



Gaetana Grobluski
ROBS History Project
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Though the spelling of her name might suggest otherwise, ever since she was a five year old, she's been answering to "Gae" to family and friends. As it happened, her Kindergarten classmates were having difficulty pronouncing her full name *Gaetana*, so it was her mother who suggested the idea that her teacher use the first three letters of her name to make it easier for new friends to pronounce her name and to get to know her and that they did.

Gaetana was given to her by her paternal grandmother who was Italian by birth, having immigrated to the United States from the old world. Gae was the firstborn in the family and was named, according to the custom, after her father's mother whose first name was Gaetana. When her sister was born, she was named after her mother's side of the family without any difficulty. She was Mary.

"Unless someone knew us before meeting us, Mary and I, might not even appear to have been part of the same family," Gae once said. *"That's how different we were from one another"*. Over the years it was Gae who became more outgoing. She loves people and loves to party. She loves traveling and is forever planning on the next place to go. Mary is more inclined to stay at home, and is perfectly content cleaning. I've told her, *"You know, we'd make a good couple."* Gae quickly added, *"By the way. I love to cook. - I could cook for an army. She loves to stay home and clean. I'll cook and entertain and you clean."* Between them there's only a two and a half year difference in age. Gae was thirteen when her brother was born. She considers him the baby of the family. Her sister was a little over eleven when he was born. They grew up with him, were very close and think of him almost as their own child. His name is Joseph. He's living in Staten

Island and is today an Executive Vice President for the Bank of America. They're very proud of him.

Gae also had her work experience origins in banking. She started in High School in her senior year, when she enrolled in a class where she worked one week, went to school the next week and worked for the Bank of New York. She was fortunate after high school to get the position of Executive Secretary to an Executive Vice President on the Bank floor. Gae remained with the firm for five years. She said it was a great opportunity. The Bank of New York took high school students in the clerical field and trained them to be Secretaries for executive positions. She remembered her teacher being very, very strict; very exact and she impressed Gae with a lot of that training that she built into her work ethic. To this day she sees letters and says to herself, *"That's not right, that margin is a little off and that is not quite right"*. She loved it, and she didn't have to be picked to work on the bank floor when she began. She didn't have anything to do with the numbers and accounting concerns but primarily dealt with correspondence. Her brother Joseph got an early start in the banking field when he graduated from high school. He was confused about what he should do. Computers were just starting to come to the fore and he came to Gae and said, *"Sis, I don't know what to do?"* He was looking for direction. He didn't want to go to college. He told her he was thinking about computers, and she said computers? What do you want to do with computers? But okay, if that's what you want. She and her sister encouraged him. *"God Bless him"*, she said. He's really made a wonderful future for himself and his family.

Gae's sister Mary is a mom and a grandmother. She was also a Secretary *and she retired about a year and a half ago. "Even though I'm older than her, she retired and wanted out and to move on. She worked for the Suffolk County Health Department. I think she used to give out the Certificates to Restaurants that were in compliance. Her role was to make sure that the Department was watching out for all of us and now she has handed that position off to someone else"*. Mary has three daughters and a son. Two of her daughters are married and one daughter has four children. So, her sister has become a grandparent of four children. Her son is not married yet. Her brother has one son. He just graduated from high school and is going off to college. Gae had a boy and a daughter who she says gave her two absolutely wonderful, beautiful grandchildren.

One of those grandchildren, her grandson, has become very interested in computers. *"Teenagers today are born pre-wired to have a passionate interest in computers. When he was about three years old, actually I think he was closer to four, I was babysitting for him. At that time they had all the joy sticks for games – I think it was Packman. He said, "Grandma, do you want to play?" I said sure! "And he was moving them all around and then it was my turn. And I was going as slow as anything. I was missing everything and didn't score at all and this poor little boy turns around and gently takes it out of my hand and says, "That's alright Grandma, I can play alone." "I guess I failed at computers. That was that. There is definitely a difference in readiness of the generations for computer technology.*

