

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARY MOORE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Janeann Robinson: This begins an interview with Mary Beubeck Moore on April 28, 2005 in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Janeann Robinson and ...

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Thank you, Mrs. Moore, so much for coming in today, and thank you, too, Janeann for bringing Mrs. Moore. To begin the interview, would you please tell us where and when you were born?

Mary Moore: I was born [on] April the 29th, 1923 in Abington, Pennsylvania.

SH: Can you tell us to start, a bit about Abington? The best place to start is probably with your father; tell us about him and his background.

MM: My father was William Fox Bubeck [born 1900]. He was born in Southhampton, Pennsylvania and, unfortunately, was killed when he was twenty-eight years old. I was five years old.

SH: What was his background? Where was his family from and what did he do for a living?

MM: His family was from ... the Somerton, Southhampton area of Pennsylvania. ... They were farmers and he went to school and was an architect, builder.

SH: Now how close to Philadelphia is Southhampton?

MM: Southhampton, I don't know, maybe thirty miles [from Philadelphia]. Abington is nineteen miles from Philadelphia.

SH: It's basically in the same area.

MM: Same area, just ten to fifteen miles apart.

SH: Was he killed in a construction accident?

MM: Yes. There is a farm in the Southhampton area that was being built. ... [It] was a horse farm that had a one mile indoor track, all under cover, and he was in charge of building that building. ... He went there one day and, for some reason, he was talking to one of the men who was working a saw and it jumped the table and cut him open. ... Gangrene set in and he died.

SH: That's too bad. Please tell us about your mother and her background, where was she from?

MM: My mother [Matilda Jane Saylor Bubeck Herschel 1901-2001] was born in a little town called Rock Lane, which is closer to Philadelphia. ... She was a model and a singer. She sang in Philadelphia, in the Choral Society there. One of the famous things that I saw as a child was when she sang at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

SH: And you got to go?

MM: And I got to go.

SH: Fantastic. What year would that have been?

MM: It was when FDR ... was running for president. [Editor's Note: Mrs. Moore is referring to the election of 1932.]

SH: That was wonderful to be able to experience that as a child.

MM: Yes, I used to go to Philadelphia to the Bellevue Stratford Hotel and my step-father [Jacob Arthur Herschel 1880-1965] would take me there to listen to my mother sing. ... We would sit in the balcony and listen to her.

SH: How long after your father died did your mother remarry?

MM: Eight years.

SH: Were there other children?

MM: No, I was the only child.

SH: Was your mother singing in the hotel or was this a choral concert?

MM: She was singing with the Choral Society of Philadelphia, and she would go with the group. ... [Also,] she would do solo work. She had a very nice voice.

SH: Did you follow in her footsteps?

MM: I sang when I was in school, yes, in high school, unfortunately. [laughter]

SH: I bet not. Tell us about a woman in that day-and-age who would have been a model?

MM: My mother went to work for a Lit Brothers department store in Philadelphia. ... They wanted somebody to model; ... so they got my mother started and she modeled for the store and went out and modeled around. ... As a child, she took me with her, and I would model children's clothes.

SH: So you would do this at different venues?

MM: Yes, different places. We would go and she would [model], and that's how she actually met my step-father, doing that.

SH: Can you tell us how your mother and father met?

MM: That I don't really know. ... I don't know, really don't. I don't recall just how they met because my mother lived in Abington, and they lived ... [where] we call "up country," and I don't know whether it was a school function, or, you know, what it was.

SH: Was there an extended family? You were an only child, but did your mother have siblings?

MM: Yes, my mother had a brother. She had other [siblings] that were deceased, but she had one brother. ... As I grew up, my grandfather [John Henry Saylor 1856-1944] and grandmother [Matilda Barr Saylor 1856-1925] had a hotel and so we all lived in the hotel. My uncle, and I had four cousins, and we all lived in the same house. ... It had twenty-four rooms, so, I mean, it was a big place, and then my cousins were like brothers and sisters to me.

SH: Was it in an area where it would have been considered a tourist attraction?

MM: Well, I don't know whether they had tourists back then or not, because, I mean, this is ... 1901 when she started it. But, in the town of Abington, they were building ... a big water tower and different things; ... so, the employees that worked for the companies would stay there.

SH: So, in effect, it was kind of a boarding house?

MM: Boarding house. That would be more a boarding house than a hotel.

SH: What about going to school? You talked about traveling with your mother and modeling, how long did you do that?

MM: Until I was about eleven, ten or eleven. ... Then she stopped working and was home.

SH: Now, when she met your step-father, you said it was at one of these shows where you were modeling.

MM: Well, my step-father was the man, I don't know what you would call him, the manager for Mr. Lit, who owned Lit Brothers, and he managed all of Lit Stores. ... So, actually, my mother was modeling in Lit Brothers and she met him there.

SH: Did you move out of the boarding house?

MM: No, I lived there until I got married.

SH: So, your step-father then moved in?

MM: Oh, yes, yes. Also, my father's sister and brother and my grandmother on my father's side, we all lived in the big house.

SH: That is so exciting.

JR: Did they take to your step-father?

