

Recording: June 13th, 2025

Location: F.W. Fraley Store, Catoctin Furnace, MD

Interviewee: Pat Weddle

Interviewer: Anne Comer

[Pat Weddle]

I was born in 1935 and my parents moved from Emmitsburg to Catoctin Furnace when I was five years old. So, basically, my life revolved around my grandfather's store, F.W. Fraley's store, and Harriet Church. That is where our- well I didn't know at the time at five years old that that's where the social life was, but basically that was it because people didn't jump in their car and go get groceries. The village people shopped here and we had the big account book just like they did up at the ironworks and Mr. Miller, Mr. Oscar Miller was there, Mr. Clint Miller was there and I can see the ledger exactly how it looked like and the wives very, very rarely came in the store, which I always thought was kind of odd. I mean not as a child, I didn't think that, but as I thought back it was always the men that I- Now maybe they came when I was in school. I don't know, but whenever, and in the summertime, I was here a lot because I'm an only child and there really wasn't anybody to play with and then, let's see, we moved here when I was five so that was '39, '40, '39.

Then World War II came so that was a huge difference in what was going on in this store because the local young men were being drafted one by one by one and they would come in and say I got my notice to appear. Well, I don't know of anybody that was deferred that I know of. Every house along the way had a young man and the very first one was one of the Miller young men and he had a wife and two sons, but he didn't come back, but all the other did come back and they knew my grandmother, Ida May Fraley, because she would come into the store and sit back there in the corner. She never waited on anyone, but they knew her as Nanny Fraley or Miss Ida or anything and I always thought it was so neat that some of those guys wrote, you don't know what email is, I mean, whatever those little, in other words, during wartime, they couldn't send a paper letter, it was a little photograph thing.

[Anne Comer]

Was it a telegram?

[Pat Weddle]

No, no, no, no. This, I don't know how to explain, you'll have to ask somebody else about that, but she would be so, oh my God, she would be beside herself. Of course, she didn't realize that it was a very long time from when that left Europe or the Pacific to get to her. You know, a lot of things could have happened, but fortunately, everyone that wrote to her came back, which is pretty outstanding, I guess, I don't know what to say.

Wartime, you came in with your stamp book to buy coffee, sugar, gasoline, shoes. I seem to think there's more things than that. But if you had a large family, your sticker book was according to the size of your family, which made sense, because you needed more things. Now, I can't think of any of the people down the way during the early 40s that- Yes, everybody had a car except maybe the men that were retired from the railroad. So, we had gas pumps. Actually, this store was pretty well, not self-sufficient, for the local people, because it was here.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, it's efficient.

[Pat Weddle]

You didn't go to a dry cleaner. You very rarely went to a doctor, because if you needed a doctor, the doctor came to you. Thurmont had, well, I can't go back, I know that my grandmother said that all five, six of her children were naturally born at home, and what was the doctor's name, came and delivered the child. There would be a midwife there, but the doctor also arrived. Then Nanny said, you know, they would keep us in bed for 10 days after the birth of your child.

[Anne Comer]

Really? 10 days? And what would happen during those ten days?

[Pat Weddle]

Well, I can only speak for what she did, because they could maybe afford it a little better. There was always a lady that came and took care of the baby, because I said, 'You had to help?' 'Oh, yes.' She said, it really wasn't- I guess it's because they probably paid practically nothing in comparison, but it was the older women that came and would do that.

What this door looked like, you've seen those bins back there?

[Anne Comer]

Yes.

[Pat Weddle]

Okay. Were you ever told what was in those bins?

[Anne Comer]

Can you tell me what was in those bins?

[Pat Weddle]

Okay. Now, think about today, how fastidious we have to be with food, cleanliness, and so forth, okay? One head sugar, an aluminum scoop, I can see it, and you took- If you wanted five pounds or whatever, it was not prepackaged, you scooped it for whatever you wanted it and then the scale was there. And I guess the adults knew approximately, maybe you got more, maybe you got a little less, okay? Then there was what they called pinto beans, are sort of tan with dark brown spots in them. There was the big, white lima beans, and then there was a little white bean, like, oh, that was soup, the small one, about like that, that was like the soup one. How many did I say? I don't know how many things were there.

[Anne Comer]

You said sugar, pinto beans, lima beans.

[Pat Weddle]

And white soup beans, that's all I can remember in there, I don't know what else was. But as a five/six-year-old, I just loved to take those, you push the lid up and take that aluminum, you know, and just dig in there, that was so much fun. But I have to wonder about the

sugar. Now, the beans you would wash, or at least I assume you washed before you cooked them, but why didn't the bugs and the ants and the stuff get in the sugar? Maybe we didn't have all that aggravation. We certainly had ants back then, but I never saw anything in it.

And above those bins, there's a pretty nice shelf that goes across there, and in the center, that's where the cigarette cartons were, and they were like this, leaned up against the back wall. But down on the counter, it was always open packages of cigarettes, because you came in and laid down two pennies, and you know what you got? You got two cigarettes, because you didn't have money to buy a pack.

And I remember doing that, and I could tell the man that came in, I knew exactly what he wanted. He never, ever had- I was told that his wife held the purse strings, and that's all he had. That's hard to believe, isn't it?

