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Mary Anne Federspiel interview for Wright State University Oral History Course 685

Bridget M. Federspiel-Newbury

Mary Anne Federspiel

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Bridget Federspiel

Dr. Marjorie McLellan

Oral History — Hst. 685

March 3, 22003

Bridget Federspiel

Interviewee: Mary Anne Federspiel

February 19, 2003; Dayton, Ohio

Tape 1 side A

Length of Tape- 27 min

Tape 1 side B

Length of Tape- 15 min.

February 25, 2003; Dayton, Ohio

Tape 2 side A

Length of Tape- 5 min.

Summary

Mary Anne Hubert Soehner Federspiel was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1937. She grew up in Dayton and has resided in Dayton her entire life. She grew up in the region of Dayton called "old north Dayton" and attended Catholic elementary and high schools. She worked as a clerk before her marriage at the age of twenty. She bore six children and returned to work in the 1980s at NCR. Her first husband died, and she remarried in the 1990s.

The interview covers topics ranging from World War II through some Cold War events. Mrs. Federspiel recalls some events in detail and others vaguely. She states "that during that particular time of my life, I was more directed to my home than I was to outside events. So, that while you thought about them and prayed about them you still felt very distant from them because your life was not involved in that."

The majority of the interview is concerning life while growing up in the Miami Valley. Mrs. Federspiel explains activities she participated in both as a young single woman and as a married woman.

"Oh, we would go to the movies. We, my friends and I, would meet and we would get on the bus and ride downtown to the movies. Movies were different in those days. You could walk into the movie house and it didn't make any difference where the movie was. You would try to get there when it was in the beginning but if it wasn't you would walk in and watch the movie and maybe you would watch it all the way through and you could sit through two of them if you wanted to. It didn't make any difference. You could stay as long as your parents had said that you could stay out. And you knew you had to get back on the bus and get back home.

We went to football games at Welcome Stadium and afterwards we would walk back into town and if there was time you stop in and french fries and a coke and then catch the last bus home. You knew you had to get on that last bus to get back home. We rode the buses everywhere. No one had cars. Seldom did you know anyone that had a car. And that was just the family car and that was it. You know, you didn't drive around. The buses were there. Things were downtown so you didn't have to go out far or anything else. You could reach them that way."

On tape B, Mrs. Federspiel answers two specific questions. First, she explains her outlook of the "good life" in the Miami Valley as a youth, young married women and today. Secondly, Mrs. Federspiel discusses the three biggest changes in respect to inventions and technology that has made her life easier.

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Content Outline
(Topics/questions)

Bridget Federspiel

Interviewee: Mary Anne Federspiel

February 19, 2003; Dayton, Ohio

Tape 1 side A

Length of Tape- 27 min

Topics

Life in the Miami Valley during 1940s

- a. World War II
 1. father's role as air raid warden
 2. end of war
- b. School — Our Lady of the Rosary Church (counter — 21)
 1. classes
 2. uniforms (counter — 41)
 3. lunch time
- c. Wright Patterson air force base (counter — 57)
- d. School — Julianne High School and St. Joseph High School
 1. courses
 2. gym class
- e. Social life
 1. boys
 2. interaction with non-Catholics (counter — 103)
- f. Korean War
- g. Activities growing up (counter — 125)
- h. After High School
 1. work - \$1.00 an hour (counter — 154)
 2. marriage (counter — 176)
- i. Cold war
 1. Cuban Missile Crisis (counter — 229)
 2. Bomb shelters
 3. Kennedy assassination (counter — 260)
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- j. Civil Rights in Dayton (counter — 282)
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2. returning to work (counter — 327)

Bridget Federspiel

Interviewee: Mary Anne Federspiel

February 19, 2003; Dayton, Ohio

Tape 1 side B

Length of Tape- 15 min.

Life in the Miami Valley during 1940s

- a. Family life in Kettering
- b. Social life as married couple (counter — 58)
- c. Unique for the time period (counter — 76)
- d. Shopping centers

Bridget Federspiel

Interviewee: Mary Anne Federspiel

February 25, 2003; Dayton, Ohio

Tape 2 side A

Length of Tape- 5 min.

What was the good life?

