

Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, NPS  
An Oral History interview with Harry Sandlass,  
Sandlass Beach Club  
Interviewed by Mary Rasa, NPS  
Transcribed by Melissa Kolbmann, NPS 2008



Sandlass family in their home, at entrance to Sandy Hook, c. 1950.



Close up of Hank Sandlass, c. 1950



Hank Sandlass, 2004



An aerial view of Sandlass Beach, c.1960.

[Editor's note: For more detailed information on Highland Beach, visit <http://www.nps.gov/gate/historyculture/stories.htm> and read the report, Highland Beach, New Jersey: A Jersey Shore Destination 1881-1962]

**Rasa-** Today is March 6, 2004. My name is Mary Rasa, Sandy Hook Museum Curator, and I'm here to interview Harry Sandlass from the Sandlass Beach Club and we are going to start out with some questions.

**Rasa-** When and where were you born?

**Sandlass-** I was born at the Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, New Jersey. December 7, 1947, the Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day. We lived at Sandy Hook at the entrance of Sandy Hook at the time on Ocean Avenue.

**Rasa-** Which is what in the park is considered building 600 today. And who were your parents?

**Sandlass-** My parents were Henry and Midge Sandlass. My father was the son of William Sandlass, who purchased the Highland Beach Club from the Highland Improvement Association around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the late 1800's. And my family lived at Highland Beach, which then became Sandlass Beach, for the next fifty years. Actually 60 or so.

**Rasa-** So you lived there from the time of your birth until 1963.

**Sandlass-** 'Til 1963, I was fifteen at the time.

**Rasa-** Do you want to tell me the history of your family's association with the site?

**Sandlass-** Sure. Like I said earlier, dates back to my grandfather coming down to this area and looking to make an investment. It was called the Highland Beach at the time. And was part of the Highland Beach Improvement Association, which was a series of properties in Sea Bright that were scheduled to be developed as private homes and one section of that at the north end was this beach club, which actually wasn't a club was an excursion activity area. A resort of sorts, Victorian nature that had this unique combination of both oceanfront swimming and beach front swimming and river swimming. And it had attracted a lot of daily visitors from New York and North Jersey on the ferry boats and from the railroad system that came from Sea Bright. So it was basically a daily excursion activity center that had a beach club swimming and what was called a Bamboo Gardens. It had a pavilion, a merry-go-round, it had a roller coaster and daily swimming. That people could spend the day here and not the night.

**Rasa-** Okay. So people would come down both by train and ferry.

**Sandlass-** And by car. And so it was the first point on the North Jersey Coast where you could actually have ocean bathing before the seashore. Before you got to the heart of Sea Bright and down further to Long Branch and Asbury Park and Spring Lake and points like that. So it was notable for that and attracted a lot of visitors and business.

**Rasa-** And when did it convert from Highlands Beach to Sandlass Beach Club?

**Sandlass-** Well, it converted. It was Highland Beach for a number of years through the teens and twenties and I would say I don't know that exact date, but my guess it was somewhere around the thirties or forties. But it, it would transition with each World War. It would get scaled back and converted over more to just a beach club and a lot of the Victorian nature of the buildings and the activities were scaled back sorta ultimately became the Sandlass Beach Club which was probably in the forties and was ultimately designated a private beach club.

**Rasa-** Did this have to do with the fact that the train stopped running after World War II providing more transportation?

**Sandlass-** The ferries stopped and the railroad was ripped up and ceased to exist.

**Rasa-** Was it still there when you were born?

**Sandlass-** The railroad was not running when I was born in 1947. The railroad tracks, parts of them were still there and most of them were covered up through Sea Bright. So, I think other areas were opening up along the NJ coast so people could actually drive to them more easily and the whole coast was outstanding. So, the nature of the business had changed significantly with people's entertainment patterns changing particularly after World War II.

**Rasa-** Tell me a little bit about the house and how it moved locations.

**Sandlass-** Well, the house that you see at the entrance now to the state, Sandy Hook was originally the Bamboo Room on the opposite side of the street and down further across from the entrance to the Beach Club. And the Bamboo was downstairs and upstairs was my family's apartment. That's where my father was born in 1913 in the middle of a hurricane. And because it was such a narrow strip of land the property would incur a lot of damage on a regular basis depending on what storms were passing through Sea Bright. So, eventually my father decided to move the building to across the street when we were scaling back some of the activities and doing away with the merry-go-round, the pavilion and it became our family home. And the whole property was developed around it with gardens and a dollhouse that matches the big house was moved a little bit away from the rest of the activities of the beach club.