She mentioned earlier that her father is from Italy. His family came from Palermo, Sicily and Gae had the good fortune to pay a visit to Sicily almost a year earlier. She toured all of Sicily and the City of Palermo. What she found strange was that she'd always had a vision in her mind of what to expect when she got there. She had an image of countryside and it's not like that. It's a city. It's a fully developed lovely, lovely city. She was kind of taken aback. Her image had been one of mountains with rolling fields and farmland and when she arrived in Palermo she found all these streets and an Opera House with everything as modern as can be. *"Wow! This can't be the Palermo I was reading about."* It was very, very interesting. *"I guess those memories came from my father's childhood when it wasn't a very big modern city."*

If you and I were ever able to go back to visit our Brooklyn roots you'd probably see a very different Bushwick section of Brooklyn today from the one you so fondly remember. *"Absolutely true", she said. "I've done that. I couldn't believe it. The street I lived on had a convent and a church; a very beautiful catholic church much in the Gothic style of medieval Europe but it had been torn down. I couldn't believe it. They tore this absolutely beautiful church down. The convent was gone. The school I went to was maybe two or three blocks away and in back of it used to be the Schaffer Brewery and that's gone. Nothing is the same".*

Gae was born on Valentines Day, February 14th 1939. She told us *"I was a sweetheart baby."* The World's Fair opened in Flushing Meadows that year. *"It did", she said, "I heard about it and my mother took me in the carriage. I'd say that now, it was probably a fifteen or twenty minute ride tops, by bus or car from where we lived. My father may have driven us because he was the only one in the family*

that had a license, had a car and was a chauffeur to the whole family. Anytime his sisters, uncles or anyone in the family wanted to go someplace, they called upon my father and he drove them. We did go to the Fair but I don't remember it though, while it may not have been the financial success Robert Moses and the City of New York hoped it would be. The explanation for its financial difficulties could more likely be laid at the feet of the initial shots of World War II occurring as it did, in Europe in 1939 as well". As young as she was, Gae, does remember World War II. She has a memory of her mother packing up boxes for her brother who was already overseas in Asia. She was five or six years old and remembers going to the Post Office with her and writing little notes to her uncle, when she was barely even able to write. She remember the rationing and food stamps, she remember the "lights out", - and, my goodness – the black shades, she remembers one time when she peeked out from behind the shades and the Air Raid Warden happened to be right outside, (OMG) Oh' did I get in trouble? He rang the doorbell, my mother answered and he came to the door and he was yelling upstairs. My mother came to me and she was yelling at me. "Do you want to be arrested?" No! I promised, "I'll never do that again".

Then on **VJ Day** she remembered everybody going outside at the end of the war and celebrating and everybody being together. But yes, she did remember the rationing. *"I remember the food stamps; you were only allowed so much sugar etc; and oh, the tin cans. We had to save all tin cans so they could be recycled. I remember sometimes I would ask if I could just keep the top because I wanted to play "topsy" with it. That was a very popular street game that all the kids played at the time. It had other names like "hop scotch".*

Gae's mother's maiden name was Bury. Her family had originally come from Russia. The name had been shortened from something with about fourteen letters (which she simply couldn't pronounce), and it was shortened to "Bury". Her mother's mother came from Russia and Gae had taken a trip to that country for the very first time last year; last Fall to be precise. She visited Moscow and St. Petersburg. Her grandmother came from a little town up in the hills of Ukraine. She didn't go there but she just wanted to visit places where the other side of the family had once called home at another time. It was an extremely interesting experience for her.

She explained how her father had once worked in a paper box mill. They manufactured cardboard boxes used for shipping various kinds of goods and products going from one place to another. He worked there for the entire period of his working life until he got very, very sick and had to retire in his mid to late fifties just short of sixty. He first met Gae's mother while they both worked in that place. It was where they fell in love. She continued working up until she had a family and then she stayed home. She didn't return to work until her children were all grown. From that point on she continued to work part time in a school for the children's lunch program. At the time of our interview Gae, said she was appreciative of having out lived both her parents.

