

Interviewee: **Lisa Adams - Pinkney**
Interviewers: **Ernest Demby, JE Hawkins-Ennis, Linda Moore-Garoute, Noah Waters, Ryan Craun**
Date of Interview: **January 22, 2020**
Location of Interview: **Eagle Harbor Community Center, Eagle Harbor, MD**
List of Acronyms: **LP=Lisa Adams - Pinkney, RN=Ray Miller, BT=Beverly Jean Wills-Taylor
CH=Clinton Howard, ED=Ernest Demby, JE=Julie Hawkins Ennis
LG=Linda Moore-Garoute, NW=Noah Waters, RC=Ryan Craun**

[Begin Transcript: 00:30]

JE: What is your name?

LP: My name is Lisa Adams Pinkney.

JE: Do you have any nicknames? Anything you want us to call you?

LP: No

JE: I know you as Lisa, so I will call you Lisa. Did you grow up in the area? How do you know about this area?

LP: Yes, I grew up in Aquasco. Right on Aquasco Road. I guess that's 381. Right on the highway.

JE: What would your parents do? Where they from this area?

LP: My mother was Mary Farmer and she married Leroy Adams and combined I guess the Farmers and the Adams both in the area.

JE: What is the memories you had in the area?

LP: Memories growing up in Aquasco... Were we lived at cousins on both sides so we had, I guess family property. My dad actually built the house that we lived in. My great-aunt, my grandfather's sister, lived next door which was Nene Walls. The Banks lived on the other side of us which is my dad's first-cousin. And then on the other side of Aunt Nene was another Banks family. So we were all right in a row all related. So growing up we would go from house to house. Aunt Nene kind of babysat all of us. So that was the meeting ground at Aunt Nene's house which was my grandfather's sister. So she doled out the... we had to get the switch off the tree if we get into trouble. Aunt Nene went and lined us up, so that's how we grew up.

JE: So Adams and Banks in the same village?

LP: Yes, so was Adams, the Banks, the Turners, The Maykle's we all come of the same family line, from the Adams. And, I mean we would spend our days as children, everybody in the neighborhood we might gather and go "Let's pick blackberries". So we get pots and pans and bowls. That would be like an all day journey. All the cousins would just get out there, walk the fields, go across the street with Mr. Holland. We would be gone all day. The Banks had a stream, you remember the stream at the bottom of the hill were they lived so we will go catch tadpoles. I give some of the frogs. I mean, that's what we did for fun, we catch tadpoles, frogs, and lightning bugs. The baseball field of course was behind our house. So that was another big thing in the area was baseball. Sunday we go to the church picnic at the Woodville School, back then it was the Knight's... well my area was The Knights of Columbus Hall. So that was the church hall with the sisters from the church. We would go there. They would sell dinners. I had [unintelligible] classes there. Bingo – so you would play there all

day and then you go across the field to the baseball game. And we played in the barns. Of course the tobacco barns. Everybody grew tobacco, that was a, most of the people in the area were tobacco farmers. My grandparents were farmers and we will go, we call it on the farm, which was on Aquasco farm road. Actually my dad worked in the city and that's actually how we ended up moving from the area. We ended up moving to Clinton because it was closer to travel to DC. Yes, that's how we moved, that's in the late 70's when we moved from the area. And there was a, I'm sure you've heard about Cam's Bar, the bar and the gas station, the source. We actually lived next door to Cam's Bar. Mr. Douglas ran the store there so we will walk there barefooted. I mean, the kind of lifestyle we lived in wear shoes outside. I mean we were set on, because our house is on the highway. So another activity was the count cars. Red car, blue car, you would sit out in the front and count cars as they go by. You never locked your doors. Everybody knew your front door is open. We will walk barefoot to the store on the rocks. Over to get some penny candy from Junior Douglas the local store owner. My brothers, I guess was kinda unique, played in a band they were all musicians. So I had a saxophone player, guitar player, singers. So growing up they had band practices in the house in the basement. My brother's band played at Cam's Bar which was owned by my great aunt, Aunt Nini. So I mean everything was like a community.

JE: That was the stores mr. Holland was talking about.

