

# Clayton Historic Preservation, Inc.

Museum located at  
29 East Avenue, Clayton, NJ 08312-0029  
P. O. Box 29, Clayton, N. J. 08312-0029

Email:  
Website:

CHP@ClaytonHistoric.org  
www.ClaytonHistoric.org

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Patricia Lillie

## *Kenneth Vergual Herndon*

CHP recently received, by way of Clayton resident Frank Lolli, a manuscript entitled "The Autobiography of Kenneth Vergual Herndon." It is not dated, however wordage suggests it was written near 1993; and it does not indicate any authorship. It is written in the third person and passages of the memoir states such things as "Ken remembers", so we believe it is not an autobiography but a biography. Ken passed away on November 09, 2002 at the age of 81. He is buried next to his wife of 55 years and his daughter at Greenmount Cemetery, Hammonton, NJ.

Kenneth Vergual Herndon, was born August 23, 1921 to the parents of Roy P. and Edith May (nee McGeorge) Herndon in Holdredge, Nebraska, a very small town, near the border of Kansas. He joins 1 brother and 5 sisters, and 2 years later, his younger brother was born to the family. His recollection of the place he was born is very limited.

At the age of two, the family moved and settled in northern Colorado, a small community, known as Loveland, due to his mother's health. His two main memories here were hiding from his mother in her flower garden (where they grew over three-foot high) and the terrible lightning storms where he learned the fear of lightning.

The family moved to Denver when he was about 4 or 5 years old due to the lack of work. This was the beginning of what is referred to as the Great Depression of the late twenties (1920s). There were no jobs, no money whatsoever, and nothing to eat. This didn't last for a day or two, a week or month, but for years. He recalls people dying everywhere because of the severe cold, lack of food, and no medical attention. Finally, a form of relief developed, and how wonderful it was when he, his brother and sister stood in line for a quart of milk and two loaves of bread each, twice a week. He recalls homes with ground around them had no such thing as grass. The front, side and back yards were planted with vegetables to eat. Excess vegetables



PHOTO ABOVE: Kenneth Vergual Herndon, left front, and unidentified fellow sailor. Photo courtesy of the Herndon family and CHP archives.

were buried in the ground in 3-foot holes with straw for winter protection and food for the winter months. Nothing was wasted. At one time all of his sisters, brothers, and spouses lived in one house for survival. They had one meal a day consisting of potato soup, and Sundays, a little meat was added to the soup making it a luxury and delicacy so to speak.

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