[Anne Comer]

Wow. Mm-hmm.

[Pate Weddle]

But other men might put down a nickel and get five, but two cents for us, that was it.

[Anne Comer]

Was there more than one type of cigarette or was it standard?

[Pat Weddle]

Okay, the variety would have been, number one was Camel, number two was probably Lucky Strike, and then there was something called Gold.

[Anne Comer]

Gold?

[Pat Weddle]

Gold. I can see the package being all gold, but I don't- Let's go on, you have to find out.

[Anne Comer]

That's okay, we can put that in the notes.

[Pat Weddle]

And the other thing, beside of the cigarette things, would be your chewing tobacco, which was- Now these men worked railroads, you know, they were, it wasn't like they had a bottle of water with them, they chewed tobacco, and that would kip your mouth, I guess. Anyhow, chewing tobacco, Prince Albert, I think they were all red cans, didn't I see a red can sitting around?

[Anne Comer]

There was a red can here at one point, it was in a red can. We'll see if we can find.

[Pat Weddle]

Well, what did I tell you it was?

[Anne Comer]

You said it was Prince Albert?

[Pat Weddle]

Prince Albert. And years later, the phone used to ring, and many a time I answered it, and the question was, 'Do you have Prince Albert tobacco?' 'Yes.' 'Well, would you let him out of the can, please?' Do you know how lame that sounds now?

[Anne Comer]

Were they just calling for fun, or was it?

[Pat Weddle]

Kids.

[Anne Comer]

Okay, just kids.

[Pat Weddle]

Now, that was much later, of course, because I don't know of any phones when I was just growing up. The store had a phone, the house had a phone, but I'm not sure about when all the locals got phones. You'd have to talk to somebody that's younger, because I don't know.

Okay, and as you went on around, then the next section was canned goods, hominy, probably kidney beans. There was also fruit, not that much fruit. Because see, back then, everything, vegetables and fruit were all canned, not frozen, nobody had a freezer. They all had to be processed in the jars, but there was a lot of cans there for some reason. So, there must have been some young people that moved in and didn't know how to can, that's all I can say, because I can see the- And I remember reaching up, you know, you said, but hominy, do you know what hominy is?

[Anne Comer]

I don't, can you tell me what hominy is?

[Pat Weddle]

Hominy is corn, whatever they do to it, and it comes out in a white kernel, and that would be very much a staple in everybody's home breakfast. You know what pudding is?

[Anne Comer]

Can you describe pudding for me? I do know what it is, but.

[Pat Weddle]

Pudding is made at butcherings, and it's from the pig, it's liver, and probably heaven knows what else went through in the big kettle.

[Anne Comer]

Sure.

[Pat Weddle]

And when it comes out, it's fine, and I guarantee you that was- Pudding and hominy was a staple in everybody's home back then, it just was.

[Anne Comer]
Is it like scrapple?

[Pat Weddle]
No, no, no, scrapple's made from cornmeal.

[Anne Comer]
Oh, of course, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]
And that's the- yes.

[Anne Comer]
And we're talking about-

[Pat Weddle]
But you're, and why it's called P-U-D-D-I-N or P-U-D-D-I-N-G, I never heard it called anything but that but maybe.
Box, cardboard boxes of cornflakes. That was probably, if not the first, one of the first cereals because oatmeal, cooked oatmeal was what the average person- There would always be a big pot of oatmeal that you could dip out at any time. But the cornflakes were there, the boxes of oatmeal, and it, believe me, it was one that- Oatmeal was something you had to put in the stove and cook and cook, it wasn't instant oatmeal like you buy today.

And what else would have been over there with the cereals?
And I said, my grandmother had a chair there in the corner, it had a nice cushion on it, and in the afternoons, lots of times, she'd come over and she'd get to see people that came in.

So, let's see, came around- Up on the top shelf was something that I was always fascinated with, and I- Your mother tried to find a case. Evidently, dyeing cloth must have been a big thing, and it was a beautiful sort of turquoise color, metal thing, and then it had rows of, say, black or red or I don't know what was in it, but the dye came in just a package. But I'd have to ask Elizabeth. And on the side of it, why I was fascinated was this beautiful Victorian lady with these gorgeous clothes, and that was the highlight of the store for a child, it was just so beautiful. So, I was telling your mother about it, and she did some research, and she showed me one very similar but it wasn't the exact one, because, you know, you knew your mother, she would love to have had that right up there like it was.

[Anne Comer]
Absolutely.

[Pat Weddle]
And I would fall in a dead faint if that- Because it's such a memory that I loved as a child. You don't realize, I guess there were color books and crayons and stuff, but there was a long period there 'till 1945 when there wasn't gas, so you didn't go to Frederick, and the delivery trucks came here out of Baltimore for what? Every now and then, my grandfather would go

someplace, and I think that would be what I call the hardware- The men's shoes, the women's shoes, the work clothes were all along here.

[Anne Comer]
Okay.

[Pat Weddle]
See, this was-

[Anne Comer]
Right-hand side wall? Yeah.

[Pat Weddle]
Well, we had a- If only Nick wouldn't have- This was glass counters, glass tops, and all the women's shoes were along that area there, then the men's shoes. Then this broke away.

