



Interview with Anne M. Stommel

Under the Auspices of the
Monmouth County Library Headquarters
125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan, N.J.
Flora T. Higgins, Project Coordinator

Date of Interview: April 10, 2000

Name of Interviewer: June West

Premises of Interview: Ms. Stommel's home, Red Bank, NJ

Birthdate of Subject: August 5, 1923

Deceased: October 30, 2003

Ms. Stommel: I am Anne Melson Stommel and I was born in Wilmington, Delaware on the fifth of August, 1923. I lived there for two years and then we moved to Brooklyn, New York. I never knew my father; he was in Sweden, and my mother had to support us, and we moved, as I say to Brooklyn, and I went to public schools there. Then we moved to Freeport, Long Island because my mother wanted better schools for my brother. I went from seventh grade to the ninth grade in Freeport, Long Island, and then we moved down here to Monmouth County. My mother was a public relations director, at what was then Monmouth Memorial Hospital and is now Monmouth Medical Center.



**Anne Stommel,
1997**

Ms. West: What year was it that you moved to Monmouth County?

Ms. Stommel: 1938. My mother had commuted for two years down here because my brother had said that he wouldn't study if she moved him away from his friends. So when he graduated from Freeport High School, we moved here; we moved over to Leonardo, which is on the shore by Atlantic Highlands.

Ms. West: How old were you when you moved here?

Ms. Stommel: I was fifteen. I had one year of Middletown High School, which was then called Leonardo High School, and then we moved to Rumson. In 1938 I went to Rumson High, and I had two years of Rumson High and graduated from there in 1941. There was a benefactor in Monmouth County, Mr. Bertram H. Borden, who was the president of Monmouth Memorial Hospital, and he also built the Rumson High School. He was very interested in children, and he knew my mother from the hospital. He was interested in me because I studied hard; I was told I had to get a scholarship or I couldn't get to college, so I had to study hard. Well, I did study, and I was the Valedictorian at Rumson High. The students voted for Valedictorian, so they voted for a football player as Valedictorian, but I actually was Valedictorian. I had applied to Vassar College and I had to take college entrance exams. I was the first pupil from Rumson High who ever took College Board entrance exams. I passed, and Mr. Borden had established a scholarship at Rumson High of two thousand dollars, which was a lot of money in 1941. I shudder when I think that college is now twenty-five thousand dollars. So it was a single scholarship and the student was supposed to be there for four years. But he gave an additional scholarship in honor of his wife, because he said, "Look what Anne is doing for our school." I never thought of the school as being new, but it was just built in 1936, so when I went in 1939, it was a very new school.

Ms. West: He built it in honor of his wife; what was his wife's name?

Ms. Stommel: The scholarship was in honor of his wife. Her name was Mary Owen Borden. So then I went off to college, and my mother married my stepfather when I was nineteen. I lived in White Plains, New York. My stepfather died in 1947 and we came back here. My mother was always very interested in history and in Monmouth County, and I can recall having to go over to Old Tennent Church in Freehold and being told about the Battle of Monmouth. I also have Delaware and Maryland ancestors, and I'm a member of the DAR; my mother made me be. The Revolutionary War ancestor that I got in on was Scarborough Parker, who was an ensign in the Snow Hill Battalion in Maryland. My reason for mentioning that is that our troops were retreating at the Battle of Monmouth and General George Washington came on the field and he said, "They must be stayed until I can form the main army," which was miles away coming from Princeton. And Major Ramsey of the Maryland Regiment said, "They shall be stayed." And Major Ramsey and the Maryland Regiment held the British off until Washington could come on the field. And I don't know, but I like to think that Scarborough Parker of the Snow Hill Battalion in Maryland was there, who stayed the British. Another very interesting thing, I don't want to say too much about the history, but there's a monument at Tennent Church to the soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War there at Monmouth Battlefield. And it was donated by Tennent Chapter DAR. I think it is down around Spring Lake. I forget the name of the monument company, but it's there on Wall Street and Locust Avenue in Long Branch. And he, an Italian immigrant, said he never charged for that, and there are hundreds of names on it, and he said it was one

