

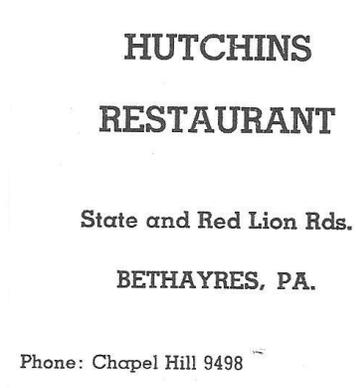
Herbert Hutchins
b. 1920

Herbert Hutchins was the brother of William Hutchins who owned Hutch's Bar at the corner of Red Lion Road and Philmont Avenue.

My Family

I was one of ten children, and I was born up in Bucks County in Richboro in a farmhouse. But I didn't grow up there. My parents moved to Chestnut Street in Bethayres, "Tin Can Alley", when I was about three years old.

How did the bar on the corner of Red Lion Road and Philmont Avenue get started? I remember that. It was in 1932. My brother Bill originally opened a place across the Pike from the Spread Eagle Hotel in Bethayres. This was before the bridge was built over the train tracks on the Pike. His place was a stand, and he sold beer there. Back then you could sell beer without a license. He had the stand for several years. Then he bought the place at Red Lion and Philmont Avenue. There was a house there on the property and a place to put the stand. Bubecks lived there and sold it to Bill. The stand was like at a farmers' market, no seats. He mostly sold beer and other beverages. You would open up the front. There was a stable too. Bill had a couple of horses for his daughter. You could ride them across the street where the Fairway Plaza office building is now. The restaurant and bar part of the property he built in the 40s right next to the house. (See aerial photograph at the end of Herb's interview).



Working at the Bar



[Photo: Herb working at the bar]

After I came out of the service, I decided to go work with Bill. I promised my wife that I would not drink. And I didn't. Now at that time, it was difficult to find anyone to work due to the war. But Bill did have a colored fellow who worked there named Al Freedman. This fellow did real nice work but went to work at the Budd Plant on Philmont Avenue when Bill told him he could probably make more money working at the Plant. That was where many people went to get work.

My brother used to open up around 11:00 AM and served lunch dinner. Then he changed that when Al left, and he opened up after lunch at 2:00 and only served dinner. Made lots of hamburgers! And homemade soup. He had people come after work from Butterworth Company, the Hosiery Factory, all located along Philmont Avenue, and the Budd Plant. I worked behind the counter at the bar. Didn't do much of the cooking.

My brother soon took off for Florida and came back and forth for a while. Bill ended up living in Florida. So I ran the place until I retired in 1981, but Bill still owned it. Bill died in 1963 and his wife died before that. His daughter Billie, his only child, inherited the place. She had other people take over, although she retained ownership. Was there a sign "Hutchins" outside of the restaurant? Yes. It read "Hutch's Bar" and remained in place until "Tailfeathers" was there. I went down to Florida in 1986. Just came back in 2007 and now live with my niece Sharon.

I have a story about one of the customers at Bill's bar, a Tinari daughter, Nick Tinari's daughter Liddy. Not Frank Tinari, the African Violet man. Nick lives on Red Lion right behind Doc Brown's store (now the Huntingdon Valley Federal Bank). Has a paving business. Liddy Tinari used to come to the bar to sit with her boyfriend while he drank a couple of beers. She never drank. She was underage. While she sat at the bar, she would talk with me. Eventually, she got married to the guy. Lanning is her married name. Now she lives on Philmont Avenue up beyond where Pine Road crosses. She has all kinds of stuff out in her yard. But she kept in touch with me when I moved to Florida, wrote me letters telling me about her children, etc. Real nice, a sweet girl. She still works in the Tinari paving company's office.

Chestnut Street

My parents bought the house on Chestnut Street after my sister Marjorie (Bette) was born, probably around 1922-23. Before that my parents lived in a house on the back of the Huntingdon Valley Country Club. The Country Club wasn't a real golf course at that time. Only had 18 holes. Eventually they added another 18 holes and my parents had to more.