[Anne Comer]
So, where we're sitting broke away?

[Pat Weddle]
Yeah.

[Anne Comer]
Okay.

[Pat Weddle]
A glass case, a high-class glass case started here then. This was flat.

[Anne Comer]
Okay. So, it changed from a flat glass case to a glass case going up the wall?

[Pat Weddle]
And it was real heavy glass, I guess they called that plate glass. My God, it might have been glass, but you'd have had to blow it up probably to crack it, I mean, it was heavy-duty stuff. And then that case had glass to the outside and that contained iodine. What was the other stuff that was even stronger? Alcohol, all the remedy stuff that they had back then. Well, not way back, because I don't know way back, but there was a lot of stuff in there that I assume had a high content of alcohol in it, because that's how it was made. You know, Dr. Jonathan Smith, or they were all men's names, you know, and it would always have a doctor on it. Well, they made it in the bathtub, or I don't know where they made it, and then packaged it. And Lydia Pinkham, that's the only one I remember, and that was for women if they had, I guess, cramps or whatever, I don't know. Lydia Pinkham.

[Anne Comer]
Mm-hmm.

[Pat Weddle]
And I'd have to research some of those other remedies. There was something called paragoric, and I have a feeling that no matter what you had, my grandmother would, 'Oh,

here, here's a little teaspoon of paragoric.' Well, you were better in 10 minutes. I don't know what it did to you, but believe me, it went off the market, you know?

[Anne Comer]

We'll have to look that up and find out what was in it.

[Pat Weddle]

No, I never did, but as I think about it, can't we Google all this stuff?

[Anne Comer]

We can, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

I mean, not now.

[Anne Comer]

No, no, but we can add notes later of what these things were.

[Pat Weddle]

And there should be a listing. Because now that case was about that wide, and it had an upper shelf, two shelves, and then the bottom. And, as I remember, there was- Well, aspirin would have been in there at that time. What was that stuff that they used for your back? Some kind of powder. Evidently, I wasn't too interested in what- Because when you opened that case, the medicinal smell almost knocked you over.

[Anne Comer]

Oh, wow.

[Pat Weddle]

And that was not any place where I wanted to play.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, you didn't want to be up there.

[Pat Weddle]

No, I didn't like that, because I was afraid I'd have to take some of that.

[Anne Comer]

So, it was about a-

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah, it was tall and skinny, I mean, in comparison. And I would say it was approximately here, but from here on down, there was no flat thing.

[Anne Comer]

Okay.

[Pat Weddle]

It was built up more. Shelves, against the wall and the back of shelves from here on down until you got to the cheese case at the very end.

[Anne Comer]

Cheese case? Tell me about the cheese case.

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah, where's the paper there?

[Anne Comer]

Oh, it's right- The diagrams on there.

[Pat Weddle]

Okay, and it had a bowed front. Do you know what a wheel of cheese looks like?

[Anne Comer]

I do know what a wheel of cheese looks like.

[Pat Weddle]

Okay, that was in there. Sharp, sharp cheese with a big- To me, now as an adult, it looked like a machete but I was allowed, when I got a certain age, I was allowed to cut cheese. Now, you would walk up, say, I want and they always took their fingers and said, you know, 'I want a wedge about so big.' You had a piece of white paper in the case, you cut the cheese, you laid it on the white paper, you walked around to the scale and weighed it, and that's how you paid for it. Whether it was just a little bit for your lunch or whether it was something you wanted to take home. How sanitary was that?

[Anne Comer]

It was a different time, that's for sure.

[Pat Weddle]

That's why a lot of people died early. But you didn't have the drugs, the medications, you know? You had a heart attack, you might have survived, you might not have survived. Typhoid was- All those other things that- All the children died of those and now I'm going back, you know, not my time, but back, back.

[Anne Comer]

Lots of diseases, lots of things going around, yeah.
So, what type of cheese was it?

[Pat Weddle]

Very strong-

[Anne Comer]

Cheddar?

[Pat Weddle]

Cheddar. Because when you opened the case for that, I didn't like cheddar cheese, so, to me it was rather repulsive, the smell. And you know cheddar cheese does have a very pungent odor, doesn't it?

[Anne Comer]

So, do you think that you didn't like cheddar cheese because of that experience, or?

[Pat Weddle]

It was a long adult time before I ever would touch cheddar cheese.

[Anne Comer]

Interesting.

[Pat Weddle]

A long time, probably 50 years.

[Anne Comer]

Wow!

[Pat Weddle]

My husband loved cheddar cheese and that brought back all the memories.

The coffee was, because there was a big, red, painted coffee grinder on the end over there, which I told your mother about. It was a bright red and I was always fascinated with that, but when I came along and grinding the beans was not a big thing. I mean, coffee came in tin cans and you only had about maybe three brands.

I knew I'd do this, you know, that's just not something that's in the back of your head, as to the brands. But I can see a blue can with, maybe we could fill in the blanks later.

[Anne Comer]

Yes, absolutely. But there was a big grinder over there.

[Pat Weddle]

Right here on this- I think, where the counter comes down and makes the turn. It sat, but it faced that way and I told your mother about that. It was, I don't know how much it was ever used, but I know that it was painted bright red and it looked, it was a pretty color.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, especially for a child. So, in that case, it was over there, it was bright and red, and then above you had this- You had the label for the dyes, for the clothing dyes?

