

Diane Darnley: *Elizabeth Buzby*

Michael Nobel Kline: Maybe you could start by telling us your name. My name is --

Diane Darnley: Diane Davis.

MNK: Can you say, "My name is?"

DD: My name is Diane Davis Darnley. Davis is my maiden name. Do you want me to hold this?

MNK: No, I can hold it. And today is -

DD: What is today.

MNK: August.

DD: August the second, 1994.

MNK: Maybe you could begin by -- Maybe you could begin by describing that upper part of, valley there above Wheeling where Warwood is, a place you must have looked down on many times.

(008) DD: All right. Warwood from my experience living there has always been, I will say probably not, it's not the elitist part of Wheeling, but definitely a step above many communities. Anyone that was from Warwood during my time period of growing up was to be considering themselves from a very well-to-do neighborhood, a very well-to-do community. And we were rather set apart from the remainder of the city considering that you had the extent of the River Road from Wheeling proper up to Warwood is a subdivision. It is -- It's always been green and plush. Streets tree lined. Very close knit, very cliquey community. And one that
(017) I felt myself that I really never fit into because my family is originally from North Wheeling. And I spent probably seven and a half years of my life in North Wheeling and then moved to Warwood, relocated there. And although I'm 42 years old now, living in the same home where I was raised and raising my children there, I have never felt a part of that community. Although that's the only community I can really identify with. I like it. I love it a lot, and you have good people there. But again I was removed even more so from the

(025) community itself because we lived rurally up on the hill in Betty Zane community. Betty Zane being named after Betty Zane the historian, the heroine of Fort Henry from the Civil, or from the Revolutionary war. And that was a great place. That is probably of all the Nancy Drew books and Trixie Belden places to be raised, Betty Zane to me was that type of a neighborhood. There's trees there that still have the initials carved in them from people that are 20 some years older than I am. My generation and my children now are growing their and playing in the same trees in the same location. It's nice that I can identify with my community to my children and tell them I played over there, I've been in every house in this neighborhood, I saw them all built. I have a real love and affinity for Betty Zane. Warwood is where I went to school. It's where my parents shopped. It's where we went

(036) to the doctor. It's where we did everything because Warwood was the bank, it was everything. It was our own community, still part of Wheeling, but yet separate and the same. And what I can think of Warwood is how green it's always been. And even the colors of the schools were green and white. Everything about Warwood to me will always -- The minute I think of the name Warwood, I think of green because you have Garden Park which is the most beautiful community park right there, full of trees. As I said, all the streets are tree lined. It's just a beautiful place. Even trees in front of the high school.

(043) Trees that have long gone down now over the last 15, 20 years that they've removed because of the fact that they were dying. But Warwood was beautiful. It still is beautiful. And unfortunately I can see a decline occurring in that neighborhood. I can see problems moving from old neighborhoods in Wheeling, moving up river and coming into Warwood. And my mother lives in a high rise in Warwood. She is from old North Wheeling. So many people originally came to Warwood. They migrated, the senior citizens, up to Warwood when they left North Wheeling. And she was able to reestablish her community, her old neighborhood once again in the high rise. Now with problems that have started to plague Warwood, and with the public high rise situation being what it is now, they have moved to private elderly facilities. And my mother is of great desire of moving out there too. Again, to recapture her community, her neighborhood once more. Where it now appears to be in Brook Park, which

is right out here on the National Road. That's where old North Wheeling now resides. And that's where she wants to go. So I can see so many different
(056) sides of Warwood. I can see a community and a sense of belonging. I can also experience a sense of alienation because my family -- I was not born there. There are a great many people that had been born there. And for those of us that even went to church there, and I never attended church in Warwood. I always was out at the church -- There's so many churches in Warwood, I think eight or nine. So I was the only thing I didn't do in Warwood was go to church. And it's interesting because you could pretty much do anything in Warwood. You could bank, you could shop, you could go to the doctor, you could even be buried because they have a funeral home there. So you could begin and end in Warwood! Really, everything was there, and I thought that was unique in itself. What else can I tell you.

MNK: How did your grandparents happen to leave North Wheeling?