thing he could do for our country. So all the names of the Monmouth County residents who fought in the Revolutionary War are on that monument, and a man in Long Branch carved the names. I guess that's enough about both Tennent Church and Freehold. One thing that's interesting in that cemetery: there's a tombstone for a Colonel Moncton near Old Tennent Church and a Britisher gave that monument because he knew that Colonel Moncton had been killed and buried there, and Moncton was his ancestor. And also his father had been killed in World War I and is in an unknown grave. There are all kinds of historical things in Monmouth County. We joined the Monmouth County Historical Society; oh, this was back in the 1950s, early 1960s, I guess. And that society was going to have a little fife and drum corps; I think it was called The Joshua Huddy Fife and Drum Corps. They were teaching the children. They got fifes for the children, they could afford that. But they were teaching the boys with drumsticks by tapping them on the back of a chair. They had to get the trap drums, and they had to get a bass drum. And this isn't to brag or anything, and I didn't really have much money, I just had my salary from Fort Monmouth, but the lady in charge said a bass drum was a thousand dollars. So I looked at mother, and she looked at me, and I said, "I'll pledge a thousand dollars for the bass drum." So the bass drum in the little fife and drum corps out there in Freehold has a plaque that is in memory of my Melson ancestors. That's my middle name and my mother's maiden name.

Ms. West: What year was this?

Ms. Stommel: I think it was probably in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Well, now, I graduated from Rumson High School, as I said, and in 1947 we came back here. And we lived on the Rumson Road and Hance Road, it's actually Little Silver, just on the border of Little Silver. And we lived there for two or three years, and my favorite view had always been crossing the Locust Bridge, the Oceanic Bridge that goes from Rumson over to Locust, going down to Navesink River Road and coming into Red Bank. And we drove there one night and we saw that the corner property was for sale, just across the bridge. That had been our favorite spot, so my mother spoke to our contractor and said, "How soon can you build me a new house?" And he said, "What's wrong with the one you've got?" And she said, "I sold it yesterday." So we bought that corner and we lived there for thirty-three years.

Before I went to Fort Monmouth, I had apprenticed at a foundation in New York City, so I knew about commuting from the Red Bank Station to New York. I learned about all aspects of motion pictures and still pictures and editing and photography and so forth. I had pneumonia in 1948, and so I had to stop commuting. All I knew except films was very punk typing, and I could picture myself as a typist/receptionist at Wyckoff's Grain and Feed Store, which is on Maple Avenue and Bergen Place in Red Bank. But the training started over at Fort Monmouth before the Korean War, and what I had done in New York fit in hand-in-glove with what they wanted at the Fort. So I got the job as a Visual Presentation Information Specialist and made filmstrips, which are sort of like a

slide lecture but on a continuous piece of film, for the trainees. And then I went into literature. I prepared training manuals, field manuals, not the technical manuals which are on how equipment operates, but the field manuals on how that equipment is used in the field. And in 1961 there was a job advertised as a Motion Picture Scenario Writer over at the laboratories. I applied for it, and I got it. And to me it was the most marvelous perfect job that I ever could have had, if I had dreamed up the perfect one. Fort Monmouth started out as the Signal Corps back in 1917, and people thought of it as cross-flags and pigeons. But during World War II, the people who lived here in the county made Fort Monmouth in Monmouth County in Little Silver so important because they made communications equipment for the army, navy, air force, and marines. They made telephones, teletypes, radios, radar, and in the laboratory, when I was there, they had communications for the space satellite. They started a Courier Communication Satellite. And I remember so much going around the parking lot at the Acme store on River Road in Fair Haven, and the radio was on. I was waiting for my mother, and I heard, "This is the President of the United States speaking to you from outer space by the miracles of scientific research and development." And it was President Eisenhower's voice, and the tape recording that had his voice on it had been prepared at Fort Monmouth for the satellite that was going around and around for a year in space.