**Rasa-** So as a child growing up there, where did you attend school?

**Sandlass-** We attended Holy Cross School in Rumson. And the, we would, you know, have to, there was no school bus to take us there so there was a car service called Shays Car Service that would pick up a lot of the kids in Sea Bright starting with us at the beginning of the Sandy Hook and make its way through town and bring us to Holy Cross and take us home at the end day.

**Rasa-** So you were considered a Sea Bright resident at the time?

**Sandlass-** Yes, I don't know the exact dates but there was a dispute at one point as to whether our property belonged to Highlands or to Sea Bright. And that was resolved, I believe in a legal way and there was a twenty minute property action part of Sea Bright so it became a tax paying entity out of Sea Bright to the town of Sea Bright. And therefore we were within in the jurisdiction for a third bus as a parish which was at that time Rumson, Fair Haven and Sea Bright.

**Rasa-** So, did you attend, where did you attend High School?

**Sandlass-** I went to Christian Brothers Academy. As I was graduating grammar school in 1961, CBA had just opened up. I was the second graduating class.

**Rasa-** How did you get there?

**Sandlass-** There was a school bus. They had buses throughout the whole county almost that would bring all the boys into that school. I also had four sisters and I'm the fourth in line in my family and they, we, all went to Holy Cross. Then they moved to Red Bank Catholic before we went on to college.

**Rasa-** Did you have many interactions with the military?

**Sandlass-** Well, it was interesting growing up. I remember in the 50's when I was 7, 8, 9, 10 the military was driving back and forth in front of our house all the time and I always found that kind of fascinating to see the soldiers in the jeeps. And they weren't patrolling so much along the beach which I know my grandmother used to tell stories about during the World Wars. They would patrol particularly at night looking for U boats and just looking for the enemy off the coast, you know, off the coast were out there and so, she would look after them and let them come in get warm and give them hot coffee. That sort of thing. But in the 50's the Cold War was going on and of course this became a Nike base and so I can remember evenings particularly in the summer on occasion once it would get dark, they would bring in these Nike Missiles on these tractor trailers. Basically they would be attached to these trucks when they would be under cover of darkness.

**Rasa-** Were the Missiles actually covered or could you physically see them?

**Sandlass-** No, the missiles, they were very large to me anyway. They would keep them on these long flat-beds, you know, two-wheeler type mechanisms. And they would very slowly move them with flags, red flags so the traffic could and they would clear the highways to let them come through. I always thought it was very ominous but also a little bit exciting. And the only other interaction we would have with the military because you weren't allowed to enter Fort Hancock they would allow you to go into the entrance and go to a certain point if you were going fishing. So, we would get our fishing poles and our bikes and they would let us in and we would explore Plum Island on Sandy Hook

somewhat, but never really down to the Fort except when it was open for the public to visit.

**Rasa-** So you never really interacted with any of the children that were dependents out here?

**Sandlass-** Not at all, not at all, and our life was a little conflicting. In the summertime, there would be hundreds of people at this beach club, day and night and you'd have all their friends and a lot of activity and a lot of, a lot of things to do for three months and the rest of the year it was pretty desolate. We really didn't have any neighbors and it could get lonely at times, but the important friends would be driven everywhere. So, it had its challenges when it comes to raising a family, but we loved it. I mean that's what we knew. And the beach club was a lot of fun. And having all those people, they were a lot of fun, but the rest of the time it was sort of like Sandy Hook, down here, was like a lot of solitude and quiet and it came with nature a lot of time.

**Rasa-** So, as a child, were there, you also said there were a lot of people who rented buildings and stayed for the summer?

**Sandlass-** Yes, the the beach club was the main activity with all the bath houses. The bamboo room had been converted to a larger area and the social life there, but at the furthest north end of the property there was a series of cottaged homes with little paths. Couldn't drive a car down to the end of the road. Just had to walk down the paths and a lot of old Victorian cottages were there and families actually. My family actually owned the land but they owned the houses. And they would spend their summers there. They weren't heated and they would come down for the summer from North Jersey primarily New York

**Rasa-** So did you make friends with the kids over there? Would that be something?

**Sandlass-** No, we really didn't. I can't say that we did. I can't remember a lot of kids. There were a few I remember being friends with, but there were hundreds of kids at this beach club (laughs) of all ages. So, we pretty much had friends there and a lot of those people at the cottages were probably older and not so much had little kids.