(066) DD: Well, it was my mother and father that left North Wheeling because of the decline of North Wheeling. My father was a deputy sheriff. And he saw his old neighborhood deteriorating very badly. And they were desirous of us leaving North Wheeling before he felt that his children should experience any problems. Was a very difficult thing for my mom and dad to do because they were raised, met North Wheeling, attended the same church together, kind of courted and carried on their relationship in the early years in North Wheeling, and then started to raise their family there. And unfortunately when I was about seven years old, six years old, things were then starting to decline. So my dad was anxiously looking for a community that had a lot of vision and a lot of potential. And he was offered property up in the countryside, which to my family from my understanding from my mom and dad, at that time to have the opportunity to live out there in the country was something that was really unique and it was like kind of the icing on the cake. But as a child when I grew up there and attended school in Warwood, if you lived in the country, you lived in the boonies. Now in the Short Creek area, which was down over the hill from where I was, that's where we
(082) always felt kind of the undesirable people came because that was the coal mining camps. And that's when coal miners did not have the status that they do today. When I was a child,

coal miners' families were poor, and they did not have much. By the time I reached high school, coal mining families were completely different. They had all the money, they had all the new cars and trucks, had the best homes, and they had done a complete turnaround just in my lifetime. From where they were just little shack communities and trailers that kind of popped up over night it seemed in one level area where they would all be like sardined, you know, into a little section of ground. All of a sudden, they were building beautiful homes. And I remember when the mines went on strike in the area one time, different car dealers were advertising that you didn't have to make a down payment, you didn't have to do anything, no payments until you went back to work. In fact it was Bill Yanen, I think, in Moundsville that advertised that. And I can remember my dad saying, "Well, it's a shame I left the coal mines years ago." But he worked in the coal mines when it was not the place to work. It was dirty, it was hard, it was unsafe and very treacherous type of living to make. And he had gone to the sheriff's office and nobody's ever going to get rich being a policeman. So he raised us on a policeman's salary. And I think

(098) we had an extremely unique quality to our life because of that. Some things I can look back on and really laugh over. But I know that we were not one of the well-to-do families, but we were from a well-to-do neighborhood. But we did not have -- We could never keep up with the Jones, we never tried. My dad was, didn't do that, but we were in a good community, good neighborhood, and we were in with the right people. Even though we were not financially, probably as secure as most of them around us were. Seems everybody around us -- There were contractors and engineers and professors from West Liberty State College and people that worked in city government were there. A lot of people that just had some position and had money. And my dad was a policeman. Even at that, that was a very good thing to be. I can remember my dad -- If we would get sick in the middle of the night, no problem. He knew the coroner. So if we got sick in the middle of the night and you lived out in the country -- I always laughed at dad, "Do I have to wear a toe tag to get to see the doctor?" Because he would right away take us to the coroner and make a phone

(111) call, and we would go to the coroner's office. We would play -- My brother and I used to play games of like wagon train. And we desperately wanted to have some type of reigns for our

make believe horses. Well my dad, he said, "Well I got stuff in the back of the cruiser I'll bring it to you tomorrow. When I come home from work I'll dig it out and leave it for you." It was the big canvas ropes they lowered coffins into the grave with that he had ended up some place! So we ended up playing with these coffin straps, which we thought later on, 'this is really sick!' But it's funny. Then he would do reports on accidents. And I can remember being very young, fourth, fifth grade. And he would take me out to the State Police Barracks with him, and he'd say, "I have to do an accident report." He was kind of a man's man, real macho, real tough guy, big, burley man. And I would sit there and be kind of bored, and he would say, "Here look at these books and entertain yourself." They were grotesque, graphic pictures of accidents that they had taken on the scene by the policeman! So -- And really it kind of didn't really bother me! I kind of desensitized towards it! But to my dad, that was okay I was sitting there going through these terrible, grotesque pictures, these Polaroid shots of accident victims. Horrible, horrible pictures as I recall. And then he would finish his reports, "Okay, all done looking at the book? Okay, let's go." I sometimes wondered did he ever really know what was in there because he would just -- He was that sort of guy. But I remember all these things that was kind of police oriented that we ended up doing. We knew when my dad was coming home because of course, that's before cable days. We had -- Everybody had rabbit ears on their TV. And just about time he would hit the entrance of Betty Zane, everybody in the neighborhood's TV would shut off, and you could hear "KQB 705, Ohio County Sheriff's Office, time" and they would give the time, and my dad would say, "Car two, 1020 home." And everybody in the neighborhood knew Kenny's home! Because it shut down over everybody's reception! So we always knew when my dad was on his way, and my mom would say, "Okay, you're dad's coming, let's go on out here and get ready at the table." And it was kind of really neat. But at the same time, because we were rurally located, there were no volunteer fire departments at that time, no paramedics. My dad was the only thing they had. And there were many people that he took to the hospital. Many people that did not survive the trip. Accidents that he would come upon. Problems or accidents within the home that they would call my dad and say, "Oh Kenny we got this problem, please take us to the hospital." or do this or do that.