LP: Yes. So, the Turner's, the Glascoe were related to us through his sons marriage. His wife Mrs. Turner was my father's first cousin, so all of us, this was all the time. Halloween, again everybody would meet, we walked up and down across Aquasco Road and you go Trick or Treating. And you would go to this big fancy houses, back then we had no idea who lived in these mansions. And we will be scared to death. "You go knock on the door, you ring the bell" and run, and see if they give us some candy but we will do it. And sometimes good results, sometimes not.

JE: So the common theme in this area is tight knit.

LP: Tight knit.

JE: And everybody spoke to me that is what they speak of. And so why we're here, were kin to related – there was a lot of families.

LP: Yes. And even now I guess some of us didn't even know we're related but now we know that we're related but we didn't know back then.

JE: Right. Did you come down to Eagle Harbor or to Cedar Haven?

LP: Eagle Harbor would be to go crabbing. Now my father would tell you he was born on the water. He knows. "I was born on the water". So he still had this raggedy boat. You might can get one and a half persons in it. And he go come down to the river, we called it down to the river. And he would go for oysters, come back with bigger bushel full of muddy oysters and we had a bowl to rinse them off and shuck the oysters. Crabbing. Everybody in the area crabbed. So we didn't have to buy crabs growing up. Everybody would go down to the river to crab. A ffew people drowned. We had a few deaths growing up when I was young. A people drowning in the river and eventually, I don't know what year? You know what year it was close with? I'm not sure what year it closed. But a lot of good memories come in Eagle Harbor. And, actually that house across the streets I think. Is that where Boose's house was? Right that one. So.

JE: You remember the river front front bar of the riverfront.

BT: Riverfront Inn

LP: Which way was that it? That might been before mine.

BT: Over here in Cedar Haven

LP: The Cedar Haven. The store that used to be there.

BT: No, the club.

LP: Yes, that might been before my time. Now another activity - I may not have always went because I was younger was Aquasco Speedway. That was everything to go to the races, and the so many family members. I mean my brothers would race cars. Everybody in the racing. All the men were into racing. Everybody knew about Aquasco Speedway and so again on Sunday, she was sit on the step and watch the cars go by. Everybody was going to the racetrack. People from Washington DC, all out of the area, people would go to the racetrack. And later years.. and one thing I did know growing up my dad would always talk about it. And the Procopio brothers, I know they were homebuilders. But I didn't find out until recently, he always wanted to buy Procopio home. So we moved to Clinton and looks for this Procopio home. I never know that the Procopio family owns Aquasco Speedway – so this is where he knew the brothers from, because of Aquasco Speedway. And my dad was a concert promoter back in the day. He would give dances at Cam's Bar and he gave one of the biggest concert at Aquasco Speedway. And at the time I don't know if Beverly remembers but this group was the Ohio players in the Bar Cay's. He gave a concert; they actually flew in the helicopter and landed on the Aquasco Speedway.

JE: Are you serious?

LP: Yes. So we just had a lot of good times.

JE: A lot of things happen in Aquasco.

LP: Yes, used to be a, wasn't it sleepy as it is now. Even though you would think it was because it was so rural.

BT: Do you remember Segal Beach?

LP: Yes

BT: Our house was were all those bands,[Unintelligible], Mr. C would come. My mother would get up at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning with my aunt and cook pots of food, and we have all the groups come from Cedar Beach going to Harry Mack's Farm

LP: Yes

BT: And we would entertain them at our house. So we knew Moon Man and a whole lot of people. We got to meet [Unintelligible], Poppy Adams – we knew them all.

LP: Patti Loubelle, I think Patti Labelle went down at the Benedict's. That's why when Patti became famous, My dad was like "I used to have dances and people pay a dollar to see her". He just thought it was crazy that you were buying tickets that cost \$20, \$30 to see Patti Labelle.

JE: Why do you think Aquasco is now sleepy?

LP: I guess a lot of... because it's so rural and that is the reason why we left. I guess goes back to kind of what Mr. Holland was saying, not so much of having a transportation to get out of here. But just the time it takes to commute to the city. But, and I actually tried to return. When I moved from Temple Hills back to Brandywine, I wanted to go back to Aquasco because I like the rural, slower lifestyle. I love Grimes. I mean, like I say that was the only place I would buy chicken and wouldn't be afraid to not wash it. Which I tell you don't but I really wouldn't be afraid you just trust it, the butcher there in the store. But when I tried to buy the land it was so expensive. It was when the market turn. And like you say when they're building the big houses down here and they wanted to close to million dollars. So I couldn't afford to move back. I keep saying I can't afford to go back home. But I was able to buy some land from my cousin Karen. That I do have down here now but I guess things were just so fast. I still like the lifestyle. I hope they don't over develop it and that it keeps the rural feel to it because there's not a lot of open land. The wildlife has nowhere to go. You can barely even find a june bug or lightning bug now or the tadpoles and the turtles.