[Pat Weddle]

Well, I don't know where the coffee beans were because that would have been before my time, so I don't know where coffee beans- The coffee that I remember would have been in round tin cans, which was in the 40s, so that can't go back to where the grinder was.

[Anne Comer]

Sure, but the grinder was still there as a decorative.

[Pat Weddle]

It was sold when my uncle, Nick Fraley, inherited everything. He had a sale and all of his things went to the Four Winds.

Now, from the ceiling, let's get, I must remind you of that. Hanging oil lamps with the glass shade, there must have been three or four of those up there. Now, they were for sale. I don't know whether they ever had oil in them, but there was at least two on this side. I

don't remember any being over there, but there was a lot of stuff that was hanging up there for sale, but what it was, I really don't know except those, and I always, because they had pretty shades on, not Tiffany shades, but maybe flowers, I don't know what, but colored shades on them, and I thought they were so pretty.

Oh, now, you realize there weren't paper bags for anything, and there was a stack of paper of different sizes there, and cord string was on the ceiling and it hung down, you know? So, that when you got to the- when you wrapped that piece of, don't let me forget about the bologna, the meat that was hanging. When you wrapped that meat, you pulled the string down, and you wrapped it like that, there was nothing to put it in.

[Anne Comer]

So, it was over which portion-

[Pat Weddle]

When I walk- Walk straight ahead.

[Anne Comer]

Uh-huh. Okay.

[Pat Weddle]

Okay, not- On over, on over, because the scale had to be there, about there. Okay, that was open, that's where you waited on everybody.

[Anne Comer]

Oh, okay.

[Pat Weddle]

Next to that was the big scale over to your right side.

[Anne Comer]

Here?

[Pat Weddle]

Yes.

[Anne Comer]

Okay.

[Pat Weddle]

And I mean, it was big and it had a thick piece of, well, I'm gonna say it was marble, it something that was- It was a big scale.

[Anne Comer]

Big scale, here?

[Pat Weddle]

Right there, yep.

[Anne Comer]

Alright. So, you're able to enter here, big scales here and the rafting would be done-

[Pat Weddle]

With the string hanging down from the ceiling.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah. I mean-

[Pat Weddle]

I can remember it as a cone, but somebody was in here when I mentioned that, and they said, 'Well, it also came in like an oval ball,' or a- I know that's how you use the string. That's all I can tell you.

And hanging from those- We're on the back wall again. I think it was some kind of a hook that came out. Now, it was fresh bologna was hanging on one and Lebanon was hanging on the other one, and there again, I can't believe that 99% of kids, if their parents could afford it, carried a bologna sandwich to school, there was no peanut butter or jam. It was bologna sandwiches, where some kids just got butter and bread sandwiches. When I went to the- I went there for six years, to the elementary school. One through three in this room, and four through six in this room, with outdoor privy, of course, and no water inside or. Talk about germs.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, everywhere!

[Pat Weddle]

I'm sort of a germaphobic now, after COVID, you know, I got my stuff in my hand.

[Anne Comer]

I mean, I still carry it.

[Pat Weddle]

It just- I wasn't that way, but the way people were dying during COVID, that had me- And I got every possible inoculation that you could get. Anyhow, but just think, those- Now you put down fresh bologna and Lebanon bologna, right?

[Anne Comer]

Yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah. And that hung there all day, I don't remember it ever being refrigerated. Where were the potatoes? And in order to get something, and that would be so good if we would have found that. It was a long pole with- You squeezed the handle down here and these things would grab the box, because look how high those shelves are.

[Anne Comer]
Like a clipper, like a-

[Pat Weddle]
Yeah.

[Anne Comer]
Yeah.

[Pat Weddle]
Now, where do you think you would find one of those today? If anybody could find it, Elizabeth might dig it up somewhere, but.

[Anne Comer]
Maybe eBay, you never know. We'll have to take a look. Did you, was it made of metal?

[Pat Weddle]
Well, the pole was wood.

[Anne Comer]
Okay.

[Pat Weddle]
And then, of course, your metal- These were metal, and your handle was metal, but it was used for years and years and years because, I'm sure when the store was built, they took advantage of everything that they- All the room that they had.

[Anne Comer]
Mm-hmm. All right.

[Pat Weddle]
Okay, coming around now, we're on this counter. That's where the bowed front glass candy case was with glass dishes, no candy was wrapped, you realize candy was just the way it came out of the candy factory. There was, there was no paper on it, so they were in glass dishes. Well, every now and then, when they would get low, somebody would, I don't know, bring a teakettle of hot water and you had to wash those dishes, because it gets kind of sticky, and I remember that was definitely one of my jobs when I got a little older, too. But it had a sliding door on the back of it, that's how you got in from either end, and it had cough drops, Smith Brother cough drops up there, I remember, they were black licorice, that was a big seller.

