

Barbara Murray Oral History Interview, 06/17/2008
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note and Abstract:

Barbara C. Murray was born on May 13, 1919 in Hartford, CT, the daughter of David Murphy and Lucy Edelmann Murphy. She moved to South Windsor, CT in 1932 when she was 13. She was married to Robert Murray on 4/2/1942, with whom she owned a farm on North King Street in South Windsor. Together they raised three children: Robert L. Murray, Jr., James D. Murray, and Susan L. Murray. She had a long career working outside the home, in various departments at South Windsor Town Hall and also as an office manager for Parker X-Ray in East Hartford. Barbara also had many civic minded interests, especially connected with the South Windsor Democratic Party. She was the first woman elected to the South Windsor Town Council and the Zoning Board of Appeals, and later worked at Town Hall and served as a Justice of the Peace. Barbara Murray passed away on December 17, 2014.

In this interview, Barbara Murray shared many, many recollections of people, places and events in and around the South Windsor community. She elaborates on several facets of the farming life.

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Barbara C. Murray
Oral History Interview
June 17, 2008
Interviewed by Virginia Macro

MACRO: This is an interview with Barbara Murray, as part of the Wood Memorial Library Oral History Project conducted by Virginia Macro. Today is Friday, June 17 2008, and we are meeting in the kitchen of Mrs. Murray's home at 712 North King Street. I want to thank you very much for agreeing to do this.

MURRAY: I hope I can satisfy—

MACRO: I'm sure what you have to say is going to be very interesting. Let's start with when and where you were born.

MURRAY: I was born in Hartford Hospital on May 13, 1919.

MACRO: Was your family living in South Windsor?

MURRAY: Oh, no, no. We were Hartford people; we were city people. At that time they were living in Bristol, because I can always remember my mother saying that we were in Bristol when I was young.

MACRO: When did you move to South Windsor?

MURRAY: Oh, when I was just a thirteen-year-old girl, my family moved here. I lived at the house on the corner. Then my husband, of course, he was born here, in this very house, and his mother was born here also. They've been here since 1870.

MACRO: Really!

MURRAY: One family—1870—they came here.

MACRO: Wow! So you went to school here with—

MURRAY: No, I went to Hartford; I went to a Catholic school in Hartford.

MACRO: Ah, and so you commuted.

MURRAY: Yes. My mother worked in Hartford; we went in each day in the car.

MACRO: In the car. Was the...

MURRAY: The bus was running, but it was cheaper for us to travel by car.

MACRO: Ah, yes—gasoline—

MURRAY: Yes, than having us all jump on the bus!

MACRO: Ah, I see, I see. Your life was more oriented towards Hartford, when you were a young person.

MURRAY: That's correct, that's correct. I never experienced my early years here—I was thirteen when I moved here, but I didn't really belong to the town, because I still went in to Hartford for schooling.

MACRO: Did you have a group of friends in South Windsor?

MURRAY: Yes, I had neighbors. I had Barbara Pierce—Barbara Reardon Pierce—across the street. I had Margaret McNamara that used to live down the street, and I had Myrtle Reardon Odlum across the street.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: So I always had girlfriends and ladies around me that I knew.

MACRO: Did you belong to any groups in South Windsor and—?

MURRAY: No, I didn't. I went to the church—when our church was established—that was just about the time we were married—I went to the first mass out there, which is well over fifty years ago.

MACRO: Which church was that?

MURRAY: St. Francis of Assisi. I went to the first mass there. I was a bride by then.

MACRO: When were you married?

MURRAY: Pardon me?

MACRO: When were you married?

MURRAY: I was married April 22, 1942 at St. Luke's Church in Hartford.

MACRO: Forty-two. Did you move to this house then, or—?

MURRAY: No, no. I stayed here in South Windsor until I was seventeen, then we moved back to Hartford. I moved back here as a bride and my husband's parents and the hired help lived here too.

MACRO: Oh, wow!

MURRAY: I had this side of the house and my in-laws had the other. So it was a different life for me. This farm—this is really farm land—horses, cows, and pigs—they had it all here when I came.

MACRO: Did they grow crops? Did they—?

MURRAY: Oh, tobacco.

MACRO: Oh, he did—

MURRAY: They were tobacco farmers; that's what we were—but not today of course. Tobacco farming has died out. The first year I lived here—or the second—we couldn't get the help we needed because the war was on. My husband needed somebody—I don't know if you understand tobacco—but you have to drop each plant. And he had no one to do it; so I offered it one day, and they didn't think I could do it—I did twenty-one acres!

MACRO: Oh, my heavens!

MURRAY: With horses first, and then after the horses, we had a tractor. The horses were awful. The smell of the horses—and we were down there dropping—the click of the machines—you put the plant in. I survived it; it didn't kill me.

MACRO: Oh, did you do that for long?

MURRAY: No, I did that until we could get help. I did it, I think, two years.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I had children, too, at the time.

MACRO: Oh, my goodness.

MURRAY: Yes. I always went out at harvest time, though, and helped the crew hand tobacco. I always did that during harvest time; I always helped.

MACRO: So this was seed tobacco?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. Broadleaf.

MACRO: Right, Broadleaf.

MURRAY: Broadleaf tobacco. Then we had—as I say—we had chickens and we had horses and cows. We used to make our own milk here; my children were raised on raw milk.

MACRO: Oh, my goodness!

MURRAY: Now, when they were really small, the pediatrician told me to cook it, which I did. I put in a thermometer, and it would tell me what heat to leave it at. That's only when they were small, but once they got a little bit bigger, I gave them the raw milk. I didn't worry, because no one handled the cows but my husband.

MACRO: Did they, as adults—could they tell the difference between raw milk and—?

MURRAY: I never could; and I was a city girl.

MACRO: Really.

MURRAY: I still drink milk; and I drink skim milk now. The others like heavy creams, but when you get used to skimmed milk, it's most unusual to go back.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: If I'm some place where I'm stuck with it, I'll take it; but it's like heavy cream.

MACRO: Yes, I know, I know.

MURRAY: I've always enjoyed milk. ...We would eat a lot of puddings when they were children. I always made a lot of pudding, and they always got their milk into them. They drank it too. I never had a problem in that way. They always enjoyed their milk. I just met somebody recently and he came over to me in the store, and he said, "Do you remember me, Mrs. Murray?" And I looked at him, and I said, "No." He was a tall man; he says, "You used to give me milk at noon with my lunch." I used to keep it in the refrigerator, have it cold, and when they came, I'd go out with glasses and fill them all for the kids that were handing tobacco; and he never forgot it. It was unbelievable, the way he came over to me. I couldn't remember him, but he could remember me.