And he was on call 24 hours. They didn't ride two to a car then, and it was whenever they needed him, they called him. So he was always on duty. And if a neighbor needed him, he went out. And it was everything from a prowler to heart

(146) attacks and motorcycle accidents I can remember and some tragic situations. I remember bad accidents that he went on. And then he would come home, and he would always have the lesson for us. Group of kids driving from West Liberty State College through Oglebay one night, drinking and driving, had flipped their car over and they had broken beer bottles in the car. And the glass had gotten imbedded in the children's, the kid's faces. And I remember he was so upset by that. So the new rule was, and that's when Pepsi came in bottles, you never ride with the Pepsi bottles in the car. "When you go to the store, the Pepsi bottles go in the trunk, not in the car. I will never look at something that horrible again." Every time he experienced a tragedy, he would come home and try to make sure

(156) that it didn't happen with any of us. I was not privy to this one experience, but my mother and my brother were. Oh, when I was young down through Short Creek, a Jeep had overturned and it was a father and his young son. I think the child was a year and a half old, something like that. And as the Jeep turned over, the baby's head skidded on the asphalt and literally almost scalped him from the front of his forehead clear to the back. It rolled the flesh back. I don't know how my dad got out on the call. Whether somebody called him directly or whether the jail sent him out, the dispatcher. But he was the first one on the scene. And when he saw this child trapped in the seat with its head all opened up, he had one of those moments where you have that strength that you call upon in that moment of tragedy, but you can never do it again. And he was able to overturn the Jeep and get the child out. And that's been years and years and years ago. And my dad died in 1975 of a heart attack. And it wasn't long after that that my mother and my brother were at Baskin Robbins in Wheeling having ice cream. And a man walked up to my mother and said, "Excuse me, are you Ken Davis' wife?" And she said, "Yes, I am." He said, "I want you to meet my son. This is the baby your husband rescued out of the Jeep that night that the Jeep overturned." And he said, "I will never forget what that man did." And here's this big,

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tall, grown teenage boy, you know. And my mom said that meant so much to her after my dad was gone, because so many people spoke so highly of him. I think there were like 20 some, 27 cars in his funeral procession because he had such a reputation in the community. And he was the all-around good guy. I remember one thing about my dad, and I don't mean to reflect so much on my father, but he was a character of Wheeling in his own right. When I went to junior high, some of my friends brought Playboy magazines to school. Their first shot of showing us Playboy Magazine. And I remember at one secret location during our lunch hour, we stood down on a back street of Warwood while one of my girlfriends opened this up and said, "Look, look what we found at home." And I said, "Where did you find these?" And they said, "All dads have them. What you do is you get into the bedroom and you look between the mattress and the box springs. That's where men keep their dirty books." And I -- Okay, this makes sense to me. Well, my dad, being a policeman carried a gun, and we were not permitted in his room. Because the minute he came home, the gun came off, it was unloaded and locked in a closet. But my dad always said 'more empty guns kill children than anything else.' And I couldn't understand till I was older how an empty gun could kill a child, you know. I didn't understand what he meant. So if he heard us headed to the direction of that bedroom, he would be up, 'what do you want, what are you doing in there.' That was a big thing with him. In fact, there were two - - Clearview's a community across the hillside from Betty Zane. There was a child that was killed with an empty gun over there, and my dad was the one on the scene. So, as I said, we ended up being cautioned for every tragedy that he experienced. And so I was so anxious to get in the bedroom and find dirty books and take them to school as my contribution to this talk that we were continuing every day at noon time. So this one night I managed to get down the hallway as he's retired after supper to read the newspaper in the living room. And I reached my hand under the mattress. Sure enough, there were books in there, but I heard him coming so I got out of that room as fast as I could. But I thought, 'I can't wait to get in there. I know there's all kinds of dirty books.' Well, when he took his bath that night, and my mother was preoccupied with my brother's homework, I ran in the bedroom and flipped that mattress up and pulled this book out. It was *The Story of Jesus Christ* and *The Robe*.

