

Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, NPS
An Oral History Interview with Sally Hanson
Daughter of Pumping Station Engineer, 1902–1908
Interviewed by Elaine Harmon, NPS,
November 19, 1982
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Sally Hanson's father, John Hanson, 1905.



Fort Hancock Pumping Station
Photos courtesy of NPS/Gateway NRA

Editor's notes in parenthesis ()

EH: Today is November 19, 1982 and this is Elaine Harmon and I'm in the Sandy Hook Museum with a lady named Sally Hanson. Miss Hanson grew up on Sandy Hook and we are very happy to have her here today in the Museum to tape record her recollections. She was born in March of 1902 and grew up on Sandy Hook and left here in 1908, when her father went on to Panama and, I guess, switched jobs with John Mulhern's father as the Chief Engineer at the Pumping Station on Horseshoe Cove. Miss Hanson was telling me a little while ago that her father, who was John T. Hanson, was a civilian employee. He was an engineer in charge of the Pumping Station at Horseshoe Cove. Could you describe your father, you know, what he looked like and what his personality was?

SH: Well, I know he was very easy to get along with. I guess I was his pet. I was the only girl.

EH: You had four brothers.

SH: Yeah. I had four brothers. He was tall, black straight hair and he always had a little mustache.

EH: Was he very well liked by everybody?

SH: Yeah.

EH: Was he known as John Hanson, commonly?

SH: Yeah, that's right. Yeah. He sure was and we had so many Army people come down to visit us. Of course, they would always come in and check on the reservoir and I just remember him working there every day.

EH: He was connected to the water treatment as you were calling where the wells were?

SH: Yeah. Well, that water supplied all of the Hook here. That supplied every house here that's why they had the pump here to push the water up. Do you want to know a funny story?

EH: Sure. You have an anecdote?

SH: They had a great big tower up there. I don't think its there yet. It might be. So anyhow, see my mother was born on the other side and all the little...

EH: Where was your mother born?

SH: In Poland, and all the little kids, from her brothers and sisters all wanted to come to America, just like they want to today. So, she brought them here and they all had jobs. They worked as maids at all these officers' houses. But I remember we used to call her

Aunt Katie. She was very smart. She taught us to read and write and everything. She was very young. They all came over here very young. So, one day I remember my mother and father screaming. She had climbed half way up to the tower.

EH: Oh my goodness.

SH: And they were all scared to death that she couldn't get down without anything happening to her. But I just remember looking up there and all this screaming and she was way up this tower. I wouldn't even go up a ten foot one now. So, another time, she used to help watch all the gauges that were pumping water. My father used to come home for lunch or this and that, you know. He didn't have to stay there steady, but he set all these things and she used to go and watch. One of the officers came in and wanted to know who was running the pumps. They found her there watching the gauges.
(laughter)

EH: Oh my goodness, she was minding the store. (laughter)

SH: She was minding the store. I remember my mother saying, "Well, you've got a smart girl here." (laughter)

EH: Do you recall what that building looked like in the Pumping Station?

SH: Yeah, I remember ...

EH: What sort of interior did it have?

SH: I just remember the gauges. But I don't remember what the outside looked like or anything, but I just remember memories of going in and looking at the gauges.

EH: All the dials and all the instruments.

SH: Yes, all the dials and everything. But us kids were not allowed up there on account of the water pressure. They were afraid something would happen. But I remember that the bank was kept so beautiful, all this green grass, that bank.

EH: It was a big sloping hills.

SH: Big sloping hills. Over ten feet, I know that.

EH: Was it behind the Station? Can you remember the location of this big hill?

SH: I remember it was all around the reservoir. All sloped and I remember the green grass. Everything was kept beautiful around there.

EH: Was the area referred to as Horseshoe Cove?

SH: No. Just Pumping Station. All we ever heard was Pumping Station.

EH: You said you were born in what was known as the red houses which were destroyed in a fire.

SH: Yes.

EH: And then, about when did you go into the residence? About 1903, more or less?

SH: I don't know where they stayed in between. I don't remember, but that was our next home so they must have been placed somewhere between the fire and this house and that's when my two youngest brothers were born. They were twins and they were born in this house.

EH: Was that 1902?

SH: No. They were the youngest...1906.

EH: 1906.