MACRO: Well, were the animals that you had for your own use or—?

MURRAY: The only thing we had for our own use was one miserable goat named Abigail. I had him for the children! He was miserable! Couldn't do a thing; all he did was eat flowers. I got him because I thought he'd eat the grass. He didn't eat the grass; all he ate was flowers! Yes. We finally took him out to a farm [inaudible]. We always had dogs—always had dogs and cats, always.

MACRO: But I mean, were the cows for livestock—?

MURRAY: Well, we always had a beeper. We always had one for our own use, and we'd have it slaughtered and made into packaged meat; and that's how we had it. I also did a lot of canning—a tremendous amount of canning.

MACRO: So you had a big vegetable garden?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. I had string beans and tomatoes. They were always good. I tried to make a little corn, but I never could quite hit corn right. I'd make succotash; I still love it. I made that and froze it, and then I could have it in the winter time. Of course, at my age now, I don't do much of that today.

MACRO: No. No. How much land did you have?

MURRAY: We had about—well, we owned, at the time—before the bridge went through our property—I think we had about 76 acres.

MACRO: Oh.

MURRAY: And a lot of it is meadowland, down the meadow.

MACRO: Oh, I see.

MURRAY: A lot of it's wasteland, like out in back here, around the place, but we used to grow just 21 acres, that's about all we could handle with the tobacco.

MACRO: Of tobacco.

MURRAY: Yes, twenty-one acres of tobacco.

MACRO: Was it financially successful—the tobacco'?

MURRAY: No, no it never was. You never got rich on tobacco, believe me. Because what happened, which happens a lot. I was thinking about one day when the children were small. I'd packed them up, put them in the car, and I'd gone down to visit my mother in Wethersfield. It was a beautiful sunny day, and when I came home, my mother-in-law was standing in the driveway, wringing her hands. I said, "Well, what's the matter?" Well, a dark cloud had come over, no storm; just a dark cloud came over, and down came the hail—every piece of land that we owned—it hit the land, and wiped out the entire crop for that year.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: It was unbelievable.

MACRO: It's a very fragile crop.

MURRAY: It's unbelievable!

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: And all just torn to shreds.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I mean to think that it would hit, and not everybody got hit like that up here. Just where ever that cloud was, it just seemed to pick out the places where we raised tobacco.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: It was a very hard year.

MACRO: Yes, but that was what you're income was based on—the tobacco—

MURRAY: Oh, definitely, and you've got your fertilizer with the promise that you'd pay them after the crop was delivered, and the grocer- God love Peter Bossen- I don't know if you ever knew him—but he was a wonderful man, wonderful, wonderful man. We'd pay Mr. Bossen, and all of our bills, at the end of the year when the crop was delivered to the buyer. I remember my father-in-law running up to Mr. Bossen (on Main St.) to tell him that we couldn't pay him that year because we had lost the crop. His response was, "Jim, I know that when you have it, I'll have it." And he never stopped giving us groceries. He was a wonderful man. Yes, he really was. That's how I feel about the Newberrys too. Harold Newberry, the insurance man- I still trade with his great grandson to this day, because, in those days, when you didn't have it, they were good to you. They kept the coverage on your house and your property, and they waited for their money, which was pretty nice.

MACRO: It must have been true throughout the community.

MURRAY: Oh, I think so, absolutely. Yes.

MACRO: Isn't that amazing.

MURRAY: Yes, I know. I appreciated what people did for us.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I won't forget it.

MACRO: No, no. Did you ever get involved in the financial arrangement of the crops and any of those—?

MURRAY: No, no. My husband handled all of that. I managed the household, but as far as the whole, overall production—No, I never have.

MACRO: No. People would come in to buy the crop?

MURRAY: Yes, there was always a buyer that came after the harvest or while we were sorting. See, a lot of the people sorted their own tobacco. My husband did, and we used to have a shed that was over in the field over there. One bad storm took the shed and all of the tobacco in it and everything.

MACRO: Oh, wow!

MURRAY: In that shed was our sorting cellar and that killed the sorting house. We had to use the neighbor's one as they weren't using it at the time. That's how we sorted our own tobacco, and we did our own packaging, big bundles of it. Then they'd come around, take it out and open it up to see what it looked like. That's when they'd offer you a price. We never got rich on it, though, believe me. Other people got rich on it, but we didn't get rich on it. It's like the poor farmer today. The middleman or somebody's making the money on the fruit they're selling. It isn't the poor farmer, believe me. No.

MACRO: Did you get involved in other activities in the town?

MURRAY: Yes, I was a very active Democrat!

MACRO: Ah-ha!

MURRAY: I was the first woman ever elected to the council in South Windsor.

MACRO: Really!

MURRAY: I broke the ice for the ladies. I won't say I was very effective, but I at least was the first woman ever elected, voted into office for the council of the town of South Windsor—the first one.

MACRO: Well, that's quite an accomplishment!

MURRAY: The second is I was the first woman ever appointed for the Zoning Board of Appeals. I did that for almost twenty-five years, I think. Also, I was a justice of the peace.

MACRO: Wow!

MURRAY: So I was very active!

MACRO: You were very active. Were you in the Democratic Town Committee?

MURRAY: Oh, yes, yes. Right from the beginning! Oh, yes.

MACRO: Were you involved in any Democratic politics outside of South Windsor?

MURRAY: Oh, no—never! No, just in town. My husband always was a civic-minded man. He was on the school board and many other boards for over 20 years. He was elected to the Board of Selectmen, and was also on the Board of Tax Review. He was a member of various farm organizations, like the USDA-Tobacco Advisory Committee. Both of us always gave service to the town—always. I just got through with it when I was seventy five—that's when I resigned from all the boards!

MACRO: Oh, wow!

MURRAY: They gave me a cup and something else. Oh, I had quite a testimonial too.

MACRO: Oh, wonderful!

MURRAY: Yes. I have all those plaques in there, all framed from this one and the others.

MACRO: Wonderful!

MURRAY: Everybody was at my testimonial but the governor, John Rowland at the time. It seemed that every living person in the state was there!

MACRO: Really, everyone?

MURRAY: Yes. I was dumbfounded!

MACRO: Isn't that wonderful!

MURRAY: Oh, it was a wonderful night.

MACRO: How did you go about getting elected? How did that—?

MURRAY: I went door to door and shook a lot of hands!

MACRO: Throughout the town?