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And I was so humiliated that my dad didn't have an honest to goodness dirty book between his mattress, that I didn't know how I was going to go to school the next day and admit that my dad didn't have any dirty books. I couldn't find any. It was not long after that that I realized that was something to be proud of, not something to be ashamed of. But I didn't have a contribution other than *The Robe* and *The Story of Peter*, that I could have contributed and that really wasn't the same type of material they were looking. So it was interesting, but I thought -- I've told my mom since that time how proud I was, you know, that my dad didn't have any of that in the house. We did not drink, we had no understanding of that side of life, that seedy side of life. And we were raised really to be a lady and to be a gentleman. And something that I think is so lost in our culture now. My mother's family, if you would see pictures of them and if you've ever seen the movie *Cheaper by the Dozen*, all big bed spring curls and great big giant satin ribbons, five girls. They were all, every one of them, a lady. My father's family was coarse by comparison to my mother's family. And she said it was very disappointing to her family that she had married somebody as coarse as Ken Davis, that she was in his company. He

(221) was an honest man to a fault, a gentleman, extremely intelligent, and unfortunately had to quit school very early to go to work to help with the family as many of them did back then. And my dad believed in self education. He would read anything. He would read books on German and Italian and teach himself foreign languages. He would read on anything, and he would always tell me, "If you don't know how to do it, then read about it and learn. Because once it's in your head, nobody can take it away from you." And he would bring books home to me and say, "Here, read this; it's good for you." Sometimes I wouldn't even really be interested in reading them for another four, five years down the road. They would be pretty much over my head. But there was nothing that he did not know. If he did not know it, he would admit to it and then he would find the answer out for me. And I remember those things about my dad. He could fix anything. He could do anything. And at the same time that he was coarse and he was hard and he could be extremely mean and nasty, he had such a soft, sensitive side to him because there was never a moment in my life I didn't doubt that he loved me. Absolutely, passionately. And he was a great artist and a

painter, a musician. He could play piano, by ear. All of his musical talents were by ear. And he had taken training but he said it confused him and got in the way of his ear so he preferred not to get into that. And everything he played was by ear. He sang beautifully. His brothers Ed and Neil -- The three of them and his father sang, and they sang professionally. And they actually went, and my mother would know more. I think they even went to other states, far away areas and they sang as a quartet.

MNK: Barber shop or --

(246) DD: No, it was -- My dad produced and directed minstrels and was, I guess, big band era music or sometime maybe not burlesque, but Vaudevilleish type. I was raised on music that's way before my time, 20s and 30s and 40s. One of my favorite singers is Al Jolsen. Probably few people in my generation know who he is, but I can grant you my children all know who he is because we've got the story of his life, we got records and my kids love Al Jolsen. And I grant you nobody in their generation knows who Al Jolsen is. But I was raised on that music. I was raised with the Dorsey Brothers and Glenn Miller Band. My mom and dad were unable to have children for 14 years after they married. So my mother and father were a lot older than most of the children I grew up with, their parents were younger than my mom and dad. And so I came from a generation that was very active during World War II. And my mother graduated from high school in 1936. I was about, well almost 15 years behind my peer group. Their parents were a lot younger than my mom and dad. So I came from a musical background. My dad sang and he danced and directed minstrels and he did all of this, and that's where I came from. And I remember he had so desperately wanted me to do plays and to sing and play an instrument, and I had no interest in that. And I was the ultimate nerd child. I was shy to a fault, painfully shy, so withdrawn and inhibited and had no self-esteem whatsoever. And I don't know why, because I was encouraged to do and try everything. But I just was not what Ken and Ann thought they had. They had produced this little snappy kid and I was going to tap dance and sing my way like Shirley Temple. And it was like if you've ever seen the cartoon where the man finds the frog that's buried in the cornerstone of a building in New York. And when he opens up the box, this frog comes out and it sings and it dances with a top hat and a tuxedo. And he takes it to so many

different people, and says, "This frog can sing and dance." And when he takes it out in front of all these musical producers, it just ribbits. And I think that's what Ken and Ann thought, 'Diane is going to be a prodigy, we can do all these things, we're so musical, we're so talented, we've produced this child. She will do all of this.' And I just ribbit! And I didn't do anything in front of anybody, but sit there. It

(282) was so -- I know it was disheartening for him because he had all these ideas of what I would be, and I was nothing. Somehow after he died, I came out of my shell. And my father never saw me. I did tours at the Custom House as Elizabeth Buzby. He never saw me act, and I do it well. If I like it, if it's my subject matter, and my subject matter is anything in the past, it's always history, then I do it well because I research it and it's important to me. He never saw that, he really never saw me play guitar. I'm self taught guitar. I play and I sing, he never saw me do that. And I think how sad, how unfortunate because he waited so long for the frog to sing and dance and all it did was ribbit. And now he's gone and I have sung and I have danced, and I've done all of this. And if I attribute anything to anybody, it all goes to Ken because he wanted all of that for me. And he was always the type of person that -- The man could kick some serious butt and get reaction. I mean there was no whimpiness in him. And I remember when I was in fourth grade at

