

MARY JONES/GWEN MARBURGER

Interviewed October 10, 1989

Edited February 1994

Q: Will you give me your name?

MJ: What's my name?

Q: Uh huh.

MJ: Mary N. Jones, 20149 E. Whipple Drive, Northville.

Q: Okay, and today is what date?

MJ: October 10, 1989.

Q: Okay, now we're going to check this, first of all, were you born in Detroit? I mean in Northville? How long have you lived here?

MJ: No, I was born in Illinois. I came here as a bride right after the First World War in 1919.

Q: In 1919, you came here?

MJ: Um, hum.

Q: Was your husband from here? Is that why you came here?

MJ: Yes, he was at the time. He was living here when he went into service. He just had returned from service from the First World War, and we were married.

Q: He was living in Northville when he went in the service in the First World War, but he was originally from Pennsylvania, you said. How old were you at the time, when you came here as a bride?

MJ: Nineteen.

Q: Nineteen, and where in Northville did you live? Your first home?

MJ: My first home, for about a year or a year and a half, was on Dubuar, and then we bought the home on 229 Linden and lived there all through my Northville life, until in 19... I sold my business – well...

Q: We'll get into your business later, but let's talk about the residence first.

MJ: I – uh, we bought the residence at 229 Linden and uh lived there until I sold it in 1969 and went to Florida, Pompano Beach, and bought down there. Now, been there ever since to live.

Q: You only come here in the summers, do you?

MJ: Yes.

Q: To visit your daughter.

MJ: Yes.

Q: Tell me- you mentioned your business.

MJ: Well at first, my husband was an electrical engineer, and he was at the River Rouge when they built the Ford- the big Ford plant. He was one of the foremen, and he later developed an idea of going into business for 'hissself', so we opened an electric appliance shop downtown. It was next to the D&C on North Center Street at the time, next to Schraders and duh...

Q: Was D&C there then?

MJ: Yes, they had a big store there...

GM: No, Mom, that was Woodworth's. It was not the D&C. It was Uncle Jerry's, remember?

MJ: But they called it the D&C, didn't they? Well the Woodworth's, and then we had the electric shop, and I stayed in the shop. We had appliances and pictures and everything for his work. And in some way, Depression was coming on- that bad depression, and they stopped building, and electrical work was out. So we had an extra lot back of our house on Dunlap, and he decided to build a green house and go into the florist business, and so he ran the greenhouse – he was a very good grower. He had beautiful flowers, and I took over the shop in designing. And his health failed, and then he died in '38, and I kept on with the business.

Q: Both businesses, did you...

MJ: Yes, for awhile, but I eventually sold the greenhouse part, and – well no, I sold all of it in... oh, when did it... I sold that... It was sold to Heidi, and I run the florist shop there for them. They took care of the greenhouse, run the greenhouse part, and ah, for about ten years.

Q: Now, the greenhouse was where?

MJ: On Dunlap Street, or Dubuar. There's a home there now. They tore it down eventually, and opened their shop downtown. That was after it was sold.

Q: Dubuar and what?

MJ: Just Dubuar and Linden.

Q: And Linden?

MJ: Our home was on Linden.

Q: Yes, but...

MJ: The greenhouse was right back of it.

Q: Uh, huh.

MJ: I had sold that first, and I kept my home. I didn't sell my home until in '69, when I went to Florida to live.

Q: And I understand the site- I think your daughter told me the other day- the site where your green house was is where the Genittis now live.

MJ: Yes.

Q: The younger Genittis- John and Tony?

MJ: Yes, yes.

Q: Now, did you carry on this business and raise your family too? How old were your daughters by then?

MJ: Gwen was sixteen when her dad died. She was just a senior in high school, and Phyllis Jean was just four and a half years younger than Gwen.

Q: So, for the most part...

MJ: She was just entering Junior High at the time he died. Then I carried on alone and run the place until I did sell the greenhouse off. Then I continued running the florist shop for Heidi's, when they bought it.

Q: Is that the same Heidi's that's now located in downtown Plymouth?

MJ: It used to be – yes. They used to have a flower... greenhouse--big greenhouse there in Plymouth and...

Q: Don't they still?

MJ: They don't operate their florist shop anymore. They sold that.

Q: But it's the same firm that you sold your place to?

MJ: Heidi's. Em, hem. And then I kept continuing, as I said, running the florist shop, and it began- I was getting older, and the girls, it was hard work, a lot of responsibility with help and everything – so I sold it, and ah but I didn't sell my – I continued working for Heidi's florist running the ...

Q: The company you sold it to.

MJ: They run the greenhouse, and I continued running the florist shop for them.

Q: Did they keep your name, or did they give their name to it?

MJ: They kept my name- Jones Floral. Even when the other man bought it from them and started the shop downtown. Jones Floral – he kept that name, but ah, I had a very good business all through the years. A lot of hard work, but the girls got married and were away, and so I decided to go to Florida- I had a daughter – my other daughter living in Fort Lauderdale, and so I bought in Pompano Beach, and I've been there since 1969.

Q: Now, your daughter that you're visiting with now – her last name is Marburger?

MJ: Yes – Gwendolyn.

Q: Isn't that a pretty well known Northville family as well?

MJ: Oh yes.

Q: I thought so. Now, what can you tell me about Northville back then, Mrs. Jones?

MJ: Well, when I first came, there was a band – a big band where they had a band concert every Saturday night up right in the center of Northville – North Center and Main Street.

Q: Is that where they have now built a little band shell? In the same spot?