MURRAY: Yes, and a lot of people knew me, anyhow, on the main streets then, but Jim Thrope and I went around together.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Poor Jim. I don't know if you know Jim or not, but I'd pick him up and off we'd go. He barely got home from his office and I'd be up there to get him, and we went from house to house together.

MACRO: What year was this?

MURRAY: I'm sorry; I can't think of the year. It's all in the town records, anyhow.

MACRO: Yes, I'm sure it is. How did people respond when you went door-to-door? Were they—?

MURRAY: They were very nice because a lot of them knew me. The town wasn't as big as it is now.

MACRO: Right.

MURRAY: You must remember, it was a farming community, a small, lovely town—it was a wonderful town. But no, they were all very civil and very pleasant to me. I never had a problem. No, I never did.

MACRO: Did you find that the reaction to you being a woman running for office -was that

MURRAY: Well, no. I didn't get any notice of that at all, really. To think I actually ran, as a woman, is the biggest surprise.

MACRO: —that you got elected.

MURRAY: Yes—a woman on the town council.

MACRO: How was it on the town council itself, when you were talking about things? Were you—?

MURRAY: Oh, well—the sad thing is I sat there with very eloquent men.

MACRO: Hmm...

MURRAY: I felt very small, and they were so brilliant in their speech...Jim Throwe and Jack Egan. I can't think of the rest of them now, but it was quite a night to sit there with those two and their thirty-five cent words.

MACRO: Did you find it difficult to speak up?

MURRAY: I was a little more shy than anything.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I think I was more shy, because being the first woman with all these men—eight men and myself.

MACRO: Yes. Oh, I completely understand.

MURRAY: Jim and I would ride to the meetings together. I'd bend his ear all the way over to the meeting; and he'd get there and he'd have to talk a while instead of me. He told everybody that one night at a party. That's the way it went, anyhow. I always enjoyed it. I truly enjoyed all the time in the party. I enjoyed the work that went with it. I just liked politics; I just enjoyed it.

MACRO: Yes. You found it interesting.

MURRAY: Yes, I did.

MACRO: You found it difficult to speak up so that—

MURRAY: Because I wasn't that eloquent as these men were. One was a lawyer and the other was a school teacher. I think that's what held me back.

MACRO: Did your ideas get out there?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. I was a firm believer that it was time to cut back on spending. If it wasn't needed we didn't need to purchase it. I know when it came time for the vote; I didn't always vote with all of them; I spoke my mind. After a meeting was over, somebody said, "I never saw a Democrat that didn't want to spend money. You're the first one." I said, "I believe if you can only afford a Ford, you don't buy a Cadillac." Yes, indeed—I believe that today.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I believe that today. For example, I think this business of the turf on the grounds for the children is unnecessary. Why can't the parents of these children get together on a Saturday and a Sunday and plant the grass seed? Do whatever they have to do. As I said, I think that there are more important things that need to be dealt with like the sewer business up here on Main Street. Something like this should be the first priority, far more important than putting turf on the playing field.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Yes, I know. That's quite a controversy right now. Oh, yes. I can see Eddie Havens' point when he said, "There are things that are far more important at this moment in town." You know they talk about the millions like they were dollar bills.

MACRO: I know.

MURRAY: Four million for this and six million for that. Who's going to pay for all this? I'm at the end of my rope. But the other people who are living here; I don't know how they're going to do it, I really don't.

MACRO: No, it is becoming very expensive.

MURRAY: Oh, it's terrible. They seem to start all these things, and never seem to finish them. They've been talking about the post office now for about three or four

years; it should have been finished. The engineering department should be out of that big building. I worked on that too. I had quite a bit of publicity on the town hall when it was being built.

MACRO: Oh! How many years were you on the town council?

MURRAY: Oh, I was on only one term, but it was the ZBA (Zoning Board of Appeals), that I loved and was on a long time. I loved the ZBA. No, the town council -one term was enough for me. And the paper work - what do those people do with all the paper work?

MACRO: I know.

MURRAY: Where do they put it? ...the ZBA—I used to have tons of...

MACRO: Yes, I know they print all of the reports—

MURRAY: Awful! Then if a word is wrong, they have to print it up again. I'd do things differently.

MACRO: What was the social atmosphere in South Windsor? As you've been in here—

MURRAY: Oh, well, we had our own little group of friends. We always went to each other's house when it was an anniversary time or something like that, or out to church—we had a lot of things going on at church. It was never hoop-di-do all the time here, you know. You didn't have the time nor the money.

MACRO: No, no. In terms of kind of the social structure of the town, did you see that there were any differences or divisions between Main Street and the other side of town or the religion or [Inaudible]—?

MURRAY: There was a kind of division. We were South Windsor, and from Five Corners up, it was Wapping. Now we're all one town-South Windsor. You know Wapping is a nice part of the town, but it was all nice. That was like East Hartford was. They used to call a section of it Burnside, and it was just Burnside Avenue. Somehow. They started calling it Burnside, and it stuck—until the post office come in and changed all that. Now you never hear of it. It's just Burnside Avenue.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I remember as a child, my mother would take me out strawberry picking, and it would be over in East Hartford. She'd say, "We're going over to Burnside today." That was a part all by itself; it wasn't East Hartford - Burnside. So we'd go over and pick strawberries, hoping there'd be places to pick them: and we'd pick them.

MACRO: Were there any other sense of separation—except for geographically—was religion, country of origin, ...

MURRAY: Well, let me see. Wapping- I don't know if I should say it, though- I think Wapping was more on the Republican side; I should say that. I don't know if it's true or not, but we Democrats seemed to have to work harder up there so they'd get to know us.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: What was the other thing you said?

MACRO: Were there any other distinctions based on religion or the countries of origin that you know—

MURRAY: Yes I know—nationalities.

MACRO: Nationalities?

MURRAY: Well, no. I can't say I ever noticed anything. We always got along with everybody. My husband and his mother, of course, were both born in this house. They were here before most of the rest. Judge Grant used to come down - you knew about Judge Grant -he lived up by you. Judge Grant, when he wanted to know who belonged to whom, he came down to this house to ask Robert's mother, "Does Jane belong to Joe or Issac, or does she belong to Thomas and Marie?" Mother Murray would tell them who they belonged to.

MACRO: Isn't that amazing!

MURRAY: In those days you could. They knew everybody.

MACRO; Yes.

MURRAY: It was wonderful—it was wonderful. They lived a different life than we do today.

MACRO: Yes. Was that to help with his work as a judge?

MURRAY: Oh, yes! He'd come down and ask her to know exactly who was whom.

