: How did people bathe once a week?

JM: Pardon me?

EH: How did they bathe once a week?

JM: Just like you bathe once a day.

EH: It's so hard to imagine though. Did people smell more pungently?

JM: I don't remember that. If they did they all smelled the same.

EH: Incredible.

TH: I could just, I have seen pictures and old movies where the housewife is doing the wash on the washboard and everything. You have come a long way.

EH: Thanks a lot. (laughter)

TH: Today you just throw the things into a metal machine and it's all done.

EH: That's right.

JM: If you only wash one a week for a year at the end of the year once a week would probably be too frequently. You just get used to living with yourself.

TH: It is incredible because I know every day I have got to take a bath. (Tape ends and restarts.) Then the one back here.

EH: Postcard number 18 is almost identical to number 17 except that 18 is in color, multi-color and 17 is brown.



TH: I am interested in the ice breakers there which were that's like downstream, just downstream from the actual vehicular and pedestrian bridge.

JM: Yeah there on the bayside.

TH: I am interested in at times of severe winter with the river ice it never could pull that out?

JM: Never did that I know about. See the ice didn't form solidly around these. This is the high velocity water movement area.

TH: Sure yeah.

JM: So the ice would come down and ride up on these things and then drop off in pieces.

TH: So it's designed to go up and on it and break on it.

JM: Yeah and these went all the way from Sandlass over to the drawbridge. And those structures you see there were south.

TH: Yes.

JM: Considerably south of these because there were these things and then there were the buoys that hit the drawbridge and then there was the railroad trestle and the railroad trestle was south of the bridge. It crossed the bridge in the drawbridge area and in the Highlands area the railroad tracks were on part of the bridge but once you got past the drawbridge going east the trestle for the railroad turned off the bridge. Now you have pictures of that.

TH: Yeah. It's almost like a crisscross.

JM: Those launches, I don't know if we asked you but those launches would belong to people who would just pull up as a pull in to at a drive in restaurant with their cars? But this is with a boat. You can actually...

JM: A motor home, a motor hotel. I don't know tom but some of these might have been rented launches. Somebody might have taken people out for a ride or somebody might have hired one of these. That's a pretty big launch. That must be 30 feet long, that one.

TH: Yeah. It's very long.

JM: See look at these people and you look at that launch, that must be 30 feet long.

TH: Sure. That's a real long one. Also boats back then seemed to be designed with like an oval like a deck area on the bow and the stern...

JM: A cockpit.

TH: Yeah a cockpit. Even then the workmanship even on a small boat at the time is really you know you don't have that today.

JM: There's the other one has a cover on it. See the canvas cover up.

TH: Yeah a sunshade.

JM: This one probably has one that is folded down or something. Maybe it doesn't either.

TH: Also in the brown and white post card these are the screens that are down and in the color its...

JM: Oh, yeah I missed that.

TH: I am sorry the screens are up in the brown and white and in the color they are down.

JM: That's interesting and I ma not sure but I think this must be in fact I hadn't thought about this in 99 years. This is that little airplane that Sandlass had out there in the Bamboo Gardens.

TH: Airplane?

JM: Yeah the kids could get up.

TH: It was like for children?

JM: Yeah. See it here?

TH: Oh yeah. It blends right in. This is color postcard 272.18 and on the right hand side on the beach you can see an old bi-plane. It almost looks like the Wright Brothers.

JM: It looks like this is the support for that but the airplane has been taken off it.

TH: Yes. It's a platform and the airplane isn't on it. In postcard 272.17 the brown and white sepia tone postcard you can see the platform but there is no airplane on it. So that was like a little playground area for the children?

JM: Yeah.

TH: Huh. It almost looks like the famous Wright airplane, the Wright brothers airplane that flew at Kitty Hawk.

JM: Yeah. There are even wheels on that thing. I guess there are. There are wheels there. And there's a boat up under the edge of the airplane wing too. See this.

TH: Okay. Yes. Yeah. It's way up on the beach.

JM: Here's the wheel.

TH: That's something the children could play on.

JM: This even looks like it has a propeller on it on this side.

TH: Yep.

JM: It is probably one that would spin just when the wind was blowing.

TH: By the way, the last time we talked, I can't recall. There was a reason for the screens or shades, the large shades. What was that for privacy?

JM: No. Just to keep the sun off the people.

TH: Oh okay.

JM: I suppose if there was some kind of fancy party up there at night and they didn't want people looking in on it could be privacy.

TH: The big nights would be what nights in the summertime? Would be the weekend?

JM: Saturday.

TH: Saturday night? Saturday night. How long would they go or be open? Sandlass'...

JM: 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning.

TH: That must have sounded really neat down there.

JM: That was a tough day for me. 8 o'clock in the morning to 2 o'clock the next morning and then get up and be back in the store at 8 o'clock.

TH: And you had to get all the way up to the...

JM: Walk over behind Twin Lights. We lived over...

TH: Oh this is when you lived over in Highlands.

JM: And then when we lived down here I was still working there. I would either ride my bicycle or come in on an Army truck or ride the train. Come out on the train in the morning and maybe take my bicycle on the baggage car.

TH: Where would you pick up, say you were going to go, this is the morning now and you were going to leave your house at the Water Pumping Station by Horseshoe Cove where would you pick up the train?

JM: Just walk out to Atlantic Avenue, Atlantic Drive where the train crossed the tracks and that was one of the stops.

TH: That was near the Y? The famous Y split.

JM: Yeah. I would put my bicycle in the baggage car. Somebody would help me put the bicycle or Jim Kelly or Andy Kelly would know I was gonna put the bicycle on and they might help or might have the train stop a little longer to drag it up on the platform.

TH: Was that an official train stop or was that just a...

JM: Yeah it was like a flag stop.

TH: It was a flag and they would actually stop a train.

JM: Oh sure.

TH: How big would a train normally be? They had a steam locomotive.

JM: Two cars.

TH: And two passenger cars? Hmm. That must have been...

JM: Just like we have in those pictures.

TH: And you take you bike along with you.

JM: For the Highlands, Highland Beach, Sandlass. I would have it there all day and ride home at night.

TH: Where would the train go from there by the way? Would they usually if they left you up at Sandlass Beach would they go over the river or could they continue...

JM: No. They just go back in Sandy Hook.

TH: How would they do that John?

JM: Just back up.

TH: The train would actually go in reverse?

JM: Oh sure. That is a normal procedure for trains. They just change the direction of the valves.

TH: How about...

JM: If you wanted to get those trains out on the mainline there was a switch at the Highland Beach railroad station just south of the Highland Beach Railroad Station so those trains could go as if they were going to Asbury Park and throw the switch and come back across the Highlands Bridge to Highlands. You must remember that from when I talked to Tom Pike, Jim Pike.

TH: Jim Pike. Yeah. How about the speed of the train?

JM: How about whom?

TH: The speed. How fast do you think the train was going back then when they used to operate on the Hook?

JM: Oh I don't know. Maybe 15 miles per hour. You couldn't get one of them things up to speed in 6 miles.

TH: That's right. Yeah when you stop and think about it. Yeah.

JM: They never went very fast.

TH: Wasn't there another stop. I think you were always telling me...

JM: Battery Gunnison.

TH: Right. That's but I was thinking if you were going south because you had the Y you'd pick up a train but also that the...

JM: Coast Guard Station.

TH: The Spermaceti Coast Guard Station there.

JM: And the Guardhouse.

TH: Yeah the Guardhouse that was down at the south end.

JM: No. The Guardhouse where the Guardhouse is now.

TH: Not our Guardhouse here.

JM: Towards the Highland...

TH: We are talking about, I know what you are talking about yeah... the Ranger Station there. Was that where the Guardhouse was or wasn't it further down?

JM: There was one there and there was one all the way down at Sandlass'

TH: Because that marked the Army boundary or property, okay. Okay.