MJ: No, they don't have it there. It was on the four corners of Center Street and Main.

Q: Oh, uh huh.

MJ: And it was built up, so cars could pass under it. And they had that band concert every night, and the Interurban line came up to that corner, when I first came to Northville, from Detroit. Oh, there's been lots of changes. It's grown so much – that everybody seemed to know everybody, and every Saturday night, everybody gathered downtown and listened to the band, and it was just quite a social thing, you know, seeing people and, that you knew, and visiting and doing a little shopping. Oh, and then too...

Q: (To GM) Maybe you'd better sit closer to that this will pick up the questions.

MJ: When I came here... where the theater is now, there was a hall, a wooden building, and they had dances there all the time, and we had dances every weekend for the young people to go and dance, and they'd have an orchestra; and then it burned down, and the theater was built there.

Q: The theater was built after the hall?

MJ: Yes.

Q: What was the cause of the burning – do you know?

MJ: I don't remember that. I don't remember, but then I remember the first shows were silent and the piano player. I can't think of her name – she played for years there at the theater – the piano – until they got sound in. They used to have an orchestra there too – later and uh – so there have been a lot of changes, and Northville has grown a lot, but it did used to be everybody seemed to know everybody and uh...

Q: Well, I think quite a few of you still know each other.

MJ: Yes, but you know, I probably can see people coming here just during the year and not being too active in anything anymore. I – when I do come – but I see people – their faces look a little familiar, but I can't place them; and I don't think they know me either; but there aren't too many of the old people. A lot of them are in the hospitals, or they've moved away. But that's mostly in the younger group – Gwen's group that have moved away; but ah – the ah ... I remember seeing all of them – all the younger groups grow up, you know, and the girls were in school here and everything.

Q: Now, where were the schools then, when your daughters were going to school?

MJ: Over here, on Main Street. The high school was there and the grade school was there.

Q: That's the big red building where they – I think they call it the school's activity building or something like that.

MJ: The new school has been built since. My grandchildren went to the new school. But no, that was the only school here at the time. And we used to have – another thing we did was all the young married group after the war, you know, the boys were all coming back. They'd been over to France, and my husband had been for a year or more; and uh, when they all come back, they'd begin to get married. There was a whole group of them that were about the same age, and they were coming back from service and getting married. But there were a lot of young, married people here right at that time, and they started a dancing club. And every two weeks at the high school gym we had dances. It was sort of a social dance, we all – we took lunches, and somebody made coffee; and at about eleven or so, why we'd all have time-out from dancing and have our lunch – and everybody knew everybody. We had a lot of fun.

Q: So you had your band concerts, and you had your dances at the hall and also at the school?

MJ: Yes. The hall was only at the very beginning after the War because it burned, and then they built the theater. No, the hall wasn't there very long. But our dancing club started of just young, married couples, and most of them had just gotten back from the service, and we were newly married, and ah, then some of the older ones came in. I remember Mr. Lapham from the bank, and oh, some of the businessmen and people would come too. And we had a very nice time.

Q: Well now, was that the same Lapham from the store, or did he work at the bank first?

MJ: It was the old... Mr. Lapham is dead. It was Elizabeth Lapham's father that was the president of the bank on the corner where the jewelry store is. That used to be a bank.

GM: Her name is Elizabeth Lapham – a different Lapham.

Q: I see.

MJ: Yes, it was a different Lapham. He run the bank; he was president of the bank. You see there was a bank there on the corner, where the jewelry store is. There were two banks.

Q: Where Orin Jewelry?

GM: That was Lapham's.

Q: Lapham's Bank?

MJ: Yes, that was called...

Q: Were they related to the department – to the – to the clothing store people?

GM: I don't think so- were they?

MJ: I don't think they were – no, no.

GM: Because the Lapham's store started out as Ponsford's. Mr. Ponsford's daughter, Beth, married a Lapham.

MJ: A Lapham, but it was no relation, I don't think. No, that was a different Lapham. But I do remember the bank and... so Mr. Lapham died, and then it went out. It didn't burn down or anything.

GM: Well, the telephone office was above the bank.

MJ: Yes, the telephone office was above the bank on the corner of Center and Main there were the jewelry store is. And a – then the other bank, the president was...

Q: It doesn't matter if you can't...

MJ: Babbitt – Mr. Babbitt was president...

Q: Of the other bank?

MJ: Uh, huh. That was Hugh Babbitt, May Babbitt's father-in-law.

Q: Em, hem – now, you mentioned the telephone office being upstairs. Did Northville have its own switchboard like a lot of small towns did?

MJ: Yes.

Q: Okay, tell me about that.

MJ: Well, as a I remember, Mr. Swabs (?) lived on Dunlap Street. She was the head one for years there until they begin to expand and until she lived really, I think. She was the main operator.

GM: Well she was the one that was always at night, mother – she was on all night.

MJ: Uh huh, well she seemed to be the head one – the main one there. Of course, there were others, but not as many. You see, it was much smaller thing then – then it is today.

Q: In other words, you knew who the switchboard operator was?

MJ: oh yes, everybody knew everybody.

GM: And when she said, "Number please," you could say, "Well, I'm looking for so-and-so."

MJ: And then there was White's Grocery Store. Mr. White was in the store for so many years. And a – of course that is where – uh, what store is there now? It's all changed along there...

Q: Mr. White?

MJ: Yes, it used to be the White Clothing Store, and then there was the other store – the ...

GM: We were trying to figure out which side of the street some of these stores were on, and it's hard to remember them.