Did we all live in the house on Chestnut Street? No, because the ten children were all spread out in ages. The oldest boy Frank Jr. was already married and living in Long Island, New York. Our mom told us, "We all live in a HUT and have CHINS. Hutchins!"

I was over three years old when my parents moved to Chestnut Street. We lived all the way down Chestnut Street in a double house on the right, although it looked like one house. One of our neighbors was a guy named Ryan, and there were other families, the Gaines, the Jefferies on my side of the street. There were two sisters who lived across the street. Mildred Jefferies was in my class at Lower Moreland. She had a brother Jeff. My father had a two pump Texaco gas station on the Pike across from the Spread Eagle Hotel. Then when the Pike was built up, he had a two pump gas station that was on the property that my brother Bill owned for his bar. The underground tank is probably still there. They usually don't dig it up. Instead, they empty it, let it air out and dry and then fill it with cement. (This is where a bank is located now.)

Did my mother work? Work? No! She had ten kids. When I was growing up, we had more than one in a bed. Before Bill and Woody were married, I slept in the middle of the bed between

them. We had a bathroom on the back porch and one off the dining room on the first floor. A bathtub with hot water! Sometimes we had floods because the creek ran right outback. I remember the time my sister had a car. It was raining hard. There was water coming up over the creek and flooding the driveway. I said, "You should get your car out of there, it's going to get wet!" There was a big barn out back, behind the house. And she says, "Well, what about you! Your car is in the barn!" I did have a car in the barn, but I didn't have my license yet. My first car was a convertible with a rumble seat in the back. I bought that from Liebold, a 1930 Model A Ford. The water never came into the house until the hurricane Floyd. It came up two steps from the kitchen, that was it. Our chickens all died in that flood except the rooster who floated up to the house on a bottle. So we named him Noah!

When my parents bought the double house on Chestnut Street, they only owned that one side that they lived on. There was a family living in the other side. Then my sister Margaret, who lived with my parents, bought the house on the other side when the family moved. She broke a door through the dining room that went into the other house. This was when my mother was sick, so Margaret and her sister Mabel could help take care of my mother, take her food, whatever. Mabel and her husband had moved into the other side that Margaret owned. My father was still living. Then when my parents died and Margaret got married, at age 45, she moved out. Mabel's (married name Steinour) daughter Peggy and her husband, Don Hessing, bought Margaret's house. So that double house was in the family, my mother and father, then sister Margaret, then sister Mabel and then Mabel's daughter Peggy.

We called Chestnut Street "Tin Can Alley", probably because when we were growing up there, we all would play "Kick the Can". Chestnut Street was considered to be "the other side of the tracks". We didn't have much and played with anything.

My parents were married in 1900. The children were born every two years, except for 1910 when she had a miscarriage. So it is easy to remember. The kids were born 02, 04, 06, 08, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22. Sharon's mother Bette is the youngest. Frank is the oldest, named after our father, Walter Francis. Bill had only one child, his daughter Billie who eventually inherited the bar and later sold it. Bill's corner, Hutch's Bar, recently sold for several million dollars to Commerce Bank in 2007, now TD Bank. Imagine!

Early Life

I was in the Lower Moreland class of 1938. After graduating before I went into the Navy I delivered papers, The Bulletin and the Daily Inquirer. I had a wagon for delivering papers. Once I had the Daily News papers in the wagon with the Bulletins. A guy from the Bulletin comes up to me and says, "You can't sell those Daily News papers any more." I said, "What! Are you, crazy!?" I would sell over 100 Daily News papers because everybody wanted to see the gambling number in that paper. And I only had to go the Butterworth Company and the Hosiery Factory to sell all those papers. I also worked at the Philmont Country Club, mostly getting the golf balls out of the lake.



I got married the day before Pearl Harbor; the date was December 6, 1941. I called my sister Barbara who lived in Rockledge to tell her we got married and found out about Pearl Harbor. My wife's name was Ann Alley. I met her because I knew her brother. I was 21.