JM: And a couple of those old Army buildings are still there.

TH: Okay yeah. The red brick.

JM: To the right.

TH: Yes. The red brick building.

JM: I guess so.

TH: Yeah way down at the beginning of the park. They were steam locomotives and I have read especially at Spermaceti Cove from time to time the lifesavers from the Life-saving Station at Spermaceti Cove would be called out when cinders, burning cinders from the...

JM: Would burn the grass.

TH: From the locomotive would burn the grass. Did you ever see that or hear about it?

JM: Oh I am sure I have seen that. Sure I have.

TH: So you took the train.

JM: You don't remember it but you couldn't miss.

TH: Yeah. Yeah. It could happen. I am thinking if you used the train was that free or...

JM: I have some of the, I still have a couple of the passes. Did I give you one of the passes for the train?

TH: You might have.

JM: You have one over there.

TH: Yes. Okay.

JM: I don't know if I gave it to you but I have a couple of them.

TH: And also you used your bike. That would probably be the longest time if you could get on an Army truck or... what kind of trucks were they using then?

JM: Oh liberty trucks with hard rubber tires.

TH: I was gonna ask you.

JM: Anyhow I would tend to go to sleep even going from Sandlass to go home. You know at the end of the day at 10 o'clock you know time for me to be in bed. You know I would probably go to sleep on the truck and by the time we got to the Pumping Station



there somebody would wake me up. "Hey, kid get up." I would get up and take a leak. Is that on there? (Tape stops and restarts.)

TH: Which is in there. Do you want a copy of that?

EH: Well, I am gonna Xerox the whole series.

TH: Okay. And where do we move to next?



RIVER FRONT AT HIGHLAND BEACH, N. J.

EH: Okay this is the post card says river front at highland beach. It's a very rustic type of triangular post and slanted logs. (Same image as relayed earlier)

JM: This is another good photograph of the ice breakers. These are all the ice breakers in this pile of photographs.

EH: Which is an upright log and a sloping log.

JM: Yeah there are three or four of the sloping logs and they are supported at three or four points. They are supported here. They are supported here and supported here and I don't know whether there is anything to weight them down where they are in the ground down there. This is a little dock for yachting purposes out in back of the bamboo garden.

TH: That's coming out into the river. Yeah.

JM: Coming out into the river. And this is just a canvas awing or something on the side of the pavilion here. This is not a wall.

TH: On the right hand side. All that's canvas.

JM: Yeah. That's temporary.

TH: For like screening from sun.

JM: Or from the wind maybe.

TH: Wind yeah.

JM: Or from the rain.

TH: More privacy.

JM: It was easy to install you know so they used it when they had to. What else? You can see the diving board you had photographed in there and the other buildings we had already identified I think. The bathhouses and the racks on them to dry bathing suits and towels. The port, see the observation point and whatever else.

TH: Did anybody ever, you mentioned diving board, did they dive right into the river?

JM: Oh yes.

TH: Did anybody ever get hurt in the times like when you used to work there? Did any of these visitors used to you know hurt themselves. You know, dive off the board and hit a floating log or something? I hate the thought but I was wondering if you, because we have a lot of visitor, well we see a lot more people now a days at Sandy Hook so some people are always going to get cut on something you know what I mean. I was just wondering if they had any similar accidents may years ago?

JM: I don't think they ever did. Somebody might have got his foot cut on the beach on glass. I might have been something like that but it never was any big doings.

TH: Ah huh, but this just came to mind. People do like they do nowadays, they must have gotten sunburn.

JM: Yeah I am sure they did. I did once. I told you about my experience with sunburn. (This section is repeated as they believed they had erased it as relayed at beginning of interview)

EH: Tom had a question about a previous postcard 272.16.

TH: The caption, "Bathing Beach Water Witch?"

EH: Yeah.

TH: That's the Highland Beach unless they are in the left background the left hand side background looking towards the Highland side.

JM: We talked about this once before and we concluded it was a mistake.

TH: Yeah okay. That's not really Water Witch is at the other end of Highlands up there.

JM: Up there where that real big smokestack.

TH: Yeah. Back that's where...

EH: That did not make sense to me either.

TH: Okay. I just wanted to clarify that postcard before.

EH: We are now looking at number 272.18. There's the Highland Beach structures the ice breaker logs, the dock.

TH: And now the awnings those canvas awnings are down now in this photograph on the right side.

EH: Right. So we wonder if you have any comments on number 18.

JM: Oh yeah the awnings I guess had been pulled up.

EH: Rolled up.

JM: They are not in use anymore. Anyhow the little dock is there for any yachtsmen that might come in there. You can see the diving board and there is nobody there now. It was probably very early in the day. Let me see how the shadows are. It must have been very early in the day. There should be some good shadows from those cumulus clouds in the sky. I don't see them.

TH: In the summertime, would that dock get crowded with a lot of boats?

JM: No.

TH: No.

JM: There's another one of those launches that I had spoke about. It probably had a make or break gas engine in it. Make or break was the ignition and a one cylinder engine.

TH: We have a couple of people who are bottle buffs and at the bottom of the Shrewsbury River they scuba dive. Correct?

EH: Mmm hmm.

TH: And find bottles like soda bottles and beer bottles. I was wondering if any of this could have come from

JM: Sandlass' I am sure they did.

TH: Hey look how far I can throw this one. You know what I mean. Littering the, of course now it is history. It's invaluable bottle history. They were throwing in there soda pop bottles.

JM: Evidently there had been some people bathing during the day because their bathing suits are hanging up.

TH: Once again. Would anybody brave swimming out to those ice breakers?

JM: Oh they might have. If Harry Rears was out there they wouldn't go out there. He'd see that they stayed where they were supposed to stay.

TH: And we must bring up the fact that boy when the tide is coming in or the tide is going out that river there as we all know is moving.

JM: Very swift. Some place, did you come across any clipping of Gertrude Ederle?

TH: No. There is none in there. Well, no clippings per se out there. She might have been in the text but most everything is about the founding of the park.

JM: I think I have some, you know about her?

TH: Oh sure. That's where she practiced there.

JM: That's right.

TH: Back and forth in the Shrewsbury River.

EH: Gertrude Ederle.

TH: The first woman to swim the English Channel. She I think is still living. She lives in Florida.

JM: I know I have a photograph of her riding in a Buick convertible with the mayor of Highlands or somebody. I have a photograph of her. Swimming from Sandy Hook to Highlands.

TH: That's where she got her practice in back and forth.

JM: She lived in, you know, where those apartments are when you go down Bay Avenue in the Highlands. Go north on Bay Avenue.

TH: Yeah.

JM: And you go down two or three city blocks from Bahrs and there are some apartments there on the left side of the road. There are about four or five or five or ten.

TH: This is past the post office and the municipal building or is this before?

EH: Before.

JM: About one block down from (inaudible) one block.

TH: Okay.

JM: Gertrude Ederle lived in a bungalow across the street from there someplace. There used to be a bungalow colony in there and she lived in one of those.

EH: I am looking at this post card that follows and right on the side of the cabanas if you could call them that.