And I can remember I learned how to slide that door very, very quietly, because the rule from my grandfather was if you want something, you ask for it, you don't just help yourself. Well, I might ask to begin with, but then as the day went along, he'd get busy, and when I knew he was busy, I could slide that door and just get a little bite of anything. I don't know if he ever knew. I mean, basically, I guess I was stealing, because I was told to ask, but I didn't do that, I don't know how often, but probably quite often, kids love candy. I still have a very sweet tooth, it's a wonder I'm not diabetic, but.

[Anne Comer]

And what was your favorite candy?

[Pat Weddle]

At Christmas-time or December, there was something called Peach Blossom, which was about that long.

[Anne Comer]

About to your knuckle?

[Pat Weddle]

And it was pink, but inside of it was something really, really good. It- for a better term, it would taste- It looked like peanut butter today, but it was maybe a maple, I don't know, but they were so good, I could hardly wait, but you only had those. And then there was Mary Jane's. I loved anything that had licorice, I know that. To this day, I love licorice. Licorice is something either you like or you don't like. I never cared for the red and all those other kinds that they have now, but we did have the licorice sticks in there, but see, they were too big. I couldn't- That would have been a telltale if I ate a piece of licorice!

[Anne Comer]

Couldn't get away with that one.

[Pat Weddle]

No. A chocolate drop, you know what a chocolate drop is? The round, well, oval, I guess you'd say. Now, they were there all year. I said Mary Jane's, there was- Oh no, we'd have to look up candy from the 40s, that's all I can remember.

Then we came to a glass upright, so tall, with maybe two shelves in the bottom, and that contained glassware that was a little better, it wasn't everyday stuff. Maybe you wanted to buy a wedding gift. Well, there would be a little glass bowl or colored bowl, maybe two dollars, maybe three at the most. That's what stayed in that and that had a little snap on it or whatever, and that always looked pretty because the colors were in there. A lot of it was just the clear, not cut glass, don't misunderstand me, this was just white, clear, pressed glass. That was next, and then we dropped down to flat counter space, but on top of the flat counter space was a glass shelf, a glass case on top of that, about 12/14 inches, and that went the whole way down. Okay, now what was in there? Oh, I know. What word do you use? Utilitarian.

[Anne Comer]

Utilitarian?

[Pat Weddle]

Meaning-

[Anne Comer]

Tools?

[Pat Weddle]

No, basins. You know what a basin is? That you wash your hands in?

[Anne Comer]

Oh, yes.

[Pat Weddle]

That. Enamel, all kinds of enamel things, enamel pitchers. In other words, they were things that you would maybe break in your kitchen or that would wear out and all that, and it was pretty, enameled stuff, you know, blue and white, maybe I think green and white, but I remember the basins were gray, they were dull looking.

There's a cheese box, that wasn't here. That wasn't here when I was here.

[Anne Comer]

So, the cheese would have been in the cheese box?

[Pat Weddle]

No, the cheese box always sat behind, I don't know. It was coated with whatever it was coated, it looked like fabric, something very porous that was glued to it, you know, whatever. It wasn't- That was way before the black covering, that plant- That wax, that came much later. This had the fabric around the cheese box that you could eventually throw away.

[Anne Comer]

Mm-hmm. Where are my cheese notes? Okay, great.

[Pat Weddle]

Okay, we finished with the enamel. Oh, now we came to linens. Just basic towels, I guess there was tea towels in there, but see there again, feed bags came along and women used- They came in pretty colors or stripes or something, and I don't think tea towels were something that local ladies probably bought, you know? If you had chickens, you would have feed bags. Now, if you didn't raise chickens, maybe you might buy a tea towel.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

But I can't swear to this, but I think there might have been some old percale sheets. If you know what percale was back then, you might as well sleep on- They were rough, you know, they were cheap, cheap, cheap, and they were not very nice to sleep on. But maybe that's all you could afford, but there was- And they would have only been doubles, and I don't know, maybe it was just double sheets and, believe me, it would be a stack, and they were all- There's no such thing as a fitted sheet, they were just stacked, you know? And they were white percale; I remember that distinctly. And, they still make a percale sheet, because I've seen them, and I think, well, I guess they've come a long way, because- And they are still like the- If you go to the department store, they're the cheapest one. Now, they make microbe or something or other that's probably like sleeping in a sweatbox or something, you know, no natural fibers. Then, they make bamboo and then you get up to your Egyptian cotton, and, you know, you can spend \$12 and you can spend \$112 on a sheet, that's- Or even more. If you're Oprah, I remember her talking about her sheets with 8,000 threads in it,

that's how the sheets are going, and I'm thinking, 'Okay, I just wonder how many people could ever-' I was a big Oprah fan, I loved her show.

[Anne Comer]

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So, the linens, the other linens, were they all white, like all the towels?

[Pat Weddle]

Oh, yeah. Yes, ma'am.

[Anne Comer]

So, the fabrics that were- So, you had dye up there on the shelf, and then there were also the linens were all white, but there was dye?

[Pat Weddle]

Well, the dyes were for clothing.

[Anne Comer]

Yes.

[Pat Weddle]

But, if there was something else in the end of that, it seemed like there was some off-the-wall stuff at the very end of that where the linens were, but right now, I don't remember what that was.

[Anne Comer]

About-

[Pat Weddle]

About something rather insignificant, I guess, I don't know what it was.

Then we go to the back wall.

[Anne Comer]

Okay.