MJ: That was where...

GM: Well, there was a shoe store too.

MJ: ... Ponsford's is now.

GM: Ponsford's is across the street – because it's Lapham's. That's where Lapham's is now.

MJ: Yes... and Jim Spagnuolo's food store – he came and opened that quite early in those days. He came from Italy and opened that store.

GM: His store was rather a sweet shop too, wasn't it?

MJ: Yes.

Q: Is that the same location where the liquor store is now?

MJ: Uh, huh – uh huh, and that's really his grandson that's running it now.

Q: Em, hem. What about the other businesses in town. Now, you told me about the two banks and even remembered the presidents of both banks. What about the other businesses – the grocery stores and ...

MJ: Well, there's the Bogart Grocery Store – Ed Bogart. And a ... there was a Smith Store here, then.

Q: Where was Bogart's Store?

MJ: It was in the smaller store where Genitti's are now. But at one time, I think he was over on North Center too. But...

GM: Some of the stores moved around. You know what I mean like Mr. Alton had the liquor store. That was over where West End Lamps is (N. Center). And there was something else in there. And they kind of would maybe...

MJ: Now, that's where all stores and people that were here when I first came to Northville. But they weren't as – they made so many of those stores into smaller shops, you see now... that it is different than it used to be.

Q: There was a C. F. Smith and Bogart's and what other stores? Grocery stores?

GM: Kroger's – wasn't it?

MJ: No, oh there was two meat markets – the Hill's Meat Market was one of the old ones here. George Hill and his brothers were running that. And that's where the...

GM: The parking lot is now behind...

MJ: And the... well, the store right there on the corner. There used to be...

GM: Wasn't Huff's Hardware was where The Record Office is, or where that now is a bank or something?

MJ: Yes, but I mean down, down on the corner – there ended up a barber shop there, but the first... uh, what was I trying to think of? Then there was the – a garage there, a Dodge sales garage, that German, Harry German run, and that's where the parking lot is now. That building was there – there on Main Street, you know, and High Street. And all those buildings on that side – they're new now. They were wooden frame buildings, and one was an apartment store where people lived, where those brick buildings are now when I first came to Northville.

GM: And you remember the old Ambler Hotel on the corner?

MJ: Yes, the Ambler Hotel was there where that deep parking lot is (Main Centre) that old...

Q: Embler?

MJ: Ambler.

Q: Uh, huh – now, someone else told me about that but did not remember the name of it. All she remembered was it burning.

MJ: It was Ambler and a ...

GM: There was another a... a variety store – wasn't that Kilgore's, mother? The name was Kilgore?

MJ: Kilgore had a men's clothing store.

GM: That was next to what is now the children's store next to the bank. And I remember there were steps going up into it.

MJ: Yes, there was a Kilgore Clothing Store. Yes.

Q: Did most of the proprietors of these businesses live in Northville?

MJ: Yes.

Q: They didn't come out from another area?

MJ: Kilgores were more of a newcomer. They hadn't lived here long, but most of the others had lived here for years.

GM: And then Mr. Brader who started Brader's Store...

MJ: Yes, Brader's store was started. That was by the theater, and a – but they were more or less newcomers in later years. I forget what was in that store before they came.

GM: I think they built the store, mother... and whatnot above it. But Freydl's, of course.

MJ: And Woodworth's had the first dime store.

Q: Woodworth's?

MJ: Woodworth's.

Q: Yeah – not Woolworth's, not the chain?

MJ: No, no – Woolworth's.

GM: There was a Woolworth's store in Plymouth and one in Northville...

MJ/GM: Two brothers started it.

GM: One in Plymouth and one here and a ...

MJ: That was the first dime store in town.

GM: Then, the man who was my mother's brother-in-law, my uncle, was Gerald Woodworth, and he finally...

MJ: It was his father's.

GM: When the D&C came along, and a he decided to sell to the D&C. That's when it turned, and he became a stock holder and what not in the D&C Corporation business, but running of the store was taken over by D&C and that's when it turned to D&C, and that's why...

Q: Yes, it's now... Just for the record, this last statement, and I didn't explain earlier ah that Mrs. Jones' daughter, Gwen Marburger, is sitting in on this interview, and perhaps may, is having something to add to it, just to refresh her mother's memory. Um, what about the – what about the churches in town?

MJ: Well, there was the Presbyterian and the Methodists, and the Baptists...

Q: The Presbyterian is where it is now?

MJ: Yes, and the Methodists is where the old church there on the corner there by the...

Q: Em hem, the one that was later a restaurant and now it's back to a different church.

MJ: That was there. They did enlarge on both of them, of course, and added on at later years. But they – the original buildings are...

Q: And the Baptist Church is where it is now?

MJ: Em Hem.

Q: What about the Catholic Church?

MJ: Yes, the Catholic – I was trying to think. That was built later, later years.

GM: That was built when we lived on Thayer. Ah, that was a little white church right on the corner of where it is now, but on the corner where the, more-or-less, where the school is now. The white...

MJ: Yes, it's in the same location as it started out, but it's much larger now, you know.

Q: You did not have as many Catholics here then – is that it...

MJ: Well, but they went to Plymouth, I think, that were. There weren't as many I don't believe. But...

Q: Which church did you attend?

MJ: The Methodist, and then my daughters started in with the Presbyterian. So I really went to both churches – Methodist and Presbyterian. But after they were older and got to going, it was just easier for me to go to the Presbyterian because I was always so busy with the business that – and you know in those days, you had to work on Sunday, as well. They'd have Monday funerals, and I used to have 60, 75 pieces a funeral, and sometimes more to the same funeral.

