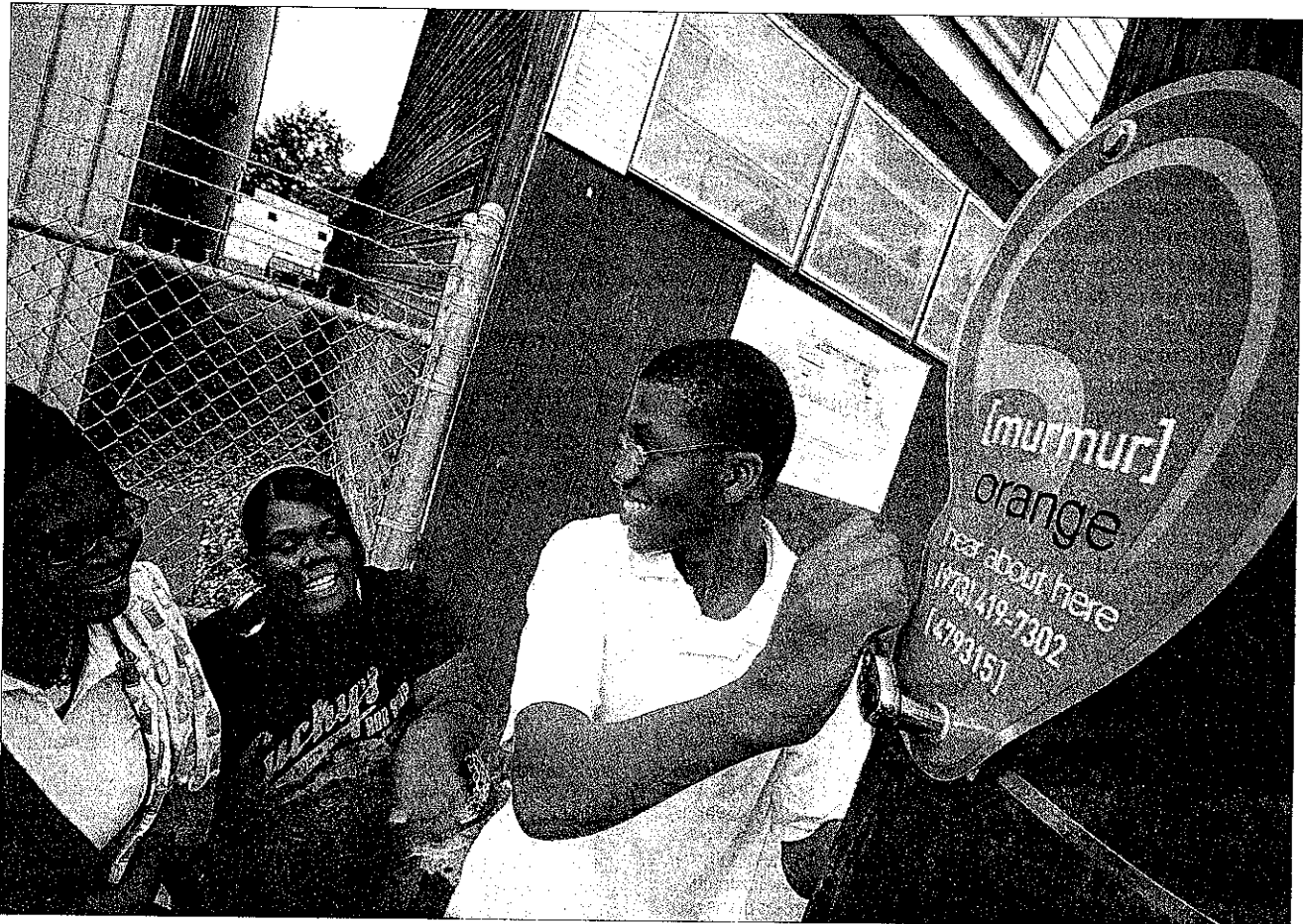


## MURMURS OF A CITY'S HISTORY



PHOTOS BY DAVID GARD/ FOR THE STAR LEDGER

Shannon Sorhaindo, above left, and Shaniqua Henry-Simmons advise Khemani Gibson as he mounts a Murmur sign to a utility pole in Orange. Vaughn Spann, below, listens to a description of the Arts Unbound building as part of the Murmur project

### First-hand tales about the history of Orange can now be heard at dozens of locations

BY HALLEY BONDY  
FOR THE STAR LEDGER

In front of businesses, parks, abandoned buildings and highways, Orange residents are hearing voices from the city's past

On Freeman Street, there's the voice of Beatrice Manischewitz, who lived in Orange during her childhood and later married the CEO of the Manischewitz matzo and wine company.