As a very young child, Gae remembers playing at home with her sister Mary. Once during an unusually severe thunder and lightning storm when they lived in a four room railroad flat with a big kitchen table, the storm was so severe that even their mother became frightened and told them both to hide under the table. She and her baby sister scurried under the table, and held on to one another, waiting for the storm to abate. They were both crying while they waited. Gae remains skittish of lightning storms even today stemming from that traumatic experience.

Whenever Gae's mother had a moment to herself from all her responsibilities; like when she could do something she enjoyed for herself, she'd jump at the chance to visit members of her own family. They lived about eight to ten blocks from where she was. She would walk. That's what everybody did. Very few people had or could afford cars. There were no such thing as cars. You walked to go everywhere. She used to visit her mother and her sisters. She had five sisters and she was the eldest of all five. She also had two brothers. She did that a lot with her family. She didn't have any personal hobbies that Gae could think of but she loved to cook and she loved to clean. Gae thought her sister takes after her mother. Her mother was the type, who used to iron socks, she would iron her father's underwear, she'd iron the towels. I mean she loved doing housework.

Gae believed her father's family had all arrived in this country by ship. She didn't know too much more about their background but was pretty sure both sides entered through Ellis Island. She said, her grandmother, who lived in Russia, was a young bride and had a child by the time she was sixteen when sadly, her young husband died. The story was told that he had been in the Russian Army, something that was never verified, but by the time she became eighteen years old, she left

her daughter with family and migrated by herself. She somehow got across the continent, managed to get herself on a boat and made it all the way to America. She was a very, very strong woman until the day she died. She met someone here, made a new life for herself and after settling down, sent for her daughter and raised another family. She was a hard working woman who honored her earlier commitments and followed through with them. We grew up with everybody and knew everyone. Gae said she cherished her grandmother. She used to speak Russian that Gae never picked up on, but her grandmother also never learned to speak very much English. She was a strong woman for whom family was everything. Family was very, very important to her and it still is to Gae. The closeness she felt with both sides of the family as a child is a feeling she embraces today. When she was born she moved with her mother and father into the family apartment house where a total of six families also lived. She lived there till the day she got married. All her cousins were there.

We wondered how many people today even knew what the expression railroad flat meant. *"Not many",* Gae said. *"A railroad flat, what's that? Did you live in a railroad yard, they might ask? No! But that's what it was called. That was when one room was in back of the other, right? Yes, you walked in the front door and through a narrow hallway where, in this case, all the rooms were off to the left. Then you walked to the end of the hall which was a big kitchen. A bathroom was on the side and a bedroom in the back, next to which was, not the living room, but the parlor. And everything went on in the kitchen, entertainment, eating, school work, everything."* The aromas were Italian, growing up in an Italian household every Sunday was ...sit down with family. They'd sit down at 1 o'clock and aunts and uncles would get together and as a teenager, you were not allowed to leave the table until dinner was over. If it was after 4 o'clock in the afternoon maybe you'd be allowed to go to the movies. It was important that everyone sat down and ate together. The movies at that time cost 10 cents. She remembered that it had been a nickel before it went up to a dime during her pre-teen years. Her mother used to make a lunch for them. They would walk the four and a half or five blocks to the theatre. The movies would start sometime around twelve or twelve-thirty and they wouldn't get out of the movies until five o'clock because you had two feature films, you had cartoons, you had a serial like Buck Rogers or a Western Movie, you got the news, you had coming attractions, you had an intermission so you could go and buy more popcorn or candy, all for 10 cents and then at 5 o'clock you would walk home, Gae would take Mary and when they got

older, her brother, but by then it had gone up to a quarter. It was an all day affair. She remembered the matrons with the flashlights that would try to keep the kids under control. There were times when a few of them would act up, and get one of the women who was on the heavy side, to chase them down the side aisle where they would open the side door to the alley and let another group of kids sneak in. It was funny!