MACRO: Isn't that amazing!

MURRAY: It was. Yes -because she had a wonderful memory- a very bright woman. She'd read, read, read all the time by candle light. I said to her one day, "What do you think is the greatest invention? What do you think is the most wonderful thing that happened during your life time?" She said, "Electricity." She'd just sit and read - she loved to read. My husband was a great reader too.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: - a great reader. She always said that electricity was her greatest joy in life.

MACRO: Wonderful.

MURRAY: Yes. See, we don't appreciate many of these things.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: You said when you first were here living in this house—

MURRAY: Yes, as a young bride

MACRO: - with all the farming going on.

MURRAY: Oh, yes. That's all they did.

MACRO: Right. You first used horses and then—?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. We had plow horses - not riders - plow horses. There were things that you had to be very careful of, because you had to be careful what they ate, and where they were. A horse could get into something. I know poor Tom next door lost several of his horses because of the salt from the snow storms.

MACRO: Oh, really. Yeah, they were putting salt on the roads?

MURRAY: Yes, on the snow. I don't know what kind they used. That's what I heard at the time - his horses - he lost two or three of them. You had to be careful with horses. They might have colic or a belly ache. You had to be very careful with horses. They were so valuable at the time, good horses-

MACRO: For the farm?

MURRAY: Yes, it was hard. You had to have a good horse, as you can understand. We had two beautiful horses here when I came. Then we got the tractor.

MACRO: Did that, I assume, made things a lot easier?

MURRAY: Well, yes it did. Robert (my husband) used to say he got a bride as well as a new tractor. I think the tractor's been here almost as long as I have!

MACRO: He hired young people?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. We always had a roomer here. We always had people that lived here year-round, that we fed and kept on the other side of the house. We had one Russian man, Harry Romanoff. He was here many years with us, and he had his Bible with him. He read his Bible at night. He was with us a long time. We used to have an old codger, and he was an Irishman. And he'd only come for the season of tobacco, and he'd stay the whole season and he'd sleep out in the wood shed. We fed him and kept him, and at the end of the harvest, he'd be gone. You wouldn't see him until the next spring. He came year after year after year.

MACRO: You don't know where he went?

MURRAY: No, no. He had the way of life that he enjoyed. They didn't belong to anybody and did as they wished. Harry liked living here and all, with the children, so he stayed all year-round. He was full-time, he'd tend the horses and Robert did the cows. He'd tend the horses and do other chores that had to be done. There were a lot of chores that had to be done, with the chickens and everything.

MACRO: Did you pay him in addition . . . his room and board?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. He got paid plus his room and board.

MACRO: Really?

MURRAY: Absolutely.

MACRO: That's wonderful. Did you ever hire local teenagers?

MURRAY: Oh, we always had, for the harvest, a gang from East Hartford out every year. To his day, they all know me; I don't remember many of them! You know, it's like Mrs. Chips, they all pass by! Yes, yes. I had a whole family of them. For example, a boy that just delivered flowers here a short time ago, one of the Callahan's that run the florist shop down in East Hartford. A lot of those Callahan brothers worked here over the years.

MACRO: Oh, yes.

MURRAY: I used to have one little small boy, a tiny one, and the kids hated him because I always had him come in and sit down to visit with me—because they picked on him. When I went shopping, I'd take him with me. When he got back, they were jealous. He told me about his memory of this the day he came here recently, with the flowers. So you see, I have a lot of old friends that remember me, but I don't remember all of them.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Times change.

MACRO: You mentioned World War II, that you had difficulty getting help.

MURRAY: Oh, yes; you couldn't get any. We'd go into Hartford to find some help. There was very little help there either. In other words, it would be somebody that imbibed too much, and when he would get out here, he was almost worth nothing after he got on out here. Many of the ones we could get drunk. There was a lot of that, or you'd have to get an older man. You'd have to get an older person beyond the years of the Army.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Yes. It would have to be an old, old fellow, or middle-age man, and usually they were liquored people, and you couldn't depend upon them at all.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: They could be here one day and not the next.

MACRO: This was just for the regular work, but at harvest time would you take young people that weren't enlisted?

MURRAY: Oh, anybody. Anybody that could work, we were glad to have them. We usually had the same crowd that would come, because they knew they could get a job here. Like the Callahan boys from East Hartford. They'd always come here because they knew they'd get the job.

MURRAY: I don't know if you have seen Barney Daley's book, the one on South Windsor.

MACRO: I think I have it here.

MURRAY: He referred—I think it was to this street as “Cork Lane.” Yes, they called it Cork - I don’t know why he called - must be because a lot of the families here came from Cork. I know he referred to Cork Lane. Poor Barney; I felt so bad about Barney. He was such a good person. The lady from the library called me because I’d sent a gift to the library, and she told me about the memorial they were having for Barney. I was very sorry that I was unable to attend. As I said to the woman who had called me, “There never was a day, when I was driving full time, that I didn’t go up Main Street that Gladys (Barney’s wife) didn’t have a group of children in front of the Library, and Barney didn’t have another group of children in the cemetery.” I thought that was so wonderful. I mean they gave of themselves all the time, and they loved it! They loved doing it; and they never missed a wake or a funeral. I mean, Barney just was a good person, that’s all I can say. He was a good person, and she is—Gladys. I hope she’s well. I’m sorry I couldn’t have gotten to see her. He was quite a thing for the town...and he was such a patriot, you know.

MACRO: Wonderful.

MURRAY: Oh, wonderful. You’d say, “the flag” and “the Army,” Barney was right there. What a wonderful life—ninety-six.

MACRO: I was there. I went to his funeral too.

MURRAY: Oh, did you? Yes. I’m sorry I couldn’t make it.

MACRO: Did the Irish people who settled on Cork Lane - did they know each other before they got here, or they know—?

MURRAY: Oh, I think they all knew one another. I don’t know, but I have an idea they all knew one another - from the old country,

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Of course, Mother Murray was born here, and her husband was born down in Haddam, I think. Some place like that. He came from a big family, the Murrays. Robert was born in this house. Yes, some of them were from Ireland—there was a few right directly from Ireland. As a matter of fact, Mother Murray told me that Dick Nicholson, Richard’s grandfather, earned his first dollar in this house.

MACRO: Really.

MURRAY: Yes. He earned his first dollar in this house. Yes, I wish—you know, I’m sorry at I didn’t pay more attention to the things Mother Murray told me, or I didn’t ask more questions, one of us could do that when we are young.

MACRO: No, we don’t.

MURRAY: We don't have the time.