SH: They were born in the house and of course, I remember the Army doctor. We always had the Army doctor. I remember one time I had an infection on my foot and my father took me up there to this Hospital. I remember sitting up there up on the table and the doctor slicing open my foot to let all the puss out. I remember that. There were parts in between that I don't remember. He must have carried me up there.

EH: Do you remember the Post Hospital here Building 19?

SH: Yes. That's the same one. That's the same one that was there. My father was sick. I don't know what with at one time and he was up at the hospital. That's the only two of us that I remember were ever at the hospital. But all the kids around here were all born at home.

EH: Most of them, I guess, were. That residence is Building 340 on Horseshoe Cove which is right next to the Pumping Station.

SH: Oh yeah.

EH: At that time, you said it was a very small wooden house. And you described it as having a big kitchen.

SH: Mmm hmm.

EH: And what else? You said there was an apple tree that your family planted right outside the house.

SH: Yeah. Yeah. We always talked about that apple tree. It was there when John was there. I don't know if it was there now or not. I can't think of it, but he remembers the apple tree too.

EH: What did the house look like then, Building 340. Today now, it has so many additions.

SH: Oh, it was a cute little thing as I can remember.

EH: Was it wood? Wood siding? Like clapboard?

SH: Yes.

EH: Was it white?

SH: Yes, it was white. Let me see...if I can find this little picture home, I think it had a little porch somewhere around it. I think that's where our pictures were taken. I remember we had morning glories growing up and that shaded the porch. I sure that's where we had the pictures taken. It was on the other side of the house.

EH: And you said there was an outhouse?

SH: Yeah.

EH: And you thought there was an indoor pump.

SH: I think so, that it was in the kitchen. But I know the outdoor pump was there because we always had plenty of water there, you know, for the chickens and the ducks.

EH: Who took care of all these animals, was it your mother?

SH: My mother, oh my god.

EH: She must have been a sensational lady with five children.

SH: She was. She died at 84.

EH: Good grief.

SH: And two years before that she had a garden planted out there. All the neighbors over there used to race each other to see who had the best garden. We had some real good gardens out there. She loved it. Everything they had on the outside out there. On the other side, (Poland) if they didn't have a garden they wouldn't have any food. So, everyone that came over here that I knew, had a garden.

EH: Did your mom have a large garden at the Pumping Station area?

SH: I can't remember. She must have, but I can't seem to remember where the garden was. I know she had one there but I can't.... The flowers, there was always flowers.

EH: Was there a parlor to that house? Do you recall any kind of parlor?

SH: Yes. It was on the other side. That's where Mr. Houston had his rooms. He had to have a room in the house too. I remember these two bedrooms on the side. That's how we divvied it all up.

EH: And the two bed rooms were for.....

SH: All the rest of us.

EH: All the rest of us. Wow, it was quite a cramped type of....

SH: Yeah, but you didn't think of it not the way like these days. Everybody has to have a 50 x 100 or else they won't have a bedroom.

EH: Did Mr. Houston stay the entire time that you lived there?

SH: Yes. He did. I don't know when he came there, but he was there and when we left he still stayed there. And some time or another in my life I remember he was retired and he had two sisters in. I think it was Idaho. He came from one of those western states. He was a real westerner.

EH: Did he have a definite accent also that you could tell he was not from...? Some people have very typical accents.

SH: Oh, I don't know. I don't remember that. I don't think so. He went out there and he died out there because the sisters sent us word. But I always remember him because he was so nice. He always came to visit us in Navesink. He said he missed us so much because my mother cooked so good. My mother cooked. He used to come out and spend the day. He always came with candy for us. He never came that he didn't bring us something. He was a pleasant old gentleman. He was so nice. He would sit there. I don't know whether he read books or papers but we never bothered him. The door was closed and we never would go in unless he asked us to come in and that wasn't much because we weren't allowed to bother him. And he was good to us kids.

EH: So, he had his own room which you said was the parlor.

SH: Yeah.

EH: And was there an attic to this house?

SH: Yeah, there was an attic up there.

EH: But it was probably just the peak of the house, not of substantial height.

SH: We had a cot up there. Now come to think of it. Now I remember the cot. Maybe they chased my father up there when all the women were around. (laughter) But remember that. But I still can't remember the stairway going up there. We were always up there playing but I can't remember the stairway.

EH: Was there a basement or a root cellar? Did your mother have big canning shelves?

SH: She was always doing something. There must have been because it really was a well built house. It was nice and warm. I remember that big stove we had there. I remember the stove.