[Pat Weddle]

And that spool cabinet was mine, I did get that from my grandmother. She was very reluctant, and I said, 'Nanny, that's something I loved as a child, pulling those drawers out and looking at all that thread.' I just- So, I had it in my family room. Don would put legs on it, but I told Elizabeth when I brought it, I said, 'Take the legs off because it belongs right there on that case, on that shelf,' that's where it was.

So, and then, beside of it was the bolts of fabric. Now, I went into Joanne Fabrics, and I got empty cardboard that their fabrics came on, so that I could put some old fabrics on- Also, all I have right now is like unbleached linen, which was not linen, but I don't know, it's rough and just would be something that's very versatile back then, but I've got to find maybe some little dark prints, and about the only place I think I could find that would be maybe at

Goodwill or something. But the day I went in to get them, there was only four in the basket, and the girl went over, and I said, 'Well, do I pay for the-?' she said, 'No, we're just getting rid of them,' but there was only four in there and I scarfed those up right away, because I want them right there beside the spool cabinet where they were.

You think I'm a nutcase?

[Anne Comer]

No, I think that's wonderful. What kind of prints were the little prints? Were they floral? What colors were the fabrics?

[Pat Weddle]

If I remember, they were- Things didn't get washed very often. Pastels were not something that I ever saw as a child. They were little black prints or maybe navy blue or, you'd only wash clothes on Monday, didn't make any difference how many kids you had.

[Anne Comer]

On Monday? Okay.

[Pat Weddle]

Monday was wash day. Tuesday was iron day, that's what they did. And you took a bath on Saturday night, whether you needed it or not. You knew that., yes.

[Anne Comer]

I did, yes. So, Saturday night was bath time, so the schedule was as follows; Saturday night bath time, Monday was wash day.

[Pat Weddle]

It took all day to do that because you had to heat the water. You had to maybe carry the cold water for the rinse water by buckets from the well. I mean, it wasn't turning on the thing, no, that's why. And women were home, nobody worked back then. I mean, they worked like dogs around maintaining the house and the garden and whatever, it wasn't- But that was the schedule. And Tuesday, whatever, had to be ironed but there again, they had the flat irons on the cook stove, didn't have an electric iron. You ironed with that flat iron and as soon as it got too cool, you took the handle off, went over to the cook stove and clicked it on the other one, made sure this got back on the stove. It wasn't an easy life, believe me, it was a hard life. And I only know what went on here, and these people were not- They had a roof over their head, they had food, they weren't beggars, they were clean, they went to church. Not many people went to Harriet Chapel.

[Anne Comer]

Really?

[Pat Weddle]

No.

[Anne Comer]

Where'd they go?

[Pat Weddle]

Over on Kelly's Hill Road is a Methodist church. And if they went to church at all- But I laid in bed one night and I was thinking, they never went to church at all. That was George Baker, he never left the house. Now, Mrs. Carty that lived in the next house down, she was- Her husband never set foot in church, but her name was Josephine, Jo was active in Harriet Church when I was a kid. In my life, a lot of my time was spent in Harriet Chapel.

Memories. I was thinking how people sat in the- I was trying to picture- Because not that you bought your pew, but that was the Fraley pew, that was the Miller pew and if strangers came and sat in your pew, you would maybe come in and stand at the end of the pew. Now, can you imagine if you were a stranger, how comfortable that would make you feel? Yeah, right. But that, I guess, was not- But when you came in, that's why I could put my brain together who sat where on that side and who sat where on that side, because it didn't change.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, didn't change.

[Pat Weddle]

And my Aunt Mabel played the pump organ, which was up in the front of the church. My grandmother went over in the winter-time at six o'clock, fired up the stove, pot-bellied stove. It was decorative, it wasn't crappy looking, it was nice. She did that for years and years. Well, I guess the whole time that it needed until the stove went out and they got- I don't know what they got, I have no idea what.

I mentioned where the marble-top scale was. The cash register was there, but it was very generic. I mean, I see on the side of it is a handle, you know, to open the drawer. You know, today you hit a button or whatever. Well, it made a pretty good noise, because that meant that if you were down here with a customer and that rang, you knew that somebody was in there.

And there is one thing I want to mention about and I haven't heard anybody mention this; There was a young man that lived in that house, corner house, with brothers and sisters. He was the only one that was ever active in Harriet Chapel, because the Fraley family was super, major active. He worked in this store probably from the time maybe he was 14. That's the only other employee that I ever remember. When my grandfather started to get old and my mother came in, I guess she was here probably 20 years, but Elmer was still around, and we had this- This isn't exactly- It was a panel truck, and they got like a car on here but was black, and it only had two- I mean, no- And we delivered groceries out on Blue Mountain Road. It was referred to- That's always been referred to as the bottom.