Ms. West: What year, do you recall?

Ms. Stommel: Around 1957, I guess. I was so fantastically interested in the space age, and of course, I never was in Florida, and never saw the rockets go up, but I belonged to an organization, the Armed Forces Communications and Electronic Association, and it still exists. I'm an honorary life member; I was made that in 1974. But we had lecture programs, and one time Doctor Wernher von Braun spoke, in April 1953. One of the scientists at Fort Monmouth knew about Doctor Wernher von Braun down in Huntsville, Alabama, and von Braun came and he talked about space travel. The rocket would go up a hundred miles in space. It would be traveling eighteen thousand miles an hour. It would make a trip around the world every two hours, and of course, the Earth was revolving underneath that orbit so that it would cover a different space on Earth every two hours. I was on the Moonwatch team at Fort Monmouth. And the Moonwatch team spotted, by the human eye, the satellites that were up in space before our radar could detect them. And we were on the roof of the Hexagon Laboratory building, which is over in Tinton Falls. It's there now in the year 2000. I don't know whether it will be there when you're listening to things in this tape. But we had, up on the roof, almost like a picnic bench, a two-by-four suspended by seats on both sides, wooden seats on both sides, and on each two-by-four were telescopes, angled so that they would cover different portions of the sky. And we had a radio from WWB in Washington, D.C. that would give the time signals. "At the return of the signal it will be exactly 4:51am da da da da da!" There were six people, three on each side of the two-by-four. They'd sit on the bench and they'd look in the telescopes, and if one saw a satellite coming into the telescope, he or

she would say, "Coming into the scope now, reaching the center now, leaving the scope now." The time signals were recorded from WWB at the Naval Observatory in Washington. They'd hear our voice saying, "Now." They knew where the telescopes were pointed and we'd send that information to the Smithsonian Institution. So that the Moonwatchers made a big contribution toward establishing the orbits of space satellites. The laboratory made materials, and they developed crystals, artificial crystals, to specific frequencies for the radios. Down at Evans Signal Laboratory in Neptune, they have the big antenna, Diana, that sent the first signals to the Moon. And the man, this is an interesting thing, the man who developed that, Dr. Harold Zahl, was the chief of research at the laboratories at Fort Monmouth, and his widow lives here in Navesink House where I live. I went with her last night to the Holmdel Historical Society. Now I sort of wore two hats, because in addition to doing that at Fort Monmouth, which I considered National Defense, which is the most important thing that we can be interested in, I was also a DAR member

Ms. West: For the records, for those who may not know, would you say what the DAR is?

Ms. Stommel: DAR stands for the Daughters of the American Revolution. And to be a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, you have to be the direct descendant of a Revolutionary War soldier. You have to document that. But he didn't actually have to be a soldier, he could be somebody who made a contribution, who gave some horses, or barrels of flour, or were nurses.

Ms. West: Someone who could have contributed to the War.

Ms. Stommel: Somebody who contributed to our Revolutionary War effort. And I don't know if this is important, but I am from Monmouth County, and I learned this from a man who was at my office at Fort Monmouth, who was a direct ascendant of John Marshall, who was our first Supreme Court Justice. And he said that our Revolutionary War was not like other revolutions, where they're trying to overthrow a system of government. Ours was to preserve a system of government that we had formed in this country for one hundred and fifty years, and that the British were trying to take away from us. And they tried very hard to take it away from us. I won't go into all the sacrifices and so forth that our patriots went through. I joined the Shrewsbury Town Chapter, which is in Shrewsbury, at the Patriotic Four Corners. Of course that church, the Episcopal Church, on Broad Street and Sycamore Avenue, has a weather vane on top with a brass or a gold ball on top of that, and that's a replacement. The original ball is in a vacuum air-controlled case in the church because the rebel soldiers tried to shoot the ball off the top of the church, and the bullet holes are in the ball, and over the years, the weather and everything, deteriorated it so that the ball sank down and the people in the Shrewsbury Historical Society thought they should have a replica of it at the top of the steeple. And the original ball is in this vacuum, air-controlled cabinet. I think I contributed to the cabinet or something to help preserve it.