Gae during the early years. There was a certain teacher who was the Principal in a school she attended early on. Her name was Mrs. Mc Curdy and Gae used to be a hall monitor in her school and for whatever reason she often picked Gae to run errands for her in school. Each year she would take a more than average interest in a few of her students and once a year they would be invited to her house for dinner with the approval (of course) of their parents. Gae can remember her telling her she thought she should go to college; that she had the ability and requisite skills to succeed in higher education. So, she should think about it and go on. Well she did think about it and she really did want to go to college – but being the respectful little girl she was, she listened to her father who came from an old school perspective when he asked his daughter, *“Why spend money on school? You’re only going to get married and have children. Why do you want to go to school?” “It’s going to be a waste.”* So, she listened to him and said, *“Okay Dad,”* and went to work. And therein unbeknownst to them both was a potential career influence *“nipped in the bud”* and the very next thing she asked gave us all the proof needed”, Gae asked, *Do you know what I really wanted to be?” A teacher! Can you believe that?*

She may not have become a teacher, but she certainly did get close. She became a public school clerical employee for thirty six years. Back then she was a parent of two young children. She worked for the Bank of New York but had to leave because back then once you became pregnant you could no longer hold your position with the bank. She bought a house in Brentwood and moved out to Brentwood to await her first born. Two years later her daughter was born, she met her neighbors not long after she realized she was bored at home and she remembers saying to neighbors, *“Its wonderful being a mother, I love it, but I need more in life than washing clothes and watching the kids. I need some stimulation”.* And a friend of mine was working for the school at the time as a Secretary. She said *“Gae, why don’t you apply to be a Substitute call in? I said Okay, I will”.* And she did. And she’s been working from that day on and loved it. She started out in

the Secretarial field, and became a part-timer. She worked throughout the district for two years and was then assigned to the Transportation Department, found she loved it and has remained there ever since. During that time she'd gotten promotions, took on additional responsibility and eventually became Supervisor and Head of Transportation. Once she became involved with that she joined all the bus organizations and became an officer of NYAPT (New York Association of Pupil Transportation), and she was an officer for about six or seven years. She has in the past year been really fortunate and quite pleased to be invited to speak to a special organization up in Albany called the New York State Contractors Association which involves every contractor in the State that runs busses and she was also asked to speak with them. Gae was really, really pleased and felt quite honored by their invitation which she accepted and went up to Albany and spoke. Gae has seen many changes during her years with the district particularly in the area of transportation safety. In the sixteen years that she has been Supervisor and part of the NYAPT organization, that have made such big improvements in the safety of students such as in the padding of seats, the additional height of the seats in case the bus has to stop short and they're not belted for some reason or the other, the cushion would help prevent further injury and the passing of laws that they must wear seat belts. All school busses constructed after 1987 must have seat belts and there are numerous other laws that are there for the safety of the children and they've been proven and they work and we're very happy to hear that.

You didn't have busses when you were attending school? *"Oh no, there were no busses then. We walked."* If we had to take a bus it was public transportation. Gae's High School was at least 3 or 4 miles away from where she lived. Rather than take a bus, she and her girl friends used to walk. The only time they would ever take a bus was if there was really inclement weather. They would meet at 7:30 every morning and if you were a student taking public transportation you would get a discount if you showed your bus pass. Instead of paying 50 cents you'd pay 25 cents. We may not have had computers then but we did have very active imaginations.

When we were very young we used to enjoy playing *Hide and Seek* or *Three Steps to the King* outside with friends. I loved *Jump Rope* and *Potsy* and I loved doing crossword puzzles and still do and I did jigsaw puzzles. My first paying job when I was about fifteen and a little younger was when I used to work weekends

at a hospital; Friday nights, Monday nights and all day Saturday and Sunday. I used to sit at the desk, greet people, help give them the flowers and give them passes to visit patients. It was the hospital where I was born and yes, it's still there. The Hospital was Wyckoff Heights. The family holiday that brought everybody together was Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving. It was wonderful; absolutely wonderful. Gae has so many good memories and when she got married and had children, they bought a house and everyone came to her then. She and her sister would cook for twenty five or thirty people and she absolutely loved it. Her least favorite subject in school was Gym. While she never considered herself athletic, she did play stickball and punch ball. We used to get the pink "*Spaldeen*" and get out there and punch it or find a broom handle (stick) and run around the bases. We couldn't forget Brooklyn as being where she grew up because of the way she had pronounced Spalding. With a laugh, she spontaneously injected that her Brooklyn comes out all the time and she's not in the least ashamed of it.