EH: Was it a pot belly stove or a parlor stove?

SH: No. No. It was a kitchen stove.

EH: Oh, okay which was what a wood burning stove at the time?

SH: We had plenty of coal, wood and coal. We had plenty of wood there but when my mother cooked and all that, I remember coal.

EH: Do you remember the delivery of coal by any chance, with horses and wagons? Because that was supposed to be a common sight on Sandy Hook, according to John Mulhern. It was, you know, sort of a major expedition to truck all of this coal out here on horse and carriage and on locomotives too.

SH: We had to have it. Oh, yeah, I remember that little locomotive that my father ran. I remember him throwing coal on that little thing. I don't know where the tracks were or how far it went, but he used to take us for a ride on that.

EH: This was a short gauge railroad, you know, a small one?

SH: A small one. Yeah. A small one I remember riding on that, but I don't know where to. But now, I remember him shoveling coal. We got the coal from somewhere. That's for sure.

EH: Anything else about the house that's particular striking to you? You said there was a little pond....

SH: Yeah there was a little pond somewhere because my mother kept ducks too. I remember we used to watch the ducks swimming around.

EH: Were there other trees or like old fashioned lilac bushes or anything that you recall surrounding the house on the grounds?

SH: I know that my mother had flowers all over the place. We had all sorts of flowers and that was cleared off. We had quite a space, you know, like people have yards and all that. Well, we had our yard there. I remember it was all cleared.

EH: What was your mother's full name?

SH: Same as mine. She was Sally. When they came over they spelled it different from over there. Of course, when she came over here everybody put the American name down but she never used it.

EH: Could you describe her appearance?

SH: She was tall and dark with curly black hair.

EH: She must have been a remarkable person to take care of so many things.

SH: She was. She took care of all the relatives that came over here then they would get married and go off.

EH: You mentioned she cooked for the soldiers. Do you recall who they were?

SH: They weren't soldiers. They were men working somewhere around there. But we had no soldiers down there. There must have been a lot of jobs down there.

EH: Did you have any contact with the Army, the military aspect of Fort Hancock?

SH: No. No, we didn't. I remember there were a couple of men there that evidently came there, they spoke Polish and I remember they called him Mike. Mike used to visit us and talk Polish all the time. But otherwise, in general, no. But the women used to come down to see us. You know, they'd be taking a walk and they'd stop in to see my mother. They always wanted chickens and eggs.

EH: Do you have any memories of the typical week, like Monday was wash day? Something like that for your mother, do you remember her boiling clothes?

SH: I remember her doing that but I don't remember if there was any special day for it.

EH: Or baking bread? I remember that people have said that, "Oh mother always baked bread on Friday and on Monday there wasn't a thing left."

SH: Well, she might have. Once a week like they gave out rations. And my father would come home with whatever the Army gave to the other people, he got. But I remember there were great big loaves of bread stuck in a box about this size, with all sorts of dry food.

EH: Do you remember the baker up here, Mr. Murray?

SH: No.

EH: Which John Mulhern has described?

SH: No. I wouldn't know his name. If I did meet him, I probably did, but I don't know. I can't place him. We were so small that if somebody came around with a name or anything, it wouldn't register.

EH: Sure.

SH: But evidently I must have seen him. I'd have to see him in all that time.

EH: Were there other houses in that location, other families?

SH: No.

EH: Like tar shacks that we've heard of here and there. Of you know, like squatters shacks on Sandy Hook.

SH: There might have been out toward the ocean or way inland or something like that. Those roads, we were not allowed to go on. The road went way inland. They must have gone to the ocean, but we weren't allowed. We were just made to stay in front and go to the (Sandy Hook) Bay.

EH: So, you really didn't go exploring.

SH: Oh no. If they said not to, we didn't. We just played around the Bay and we went swimming there. In back, no. All we did was stay on the front roads. So those roads were there for some purpose.

EH: Do you remember things like beach plum picking?

SH: Oh boy, picking those damn things. Now I wish I had a few. (laughter) We didn't appreciate it. My mother made all sorts of things; jams and jellies. Now I'm trying to find some. I'm hoping there are some bushes around here where I can get some.

EH: There's none around now. By now the birds have certainly had a feast.

SH: Oh, boy would I love them. They used to know where to go to get the great big ones. Oh my, they were so good.

EH: Did you go frost fishing by any chance here in the wintertime?

SH: No.

EH: Because that was a major production of John Mulhern's family.