Because the most important thing is to preserve our country and our history. No matter how many failings there can be, how many things can be wrong, it's better than any place else on earth. At least I believe that DAR members recite The Americans Creed, at every meeting, at our chapter meetings, and at our state meetings and our national meetings. And some people remember having said the Americans Creed at school. I never learned the American's Creed at school, but I had to memorize it because I was the Regent of our chapter. I'll recite it now if I can, because it's something that we say here in Monmouth County, and we know it's important: "I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed. A democracy in a republic: A sovereign nation of many sovereign states: A perfect union established upon those principals of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies." Now that last part 'defending it against all enemies' means domestic enemies as well as foreign enemies. And I'm very conservative; some people would probably call me straight-laced and reactionary, but I don't mind saying that I'm conservative and I believe that the United States is the most important thing in the world.

I told you previously about a Doctor Rullman, Dr. Walter Rullman, who founded Riverview Hospital back around the thirties... and old Doctor Field. Doctor Rullman was the chief surgeon at Riverview Hospital which then became Riverview Medical Center. I don't know what it's called now, and I don't know what it will be called by the time people listen to this tape. The Rullmans lived on Front Street, 58 West Front Street, across from Trinity Church. In the 1990s, Tracy Challenger was hired as the executive director of Rivercenter, and she was supposed to rejuvenate Red Bank and get the stores to be more productive. All the storeowners and the doctors, I think Doctor Blades, who is an eye doctor, contributed to make Red Bank viable again. Several of the towns in Monmouth County had fallen into disrepair. They were going to build Red Bank up. But I went to a supper last night at Basil T's, which is just at the foot of the new bridge in Red Bank, and there was a tri-city newspaper, weekly, that of course is free, and had a big article on Tracy Challenger, and it had her dream of Red Bank. Well I never cared about her dream of Red Bank; it should be the residents of Red Bank, what their dream is. So one of the things they did was to have Riverside Park, across from Trinity Church, down toward the river. To me, and now, it is just covered with cement. They might as well be on Shrewsbury Avenue; no trees, just cement cover; I don't know what it's going to be made into. But they had to knock down the Rullman's house to do this, and we had an organization, which we called Preservation Red Bank. I joined Preservation Red Bank in the late 1990s and one of the things we wanted to do was to save the Rullman house. It was a century home; it was of historic importance. It never got on the New Jersey Historic Sites List, but it was a project. The mayor and council thought that it would be too expensive to restore the house, so they just bulldozed it down, but it was a historic site, really, to people in Red Bank. It was a

Federal period home. I'm not sure, but I think the Federal period was around 1810; it wasn't pre-colonial, before the Revolutionary War, but it was from about 1810, so it must have been a hundred and eighty or a hundred and ninety years old, and one of the last examples of that kind of architecture and that kind of a home. But the "progressive" people in Red Bank didn't give a hoot about it; it didn't fit the dream of this town planner. Now, let me think. I'll tell about some of the things about how simply wonderful those people were during World War II, which was from 1941 to 1945. Mrs. Rullman sent subscriptions of the Red Bank Register to the young fellows who had been their son's playmates who were drafted and were overseas in the military, and that was their way of keeping in touch with Red Bank.

Ms. West: What locations in Monmouth County have personal significance for you, and why?