Q: Oh my goodness!

MJ: And then sometimes, there would be three or four funerals at once. And...

Q: You did them all yourself?

MJ: I did all of the dying at that time (MJ laughs). I had other help.

Q: Did you have any training, or did you just pick this up?

MJ: I didn't really. I studied on it and all that, and I did go to some of their things they had in Detroit, you know ah, florist designing and things, but mostly started out on my own (chuckles).

Q: Em – so you frequently had to work on Sundays then?

MJ: Oh yes! I got to where – well, and then my husband was sick, and everything was up to me at the last two years, and a, so I - I had to quit being active – I was very active in my younger married life in the organizations...

GM: Eastern Star.

MJ: In the, and I was a member – I'm a life member of the Eastern Star.

Q: Did they meet in Northville?

MJ: Pardon?

Q: Did they meet in Northville?

MJ: Oh yes, up above where the Mas- Masonic is now. I guess they still do. But I haven't gone in a long time. But I was – started out being "Ruth" – I was "Ruth" two or three years, and then I had to get out of it because I didn't have time. And...

Q: What was the word you were using, you were what?

MJ: Eastern Star – I was one – Ruth – one of the chairs.

Q: I see – I'm not familiar with your organization.

MJ: But I – I didn't go on, and a go through the chairs because I got at that time, we got too involved in the floral business, and I didn't have time.

GM: Weren't you also one of the charter members of the business and professional women of – when they started that?

MJ: I think I was, and I used to go to the business and professional women's group, but I haven't – I didn't do that in later years because I didn't have time for that, or I thought I didn't. And I really should...

Q: But tell me some of the women that were at – in that...

MJ: You know – pardon?

Q: Tell me some of the women that were in the business and professional women's group back then. Can you remember when it first began?

MJ: Oh, who were the – a lot of them were the teachers and things that aren't even here now. But...

Q: I just wonder if any of them...

MJ: Yes... most all of the... of the women that were in business or the one that's head of the race course – what's her name? She's active in it – Margaret Zayti. And there were several, but right now to think of their names, I forget who were the most active. And some of them are passed away – some of them most likely. And I was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary when I was in Northville, along with the American Legion. And Hugh in the Masonic Lodge. He went as far as the “chapter”, and he wanted to go on, but he was sick. And he got sick and died. So he never got any father than the “chapter”. And I was in Eastern Star and active in that for quite awhile. But I got too busy; I couldn't – you know, we'd go other places and put on the work, and – and a it took a lot of time...

Q: What about the funeral homes that were here then? You were – you certainly were involved with them if you prepared the floral arrangements.

MJ: Well, there was Schrader's to begin with.

Q: And where was that?

MJ: And then –

Q: Where was Schrader's?

MJ: They were on – on Dunlap Street.

GM: Center Street, mother.

MJ: Or I mean, Center Street. Why do I want to say Dunlap Street? They were on Center Street there where the old Post Office used to be. And...

Q: Is that for purpose of clarification – was that across from where Cloverdale Creamery, Dairy is now?

MJ: Em hem, yes – there is a new building built since then too.

Q: Yeah, and – and was that a forerunner, was that a relative of – then it became a furniture store, which is since closed. Was that related to the – wasn't that Schrader's, the furniture store that just closed?

MJ: Schrader's Furniture Store was there all through the years.

GM: Well, Mr. Schrader owned the whole business – the Schrader's Funeral as well as the ...

Q: Oh, that's where it got its name? Okay.

GM: Nelson Schrader – he – he was the one that had both.

MJ: Well then Casterline's, Ray Casterline, was ah – worked for him for years. Well then, he decided to go in for hisself. So that made Schrader's and Casterline's – there were two of them here.

Q: Two?

MJ: The last several years – not the first years.

GM: And then after Mr. Schrader died, his son, ????, took over, but then finally he decided to close the funeral – Schrader's funeral and a sold it, and it moved up to across from the old high school in that blue house that's now there (Ed. Note: Ebert's Funeral Home – corner of Main and West Streets). Then it was eventually phased out. They sold it and returned to the house it was – residential area. But to get back as a daughter of Mrs. Jones's and her business, we used to be interrupted at ten o'clock and eleven o'clock at night with people coming and knocking on the door and wanting flowers.

MJ: You know, my florist shop was right in the greenhouse, right back of my home, and a people came – and in those days, I would – I would go out when there were funerals – sometimes you'd get three and four funerals at one time the one weekend or something, and I would work night and day. I worked all night many times... and holidays – making corsages. And there – there's quite a thing developed into corsages for the holidays – Easter and Mother's Day and those things, and ...

GM: And added – tell them about the high school prom.

MJ: And then the proms – the dances – why they all had corsages.

GM: The boys would bring in pieces of the girls' dresses and want them to match.

Q: I think they've gone back to that.

GM: And I would have – I would give anyone \_ I would bet them that they could not find of 150 corsages two that looked alike. She always – it was always personalized and...

MJ: Tried to make them different, you know...

GM: And a – she worked very hard at doing that, and I think there are some boys right now who are gray haired men who remember her and what she would go through and do for them in things like that. That was – that was a ...

MJ: I had a – I had a very large – it was nothing to make one hundred corsages in one day. But it was a lotta work.

Q: Of course it was. It must have been.

MJ: And you'd have to work lots of nights, and on funerals or weddings – I've had as high as four or five weddings in one day. And even when I sold the business and a worked for Heidi's

there, I've had weddings, you know and did their wedding work too – a lot of it over there... in Plymouth. But to help them out. But it was a lotta work.