**Rasa-** Okay.

**Sandlass-** and so but they added another sort of dimension to the lifestyle down here.

**Rasa-** So would you go out most of the time, would you go on the Oceanside or on the bay on the riverside?

**Sandlass-** For swimming?

**Rasa-** Yeah.

**Sandlass-** Both. And that was the fun part. You got to swim in the ocean when there were waves and this was before there were surfboards. And you would ride mats and just play in the ocean water. And then all the children at the beach club were in the swim program and you were taught to swim in the river. There was no swimming pool and so our instructor, who was there for many years when I was growing Mr. Cartmen (spelling unknown), he never went, I never saw him step foot in the water other than at the rivers edge with a clipboard. And he had everyone by age group. And we had lessons twice a week and we had races and ribbons at the end of the year and medals and that sort of thing. And he taught everyone how to swim holding a clipboard with a whistle and never set a foot in the water and great swimmers came out with that clipboard.

**Rasa-** Did you ever swim all the way across the river?

**Sandlass-** No, but I used, I was too young, but I know some of the lifeguards used to do it. And the currents along that bridge, the Highlands Bridge, to this day are extremely treacherous so you have to be careful when you crossing the river. There, it can be very dangerous and I don't really recommend it. I can remember some of the lifeguard who attempted to do it. There is a lot of boat traffic out there now that there didn't used to be. A lot more than there used to be. But, we had, you know, a float there that you could swim to, a diving board and a rowboat. And we used to fish a lot in the river and just, you know, play along the beach.

**Rasa-** What were daily activities at the beach club. Other than having, like swimming lessons, what else did they have?

**Sandlass-** Well, it was a very family-oriented club. And so a lot of families would come to the beach just to sort of relax and enjoy and let their children play in the sand and build sandcastles and ride waves, swim in the river, and just get away from organized activities that they might be involved in at school or year long, that sort of thing. But there would also be baseball games that would be very organized and we had a whole lot, there was a lot at the southern end of the property for that, and fishing contests and I remember the teen dances that we would go to, but mostly it was just relaxation at the beach. Pretty much what people do at beach clubs today in Sea Bright. Its not dissimilar. There would be volleyball net people, would play volleyball on the beach, but traditional I would say traditional beach club type activities.

**Rasa-** When it was a beach club when at that point of time, was it very local people coming?

**Sandlass-** Yes, there was a very strong network of families to this day, in fact, its very interesting. Families were so committed to that beach club. People still come up to me and talk about it 'cause the name is recognizable. And I would say attracted families primarily from across the bridge at Highlands, Atlantic Highlands, Middletown. Not so much down the other end Rumson, Fair Haven because they went to those beach clubs at that end but sort of along the Atlantic Coast. Those communities up the highway, they attracted mostly those families and they were very attached to it. It was their whole

social life for the summer and for many generations those families went there. In fact, years after the beach club was closed when the state took it over there would be reunions that that would be organized by these families. I would say as recently as the 70's, late 70's early 1980's, just to get the families together because of their very attached to it. It was really a very close community and very sad in many ways when it had to close.

**Rasa-** Talk a little bit about the bridges. If you want to explain the difference what happened when there were two different bridges and what the original bridge did and then when the second one came in?

**Sandlass-** Well, the original bridge was for the railroad and also for cars and they sort of like crossed like paths. So, I know a lot of pictures that demonstrated how that worked and that was a functioning bridge up until the 1930's. I want to say 1933, at the import of the new bridge was built which was much higher and strictly for traffic and about. I think the plans to replace that one now about 75 years later. So the, the between the, the train coming through and dropping off people visiting for the day you know, and all the old 1920s cars that were trying to get through, my sense is there were a lot of traffic jams going on there. I mean a lot of people coming and going if you look at the old picture the beach was crowded there was lots of traffic. But people all seemed to be happy you know enjoying themselves at the seashore. But there, it was a big intersection of traffic and you had to have long parking lots to park all the cars and all the Model T's and all that sort of thing.

**Rasa-** So, you said that there's more boat traffic today. Did you really remember the bridge opening and closing a lot? The 1930's bridge?

**Sandlass-** Well, yes. And I remember two things growing up. My bedroom window was upstairs in the corner that looked on on Twin Lights. So I go to sleep every night with the Twin Lights with the Twin, with the light going on and off every night into my room. And that was sorta the way I went to sleep. And and also with the bridge, you know, being raised and lowered for any sailboats that had high masts. And that one they didn't really organize time things the way they do with bridges now. So just sorta when a boat came up, the bridge would go up, which was relatively frequently. And I also remember, you know, standing there, we we used to fish everyday and fishermen in boats would get caught in these eddy's. Those currents were so dangerous from the old bridge. The stanchions from the old bridge that was cement, in fact, some of them are still there, would create these eddy's of water. So these row boats would get, that they would rent from Highlands, would be going around in circles getting caught. And they couldn't get themselves out because the currents were so dangerous. Those were my visual images of looking out my back window that we had on our porch.