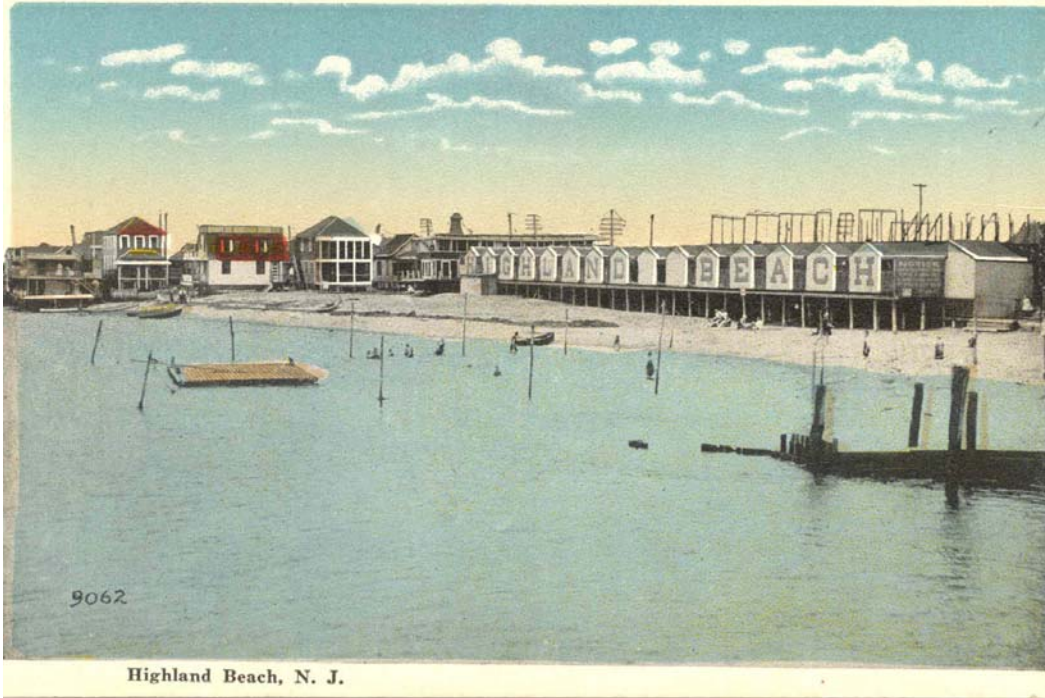
JM: The bathhouses.

EH: It says, "Notice," and then its very small print and it says Highland Beach in big letters that were enormous letters and at the end of beach it says, "Notice." Do you have any recollection of what the notice was warning you about?

JM: It probably was for no trespassing.

EH: Don't go out too far. Or... do you have a clue?

JM: It probably says private property no trespassing. I can see where it says notice on there.



EH: Yeah.

JM: And I am sure I read it a thousand times more or less. In this picture too you can see the old telephone poles with the many cross arms on them and probably the glass petticoat insulators.

TH: Yes.

JM: You see the cross arms on that.

TH: Yes.

JM: I don't know whether all those telephones were connected but connected mostly to that bungalow colony. You know we didn't have the business of multiplexing in those days that you have now where you get several circuit across one wire. So there was probably a separate circuit for each person who had a telephone in that bungalow colony. I think I am gonna have to take off. We have dinner guests at five o'clock.

TH: Okay. (Tape stops and starts again.)

JM: Well, the first concrete road was built in World War I

TH: The concrete slab road. How many lanes was that by the way.

JM: Two.

TH: Just two lanes for one...

JM: And they weren't wide two lanes either.

TH: Narrow road. But we were just mentioning now if you had to be, if you had to go up Sandy Hook leaving work at Sandlass Beach by bicycle.

JM: Yeah all the time that happened. I had a light on that bicycle. You know we used to use those calcium carbide lights. Gas lights. You put a little drop of water on the bottom with the calcium carbide and that would generate the acetylene and that would burn a little glass tip, a little ceramic tip that was in the lamp just like a miners light. Just like those kind of things.

TH: Did you ever, this would be after ten right? Because you would get off work at 10 o'clock at night did you ever run into, not run into anybody but were there ever any people biking or were there soldiers walking?

JM: Very few. Very few. A lot of the soldiers had bikes and they would have them for a while and then something would happen to the bike it would get wrecked or something and then it would be off to the crematory off to, the what is the other name? The incinerator.

TH: The incinerator.

JM: I called it the crematory. The incinerator I never knew that word. But anyway that's where they would go. You know if I needed handlebars for my bicycle or if I needed some other part I would probably go there first to look for the part over there. Take somebody else's bicycle apart that had thrown it away.

EH: It was a graveyard for parts.

JM: One hundred thousand and one parts for bicycles.

TH: The area where we now have our Ranger Station down below would be the military police gate house and now the Ranger Station when you go north of it going up the Hook the area between the northbound and the southbound traffic lane was that heavily wooded like with holly's and cedars when you were...

JM: I am sure it was. There was only one road there.

TH: That went right through the woods.

JM: It was the one well the railroad tracks were in there.

TH: Yeah they went through there too right alongside the road.

JM: Just east of the road.

TH: The trains didn't run at night though. So I guess after a certain time I guess at the end of the day...

JM: Oh yeah, the last train that left the Highlands was generally around 4:30. And that would be to pick up the school kids. It might have been a little bit later than, it might have been a little bit after 5 o'clock because the people from the ordnance machine shops would have to go home and it seems to me that I recall that the train would leave down here right alongside the machine shops there used to be a regular train station there where the flagpole was. There was a flagpole there and that's where the train would stop and all the people from the ordnance would get on it and is that thing going on.

TH: Yeah.

JM: That's where the people would go after they finished work and they would wait for that train. That they generally quit work around 4 or 4:30 in the afternoon. So then they would ride out to the Highlands, Highlands Beach and then maybe the train would be scheduled to come back in here at 5 or 5:30. I don't remember specifically the time for that. Although someplace I have the timetable for the train schedule. And the, if any kids were late coming home from school they would also get on that train. If they would have to come down by trolley car or civilian train from Leonardo to either the Highlands or Highlands Beach to get on the train and come home. So that would be the last trip of the day. And as a matter of fact, I don't remember any trains that ran at night. If there was any transportation required in or out of Sandy Hook at nighttime it would be provided by hard rubber tired liberty truck and then there wasn't much going on at night at Sandy Hook. But anybody off Sandy Hook would want to be here unless during mobilization periods, during war periods or before or after and there was some social events at the dance hall or movie house or something some trucks might be run out to the Highlands or the community center or to Long Branch to a community center to pick up some of the ladies to come down and spend their evening at Sandy Hook. Then they would go off again of Sandy Hook by truck not by train. So the first train in the morning would probably leave the station down there just across the street from the Officers' Club maybe about 7 o'clock in the morning. To go out and pick up the people who were due in to work at Sandy Hook at 8 o'clock in the morning when the machine shops started up. But and during the day there was the early train out to pick those people up and I am not so sure that was the train we went to school on or not but they would make that trip down here and they would make one more trip down to Highlands in the morning. Two trips in the morning and come back and then there would be a trip at 1 o'clock in the afternoon and that would be to take the shopping ladies out to up in the Highlands and then that train would come back around 3:30 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon. And I guess by the time it got back here it was time to load up the workers from the ordnance machine shops and take them back out to the Highlands and then a train would come up and fold a tent like the Arabs and go to sleep for the night.



TH: Up by them machine shops they used to have that engine house a red brick engine house where they put the engines in.

JM: The Roundhouse

TH: Roundhouse, Roundhouse.

JM: The original round house would hold about 5 engines, 4 or 5 engines and then many years later the Corps of Engineers felt they needed a Roundhouse and they built that building that is right alongside of the mine casemate in which you could put two locomotives.

TH: Yeah terra cotta brick yeah.

JM: And that's the one that I worked on for Johnny Simpson. Hoisting the terra cotta brick up so the masons could lay it up there to build the building.

EH: When was that? How old were you at the time? Do you have any idea?

TH: It was supposedly built around 1919, 1920

JM: 1920 and I was 15 years old at the time. Or whatever I was picking up the work for Johnny Simpson.

TH: What kind of bike did you have at the time? Was it any particular brand?

JM: I had an Irish Johnson. That was one and I had a Mead Cycle Company bicycle and I had a Rollfast.

TH: Names I am not too familiar with.

JM: The Irish Johnson was the best of the tree.