She attended the local Public School - Kindergarten through eighth Grade - P.S. 145 and from there went to Bushwick High School that was located in Glendale. She graduated from that school in 1956 and got married in 1957 but didn't start college until the oldest of her children was about eight or nine years old and was the type of mother who always made sure they did their homework, read it over and corrected it and all. She remembers one evening her son asked her about some history which she helped him research. Then dad comes home at 6 'oclock and he goes running over to his dad and says, "*You know dad, I had to do this history homework. Would you look it over*"? And I sat there and said, "*But I helped you with it and we went over it.*" Yeah, but mom, you don't know anything. I don't know anything? Okay! She felt devastated and decided on the spot, "*I'm going back to school.*" And at that time Suffolk Community College had classes at the Sonderling High School. I enrolled in a Psychology course, and Low and behold, I got an "A". I did go on to receive my Associates Degree and did one more year after that but never finished. She was asked what had brought her to Brentwood in the beginning. "*It was cheap at the time*" was what she said. What she meant was, local real estate prices were more competitive there than they were in other regional communities at that time. Gae's husband had just joined the NYC Police Department, they were living in Brooklyn and no one in the family had ever owned a house. It was her dream to raise a family, hopefully, in a regular house. They began searching and soon discovered that Nassau County was much

too expensive for their price range. They began house hunting in Suffolk County, but found Huntington to be unaffordable. It was too expensive further in and then we heard about a place called Brentwood and they had homes for sale. They were driving around and came down Washington Avenue when they saw a sign that said, *Model Homes*. They stopped, looked and Gae fell in love with the house, and lo and behold they could afford it. I think it was called Robin Hill Development and the developers name might have been Sid Farber. It's up in the north area of town along the L.I.expressway. When they went to the closing and because it was a corner piece of property they wanted five hundred dollars more. She sat there and cried because that was all they had in the bank and it was supposed to cover the cost of furniture. But they put the deposit down and closed and when they could afford it they furnished the house.

The next step was to move to Brentwood. You weren't working but you heard of an opportunity for work. Who did you talk with first when you considered the job opportunity? She spoke with her friend, Lillian Yedwabnik. They met when they were in High School and after fifty years are still very good friends to this day. They're still there for each other even though Lillian now lives in Florida. They're there for each other along with another friend who they met back in night school. I think Lil was working in the Library at the time. She sent Gae down to the Business Office where Virginia Datre was in charge. Gae introduced herself to Virginia and told her who she was. She asked what Gae had been doing previously, and she immediately signed her on, and within two weeks she was at work for the district. Her first assignment was at North Middle School. It was very interesting there. She was back in the working world and she loved that. Even though it was part time, she just loved it. What made NMS so interesting was that it was a different kind of school from any school she'd ever known. In Brooklyn all the schools were four, five and six stories tall. Here there was this big school with one story (yes, there was a second story on part of the building), but it was all spread out over the property and completely surrounded by fields. What they had her doing was all new to her as well. She loved it because she had the opportunity to watch Brentwood grow. She was married in '57 and moved here in '60. Even though her children were still young, she could see them building and when she saw them start building it was crowded in the schools and they started building more schools and more schools, and talking to the Principals she found them all to be really energetic and really "gungho" and everything, was for the kids. She loved the feeling of that. She worked with Pete DiMento, Chuck

Puleo, Herb Fishman, - who was the Principal of my children's school and she became active with the PTA in that building – *“and was really touched by that experience, and Lou Lotito, all the old timers and I saw them all grow, and I saw the District expanding and offering more and more. It really was a good feeling knowing that I was part of this and helping to do the best for our children”*. The number of schools was growing like mushrooms as also were the number and the diversity of children moving into the district. Every year there was another school opening up and once I got into working I moved into the transportation end of it and it was amazing and I continued to see it grow and I remember at that time the High School was on split session. The transportation for split session was so astronomical, I mean there were passes all day long. You had split session, an overlap session, kids going to BOCES, and then you had an evening school. There were classes from seven in the morning to eleven o'clock in the evening. Don't forget we had the Adult Program and Suffolk County was holding classes here. It was really a growth pattern that was unbelievable. Brentwood was also a large district - as a matter of fact it was the sixth largest school district in the State of New York and for periods of time, the largest school district on Long Island.