BT: There are raccoons in our yard.

LP: One year...

LG: [Unitelligible]

LP: From the Banks, from their swamp my dad has a turtle. We saw these footprints. The turtle was this big around so my dad was like "Turtle Soup". "Mom we're going to have Turtle soup tomorrow". So he put the turtle into the bushel basket. It barely fit. He's like it can't get out. He put cinder blocks and woods. Turtle was gone in the morning. The bushel was turned over and all we saw was these big footprints. Turtle just left, so.

JE: Do you remember Wilmer's Park?

LP: Yes. Another place my dad used to get concerts. And I might have been like 9 or 10. But I worked the gate. We called it working the gate – to collect the money at Wilmer's Park and I remember Mr. Wilmer, and yes so a lot of good times. They would have the rides, the games. That was all day affair. When you went to Wilmer's Park they used to have too. Games or any activities for kids. So it was another place you could go and the whole family we just going to be an all-day event.

BT: And Lisa used to stay with us on the farm.

LP: On Harry Mack's farm. I loved Harry Mack's farm. And actually, my cousin Harry just passed and I wrote in his program about spinning time at Harry Mack's farm. It was so much fun because... we never lived actually on the farm like a lot of families. So that was like my farm experience – to visit them and it was the pig, what do you call the pig? [Unintelligible] whatever. We would have so much fun playing with the pigs.

LG: What about Chuck Brown?

LP: Yes, my father was actually the first one to bring Chuck Brown to this area with a show at Wilmer's Park. My father brought him to Wilmer's Park. I remember Ms. Mack was the manager. Yes I remember her, working the gate with her. So my father did bring that. You know he lived in Croom Road when he died?

LG: I worked with your father, he was like really introverted.

LP: Yes

LP: Yes, and I used to ride up to Globe Poster Company which is the Maryland Art Institute. I know you've seen the posters that would hang on side of the road that people staple on. The globe posters sold all of their archive to the Maryland Art Institute so they own all the posters now. They really wanted to see if I could find the poster from the Aquasco Speedway and some of the ones from the Wilmar's Park. I used to ride up to globe poster with my father on Friday's to pick up the posters. So we get the posters, get in the car, get staple guns and staple – and I will ride all Friday night, Thursday night we ride hanging up posters. And then you supposed to take them down the next week after the event was over. So let's see what else I get on my list. When you ask me I will take on to the number man.

LG/JE: Yes please.

LP: So the number man is deceased but he was lovely. Ted Jones was the number man. So you would wait for Ted Jones to knock on that door and everybody will get their number list to get

LG: Who's Ted Jones?

JE: He's the number man.

LP: Ted Jones was the number man.

LG: Did he live in Aquasco?

LP: Yes, I can tell you we lived there. Right before at the Glascoe's on the right outside the Butler's. We can name every house going down the Aquasco Road. So Mr. Jones was tall, tall right? He was tall.

LG: And he was the only?

LP: I think he was the only. I never knew of any other number man.

BT: His cousin's brother, it was Mary Washington's brother.

LP: Was he?

BT: The number's man was your cousin's brother. Ted Jones was Mary Washington's brother.

LP: I never knew that.

JE: He's the number's man.

LP: He was the number man. And I don't know of any other number's man. But anyway on my 12th birthday... I played the number 257 and I hit straight. \$250 so I thought I was rich. So my dad took us over to the Schwinn Bicycle Company over in Waldorf, the only thing they sold was bikes. I wanted a good bike. So he took us to... Mr. Jones came with my pay out. We went to Waldorf I got me and my sister bikes – so we got a new bikes.

JE: Did you grow up Catholic here?

LP: Yes.

JE: What church did you usually go to?

LP: Well, we went to St. Dominic's. And I think St. Dominics... Did they have a fire at some point? I'm trying to figure out why because I was baptized actually in Benedict. We used to go to church in Benedict where I grew up. St. Francis in Benedict. And it think... I don't know. I want to say that St. Benedict was closed. Was it closed?