MACRO: Let's go back to your days in Hartford. Where were you in Hartford? Where did you live?

MURRAY: Well, to begin with, we lived off of Farmington Avenue, on Beech Street, which is no longer there. That was up by the cathedral, and we lived there for a while. Then we moved down to off of Wethersfield Avenue - Shultz's Place - for a while. That's about all I can remember of Hartford, you know. Then I came here to South Windsor when I was thirteen, so most of my life—

MACRO: You went to school in Hartford—?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. That's where I did all my schooling—in Hartford.

MACRO: You mentioned that you were at a Catholic school?

MURRAY: Yes. St. Patrick's-St. Anthony. It was St. Patrick's; it wasn't St. Anthony. St. Anthony was on Market Street.

MACRO: Right, right. So that you went through grade school there?

MURRAY: Yes. I went to business school for ten years. Then I went out to work as a . . .

MACRO: Ah-ha! Tell me more about that.

MURRAY: Oh, I don't enjoy talking about that. I got a job; I could take shorthand and type, and that's what I did. Then I worked in Hartford at Michael's Jewelry Store for nine years. Then I got married and came out here. Oh, I worked at the SW town hall in the building department, when they established it. I worked at the tax collector's office. Mr. Johnson and I also worked for Hazel Van Sickland in the assessor's office.

MACRO: Those were jobs after your children were grown or—?

MURRAY: Oh yes. They were big enough that I could—and Mother Murray was here all the time. But she helped with- oh, yes. She helped with the children. Poor woman! She was a saint, a saint.

MACRO: How many children did you have?

MURRAY: I had three.

MACRO: That was kind of trailblazing for the time, wasn't it, to be having a job outside of your home?

MURRAY: Yes. I worked hard, we worked hard. You had to because if you didn't, you had to work. I never minded it. I always felt if you were all happy, and you were all well, you could get by.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: That was my thing. Yes, life doesn't always hold things easy for you, does it?

MACRO: No, that's true.

MURRAY: You have to take what comes. It's a little hard at times.

MACRO: Yes. I'm trying to think what else you can tell me about your career days. You worked full time.

MURRAY: Yes, at the town Building Dept. After that, I stayed home. Jimmy (my oldest) went off to the Army, during the time of Vietnam, he had finished college and joined. Bobby (my second son) was away at school. I couldn't stand being here thinking and worrying about them. So I went off to work for Parker Industrial X-ray in East Hartford. I was with them for twenty-eight years.

MACRO: This is after all the work at the town hall?

MURRAY: Yes, oh yes.

MACRO: Oh, my Gosh!

MURRAY: Yes. I went down and I worked twenty-eight years down there, and as a matter of fact, I just got two wonderful birthday cards from them. They tell me the place is not the same since I left—well, they keep telling me that. I was tired when I got through; my knees had to be replaced the next year.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: But I loved every moment of it down there. They were wonderful to me. Yes, I went in there, the only woman for a while. I did the payroll, receivables, and payables. I did everything, answered the phone, did everything. Then business got so big they had to keep bringing on more help.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: But I enjoyed it. I never minded working; I always loved working. I didn't retire until I was 76!

MACRO: Well, now that's interesting, then, because do you think that your relationship with your family was—? Have you ever thought about this, whether your relationship with your family was any different because you were outside the home and—?

MURRAY: No, I don't think so; my children were young adults at the time.

MACRO: —rather than in the home all the time?

MURRAY: No, because Robert, being a farmer, was pretty well in the house when I wasn't in the house. For a while he never left the place. Then he had to get a second job. He worked nights for a while; then I'd be home. Then Mother Murray was always here when the children were growing up. No, I never had (knock on wood), any problem with any of my

children, as far as trouble.

MACRO: No, but I mean whether you're having time away from the children might have, rather than being full time with the children, you had a part of your own life outside the house and you came back—whether that made some kind of difference.

MURRAY: Yes, I know what you're getting at now. Well, the only thing I can say is the children—at that time I was working—were busy into their own things. Now, as a matter of fact, when I went to work at Parker's, that's when Jimmy was away to the Army, so he was an adult young man and through college. Then Bobby was away to private school—we kept them all in private schools. Susan was—I don't know if she wasn't at the Mount, in high School, or not—I can't remember. She might have been at the Mount at the time. And, of course, choosing to send our children to private schools meant that we needed the added income.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: No, I always had close contact with my kids.

MACRO: Maybe it was a very positive thing, at times, because you have your work outside the home, and when you're home, you're with family—

MURRAY: With family, yes.

MACRO: There's a distinction.

MURRAY: I never thought there was anything lacking on either side of us. Well, you see, at that time, that's when they started to live a little differently because when Jimmy got out of college, he went into the Army. That took him out of the complex of the house. Bobby was away to a private boarding school, and he only came home at different weekends. Susie, of course, she was enough to keep anybody worn out. She was very active—if it wasn't her horses, it was something; but she was a busy young woman.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: The time she came home with a carton of chocolate bars, she was going to sell them all and get the stuffed animal prize. I said to Robert, "I don't know what I'm going to do with all this candy." He said I ought to get out and sell it with her. Well, I got the car out, put her in the car with the candy bars, and drove house to house, constantly shifting gears and when I got through, the gears on the car were shot!

MACRO: Really!

MURRAY: Oh, it cost me three hundred dollars at Rocco's Service Station. That wasn't all. She went down the trailer camp to sell, and she lost all of her money down there. She lost the envelope with money. So that cost me another twenty dollars, for the envelope she lost. I said to Robert—oh, he almost had a fit—he had a fit. I said to him, "Well, we have to do something!" He said, "Dear, let's just buy all of the candy!". . . It was awful. Come to find out,

she came home with a stuffed animal that probably cost \$2.98, and cost me almost four hundred dollars, by the time it was over. Oh, she was something. Susie was something, I'm telling you! Oh, God. She'd be coming down Main from School, and somebody would call me up and say, "Your daughter is out on a horse in the middle of the lot," and she'd be out there, riding it bareback, riding up and down the lot. She didn't even know whose horse it was—her red hair flying—the red hair flying. Oh, she was more work than five boys!

MACRO: Really.

MURRAY: Oh, yes.

MACRO: What age was she when she was—?

MURRAY: Oh, this is when she was in grammar school—I don't know what age—she was always a busy girl. She was a smart child, but she didn't put as much time as she should have into her studies. She started at a Catholic college with the nuns. She called us one night and said, "You come and get me, or I'm going to just leave here!" So I had to go up and get her. Oh, she was awful! It took us two days to get up there, way up in New York State. Then she transferred to Iowa Wesleyan. In her senior year she went on a trip to Russia and Sweden with a group from school.