MM: Oh, yes, yes. He was very nice. He was better. ... [tape paused] No, when my mother got married, actually, I didn't know she was ... [going to] get married. ... Anyway, in the house, actually before my mother got married, we sort of put a division in the house so that we had twelve rooms and my uncle had twelve rooms. But, we still ... could talk back and forth from [the] rooms and everything, but there was like a division. They used one half and we used one half. But, my step-father, when he came in, was a wonderful man. I mean, he was great. All I had to do was say "I need," [or] "I want," and I had it.

SH: So, the father whose family that you talked about was your biological father.

MM: My biological father. His sister, his brother, his mother, my mother's father and mother, and my step-father and I lived in one part of the house. My aunt and uncle were younger than my step-father and, of course, when they got married, they left. My father's mother, my grandmother, went with my aunt.

SH: Did you go to school there?

MM: Yes, [I] went to Abington School all the way from, well we didn't have kindergarten then, but we had, because I was the youngest of the group, I followed my cousins to school and they let me stay. ... I went all the way from first grade and graduated from there. I had perfect attendance for all twelve years and received an award for it.

SH: When you were younger and in school like that, we talked about your mother having such a beautiful voice, did she sing in the church choir as well? Were you involved in church at all?

MM: Yes, yes, very much so.

SH: What church did you all go to?

MM: [We went to] Abington Presbyterian Church. It was the only church in the town so everybody went there. Even the Catholic children came with us, and the Catholics were in the next town, their church, and we would go with them. So, it was very ecumenical.

SH: I thank you for explaining that there were other communities besides my own that had this ecumenical outlook. You talked about having such a good, close family, was your family also involved politically in the town?

MM: No.

SH: You talked about your mother singing at the Democratic National Convention.

MM: My mother sang because the choral group sang at the National Convention, when it was held in Philadelphia. No, we had nobody in politics that I know of.

SH: Well, I thought maybe that was how she got the invitation to be there. Was there a certain subject, or a certain teacher, in your growing up years that was a mentor for you?

MM: Yes. All the teachers were great. I mean, ... I had one teacher, [a] science teacher, that went to school with my father, so, ... she, of course, was close. But in high school, I took the commercial department and (Mr. Krieger?) was our teacher, and, of course, we only had a small class. Way back then, it wasn't a big community and there were only sixty-eight in our class, and then in the commercial department there were six girls.

SH: Tell us where you went then after high school?

MM: After high school ...

SH: What year did you graduate?

MM: I graduated in January of 1941. We had mid-term graduations. We could start school in January, also, the beginning of school, so ... we graduated in January and I went to work in Philadelphia. ... I went to work for Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company as a secretary.

SH: Now did you also go to secretarial school?

MM: I went to Pierce Business School in Philadelphia and took courses at the same time I was working.

SH: Did you move to Philadelphia?

MM: No, I commuted every day by train and walked about ten blocks.

SH: What was the most exciting thing for a young woman in 1941?

MM: Yes, this is before the war, because I graduated in January. ... To go into a big city and work in a big place and to, actually, be working with mixed people, and [to] just have nice people to work with and have young men that were working, until December of 1941, when the war came. The men ...

SH: Before we get into that part, because I do want to hear about that, but first as a young woman graduating in January of 1941, were you aware of what was going on in Europe?

MM: No, no, we really didn't know too much. [We] focused on what you were doing in social life and you know, dating. [laughter]

SH: What about the Depression? What do you remember, either you personally, or the stories around the dinner table?

MM: The only thing I remember, well, actually, the stories that I heard on the Depression, of course, my father had just passed away and my mother had to go work and my mother lost

almost everything she had. ... Fortunately, ... my grandfather had the home, and everything, and that's why we all lived there. My grandfather had a good job. He was a motorman on the PRT, Philadelphia Rapid Transit, trolley car, and the trolley car ran from Willow Grove to Philadelphia and he drove the trolley.

JR: Speaking of your social life, can you tell the fortune teller story?

MM: That would be after I met my husband, that will come later, I think, when we talk about [that].

SH: So prior to your father's death you lived in another home separate from your grandfather?

MM: No, no, we always lived in the same house.

SH: Because you had said your mother lost everything so I thought she lost her home.

MM: No, she didn't lose the home, but lost the money that they had in the bank.

SH: What did your mother go to work as, I mean, we talked about her singing ...

MM: She went to work as a salesperson in a department store, Lit Brothers. That's how she met my step father, that, along with her singing.

SH: We talked about the social aspect of being a young woman, and being in Philadelphia and single, and going to school, ... taking the trolley. What were some of the social etiquettes that you would not see practiced today that you remember?

MM: Well, you were more reserved. I think we would go to the theater, the opera. You don't hear much of the young people going to the opera today. ... We had, like, season passes at the opera in Philadelphia and we go to the theater. We go out to dinner.

SH: Did you dress differently than people dress today going to the opera?

MM: Oh, yes. I never wore a pair of slacks until later in life. When I first went to work in Philadelphia, in order to get in the front door of the office, Penn Mutual is right behind Independence Hall, ...so we had to wear a dress, stockings, gloves and a hat, to go to work, [just] to get in the building. Now, we did not see the public, but that's the regulations to go to work.

SH: What was your job?

MM: I was a private secretary ...

SH: For?

MM: For the loan officer because I had done, even when I was in high school studying, I had done secretarial work in the office in the school and also at the bank after school.

SH: You talked about a mid-year high school graduation, did you go to school during the summer or did you have summers off?