**Rasa-** That's a pretty impressive image. (laughs) I'm looking at an old photograph probably from the 1940's. It looks almost like they were parking on that pathway.

**Sandlass-** Yeah, this is...

**Rasa-** It must have been the right away to the old bridge.

**Sandlass-** This was the right away to the old bridge. And it looks like the parked out. I don't think it was. It was kept open awhile because they stopped using it. But they could have been doing work there. But between that and the new bridge there's a cove near the beach and we used (inaudible) and swim.

**Rasa-** Was this piece still the most continuous piece still there or was it all gone by then just the pilings

**Sandlass-** Just the pilings and underneath were left when I was growing up. The top part was actually the expanse were somewhat (inaudible).

**Rasa-** Tell me a little about the movies that used to be shown there.

**Sandlass-** Well, my Grandfather traveled down to Cuba at a time when Cuba was a popular island to visit and in the 1920's and he brought back a lot of bamboo and so he built the bamboo room. All the walls were made of bamboo and these murals of Hawaiian dancers and all the furniture was bamboo and the bar stools and matting. It was a very tropical environment which was very (inaudible). And he also built the bamboo gardens, which was an outdoor movie theater. And the frame of the movie theater itself was all bamboo and the walls and the entrance and, you know, it was just another attractive feature to when people would visit that would you know find it interesting way of entertaining customers. And I don't really know what movies they played back in the 20's and 30's. Eventually it was, it was closed down because it was outdoor and it wasn't very practical. So the bamboo turned into an indoor functions room and bar and sort of like a dance hall.

**Rasa-** Did any soldiers come to the beach club or not really? Like the wives bring the kids or anything?

**Sandlass-** I think to a certain extent there were yes. There were two types of membership. You could take out season membership or you could just pay by the day up to a certain point, then it became totally private. So anyone could, but I think generally the officers of the fort would pretty much use the facilities down there.

**Rasa-** Right.

**Sandlass-** But I think the bamboo room was a very popular watering hall. And actually it was another memory of summer time of trying to go to sleep on the, a lot of revelry going on and the music playing and people used to come from all over

**Rasa-** Do you know what time it closed down at night?

**Sandlass-** It used to close about 1:00 in the morning, 2:00, you know, people would go on the beach.

**Rasa-** Was it open seven days a week?

**Sandlass-** I don't recall whether the blue laws applied. I don't think it would be open on Sundays. I don't think so. It was probably, it was my guess probably six days a week but again it was only in the summer time.

**Rasa-** Anything particularly humorous happen while at the beach club or wandering around in the summer time. Any stories about lifeguards or any employees?

**Sandlass-** Well the lots of stories about the employees. (laughs)

**Rasa-** I'm sure.

**Sandlass-** Of what they used to do. The, well, one in my memories is in the 1950's. My father would always hire a few young guys usually in high school, late high school, early college. And they used to love to work for him. And most of them came from, I would say, the Atlantic Highlands, Middletown area. And their families belonged there. And they were growing up and would get jobs there. And they would all drive in these jalopies. Because in the 50's, you know, you had more streamline cars being developed. But young teenagers were given, could only afford the older cars. They all had these old jalopies and they would all be lined up on the side street next to our house. You know, they had girlfriends and they used to party a lot and just really have a good time there. And my, they just admired my father a lot and the way he managed them and took a personal interest in them. And to this day I have some of them or their children come to me and talk about their first job working for the Henry Sandlass, Sandlass Beach Club and how much they learned just you know working there. So, it wasn't so much humorous as it was a very, people have a very for whatever reason its hard to explain but a real emotional attachment to their experience. Whether they were a member there or whether their family just visit there on occasion or whether they worked there and that went on for several generations at Sandlass Beach Club. And, you know, I read about Sandlass Beach Club in New Yorker Magazine. Where they would talk about Edmund Wilson, you know, would write about it when he would visit, and associates from F. Scott Fitzgerald. I've come across people from literally all over the world that had some connection with family visiting Sandlass Beach Club because it was such a well-known watering hole at the turn of the century and early parts of this century when this was the primary area for people, the primary resort area for the whole east coast essentially. Those are my memories, my strongest memories.

