

Interviewer: Carla Helgert

### INTERVIEW AND TAPE SUMMARY

Name: Wetty Siemer

Date and Place of Birth: Sept. 10, 1946, Alton, Ill

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: [REDACTED]

Interview Date, Time, and Place: 12/16/01 6:30pm Siemer Home, [REDACTED]

#### Interview Summary (attach additional sheets, as needed):

- Childhood - 1st of 7 born in a hospital
- neighborhood - rural
- Schools attended -
- Shopping in Alton - 3rd St. - College Ave
- 1st shopping trip to St. Louis - Northland - Riverroads
- Taverns in Alton - The Wedge, East Eddie's, The Sandbar, Irene's Tavern, Earleville (Sp.)
- Funeral homes in Alton - Grant, Smith, Streaper
- Fire Stations in Alton
- Movie theaters in Alton - Grand, Uptown, Princess

Note any special circumstances involving the interview:

Book looked at in interview: Alton Pictorial History by Charlotte Stetson

Carla Hilgert  
History 447  
Betty Siemer Bio.  
11-12-01

Betty Siemer has seen a lot of changes in the Alton area, but the biggest change she saw lately was personal. After 27 years of teaching health and traveling between the middle schools and Alton High School, Siemer made a change. No, she did not pack up and take off for a round-the-world adventure, she simply switched subjects. After 27 years of getting kids to know their bones and the dangers of cigarette smoking, Siemer is teaching US History and Sociology. Finally, no more traveling between the schools, and for the first time in 27 years she gets her own room with her own desk. A desk on which she can display her children's pictures. There's Erin who graduated from University of Illinois and is now working and living in the Chicago area, and Justin who is studying German at the University of Illinois.

Siemer's family has lived in the Alton area since they came to America from Germany in the early 1800's. At one time her family owned much of the land where she now presently lives. A favorite family story that has been passed down through the generations is that of her great-great-grandfather walking to downtown Alton to watch the last Lincoln-Douglas Debates in 1858.

Siemer has lived her whole life in the Alton area. She was born at Alton Memorial Hospital in 1946, the only one of seven children in her family to be born at a hospital. She attended the local schools, not even straying too far from home to attend college. Because of a scholarship offer, Siemer attended Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville where she majored in education. After college she was offered a job in the very school district she attended. Siemer married a local boy, Mike Siemer and they had two children, Erin and Justin. Although her children may have left the Alton area, Siemer has chosen to remain a home-town girl.