MM: We had summers off but you started school in January and you went, you know, you went like 1, 1A, 2, 2A. They don't have that anymore. They discontinued it.

SH: What did you do for fun in the summertime? Did you have a job?

MM: After school, I mean, I worked from the time I was about twelve or thirteen.

SH: What did you do?

MM: Well, [I] worked at the school. I took dictation from the principal and did the morning bulletin and then, after school, I worked at the bank.

SH: So that continued in the summer then?

MM: Then that continued, yes.

SH: Did you join any organizations as a young woman in high school?

MM: Well, we had clubs at school, but I also was a Girl Scout. ... I did go camping. We walked about ten miles to the camp in Downingtown and camped for a weekend and slept on the ground, like, I don't know if they do [that] today. I guess they do. I'm not a Girl Scout. Were you a Girl Scout?

SH: Did you get to travel at all? Did your family take any vacations?

MM: When my aunt got married, she moved to New York City, and so the day after school was out, sometimes I would go and stay with her, and then she moved up to New York State, near Poughkeepsie. ... I would go up there and spend my vacation up there with her in the country, and we would drive, like, if my step-father would take the last two weeks in August off every year, and we would take, go up to the New England states one year and we'd go down to the South, drive down through to Florida and back. But, we didn't go west, too much then.

SH: It sounds exciting. Now, tell us then about January. You are in Philly; you are working for Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, you are going to school at night, and as that progressed, there was a draft that had been put into place in 1940. Were there young men from the community, or your cousins that were called up before Pearl Harbor?

MM: My one cousin was called up because he was older than the rest of us, and some of the boys that I work[ed] with were called.

SH: Had any of them worked in any of the WPA projects?

MM: One fellow did. One fellow lived in [the] Hammonton area, in New Jersey. ... His family had problems by the Depression and he worked in WPA.

SH: Tell us then, in December 1941, how you found out about Pearl Harbor and the reaction?

MM: Well, we heard about it on the radio and, of course, at work. It was a big shock because so many of the men, they were called immediately to go, and, of course, it meant that a lot of the women had to take over the jobs that the men had. It was very difficult and then a lot of the men were called. ... Especially because I lived near Willow Grove, which was Willow Grove Naval Air Station. A lot of the churches started church door canteens to help the men and to have entertainment for them and different things like that, and, of course, I joined what they called the Church Door Canteen.

SH: To back up a little bit to that Sunday that the news came out about Pearl Harbor, where were you?

MM: I was home.

SH: You just happened to be listening to the radio?

MM: Right.

SH: What was the immediate reaction in your house, because you have a large family?

MM: Well, the only thing was that my cousin, who was the oldest one, that he, you know, would have to go.

SH: Did the family really understand where Pearl Harbor was?

MM: Yes, I think so.

SH: Now when you returned to work that Monday, did they have a meeting for everybody or was it just back to work as usual?

MM: Just back to work, but, you know, the different ones, everybody talked, you know, and knew the fellows that would be called up, and there were some men that were in the service, you know, but hadn't been called to active duty, and a lot of us ...

SH: Did your job change?

MM: No, not at that time. I was private secretary until I left the company.

SH: This mobilization of your community, the Willow Grove community, with the Naval Air Station there, the air station, how quickly did that take place?

MM: Well, of course, the air station was there, but it wasn't, you know, it was open more or less and, of course, right away you couldn't go on base, and, of course, the men that were there, you know, as I say, we had the Church Door Canteen, which I became very active in and as a social person, and that's where they had dancing and they had fortune tellers that would come and tell your fortune and tell you what was gonna happen to the different fellows and everything. Because the one that I went to was in Jenkintown, which is the next town south of Abington, we had to take the bus home at night and the military had to take the same bus to the base and so it was wide open. We weren't supposed to date anybody that we met at the Church Door Canteen, but, how could they know if somebody got off the bus at the same stop you did, and that's what happened. [laughter] I met this fellow and one night when we were waiting for the bus and we all got on and when I got off at my stop somebody was behind me and he came to my house and from then on he came every time we went to Church Door Canteen. [laughter]

SH: Where was he from?

MM: He was from New Jersey ...

SH: What part of New Jersey?

MM: Cranbury, New Jersey and [a] very nice gentleman ... which my family liked and ...

SH: Was he a good dancer?

MM: Not real good, but he danced, and, of course, you know all the men were very nice, really.

SH: You talked a bit about some of the rules that went around for the canteen; like you couldn't date, but you could dance, fortune tellers, some of those activities. Did the whole community provide cookies and punch?

MM: The church provided it. They had meals there for the men, that they could come and eat ...

SH: How often was it open? What were the hours?

MM: It was open every evening and some of us went as much we [were] permitted. I mean you weren't allowed to go every night but ...

SH: Was there a sign up?

MM: Yes, yes, and you had to be interviewed, more or less, to be allowed to go, and, of course, say you will abide by the rules, and none of us did. We had quite a few marriages out of that. But, we also, as I was telling Janeann, we had a fortune teller that came and told our fortunes. ... I had mine done and she told me I was gonna marry a man and that when he was thirty-nine, he would become ill, and, you know, you just don't believe it. You know you think that they don't know what they're talking about, and she also told my husband who was, I mean, he was just a friend then, that he would have a serious change in his life when he was thirty-nine, and, of course, later on when we got married and when he was thirty-nine, he was stricken ill. So that

fortune teller had told us both, and how, you know, never knew, how they could really tell that but it just seemed coincidental to me.