- a. youth
- b. 30s/40s age
- c. today 60s

What were the three biggest changes as far as inventions, technology that made life easier? (counter — 25)

- a. cars
- b. computers
- c. internet

Bridget Federspiel

Dr. Marjorie McLellan

Oral History — Hst. 685

March 3, 22003

Transcription of interview

February 19, 2003

Mary Anne Federspiel

Dayton, Ohio

Tape 1 side A

Length of Tape — 27 min.

Bridget: This is February 19. We are in Dayton, Ohio. My name is Bridget Federspiel and I am getting ready to do an interview for the Oral History project.

Mary Anne: I am Mary Anne Federspiel. I was born Mary Anne Huber and my first husband was Richard Soehner. My second husband is Walter Federspiel. I was born April 24, 1937.

Bridget: Okay. We're going to start by asking what life was like in the Miami Valley and I wanted to start with what do you remember of World War II?

Mary Anne: World War II I was very young. The most I remember was that my father was the air raid warden for our street. He had to go out every night and make sure that everything was dark. We had to have curtains that shut out all the lights. I was very young, six years old. I remember when they declared war. I was with my grandmother at a movie house and we came home very rapidly after everyone heard that news. The, I don't really remember much about the end of the war. It was, I just too young to think about that. I just remember about my father.

Bridget: Okay. Do you remember what he would have to do if somebody, if lights were showing through, I mean?

Mary Anne: No, no I don't. I remember my mother saying that he didn't, he didn't have to go to war, because he had two children at the time. So, that exempted him from being in the army at that point. I don't really remember any that they talked about.

Bridget: Okay, where did you go to high school in Dayton?

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M: I went to Julianne High school for two years and for two years at St. Joseph's commercial high school. Julianne was out off of north main street and my friends and I took two buses to

get there and back. St. Joe's was down town and so we only had to take one bus to go there. But both were Catholic girls' high schools.

Bridget: What part of town did you live in?

Mary Anne: I grew up in what is now called old north Dayton. Which I lived on the same street as Our Lady of the Rosary Church, right across the street from the school. So I never had any excuse about not being there on time.

Bridget: What was your neighborhood like? I mean who lived there and how was it?

Mary Anne: Well, I had, I was the only girl my age living in that particular first block of Notre Dame. Most of my friends live in the next block of either Baltimore Street or Notre Dame. So, I always had to go up the street to play. My school was unusual in the fact that boys and girls went to school separately. We were taught by the order of Notre Dame nuns and the boys were taught by the Marianist brothers. And at that time, they didn't teach girls. So the boys and girls were separated and I never went to school with a boy until I went to college in the evening.

Bridget: Even in your elementary school?

Mary Anne: No, elementary school was separated at that point. Now of course they're all together and but at point the boys went to school in one building and the girls went to school in another building.

Bridget: Now did you have a dress code? Did you wear a uniform?

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Mary Anne: We didn't wear uniforms. No. We didn't have uniforms. I remember that winters were really winters. We wore leggings. You didn't wear slacks back then. We wore leggings to school. When I was, up to the third grade, in the winter I always had to wear long cotton hose. It wasn't, it was definitely cotton, and it was heavy and you could tell it wasn't nylon or anything. It was heavy because we wore skirts, and your legs were bare and my mother always said we needed to have our legs covered.

Bridget: Did you eat at the school? Did they have a cafeteria? Did you bring your lunch?

Mary Anne: Some children bought their lunches. We had students that came from farms around. There weren't a lot of houses out in the country. There were big farms yet. And other students went home. Of course I always went home because I lived across the street from the school. And we had, I don't know how long the lunch hour was but it was time enough for people to go home and eat and still get back to play at recess time, lunchtime.

Bridget: Okay. You grew up in Dayton near a major airforce base. Can you tell me anything about the base when you were growing up? Anything that you can remember?

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Mary Anne: I don't really remember very much about it when I was growing up. I just know when I was younger. I know that we didn't have a car in our family so of course we could even go out to go past it ourselves out there. It was always a military establishment so you never even thought about going into a place like that. It was very military. And of course there was always a big high fence around it so that made it even more forbidding at that point.

Bridget: Okay. Once you got into high school what kinds of courses did you take?

Mary Anne: At Julianne, I took college preparatory courses. I had two years of Latin, three years of English, biology, geometry, algebra. I mentioned biology.

Bridget: Did you have to take a gym class?