Q: Now in the beginning I gather that your husband built this greenhouse because he grew a lot of plants but...

MJ: It was a hobby... He started out – he was quite a hand to get books and read, and he gotta – into the flower business to that, and he decided he wanted to go into it in a small way as a hobby along with his other work. Well, the Depression came along, and of course, he built too big a greenhouse to have it as a hobby. And he used to grow the most gorgeous snaps (snapdragons), the heads of the flowers were that long. I've never seen any more beautiful ones since. And a – there were all the leading, big florists in Detroit always wanted his snaps. And we grew lovely stock, and we grew carnations. We didn't grow roses. And a – and then a lotta...

Q: You grew your own carnations, then?

MJ: Oh yes.

Q: Well now, the flowers that you made these corsages and wedding arrangements out of – you didn't grow all of those, did you?

MJ: Well, we had the – we had lots of times – we had a lotta our own carnations and certain things. No, we bought what we needed – we whole, some wholesale. And a...

GM: But you mostly wholesaled the things that you grew.

MJ: Oh, we wholesaled a lot of flowers because Northville wouldn't take it all unless we happened to have a lot of funeral work, you know, and things. And you know those things would come spotty. You'd have – didn't have one every day always in the small town, but when you did have, people sent a lot of flowers in those days. Now they don't do that so much anymore because they send other things – scarves, some money, memorial. And they don't have the pieces that they used to have. And a...

Q: They'd probably charge five times as much.

MJ: Oh, oh – yes. When I think of prices today, I have made arrangements and sent 'em out for \$3.00 and \$5.00 and things like that. Not for funeral they would say. Well, I've spent five and six dollars for these. I can remember way, way back and how- what a difference there is in flowers today (laughter).

Q: Yes, you can't touch funeral spray for under 25 or 30.

MJ: I know! And we thought we were getting – if we got a 25 or 50 dollar piece for a funeral, that was a lot! And made basket pieces. We – I used to make blankets, you know that covered the casket, of just roses; and I know I made those for \$50.00, and things like that. Remember – now those were many years ago (laughter). When I think I may be not about – I'll be 89 in December – it's hard to realize because I don't feel that old.

Q: Well you certainly don't look that old either. I was just sitting here looking at your eyes – you know, I pay attention to people's eyes. Somehow or other that shows their age to me. You have a young girl's eyes.

MJ: Well, well, I've been blessed by having good health through the years. And until 81, I had my first operation except childbirth with the girls, but two girls. But I've never been sick – oh, I've had colds, or I feel bad at times, but I kept on working. I never had to go to the hospital or anything. But until 81 in Florida, I had an attack – I guess it started out to be a gall bladder attack, and they started operating, and I had had – they found in my intestines...

GM: Mother, they don't want to hear about that...

MJ: No, you don't want to hear about that. But they found things wrong, and I had to very severe heart attacks. And I was in the hospital about two months... at my first and only time in the hospital, all my life.

GM: I think it's interesting too that I was born at home, you know, they – you didn't go to the hospital.

MJ: There wasn't a hospital.

Q: Were both your children born at home?

MJ: No, because Sessions Hospital started up right on Main Street, where the one is now – but it was different – it's been remodeled.

Q: Is that – isn't that where – where the nursing home is now?

MJ: Yes. And Mrs. Sessions was the nurse, and she – but the doctors – there was more – Dr. Holcomb and Dr. Snow were in it, and some of the doctors – they started that hospital. And so when Phyl – of course she's four and a half years younger than Gwen – why the hospital was there at the time. Much smaller, but it was a hospital, and so that she was born in there. But up until then, everybody, if they had to go to a hospital – a lot of them were had them at home at my first year at home.

Q: Now if you had to go to a hospital, where did you go from here?

MJ: Well Detroit... or Ann Arbor, there were no....

Q: There was nothing in Plymouth or...

MJ: No, no, and then they started that Grace Hospital in later years out this way, but that's her – who's born there?

GM: I think it was Phyl's...

MJ: Oh, it was Phyl's child – Phyl's first born. But no, there were no hospitals here at all at that time, and there were an awful lot of peo – there were, what we call practical nurses. What was

her name – Mrs. – she was a practical nurse that took care of Dr. – what was my doctor’s first name? He died... Dr. Dan, yes. What was his real name? Dr. Dan, everybody called him, but he was an older man, and he was killed in an accident going to a case or something, went off the road and he was killed. And Dr. Snow had just started in practicing. And he was in the office with him, and so he took over Dr. Dan’s place when he died. And then there was Dr. Holcomb, he came in and...

Q: Someone has told me about, I don’t know whether it’s Dr. – sounds like Dr. Hoot? Hoot? That was in – it wasn’t Holcomb – I’m sure she said a Dr. Hoot.

MJ: ... isn’t familiar to me.

Q: It isn’t familiar to you? Okay.

MJ: And let me see, what other doctor was here at that time?

GM: It’s funny – you’re talking about Pearl Stephens because remember her dad, Dr. – Mr...

MJ: Oh, they had a grocery store here – Stephens. Pearl...

GM: Pearl’s husband – that’s right, that was in our new – it was Pearl’s father-in-law.

MJ: Yes, Mr. Stephens had a grocery store.

Q: Where was that?

MJ: On Main Street... that was before Bogart’s

Q: Do you remember Carl in growing up and working in his father’s store?

MJ: Oh yes.