SH: Tell us then about, him coming in to meet your family, what was his name?

MM: His name was Harold Liedtke [1922-1973] ... We called him "Dutch." He was nicknamed Dutch by his family, and he was from a big family. He was the youngest of nine and so it was a big difference for me to have a big family.

SH: Where were you married then?

MM: We were married in Abington in the Presbyterian Church.

SH: What year did you get married?

MM: We were married in 1944 at Abington Presbyterian Church

SH: So you've known him for quite a while by then.

MM: Yes, yes, I knew him.

SH: Did he remain stationed at the Willow Grove Air Station?

MM: He was at Willow Grove for quite a while and then he was told that he was gonna be shipped out, and that's when we started, we made plans to get married, but, he was only shipped to Atlantic City.

SH: What was his duty?

MM: He was an aviation machinist and he repaired the engines on the airplanes.

SH: Do you remember what kind of aircraft it was that was there?

MM: I don't remember. It was that big old planes, you know, but, I don't know just what the name of them were. Because he had difficulty studying because he didn't have the education that he needed to study to go up in his rank, ... so I would help him by reading it to him and question him and he would take his tests orally and that would, I mean, I thought that was unusual. ... I don't know the military would do that, but he did raise [in rank], ... [went] up to First Class Petty Officer and then they wanted him to go to school. Jet propulsion was coming in and they wanted him to go to school to study that and because he didn't have the background, the education, that he could read the books himself, he wasn't able to go.

SH: Did he stay in the military after World War II?

MM: He stayed in. He came out in 1948.

SH: You would have met him then in ...

MM: 1942, something, yes, about '42, I guess, because he was, he would have been drafted in the army, but, because he had had been burned as a child they wouldn't take him. [But,] because his brother was in the army ... he enlisted in the Navy, because he wanted to go.

SH: He was sent from Cranbury to ...

MM: No, he was from, yes, Cranbury, and he went to Floyd Bennett Field in New York and then to Willow Grove. Then he went to Virginia and then he went up to Brunswick, Maine, and I left my job and went up and lived with him up there. Then he went aboard the USS *Siapan* and then when he came home from there he decided, because they wanted him to go to school, that he would come out of the service.

SH: So he was on the *Saipan* after World War II was over?

MM: Yes, yes. Actually, I don't know whether they do it today, but as an aviation machinist he had to go fly with the planes when they did patrol duty 200 miles out at sea. He would have to fly with the planes and when he was at Willow Grove, they had coming in, they had an accident. One side of his head was paralyzed, but later on in life, after we moved to New Jersey, he came down with MS. [Multiple Sclerosis]

SH: During World War II, you said you married in '44 and he was sent then to Atlantic City, or was he already in Atlantic City?

MM: No, he was at Willow Grove yet, I think. You know, I'm trying to think back and put in, you know, just the right order of when he moved from one base to another.

SH: But you stayed at your job?

MM: Why, I stayed at Penn Mutual until I went up to Maine with him. Then when I came back, I went to work at Philadelphia Gas and Electric there in Philadelphia, and then when he came out ... we moved to New Jersey and then I left that job.

SH: When you were working in Philadelphia all through most of the war, how much information do you have, as the public, have? Did you see much in the newspapers, on the radio, before the movies, in the newsreels?

MM: You would see it in the movies. I'm not a movie person, wasn't back then very much either, but in the newspapers and people would talk [about] what they heard and everything, and it was the conversation at the time.

SH: What about the restrictions, as far as rationing and things like that? How did that affect you?

MM: Well, when I lived in Maine, I walked three miles every day to get meat because they didn't have a supply in the stores. ... So, you would go to a back road someplace, where there ... [was] some of it, and also, you couldn't get stockings. I mean, nylons were not available. So you would try to find someplace that you could get it illegally, or cheaper.

SH: Now this was in Maine?

MM: In Maine that I did that, yes.

SH: What year do you think you were in Maine about?

MM: It must have been, ... maybe around '45.

SH: Just before the war ended?

MM: Yes, just before. I lived right near the seaport that they built the ships, and we used to go down and watch the riveters riveting the things, because you could walk right along the road.

SH: Could you really?

MM: Yes.

SH: It wasn't secured?

MM: No, it wasn't secured, and you could just walk along and watch them building the ships. ... Of course, there was no transportation so you had to walk to the store.

SH: As a navy wife, did you find that you were treated any differently than you would have been as a civilian?

MM: No. I think everybody was very nice.

SH: Was it hard to find a place to live around the base like that?

MM: Well, actually, I was maybe three or four miles from the base. I was in Bath, Maine and the base was in Brunswick, Maine, and this family, and their name was Robinson, and I just thought about that the other day, they had this nice home that they opened up their second floor and had like little two rooms, apartments, for the military if they brought their wives there. ... So, I had a little bedroom, which was big enough for a single bed and to get into that single bed, and a little couch, in ... what they called the living room part and a wood stove to cook on, and they would supply me with wood to cook and we had one bathroom in the house that we all shared. You didn't have your own private bath.

JR: How many people?

MM: Well, with Dutch and I in this one part and then there was another couple across the hall in another two rooms and then the Robinsons lived downstairs. They turned one of their rooms into a bedroom. But, that's how they had income during this time. ... As I think back now, I was telling you what our salaries were back then, and we paid forty-five dollars a month rent and he made ninety dollars a month.