Mary Anne: Oh, yes, we had gym. At Julianne we had gym. And we wore a gym uniform that was cotton. It was light blue and it was all once piece. If I can remember, and it had bloomer type legs. It was, you know, no one liked gym. It was not the most favorite class. (Laughter) But we did learn dances and different games but I don't remember doing anything much outside at gym time. It was always inside.

Bridget: It was always inside. Did you play any sports, like basketball?

Mary Anne: I was never a particular sports person. In grade school I remember playing kickball and that was the most of my sports involvement. I played a little tennis in high school with my friend and nothing, no organized, basketball or volleyball or anything like that. I am a much better speculator than I was a participator.

Bridget: Going to an all-girl school, how did you meet boys?

Mary Anne: Well, there was, first of all you always saw them on the buses because they were going down to Chaminade or they were in your neighborhood. At our church every Sunday we would have, every Sunday evening, we would have a dance and all the high school students that lived in the neighborhood or went to that church could come to the dances. Also Friday evenings we had Club Kaoda,,which was at the Loretta, which was downtown on first-street, west First Street. The Loretta was a hotel for girls, for young women. Mostly they came from the north, from Minister and Wapakoneta, those kinds of places. And they would come to Dayton to work, and so this was a place where they could live. It's kind of like, I guess you would call it a Catholic YWCA, and they had small, I don't even know if there were cooking facilities there, but a lot of my friends were there. After I graduated from high school, there was another group called the Catholic young peoples club and it also met at the Loretta and they would have different activities. We would have dances and of course there was always a meeting on Wednesday, and we would plan different activities during the year. We went on picnics. And to

swimming pools and we played miniature golf. And that's where most of my friends, and I, myself, met our husbands was at the Catholic young people's club.

Bridget: By going to Catholic schools all your life, did you have interaction with children that went to the public schools? What were the big public schools?

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Mary Anne: Well, there was Allen school and Webster. Kiser high school. But no, I didn't know many non-Catholic people. I think I had maybe one date with a non-Catholic person, and you just, you knew more Catholic people than Protestants, you just, you knew your parents would not particularly approval of you going out with a Protestant so you just didn't, you didn't do that.

Bridget: Now while you were in high school, the Korean War broke out. Do you remember it breaking out or any of the reactions?

Mary Anne: I remember, not so much when it broke out, but we were, my friends, my one particular friend always included me in their family outings or family get togethers, and some of them were from the North and they had a big picnic party one day in the summer after we were freshmen and this was the summer after our freshmen year. And so I met one of her cousins there, who was going off to Korea. And so for over a good year I wrote to this young man in Korea. I sent him comics and just told him ordinary things that were going on in high school. Nothing ever came of it. It was just a year when he was over in Korea. And he would write. He wrote about different, how horrible it was there in Korea. But being as young as I was it didn't you know the full impact of all that didn't register until much later in my life.

Bridget: Besides these dances, what else would you do while growing up for fun?

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Mary Anne: Oh, we would go to the movies. We, my friends and I would meet and we would get on the bus and ride downtown to the movies. Movies were different in those days. You could walk into the movie house and it didn't make any difference where the movie was. You would try to get there when it was in the beginning but if it wasn't you would walk in and watch the movie and maybe you would watch it all the way through and you could sit through two of them if you wanted to. It didn't make any difference. You could stay as long as your parents had said that you could stay out. And you knew you had to get back on the bus and get back home.

We went to football games at Welcome Stadium and afterwards we would walk back into town and if there was time you stop in and french fries and a coke and then catch the last bus home. You knew you had to get on that last bus to get back home. We rode the buses everywhere. No one had cars. Seldom did you know anyone that had a car. And that was just the family car and

that was it. You know, you didn't drive around. The buses were there. Things were downtown so you didn't have to go out far or anything else. You could reach them that way.

What else did we do. . . Oh we would go have slumber parties with the girls. I remember doing that. And, we also would just to each other's houses and on the weekend and just have a party, a gathering of girls together. I'm sure we did other. . . oh, I spent a great deal of time at the library. I loved to read and we in the summer time especially would have plays and so the kids in the neighborhood would get together and we would have a play and we would put it on for the rest of the neighborhood kids.

I also like to embroidery and crochet so I did a lot of that as well.

Bridget: Once you graduated from high school, what did you do then?

