

Warren Historical Society

Oral History: Dorothy Maier (12 min 14 seconds)

Interview with Marylyn Hendricks

Transcribed by Janice Swartzfager August 2021

Interviewer: "Today is October 24, 2015. This is Mary Lynn Hendricks. I will be speaking to Dorothy Maier at her home at 23 Cornwall Rd in Warren. My husband Larry will be doing the taping. So I'm going to begin with questions for Dorothy. If you'd tell us your name including your maiden name."

Interviewee: "Dorothy S. Maier. And what else?"

MH: "Your maiden name."

DM: "My maiden name, Schatz."

MH: "S-C-H-

DM: "A-T-Z. That means sweetheart in German."

MLH: "Oh, that's good, that's good. When and where were you born?"

DM: "I was born in the middle of Manhattan, 9-21-22."

MH: "Ok, that sounds good. And where was your family originally from?"

DM: "All parts of the world I guess."

MH: "I'm sorry?"

DM: "New Orleans."

MH: "New Orleans, ok. Both parents?"

DM: "No, one parent was from New Orleans, and the other parent—his family was from Pine Bluff, Arkansas."

MH: "How did they end up in Manhattan?"

DM: "I have no idea."

[Both chuckle]

MH: "Ok. Well since we're interested in the history of Warren, what brought your family to Warren, and when was that?"

DM: "Well I—we arrived the last day of '78. And how did we get here? I had a very old friend down in New Fairfield whose family owned the—the Bible camp up here. And it was through her that I got to know Warren. And what else can I tell you? We've been here all that time."

MH: "Yeah, what was the name of those people? The Bible camp?"

MH: "The Sybergs owned it, was that the family?"

DM: "The Thybergs, yeah."

MH: "So you had friends from—"

DM: "I had a friend who was one of the Thybergs."

MH: "One of the Thybergs, and you knew the Thybergs from New Fairfield. And were you living in New Fairfield full time or part time?"

DM: "No, we [indiscernable] a cottage, a summer cottage."

MH: "Summer cottage, ok, so you were living in the city."

DM: "Oh yeah."

MH: "Ok. I'm going to ask, do you have siblings?"

DM: "I have a brother."

MH: "You have a brother, ok. And where is he?"

DM: "Long gone."

MH: "Long gone, alright. A friend brought you to Warren, and you decided you wanted to have another summer place, is that right?"

DM: "No, no, we were looking for permanent."

MH: "You were looking for permanent."

DM: "Permanent housing."

MH: "And what attracted you to Warren?"

DM: “Well as I said we had a friend who was one of the Thyberg sisters, and that’s how I knew Warren, and it proved to be a lot less settled than New Fairfield, so we moved up here.”

MH: “Ok, sounds good. What was here—what was in the center of town when you moved here?”

DM: [chuckles] “The store. The liquor store, and the—well it was a dry goods store, I guess you’d call it in those days, just a general store.”

MH: “There was no gas station—”

DM: “No, no bank, no nothing.”

MH: [chuckles] “But you could mail a letter there.”

DM: “Yeah, or buy a bottle of liquor.”

MH: “Ok. Did you have any family members who served in the military?”

DM: “My husband was a captain in the U.S. infantry.”

MH: “At what time, what date about?”

DM: “From about ’43 to ’46.”

MH: “Did he go overseas?”

DM: “He sure did. He was a forward observer in an infantry company.”

MH: “And he went where?”

DM: “Germany.”

MH: “Germany, ok. Do you remember anything about Eric Sloane?”

DM: “I met him once or twice. And one of my fondest memories was when Karcher Reynolds came down, playing the bagpipes, followed by a crowd of one, and Eric Sloane said, ‘Where are all the others’—no, somebody asked him, yeah, ‘Where are all the others?’ And he [Eric Sloane] said, ‘This is a very small town, we have very small parades.’” [chuckles]

MH: “Now that was a Memorial Day Parade?”

DM: “I guess so, I don’t know.”

MH: “The parade got bigger though, didn’t it?”

DM: “Mm.”

MH: “Do you remember anything about the inn on Lake Waramaug?”

DM: “Having dinner there many times, but that’s about it.”

MH: “The Hopkins Inn?”

DM: “Mm?”

MH: “The Hopkins Inn?”

DM: "Same thing.

MH: "And Boulder's Inn?"

DM: "Same thing with Boulder's Inn."