JR: You said he got overseas pay because he was ...

MM: Because they flew out over two-hundred miles, out to patrol.

JR: Was there hazard pay back then?

MM: No, not that I know of, but he got, you know, like what was it, twenty-one dollars a month and then he got the overseas pay, so, that we had about ninety dollars a month coming in and we paid forty-five dollars for rent.

SH: What did you do for social activities, I mean, how often was he gone?

MM: Well, the only time he was gone was six months when he was on the *Siapan*. Other times, he would come home on weekends, or when he was in Virginia, he would come home on weekends, and there was a time, when he was at Willow Grove, he was on night duty and I worked in the daytime and we passed on the street, you know, "good morning," and that's when we saw each other. But, you know, it was always a good life, even though it was hard, you know, but, I think, as young people, we didn't realize how difficult the times were for us, except when we lost some of our friends.

SH: Did that happen?

MM: Oh, yes, yes. We had a couple of fellows who were lost when they went in for what was D-Day in Europe.

SH: They were from the community?

MM: They were from Cranbury. Those were hard times when you would [lose fellows from the community], but, actually, I mean, I think I was fortunate that we didn't have, you know only the six months that he was actually at sea. The other times we would see each other, either, you know, he could come home, or when he was in Atlantic City he commuted. But when he was in Virginia, he would only come home on weekends.

SH: How did you see the economy changing after World War II started? Did it appear that those that were not in the military were doing better?

MM: I don't think salaries went up or anything. I think it was, you know, just you lived on what you have.

SH: Did any of the women become Rosie the Riveter?

MM: No, I didn't know anybody. I used to enjoy going down, watching the women at the shipyard.

JR: You said you had a couple of girl friends who became nurses. Did you keep in contact with them, or did they join the army?

MM: I had two girl friends that joined the army. ... I did [keep in contact with them] until I moved away from Abington, and, you know, I haven't really been in contact with friends that I should be.

JR: Did everyone in Abington think that it was okay, that they were becoming nurses, or like joining the army, or was it not a woman's place?

MM: Well, some people didn't think the women should be in the military, but the two girls that went were very dependable people, and they served their community, and the country, and the one stayed in for quite a while. I don't know whether she retired from the army. ... The other one came out, but, she moved away and I don't know whatever happened to her. But, I would say at least ten, or eleven, of my girl friends from school and the community married military people, you know, fellows from other towns, from either Philadelphia, or from Willow Grove Naval Air Station.

JR: Did you ever socialize with the wives? If the husbands would all be at work for the entire week, did the wives ever get together?

MM: Not too much, no, only in church, you know, you'd go to church. We didn't go to the movies that much.

SH: Was there a Shore Patrol for those that were in the Naval Air Station at Willow Grove?

MM: Well, they patrolled the ocean. They flew out.

SH: I mean, the military police, was the Shore Patrol in the navy, was there, especially like in Philadelphia, with the Navy Yard there.

MM: That, I think, is in more recent years than what was back then. They could have been secretly there, but, we didn't know.

SH: Before World War II began, were there people, because there was a military presence already there, close by in Willow Grove, were there any people who were actively against getting involved in the war that was going on in Europe that you remember?

MM: I don't remember people discussing it, really.

SH: Did they have the sense that it was just a matter of time before we would be involved in World War II?

MM: I don't think so. I think it was [a] shock to most of us.

SH: At that point we were already supplying goods and ships and things to Britain, I wondered if there was any opinion on this?

MM: I don't think we talked about it. We were more interested in going bowling, or dancing. We had the Willow Grove Park there, and we used to go listen to the John Phillip Sousa Band and they had a place for dancing. ... We would go dancing two and three nights a week. That was my thing, to dance. Today, I don't know how, but when I was young.

SH: [laughter] What about your cousins that were living in the same house as you, you talked about the older ones ...

MM: Well, two of them actually, eventually, were in the military. One was in the army and the other was in the navy.

SH: Did you write to them or keep in contact with them?

MM: I didn't write to them, but, when they would come home I would see them. ... They later moved to California. They married people from the West Coast that they met when they were in the military and they moved out West. Of course, they're no longer here, both of them are gone.

SH: Did your step-father talk at all about if it was difficult to keep the departments stores supplied, or was there no shortage, because so much material was then directed towards the military?

MM: Right. No, he never discussed anything bad. Everything was very positive with him. He had been in World War I, and he'd been an officer in World War I. He never had any ill feelings towards things. I mean, he was a very positive person, very nice, great guy.

SH: Were there any people in the community, that you were ever aware of, that were suspected of being sympathizers with Germany?

MM: Not that I know of, even though my step-father was German. He, you know, had a Jewish background.

SH: Did you ever see any prisoners of war working on any projects?

MM: No, no.

SH: African-Americans?

MM: Not many, no, I don't think there was. I never saw any down in our area. I shouldn't say I never saw any in our area; when I was in high school, we had one girl and one boy in school that were black. I think most of them dropped out ... [of] school before they got to high school, and

our high school was a receiving area for about four or five different elementary schools. ... We had this one boy who was a football player, that he went all through school and this one girl, ... tall girl, and she went through school but we didn't see any in town.