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Mary Anne: Well, when I graduated from high school I had gone for two years at St. Joseph Commercial and that was more of a business-type school although you still could go on to college after that. Several of my friends did do that but I went to work. I worked during school I worked after school as a file clerk while I was at the end of my junior year and all of my senior year. And then I went to work in an office. It was called; the company was called Precision Laboratories. And it was a dental laboratory and I was the only clerk, you would call me, in the office. There was a manager, myself and I did payroll and bookkeeping, answered the telephone and that sort of thing after high school.

Bridget: Can I ask you how much did you made?

Mary Anne: I made a dollar an hour and that was, I only made seventy-five cents an hour when I was a file clerk and when I started full time I made a dollar an hour. And I worked from, let me guess I see, from '55 until '58. I must have gotten a small raise in between because I remember when I went back to work after my children were born, and I subbed in the summer a couple of years, they actually paid me two dollars an hour and I thought that was very good. (laughter) at the time.

Bridget: Okay. When did you get married?

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Mary Anne: I was married in February 16th 1957. And I was not yet twenty when I was married.

Bridget: Okay. Where did you live when you first got married?

Mary Anne: Well, when I first got married, we had built a house. We, we went on our honeymoon and we came back and we lived, in Dick's mother's apartment for about three days and by that time our house was about finished. My husband was 7 1/2 years old than I so he was

more settled and had a little more money and so we decided we would build the house when we got married.

Bridget: What section of town?

Mary Anne: Well, we lived in Kettering. It was in Kettering, very on the edge of Kettering, at the time. Woodman Drive was just beginning to be finished. Rikes-Kettering, which became Lazarus, was just being built when we moved in. The house was a couple blocks off Woodman Drive there. It was all brick. It had a basement. It didn't have a garage but we had three bedrooms and like I said a basement.

Bridget: So, once you got married, did you just stay at home or did you continue to work?

Mary Anne: No, I continued to work until our first child came and then I stopped working about the end of May and Mark was born the end of July. So, I just stayed home then after that.

Bridget: What kind of, what kind of activities did you do while you were married? What did you do for fun? Anything different then when you were single?

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Mary Anne: Oh, well we went to movies. We also after, it must have been 1958, '59 time frame. A group of couples that we had known from the Catholic young peoples club got together and formed a pinochle club. So we met with them every month. It was once a month and played pinochle. I also, we also went out with other friends of mine, we had gone to school with, high school There were six of us that were very good friends and we the girls would get together once a month and we would bring our sewing or embroidery there and sit around and talk. That was our girls' night out. And once a month, the fellows would get together and they would play poker. So that was their night out. And in between we would get together and play cards at each other's homes and sort of thing or go out to the movies and Dick always said that we needed to get out at least once a week and do something. So, so we always did that, even after the children came.

Bridget: And how many children did you have?

Mary Anne: I had six children.

Bridget: In how many years?

Mary Anne: Well the first, the first five came, well the six was all together in twelve years, but the first five were in oh, just about six years and then there was a space of six years later I had my last child.

Bridget: Okay. During the fifties and sixties the Cold War was heating up. What do you remember about the Cuban Missile Crisis?

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Mary Anne: Well I remember that there was a big commotion about it. I remember Khrushchev being in it and the President, I think it was President Kennedy at that time. So, I remember being worried about it. And there was always in the fifties, especially the later, fifties they were talking about, we were talking about making (Pause) Oh stop it. (laughter) I can't think of what you called them. Air raid, no, not air raid shelters but

Bridget: Bomb shelters?

Mary Anne: Yes, bomb shelters. Because that was the big thing if they, if they drop an atom bomb, you know you were suppose to have a place that you could go that would be secure Well, we talked about it and personally they were not cheap to build and we decided because we were so close to Wright Patterson that if they were going to come and bomb Wright Patterson, which would have been one of their main targets, I am sure, but we would be much too close to have any chance to, of surviving. So (laughter) we put our trust in the Lord and said that we will not build a bomb shelter. And so luckily we didn't need it. We were very grateful for that. But that, I remember when you asked that question, when we were in the eighth grade like 1950, '51 we practiced for bombing raids. We would have to, they would give a signal and everyone would have to put their heads down and under the desks. I mean that was, I don't know what that would have done, I mean it wouldn't have protected us from much but that was the air raid system that we went through when we were in school. I remember doing that.