When I was 12, I used to go with Elmer, delivering groceries and when we would turn off of 806 on to Blue Mountain Road, he would get out and go over to the other side and let me drive on Blue Mountain Road and that's how I learned to drive, with a big old stick on the floor. Elmer Anders was, to me, an important part of this store, because he was- And I have not heard his name mentioned. And then when things- Oh, he didn't- He kept having a low draft number or no, I guess it's a high number. The lower you go- And he thought he was going to sneak by and not have to go to war but by golly, he did, he ended up in Italy. Now, this is a little country boy that's never- And it's wartime Italy. But it was very near- I wish I knew what company he was in, I think it was Patton. Patton went up through Africa. It seemed like there was some famous general that- Well, he would have been Private Elmer

Anders, or whatever he was. But I often thought, what an experience. I mean, prior to that, I doubt if he'd ever been out of Frederick County and then suddenly you were in the Army. So, when he came back, I don't know whether my grandfather was still living or not but he had to find a way of making a living. I don't know what he got paid here, but probably next to nothing, you know? He lived there with his brothers and sisters and I think it was three or four of them, never married, they lived in that house as adults. But then Elmer moved to Frederick and went to work in a liquor store. And that's where he- I never really saw him after that that much. But I think he deserves to be included, because he was so much a part of this store.

[Anne Comer]

Mm-hmm. Do you have other stories about Elmer? Not just interactions, like the-

[Pat Weddle]

Well, he was very fond of Aunt Mabel. And he became very active in Harriet Chapel. My Aunt Mabel had real- Kept her hair dyed really dark, dark brown, brown. Wore bright red lipstick, bright red nail polish, which as a child I thought it was gross then. So, I mean, today it would be really gross.

Elmer used her as his mentor. Mabel wore a lot of gold-colored clothing, heart colors, greens, you know, because- Elmer was blonde, extremely fair. These were not the colors that he should be wearing but because of his, I guess, love/attention of Mabel, that's all he bought were those colors. Why would I- But today, if you're wearing colors that I don't think complement you, I notice it immediately, I'm aware of that. And as a kid, I thought, 'Why is he buying that ugly gold shirt? God, that-' And some of them were sort of orangey-gold, just colors that I really didn't like.

[Anne Comer]

So, he was not dressing to his season, you know?

[Pat Weddle]

Elmer was Elmer. And I didn't realize how much of my growing up he was part of but you just took things like that for granted. But he was, deep down, a good soul. He was the only one that ever- The Anders, that ever became an Episcopalian until his baby sister- Everybody died and she was over there by herself and she got involved in Harriet when she was like 70 and turned out to be the best worker and just- But all those years- That's really not important, is it? I don't know.

[Anne Comer]

That's important, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

Well, it's part of the- But I wanted Elmer included because I have not heard one person ever say- Well, one. I mean, there's Nicky and Bobby, my two cousins. I don't know if they ever really- I never remember them ever coming in the store. Now, I'm sure they did but there was no- Their father was a- From the time they could walk and do things, he was a taskmaster. What's that word?

[Anne Comer]

Taskmaster, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah. They were working, they were working whatever. They didn't have time to play or do anything. Because Nick was a workaholic and he turned his boys into that, so that's probably why they never got here. I never remember everyone coming over and having a Popsicle. Maybe they did, but.

[Anne Comer]

But rare.

[Pat Weddle]

A few years younger than- Nicky's two years younger than I am and Bobby's three years, I think they're just a year apart.

But then you know about the ice cream room?

[Anne Comer]

Oh, please tell me about the ice cream room.

[Pat Weddle]

Well, that was one of my favorite rooms! And that's how I learned to drink Coke and to this day, I'm a big Coke drinker. I shouldn't be, but- You go in a restaurant and I always say 'What do you have?' 'Oh, we have Pepsi.' 'Oh, bring me glass of water, please.' I don't drink Pepsi; I'm a Coke drinker!

Anyhow, as soon as you walked in, and Elizabeth's been trying to find a Coke case, and it was cooled by water. I guess it was, well, it had to be electric. But, and that's where the bottles, of course, there was no cans. I mean, that was bottles of Coke, Hires Root Beer, what was the orange something? You'd have to ask somebody- I never, I was a Coke person, I never drank those other things. Maybe it was Hires Root Beer and Old-Fashioned Root Beer and Hires Orange, I believe. I know, it wasn't a vast array.

But the water, once a month, or maybe every three weeks, that water had to be drained, take the bottles out, wipe them off, set them on a table or the ice cream thing, because I don't know what would form in there, something, it could be nasty. So, you didn't want to reach in and get your- And then you had your bottle, your cap thing right on the side of that.

But that was your tour. I mean, that was there until the end, I don't think there was ever anything any better than that. Now, it was Hershey's Ice Cream. At that time, Hershey's Ice Cream was the ultimate of- There was Ebert's, it was made in Frederick, and I don't know how my grandfather got the Hershey, but that's the only thing that was ever here, was Hershey Ice Cream, which was like top, top. Which really didn't go with the country store, but anyhow.

The ice cream cabinet was about so big, I guess, and it had four lids that were about that thick, and you put it back. I don't remember ice cream cones, but I remember the ice cream was in the tubs, so you had to put it in something. Remember popsicles and pints of Hershey Ice Cream, because everything was in paper, maybe we had cups that we put the ice cream in. I can't remember cones, but maybe I just don't remember cones.

But that was neat to raise the lid. You only had vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry, that was it.

And, I don't know if she put that in here or not. There was a wrought iron, maybe it wasn't a wrought iron. It was what they used in soda fountains years and years ago, little white ice cream tables with two little back chairs, I'm not sure what it was made of. It wasn't wood, it was white.