SH: Yeah. Well, that was later on that they could go out there. But we were not allowed. We were too little. I know my father went and I don't know who was with him but I just remember a couple of them coming back with fish, but we were not allowed out there.

EH: I notice you mentioned that one of your, among your family, that godparents were Lighthouse Keepers here at Sandy Hook called Tom Lacey and his wife. Do you have any recollection of them, as a person?

SH: I kind of remember him. He was tall and skinny but she was sort of heavy and very pleasant.

EH: Were you ever in the Lighthouse with them or in the residence outside of the Lighthouse?

SH: When the, see when the old people retired, see they had a daughter and she got married and he was up there. Well, I used to go up there. We used to come in from home. But when we were kids, no, we never were around. But when we came to visit, we always visited, our family stayed friends. I went up that Lighthouse so many times. I used to look up there. He showed me how to look at the telescope and show me the big ships coming in and all. Oh, I loved it. Way up in the air. We had to walk all those stairs up there.

EH: Lacey is an old name, L-A-C-E-Y, an old name in Monmouth County. I'm just curious to know how it connects, in what way. You said that your godfather, your personal godfather was Mr. Houston, himself.

SH: Yes. Yes.

EH: Was he a bachelor, he never married, is that correct?

SH: Yes.

EH: And he lived in your residence Building 340, as you said in the parlor.

SH: Yes and when we left there he was still there.

EH: He stayed behind then in 19--

SH: Whatever job he had.... I can't tell you what job he had, but he had something. I don't know. I can't say because I don't know.

EH: And you began school you said on Sandy Hook.

SH: Yes.

EH: Do you remember the location of it as you were describing it to me?

SH: It was right near the church and the store.

EH: Right near the Post Chapel.

SH: Yeah. Right there.

EH: And what did the school look like? Do you have any recollections?

SH: Oh, I remember one, just one big room and that's all. All of us were in there. I don't remember but she must have taught in sections.

EH: I think you're referring to Pearl Murray, who was the teacher here for over thirty years.

SH: She was there for ages. I used to meet her out. She always used to say, "Don't tell anybody I taught you." I always remember her being so nice. But she would eat here lunch, I don't know where she lived or where she came from, but she would eat her lunch up at the desk. Us two, we were the only lunch eaters because we lived that far away. I remember us having lunch.

EH: Did the rest of the children go home?

SH: Yeah. They all went home for lunch and came back. We were the only ones.

EH: Do you remember any of the names of any of your companions in school, like other children, your colleagues who attended at the same time?

SH: Not now. I can't remember. I used to know them. I remember that the room was full.

EH: The what?

SH: The room was full, there were a lot of kids in there.

EH: And the chapel you said was next door, St. Mary's Chapel?

SH: I think it was next door. It was all right there. Now whether it was right next door, to this side, or that side, I can't remember.

EH: Well, the school we know was a small wooden clapboard school.

SH: Yeah small white, and all on one floor. Yeah and everything was together. The store was first and I think the Chapel was on the other side. But they were all together back there.

EH: And the store was Bob Kay's Grocery Store.

SH: That must have been his name but I can't remember, but it was the only store there.

EH: K-A-Y-S that's what John Mulhern said. And what do you remember about the store?

SH: All I remember that I used to go in there and look at the candy case and watch the kids buying candy because they always seemed to have a penny to go in there to buy candy.

EH: And you would just look at it longingly?

SH: Yeah, I didn't always have a penny. But when Mr. Houston went to town, he always made sure that we had candy.

EH: Did you walk to school from Horseshoe Cove?

SH: When it was nice. When it was nice, but when it was windy, rainy, cold, my father rode us down in the basket.

EH: Is those laundry carts.

SH: Yeah.

EH: Which was what, was it a wicker basket, did you say?

SH: Sort of, yeah.

EH: With wheels on it and a handle?

SH: Oh, he made the wheels and all that.

EH: How inventive.

SH: He put us on the (inaudible) and I'll tell you when it rained and snowed out here especially when it rained and wind it was, it was really something. It was really something.

EH: You remember the weather, I'm sure, still to this day.

SH: That I can't forget.

EH: It can be fierce.

SH: Oh, that I know. And I guess you would probably be blown away, if we had taken us down. (laughter)

EH: What was the typical idea of a woman? I can well imagine it was very domestic but in general terms.