MACRO: Oh!

MURRAY: Yes, and she saw wonderful things. Then she was able to visit Germany and she stopped off to see her brother Jim and his wife Janet, who were stationed there. Susie then decided she'd like to move over there, to live, to teach. She went over there, and she taught school there for eighteen years. Frankfurt International School, that's where she taught. She was there a long time. She made many wonderful friends there and loved her many students. Of course, near the end of her career, she wasn't well. She had MS.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: It took her.

MACRO: Yes. I knew that.

MURRAY: She certainly filled her life, though, right up to the end. She didn't let anything hinder her, nothing. She really had a lot of spunk and she really—she went all over. Yeah. She didn't let anything stop her. Which, I'm glad of...

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Yes. That gave me peace of mind. She had a happy, full life.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: This was an active place.

MACRO: Was this land part of... the Nicholson's property over there—

MURRAY: That's my land.

MACRO: That is.

MURRAY: Yes. Richard is on that side of the street.

MACRO: I See.

MURRAY: The house—and I think they had four acres in back.

MACRO: Yes, right. Your land went all the way down to the river—

MURRAY: Well, not quite. It goes down to the river, but it doesn't go straight like some farms. No, mine is kind of at an angle. There's different pieces here and there and there's another big piece over here. The meadow, I've been down there once or twice, but it's so overgrown and all. They used to farm it, but you see, these spring floods—I mean, you took a chance—it was a gamble every time. A lot of the snow up North would come down to the river and flood it. For a while they got hay off the land; they did take hay off the land, but now it's just dormant. Bobby, my second son, who is gone now, used to be my tractor boy. He did everything on the tractor; he was really wonderful, wonderful. I sometimes think back to those days. Everybody knew each other in the town. You never had to worry about anybody coming down on your property. Somebody would always see somebody on your land and tell you about it.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Time changes a lot of things.

MACRO: No, no; it's growing. By the time you were here, there was no more trolley going up and down the street—

MURRAY: No that had just ended, we had bus service was here. Then, of course, when they built this bridge, the traffic used to come off right here in front of the house.

MACRO: Oh, really?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. That's when they continued the highway off to Route 5 and Manchester. Oh, the noise was awful. Oh, the traffic at night was terrible. How we yearned for the days when our street was just a little country road!

MACRO: When was that put in?

MURRAY: The bridge?

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Well, it's well over thirty years—it's well over thirty years.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: It's got to be—see I've forgotten dates—I haven't been paying attention. I'm glad they did it—finished it. It's well over thirty years because my husband's been dead thirty years, and it was here when he was here.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: That was unbelievable how they would come off the bridge onto our street. We had the horses across the street and it was very difficult to get them back to the barn on this side. There was a lot of traffic . . . A lot of traffic goes over it now. I hear it at night. The noise is frightful - brakes, and those noisy little motor bikes. They start here and you can hear them throughout the woods.

MACRO: Yes, yes. I know, I know. We're not far from Route 5.

MURRAY: That's right. Oh, I bet you get it too. It's not pleasant.

MACRO: No, no.

MURRAY: Do you own that home?

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Oh, that's a beautiful home. Whose was it before you went there?

MACRO: Well—now you're putting me on the spot!

MURRAY: I'm glad. Now, I don't feel so stupid!

MACRO: The Dorans.

MURRAY: Oh, yes. I've heard the name. Yes. Yeah, that was an old family there, Doran.

MACRO: Yes. McGrath and Doran—I think it went straight back.

MURRAY: It's a lovely home. You travel a lot so you're away from it too.

MACRO: Yes, not so much; it's sporadic. We have had long stints, but kind of sporadic.

MURRAY: Well, I've pretty well stayed here all the years... sixty. Well, my son Jimmy will be sixty-five this August. I married a year and a half before he was born, so I've been here almost sixty-seven years.

MACRO: Wow. So you've seen a lot of changes in here.

MURRAY: Yes, I have. I should have taken the time to write things down. After a while you get tired of all that.

MACRO: Yes. Well, that's kind the point of our doing this is, to

MURRAY: Oh, there have been great changes—

MACRO: -try to capture some of the-

MURRAY: You think of the people that lived in town that were good friends. They're all gone, most of them. Main Street has changed so. Like Mrs. Pelton, she was a wonderful—did you ever know her? She was a wonderful woman.

MACRO: I never met her, no.

MURRAY: Oh, she was a wonderful woman. I remember my daughter Susan had to write something for school when she was at the Mount. I called Mrs. Pelton and said, "Susan would like to go up and visit the house at the corner," which is now a B and B—

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Mrs. Pelton was so charming; she got hold of Mrs. Raymond, the owner of the house.

MURRAY: I went with Susan when she got out of school, and then they took us through the whole place. It was so lovely of them. When they were digging for the bridge over here, they dug up some earth and they found a lot of bricks. I called Mrs. Pelton to ask her about that because she had an old, old map of the town where everybody really lived. She could tell me whose house that was—it must have gone back over 250 years ago—and she knew whose house that was that was embedded over in that hill. Can you imagine!

MACRO: I know, she was quite a historian.

MURRAY: Isn't it wonderful how people like that know.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: I don't know if there's anybody like that left in town.

MACRO: Well, her daughter, actually—

MURRAY: Oh, she's wonderful. She's a lovely girl, isn't she? The one I know is Mrs. Woolam. Is that the lady?

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Mrs. Woolam. Sweet person—I met her right after— she had three deaths in the family. I felt so bad for her. Oh, God. Yeah, life is strange.

MACRO: Yes, it is. Did you know a lot of people up and down Main Street, or—?

MURRAY: I do—the old timers. My husband would say so-and-so, and we'd meet them at fairs or something, meetings of some kind. See, it's hard for me to sit here and go back on to Main Street—the old timers—most of the old timers are gone from Main Street. The

Trotmans are gone now. Mrs. Surber's still there—they're old timers.

MACRO: Did the people who are in farming share stories?