**Rasa-** Okay. Okay, tell me about the whole story on how the state of New Jersey declared the eminent domain on the property.

**Sandlass-** Sure. Well...

**Rasa-** Well, first of all tell me about Hurricane Donna since that was one of the big storms of the area.

**Sandlass-** Well, there were a number of serious storms that did damage Sea Bright. And it seemed like every time a hurricane and in those day you didn't have the weather forecasting system first of all and so you really didn't know whether or not a hurricane was going to come up the east coast or when it was going to arrive and so the more often than not you could be surprised by these storms and be unprepared. And the town in general was not well protected because its such a narrow strip of land. And you had all these old Victorian homes lined up and one by one most of them all washed out to sea in various storms. And I remember in 1963, the storm wasn't supposed to be such a severe storm. And we did not, my family, my parents didn't believe in evacuating the house when a storm would come. In fact, my father, they used to have a saying they'd say Henry's Nor'easterns because they never believed they really had serious hurricanes. It was probably more wishful thinking than anything. But in this particular case, the storm was so severe that they did decide we had to leave. And so, we had to wade out waist-deep in water. The ocean had met the river surrounded the house and the cars in the garage were in higher land. But we had to get over to them. We had to wade over in waist-deep water to get to the cars. To get to escape in the middle of this hurricane across the bridge to Highlands. And we got to stay at a hotel in Red Bank and we were excited about that. When we came back the next day, I can remember walking across the bridge and the property had been very severely damaged. And I can remember each one of us saying look at this building, look at that building. One-by-one as our eyes travelled down the landscape we could see the damage that had been inflicted on these buildings. So it was March 1963.

#### **Rasa- 1962**

**Sandlass-** I'm sorry 1962. And you know, that wasn't the first time there had been serious damage, but it was probably one of the worst. So, my father as it was his way, you know, set out and to prepare the club for opening in June. And from March until June didn't have a lot of time but worked very hard getting people together to rebuild a lot of buildings. The bath houses were smashed. The bamboo room porch had collapsed. And the water was so, the wind and the rain were so strong that the water came right through the walls of our house into the book cases. And the books were all wet. And it was really one of the most severe storms. So, he got everything ready for opening day and before the beach club usually would open after Memorial Day Weekend. It was in June, not Memorial Day weekend in those days. And so, you know, just prior to opening the state notified him that the, they were going to, they were condemning the property under eminent domain which they were entitled to do. Recognizing that provision, you know, allows for the taking of personal property for the greater good of the populous. And that you will not be able to operate the beach club that summer. And that he would be paid, you know, a fair value for the enterprise. And that came as a great shock because, you know, it had been almost sixty years in the family. And it, you know, it was really a family type club. So, you know, we accepted that. And I don't think it was very well thought out in terms of timing on the part of the government because then you had a beach club that were had hundreds of members that were accustomed to using for many generations they had no where to go. And it was unsupervised property. We remained in

the house for the following year. It was unsupervised property. Public property essentially so, it was an attractive nuisance in a legal sense. And the summer, the season, was starting. And you had hundreds of people that were trying to access this property and basically trespassing with no supervision and no lifeguards it was a very dangerous situation that had to be at times the police had to be called to clear off the property. It was a very distressing period for us as a family to see and also for all these families that were involved for so long to see how it was all being handled. But then lost and followed because the price that was offered was totally inadequate. So, we went to court on that and see a much more attractive settlement that pretty much satisfied my family. We built a house in Rumson and my family moved there when I was a sophomore in high school. And my father at the time, then purchased my uncle's beach club that his half brother had started a beach club in the thirties called the Sandlass. Not to be confused with Sandlass Beach Club. And he was in his eighties at that point and he was looking to retire. So my father purchased that beach club from him and ran that for the next six years before he passed away. And then I ran it for a number of years before our family sold it. So in some ways, the possibility of, worked out to our advantage that all that did happen. My father only lived six years after that and I was twenty one years old and you know passed around the family business which would have been too much if I'd done the other one. So, who's to say what would've become of it. (tape cut off).

**Rasa-** (portion cut off, meant to ask if Sandlass Beach Club was larger than the new club) ...than that he purchased

**Sandlass-** Significantly, well, and significantly larger property and a lot more activities and aspects that you had to be... A much bigger operation.