TH: Would those be inflated tires?

JM: Oh yes. (Tape ends interview ends.)

### **END OF INTERVIEW**

(Editor's note: This interview explaining the postcards continued on February 27, 1985

EH: ...February 27, 1985 and this is tape number 4 to conclude the last remaining postcards of the Paul Koepchem estate. Catalog #272 and we are up to postcard # 20.

TH: Yeah. I just want to mention on 19 there's that sign on the side that says notice but everything else under the magnifying glass cannot be read so.

EH: Okay, we tried.

TH: A big notice sign on the side of the changing houses or bath houses.

JM: Bathhouses.

TH: I guess to warn people that you had to pay to use facilities.

JM: It probably said this property is private property. Changing of clothing is prohibited under the bathhouse. Violators of any of the rules of the beach will be promptly prosecuted. Signed William Sandlass is probably what it said on that sign.

TH: Did we mention anything about the houses over here at the north end of these bungalows or two story dwellings?

JM: I am sure that we mention them in one of the on one of these card descriptions. Most of them were two story buildings. A number of them were one story buildings. It looks to me like one of these little buildings conceivably could be a houseboat that might have moved in there. This looks like it could have been a house boat. At one time and I think we talked about this before Down Sea beach house boat was pulled up on the beach down there and this is it. This is Captain Dow's house boat. You see all those poles along there? You see the roof of that porch?

TH: Yeah, that is what we are talking about here is above the bathhouses that say have the word Highland you can see like posts. It's a flat house. It's got a flat roof.

EH: Above the letters...

TH: Highland.

EH: Highland...

TH: No, yeah. You can see...

EH: A long horizontal building.

JM: Just a back end of the house boat right there. And this is the houseboat. That was Captain Dow's house boat. Captain Dows was a Captain Dow at #2, the current Visitor Center (Spermaceti Cove). He was in charge of that Life-saving Station there, Captain Dow and every year, every year this houseboat was moved out of the Sandlass property and brought down here to the Coast Guard property and stored on the beach down there for the winter and for the springtime that would again be re floated and taken out up to Highland beach and moved up on the beach there to Sandlass' Beach. And would be there for the summer. And that went on for many summers and I don't know how many. But on one of the trips from Sandy Hook to Highlands, I am sure it was around that time

that the Coast Guard ruled that the houseboat was no longer sea worthy. So, they moved the houseboat, this entire house boat through the bridge in the Highlands and put it on the beach there where Dow Sea Beach is. Do you remember that restaurant, Dow Sea Beach? That was the remains of the house boat for a good many years. And then they built other things on that little property.

TH: Property yeah.

JM: And they built a bath house and they built a swimming pool and all those kinds of things there. This house boat had several rooms. I don't know how many, five or six rooms probably on each side on both floors. So Nancy May would rent rooms to people to stay in the house boat in their room at the houseboat for the weekend or for how ever long that was required. But that is the houseboat and I don't remember if I mentioned it to you before.

EH: No.

TH: That's pretty high up and on the beach. How did they get the, did they drag it up somehow?

JM: Oh I am sure they would just roll it up on big wooden rollers. That's the way they moved everything that was big in those days big wooden rollers that would be 8 inches in diameter, 10 inches in diameter maybe. Not much bigger than that because too much leverage going on so the smaller ones were easier to handle. And they probably had a team of horses to pull it up or a team of mules.

TH: Right.

JM: Or some other contraption but this was a small houseboat down at the end. If I keep looking at these things long enough I will learn things I never knew about before. (Tape stops and restarts.)

TH: So, that is very interesting. You can see now like a boat up on the...

JM: Yeah. It's like a little deck on the back end of the houseboat. And the houseboat was called *Nancy May* and Nancy May was Captain Dow's wife's name.

TH: How about all these houses there? Was that a seasonal place or did they live there year round did they live there year round.

JM: Seasonal place.

TH: Summer time cottages.

JM: The cottages were all owned by somebody or other but the owners rented the land from Sandlass on which the cottages were built.

TH: And maybe I asked this the last time we talked and met about Sandlass Beach but was there water, running water for those houses?

JM: Oh yes. Yes.

TH: So they actually had piped in water?

JM: Oh yes. And there was some kind of sewage but I don't know what kind it was. And a number of them had oil stoves for cooking you know oil ranges for cooking. I don't know if any of them had any gasoline ranges and it seems like the bottled gas that we have now they didn't have then. They did in later years but not in the early years. A lot of them were these little 2, 3 and 4 burner oil stoves that were about this long, this wide and they had a wick type burners in a can that was about this big around with a little glass door on it or something so you could see the thing. Something like the oil stove burners that were used in houses to keep houses warm long ago. You remember those convection oil stoves that were about that high and about that big around and they would hold about a gallon of kerosene with a wick in it and just a cylinder and the heat would come out of the stove from the burning wick. You could put a tea kettle on top of them to warm hot water but most of those had something like those oil burners because there was no gas down there. There was no gas on that strip. Now they might have had an electric hotplate. They all had electricity and some of them you can see the electric poles going. You know the electric pole right there.



VIEW FROM HIGHLAND BEACH, HIGHLANDS, N. J.

TH: Sure. Yeah. Okay. We will move onto postcard 272.20 and its entitled, "View from Highland Beach," and its looking west at Highlands across the river but in the foreground there's the long dock coming out and once the ladies are all dressed up and there are some of those boats we're noticing. Launches I guess you would call them back then?

MJ: Launches is what they are called. That's right. There are several of them there. There is a little dory in the foreground. That might have been Harry Myers Life-saving boat. Harry Myers was the head lifesaver at Sandy Hook. This is really quite an elaborate yachting picture I would say. I think this, I am gonna have to go over my pictures and see if I have any more like this and I would like to lend a photograph of this type to the *Courier*, that's the Middletown Township newspaper and they are very anxious to borrow photographs of things having to do with this part of the world. And that is very good. I think that arrangement of yachts is terrific.

TH: John, do you think a lot of these yachts were people who landed at the dock and came in for something to eat or drink?

JM: I don't. I sort of don't think so. I think they were people, I think they were cruising yachts. They just docked in there for as long as they wanted to stay like a weekend or whatever. It looked like in this picture that the tide is going out. You can see all the boats that the sterns are toward the north.

TH: Okay.

JM: See the anchor lines.

TH: Right.

JM: Even ones that are out in the middle of the river are that way.

TH: Good point. That's right. That is rather a good crowd though. I can see 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, about 15 people in the...

JM: That's terrific isn't it? That whole thing is. I think that's a very fine photograph. Too bad we don't know who made these. Americhrome, (inaudible) New York.

TH: But the dock was also a part of the Highland Beach operation there?

JM: Establishment, yes it was. It went back into the back of the Bamboo Gardens.

TH: So you could literally tie up your boat and...

JM: Go in there for a sandwich or go for lunch or whatever....

**END OF INTERVIEW**

**Highland Beach, New Jersey:  
A Jersey Shore Destination  
1881-1962**

**SANDY HOOK  
GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**Written by: Andrew McCollough, student intern**

**Compiled and Edited by: Mary Rasa, Museum Curator  
December 2005**

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## Introduction

Hundreds of beachgoers, bicyclists and historically inclined tourists travel onto Sandy Hook each day in search of a relaxing, invigorating or informative adventure. The entrance to Sandy Hook Peninsula is a mere 100 yards in width and visitors to the Sandy Hook Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area must pass through this area along their journey. Yet, despite the fact that the southern portion of Sandy Hook is heavily trafficked on a daily basis, little is known about the rich, vibrant history that has shaped this area since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides a white cedar shake house in need of a paint job that is veiled in the darkness of the ramp for the Highlands Bridge and an obscure concrete pathway once heavily traveled by visitors, sand dunes and dune grass are all that remain to tell of this site's energetic past.