MURRAY: Well, I never did because I was home with the kids. Robert would go to meetings, and he always went to the agricultural meetings. I think one was called The Farmers' Association. I don't know how often they'd have them. They'd discuss the crop or what might be harming the crop, if there was a bug that year that did great damage to the crop. I know they also discussed fertilizer, different things like that. Oh, and then there were times that Robert and I would take a trip down to the Amish country. The fertilizer people would give us an introduction to the farmers down there so it made it easier. That was a wonderful thing, to go down there and see the Amish people and talk to them. Not the ones that are on the farm—I think they're called Mennonites—

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: and they did socialize. Mennonites might socialize with the likes of us, where the Amish did not; they were very brief in their conversation. You could buy cookies at their door or whatever or chicken or something—they were always strictly business--\$2 a cookie, you gave them two dollars. The Mennonites were a little different; they would socialize with you. We took a couple of trips down there during the spring, and went to the fertilizer factories and saw all that. We'd run around and talk to different people. Robert loved to do that. He was a great conversationalist. It was wonderful for him. It was wonderful for him to go around and talk to people. We did see a lot of people. See, I forget that because that's so many years ago.

MACRO: Yes. Well, were they in tobacco farming as well?

MURRAY: Oh, yes—they were in all kinds of farming, and used the same type of fertilizer we did. They were always so pleasant to me. You always felt you were welcomed there. You really felt that they truly were glad to see you and talk with you, and that was nice. Yes, and their approach was lovely.

MACRO: Right. I think there was a grange in the Wapping area, right?

MURRAY: No. I don't recall them having anything like that. I don't remember Robert ever going out to a grange. No. There were things he went to, but he'd get a notice. There would be a meeting and so forth. Whether it was from the extension service or what it was from a farmer's association. He would go to those. He would go by himself; I wouldn't go. Most of the time, it was the men that went, those who ran the farms. That's all I can think about that. I'd say just my getting up and working on the farm is all I can tell you. It's hard, dirty work. Yes, but as long as I was helping, I never minded.

MACRO: Well, did you have your own shed that you stored tobacco in?

MURRAY: Yes, for every lot, but they're all gone now. I got rid of them all because it got to be when we weren't in tobacco; you had kids in there, climbing the poles. The two that we had in Long Hill—we had two big ones there—kids came and took the whole side of the barn off and stole it. Took the whole side off—we don't know how they did it. They must have had trucks and everything. The fellow, one of the neighbors who lived out there called my husband and said, "Hey, Bob, you know your shed's half gone." Robert says, "What do you mean it's half gone?" He says, "They just carted part of it away." Anyhow, this was all barn here, and I had a shed down on a property on Burnham Street. I got rid of that, and I got rid of what was up in Long Hill. I didn't want any sheds at all because of the kids in them, climbing the poles—

MACRO: Yes, that's dangerous. You had said you had something like seventy-six acres. And was it in separate parcels then?

MURRAY: It was in pieces as it is today. I have the pieces here around my home. I also have one over here on the corner of Main Street and King Street. That's all mine.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Down on Burnham Street, I have another piece there; so it's all over the place.

MACRO: Oh, really, interesting. That was all farmed?

MURRAY: That was all farmed, every bit of it was farmed, yes.

MACRO: So how many sheds were-?

MURRAY: There was a shed on every lot that we had. There was a shed that could handle what was grown there. Once in a while there was an overload, a big harvest. You'd make room in another shed, or you used the top of the barn, you see. Nothing was ever left on the earth; they brought everything home.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: It was a busy time in harvest time.

MACRO: Oh, I'm sure.

MURRAY: People coming and going, the horse and the wagons, and you had to keep the equipment up—it was quite a lot of work.

MACRO: Were you generally home during that period? Did you have to feed people or—?

MURRAY: Oh, yes.

MACRO: Did you do all that preparation?

MURRAY: There were the kids that brought their own lunch, and I gave them milk. I gave them our milk. Other than that, that's who I fed—the ones that came here. We'd have like, two or three out in the back room. There'd be two cots and then we'd have Harry upstairs and somebody else some other place. They didn't care where they laid their head, as

long as you fed them. It was a busy time.

MACRO: Interesting time, yeah.

MURRAY: For a city girl.

MACRO: Exactly. How did you find that transition?

MURRAY: I didn't mind it at all, to tell you the truth. I loved being out there, I loved the life. I never got sick of it; I was always happy. If people were well, my kids were well, and everything's going along. Of course, there was the hard time we lost our crop. It's a very bad time, very sad time, because you didn't have any extra money for anything; but you managed—you managed.

MACRO: Did you ever go as a couple, or a family—did you go into Hartford?

MURRAY: Robert and I? I don't know if you're old enough to remember Honesses Restaurant.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: We'd go into Honesses and have supper, Robert and I. He loved the social crowd; I just liked the crab meat! When we got through, it was nice. We'd come out of the restaurant and we all went up the street to Main Street—you'd go by Sage-Allen, Brown Thompson's, G. Fox across the street, come back by Wise-Smith, walk down a little farther on Pratt Street, and turn around. It was lovely to walk in Hartford, but you can't do that today. It was a treat. Then we'd go back and get the bus and go home.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: That's what we used to do.

MACRO: Yes, that's nice.

MURRAY: Hartford will never be the same again unless they stop getting \$10 a night for parking a car. If they don't wake up to that, they're the ones that are suffering; that is what is killing Hartford.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Imagine, ten dollars to park your car!

MACRO: Yes, that's too much.

MURRAY: Even to eat in a restaurant across the street, that's too bad. Hartford, I used to love Hartford. I'd love to just walk on Main Street and look at the stores, the windows—

MACRO: Yes, I can remember—

MURRAY: Yes, it was really wonderful, but those days, I think, are gone forever,

MACRO: Back to when you were working. How old were your children when you first started to go to work?

MURRAY: Oh, let me see, I'll have to think. When I worked at the town hall, I remember Susan, my youngest, was in grammar school, and the two boys were older.

MACRO: Okay, they were in school before—

MURRAY: Oh, yes. They were in school. Jimmy was off to a Massachusetts prep school and then went to Nichols College. Jimmy's the only one to go to high school here. Henry Adams was the principal—a wonderful man. My husband was on the school board when he was appointed, when he was hired.

MACRO: Oh, really.

MURRAY: Yes. Robert sat on the school board for a long time, but the minute Jimmy started school, he left. He said, "I'm not going to be on any school board when he goes to school." He wanted no favoritism shown to his son. I do remember a funny story about Jimmy when he started school. When he was a little boy, it would be six o'clock, and I'd say to him, "Well, nine o'clock, time to go to bed."...he'd give me no mouth, no nothing, nine o'clock. Then he went to kindergarten, Miss Lucas, his teacher, said, "Mrs. Murray, it's the darndest thing. We're trying to learn to tell time, and your son keeps saying its nine o'clock, when it's only six o'clock." I said to her, "Don't blame the child, blame his mother." I said I lied every night of the week to get him off to bed. It took her the longest time to have him finally learn its six o'clock, not nine o'clock. All my children went to bed early. I was a firm believer in getting them up there early, and they were all there early.