GM: Carl is my age... I can remember Mr. Stephens. He always wore a hat and white apron – always, and he was always giving meat to various... Another person that I can remember, and I’m sure you do too, mother, is Mr. Pickard...

MJ: Pickard – yes he had a meat market here.

GM: Over – right next door to...

SIDE A ENDS

MJ: ... a type of shoe store for years just where Spagnuolo’s are now.

Q: Men’s and women’s shoes?

MJ: Yes, uh huh... a regular shoe store. That was the only shoe store in town at that time. And they had been here for years, until they got too old to continue.

Q: Okay, we've covered – what about hardware stores – no we've covered churches and meat markets and grocery stores – there must have been hardware stores – was Black's here then?

GM: It was Huff's on the corner where the, where The Record Office is, and – what is that – a bank or something right there – a credit union... That's was the old Huff's hardware.

MJ: Yes, that was the hardware store... there... above where the beauty parlor is – that Main corner building... it was there for years.

GM: The newspaper was across the street – only it was in a different building. That burned down too, didn't it mother, where they built...

MJ: Well, I think the old hotel used to be a – where there isn't anything there – Ambler's. Next to that was the, the – a doctor's office. And there was a barber shop in there at one time too.

Q: What – where was the Northville Record? Was it the Northville Record back then – the paper – was there one published here, when you came here – do you remember?

GM: That was, mom remember, that was across the street. Mr. Neal, remember... it was across the street from Schrader's where the – what's in there now – a real estate office or a (MJ: a beauty shop). No, it was next door to the – because Mr. Blake had the jewelry store. Remember Blake, the two Blakes, where the Sweets and Treats store is now. That was a jewelry store all the time that I was growing up in Northville.

MJ: Well, there's been so many changes...it's hard to...

Q: Well, that's why we're trying to – trying to record how it used to be then because we know what it's like now.

MJ: These are the old timers that I'm thinking of, you know, with the Stark Brothers. They're the old timers that were here for years.

GM: And Mr. Neal, who owned the Record, that his home is now the Legion (MJ: building) building – only was turned the other way.

Q: On South Main?

GM: Pardon?

Q: Isn't that the American Legion Hall on South Main..?

GM: No, that's the V.F.W. (MJ: Yes) The American Legion is right there on the corner of Dunlap and Center Street.

MJ: Next to Casterline's, you know.

Q: Oh... oh yes.

GM: And that house was turned the other way, and it went the long way along Center Street. And then there was another house, Shafer's. Mr. Shafer owned the bar downtown, where – where the photo place is now (Ed. Anne's curtains) And a – so there have been a lot of changes downtown.

Q: Oh, what about a – other people have told me – you haven't mentioned the fair. What can you tell me about the fairgrounds? Did you ever have time to go there?

MJ: Oh yes (laughter).

Q: What month was that?

MJ: When it first opened, we used to go a lot for a pastime, and I planted flowers where – you know, I had someone working for me. But I – we'd put out the flower beds, and when they gave the bouquets, why they'd present them. Orlow Owen was in charge.

GM: You're talking about the race track now. You're talking when they changed the old fair into the race track.

MJ: Oh yes, that's right. I'm talking about the race track. No, we used to have a booth every year there, when we were in the electrical business. And all the businesses would have booths as well as farmers having their – the products and everything. They had a building there that they had every business person in town nearly had a display of some kind in this building at the beginning of the fairgrounds. And they had horse races, harness racing, and the grandstand was there. They built that. And that was the beginning of the race track. I remember that.

Q: Em hem. How long can you remember when it changed from a fairground to a race track? Were you still in business then, or was this after you moved to Florida?

MJ: Yes, I was still in business when – when they changed. And I used to do all their flowers. That's what I'm – the other race track didn't have flowers. They used to have a horse show every year – the riders from Grosse Pointe and Detroit came out and had a horse show every summer there – a horse show. (GM: and Fall.) And Evelyn Grennan had horses and always did. And Catherine Marburger, sister. And they had these horse shows, where they did their jumping and a...

GM: the Briggs daughters. Mr. Briggs uh, owned the Tiger Stadium...

MJ: I can't remember who started that – the horse show, but there was the horse people in Detroit who started it.

GM: it was during the fair time, and part of the infield was a big horse show, and it was very prestigious one at that time. People with their horses and what not always...

MJ: All these – all these people in Detroit – what were some of their names?

GM: The Briggs and a ...

MJ: They had horses out here and (GM: The Wilsons), and they were really the ones that started it...

GM: Then they would have a – they had a stage in the middle, which was for the free acts, they called it. People would pay to go on the grandstand, and they would have circus people type things – high trapeze, the clowns, the...

Q: Was that in conjunction with the fair or the racing? The fair.

GM: That was in conjunction...

MJ: Not always, not always.

GM: Yes it was mother. It was always in conjunction with the fair. And then they also had over on the other part of the infield, they had a baseball diamond. And they would have a – baseball; so you could go up and sit in the grandstand – this was during the fair – and sit in the grandstand, and at certain times, they would have races, the harness races would take place. But some of the harness races could be going on – they would be going on at the same time as the horse show. So it was like sitting and watching a three-ring circus. And then at certain times of the afternoon and evening too, they would have these free acts, they were called, on the stage. And they were, as I said, circus people who did oh like the trampoline then, like a circus act would be. And then at night, they would also have the same thing going on at night. And then at the end of that, there would be fireworks every night.

MJ: But they did have a horse show separately from the fair, and they sold boxes around the horse show place.