(298) Warwood, and I did so hate Warwood School because it was very strict, almost like an academy. They had rest room guards, lunch room guards, hallway guards, water fountain guards and playground guards that were assigned daily by the principal, but you never knew who they were. And my father, I remember one day, taking me to school and saying to the principal at the doorway, "Morning Mr. Smith, I've got to tell you you got more guards here than we do at the State Pen in Moundsville." And he's, "Well this is how we keep order." And he's, "Well, kids aren't supposed to be orderly. This is the time in their life they're supposed to be disorderly, and I think you're too hard on them." And then he would just take me on in and that would be it. Well, one day, I had a great deal of problem with math and discovered later on, after my college years, that I had a learning disability. But back in fourth grade when I was a kid, nobody cared, nobody knew about that stuff. So I had problems with the math test and I failed it and they locked me in what they called the

blackout room with a boy that had misbehaved. And we were to do this remedial work in there. Well, the teacher forgot about me, and I knew that I had been in there a long time, but there was no clock and I had no watch and I had no way of knowing how long I had been in there. But that's the way I was, I would never had gone to the door or into her room and said, "Did you forget about me?" I would have sat there till the cows came home. I would not -- I was very well behaved; I would not have moved. Next thing you know the

(318) door opens up and it's my father in his uniform with the teacher. She said, "Oh, I'm so sorry Mr. Davis, I just lost all track of time and I forgot." It was after lunch, mid afternoon. She had forgotten about us for lunch; she had totally forgotten about us and left us there. And my dad had wanted to pick me up for lunch and couldn't find me and left assuming I was on the playground or something. But something bothered him, so he went back. And it was at that point when he didn't see me in the classroom when he went up, he questioned the teacher and she realized she had forgotten about myself and a little boy named Tommy Kraus and -- My dad took me home and he did not take me back to school. And I remember the next morning, he was writing out the excuse for me on his legal tablet. And it said, 'Dear Mrs. Mercer, I'm sorry Diane did not come back to school, but I forgot about her.' And that was my note that I was to take to school, that he had forgotten to bring me back. So I remember how I was so worried what she would think about that because I knew that was a kind of flippant remark, but that's what I had to take to her. That was that he had forgotten about me too. So -- But he was just a real character. He

(334) was a real character. And I have, being 42 years old, his name has still opened doors for me in life. Somebody will run into me and we'll start to talk and the next thing you know, they'll ask me who I am or where I'm from. And if I tell them and it comes up that I'm Ken Davis' daughter, I can believe the people who have treated me differently or done things for me that normally they would not have done because they knew my dad. And I find that really amazing because he did have a very good reputation, a very good name within the community, within the city. And he was privy to so many things going on, so many changes. He escorted Jack Kennedy during the campaign tour from Ohio County Airport to Wheeling and spent some time with him before he was elected president. There's just little

interesting things, different people that he had got to meet through the course of his job. Of course in Wheeling, one of the big notorious gangsters of our time, of course he knew Bill Lias, but Paul Hankisch too is a leader, gangster of our time. When Paul Hankisch, the attack was made against his life, it was in Warwood. And they bombed his car and it blew his legs right off, right in Warwood. My dad was the deputy that sat with him in his hospital room for six weeks because they were waiting for a second attempt on his life. And my dad for six weeks guarded his hospital room. Morning, noon and night, he was there.

(356) So he ended up becoming, you know, kind of a pal of Paul Hankisch's too, because you just don't spend six weeks with somebody like that and not end up being a friend, I wouldn't say, but at least an associate. Not associate, but an acquaintance, a close acquaintance, after that period of time. So I know there's a lot of things -- It's a shame when my dad passed away, there were so many things we didn't talk about. I know he had a wealth of information that he could have shared with me. But we did talk, but at that time, at my youth, I wasn't as particularly interested in the past, especially about this type of past, local past, as I am now. And it kind of takes that circle for you to leave home and go out and experience other, other aspects of life before you finally come back to your roots and you want to identify with yourself. And when I came back, well my father was gone. So there's a lot of things I would loved to have asked him. And right now I'm trying to pull these things out of my mother, and she is very receptive to this.