JR: Did you ever hear talk about people's opinions on what an African American person's role would be in the navy or anything like that?

MM: No, because we never had, you know, we didn't have them around. They did have the Ku Klux Klan.

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE-----

JR: Side two tape one

SH: You were talking about the Ku Klux Klan in your area.

MM: Yes, they were up country. They apparently had a meeting place, or a, I don't know what, like a barn, or something, where they met and there was a conflict with some of the people, back then, about difference in religion and so that the Ku Klux Klan would put crosses up on their places.

SH: You saw this as a child?

MM: Oh, yes, yes.

SH: Were they on Catholic or Jewish homes?

MM: They would be on, well, we didn't have any Jewish, that I know of, but they would be on homes even if people were friendly with the Catholics. They would put, you know, put it up because they were apparently back then, basically, against the Catholic religion. But, yes, I attended a funeral where they weren't allowed to go through the town where the Catholic Church was because they were Ku Klux Klan people in the funeral procession, so they had to go around the town. That was interesting. I did see things of that [nature].

SH: How did your family react to something like that? What were the discussions?

MM: Well, my father was all for the Ku Klux Klan.

JR: Your step-father?

MM: No, my own father. But, see, I was just little then, but then that disappeared, you know, after a while.

JR: Did it really disappear, or you just stop hearing about it?

MM: Well, I didn't see it. I didn't see it after that. I mean, I'm sure that they maybe still meet, I don't have no idea but ...

SH: Please then continue. Your husband was put on the *Saipan* and was offered the opportunity to go to jet propulsion and then gets out of the military. Where in New Jersey did you move?

MM: We moved to Cranbury, New Jersey, which is where we lived, well, for many years, from 1948 to 1975, I guess I lived there, and I went to work in the post office and Dutch worked for his brother, as an auto mechanic, and, until he became ill and then he was home. Unfortunately one day he fell in the bathroom and became unconscious. ... I had him sent to the hospital and we had him transferred, well, it had to go through a lot of military problems because we tried to relate it to the airplane crash and had him transferred to Wilmington, Delaware to the military hospital there. ... He was there for one year, and they tried to rehabilitate him and they couldn't, and he was transferred then to Menlo Park to [the] Old Soldier's Home. ... He was there for nine years. They put him on life support and I went one day, he'd been on it for about five or six months, and I saw the doctor and I told him that to me there was no sense in just keeping him alive and he said he couldn't do anything about it, that if I wanted to, I could pull the plug and I said, no, I wouldn't do it, because then they could charge me with murder. ... So, I left about five o'clock that afternoon and I got home at seven o'clock at night [and] I had a call; he was gone. So, I never pursued it or anything, because somebody pulled it, either the doctor, or the nurse that was in the room. So he passed away. He had been on life support for almost four months.

SH: Did you have children?

MM: I had one daughter. I had lost six. He was an (RH negative?) and I was an RH positive and for some reason I couldn't carry and I had one daughter.

SH: Was she born while you were still in the military?

MM: No, she was born in Cranbury. She's a professor of industrial technology in China.

SH: Really? Do you get to visit?

MM: Yes. I've been over four times in [the] six years that she's been there. ... She trains the Chinese how to work for American companies.

SH: Which city is she in?

MM: She's in Beijing, but she travels all over China, wherever they need her.

SH: Is she employed by the Chinese government?

MM: No, she's employed by, or she was, she's now retired from Illinois State University, professor at Illinois State University.

SH: They had some kind of an agreement?

MM: They had an agreement where they were opening a training center in Beijing and they asked her if she would like to go as the manager of the training center, which she did.

SH: What year was this?

MM: Well, she's been there six years, and she had previous to that, she had gone back and forth for about eighteen years because, when she took her sabbatical, she went to China to study. ... She liked it so much, and she adopted a Chinese child, and so she became very interested in the culture and everything. So, she went and, of course, the little girl is now twelve and my daughter, since then, she has now gone on retirement, early retirement. ... She has a non-profit organization to help adopted Chinese children, for families in the United States that would like their children to learn of the Chinese culture, to go back to China with their children. ... She manages that, and has tours and things and has sales in this country, which Janeann helped last year with a fundraiser project.

SH: What is that organization called?

MM: It's called "Our Chinese Daughters Foundation, Incorporated" and in this country there is many chapters of "Families with Chinese Children." FCC they're called and they raise money to help Chinese children, or help families who need help that have adopted Chinese children, and Jane donates to different organizations. If a child needs some help, like we tried to get a child in Deborah Hospital who needed heart surgery, and so she does that now. Besides, she still works for these companies to train the Chinese ... as a consultant.

SH: So her home is in Beijing?

MM: Beijing, China. Right now, she's on a lecture tour around the United States. She does that.

SH: It must be exciting to have a granddaughter

MM: Oh, yes, I love her.

SH: I understand that you've then remarried?

MM: Yes. Three years after my husband passed away, I was sent by the post office department to Phoenix, Arizona to a convention. ... When I got to the convention there were other people from New Jersey. There were ten that were sent and I met this gentleman and, by coincidence, we all ate breakfast together, and everything, and so I met this gentleman and, by coincidence, his first wife and my first husband were born on the same day, the same year, and died within two weeks of each other. ... Both had been ill for many years. So it sort of, you know, we had something in common to talk about and so we left the convention and come back to New Jersey and about a week later I get this letter in the mail from this gentleman, would I go out to dinner with him? He was very proper wasn't he? Janeann knows him, and so I accepted the invitation,

and we went together for a couple of years and then got married, and we had a lot of things in common.