Four blocks away, there's the voice of resident Tony Monica on a Route 280 overpass, describing how the highway "took a chunk of Orange away" in the 1970s.

And in front of Orange Memorial Hospital on South Essex Avenue, resident Deborah Allen can be heard describing how her mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer in the building

Through the Murmur project — part audio tour, part scavenger hunt — these voices and about 30 more around Orange can be heard via cell phone in two-minute snippets



The project is intended to create a sense of pride in a once-thriving industrial community of 33,000 residents that saw a mass exodus of businesses and residents to the suburbs when the construction of

Route 280 demolished entire neighborhoods beginning in the 1960s

At times known as a city and at other times a township, Orange, part of Newark until the early 19th century, is the birthplace of actor Roy Scheider, astronaut twins Mark and Scott Kelly and boxer "Two Ton" Tony Galento, and the final home of an American historical figure, Civil War Gen. George McClellan.

Since March, nine Orange High School students have interviewed business owners, current and former residents and officials throughout the city, and transmitted the interviews to an online message center. Callers can find ear-shaped signs at sites around the city, dial a free local number and punch a code into their cell phone to hear short, first-hand stories about the location.

The young Murmur participants were surprised to hear some of the subjects' stories, which in many cases highlighted Orange's forgotten heyday [See MURMUR, Page 18]

## Orange records its history and pride

**1. 544 Freeman St.:** Beatrice Manischewitz talks about her parents' grocery store, which served as a hub for immigrants when she was 10 years old

**2. Corner of Stetson and South Jefferson streets:** Rick Mattos talks about Stetson Lounge, a pub that was built in the 1800s and is now owned by his father

**3. No-Name Hat Factory:** Pat Morris, director of the Housing and Neighborhood Development Corporation Inc., talks about the popular "no-name hats" manufactured from Orange in the 1880s

**4. 535 Central Ave.:** Resident Kori Davis talks about his middle school memories at Bella Italia Ristorante

**5. 179 Jefferson St.:** Resident Shaniqua Simmons says she has encountered two paranormal experiences in her house

**6. 502 Central Ave.:** Tino Bugallo, co-owner of Rita's Deli, talks about the deli's Uruguayan cuisine.

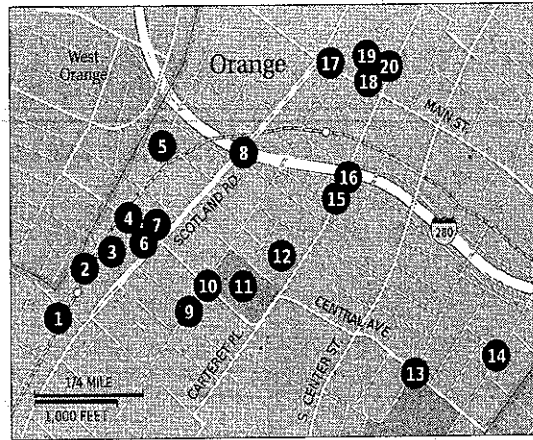
**7. 501 Central Ave.:** Anthony White talks about how he recently bought the property for a Daily Soup Bar and Grill

**8. Scotland Road over I-280:** Resident Anthony Monica describes the construction of Route 280 which he documented with an 8mm camera in the 1960s

**9. Orange High School:** Asst. Principal John Young describes a shooting outside the school on Lincoln Avenue that injured a young man recently.

**10. Orange Fire Station:** Firefighter Abdul Hasan describes the alarm system in the station and firefighter Jamie Anderson describes a fire on Hillside Avenue with several fatalities

**11. Central Park:** Resident Gordon Roberts describes the deterioration since the Orange Triangles — a Negro National League Team — played here in the early 20th century.