MNK: What about the big Bill Lias era? What did he say about that or what --

(372) DD: Well, my mother told me that there were several murders in Wheeling that were directly attributed to Bill Lias. And that I had just asked her recently -- I had heard more good things about him than bad things. And she said, "Don't ever get the idea that he was more good than bad." She said, "There's no doubt that he was a gangster and he was responsible for murders, and everybody knew it. And there were some horrible things that happened in Wheeling that he was definitely responsible for and everybody knew that." So she -- My mother graduated from Wheeling High School in 1936 and went immediately to work at the City-County Building in Wheeling. And she worked in those offices and at the same time and then later on, she left and went to the New-Register and worked there, I think, for 18

years. So she, between she and my dad, they had a lot of connections to what was going on inside Wheeling. And they had a lot of stories and a lot of experiences in Wheeling. Of course, my mom graduated the year of the big flood, the '36 flood, and I know she has many stories about that. As I said -- Now she told me, and where, I don't have any was of knowing this individual's name, I don't know if she does or not, but my father had a relative of during the gaslight era on the streets of Wheeling, was seven feet tall or better. And because of his unusual height for the time, he was elected the man that lit the gaslights every night in town. And she said she had heard all those stories about him, that he would walk up and down the streets and light the gaslights in town because of his height. I wish I had recorded this story. He had some relatives, distant cousins that lived

(398) way out in the country in an area that's known as Viola. And Viola around here, if you mention that to this day to some people, you'll get a raised eyebrow. The rumors went for years and years that well, you go to Viola but you don't come out unless you're kin. There was a lot of bootleg whiskey going on out there. A lot of stills, a lot of things like that. And Viola is still a very desolate area, very desolate. And it's right betwixt, between Ohio and Marshall County, like almost into Marshall County. In fact, after my dad died in '75, I think it was about '78 or so, '79, my brother, he did not resolve his differences with my dad. I had a time where my dad and I had problems, and we made peace. And we resolved all of our problems and difficulties and we had gone full circle in our relationship. My brother, unfortunately, did not get to do that. During his rebellious time was when my dad passed away. And my brother has had a great deal of difficulty in trying to come to terms with that, sense of unfinished business with my father. And it has damaged him as an individual. I can see that. So around 1978 or '79, my brother had decided that he was

(418) going to track down the roots of these old stories that my dad had told about his country kin way out there in the Viola era. And my brother drove out there one day just to look around. And it is desolate. And there is a bar that's literally like a hole in the wall out there in the mountainside. They built a bar right around it. And he went in to ask questions and that bar was one you were told never, ever go into that bar in Viola. Well, he went out there and he said there wasn't anything out there but a bunch of old geezers sitting around. He said,

"I walked up to the bar and they ignored me for the longest time, and I had to draw their attention to me and ask could I get some help here. And finally the man came over and said, 'What do you want?' in a very cold and almost hostile manner." And he said, "Well, I'm looking for" such and such and he named a man. And he said, "'For what?'" And he said, "Well, my dad was a relative of his and my dad's gone and I'm just trying to look up some people that might remember." And this man said, "Well, who is your dad?" And he said, "Well he was a deputy. His name was Ken Davis." And he said, "You're Kenny's kid? These are all your kin out here son." Well this is so and so and this is so and so. And my brother spent the whole day there and drank his little heart out, all on the house, and had the best time listening to all these stories because they were all distant cousins, cousins of cousins, that knew my dad and his family. And one area out there, there's a little old run that's probably not more than a trickle from a sink, that's called Turkey Run. And my dad -- Now this would probably be right after, probably the early '20s or before the '20s, 1900s. He had cousins and relatives that lived out there, and one's name was Clark Tolan. And Clark was a moonshine maker or whatever they called them, bootleggers, whatever. And he was notorious -- I guess he had like 12 kids, and they lived on this desolate farm. And I'm almost ashamed to say it, it's your typical almost Appalachian mess up the creek. And my dad told me a story of how when he was a young

(454) boy, his father took him out to see Clark and the family. And there was no really access road. You had to pretty much go up the creek to get there. And my dad's father went up the creek and they go up there and there's this beautiful new building built. And my grandfather, Gene Davis, said, "Clark, my God, I never thought I'd see the day you'd put up a building like that for the family." And Clark said, "Gene, hell that ain't for the family, that's my new pig shack. I wouldn't put the kids in that place, it's too good." And here was this run down dump where the family lived, but this fine looking building for the pigs and his still. And that was out in the back. So -- But when I was in college, my dad's long gone and all of these people are long gone, my brother and I traveled up that creek one day for three hours and we found the place. All overgrown, no access road, but we found the foundation of the building, we found all kinds of broken whiskey bottles buried in a dump.