Unknown: St. Dominic was a mission parish, originally St. Peter's. And they came affiliated with St. Francis. And now it's affiliated with Peters.

LP: Okay because I was actually baptized. And I remember going to church at St. Francis over in Benedict and then we...

Unknown: It was St. Francis that was set with old fire.

LP: They had a fire. Was it St. Francis that had a fire? So that was 62 when I was born I was baptized in Benedict. But we actually went to church when CCD class at St. Dominic's and that's where I had my confirmation. I still have a picture somewhere of me on the steps. And let me get my pictures but yes. So most of the family all of us were Catholics. So we had a church. So the Catholic Church... like I said they drank, they gamble. Yes, the church dances, the picnics.

LG: Who were the father there?

JE: Fr. Trout – if you remember him. That might be before your time.

LP: I remember, yes. Was it at St. Dominic's?

JE: St. Dominic's

Unknown: Fr. Trout did my wedding. He set up there on my altar, rocking on his feet while he was talking.

NW: No my mom... my grandmother's funeral the priest I don't know who it was back in the 70's when my grandmother died. I'm Protestant but my dad is a Methodist minister. My mom used to attend at St. Dominic's but when my grandmother passed... I wasn't used to this because my father didn't drink and I didn't know about clergy drinking. So I was a kid and kids see through different eyes. And were in a church and everybody is crying and it was somber and everything. I didn't know about rosary's, just the beads. But I'm like a kid... And I noticed that the guys or the altar boy's I guess what they call them doing rosary and they gave this guy drinks. He's like Hail Mary mother of grace and doing this kind of thing and I noticed he starts to slow down. And I guess he cut him off.

LP: At St. Dominic's

BT: Did he come up from the church in Benedict? The Catholic Church down there?

Unknown: In the 70's

BT: Because he did my father's funeral and he was lit.

NW: The altar boys escorted him, to help him stay up.

BT: The night we went down that my father was murdered. We went down to this house and he was wreaking of alcohol. I mean seriously, and then my mom had to pay a lot of money at that time ..I think my mom had to pay him \$500 to preach at my father's funeral.

LP: That was a fortune. Now, St. Benedicts I know one reason why we stop going. The mass was in Latin and I don't know if it was from St. Dominic's, but my mom was like she didn't know what they were saying. So a lot of people stop going because the mass was in Latin. And they still have a Latin service I think.

JE: Do you know of any history? That anybody pass down to you as far as... slave history or civil right history?

LP: Yes and I guess other than when we did first big reunion when I really got into research and I was calling my uncle Billy, Billy Mackle who actually is my dad's first cousin. And when we did our reunion back in 1997 – and that was the time because we always knew we had a lot of relatives in the area. And when you work... In the city, usually, you work in the city with people in the office. "I'm going home this weekend" and they were like where you going? South Carolina, where you going? North Carolina. So everybody I knew have relatives from South and North Carolina. And I'm like... So what we don't have any relatives anywhere else. Everybody is here in Southern Maryland. I don't know of any relatives anywhere else. So we did our first reunion and I don't know how... My cousin Karen, she will write to the churches and ask for different affirmation. So she wrote to St. Peter's and we discovered that my grandmother had a child that we didn't know about. So we found one relative in Pennsylvania. So we're like "wow we got one relative somewhere else". Because everybody is from Southern Maryland. So Uncle Billy, my dad's first cousin, he explained us that he told me that when the slaves ships came in to Baltimore or Virginia we were sold out to Baltimore and that is how all of us ended up in Maryland. We don't have any relatives in the South like other people do, most African-American, Black people have relatives in the South.

LG: Because it come from the South.

LP: Yes and he said it's because they were sold through Virginia and they were sent to the South. Where we were sold out to the Baltimore and was sent to Maryland. So that is why we don't have relatives in the South. Which, until DNA... without that I still wouldn't have known that we have relatives anywhere else. But I always appreciated him. He was really in the history in family and actually he's wife was a good person to talk to cousin Ida.

JE: Ida Mackle.

LP: Yes, right across from Woodville School.

JE: Is there anything you would like to see down in Aquasco? What would you like to see this area?

