

Interviewers: Wynell Schamel and Ed Schamel
Interviewee: Ed Schamel: Lucille Disharoon Cobb

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WYNELL SCHAMEL: This interview is with Mrs. Lucille Disharoon Cobb. The date is September 5, 2013 and the interview is being conducted in the home of Mrs. Cobb at 6338 Church Street on Chincoteague Island, VA. The interviewers are Wynell and Ed Schamel representing the Chincoteague Island Library Oral History project. Hello Mrs. Cobb.

LUCILLE COBB: Hello.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Would you tell us when and where you were born?

LUCILLE COBB: I was born in my grandmother's house.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Was that here on Chincoteague?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes it is. Creek Section.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Up the Creek?

LUCILLE COBB: Up the Creek, uh huh.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: That's Main Street now?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes, North Main. And there's a creek that runs in there. It uses its name.

ED SCHAMEL: Is that house still here? Is the house you were born in still here?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes, but it's been changed. All of them here have been changed.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And when were you born?

LUCILLE COBB: July 28, 1918

WYNELL SCHAMEL: 1918, July 28, 1918. What was it like growing up on Chincoteague? What did you remember about being a little girl on Chincoteague?

ED SCHAMEL: Were there many other families that lived close to you up there?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

ED SCHAMEL: With kids?

LUCILLE COBB: And we all lived in the woods. School down here on this street.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: It's been torn down?

LUCILLE COBB: It's gone.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: On Church Street?

LUCILLE COBB: No, it was right in sight of this house.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And what grades did you attend there?

LUCILLE COBB: All

WYNELL SCHAMEL: From first grade?

LUCILLE COBB: First grade through 11 I guess.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: There was no 12th grade?

LUCILLE COBB: I don't think so.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What was school like in that building? What are some things that you remember about that, going to school in that building?

ED SCHAMEL: Did you walk to school in the mornings.

LUCILLE COBB: Always.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And then did you have lunch at school or did you walk home for lunch?

LUCILLE COBB: We walked home for lunch.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And who were your parents?

LUCILLE COBB: Lyda Lynch Disharoon and Charles Reese Disharoon

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And were they both born on—did they grow up on Chincoteague too?
LUCILLE COBB: My mother did.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And where was your father from.
LUCILLE COBB: Maryland, Berlin.
ED SCHAMEL: Oh yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: What did you parents do for a living?
LUCILLE COBB: My father came here from Berlin and I don't know how he met my mother.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: What did he do for a living?
LUCILLE COBB: He—there was a store that sold—I think it was [?]
ED SCHAMEL: Was it a grocery store?
LUCILLE COBB: No it was...
WYNELL SCHAMEL: A general store?
LUCILLE COBB: A clothing store for men.
ED SCHAMEL: Oh really.
LUCILLE COBB: Men, but it carried other apparel.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: What was the name of it? Do you remember?
LUCILLE COBB: There were three of them in that store. One was and older man, T.P. Selby.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: S E L B Y, Selby?
LUCILLE COBB: S E L B Y.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And the second?
LUCILLE COBB: And who?
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And the second person in the store?
LUCILLE COBB: Ralph Selby was his uncle.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And then your father was the third?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Did you tell me his name? Yes you did earlier. What was the name of the store?
LUCILLE COBB: I don't know.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: When did the store become a notions store; a five and dime it was called.
LUCILLE COBB: It didn't become.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh.
LUCILLE COBB: I don't know anything about the sale of it. My father lived in the hotel in town. There was a hotel.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Do you know the name of the hotel?
LUCILLE COBB: It may have been called the Atlantic. I'm not sure.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: That was the Atlantic was a famous hotel in Chincoteague. And he lived there before he married you mother?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And do you know when they got married?
LUCILLE COBB: 1917
ED SCHAMEL: Do you have brothers and sisters?
LUCILLE COBB: No.
ED SCHAMEL: No brothers and sisters. You are the only child?
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Well, when did you get married? Who did you marry?
LUCILLE COBB: Warren B. Cobb, Jr.

ED SCHAMEL: A Chincoteague boy?

LUCILLE COBB: No, from Wachapreague.

ED SCHAMEL: How did you meet a boy from Wachapreague?

LUCILLE COBB: I was teaching down in what was called Central High School.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Down in Accomack County?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What did you teach?

LUCILLE COBB: I don't remember. [later in the interview she says history]

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Were you teaching little children or in high school?

LUCILLE COBB: The first year I taught I taught seventh grade. And then they sent me to high school.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What subject did you teach in high school and did you have children?

LUCILLE COBB: One daughter.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And what's her name?