[Anne Comer]
Some kind of metal?

[Pat Weddle]
It must have been some kind of metal. When I said wrought iron, wrought iron is what you see in somebody's lawn, because they weren't heavy, they were lightweight, so they couldn't have been anything other than metal.

[Anne Comer]
Was it like a, it was a table or?

[Pat Weddle]
I'm going to say it was round, I'm almost sure it was round. And the tables, their chairs, might have had a little indent and then went down like that.

[Anne Comer]
Almost like the little heart indent.

[Pat Weddle]
Sort of, yeah.

[Anne Comer]
Sort of, but it doesn't exactly look like that. Was it a little counter? Where you could sit? A round a place to sit, or?

[Pat Weddle]
Yeah, it was back here in the corner.

[Anne Comer]
Uh-huh.

[Pat Weddle]
See how- Where's the, where's the Coke case? When you came in, the Coke case was what you faced, the ice cream was to the right and this little table sat in this corner of the room. It was big enough that there were only two chairs, but.

[Anne Comer]
Gathered around, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]
Yeah.

When my mother was here, she was great for decorating the windows with crepe paper at Christmas-time. She- As I got older, I remember coming in from school one day, because the bus dropped us right here, we waited on the porch for the bus to pick us up when we- You know, that wasn't until the seventh grade, so it must have been earlier than that. We walked up to the other. And I came down and looked into that window over there, and she had my little, my little stove and my little wooden cabinet and a lot of my little dog dishes. She brought them up to sell them, to get rid of them. I mean, I was too old. I never got over that, I did not want to dispose of them, but they went.

Ah, that was back when you kept everything. Not my mother, she was not. Her life was being a Democrat 24/7, 24/7. Right now, she's probably, well, they use the expression rolling in her grave, but the way the Fraley's were devout Democrats, devout.

There's nothing else I can tell you. I'm amazed that I remembered what I did.

[Anne Comer]

This is incredible. Thank you so much. Thank you so much for spending the early morning, or the mid-afternoon morning, we got a lot. That was a lot of information. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

[Pat Weddle]

Was it- Is it of any, I'm not going to say value, but is it anything that anybody would ever be interested in? Maybe in a hundred years they might, but today they're not going to be interested in that stuff.

[Anne Comer]

I think they will be. I think they will be. How many stores like this still exist, right?

[Pat Weddle]

Probably not that many.

[Anne Comer]

Not that many. And in this condition that this is in-

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah, true.

[Anne Comer]

I think that people are going to be very interested in this, you know?

The other thing is that I, personally, I'm extremely interested in this because this is the type of thing I love, right? So, this is such a joy to be able to sit with you and to hear about it. So, thank you.

[Pat Weddle]

A joy?

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, it was, for me, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

Oh my God. I don't think anybody has ever said it was a joy talking to me!

You know who was really- The first tour group that came through, those women came in here and their faces lit up and they were like, 'This is just amazing, amazing!' And after they looked around and I was sitting right here or whatever, and- No, I tell a story, I was over on that side. And the one started questioning me and she just would not stop. She said, 'In Yorkshire, we have a store very similar to this that they're trying to, you know, preserve. You need to tell me-' She didn't say she was involved, but I kind of assumed that she was because they had to go over, I guess, to the museum or something. The other girls could not get her out of here because she just asked questions galore.

So, then when the meeting was after that, your mother said something about how much the women enjoyed it and 'They couldn't get over you, Pat. They just thought you were-' I was amazed that they sent it- Oh, I know what Elizabeth said, and she was telling a story. She said, the one girl said, 'It was the highlight of our tour!' I thought, oh my God, your tour must have been pretty busy, I mean, pretty boring if you thought this was the highlight! Anyhow.

[Anne Comer]

Thank you so much. Also, before we end, we didn't do an introduction in the beginning, so I just want to get that recorded. It's very short, just the date, state your name and then I'll be able to edit that into the beginning before.

[Pat Weddle]

Yeah, I guess it would be kind of- You need to know.

[Anne Comer]

Yeah, yeah. So, in 100 years, they know that you and I were sitting here on a very hot summer day in the Catocin Furnace.

[Pat Weddle]

I am so glad that it wasn't videoed. I could not have been as comfortable as I was if it was videoed.

[Anne Comer]

Sure, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

You understand that?

[Anne Comer]

I can, absolutely, yeah.

[Pat Weddle]

I would have had brain fog more than a live fog!

Sometimes I think, 'Well, for your age, I guess you're not too bad,' and then other times I think, 'Oh my god, you're out of it, lady!'

[Anne Comer]

We all have our moments. You're like, 'What's happening?'

[Pat Weddle]
I try to keep current.

[Anne Comer]
Yeah, yeah. That's good.

[Pat Weddle]
But current today is not-

[Anne Comer]
Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, yeah.

So, today is June 13th, 2025. My name is Anne Comer, we're here in Catoctin Furnace, the village of Catoctin Furnace, and I am here with?

[Pat Weddle]
Pat Weddle, born in 1935, lived in Catoctin Furnace 'till I was 18. So, my memories are from those years in the Fraley store, a lot of my time.