GM: it was the same horse show, mom. Okay, we're disagreeing....

MJ: ... They had this horse show every year.

GM: ... I know, that was during the fair. Yes it was...

MJ: It was separate.

Q: Perhaps someone else can...

MJ: Because it was the horse, big horse people, the wealthy people in Detroit that came out and started that.

GM: I'll prove it to you (Laughter). She is not remembering correctly, but that's the only horse show we had out there.

MJ: Well, I know I used to buy a box for it.

GM: That was it – fairgrounds.

Q: The Northville Record office – you still didn't tell me where it was – it was. Oh yes, down the street. It was on Center. Yeah.

GM: Across from Schrader's... Ah, the – let's see – there's a little alley that goes between the jewelry store – you know the building that the jewelry store is on Center – there's a little alley – then that building right next to it.

Q: Okay.

GM: ... Who? I don't remember who's in it now.

Q: Now you've written quite a few things down there... you want to refresh you – do you want to read some of it to....

MJ: Well, it's more notations – I think I've covered it mostly. Oh, I told you I – I was 69 when I moved to Florida. Now, I'm 89...

GM: Well, you've been gone from here.

Q: Have you been coming back every summer?

MJ: Yes, yes – I don't think I missed a summer, did I? Coming back? I don't think so. I've stayed different times. This year I'm staying a little later than usual, and I came a little later. But it's been awfully hot down there.

Q: Well, here too.

MJ: And a...

GM: She didn't get out of the heat coming north.

MJ: No, and I didn't get – and then it turned so cold here too. I've noticed the cold, but it's been coming back each year, and some of my friends, May Babbitt and Florence Schoultz, they used to come down and stay a few months with me in the wintertime 'cause I was living alone. And a –

Q: Do you still live alone?

MJ: Yes, my daughter and her husband is there with me in the last two years – two or three years. They sold their place, and a – they felt I shouldn't be alone.

Q: For the purposes of clarification, what is that daughter's name. You told me it was Phyllis, or Phyl you call her. What's her last name?

MJ: Lininger.

Q: Lininger?

MJ: Yes. L... I... N... I ... N... G... E... R, and I had two grandchildren, or she did, and I have – Gwen had the three, so I have five grandchildren.

Q: Great – grandchildren – no grandchildren.

MJ: No, they're grandchildren and I have the one granddaughter – she married a Presbyterian minister, and she's in Maryland, and she has three children – two boys and a girl. And the other son of my daughter's down in Florida hasn't any children. And then up here, of course, Gwen had three – two boys and a girl. Mary Jo – she's the band director.

GM: You have six great grandchildren. (MJ: Huh?) You have six great grandchildren.

MJ: And Mary Jo – her daughter is the band director of Redford Union. She's been in music. She graduated the University of Michigan, and then had two years getting Master's and other things at the Colorado University.

Q: Now, so to make sure we don't miss anything, I would like you to try, if you can, to visualize Northville probably when you first opened your business because before that you probably didn't get around as much. Ah, where was the train station, for instance.

MJ: It was – down at the depot, the train came in and stopped...

Q: Where was it though? Because we don't have one now, so...

MJ: Did they tear it down?

GM: Uh huh, it's above the springs.

MJ: It's above the springs – where you know the spring where all the (Q: yes.)... well, it's up there – right in back of that. (Q: In back of that?) Uh huh, ... building, and the train came in and – quite a few trains and stopped, and they had a regular run of trains.

Q: Did you have a bus service into Northville then? You had the interurban...

MJ: The interurban – no buses at that time. Later – in years.

Q: Later you had bus service?

MJ: Yeah, uh huh, but at that time there was just the interurban and the train.

Q: Where did the interurban come to?

MJ: Right up – right up to the Main Center of Northville.

Q: What street though?

MJ: Main Street and North Center. Right where I said the old bandstand used to be.

Q: yes, uh huh.

MJ: Yes.

GM: What was fun to see was the conductor of the or the motor man get out of the car and he had this big long thing and he would attach it onto these things, and he would walk around and

turn it around and I watched that many times. Another thing, mother, that you didn't mention, across from the spring there was the old Globe Factory, (MJ: Yes.) where they made church furniture. (MJ: Yes.) It was a big place.

MJ: There was a Globe Factory. Did you have of that down?

Q: No one has mentioned that.

MJ: No, there was a Globe Factory... that was along where...

GM: Well, where they have made the curve – you see there didn't used to be that big sweeping curve from the Ford Plant around. It went over the bridge. It turned where they have that little... Well it's where their parking lot is now, there was a ...

Q: Where the Water Wheel Car Wash and things now?

GM: Yes, yes...

MJ: It was on the other side where the gas station is on the corner, you know, where...

Q: It's still there?

GM: Beside it. And there was also the big plant that's still there – it is Bellinger's, I think now – where they made airplanes – Eddie Stinson's airplanes.

MJ: Eddie Stinson made airplanes there.

GM: And I can remember they used to take the airplanes without the wings on and cart it through town and out to the airport – the little airport on Ponsfords' farm, which is the corner of Beck and Six Mile. Beck and Six Mile is where it was.

MJ: And that was all factories right in there.

Q: Okay, now tell me about the Globe Factory – you said was Globe, the name of the factory, but they didn't make globes. They made...

MJ: No, they made furniture (Q: Furniture) – wonderful furniture.

GM: In fact, most of it was church furniture, mother, like the church benches and things. A lot of the churches around here will have the Globe name underneath the ones – the very old benches...