## Early History

On February 28, 1881 Anthony and Mary S. Reckless sold Wardell Beach to The Highland Beach Association for \$10,000. Wardell Beach was subdivided by the Highland Beach Association into 74 building lots and was renamed Highland Beach.<sup>1</sup> This transference of ownership set a precedent for the profound changes that would shape this area over the next 82 years. With the development of easily accessible transportation, residents of northern New Jersey and New York eagerly swarmed to Highland Beach. "The nearest available ocean beach on the New Jersey coast..."<sup>2</sup> On November 1, 1882 Lot number 1 was sold by the Highland Beach Association to the Atlantic Highland Association for \$1,500.<sup>3</sup> Less than 10 years later, on July 29, 1892, the Atlantic Highlands Association sold Lot number 1 to the United States of America with riparian rights for \$1,500.<sup>4</sup> On July 27, 1892 the Highland Beach Association sold Lots 2 through 22 to the United States of America for \$19,000. This established a permanent boundary line between the private property of Highland Beach and government owned property boundary of Fort Hancock.<sup>5</sup>

On November 1, 1887 The Highland Beach Association leased Lots 23 through 28 and lots 30 through 33 to The Highland Beach Improvement Company at yearly fixed rates for 10 years.<sup>6</sup> A December 14, 1887 article in the Red Bank Register commented on the pending plans for construction. "The name has been changed to Highland Beach. Plans of the buildings to be erected by the association are nearly finished. There will be a new depot, bathing, music, and dancing pavilions, stores, pagodas of unique styles of architecture, hotels and other fine buildings."<sup>7</sup> Thus began the development of an area that would eventually become renowned for its pleasant and enjoyable atmosphere. "By 1889 several cottages had been built on the northern most plots of land and offered for sale."<sup>8</sup> Cabanas were constructed earlier as a private beach club around 1887 and by 1888, the Highland Beach Gravity Railroad (an early roller coaster) had been built. The area was teeming with activity as beach goers flocked from all over. "Highland Beach is an excursion resort, especially designed for family parties, though larger excursions can obtain ample accommodations on notice. The bathing is especially fine and varied, the ocean and the river being but 50 yards apart."<sup>9</sup> The Monmouth Press commented on the vast improvements made to Highland Beach in an article published on September 15, 1894. "Altogether the place is booming. So much so that the management have ordered



the erection of 200 new bath houses, extending the group northward considerably. The houses are of large size like the others. A new gate house on a more pretentious scale has been erected with a capacity equal for the hundreds more keys and towels needful to the handled with enlarged facilities.”<sup>10</sup>

#### Transportation

The first bridge spanning the Navesink River between Highlands and Sea Bright was constructed and opened on December 5, 1872 by the Highlands Bridge Company. The Navesink Bridge Company eventually purchased this bridge, repaired it and reopened it on June 27, 1878.<sup>11</sup> On January 31, 1884 The Highland Beach Association sold to the Navesink Bridge Company part of Lot 29 for a bridge landing for \$1.00.<sup>12</sup>

The railroad was actively involved in the construction of a railway bridge and a train station that satiated transportation needs of attendees from distant locations. On February 1, 1892 The Highland Beach Association sold to the Navesink Railroad Company a tract of land between Lots 33 and 37 for \$1.00. With the railroad company building a new railroad and pedestrian bridge over the Shrewsbury River in 1892, the company was apparently buying this tract to build a railroad right-of-way and a new railroad station.<sup>13</sup>

The 1892 bridge had its pedestrian and automobile function, but not the railroad portion, discontinued, with the construction of a new drawbridge. On June 5, 1931 the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Monmouth County resolved to close the west and east sides of the old vehicle bridge to public traffic once the new State Highway bridge was constructed on Route 36.<sup>14</sup> By September 6, 1933 the new State Highway Number 36 Vehicle Bridge was completed and the west and east sides of the old vehicle bridge were discontinued as a county road.<sup>15</sup> By 1960 the bridge had all but disappeared except for the remains of pilings which jutted from the strong river current.<sup>16</sup>

A ferry service also provided public transportation along the river. “The excitement of steamboat travel at the Highlands began around 1832 with the *Saratoga*. By 1932, a century later, the fun had stopped and the *Little Silver* made her last journey-to the scrap yard. Economics killed this romantic form of travel. Trains, trucks, buses, and the mighty automobile came in vast numbers, and the old wooden docks and piers began to rot away.”<sup>17</sup>

#### The Sandlass Family

On January 5, 1893 The Highland Beach Improvement Company leased Lots 23-26 for 5 years, beginning on March 1, 1893, to William Sandlass, Jr. at an annual rent of \$500.00.<sup>18</sup> It wouldn't be until March 18, 1920 that William Sandlass purchased Lots 23-33.<sup>19</sup> When the lease began the Sandlass' influence over the area was profound. The Monmouth Press wrote on May 22, 1897, “William Sandlass, Jr. proprietor of Highland Beach, is making extensive improvements in readiness for the coming season. The current in the river has altered making the steamboat pier of last year unavailable and Mr. Sandlass has extended it riverward about 75 feet. The building containing the confectionary and variety stand which stood in between the Surf House and the seas has been removed to the north side of the bridge.”<sup>20</sup>

Highland Beach comprised many different attractions that were built in the Victorian style of architecture. Using photographic evidence, the Bamboo Gardens, the Basket Pavilion (a dance hall), a Merry Go Round, bar and storefronts existed c. 1910. William Sandlass had traveled to Cuba and brought back a considerable amount of bamboo. This bamboo was used to construct the Bamboo Gardens, an outdoor theater called an Airdrome that were popular around World War I, as well as the Bamboo Bar. Also on the property were private cottages. Sandlass leased the land to families who built cottages that were used each summer. Cabanas were constructed on the river side of the peninsula. The Sandlass family lived above the Bamboo Bar which was originally located between the railroad track and the roadway. This is known as NPS building 600. It remained there until the Hurricane on September 21, 1938 caused considerable damage. The Sandlass family moved the house the following year to a safer location to the south and closer to the river.<sup>21</sup>

Storms were a continual issue for the entire time Highland Beach served as a resort. This is an account of a storm from 1896 that shows typical damage.

“...at Highland Beach the damage was quite extensive. A broad inlet, five or six feet deep, was cut through the beach from the ocean to the river. This inlet is opposite the head of Island Beach. The ocean was rushing through this inlet at a great rate last night, but as soon as the wind shifts to the west it will begin to fill up again with sand. The north end of the row of bath houses at Highland Beach was carried away. Some damage was done to the other buildings there, but the damage was not so great as has been reported. The great rocks which had been piled along the ocean side of the beach as a protection to the coast were tossed about by the waves like playthings.”<sup>22</sup>

The character of this area was by no means stagnant. In its early years Highland Beach, with the resort area later referred to as Sandlass Beach, was utilized as a family retreat open in the summer and patronized by residents of northern New Jersey and New York. However, by the 1930's, profound changes in the United States economic conditions as well as the rising war abroad would beckon towards a dramatic shift in focus.

