



"So fades a summer cloud away; So gently shuts the eye of day; So dies a wave along the shore."



Emma Hankins with her 3 granddaughters, Emma, Elsie and Mae



Young Emma Hankins who fed the crew of men who built the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse



Benjamin Hankins in his later years. He died in 1915 at the age of 68.



Young Amanda Hankins Davis



Young Richard Davis, he was the first police officer on the island.



Mother, Mae, with sisters Emma and Elsie with Richard Davis' nephew Joe Davis

My Granny, Emma Hankins

by Charles Neill

The year was 1858 when our great grandmother Emma Touzer was born. She was seven years old when Abraham Lincoln was shot and killed on April 15, 1865.

Our great grandfather Benjamin A. Hankins was born in 1847 in Bristol, PA. He served in the Civil War (Co K 38 infantry), the same time as his father, Eleazer's second term.

At the age of 15, Emma was hired as a cook for the workers employed by Hurst/Marshall, the general contractors who built the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse. In 1874, Emma & Ben were married and moved to Anglesea in North Wildwood, NJ. They lived on the lighthouse site in a little shack, Granny cooking for the men who were working on the lighthouse and Ben hauling supplies and transporting workmen by boat from Bennie's Landing in Cape May Court House as there weren't any bridges or railroads onto the island yet.

When the lighthouse was finished, the cookhouse was moved to 4th & New Jersey Avenues where the WaWa stands today. It was on that block that Emma & Ben built a charming two-story house with a white picket fence surrounding it. There were 5 tall trees that fronted the house. They were landmarks from out at sea. During the summer months, people walking by would stop and sit under the trees to rest and cool off. There was a hitching post by the street for horses, blackberry bushes grew in great abundance. There was a chicken coop with plenty of chickens for fresh eggs and sometimes a nice roast chicken dinner. Out in back of the house were the pig pens and the barn. Of course, there was a large garden with plenty of fresh vegetables to eat and can and we have to mention the proverbial outhouse.

Granny had two children, a boy named Clarence, born in 1874 and a girl named Amanda born in 1881. At the age of 13, young Clarence was crushed to death between two railway cars.

Amanda married Richard Davis and had three children, all girls, Emma, Elsie, and Mae, my mother. Richard Davis was hired as an officer on Anglesea's one man police force.

Amanda was pregnant with her fourth child when one day she was tending to her cow, also her pet, who playfully pinned her up against the wall. The cow's horn pierced Amanda's stomach and she died from complications at 27 years of age. This left Granny with three granddaughters to raise on her own. To make ends meet she took in boarders.

All three granddaughters married after they grew up. Emma & Elsie moved to Philadelphia. My mother Mae married Clarence Neill from Belfast, Ireland and had eleven children. We lived across the street from Granny, but every summer, my parents would rent out our house for extra money, which meant moving in with Granny. To get some peace and quiet Granny would love working outdoors in her garden. She also made friends with a pet crow who would love to sit perched on her shoulder. Some say he would call her name. Granny lived a long life. She died in 1947 at the age of 89.



June Moore, Bill Neill, Jean Holmes, Charles Neill, Don Neill, Norma Seagraves, Mary Hand, Richard Neill, Alice Davies, Jim Neill (who once had Jim's Clam Bar)



Above: 4th & New Jersey Aves. in North Wildwood, a plot of land once graced with an old seashore farmhouse surrounded by wildflowers and tall trees and sand dunes that were once home to forts built by the young Neill boys and many other children who had the fortune to grow up in such a place as Five Mile Beach. Below: a busy Wawa now stands in its place. It opened August 28, 1981



On April 16, 1964, Wawa Food Markets opened their first store in Folsom, PA. This location is still open today. Most Wawas are open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The chain's name comes from the site of the company's first milk plant and corporate headquarters in Wawa, PA. The name of the town is in turn derived from the Ojibwe word for the Canada Goose (taken from "The Song of Hiawatha"). An image of a goose in flight serves as the Wawa corporate logo. Wawa sells over 195 million cups of coffee a year. (Wikipedia)



Emma Hankins nee Touzer
1858 - 1947



Ben Hankins
1847 - 1915



Amanda Hankins Davis
1881 - 1908



Clarence Hankins
1874 - 1887