[Photo left: Herb and Ann's wedding picture, 1941]

[Photo right: Herb in the Navy]

HERBERT HUTCHINS, SF 2/c



Herbert Hutchins, SF 2/c, now at Ocean-side, Calif., writes in part: "Well, it was swell to get home. And it's swell to be in the States again. It was really a treat to see the little town of Bethayres and Huntington Valley. I never saw any place as beautiful when I first was going into Bethayres from Fox Chase. They have nothing like it on the other side."
"I'm now going to school again and I have four weeks left to go before I am assigned to a ship."
"I was at the Hollywood Casino and enjoyed myself very much. I have seen a few movie stars but not any of the well-known ones."
"I would like to know if there were any of Lower Moreland folks out near Long Beach, Los Angeles or San Diego. Maybe I could look them up if they were."

When I was 22, I went into the Navy and was in for the duration of the WWII. I was in the 1st Beach Battalion. We were involved in the first invasions. North Africa was the base. We took troops and equipment to Sicily, Salerno, Anzio and France.

I rented my house in Hatboro when I moved into the house next to the bar. I was told an interesting story by a Lower Moreland police dispatcher. It happened in 1974 when I was living there. One night, as it was told to me, I called the Lower Moreland Police Station and told them there was a burglar in the bar. I had an intercom system. One end was in the bar and the other end was in my house there. I told them that I could hear someone in the bar. This was around two in the morning. Anyway, the police came down and the guy in the bar took off down Philmont Avenue across to the other side where the factories were. The police chased him with their guns drawn, ordering him to stop running or they were going to shoot, and they hit him three or four times and finally caught up with him. He said he was tired and couldn't run any more. It turned out that the ammunition in the guns was so old it did nothing! Anyway, the police were so glad that the bar had the intercom. The dispatcher told me that this is still talked about in the police department, how a burglar was caught with an intercom!

Later Years

For the last 20 years I've lived in Edgewater, Florida, near New Smyrna Beach. I lived in a house near friends. Saw the house when it was being built when I was visiting these friends. I miss the warm weather there. I don't like this cold weather up here! I rented my house in Hatboro, where I lived when I was married, when I moved to Florida.

My niece has a wonderful album of all of us taken at my parents' 50th wedding anniversary celebration. A professional photograph of each family was taken. Sharon has them all together in the order of the children in the album. She has collected family photos. Some go way back! Even a picture of the rooster! Sharon's mother Bette made an album. Sharon's boys put together a wonderful group of Grandmother Bette's photos from her album on the computer. Unfortunately, we don't have a good photograph of the bar, just snapshots of the inside here and there and an aerial shot of the area.

The Hutchins Family

Walter Francis Hutchins Jr	04/20/1902
William Downs Hutchins	07/28/1904
Mable Duddy Steinour	12/03/1906
Barbara Hazel Smith	12/09/1908
Woodrow Wilson Hutchins	08/13/1912
Charles Strawn Hutchins	08/03/1914
Margaret Livezey Shotwell	06/20/1916
Emma Jeannette Yentzer	04/03/1918
Herbert Hutchins	03/20/1920
Marjorie Elizabeth Anguline	07/31/1922



[Photo: Emma and Walter Hutchins at their 50th wedding anniversary, 1950]



Hutch's Bar (now known as Tailfeathers) and the house next to it are located at the southwest corner of Red Lion Road and Philmont Avenue. The area is a flood plain and has not changed significantly since this photograph was taken c. 1950. The house on Red Lion Road just above Hutch's is still standing. On the ridge in the center is the back of the Huntingdon Valley School on Murray Avenue. The district's athletic fields are back of the school. Farther south on Murray Avenue is the First Baptist Church. On the other side of the school in the area between Murray Avenue and Huntingdon Pike is the small building that housed the L.B. Saint Glass factory, which made stained glass windows, including the first 13 windows for the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Just to the south of Hutch's on the eastern side of Philmont Avenue stood the 22-acre property of Butterworth & Sons Company. At the time of the photograph, Butterworth was the world's largest independent producer of synthetic yarn-spinning machinery.

[Photo: OYRHS]