Ms. Stommel: Well, not to me, but to a lot of people, the shore and the beach from Sandy Hook down to Point Pleasant are very significant. But to me it's the Navesink River, which is the North Shrewsbury; at one time it was called the Shrewsbury River. But there is a Shrewsbury River south of here. But the Navesink River from Red Bank over to Sea Bright has the most significance to me. I live at Navesink House, which is a retirement place in Red Bank, and four miles east is the Oceanic Bridge. Rumson used to be the Town Oceanic, and we still call the bridge the Oceanic Bridge. I lived on the north side of that bridge in Locust. When I was fifteen and sixteen I sort of christened every pair of sneakers I ever had in the river. I would go crabbing, and I would wade with the sneakers and the crab net. Of course you could go crabbing from a boat, but I didn't have a boat; I didn't have a rowboat so I waded. And you couldn't catch crabs if you saw the crab with its eyes, which would be the front of it; you couldn't put the net at the front of the crab to catch it because the crabs went sideways. I learned how to crab, and I had a lot of fun with that. I used to know people who had sailboats in Red Bank and I was a member of a crew at one time. A girl in Red Bank phoned me. She was very popular and she had a sailboat. She asked if I would crew for her. I thought, "Oh, how terrific, I can crew for Barbara!" So I came to Red Bank, we got in her boat that she had made during the winter, and she said, "There's only one thing you have to do: hold down the center board." Now if the centerboard would rise up, the boat would be like a canoe, and if you put the centerboard down, you could steer it better. She said, "You have to hold down the center board because I lost the cotter pin." The cotter pin was something that you could put in and hook and it would hold the centerboard down. So we started on the race, and it was a very quiet day, there wasn't much wind. But we went around the racecourse, and as we were coming toward the finish, and we were going to go straight, Barbara said, "I don't know what you're doing, but keep doing it" because she was gaining on the person that she was most in competition with. So all of a sudden, when she said, "I don't know what you're doing, but keep doing it," I realized I was so interested in the race that I forgot to

hold the centerboard down, so we were like a canoe and we were going faster than the other fellow that had the resistance of the centerboard in the boat.

When I worked at Fort Monmouth, I used to drive over there every morning and every evening. I lived in Locust for thirty-three years, and I used to think it was the most beautiful view on earth. I'd go over the bridge and to my left I could see the Navesink River, and Clay Pit Creek, and beyond that was a row of houses along Sea Bright, and beyond that was the ocean. And if I turned -- I saw the hills, of course, the hills of Highlands; if I turned to the right, I saw the river and the beautiful trees and hills and it was pretty - when it was cloudy it was pretty, when it was sunny it was pretty. And I used to think, "If somebody blindfolded me, and took me a thousand miles away and took the blindfold off and I could see the river and the ocean and the hills, I'd think it was the most beautiful sight that ever was." So that was important to me. Now I live at the other end of the river, and they have lots of sailboat races. People in the Monmouth Boat Club in Red Bank make boats out of fiberglass; they have different classes of boats, and they also have classes teaching the children to sail. And there are sun boats, or something, you see the little boats out there in the river with the little sails and you know they're teaching the children to sail. In the winter when the river freezes over, and it doesn't freeze over as much now, in the year 2000, as it did maybe forty years ago, they have iceboats. The ice would get maybe fourteen inches thick or more. They have the National Regatta of the iceboats here in Red Bank, right out in front of our windows. They also have a National Sweepstakes Regatta, up and down the river. And there used to be somebody named Guy Lombardo. He always played at New Year's Eve. But he also had a speedboat, and he'd go back and forth around the river. He won quite often. And it was like the Nascar, or the Indiana 500, but it was in boats. For that weekend you'd know that you just couldn't rest or relax Saturday and Sunday because of the terrific sound of the boats, BRRRRRRRRRRRURURUR, all afternoon long. The only quiet was when one race had finished and they had to get the boats that had just been racing out of the water and put the new boats in.

Ms. West: Do they still have the regattas of these out on the water now?

Ms. Stommel: They have had them up until a year or two ago, I'm not sure right now, because I don't follow the races. People like to see them out our window. Oh, and another thing that's terrific, are the Fourth of July fireworks. We have very special makers of fireworks, which of course are outlawed, but they can have them sponsored by a town. People come from all over to see the Red Bank fireworks. A barge comes out, not too far in front of us. It looks as if they're putting the fireworks on just for us. The Asbury Park radio station has music, and the fireworks are synchronized with the music. And they're just fantastic.