SH: Where was he from?

MM: He was from New Egypt, New Jersey, and he would have been like my father's choice; my father said, "Marry an officer" and he was very military and he had just retired from the military. He had twenty-eight years in the military and so we decided, you know, that we would get married and so we were married twenty-eight years, and he just passed away in December, and his daughter is another Jane, Mary Jane she is, and my daughter was Janeann... but we had a lot in common ...

SH: He was born and raised in New Egypt?

MM: He was born [there], yes.

SH: He was working for the post office?

MM: Well, he was in the military. He had graduated from Rutgers University, in the medical, pharmacy. I don't know whether he has a doctorate in pharmacy. But, anyway, ... in the military he was a pharmacist on board a ship for D-Day and different things, and he did fourteen trips across the Atlantic on military ships ... bringing the wounded home and all. He stayed in that until he got tired, ... then, he couldn't get a commission that he wanted, so he transferred over to transportation, and then he was transferred, then to India, and he was there for two years as a major, and taking the supplies over the Hump into China.

SH: So he left the Navy and went into ...

MM: No, he was army.

SH: Oh, he was in the army. Okay, because when you said he was a pharmacist's mate and made all these trips I ...

MM: No, no, he was in the army. No, he went in as a private and came out, well, he was a lieutenant colonel in the reserves, but they dropped him back to major because that's what he was during wartime, so he goes by major, but all his pictures [are] with the bird. [Editor's Note: Mrs. Moore is referring to the insignia of a bird to represent the colonel rank]

SH: What was his name?

MM: Owen Ford Moore. Well, after he'd come back from India, he was the postmaster at Fort Dix, the APO post office. ... [The] New Egypt postmaster had committed suicide, or something. ... He jumped out of a roof somewhere, I don't know, but, anyway, they needed somebody in New Egypt, so, they asked him to come over there, transferred him over there, and so he was postmaster in New Egypt, and that's how we met as postmasters.

JR: You said he went to Rutgers.

MM: Yes, Rutgers School of Pharmacy, in Newark.

SH: That would have been prior to World War II that he graduated.

MM: Yes. I'm not sure. ... I'm trying to think, because he would have graduated from high school in about '36, 1936, because he's, you know, two or three years older than me, so he would have been around '39 or '40 when he graduated from Rutgers, somewhere at that time.

SH: So he was attached to a unit that was in charge of ferrying the wounded back?

MM: Right, he did the medical supplies and took care of, you know, all the medicines and things. But, for some reason back then, a pharmacist couldn't get a rank and so he wanted to get a rank so he transferred over to where he could, and when we were in China, it would have been four years ago, about four or four and a half years ago, we met a Doctor Lin (Wu Song?) and his wife and when Dr. Lin found out that Owen had helped with the supplies going into China, he honored him in China for doing that to help the Chinese government.

SH: He was involved in sending medical supplies that were going over the Hump?

MM: The Hump, over the hump into China.

SH: This was during World War II.

MM: Two, yes.

SH: Do you know where he was stationed in India when he was there?

MM: I don't know where the bases are, but, I know he had talked about Calcutta. But, I don't know just where the base was because he talked about how people would die and they'd take them down the street on the top of a wooden plank and how they would burn things, you know. He really didn't like to discuss what he did in India.

SH: Are there any photographs, or letters, or anything that the family has of either of your husbands' service during World War II?

MM: Probably in all my boxes and things that I have around my house because I have boxes from, I have pictures of my first husband on the *Saipan* and different things when he was in the military. I have never thrown anything away. There are letters, [laughter] in fact, in my pocketbook is a letter that my second husband had written to me inviting me out to dinner and things and I have carried that in my pocketbook all these years. That's how sentimental ...

SH: Please continue, I believe there are other stories about New Brunswick.

MM: When I lived in Cranbury, of course, we had doctors in Cranbury and they were connected with the hospitals here in New Brunswick and they would send my husband down here to New Brunswick. Also, I was a 4-H leader and taught sewing when I lived in Cranbury, and we used to bring the girls to New Brunswick, to Rutgers to the different things that were going on, and the camps and different, whatever programs they had for 4-H, and anything in Middlesex County that was going on.

SH: How has New Brunswick changed?

MM: Oh, just coming in here today I said, "My gosh all these big buildings." I mean, it was country back, you know, back in the '40s. This was countryside. We didn't think anything about, I mean, you would come up Route 130 [and] you would go through the towns. There was no highway; you went through Cranbury town and you went through Dayton and Deans and all these little towns and now, I mean, my gosh, it's like a superhighway out here. That's when I jumped out of an airplane in a parachute. [Editor's Note: Mrs. Moore is referring to the photo of her sky-diving.]

JR: How old were you guys?

MM: Well, let's see ...

JR: My mother won't let me jump out of the plane with the army ...

MM: All right, I wasn't married to Owen until I was fifty and we did it after we got married, so I would have had to been, you know, about thirty years ago.

JR: Are there any other crazy things you've done? [laughter]

SH: Any advice for someone like Janeann?

JR: My age.

MM: I mean, I think she should do whatever she wants to do. I mean, I'm ...