SH: Well, there was nothing for us to do. I don't remember seeing women working anywhere but in the house. There were no outside jobs for women. That much I remember.

EH: And your mother was, you know, a pure example of being a housekeeper. Was she very stern? What was her personality like?

SH: She was very good. What I thought she was very nice. We had no other kids so we couldn't get into any fights. We'd fight among ourselves, I guess. (laughter)

EH: You really had no playmates?

SH: No. When we moved in to Navesink and saw all these black kids and some of them were fresh just like today. Oh god, more lickers I got, even from the white ones because we did not know what a fight was. We never fought with these kids around here. A lot of these kids were officers' kids, and all that, and we were all mixed up together. Everyone minded their own business. But there was no discussion and no violence or anything like that. Then I went over there (Navesink) and got mixed up with the every day Americans.

EH: A different world outside of Sandy Hook.

SH: Oh, it sure was because it was pleasant. I don't remember anything. I don't ever remember seeing a fight like you see the kids come out of school these days and beat the heck out of each other outside the door.

EH: How did you get groceries, by the way? You were mentioning how you got groceries to your house and all.

SH: Yeah, they went up to New York. They would order all the dry stuff and it would be delivered to us down here.

EH: How often did that happen? Was that a big like winter preparation?

SH: Oh, no, god we'd use up all that stuff in no time at all. I would say every couple of weeks, one month at the most. Because I remember barrels of sugar, oatmeal and all that

stuff, all the dry stuff that we went up and ordered. I guess the meat they must have gotten down at the store. I don't remember that. There was no problem with groceries.

EH: Did you feel isolated? Did you feel like you were at the end of nowhere?

SH: No, none of that at all.

EH: And the transportation was the ferry, you said?

SH: Yeah and the train would go to Highlands, you know. So, we rode the train. My mother would take us and we would stay on the shore. Whatever little park they had there we would spend the day there. It was a very simple life. I sure wish to heck it was like that now. It was very pleasant. I don't remember anything out of the way. We played on that beach and we'd go swimming there. We went fishing around there. I remember my father used to go with us when he did have time, but we took care of ourselves.

EH: What were the kinds of things children did to keep themselves occupied? Did you have paper dolls or any special kind of things? How did you keep yourselves busy?

SH: I suppose we probably just played around. I don't know what with, but we were always doing something. We always had to be called in to eat. But we must have played around.

EH: There was no radio. There was no television. What kept you occupied?

SH: I guess we just occupied ourselves. I don't remember what we did but we were always doing something. We never sat around. We loved that beach. We used to go down on that beach. We were always wet coming home. I remember I guess we must have walked with our shoes on because I remember mother screaming because we had our shoes all wet. (laughter)

EH: Did you have a preference for the Bayside or the Ocean side?

SH: We did not go to the Ocean.

EH: Okay, so it was purely the Bayside.

SH: We were not allowed back that way.

EH: What was the Cove like? Was the vegetation different?

SH: Oh, it was so nice and clean. When I look at it now I get homesick because it was great. Nothing like now, we'd walk up and down. Sometimes in the evening my mother would walk with us and we'd walk down and back. Of course, she always had one of the relatives with us that came and stayed.

EH: Was the vegetation different then? Were there mature trees or were there holly trees?

SH: I remember plenty of holly trees, loads of them all the way around. But if it were cleared up, not all that junk on it, it would be the same.

EH: Beach plums on that side also?

SH: Yeah. We used to...I guess it was over there because I remember we used to eat them in between. But we didn't have to go far to get them.

EH: Other things like wild asparagus, did you remember collecting those? Cause its still abundant here.

SH: No. Well, if they did, I don't remember it. But I remember the beach. (tape cut off)...stuck up relatives.

EH: You were talking about some of the incidents about one particular family member you don't have to name but a cousin was always in the Guardhouse whenever anyone asked where he was. What was that all about?

SH: Well, he couldn't stand anyone telling him what to do because he came from out west. He was a real westerner and nobody told him what to do. If he was given an order he wouldn't do it. So, a couple of times he was given an order and he would just smack the officer back, in the Guardhouse. (laughter) We said he spent more time in the Guardhouse. They'd put him in and let him out and he'd be out just so long and the same old temper would start out again and yet he was a wonderful man. He married my, he was an in-law.

EH: He was just hot tempered, I guess.

SH: Yes. He was awful good but I guess he couldn't stand another man telling him what to do and probably didn't care for what he was supposed to do so he'd let him have it, in the Guardhouse!