LP: Well, with the end of the tobacco farming, and that I guess it was the Department of Agriculture in Maryland. They paid the Tobacco farmers not to grow the crops anymore so that is why the industry just disappeared. And like I said all of our family members a lot of them grew Tobacco. That's was their living. And the produce, a lot of men at the farm. They sold produce and what not. But now with the area especially with the Grimes's being gone, it would be nice if they could get some kind of little grocery store that sold organic. The government is actually paying people for to grow the grape crops. So we have like five winery's now in the Baden-Brandywine area. So it would be nice if the same resources could be used to get the farmers back in the

business. The people that used to have land and want of the return. Some of the younger generations that want to farm. Everybody's trying to eat healthy and organic and clean and with the meat and vegetables. So it'd be nice if you could see a return of nice country grocery store.

BT: There's a guy Estep up the hill at the right that raised crops for different grocery stores – organics.

LP: Yes. There is a couple of them like in LaPlata. Like the Hancock Farm because I go to them and buy my vegetables and fruits. Now it's more like word of mouth. Like if I go to the Buckner's. The girl back there that sells the grains but she had a bad year for crops. She said it was really a bad season. Last year it was really... she didn't...

LG: Climate change

LP: Yes, about the climate change. You feel bad for these people they can't... Because they lived off of that. So I still try to return and buy from local people. I think it's one of the Esteps, they still sell greens. That we come down here and buy from them.

JE: Well that's it unless you might want to add?

LP: That's it.

JE: Thank you Ms. Lisa. You have a question?

NW: Yes, I do. So, this is about sustainability, identity, preserving history. Well, sustainability honestly involves youth. So what would you suggest to attract youth involvement in the area?

LP: It's almost back to getting you need to increase the population. I think because of the population left is the older population. It's just like the churches. I attend St. Phillip's Church sometimes with my niece in Baden and given that it's on a Sunday, I mean it may not even a 20 people there. It's because all the young people are gone. Now when they have big anniversaries, the big events, you get a big turnout, but it is just not a lot of people. Because it is rural which is what you like about it but you still need to attract some of the younger people back to the areas and I don't know if that's through some type of rural home ownership just like they're doing to the cities to attract people there. It's like I said when I tried to move back here, I couldn't afford to move back because all the new houses was close to million dollars. And in that in between I ended up in Brandywine. So maybe that is something that to revisit. Because, it's such an, I don't know how you can promote the lifestyle. But it was such wonderful lifestyle. You could sustain your stuff and start farming like I said with the crops and everything is organic and clean. So it should be a way that it could be done. Even with the greenhouses. The homes now are green and everything is sustainable, and the clean water. Even with the clean water partnership I don't know if you have seen like all this, what do you call them, the bio-farms are being built and...

LG: Green Gardens

LP: Yes, the Green Gardens. Actually. My company, we do those. The rain gardens and the bio-retention.

Unknown: Sometimes I would go down to, I'm actually from Mechanicsville. Because I've got two sons tend a farm down there. Otherwise like Baden because they have a 5'oclock Saturday mass. I haven't been at St. Dominic's for a while. But the difference in the church down in Mechanicsville and then the church in Baton, I say that the Immaculate Conception is a living parish, where at St. Michael's, I guess I haven't been at St.

Dominic's for a while but they are like a dying church because there are no young ones. And the only problem – the things that would attract young people to come or to stay would be things that would considerably change Aquasco. I mean they want McDonald's and they want game rooms.

LP: They want legal marijuana. I get what you say. But there's licenses given out in Maryland for them to grow marijuana but it would change the dynamics but I don't think it's going to reverse – I really don't really see it reversing.

NW: They would probably need a place to eat at.

LP: Yes, it was like the moonshine. My dad, it was people. When I grew up my dad would stop and get moonshine for People. It was relatives who made it. Yes, the one that burned. We had a couple of that... they still walking around with burns from the moonshine. Wounded Warriors from making moonshine. I mean seriously.

BT: That was a big business for us.

LP: Yes. That was a big business.

LG: We touched on the economy.

JE: Well, thank you.

LG: Thank you, Beverly.

[End Transcript: 31:55]

[Extra: 31:56]

BT: I just wanted to say one thing. I meant to bring it up. In the 70's, I can remember when the Vietnam War was going on and there were no young men in Aquasco. They all drafted to go to Vietnam. Only the older man. A number of them were killed.

JP: My dad was in World War II.

RM: The fact that St. Dominic's Church... the frame church is there inside the brick wall. The church you see today is actually a brick church built around the existing frame church. They just bricked right on top of it.

[End Transcript: 33:00]