LUCILLE COBB: Deborah Cobb

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Does she live here on Chincoteague?

LUCILLE COBB: She lives in Virginia Beach.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: But she grew up here on Chincoteague?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And then where did she go to school?

LUCILLE COBB: The same building.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: All the way through high school or had they built a separate high school?

LUCILLE COBB: I don't remember.

ED SCHAMEL: When you married the boy from Wachapreague did you live here? You didn't go to his home in Wachapreague.

LUCILLE COBB: We lived with my grandparents until seven years old. They sold the old store.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Are you saying that your grandfather also had a store.

LUCILLE COBB: No.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Just your father. And when you married your husband from Wachapreague did you move with him to Wachapreague? Where did you live?

LUCILLE COBB: Here.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And what did he do for a living, your husband?

LUCILLE COBB: He was an officer in the...

ED SCHAMEL: Coast Guard?

LUCILLE COBB: No. That [the Coast Guard] was very popular here.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: But he was an officer in the Navy?

LUCILLE COBB: Carried the...

ED SCHAMEL: On the mail boat or something like that?

LUCILLE COBB: Carried passengers.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: The ferry?

LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: He was the captain of the ferry?

LUCILLE COBB: No.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: No, he was an officer on the ferry?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: From Chincoteague to Franklin City?
LUCILLE COBB: No.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: From where to where?
LUCILLE COBB: I think it's...
ED SCHAMEL: It was a ferry that came to Chincoteague.
LUCILLE COBB: No.
ED SCHAMEL: Oh, no.
LUCILLE COBB: Cape Charles I believe.
ED SCHAMEL: Oh. Was it to Norfolk?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
ED SCHAMEL: Oh, that's it.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh, okay. So you lived down on which side of the Bay [Chesapeake Bay]. You were married to him when he was an officer on the ferry?
LUCILLE COBB: I remember he had a year in the Navy.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh, the Navy down at Norfolk.
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: When the two of you lived here on Chincoteague together, what did he do for a living then, after the Navy?

Second Recording

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What did your husband do for a living here on Chincoteague? Did he have a store?
LUCILLE COBB: He started in armed forces command.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Before there was a bridge [Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel].
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And did he do that for many years?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: But you didn't live there, you lived here?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And raised your daughter here by yourself?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh. He had so many days off and that's when he would come to Chincoteague.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: That was a journey for him to come from Norfolk to here.
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: It took him quite a few hours from Norfolk to here.
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: It took him quite a few hours I would think.
LUCILLE COBB: Well it takes two hours for him to go from here to Norfolk. He goes from here to Norfolk.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: That was quite a journey. Did he ever live here on the Island with you?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: After he retired?
LUCILLE COBB: No. He was ill.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Did he die young?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh that was hard for you.
ED SCHAMEL: How old was he when he died?
LUCILLE COBB: I'd have to go to the tombstone for those dates.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh yes, I understand. When you were growing up on Chincoteague what did you do for fun?
LUCILLE COBB: Pony Pines.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: The restaurant Pony Pines?
LUCILLE COBB: No, the dancing.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: There was a dance hall called Pony Pines?
LUCILLE COBB: Un huh.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Where was it?
LUCILLE COBB: Over on the East Side.
ED SCHAMEL: It was the Pony Pines. It had a restaurant and kind of a nightclub area?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
ED SCHAMEL: That had been there until about 10 to 12 years ago.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And you liked to dance?
LUCILLE COBB: Oh, loved to dance.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And what kind of dance do you like to do?
LUCILLE COBB: What ever was popular at the time.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: What dances do you remember?
LUCILLE COBB: We selected them then. I think it was...
ED SCHAMEL: Oh, records; the jukebox.
LUCILLE COBB: Yes, jukebox.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: And did a lot of young people come to the dance, to the dance hall to dance?
LUCILLE COBB: Oh yes.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Is that when you were a teenager?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Was the movie theater here then too?
LUCILLE COBB: I imagine so.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Do you remember going to the movies?
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Did you have—did you ride, did you have horses?
LUCILLE COBB: My daughter rode and had one of her own for her 12th-13th birthday.
ED SCHAMEL: Did you live in this house then?
LUCILLE COBB: Yes. I've been in here since I was...
WYNELL SCHAMEL: Did this house belong to your parents.
LUCILLE COBB: No. It was built by a couple that were married and I guess they were—they had it built
ED SCHAMEL: It' a really fine house. You and your husband bought it from them then?
LUCILLE COBB: My father bought it. It was, I guess it was a public auction. I don't know.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: This was when you were a girl. Was this when you were seven? You said you lived with your grandparents until you were seven.
LUCILLE COBB: I moved here when I was seven. That's what I remember.
WYNELL SCHAMEL: So you've been in this house most all of your life.
LUCILLE COBB: Uh huh. And I was 95 last month.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Congratulations. Happy Birthday! This is a really nice house. Has the house changed? Has Church Street changed since you've been living here?