EH: Was he a soldier here at Fort Hancock?

SH: Yeah.

EH: Do you remember his name by any chance because we have some old rosters?

SH: His last name was Morgan. M-O-R-G-A-N.

EH: Morgan. We'll have to look that...cause it was around the turn of the century. I'd like to know because those were the early company's here on Fort Hancock.

SH: And of course, we had left here when all this happened. He was very nice. We liked him after he got out of the Army. Of course, they were married in this little chapel here.

EH: St. Mary's, hmm.

SH: The minute he got married his time was up. She wouldn't marry him unless he stayed out of the Army. He had several different jobs and it turned out that he worked for the telephone company. It was too bad, but he was accidentally killed trying to save a guy from the hot wires.

EH: Do you recall his first name?

SH: I think it was Tracy. Either T-r-a-c- either ey or just y.

EH: Tracey Morgan

SH: He was a very good father to his son. He wouldn't let his wife do anything. He treated her like a

EH: A queen.

SH: Oh, she never had to do a thing. Those kids would always be kept in line. He was a very good father.

EH: Did you have much interaction with the soldiers here?

SH: No.

EH: Was it forbidden that civilians don't associate with military, is that it?

SH: They were, no man in the Army was any good in those days. They were all bums.

EH: That's what you said before.

SH: I remember that. "Stay away from them." (laughter)

EH: No kidding.

SH: Well, a lot of them came from out here. They were always getting into trouble. And of course, they all lived down there in Highlands with the prostitutes. That was their pass time. Highlands was full of prostitutes.

EH: Oh boy. It kept them occupied.

SH: Oh, boy none of us, it was understood, nothing to do with them.

EH: Do you remember the sounds of guns? Do you remember anything associated with the Proving Grounds?

SH: Oh yes. Yes. And every Sunday morning was parade day out on these grounds. These grounds, when we came home from church, when we did go were kept beautiful. It was like green velvet. I never saw anything...

EH: You're talking about the Parade Grounds surrounding the flag pole.

SH: Everything, everything, all the front yards of all these houses were the most beautiful thing that I ever.... I remember that Sunday morning was the parade.

EH: The soldiers were actually marching in formation on the Parade Grounds?

SH: Yes.

EH: Was there a bugler? Was there a special ceremony?

SH: Everything that was there. Well, they had nothing else to do but just to hang around and no where else to go unless it was to Highlands. Of course, they weren't allowed. Everybody had to have a pass to get out. So you see, they didn't go there much but otherwise they were here. I just remember the whole field was so beautiful. The whole place was so beautiful and I look at it now and its not. I remember how pretty, everything had flowers in it and these women would be sitting on the porches on the Bay. I look at it now and (inaudible) It was beautiful.

EH: Do you recall the sounds of guns of the Proving Grounds? Do you have any recollection of that?

SH: Yes. I do because the way they boomed around here, you would have to hear it.

EH: Were you given a warning that such-and-such a day, as we do have a notice out in the Museum, "To all local residents on this particular day there will be guns tested on Fort Hancock and you were to remove the dishes off your shelves, roll down your car windows." Do you have any.....

SH: Well, there must have been. I know they were always talking about the guns that went off, so we must have gotten the same notice. We would have to. I remember those guns went off everything in the place would shake. That's for sure.

EH: How often did it happen?

SH: Oh a couple of times. I don't know. That's why we were not allowed to go. (The back of the house was our limits. Everything there was off limits. That's all. We just could not go there. But I remember those guns, oh boy.

EH: Did you see them? Actually could you go ...

SH: No, we could not go there. We had to stay over here and that was it. I remember those things going off, very much. I never even saw them over here until a couple of years ago when we were allowed to go there. And I said, "Tom, this is what we were living under." And I can't believe how this is all shot. Everything, no matter where you went, everything was kept so...

EH: Was well maintained, which we don't have today.

SH: Oh, it was so...

EH: Who were your four brothers, by the way, we didn't give their names. Tom was one of them.

SH: Tom and Henry were the twins and John was the young one and Joe was the oldest.

EH: So John, Jr.

SH: Yeah he was John, Jr.

EH: And the fourth one was...

SH: Henry and Tom were twins.

EH: And the last one....

SH: Joe was the oldest.

EH: Joseph. Are they still alive?