Transportation for residents of northern New Jersey and New York to the New Jersey shore was mainly by boat and train. Once train service was discontinued in the late 1940s and the automobile became the preferred method of travel with the opening of the New Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway in the 1950s attention was drawn away from Highlands Beach as beach-goers were filtered farther and farther south along the shore. The Sandlass family changed the focus of the resort from one for day trippers from the city to becoming Sandlass Beach Club and patronized primarily by those families living in the northern Monmouth County area. This club continued to have cabanas for its patrons. The Victorian buildings were either torn down or converted to smaller, more useful buildings. The private cottages continued to exist on the northern edge of the Sandlass property.<sup>23</sup>

On January 1, 1962 a lease agreement between the Department of the Army and the State of New Jersey, Department of Conservation and Economic Development was established dictating that the property on the south end of the Fort Hancock Military Reservation would be used as a state park.<sup>24</sup> By using eminent domain, the state took the property owned by the Sandlass family that consisted of Lots 23 through 36 for better access to the newly formed park. The Sandlass family was given a sum of money that they did not agree was sufficient for the value of the land and filed a lawsuit. On December 28, 1962 Henry J. and Helen J. Sandlass were awarded \$350,000 in condemnation proceedings by the State of New Jersey Superior Court for Lots 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, and parts of Lots 31, 32, and 33.<sup>25</sup>

#### Conclusion

On December 31, 1974 the U.S. Army closed down Fort Hancock and turned the land including the leased land that was Sandy Hook State Park over to the Department of the Interior as part of Gateway National Recreation Area. A new highway ramp was built off the bridge and the front lawn of the Sandlass family house was no more. The only remaining structure from this area is building 600. Its presence is a reminder of the long history of Jersey Shore resort towns.



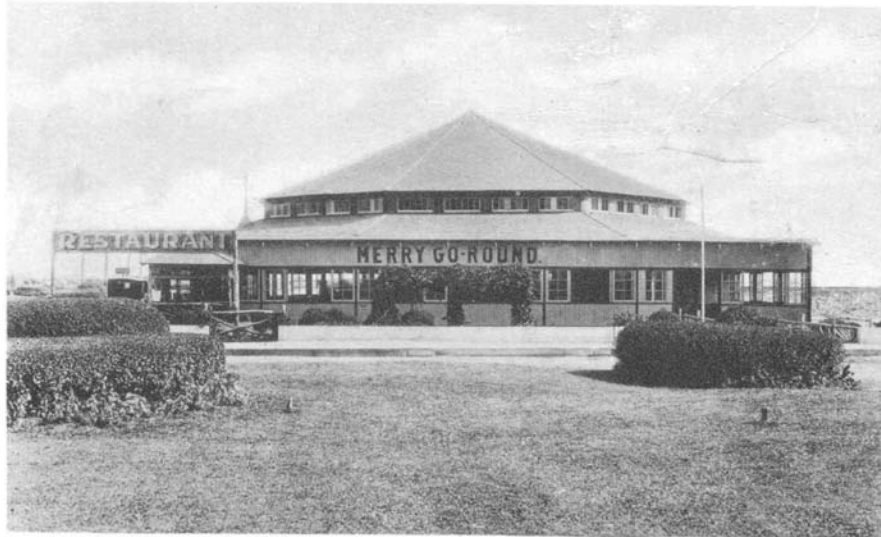
Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



MERRY-GO-ROUND HIGHLAND BEACH N. J.

Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



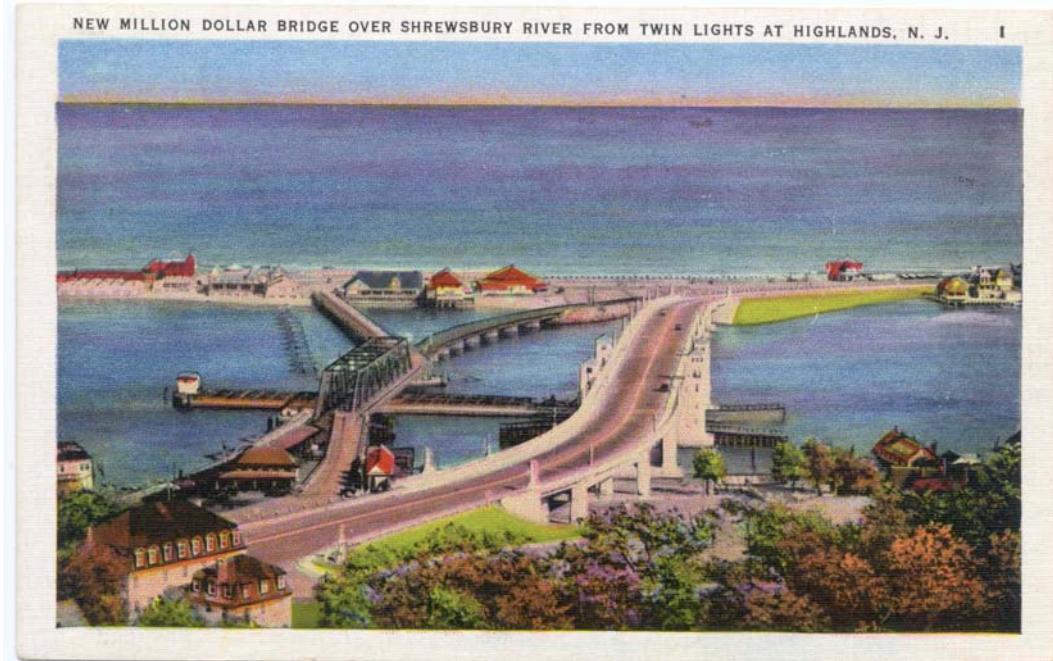


Figure 12

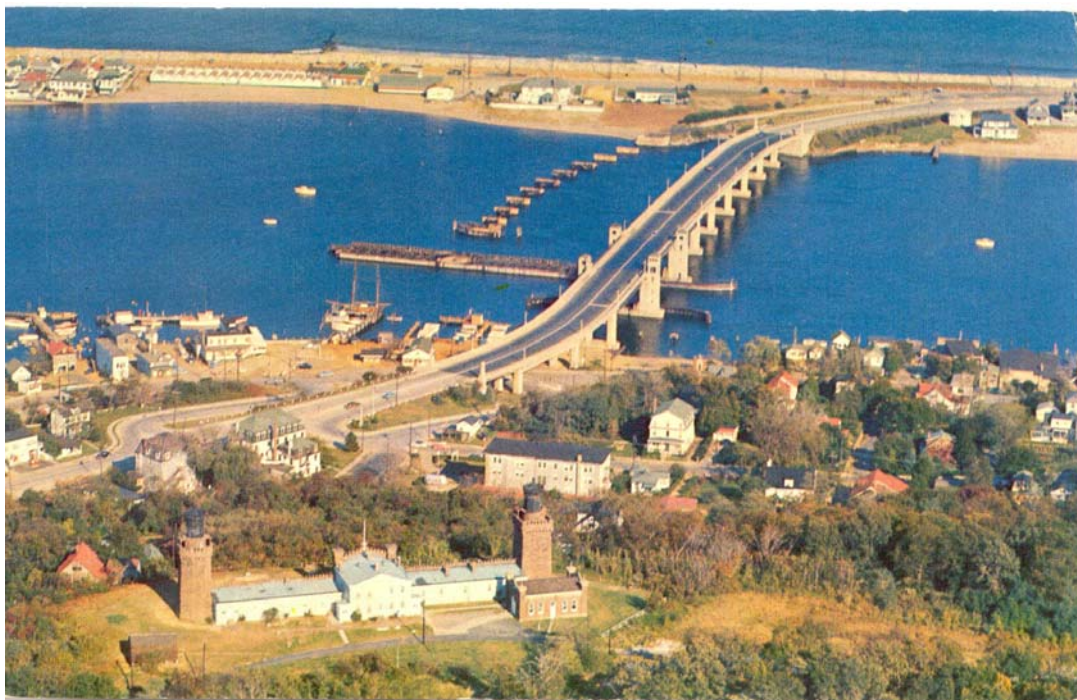


Figure 13



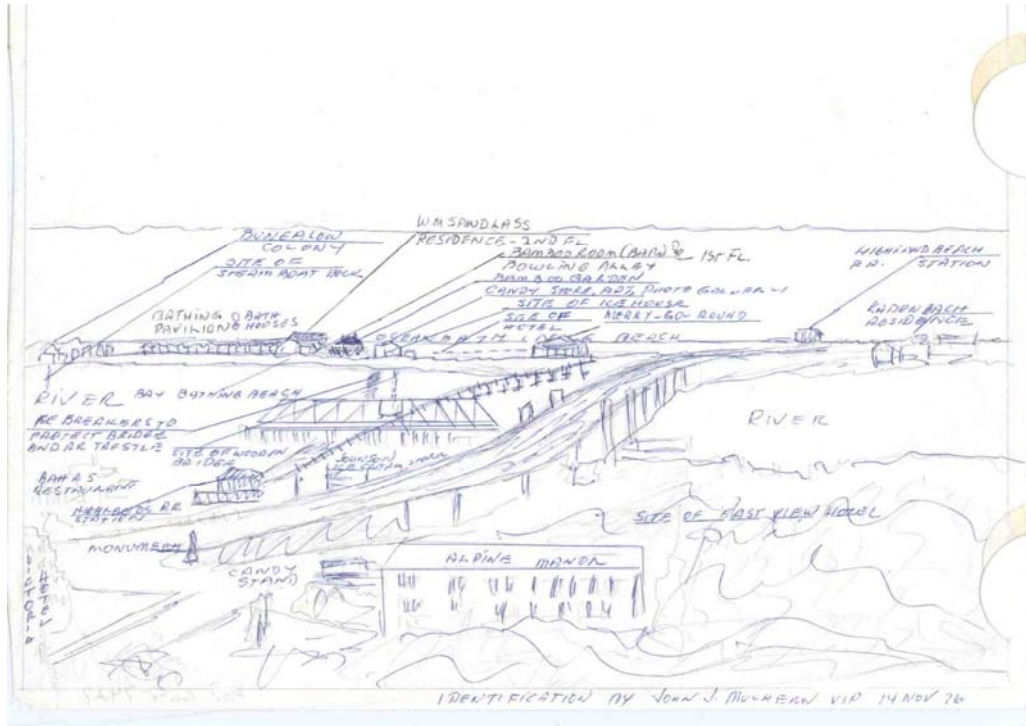


Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

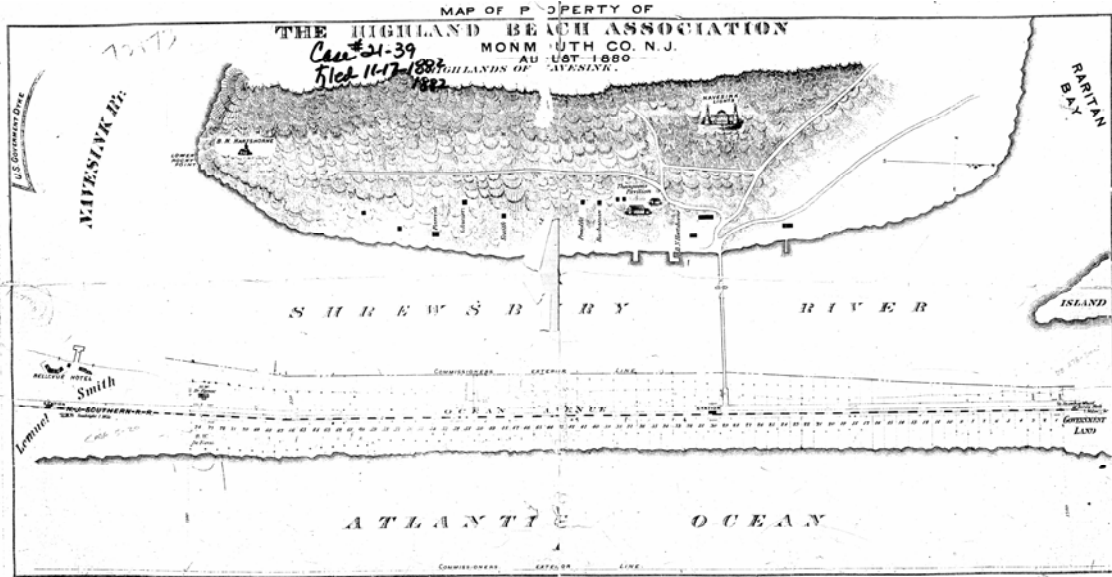


Figure 20

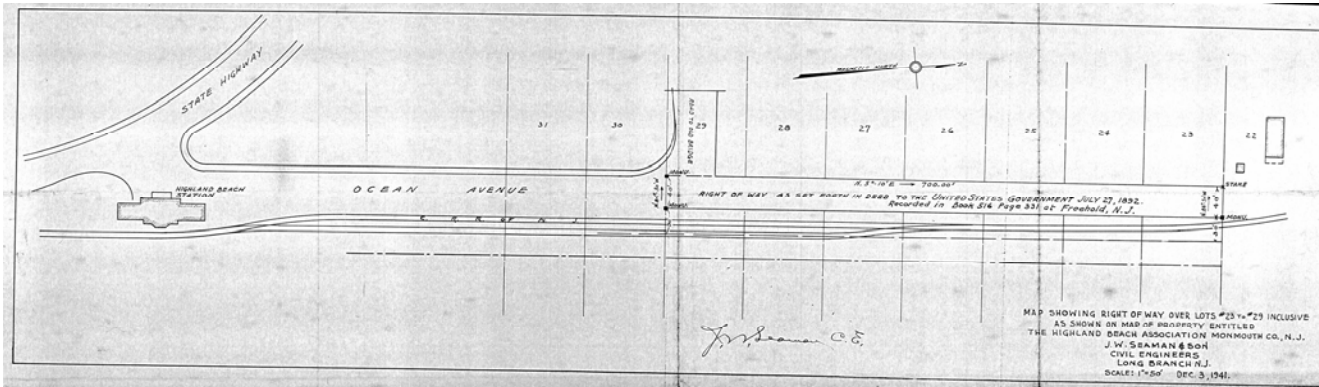


Figure 21

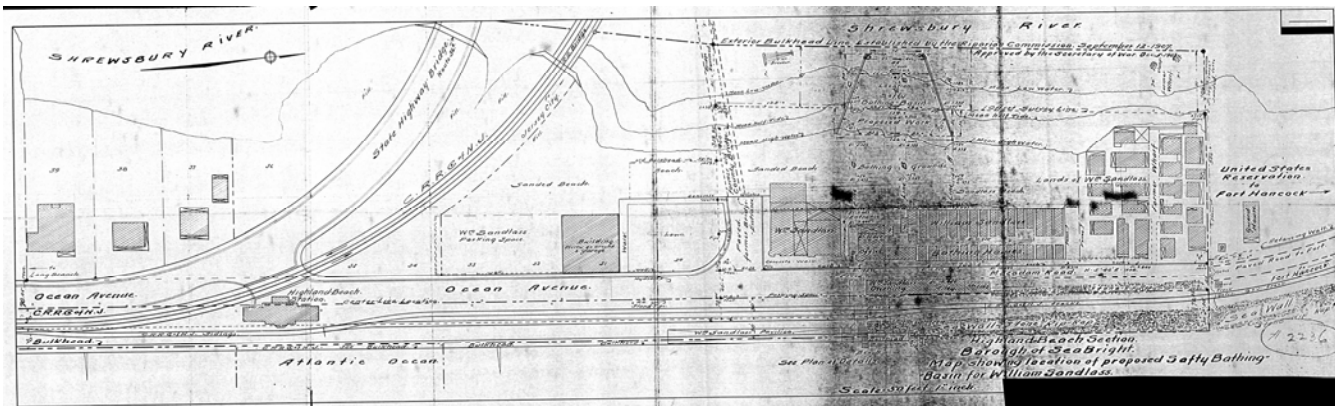


Figure 22

## ENDNOTES

1. DEED: February 28, 1881: Anthony and Mary S. Reckless sell Wardell Beach to The Highland Beach Association for \$10,000. Wardell Beach was subdivided by The Highland Beach Association into 74 building lots and was renamed Highland Beach.
2. Another Look At Nauvoo to the Hook. George H. Moss Jr. Ploughshare Press, 1990. Pg . 89.
3. DEED: November 1, 1882: The Highland Beach Association sells to The Atlantic Highlands Association Lot No. 1 for \$1,500.
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6. DEED: November 1, 1887: The Highland Beach Association leases to The Highland Beach Improvement Company Lots 23-28 and lots 30-33 at yearly fixed rates for 10 years (1887-1897)
7. Red Bank Register – December 14, 1887 – Highland Beach\*
8. Another Look At Nauvoo to the Hook. George H. Moss Jr. Ploughshare Press, 1990. Pg . 89.
9. Another Look At Nauvoo to the Hook. George H. Moss Jr. Ploughshare Press, 1990. Pg. 95.
10. Monmouth Press article – September 15, 1894. Highland Beach Also Flourishing\*
11. Images of America – The Highlands. John P. King. Arcadia, 1995. Page 28
12. DEED: January 31, 1884: The Highland Beach Association sells to the Navesink Bridge Company part of Lot 29 for a bridge landing or place for supporting the easterly end and approach of the bridge for \$1.00.
13. DEED: February 1, 1892: The Highland Beach Association sells to the Navesink Railroad Company a tract of land between Lots 33 and 37 (lots 34, 35, 36) for \$1.00. With the railroad company building a new railroad bridge over the Shrewsbury River

in 1892, the company was apparently buying this tract to build a railroad right-of-way and new railroad station (on the east side of Lots 35 and 36)

14. DEED: June 5, 1931: A resolution wherein The Board of Chosen Freeholders of Monmouth County resolve to close the west and east sides of the old vehicle Bridge to public traffic once the new State Highway Bridge over the Shrewbury River is constructed on Route No. 36.

15. DEED: September 6, 1933: A resolution wherein The Board of Chosen Freeholders of Monmouth County resolve that the west and east sides of the old vehicle bridge are now discontinued as a county road, and that the County relinquishes all jurisdiction over and responsibility for the construction, reconstruction, repair and maintenance thereof now that the new State Highway No. 36 Vehicle Bridge is completed.

16. Images of America – The Highlands. John P. King. Arcadia, 1995. Page 27.

17. DEED: January 5, 1893: The Highland Beach Improvement Company leases to William Sandlass, Jr. Lots 23-26 for 5 years beginning March 1, 1893 at an annual rent of \$500.00

18. Monmouth Press article – May 22, 1897.\*

19. Highland Beach article – October 14, 1896 Damage by the Storm\*

20. DEED: January 1, 1962: Lease agreement between the Department of the Army and the State of New Jersey, Department of Conservation and Economic Development, to use property on the south end of the Fort Hancock Military Reservation as a state park. (from the southern end of the land owned by the United States north until where the current Ranger Station is, the previous site for the gatehouse to Fort Hancock which was deactivated in 1974). This lease will eventually affect ownership of Lots 23 through 36 when Sandy Hook State Park begins operations in 1962.

20. DEED: December 28, 1962: Henry J. and Helen J. Sandlass are awarded \$350,000 in condemnation proceedings by the State of New Jersey Superior Court for Lots 23,24,25,26,27,28,29, and 30, and parts of Lots 31, 32, and 33

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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King, John P. Images of America – The Highlands. Arcadia, 1995.

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\* denotes item is in collection of Monmouth County Historical Association, 70 Court Street, Freehold, New Jersey.