LUCILLE COBB: Oh yes. It's the stores. There was a vacant lot in town, in the center of town. And my father, I guess, bought that lot and built the...it was a five, ten and a dollar store. And it was very popular like the great stores are today.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Was it called the Ben Franklin Store?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Yes those were popular stores. What other changes have you noticed from living here? How has your neighborhood here changed over the years?

LUCILLE COBB: Well, first store was further down the street and they brought it up here and divided it up into...

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Into units? So that more than one family could live in the house.

LUCILLE COBB: It was—they divided it up so that three people could live in the house.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Where did you go to church?

LUCILLE COBB: Christ Methodist.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Was the Methodist Church always in the building it's in now.

LUCILLE COBB: It was across the street.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Where the Op Shop is?

LUCILLE COBB: Where the Op Shop is.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And when did it move? Do you know how old you were when it moved over to its present location? Where you married in that church?

LUCILLE COBB: I was married in the drawing room.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh, here in this front room. Did the Methodist minister conduct the ceremony?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes. He had been our principal.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Down in Accomack County?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: But he was also a minister?

LUCILLE COBB: Evidently. He studied to be a minister.

ED SCHAMEL: When you taught in Accomack County that was before the causeway was here, isn't that right?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

ED SCHAMEL: How did you get to school every morning?

LUCILLE COBB: I lived in Melfa.

ED SCHAMEL: Oh, okay. And that's before you got married or after you got married? Did you live there with your husband?

LUCILLE COBB: No, I lived there with other girls that were teaching in the same school as I was.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: When you went through, to public school here on Chincoteague, did you go to college?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Where did you go to college?

LUCILLE COBB: Randolph Macon.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Out in Virginia? That was an experience to go that far away from home, wasn't it?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What was that like?

LUCILLE COBB: It was an experience.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Yes. Were you homesick?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Did you live in a dormitory?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: You made good friends there?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes. I had the same roommate for four years.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: And where was she from?

LUCILLE COBB: Florida.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Oh. So you got a degree in education?

LUCILLE COBB: History.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: In history. So you must have taught history at the high school. Well that's why we like doing these interviews because we like history too. We like learning about the history of Chincoteague and we appreciate your time with us to tell us about your years growing up here. We don't want to tire you out, so can you think of anything else you would like to tell us?

LUCILLE COBB: Chincoteague was divided when I was young into different sections.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Different neighborhoods, communities?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes. And each street had its own grocery store.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What was the grocery store in you neighborhood over on Main Street when you were little? Do you remember what the grocery store was in Up the Creek?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes we had two of them.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: What about here? Was there a grocery store on Willow Street?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes there was one.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: There were quite a few grocery stores around on the island. Could get around from one community to the other? Did you know people who lived in the different communities? You knew them from church or from school? How did you get around when you were really young? Did you have a car?

LUCILLE COBB: I learned to drive and no one—and my grandmother would drive with me.

[laughter]

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Were they scared of driving in a car or were they scared of driving with you?

LUCILLE COBB: It was me because I just learned. I was doing what things you had to do to get a license and all—except my grandfather and he got right in and I took him for a ride safely. And I do remember that.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: I bet you do.

ED SCHAMEL: And that didn't make everybody else more confident that you were a good driver?

LUCILLE COBB: When I was teaching we didn't have a man teacher for that school that I was in was...lost my thought.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: That's okay.

ED SCHAMEL: Did you know Nancy Conklin when she was a girl? She's probably 15 or 20 years younger than you are, something like that.

LUCILLE COBB: Yes.

ED SCHAMEL: She grew up here though.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: In the same neighborhood.

ED SCHAMEL: Nancy something else. I don't know her maiden name.

LUCILLE COBB: Bennett.

ED SCHAMEL: Was that it? Were there a lot of kids around here to play here when you were growing up?

LUCILLE COBB: Yes and the school was in sight from this house. It was...

ED SCHAMEL: Just down the block?

LUCILLE COBB: Right in this—across the street and down about a block.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: How did it make you feel when they tore that school down?

LUCILLE COBB: I had no feeling about it.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: Have you been over to visit the new school over on Hallie Whealton Smith Drive?

LUCILLE COBB: I haven't.

WYNELL SCHAMEL: It's very nice. Thank you so much for your time and your memories.