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But I think that during that particular time of my life, I was more directed to my home than I was to outside events. So, that while you thought about them and prayed about them you still felt very distant from them because your life was not involved in that.

Bridget: Where were you when you heard that John F. Kennedy was assassinated?

Mary Anne: I was in the basement doing the laundry. And I can remember, having the radio on and listening to that and, I mean it was just so shocking. To this day, I can remember that. It was really bad.

Bridget: During the sixties we went through the Vietnam War and one of Kennedy's promises was getting a man on the moon. Do you remember watching the man step out on the moon?

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Mary Anne: Oh yes. Yes, we did. In fact we woke Mark up. It was right before his twelfth birthday and that was very exciting. Yes we did do that. We watched all those kind of things with much interest, at that time.

Bridget: Also during the sixties, we were going through the civil rights movement. Can you recall any particular events that occurred in Dayton or anything that really stands out in your mind as far as civil rights movement?

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Mary Anne: Well, I think as a child I always felt that the fact a person's skin was a different color was certainly no reason and why they would have to have a separate, separate hotels, or places where they had to be. I never agreed with that, and my family never felt that way.

Bridget: Did you encounter much segregation here in Dayton or were you just aware of it?

Mary Anne: I think that we were aware of it. The west side of Dayton was always, was always black. There wasn't much mingling between the two sides. However, when I was in high school, a friend of ours lived on Western Avenue. They, her grandparents owned the Super Packing Company and their house was right across the street from where that was. And, so when we would go to visit or go to each other's houses, my friend and I would take the bus from North Dayton and go down to Third and Main and get on the western avenue bus and go to our friend's house. And we would be the only white people on the bus. That I remember. We had no troubles. I mean you felt strange because you were the only white people on the bus. But we didn't have any difficulties at that time.

Bridget: Were there any African-Americans that went to Chaminade, I mean Julianne?

Mary Anne: I think that there was maybe one girl in our class but I really can't remember more than that being there.

Bridget: Would blacks and whites be on the sidewalk together or was it really pretty much separate downtown, like when you were transferring buses or getting on buses?

Mary Anne: I think they were all just standing there together. I don't think there was any problem in that way, downtown, at any rate. It wasn't like it got to be later on when things seem to heat up and then they were beginning to stand up for their rights. You know what they were doing. But at the time, especially the early part of the 50s, I don't think there was downtown.

Bridget: Okay. Lets go back to your family life and raising children. When did you go back to work?

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Mary Anne: I didn't go back to work until my youngest child was twelve. So I.

Bridget: You got a dollar raise?

Mary Anne: No (laughter), the first time, I was referring to that. That was after, after I was home with Mark and the following summer they asked me to come in and that's when they gave me the two-dollar raise. But when I went back to work in '85, I guess it was, or '86, why, no, I had a much more substantial raise at that point. But I went back to work at that point. I was beginning to feel like I wanted to contribute something else to my own life as well as to our family life. The children were getting older and there were more expenses and things like that. So at the time, the company my husband was working for was bought out by another. There was always that worry about whether or not he would have a job and so I went back to work at that point. Partly for that and partly for the fact that I wanted to accomplish something on my own as a person.

Bridget: Okay, where did you go to work?

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Mary Anne: I worked first part-time positions and then I was offered a full-time position at NCR, which I was very grateful for. And, I worked there as a temp for three months, and then I was hired full-time by the company.

Bridget: NCR is still a major company here in Ohio, Dayton. Growing up, was it a big company? I mean was it a dream to get into NCR?

Mary Anne: Oh yes. Very definitely. I remember my mother talking about her brothers; they had worked at NCR. My cousin worked there. So, it was a good company to work for. It was here in Dayton and it always had the interest of the city and the people in mind when they were here.

Bridget: Okay. We are going to stop the tape and turn it over.

Tape 1— side B

Length of Tape — 15 min.

Bridget: Part of an interview with Mary Anne Federspiel. And we were talking about going back to work in 1985, after your children, your youngest had gotten to be twelve and lets go back and talk about more on how Dayton was when you were growing up. You had mentioned after you married that you moved out here to Woodman, and Woodman hadn't been, wasn't, was almost complete. What else do you remember as far as the geography of the city?