MH: "You used to go there quite a bit, ok. Primarily I wanted to ask you about the Warren Land Trust and how it began, because I felt you were—"

DM: "That started out as an offshoot of our fight against the pipeline, when a small group of people got together and decided we should fight the pipeline, and as an extension of that when we fought the pipeline and won it was decided we needed a land trust in town."

MH: "Now the pipeline was—do you remember the date about?"

DM: "Eric Wood Pipeline. I don't remember the dates."

MH: "It was 1970 something."

DM: "Yeah? You got me."

MLH: "And they wanted to build a pipeline from Canada through Warren."

DM: "Right through Warren."

MH: "And the town raised funds and they were able to get the pipeline moved I guess."

DM: "Well I didn't say—I don't think the town raised funds. A group of citizens got together to fight the pipeline which involved to some extent the town, but the town fathers did not contribute

to this in any way. And then a couple of us broke off after this was over and decided what we need—we need is a land trust.”

MH: “And who was involved with that besides you?”

DM: “Well the other principle was—I’ll think of names as we go along.”

MH: “Aunt May?”

DM: “Hm?”

MH: “May? May Hill?”

DM: “May Hill, yes.”

MH: “Nancy Binns, I think.”

DM: “Nancy Binns, yeah. It was Nancy Binns’ idea in the first place.”

MH: “Ok. And so you started the Land Trust, and so at that point the town had no public land like that.”

DM: “No, and this started out—we were helped along by some seed money which is what a group of citizens had raised to fight the pipeline and it passed on to us.”

MH: “And do you happen to know how much land they have now?”

DM: “Oh in the 600 acre range.”

MH: "I know it was quite a bit."

DM: "Yeah."

MH: "So it's been really a great undertaking for the town. But you and Sandy also founded the Prime Timers. And will you tell me what that was?"

DM: "That was a group of senior citizens banded together to—for social reasons. And it was very successful, we had—I would say we had 40 or 50 members originally. It's now down to about 7. Attrition, they call that."

MH: "Well the town now has a director of recreation, and he's getting programs together and it's essentially—"

DM: "Well, he's very successful, he's doing a wonderful job, and he has taken over—it's mostly the parks and rec which joined in with the rest of the group that was left anyway, and it became the, what do they call it? The Park and Recs, mostly."

MH: "Park and Rec, yeah."

DM: "And we were fortunate in having the old town hall to use as a community center, which was a good deal."

MH: "Sandy was very involved with the town."

DM: "He certainly was, he was the treasurer for 18 years."

MH: "How many years?"

DM: "Eighteen."



MH: "Oh, he was also involved with the fire department."

DM: "Oh yeah."

MH: "As you were too."

DM: "Well we were both EMTs."

MH: "You were both EMTs. And is there any stories you can tell me about the fire department?"

DM: "Only that I think it's a wonderful organization. I joined with some of the crew—some of the resident—the members of the fire department in taking umbrage, as they say, about the fact that they now charge you for their ambulance rides. Because some ambulance group in the state found out that your insurance would cover your bills if they had one, so it became less than a real volunteer organization, which is to our discredit."

MH: "Yeah."

DM: "Well it was a blow to our pride because we were always a free-standing organization of volunteers and all of a sudden because of this combination of other groups we had to do the same thing. But it's a very devoted group of people, and they will move heaven on earth to get to you wherever you're going if you're sick."

MH: "Yeah, well, we have experienced that."

DM: "Yeah, for real."

MH: "And you know they are very active with the fall festival, and you and Sandy used to help out there a lot."

DM: "He used to stand and take the entrance fees."

MH: “That’s right, Sandy used to be at the booth, and you used to be at the booth, that’s good. Since you didn’t grow up here I can’t ask questions about that, but do you have any stories of interest about the town that you’d like to put on record?”

DM: “Well my memory only goes back about 40 years, and I really can’t tell you too much about what happened in between except normal growth, you know. Our kids didn’t go to school here, and we spent the adult portion of our life in retirement here. But it was always a wonderful town, and very receptive. When we walked in the front door, we were told literally, that we could join any organization that would have us.”

MH: [chuckles] “Ok, that’s pretty good. But you were also active—used to go to the library. And certainly helped out a lot with the fire department.”

DM: “Oh yeah.”

MH: “And the town, treasurer for 18 years, that’s a long time. So, do you have any questions Larry? Anything else?”

LH: “Nope.”

DM: “He just took a pass.”

MH: “Ok. Well, thank you.”

DM: “That’s it?”

MH: “I guess so.”

DM: “Oh, alright.”