Ms. West: Does your room overlook the river?

Ms. Stommel: No, but I visit a friend whose room does. Forty years or so ago, I used to go to the Rullmans for the Fourth of July, and we would go out the back of their house and down the driveway to where the garage was and we'd watch the fireworks. And a firework would go up, splashing lights and everything, and then you'd have to wait about fifteen or twenty minutes before another one went up. And then you'd have to wait maybe another five or ten minutes, although it seemed a lot longer to me. And of course it wasn't paid for by the town, and the fireworks were expensive, so they didn't have too many. Now they get collections from residents, from people in Navesink House, from stores, from everything else, and they hire this terrific fireworks maker, I wish I could remember his name. And a barge is just loaded with the fireworks, they keep going up, PWEW, PWEW, PWEW, PWEW. And, as I say, people from all over come. After they're over, there's a steady stream of cars leaving Red Bank, oh, for a good hour probably. And then the boats. People who have boats come from all over to the Red Bank area, and you see all the lights on the boats and after the fireworks end, there's a steady stream of boats and lights going down the river to peoples' homes. People who live on the river in Fair Haven enjoy the boats going by as much as they enjoy the fireworks. Now, of course, that's celebrating the Fourth of July and the birth of our country and its patriotism, and I don't how long that's going to keep going.

After I left Fort Monmouth, I formed my own business. I did the same thing that I had done at Fort Monmouth, only for myself. One of my contracts was with CMCE, the Canadian Marconi Electronics, which was a United States subsidiary of Canadian Marconi.

Ms. West: And that was located where?

Ms. Stommel: Well, their company was on Industrial Way, which is below the Monmouth Mall on Route 36 at Exit 105 from the Garden State Parkway. It was the town of Eatontown. They wanted to make a proposal for a contract at Fort Monmouth; this was a private company that was doing business with Fort Monmouth. The very interesting thing to me was the cooperation and the coordination between industry and the military. We had to have industry to manufacture the equipment that the military are going to use, and they had to know what the military needed, and that was very important for the Armed Forces Communications Electronic Association and its chapter in Fort Monmouth. Now I was very pleased, you see, to have my own company; I was very pleased that the national group of the Armed Forces Communications Electronics Association had me as a guest, an honored guest, at the head table of their national convention in Washington. I guess that was probably the highlight. I still have the dress that I bought to wear at the head table. To get back to Canadian Marconi and the contract, they wanted to make a proposal; they had to have a proposal which had to be written in a certain way to present to the contractors at Fort Monmouth who would then decide if they could make it. And one of the members of the CMCE phoned me and said, "This is a voice out of the past, but I

wondered if you would be interested in writing this contract." Well, I was very interested in it. I used to go there to that office, and there was a five-part contract that various members, various employees, of this company would prepare, and what I had to write primarily was the technical report, but there were four others also. And this was Monmouth County; I used to go from Locust to Eatontown to prepare this thing. It was a proposal for a hand-held device, like a remote control for a TV set. The hand-held device had a computer inside of it, which would simulate the messages that a young soldier on patrol would send back to the mother radio station. Within a radius of about two hundred and fifty miles, he could tell if he saw an enemy, if somebody in his patrol had been shot, where he was, and why he was there; he would give all kinds of intelligence over his hand-held device to a radio station, the mother radio station, that could be two hundred miles away. Well, in order for the young recruit to learn how to use that device, they would have to stage an exercise of about two hundred and fifty miles somewhere down in the South. What was needed was a simulator, a hand-held device that would be like a remote control on the television set, that the young recruit could take back to his barracks and practice sending messages on. And he would get responses from the computer that was inside the device. There wouldn't be a computer in the simulator he had in the field, but there was a computer in the one he had. Well, Canadian Marconi Electronics got the contract for Fort Monmouth and then I wrote the instruction manual.