Q: Someone was telling me about the aircraft factory, but no one has mentioned the church furniture place.

MJ: Oh, the Globe – that was the first – the main one for years.

GM: In fact, that – I was either a junior or senior in high school, it must have been '37 or '38 around in there when that burned, the Globe, you could see it all the way to Detroit. It was just huge.

MJ: It was one of the main things in Northville when I first came here.

Q: Was Ford's there back then?

MJ: No, Ford's came later.

GM: No mother, Ford's was there.

MJ: When I first came to Northville?

GM: Yes, because Mr. Marburger – they all lived right there, you know, he was... In fact...

MJ: They came later. That – Ford's was not there when I first came... I don't think so.

GM: I've got some proof... a picture of the old Ford plant because Irv came when he was four years old. He is three years older than I am. So it must have been maybe the year before... my senior... or something.

MJ: Well, you were thirteen years old, Gwen. I lived here – I lived ... well, I came in '21, or I mean '19 – '18...

Q: Well, you didn't have that many cars then... cars had been invented, but you didn't have...

MJ: Oh no, we didn't have a car – my husband had a motorcycle to begin with to go back and forth to work. And a, there were only a few – a very few cars in Northville. I don't believe hardly anybody had a car when I first came here – well, they began to have cars right then.

Q: Were the streets paved?

MJ: Oh no. No, I remember when they began paving in downtown, but I don't remember the year.

Q: Now we're talking about the Ford Plant. What about the – what branch of the Rouge River that runs behind the Ford Plant – what...

GM: Well, it – it runs into the mill pond. You mean that river? Well, okay. There were little dams along where the, the water was held in little pools. It wasn't a big thing, and then it kept running into or out of – I don't know which it is – the mill pond there. And a all the kids in town used to hunt frogs, do all kinds of things. In the wintertime we skated on the mill pond. Ah, in fact the City used to clean it off at times. But then somebody got careless, and one of the scrapers went through the ice, and so they decided it was not safe to skate on.

Q: Someone else told me, and this is hard for me to visualize because there must have been buildings there, and I don't know. I wonder if you remember. She said that they used to in the

wintertime...um...be able to sled, ride a sled from where the school is now all the way down to the race track.

GM: Oh yes, we used to get up where the Allen Terrace is now – it was Eastlawn Sanatorium at that point – and you'd station somebody at every corner because there weren't that many cars. People usually only had one car, and the father was off to work in, and so there were never many cars in town at certain times. And we would start there, and we'd go east and across Randolph.

Q: Now, was this on Sheldon, or on Center itself that you...

GM: ... and we'd come down East Street, right from there. East Street would cross – you'd come down that high hill and get enough going so that you'd get up onto – what's the road there – which one is it – West Street, or I don't know which one (Ed: High Street) that goes onto Main Street. But it's the one that comes down East Street, and it crosses Randolph, and it goes across Dunlap, and ends at Main Street, probably where the Town Hall is now. And you'd make that turn and go on down to the race track that way. And so that would be done with loads of fun – you'd get going on it. Also the churches always had during the Christmas time bobsledding, and you'd either do it behind cars some of the time or horses. And we'd go up – this was before Beck Road was paved and all those – you know – all the roads were paved, and we had great fun every winter – the churches with big hay rides and sleds. So there was an awful lot going on in town....

MJ: Well of course, when I was – people began to have cars, you know, they were all battery run. So in the winter, they had their cars put up, take the batteries out, and their cars they couldn't drive them in the winter. Freezing weather, you know, when it got to be freezing, and it seemed in those old days, we used to have a lot of snow every winter. And there'd be bobsleds and things like that around, but they couldn't drive their cars.

Q: Well, what mode of transportation did you use when you couldn't drive your car in the winter – way back when?

MJ: Well, horses and buggies – some people did.

Q: Did you have a horse? Did you have a horse?

MJ: No, no, but some people did. I don't know. Those that had to – I don't know – in those days, they went, if they had to go to work someplace, they went on the interurban, like if they worked in Detroit or worked down, they had to go on the interurban – or places like that. If there was snow, they couldn't drive their cars, and then finally, they got to where, when everybody began driving cars, they would keep the road clean, you know, so they could drive. But there for a long time, they – the cars had batteries in them, and they had to put the batteries out. They'd freeze, you know. They couldn't drive the cars in the winter.

GM: Do you recognize this house?

Q: Now, Mrs. Jones, can you think of anything else now that you think we should record for posterity that no one else...

MJ: ... I don't believe that I can think of anything right now that we haven't dwelt on – that go way back.

Q: You touched upon I think all the businesses, haven't we? (MJ: Uh, huh.) The stores and the funeral homes and the theaters and –

MJ: And those names of the stores were people that lived here for a long time. And of course Northville at that time was small, you know. It was small.

Q: By most standards, it's still considered small.

MJ: Oh yes. You know, you know what all of the way it's built up around, one thing we're very fortunate – there are lovely homes and condominiums – they're all nice. Nothing cheap, you know, and shoddy. No subdivisions that are really cheap and shoddy that they allowed to be built around. That's what makes Northville so nice, I think. It's all – the small – the town itself still has its small atmosphere, I think.

Q: Yes, I do too – I like it here.

MJ: And a – but, you see, it's being surrounded with subdivisions and shopping - small shopping centers and things like that. And it's grown in a lot of ways, but it's still a small town when you get right down to it.

Q: Okay, I want to thank you very, very much – I appreciate all of your...

MJ: Well, I hope I have helped a little bit. I certainly did.

TAPE ENDS.