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6. November 1, 1887: The Highland Beach Association leases to The Highland Beach Improvement Company Lots 23-28 and lots 30-33 at yearly fixed rates for 10 years (1887-1897)
7. February 1, 1892: The Highland Beach Association sells to the Navesink Railroad Company a tract of land between Lots 33 and 37 (lots 34, 35, 36) for \$1.00. With the railroad company building a new railroad bridge over the Shrewsbury River in 1892, the company was apparently buying this tract to build a railroad right-of-way and new railroad station (on the east side of Lots 35 and 36)
8. January 5, 1893: The Highland Beach Improvement Company leases to William Sandlass, Jr. Lots 23-26 for 5 years beginning March 1, 1893 at an annual rent of \$500.00
9. March 18, 1920: The Highland Beach Association sells to William Sandlass Lots 23-33, lying between the north line of the property of the Central Railroad Company of New Jersey (Lot 34), and the south line of the property of the United States of America (former Lot 22), for \$1.00.



10. June 5, 1931: A resolution wherein The Board of Chosen Freeholders of Monmouth County resolve to close the west and east sides of the old vehicle Bridge to public traffic once the new State Highway Bridge over the Shrewbury River is constructed on Route No. 36.

11. September 6, 1933: A resolution wherein The Board of Chosen Freeholders of Monmouth County resolve that the west and east sides of the old vehicle bridge are now discontinued as a county road, and that the County relinquishes all jurisdiction over and responsibility for the construction, reconstruction, repair and maintenance thereof now that the new State Highway No. 36 Vehicle Bridge is completed.

12. January 1, 1962: Lease agreement between the Department of the Army and the State of New Jersey, Department of Conservation and Economic Development, to use property on the south end of the Fort Hancock Military Reservation as a state park. (from the southern end of the land owned by the United States north until where the current Ranger Station is, the previous site for the gatehouse to Fort Hancock which was deactivated in 1974). This lease will eventually affect ownership of Lots 23 through 36 when Sandy Hook State Park begins operations in 1962.

13. December 28, 1962: Henry J. and Helen J. Sandlass are awarded \$350,000 in condemnation proceedings by the State of New Jersey Superior Court for Lots 23,24,25,26,27,28,29, and 30, and parts of Lots 31, 32, and 33

## List of Figures

Figures 1 through 19 are located in the Gateway NRA Museum Collection.

1. Catalog # 21891, William Sandlass portrait, c. 1910.
2. Catalog # 21897, of roller coaster c. 1890.
3. Catalog # 21898, of roller coaster c. 1890.
4. Catalog # 20935, Postcard, Merry Go Round, Highland Beach, N.J., c. 1910.
5. Catalog # 21896, Basket Pavilion dance hall c. 1910.
6. Catalog # 21894, View of Highland Beach and Bamboo Garden c. 1920.
7. Catalog # 20926, Postcard, Sandlass Pavillion, Highlands Beach, N.J. View shows Bamboo Garden c. 1915.
8. Catalog # 1781 Postcard, Highlands Beach, Highlands, N.J. View looking north of ocean, train tracks, bldg 600 in original location, and car parking c. 1920.
9. Catalog # 20921 Postcard, Bathing in the River, View of cabanas with Highland Beach sign. Highlands, N.J. c. 1915.
10. Catalog # 21890 Bamboo Garden interior airdrome movie theater, c. 1920.
11. Catalog # 21895 View of Bldg 600 as Bamboo Garden c. 1915.
12. Catalog # 791 Postcard, new Highlands bridge with old bridge, 1933.
13. Catalog # 1782 Postcard of Highlands looking at bridge from Twin Lights, old bridge pilings and swing platform visible c. 1960.
14. Catalog # 7426a Identification of Highland Beach for catalog # 7427, c. 1935.
15. Catalog # 7427 new bridge after old bridge roadway is demolished c. 1935.
16. Catalog # 722.1 Postcard. Bamboo Room, Sandlass Beach, Sea Bright, N.J. c. 1940.
17. Catalog # 21892 Interior of building 600. Sandlass family portrait c. 1950.
18. Catalog # 21900 Sandlass baths, c. 1950.
19. Catalog # 21885 Sandlass Beach aerial, c. 1960.
20. Map of Highland Beach, 1880.
21. Map of Highland Beach, 1941.
22. Map of Highland Beach, c. 1935.