**Rasa-** How many people were typical patronage to the Sandlass when you were around?

**Sandlass-** How many families?

**Rasa-** How many families would have gone?

**Sandlass-** Oh, I would say, I'm pretty sure there were 500 bathhouses. Now they weren't all entirely used. Some were for guests. But I would say there were probably a good 300, 350 families that belonged.

**Rasa-** So there was a large operation.

**Sandlass-** Very large operation and, you know, there was substantial piece of property. So you could fit a lot of people on land. And, you know, two beaches on both sides if, you know, left a lot of room for a lot of families so that really wasn't a problem. But it was very sad to see it kind of sit there unattended and deteriorating to be around and a little bit frustrating because it had just been fixed up after the major storm. It would have been one thing if it had been damaged and then you just had to tear it down, but, you know, a lot of new parts to the building all had to be torn down right after that anyway. So, the state park began functioning and they tore everything down except for the

bamboo room and my family's home. Eventually the bamboo room burned down. Someone had set it on fire in the seventies mid-seventies or so.

**Rasa-** It was the same person who did the buildings at Fort Hancock. It was like eighty-four or eight-five

**Sandlass-** I believe that's when it was. It was used as storage. Sort of an ignominious ending to a, you know, a beautiful beautifully designed building.

**Rasa-** The cottages, were they still there by that point of time or were they already gone?

**Sandlass-** They were all torn down within a few years including the major beach club itself so ...

**Rasa-** Did these people get any monetary?

**Sandlass-** Well, that's the interesting thing. They didn't own the land and so depended, the state said, we are only going to pay you for the land. You can move all the buildings you want which was an absurd position really, which is why they, legal, a lawsuit and sued. But so they based to my knowledge they did not receive anything.

**Rasa-** Wow.

**Sandlass-** And they were free to move their buildings, but where are you going to move a cottage. It doesn't work. No place to move it

**Rasa-** Right.

**Sandlass-** So, I don't think they received much compensation. I'm almost positive they received no compensation.

**Rasa-** Well, after the storm they might not have rebuilt at that point in time so they might have just had a wreck of a building anyway, right?

**Sandlass-** Well, most of them were still there.

**Rasa-** Oh, okay.

**Sandlass-** The buildings that get damaged tend to be right in the front. Right in the front line of where the currents are in the river 'cause the ocean does meet the river in one of these bad storms. At least it did in those days.

**Rasa-** It still does today. I've seen it a few times.

**Sandlass-** So then the overpass was built on to accommodate the traffic coming into the, into Sandy Hook. And tried to come into my family's home and everything else is pretty

much gone. That overpass went right across where our front lawn was. And everything else is now just fallow land.

**Rasa-** So just a, when you used to come over the bridge you used to turn left since there was no overpass?

**Sandlass-** You would wait for the cars to pass and you would take a left. And in the summer time my father would hire a policeman to stand up there and help direct traffic so people could get in and out. So, it really has evolved quite a bit. I mean when you think about it. To scale from a major Victorian resort scale back to two World Wars to a private beach club and then basically dismantled through the 60's and 70's to accommodate the traffic to the entrance of the state park at the time.

**Rasa-** Do you have anything else you would like to share?

**Sandlass-** No, I was just think that it an interesting piece of history that is very much attached to Sandy Hook and how its evolved over the past century. And I'm just pleased that there's an interest in the history of it because it was a, you know, a prominent Victorian resort. And its nice to know that its not going to be lost to history. That we're able to record some of the activities and the importance of it as an attractive beach area in the development of the whole Jersey Coast. And, you know, it just has, it just has a very interesting history. I think of a interesting people over the years some famous, some not so famous people that have passed through there. That all have very fond memories of what it meant to them as a...

**Rasa-** Who famous?

**Sandlass-** One that actually comes to mind who just passed away this year is Gertrude Ederle. Gertrude Ederle, you know, was the first woman to swam the English Channel. And she was also an Olympic swimmer, I believe, a medalist and her family summered in Highlands in that area and so she would come to visit. And I want to say around 1960 at our annual award ceremony for the whole swim program we, somewhere I picked up a picture of her handing out all the medals to us.

**Rasa-** Well that's pretty nice.

**Sandlass-** And that memory just came back cause I just read her obituary this year recently in our history and her linkage to the area.

**Rasa-** Well, she used to swim across the river because it was similar currents to the English Channel.

**Sandlass-** That's correct and she would so some of her training and I just remember her being very nice, friendly person

**Rasa-** Okay. Well, thank you very much for coming.

**Sandlass-** Thank you for having me and I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the history.

Rasa: I'm going to end the interview now.

**END OF INTERVIEW**