(476) And we know we hit the right spot by different things we'd been told, different landmarks. So we found the old Tolan property. And when I was helping to work on, with our Civil War work with the National Pike Festival, Herman Fonner, who drives one of the covered wagons for the National Pike Festival -- I wanted to get him last year to come to our Camp Carlisle, and I had corresponded with him by letter but he never really answered me. And I left two phone calls, and he did not answer me. So finally one day I called again after a second letter and he actually answered the phone. And I told him who I was, and he said, "Oh, yes I'd gotten your letters." I said, "I had not heard back from you." And he said, "Well, you know I don't have much interest in this." And I said, "Well, you know, even if I come out and talk to you, but what we're trying to do I'd love to have your wagons at our Civil War event." And he's, "Well, I live way out." And I said, "I know where you live." I said, "I've been out there for years and years." I said, "In fact, I had distant relatives, Tolans, out there." "Tolans! Oh, you're related to Tolans." All of a sudden this whole world opened up. The man knew Clark Tolan. When he was a little boy, he knew of Clark Tolan and the still and the moonshine and the pig house and the whole story. And he was a distant relative of mine. But this man knew all of that lore of those people out there. It ended up, he brought his wagon, and he was in our Civil War thing. So it kind of like -- It still, after all those years, it connected with somebody and they ended up doing something for me in 1993. You know, that really -- The only reason he did it is because of this connection way, way back when, long before I was even born. So I thought that was really interesting.

MNK: This was your mother?

(501) DD: My mother, yeah. That one night when my father was courting her in the parlor -- My dad even told me this story several times. That her mother came downstairs. First of all her father, which they called Papa, would go upstairs and my dad would hear him drop a shoe. That was the indicator that it was time for him to leave when he was visiting. And he said, "Poor old Frank, I don't know how many feet he ended up having. He dropped shoes all night long until I finally left." Then my dad said one night the last straw was for Bertha, my mother's mother, she came down the steps and she had, I don't know, poison for rodents

or mice or something and started putting it around the parlor where they were sitting. And my dad said, "That was it. I knew they didn't have any rodents in their house at all. That was the last straw that she was going to bring that out for me to leave." So he said, "With that, I got up and made my apologies for overstaying my welcome and left."

(520) But my mom's family was very concerned with appearances, with the way things looked. My mother's -- My grandmother, my mother's mom, made everything, right down to their underpants, she made everything. She sewed their winter coats, she made everything. And the only thing that my grandfather, Papa, said that the only thing she did not make were their shoes. They bought their shoes. But she was an accomplished seamstress that did beautiful --

MNK: What was her name?

(529) DD: Her name was Bertha Miller. Bertha Sergun Miller. And she married Frank Miller, and he was a mailman here in Wheeling. And they raised these five girls. And it was the one aunt -- If you speak with my mother, she'll tell you the story of the sister that was kidnapped by gypsies. They lived out in Elm Grove and the gypsies came through on Route 40, the National Road, and they picked the baby up, my Aunt Fay, and kidnapped her. It was a young man, I think, that recognized the Miller baby on the hump bridge, that the gypsies had her, got the authorities and had her returned to the family. So she has that story much better documented than I do. I just heard it so many times, but she's got the details. And one of her sisters, and I think it was her sister Eleanor -- My mother is the youngest of the five. Her sister Eleanor, I believe, they did not name her. They allowed her to name herself. So -- And I don't know, she was around eight or nine when she decided

(548) to take a name. And up until that point in time, they referred to her as sister. She was simply 'sister' and then she named herself. But they were very prim, very proper, right out of the Victorian period. There was no one more proper than my mother's family. And as I said, pictures of these girls, beautiful pictures, all dressed in the white stockings with the drop waisted skirts and the long bed spring curls with the big satin bows on the top. And of course, my grandmother Miller died in 1960 or '61.

MNK: When was she born?

DD: I don't know when she was born.

MNK: ...

DD: Oh, my goodness, '61. She was 80 years old. I think in her 81st year in '60, so go back.

MNK: She was born in the 1880s.

(565) DD: Yes. Yes. And I know my mother has all -- She has all the Miller documentation and everything so she could share that rather readily. When I was a little girl, we lived at 929 National Road right out here. The house is no longer standing. It's right above Vance Church and it's a vacant lot now between Vance Church and Tallyho Apartments. And in the middle of the afternoon, my grandmother -- I loved her dearly, she was such a wonderful person. She would call me in and I would have to take a bath, and I would have my hair done and we would have tea. And she came from a very, very British background. Not off the boat, they had been here for a while, but the traditions had carried on. And afternoon is tea time. And we would have macaroons and tea. And I would be dressed up and, with a bow in my hair. I can still remember it going in. I can remember the way it felt. And in the middle of my afternoon playing, whatever I was doing, I had to stop and drop everything and come in, be bathed and put a dress on and a big pink bow in my hair