“Everyone used to come to Brentwood from all over to learn what to do as well as what not to do because everything happened here first. We were so big and so experienced you could say there was nothing we didn't already know about from having seen it before anyone else had a chance to discover what we already knew and were willing to teach to other communities. Brentwood is unique. Gae was just being honest when she said, “I love Brentwood” .It was George Land author of Grow or Die, who said, “We love those things that contribute to our growth”. So true! “I may retire, but my heart is still in Brentwood”. She felt needed. She felt as if there was a purpose for her work. Children needed transportation and she was there. She helped organize. She liked to think that she was instrumental in helping to carry out some of the innovative programs the district was trying to implement. She was there organizing, researching and giving them what they needed. She felt needed and that she was contributing. It was a good feeling. She said, “There are so many people who don't enjoy their work. I've often said to certain people, how can you spend day after day, going to work and not being happy? It must be a really hard burden on you I love my job! It might be stressful, Yes! Especially if you're doing it properly, Right? You have to have pleasure. You have to be able to enjoy it.

Some of the most stressful times for Gae took place during double session. Periods of austerity were very stressful. The opening of school – every year was stressful.

She remembers Guy DiPietro with fondness. She said, “He was a great person.” They became friends later on as she continued working in the school district. She remembers the first time she ever met Guy DiPietro. Again, she was subbing in the High School, and she was in the Department Office and she remembered filing – and you know when you’re standing someplace and you can only feel somebody’s presence – I turned around and I see this gentleman standing there with this big grin on his face. And he says Hello! I said, Hello. He says - Who are you? I don’t recognize you. I said, My name is Gae. He said, Gae? I said my real name is Gaetana. And he said, My name is Gaetano. And we just clicked from then on. We had something in common – our names. We researched our common backgrounds and that’s how I first got to meet him. ‘

The actual date of her retirement was going to be October 28th 2005. Was she looking forward to it? Was she apprehensive? Was she ready? She said she is more ready now than she was last year when she first submitted her paperwork. Whereas, two years ago, she wouldn’t even have been thinking about it. She said, *“I am a little apprehensive because I love my job and working here is like being with your family every day, but I just feel that it’s time to kind of slow down. No health reasons are involved but the stress is really tremendous and I’m no young chicken anymore. I’d love to be involved and if they need me I’d love to come in and help”.*

I would like to think that Brentwood being the largest school district on Long Island, I’ve accomplished providing good service to them. I have provided a good relationship with our bus company who I trust, and they trust me implicitly. I think I’ve provided as much service as we can get out of the bus companies because I know the contract, I know what it says and I know what I can do. And I’ve been told, it’s hard for me to believe but I’ve been told I’m kind of like the guru in the transportation field in Suffolk County. New people start and they call for advice, for information, I’m so and so and they told me you would know, you could help, your reputation has just exceeded yourself, I can’t believe it. *Gae, it gives us all a sense of pride to hear you say that because we are a family and we are all a part of something larger than ourselves.* And if it weren’t for the people I

work with it wouldn't be the same coming to work. I have gotten to know some of the most wonderful, wonderful people. What has made my job easier by far has been the friendships and working relationships I have made by working with the people on the third floor. They have made a tremendous difference for me. The Superintendent's Office, they are part of it, they have supported me, they've backed me up, they have put trust in me, and they've made me feel important. They've just been so supportive. The Special Ed Department has just been constantly calling me and thanking me for doing this or for doing that. And I just feel it's my job. I'm the support staff and I should be doing this, not that I'm doing anything above and beyond. This is what I should be doing. And I think it's just wonderful. They've just made me feel so good.