Ms. West: Did this device have a particular name?

Ms. Stommel: Yes, it was call UROS, the User Read Out Simulator.

Ms. West: And that was developed here in Monmouth County in Eatontown?

Ms. Stommel: It was developed in Monmouth County in Eatontown. And Fort Monmouth was very significant and important. I would say probably the highlight in my life was that I was the information specialist at the laboratory. Getting back to UROS, the hand held device. The whole system was called PLRS, a Position Locator; I forget what the R was, but System. And it was part of JTIDS, which was the Joint Tactical Information Distribution System. They would distribute this information that the soldiers had. The mother radio station could pinpoint the location of that fellow with the readout within a radius of twelve feet. So the fantastic thing was that with electronics, computers, radios, and what Fort Monmouth Communication Systems worked out, there would no longer be a lost battalion like there was in World War I, when a whole battalion of troops were lost because nobody knew where they were. With this location readout system they could tell where their patrols were. Fort Monmouth developed the communications, the computers, the radios, the telephones, the teletypewriters, and all kinds of electronic communications, not only for the Army, but for the Air Force, Navy, and Marines as well.

Let me tell you about Patriot's Isle. Patriot's Isle was just a plot of grass in the middle of Sycamore Avenue in front of the Episcopal church, right past Broad Street and Sycamore Avenue in Shrewsbury. It's right by the Episcopal Church where the ball was on the steeple that the patriot's fired at. I belong to the DAR, and on Memorial Day we always have a ceremony with Boy Scouts and the mayor and so forth, memorializing our patriots from the World Wars, the Korean War, Vietnam, and so forth. We present a floral wreath that we put on a standard carrier there. There are lots of those floral wreaths to memorialize the veterans from our wars, and it's there by the flag. The amusing part about Patriot's Isle was that at the far end of the Isle was a post office, a small post office of course, because it was there on the grass, but it was the only post office in the United States that was in the middle of the street. But they have removed that post office; it's no longer there.

Ms. West: Do they still have the ceremonies?

Ms. Stommel: They have the ceremony every Memorial Day. And most of people come to it. They listen to the speeches and representatives carry the floral wreaths down to the flag, and of course, afterwards the children have a marvelous time because the firehouse has a picnic with hot dogs and soda.

Ms. West: So it's an all day affair.

Ms. Stommel: Well, it's around from ten thirty until one o'clock or so, after lunch. Of course they have those ceremonies all over the county. Fire engines in the parade, boy scouts and girl scouts marching. We don't have a parade there in Shrewsbury, but there's a place right out here near Navesink House where Riverside Avenue and Broad Street meet, there's a little triangle, they have a cannon there and they have a ceremony on Memorial Day.

Ms. West: The cannon represents what war?

Ms. Stommel: Oh, I'm sorry, I don't know. Probably the Revolutionary War. I don't know if they used those cannons in a World War. They're obsolete. One thing that's very interesting and getting back to Patriot's Isle. Mrs. Bruce Campbell lived there on Sycamore Avenue in Shrewsbury and used to volunteer out at Marlboro State Hospital. Her son Bruce Campbell was killed on the Anzio beachhead in World War II, and his monument is there. And also Lance Corporal Dorn was killed in Vietnam. He was the son of Danny Dorn, who has Dorn's photo shop on Wallace Street in Red Bank. And Danny Dorn has the most terrific collection of photographs of Red Bank, of all kinds. One thing that's very interesting to me is that the Korean War, it was only called a conflict, because you couldn't call it a war. It was called the Korean Conflict, and I think that that was politics, probably, that they wouldn't call it a war.

Ms. West: Okay, well we're going to end our little conversation now, and once again, we thank you very much for giving us this bit of history and letting us in on a portion of your life.

Ms. Stommel: Thank you so much, Ms. West.

Ms. West: Thank you.