**12. Orange Memorial Hospital:** Resident Deborah Allen talks about her family's experiences in the Orange Memorial Hospital before it was shut down in 2004

**13. Orange Park:** Resident Glenwood Robinson talks about the park's recent renovations which includes a new baseball and soccer field. Eleven-year-old Samuel Pompono describes an epic water balloon fight he had with his friends in the park

**14. Woody 'Home for Services' Funeral Home:** Ida Woody Wells talks about a visit from Martin Luther King Jr. to the church across the street from the funeral home where she also lives John Lee, the home's manager, describes the biggest funeral in Woody's history, when two sisters died in a car accident

**15. Phil Serrani's Bakery:** Bill Serrani talks about baking bread for his Italian bakery, which has been in the city since 1948. His sister Jean talks about the bakery's recipes and how the city's changing demographics have introduced new ones, such as Ethiopian bread

**16. 100 South Essex Ave. at corner of Capuchin Way:** Paul Madugno talks about John's Market

an Italian deli and hangout that has been in his family since 1917

**17. J Rossi Paint and Wallpaper:** Louis Rossi talks about his paint store which has been in the city for more than 100 years, and about competing with Home Depot and other large outlets

**18. Mazzi Dogs:** Ken Lazorko and Vincent Mazzarisi talk about the origins of the famous hot dog joint, and events such as the upcoming eating challenge "Mazzi Monster"

**19. Central School and First Unitarian Universalist Church:** Resident Joshua Paul Thompson talks about Benjamin Jones, the first African-American councilman in Orange. University of Orange president Mindy Thompson Fullilove talks about attending Sunday school as a child at the First Unitarian Baptist Church

**20. 17 North Essex Avenue:** Cynthia Bianchi talks about paranormal experiences in her 18th century house which was also one of the first schools in Orange

SOURCE: MURMUR ORANGE  
 THE STAR LEDGER

## MURMUR

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### MAKING CONNECTIONS

Shawn Micallef, one of the creators of Murmur — a nonprofit project that began in Toronto in 2003 and now has installations in Canada, Ireland and San Jose, Calif. — said the project was intended to connect residents to their cities, even if their cities are often overlooked.

"When you actually interview someone or record a story about your city, there's a realization that people like living where they live," Micallef said. "It puts a stamp on it that says, 'This is important'"

In front of Arts Unbound near the Highland Avenue train station on Freeman Street, callers can hear Beatrice Manischewitz laughing about her childhood, which was spent in the building above the storefront A&P owned by her parents. Her family, composed of Russian Jewish immigrants, housed incoming immigrants there while they got acclimated to the city, she says in the recording. Her family left Orange when she was 10, she said, and she married the Manische-

witz company CEO in her second marriage.

In front of Orange Memorial Hospital, now abandoned, resident Deborah Allen describes the former health center as "one of the best hospitals in the area." She said her children were born there, and that all of her in-laws were employed there before it shut down in 2004. Her negative association with the hospital, she said in a slow, melancholy tone, was that her mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer there

For Shannon Sorhaindo, a senior at Orange High School who participated in the Murmur interviews, the most interesting story came from Woody's Funeral Home on Oakwood Avenue, where the owner said the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. visited the Union Baptist Church across the street during a speaking tour of New Jersey, just a week before he was assassinated

"I had no idea he came here," said Sorhaindo, 17. "These people were all strangers to me, but I learned how to open up to them, and I got to learn interesting facts."

Molly Rose Kaufman, a member of the community group University of Orange, said members

found the Murmur project online and connected to Micallef last spring. Other advocacy groups, such as Housing and Neighborhood Development Services Inc., raised grant money for the project, which cost around \$15,000, to install phone lines that transmit the messages from an internet server in Toronto.

### A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

"We're always trying to get new things in Orange, and we thought it would be an ideal youth program," Kaufman said. "We actually learned so many interesting stories. But then again, the students did all of the work"

The stories will remain in place in the city indefinitely, Kaufman said, and the organizers might consider adding more

"People in Orange have so many stories they want to tell," Kaufman said.

More information can be found at the website [murmurorange.com](http://murmurorange.com)

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