Mary Anne: Well, our house was in a new plat. Our houses were brick with wood, wood peaks to them. The houses that were across the street on Woodman Drive had been built in the early fifties and they were smaller homes and didn't have basements. In fact the company I worked for was a mortgage company, the Kissel Company and I helped file the mortgages and the paper work on the houses that were in that plat on the corner of Woodman and Dorothy Lane. I remember the names of the streets. There, there really wasn't much that I can recall beyond where this plat was In front of that plat was a just completely open field. In fact they assured us that they would not have a shopping center there, or anything there. But as things go, builders

promises are not always kept and there was another smaller plat of homes went in front of ours in the open field and then at the end of that there was a strip mall that went in there as well. Later on in our married life, after we had been married for about eight years, we moved to a new home and at the time that was also a brick home and it was further out in the city. In fact, it was in Washington Township. Right on the edge of Kettering. And at that time, Woodman Drive, no not Woodman, Ackerman Blvd was not completely through and they were just building Rahn Road. When we moved into our house we could look from our front yard clear over to Rahn road and there wasn't there were no homes. It was completely empty. You could see St. George Episcopal church, that was there. But there were no other homes. We were the first, one of the first on our street to be built. To go to church you just could not go half a block and then take a left and go down Ackerman. You had to go half a block and then around, oh at least, two or three more turns before you finally got up to church at the corner of David and Ackerman. Behind our house, was a completely open field. For quite a long time there were no homes there. And then they began to build even bigger homes behind us. The children enjoyed playing in the open fields and when the homes were being built back there they used scrap lumber and built tree forts in the trees along our property lines. Spent many hours doing that sort of thing. The property line behind our house was the boundary line for a farm at one time because there was entire row of Ohsao Orange trees back there which were virtually indestructible trees. And by the time we moved there, they were very large and could hold children, climbing them very easily. Ours trees in our yard were the males and the trees in the rest of the yards, all the way down the entire street were the female trees and we did not have any Ohsao orange, big green balls that would come down in the fall time, we were completely exempt. But everyone else had buckets and buckets and buckets of the fruit from the Ohsao orange tree.

Bridget: Now, could you eat that fruit?

Mary Anne: Oh no.

Bridget: Okay

Mary Anne: The people would say it was good for chasing, roaches and things like that but I really don't know if that was true. (Laughter) But they were very heavy and there were many, I mean very fruitful trees. I was always grateful that we didn't have that problem. Our trees did not have thorns. The female trees had thorns so you couldn't climb them. But ours did not so we many people climbing our trees and not the other ones.

Bridget: When we were talking earlier about being married in the fifties and sixties and getting together, you didn't mention going out to dinner. I mean that is a big item that couples do today like they go out to dinner someplace. Can you comment on why or why not?

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Mary Anne: We always went out to dinner on New Year's Eve. That was a big thing. We would go to the movies with our friends. First we would go to dinner and then to the movies afterwards. In the early fifties and maybe even into the sixties there were not as many

restaurants as there are today. Chains were just beginning to be established. McDonalds was the drive in that had fast hamburgers. We had Frisch's and Hasty Tasty where you could drive your car in and the bellhops would come out and take your order and go back inside and you could eat in your car. Those kind of things. But we didn't do that very often. I think it was more of a treat than an every day occurrence. I just we just never did very much eating out to any extent. I think we would occasionally go out to eat before we go to movies ordinarily but most of the time we would visit our friends' homes and play cards or board games. That type of thing. There just wasn't as much eating out as there is nowadays.

Bridget: Okay. Can you think of anything else that is unique about growing up in the Miami Valley that people today just don't understand the difference?

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Mary Anne: Well I think when I was growing up you knew more people in the neighborhoods. I know the people in my neighborhood now, and I did in my old neighborhoods. But houses were closer together. People walked a great deal. They rode buses. I mean most people rode buses. Companies were located downtown. There wasn't as much activity in the outside, in the outlying areas as there is now. People had cars but there was usually only one car in a family So, and that the husband would usually take the car for work. And especially in the city, the bus service was very good. So there was no reason to have an extra car. You could get to places and do things without going far away.

Bridget: And they didn't have shopping malls like the big malls we have today. Where did you go shopping, like grocery shopping, clothes shopping?