MACRO: So this was in grammar school?

MURRAY: Oh, yes. Robert always had a civic job in the town. We both enjoyed that; we didn't mind it at all. For all those years I went to the ZBA, I loved it.

MACRO: It's nice being involved in your community—

MURRAY: Yes, I enjoyed working with the other members of the Board. A lot of the times they didn't go along with me, but I believe in a little compassion and compromise.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: Not many people sitting on boards have compassion today. I always put myself in the shoes of the person coming to us with a request. I would think the person standing next to me could be myself. That's the way I looked at the cases that were presented to our Board, show a little compassion. It's not going to change the whole neighborhood; it's not going to kill everybody in the town. A man wanted to do a little extra work and put his deck out

a little farther—what harm? It's not going to kill anybody. I just don't get the thinking of some people. By the rules, by the rules! Sometimes the rules can be overdone.

MACRO: Yes, yes. I agree.

MURRAY: That's what I say.

MACRO: Is there anything else you can think of that you all would like to...

MURRAY: Well, let me see. It used to be fun in the Democratic Party, we'd always have the little gang in the middle of the party that wanted to separate us and make themselves the boss. We fought them off and won. We'd get out and work harder. We'd get out and work harder and we would always win. In those days, we had the trailer park down here, and John Coyne, a Republican, owned it and he always could kill us because he would get those residents all together and bring them up to the polls. We'd lose out because we didn't have a voting block like his. That's what we used to have to work for. We used to haul anybody we could find, poor Mother Murray and poor little Nellie Reardon (Myrtle's mother), they were little old ladies. One night there was a crucial vote and we hauled them all out. They were ready for bed. Mother was deaf, and little Nellie didn't quite know what she was there for. It was so funny! Oh, we were fighters! We fought.

MACRO: Was this a town meeting or was this a Democratic meeting?

MURRAY: It was an election. Oh, God, it was funny, how we'd get them there to vote!

MACRO: This was for the town Democratic—the Democratic Town Committee.

MURRAY: Yes. We fought, we worked hard, by golly; but we succeeded. They got to be the bigger party as more Democrats that came in. The old staid people here were mostly Republicans, on the Main Street. They were very understanding, because I know I got a lot of their votes. I really got Main Street. The Republicans were dumbfounded when I got Main Street. I fought for the town hall, had a big meeting over there that night. I remember going to that. Oh, it was big time that night, big piece in the paper and everything about it. As I say now, they may not like the town hall, but I'll say one thing, we haven't spent a lot of money painting it because it's brick. Same thing inside, it's brick. I think of it every time I look at it. You might not have liked it, but it saved you a lot of money.

MACRO: That's good.

MURRAY: The more practical.

MACRO: Yes, absolutely.

MURRAY: Yes. I remember that so well. Oh, there are a lot of things—I can't remember now because it's gone from my mind. I haven't participated in so long because, as I say, at seventy-five I got off all the boards. Well, I figured it's time for young people, that's what I thought. Time for young people to get in and do the thing, and I think that's what should be done. The enthusiasm in this country, well this whole Barack Obama thing came up, the enthusiasm has been unbelievable. However, you still see, young people today know nothing about politics. They can mouth every word the pop singers sing. Every little child can mouth every word. Can they say the "Our Father?" That's what bothers me. It's amazing, isn't it?

MACRO: Yes, yes it is, Times have changed. The focus is on...

MURRAY: Today they have some kind of strange music and dance. On The Today Show they had some boy just dancing and throwing himself all over. I looked at that and the lovely little girls watching him and every word he said, they mouthed it with him; it's unbelievable.

MACRO: Yes, I know.

MURRAY: I don't know—I'm a classical music person. Richard Nicholson and I go to a lot of the operas. I used to go regularly. The symphony also- we had wonderful seats- we had wonderful times going to the opera. I also attended the visiting symphonies and opera with my dear neighbor and friend Ethel Friedberg, until she passed.

MACRO: In Hartford or in New York?

MURRAY: I went to the Bushnell the day it opened.

MACRO: Really, the day it opened?

MURRAY: Yes. Oh, that first season, I meant.

MACRO: Oh.

MURRAY: They had opera, and all I could afford was the last row in the second balcony.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: But we went.

MACRO: Good, yes.

MURRAY: Saw all the operas. I saw Sutherland from Sweden, I think that was her name, Sutherland. She was a great singer. I used to go to the Sunday afternoon concerts at the Bushnell. They had them every Sunday afternoon during the season. They used to bring the great stars in. I love good music.

MACRO: Yes, you know the concerts at Wood Library.

MURRAY: I can't get up the stairs, that's what—

MACRO: They have an elevator.

MURRAY: I know they do now, but now I'm too old—I can't do much getting out. I said that to Richard years ago. I never could understand why they never put an elevator in there. It wouldn't cost what it costs now.

MACRO: No, I know. Even when I was Director there.

MURRAY: Yes, they really needed it after day one, when they started having these concerts, because those marble stairs going up, God they're awful, even to come down them. Then they have you go down to the basement for refreshments.

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: You have to be pretty spry.

GM: Yes, it's much easier now.

MURRAY: Oh, yes, it's nice. I'm glad they did. But aren't you surprised they didn't do it earlier, though?

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: They get a good turnout for their programs, don't they?

MACRO: Yes, it's very good.

MURRAY: Yes, it's very good, yes. Does Nancy Braender still come?

MACRO: Yes, she's still in charge.

MURRAY: Oh, is she, really?

MACRO: Yes.

MURRAY: She's a wonderful woman, and how is her health?

MACRO: I think, pretty good.

MURRAY: Good. I think it's a wonderful thing she moved over there to Bloomfield.

MACRO: I think that's the best move she could have made.

MURRAY: She was always a pleasant person. I haven't seen her in ages. I guess I saw her at some political thing or—some night they were doing something for somebody—and she was there, and I spoke to her.

MACRO: Sometime, if you have other thoughts that you want us to record, we'd love—

MURRAY: I'm afraid you won't find this too interesting, the stuff we talked about today. Are you happy about it?

MACRO: Yes, absolutely.

MURRAY: Oh, good.

MACRO: Yes, I am. Do you think we should wrap up now?

MURRAY: It's up to you, dear.

MACRO: Unless you have anything else to

MURRAY: No, nothing else I can think of right now.

MACRO: Well, thank you very much.

[End of Interview]