SH: How did you meet Janeann and her family?

MM: Her mother and father joined the Eastern Star and I've been a member for fifty-two years, the Eastern Star.

JR: What is the Eastern Star?

MM: The Order of the Eastern Star is a fraternal organization connected to the Masonic Order. It's the women ... you know, the wives, mothers, [and] daughters of Masons. It's a fraternal organization, not a religious organization, but fraternal, suppose to help with charity.

SH: Did you join this organization as a young woman?

MM: Fifty-two years ago.

SH: A younger woman we'll say.

MM: Well I would have been thirty when I joined. My step-father was very active in the Masonic Order. He was a Knight Templar and in Scottish Rite, and all kinds of stuff, and so he had my mother join, and when New Jersey changed the law that a step-daughter could join, then I was able to join, and I did, and my step-father came to New Jersey to see me initiated, which was against the law in the Masonic Order at that time. Pennsylvania Masons were not permitted to come to New Jersey meetings.

SH: Really, they're not allowed?

MM: They weren't allowed back then. They weren't allowed to visit New Jersey because there was some fight between the two states.

SH: When you say laws, do you mean Masonic law?

MM: Masonic law, that he could not visit here, but he did come over to see me initiated and I became very active in that. Anything I've gotten involved in, I sort of get active with and her [Editor's note: Mrs Moore is referring to Janeann] mother and father joined that seven years ago now and so, I sort of like took her mother as a second daughter.

SH: Where do you live now?

MM: I live in New Egypt.

JR: She's looking forward to a granddaughter being in the Olympics ...

SH: What does she do?

MM: Horseback riding and, well, I never knew what to give the child for her birthday, or Christmas, or anything, so I paid for all her horseback riding lessons and so she just loves it. She wants to be a veterinarian when she gets older and so, well, she plays soccer, and she's very sports minded. So my daughter started giving her lessons, and there's only a few places that you could go over there, and the school that's she's going to is run by the Olympic team. ...So, they are training her and another girl, who is about her age, to now jump. So she ...

SH: She's eleven now?

MM: She just turned twelve last week, and so she's just started recently for jumping, but she does all the tricks and all the things on the horses. So the Olympic team told her if she stays in China for the Olympics, they would use her in the Olympics, she and this other girl. They might just be riding, you know, as far as display, or something like that, but they would use the two of them.

SH: Does she get to come here often to visit?

MM: Yes, they come home twice a year. In fact, my daughter is in Minneapolis right now.

SH: Your granddaughter travels with her?

MM: Well, she didn't this time. It's the first time and I don't like it. But, Jane seems to think it will be all right for her to be over there.

SH: Is somebody taking care of her?

MM: Yes, she has a Chinese woman who is her housekeeper, baby-sitter, everything. She's had her for about four years now, and she's very dependable, and Emily, and this woman only speaks Chinese, and so this gives Emily a chance to practice all her Chinese all the time. But Emily can't come out of school this time, this trip. Usually Jane would just take her out of school and bring her and then she would teach her herself, home teaching. But she wants to get her, and she goes into seventh grade in the fall, and she wants to get her in a special private school for seventh grade, and if she, well, she came home for my husband's funeral in December, and Emily missed out on the going over the things that they were going to have for their tests and her grade dropped from an A to a C and Emily doesn't want anything lower than an A. She's very conscious of it and she cried. She was so upset and so she told her mother she didn't want to come home, when you know, when she had to be in school, so Jane is leaving her there this time and I'm not happy that, you know, that Jane's going to be sixteen hours away from her.

JR: You were telling me that Jane wasn't allowed, I mean, your granddaughter wasn't in school for a certain time because something had broken out. I'm trying to remember what that was, SARs?

MM: The SARs, yes.

JR: How long was that for? How did that affect her school schedule?

MM: Well, it affected their schedule because they couldn't go to school. See, Emily goes to an International School and so they gave them home study, you know, things to do at home, but they couldn't go to school. A lot of people couldn't go to work. They couldn't do anything for a while. No, Emily doesn't want her grades to drop and, of course, Jane doesn't want it either because to get her in this private school that she's going to, it costs eighteen thousand dollars to go to seventh grade.

JR: Really? Unbelievable. How much does Rutgers tuition cost? [laughter]

MM: For her to go to high school in China will be thirty-four thousand dollars a year.

SH: My word.

MM: To go to an International High School.

SH: Now, does the organization that your daughter works for, do they provide some compensation for her education costs?

MM: No, she can't, I mean, she has to pay for it herself, out of her own money.

SH: Has she thought about immigrating?

MM: I said she could come home and live with me, but my daughter will be coming back to Illinois because that's where her, well, if she comes back to Illinois, Emily gets her education free because she's an employee of, you know, the State. Emily can go to Illinois State University free and they also have, the college has a high school program, and so Emily could go to high school there, too, at the University. So she's planning that she'll just go to seventh grade in China and then they'll come back, and Jane will commute back and forth to China, and Emily will stay here and grand-mom will go baby-sit.

SH: Well, if there are any other stories that you'd like to share with us, please do. If not, I thank you so much for coming and I thank Janeann for bringing you to campus.

MM: Well, it has been an interesting experience.

SH: This concludes the interview. Thank you.

MM: Okay.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Stephanie Ruffo 10/19/05

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 11/14/05

Reviewed by Mary Moore 12/01/95