Mary Anne: Well when I was growing up there was a small grocery at the corner so that was the first place. There was a Liberals, and a Krogers. Liberals was about four blocks away. My family didn't have a car so we, my mother would take a wagon to the grocery store and we would bring the wagon with our groceries back home. There was a baker shop, not quite two blocks away I guess. Saturdays we would go down and get fresh bread. As far as stores were concerned, we went downtown for shopping. That was always a big thing to do. We, my mother and I, I can remember my sister as well, we would go downtown and go shopping. I don't really know for what particularly but we would end in McCroys and we would have a hotdog and a coke and that was a big thing. Or we would walk through the arcade and we'd get caramel corn. They sold caramel corn there. And the arcade was always a neat place to go through. It was very bustling and had small shops there. And so I remember doing that as a child.

Santa Claus was always at Rikes. And, you just, downtown was where you went. I mean, the movie houses were there. Restaurants were downtown. I can't remember as a child being in a restaurant particularly. My father worked on the weekends as a busboy in a Chinese restaurant downtown. Became very good friends with the owners. And, but as far as, I remember he would bring carry out home but as far as eating in the restaurant, I didn't eat there until though myself was out of high school. And would go to this man's restaurant.

Bridget: Do you remember, what was the first big shopping center?

Mary Anne: Well the first big shopping center in Dayton I recall was a place called Miracle Lane. It was off of Salem Avenue. And if you think of it now, it really probably had four or five smaller stores in it. And shortly after that then Town and country was built. And at the time, both of those were almost on the outskirts of town. There were either in another township or in the case of Town and Country, it was in Kettering. And they had the Metropolitan. And there was a grocery store. The _____ was there. A & P, A & P grocery store. Other smaller stores were in that shopping center. And it was a big deal because the stores were not downtown. They were out and in the suburbs. And that was a big thing. And yet today, they don't look any more than like a strip mall. And that's about it, although, they are very nice. Town and Country is a very nice shopping center. Miracle Lane I don't believe is still there any more. It's completely gone.

Bridget: Well, thank you very much for talking about growing up in the Miami Valley and I will be back in a couple of days to see if you can think of anything else that you want to relay to future generations.

Mary Anne: Thank you.

Second Interview
February 25, 2003
Dayton, Ohio

Tape 2 side A
Length of Tape — 5 min.

Bridget: This is February 25, 2003 and this is the second interview. My first question is, when you were young, growing up in the Miami Valley, what did you consider to be the "good life"? What did you consider to be the ideal life, this is when you were little, that you kind of wanted to aspire to?

Mary Anne: Well, I think when I was growing up the ideal was to be married and to have children, to have a husband that you would be happy with. I think that is what most of my friends felt like at that time. I would say probably throughout high school that is what you began thinking of.

Bridget: Okay. A little bit later, when you were in your thirties and early forties, what did you consider to be the good life then?

Mary Anne: Well, at that point I had my children and my husband, and my house, more than I ever thought I have and so to me that was still the good life.

Bridget: Okay, and the third part of that question is what do you consider to be the good life today?

Mary Anne: Well, I think somewhat the same thing. I lost my first husband and I was, which I never expected really and through friends, I met a second husband and I am very grateful for that. I consider what I do still the good life and I don't expect. I don't aspire to do anything differently.

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Bridget: Alright. The second question has to do with the time span of your life. And, I know that this puts you on the spot but not to think too much about the question but in your life span you have seen a lot of changes, as far as technology. What for you were the three biggest changes, as far as inventions, technology, things that made your life easier that you have seen from when you were little until now?

I know there is a lot to choose from (laughter).

Mary Anne: Well, I think being able to drive. I didn't learn to drive until after I was married and having a car. That was a wonderful thing. I think the latest technology that we have are computers and the internet. That's another great, giant step that you could never have even dreamed of when you were, when I was that young.

Bridget: Especially, when you had spent a lot of time in the library looking information up or just reading.

Mary Anne: Oh that's right. It is, it is just a wonderful thing. When you say it's a new invention. When I was in high school we had manual typewriters. When I went back to work, I had to learn to use an electric typewriter so that in itself was a giant step as far as technology went and soon after I went back to work (again), well, computers arrived on the scene and I have thought that ever since. I think it was probably the most important thing is the computer and the way it has opened life for us.

Bridget: Well, thank you very much.

Mary Anne: Your welcome.