SH: Joe is the only one alive. The others are dead. See, the way they named the kids had to be after some relative. So Joe, I remember Uncle Joe when he came over from the other side. They would all come over and stay a year and go back. I remember Joe and I remember John. Henry must have been the other brother over there, probably one of the other relatives.

EH: How did your brothers like living here? Was it a pleasant memory for them?

SH: Well, it must have been. Same thing as with me because we were all so close.

EH: The boys were treated differently, I imagine you know I would think or did you all pal around together?

SH: Oh yeah, the three of us, Joe and John and I. Of course, the others were babies and, of course, they don't remember anything. Nothing bothered us. It was a pleasant life.

EH: And then from here you said...oh, the last thing I had to ask you about is Halyburton. That was 1908, when the tomb was discovered in April of 1908.

SH: Yes.

EH: What kind of experience was that?

SH: Well, all I know is what I heard. We weren't allowed. And when everybody cleared out we walked down.

EH: Do you remember where this was?

SH: I know it was somewhere around here, somewhere because I remember my father going down.

EH: Was it south of the Cove or north of the Cove?

SH: I think it was south. Because we did not walk this way we walked the other way so it had to be south.

EH: Anything special about the location because we're always still fascinated about pin pointing it?

SH: No. I don't know. All I remember is my mother and father talking about it. Everybody was all excited about it but we did not go over there.

EH: You said that your mother forbid you to play with the bones after you had already done so.

SH: That I recall.

EH: Were they boxed or were they...

SH: Same box as you see in the paper. They were all in a box.

EH: It's exactly like that photograph.

SH: Mmm hmm.

EH: You mentioned that the person in the photo, the second from the right, was possibly Mr. Houston.

SH: Yes. So, John and I were trying to see what we could recognize. And I said, well it was so blurry. But I think, I think that it looks so much like him and he had glasses and he had a mustache. That's the closest to that picture but we couldn't remember anybody else. No I can't....

EH: So, were you there at the location. You were really not there and it was something that you heard a lot of commotion about.

SH: Yeah, we were talking about it after it was going on. We didn't know anything about it.

EH: But most likely your father did see it, in person.

SH: Yes. Yes. Because he went down there a number of times. I remember him coming back and all the excitement about them finding something and digging it up. So, he went there but we didn't go there. (inaudible) I know it was in the evening after everybody had left. I don't remember when they came to take it away and clear up the ground. That I don't remember. I remember all the fuss that day, of course my father...

EH: It caused quite a calamity.

SH: Yes. Of course, my father telling my mother about it and all this talk. That's why us kids went down to see what was going on. (inaudible)

EH: I'm sure it was more the excitement of the event more than anything that stands out in most peoples minds.

SH: Oh yes. We just stood far away enough from it, but it was there alright.

EH: Was it a spooky kind of experience that these bones were excavated and that people were like, squeamish about it?

SH: Oh no, I don't think so. I think it was just a discovery, just an important discovery. Not like they act these days when bones are discovered and people get excited and start screaming. I don't remember any of that. There wasn't any of that. There was talk around about this and that but no hot steam fussing.

EH: This summer I met a man who I tape recorded by the name of Mr. Feakes, F-E-A-K-E-S. He was with the Quartermaster Department here in 1908 here and he personally boxed the bones.

SH: Oh yeah.

EH: ...and sent them off of Sandy Hook. But he knew nothing really about what it was. He was sort of in like a warehouse type of duty and he said he wasn't really aware of what he was doing until he was presented with the bones and he was told just to crate them. So, he personally was involved with it but he wasn't at the excavation.

SH: Well, see, my father knew everybody on this Hook. We always called it the Hook.

EH: Right. Did you explore any other areas like Skeleton Hill, Plum Island, all the other small islands off of Sandy Hook?

SH: No. No. We were too young for that.

EH: Did they, did your parents go out, your Dad....

SH: They knew an old Holland fisherman that lived out on Plum Island.

EH: Really?

SH: and he used to come to our house and bring us fish and everything like that. There were people on the outside that my family knew.

EH: This Dutch fisherman lived there all year round?

SH: Yeah.

EH: Wow, he was a sturdy sole.

SH: He sure was. I remember seeing him. I remember one time he was walking on the ice and it broke through. I remember my mother saying he always had these big boots on. He got through the ice and there was no help and he drowned right there.

EH: Gee whiz.

SH: I remember that fuss. There was so much talk about that but he used to come to our house all the time and bring us everything from the sea. He was a real fisherman from Holland. I think that's where he came from.