Did she have heroes' growing up? *"Yes! I did. I loved Alan Ladd. I laugh at that because I remember my uncle coming in one time. I used to have scrap books of all the stars. My uncle came in one time and said, "I don't know why you are so madly in love with Alan Ladd? He's just a little shrimp. What do you mean a shrimp? Do you know he has to stand on a box to be taller than women? Oh, He crushed me. I guess some of the stars were my idols. I just loved the way they dressed – the glamour part of it and I tried to emulate them in my growing years. I liked going to the movies. I do enjoy going to the movies."*

I think I would most certainly have liked to complete my college career. I think I would have liked to have done that. Perhaps being retired will provide you with that time. I'll have time to continue my traveling. I love to travel. Maybe she can explore that mysterious word of computer technology. And maybe you could complete your education without ever entering another classroom?

What will Gae not miss? She is not going to miss the pettiness of those few parents that call with a complaint that the bus driver didn't say good morning. Maybe he was just having a bad morning, you know? She won't miss the pettiness of complains. Serious complaints are always taken seriously. I will always follow them up and correct anything that's wrong but the pettiness? What you'll miss? She's going to miss the people. She's going to miss the commitment of getting up every morning and reporting to work because she is a people person. She said, *"I know I have to be doing things."*

What are the things you would either like to change or see changed in, or about public education? (1) The way student learning is currently structured isn't fair to every student (2) Students need more opportunities in school to learn how to become responsible, involved citizens, and (3) To gain greater appreciation for the importance of developing a healthy respect for civil authority.

Gae was asked if she had any feeling to share about local taxes. A great many other voters have expressed frustration with the way in which taxes are assigned to homeowners on Long Island. Here's what she said about school taxes and who should be paying them. *"Yes! Yes, I think everybody should contribute to paying taxes for the public schools. The children are our future and I think everyone should be responsible for paying a certain amount; though not strictly based upon property value because we may be paying taxes for students whose parents may be renting an apartment some place and not paying any school taxes. Why should only one segment of society pay taxes for educating everyone. I think taxes should be assessed in a manner based on some kind of a sliding scale, perhaps, on income, for example. I don't know exactly how best to describe the system but I do think it's unfair to continue to expect one segment of our community to pay for all those who are only on the receiving end of having their children get "free public education" without having to contribute into it".*

Was there one favorite year of the thirty-six years devoted to the district? She reflected and said it would probably have been some time during her early to mid thirties, *"They were fun years"* she said. *"We worked over in what is now the small office at Oak Park. Even though we were crowded, we were a bunch of hard working, fun loving people. We would always get our work done but we would laugh a lot. We would talk to each other and share things and George Klein was there at the time. Yes, I do keep in touch and I just saw him at the beginning of this school year. He's been involved in so many things and has stories that are just unbelievable. I remember a memo that he once wrote to Guy DiPietro, I guess it was during austerity or something and they wanted certain busses for something. At that time I was a Secretary and he had me write a memo regarding ----- "What do you think - I turn on a faucet and out come dripping yellow busses? And I said "You don't really want to send this do you" "And he said, Yes, I do!" He insisted so I sent it." Sure enough, Guy told him, "What do you mean dripping yellow busses?"*

What might be your best piece of parting advice to the person or persons who follow you (if it were possible to tell them what they most need to hear), as they commence their own career path managing the transportation piece of the puzzle of the largest school district on Long Island? First, *"You have to have a sense of humor. Trust your Secretarial staff. They are good people. They're good girls there. They work very hard. They know a lot and they're always willing to help. Trust in them."*

How would you like to be remembered in your role in the District? *"As someone who did their job. I was paid to do the job. I was there for the children. And I tried to help them in whatever way that I can."*

I made a lot of friends working here. I had the opportunity to meet some wonderful, wonderful people. Everybody in my past has been so good. I see a lot of retirees and I remember them. Everybody has been wonderful to me. She was so looking forward to joining ROBS (The Retirees of Brentwood Schools) and becoming a part of her new 'retirement' family. When she would see Frank Spenser every once in a while she would keep telling him, "Frank I'm retiring soon. I would love to join the organization and be of help. It will give me something to do in retirement".