EH: Did you hear of anyone by the name of Rabbit Hayes? This hermit who lived on Sandy Hook? Rabbit H-A-Y-E-S.

SH: If I heard it, it didn't register.

EH: He was a particular colorful folk figure. I think that he was somewhat of a semi-alcoholic, also. He was a hermit who sort of had squatter's rights and who lived out here for many years. He was very well known. You would have steered away from him.

SH: Well, like I say, my parents knew everybody like that around here. They must have come around but when you're that young you don't remember things, you just remember certain events and there's a blank in between. As far as names are concerned, it doesn't even register.

EH: He was considered to be quite a character.

SH: Well, I'm sure if there was someone like that he must have come around visiting because everybody came to visit us.

EH: Your house was always....

SH: It was always full.

EH: Like Grand Central Station. Your mother was always cooking for everybody.

SH: Yeah. And it was always well, that reservoir was the main industry and if that didn't work, they had no water out here.

EH: It was a crucial position to have.

SH: Yeah and I don't ever remember them having any trouble with it. I guess my father must have been pretty darn good at it because it always kept on going. That was it. They supplied all the water here.

EH: Do you, the last question that I have is do you remember any great events like big major storms, blizzards, hurricanes or whatever that you know? You had electricity in your house even back then?

SH: No.

EH: No. You had lanterns.

SH: Yeah.

EH: I was thinking of any major power failures?

SH: No. That didn't go here. I remember rain storms. I don't remember anything. We must have had them. Sure, we had to have them. It just didn't register in a case like that we just stayed in. We weren't allowed out and we didn't have to go anywhere.

EH: Right.

SH: And we never went by ourselves. The only time we went by ourselves was when we walked back and forth to school.

EH: Have you heard of any particular place called the Cove House? Cove House which is a location we're trying to study near Spermaceti Cove? Anything like that ever ran across...

SH: I don't remember any houses around, no one.

EH: Because that's a location we're trying to pinpoint. How about cemeteries? Do you remember the seaman's cemetery near the Lighthouse? There were supposedly many grave stones retrieved that are no longer around. There was a seaman's cemetery right near the Lighthouse and just near the Mortar Battery wall.

SH: Well, see when we were kids we did not come down to the Lighthouse.

EH: Apparently, that was off limits to you.

SH: If it were there, I wouldn't have known anything about it. If I had seen it I would have.

(Tape turns off and then on again outside. Audio is difficult to understand)

EH: We are currently outside of Building 340 which is opposite Horseshoe Cove. Sally Hanson is looking at the house. It has drastically changed.

SH: It sure has.

EH: And the porch, she remembers to be, on the west side of the house.

SH: See the windows over there, it must be somewhere on that side.

EH: On the East side of the house, I'm sorry.

SH: We had an outside pump.

EH: Right opposite it is Building 341 which was the Pumping Station. It's drastically changed now because its eighty years later.

SH: (inaudible) has changed. Is that the Bank I was talking about?

EH: It looks like the big slope you were talking about. Those buildings up on the hill are 342 and 343 so it's entirely possible that that's the slope that you mentioned.

SH: I remember that it was big and

EH: Do you remember where was the pond?

SH: I can't remember where the pond was. It was probably overgrown again. This is it alright, but they must have expanded. They are all new boards.

EH: Well, you can tell, from here, that there was an addition because that was all cement block on one side of those steps and on the other side is definitely old brick. So there's much change taken place.

SH: On the side over there is where the pond used to be.

EH: I was going to say, that depression over there.

SH: It was not that far away from the house.

EH: We're looking at the northwest corner of the house and we are remarking that there is a lot of trees in there. There is sort of a concave area where it's possible that a pond could be located but its very hard to judge now.

SH: If it's anything with heat there then that's where the pond was.

EH: It looks like a likely spot for it.

SH: Because it wasn't out here. All this, we were not allowed back here in the woods.

EH: More or less north east.

SH: I know we had a big place to play Now this building was not (inaudible)

EH: We're remarking that the location of the red houses that were destroyed in a fire which was where Sally Hanson was born somewhere between the Halyburton Monument where it stands now and just east of it as far back as Horseshoe Cove. She also mentioned that the shoreline has changed quite a bit on the Bayside. Apparently it was much closer to the road. That it was narrower and shallower than the appearance that as it seems right now. (tape cuts off)

END OF INTERVIEW