(586) and I remember -- I have naturally curly hair and I remember her twisting it around her finger, dampening it with a comb and then pulling her finger out to make these -- I called them bed spring curls that would hang down. And she would wait for a lady that came -- I don't remember where the lady came from, but again out here in Edgington Lane area. Her name was Mrs. Bunenberger and she was a bridge player that had played cards with my grandmother. And Mrs. Bunenberger would visit on certain occasions, seems to me on Wednesdays. And I would sit on a chair, and with -- Mrs. Bunenberger would come into the living room, I would get up and she would say, "Hello, Diane, how are you?" "Very fine, thank you Mrs. Bunenberger. I am so pleased to have you visit today Mrs. Bunenberger." And I would shake her hand and curtsy and then go back to my chair and fold my hands in my lap because you must fold your hands, grandmother said, because if you did not fold your hands, they would become idle and get you into trouble. So I would sit there with my hands neatly folded in my lap. And I remember if I wanted something -- Grandmother didn't have

money, but she would make me anything that she could and she made me a splendid nurse's uniform. And I can remember she made the hat with the cross on the front, and she made a cape with it. It was just absolutely spectacular. I've often thought about that nurse's uniform, and I could remember everything about it. How I wish I had had it now for my little girl. I do have -- My father

(620) had an extraordinary memory and he was -- It was called upon often times in legal issues or court problems or something. That they would call upon him because of his ability of recall was so, so perfect, almost verbatim he could recall a situation that could be easily documented. And my brother and I find that we're pretty much the same way. I don't just remember an incident. To myself, I can remember the feel, I can remember smells and odors at the time. I can remember the way things felt. And I remember when I was little, when we would go to the store, I would go around touching everything. And my dad would say, "Look feelers, get your fingers off of something before you break it." Because I always had this feeling that if I ever went blind, I wanted to make sure that I had kind of sensed as much as I could. And I always had that in my head that if I ever go blind, I want to make sure I can recognize all these things by the way that I touch them. So I would feel things and to this day, I can remember the very special odor that my Baby Tears doll had. And if you remember Baby Tears when it was out, she cried and she was made of that funny kind of rubbery stuff that it would dry up and it'd crack and the fingers would snap off. Kind of like they had leprosy after a while. Baby Tears would have no fingers or toes. And I remember that odor of that plastic or that rubber, I think it was rubber. When I was a sophomore in high school at Warwood, Bank of Warwood passed out triangular shaped pens, big long pens, thick ones that said 'The Bank of Warwood' and had little phone number and address on there. That pen had the very same odor that Baby Tears did when I was little. And I can remember when I smelled that pen, that it was like 'that's my Baby Tears doll' I can smell that. And I hadn't had Baby Tears since I was probably five years old. But I can always remember the way things smelled and tasted. And I can remember my Grandmother Miller's apartment was over top of ours at 929 National Road. And I can remember a parasol that she had and a big hat and how she would allow me to play with it.

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And I can remember her very special tea serving was not amber colored but kind of like a burnt brown, a light brown. And she would entertain in her dining room which was in the rear of the apartment. And I remember the linens that she had on her dining room table. And I can remember to get to her bathroom, you had to go two steps up from the hallway. The bathroom was elevated, and it was a ball and claw foot tub. And the bathroom was green. And I've always been able to recall with great detail, wherever I have been. I'm kind of like perceptive. If I walk into a room and walk out, I can pretty much describe everything in the room. And I can remember the way things tasted and the way they felt and the way they smelled. And I remember when I was little living in 929,

(691) watching Mike Nelson and *Sea Hunt*. That was one of my first memories of a TV show. That and Popeye the cartoon. And of course, Pinky Lee and Howdy Doody and things like that. But I remember one night my mother, my brother had just been born and he was -- I know now he was about six weeks old. And I remember her running out into the living room. She had a blue print dress on and I remember how frightened she looked. And she was holding my brother extended to my dad and said, "There's something wrong with the baby." And I remember seeing her tilt him so my dad could see. And all you could see was whites of his eyes, you couldn't see his pupils. They had rolled clear up in his head. And I remember my dad -- They took me upstairs to my grandmother, and they rushed my brother to the hospital. And he had what they called bronchialitis. He nearly died. That time they didn't have life support for children, they just laid in an incubator. And if they survived, they did, if they didn't they perished. And my mother lived at the hospital, it seemed, for almost six weeks. I hardly ever saw my mom. And I stayed with my grandmother and my father who was very devoted. I remember how upset my dad was because I was born in '52 and in '53 they lost a baby. My sister Cynthia was born premature and she was born at home, and she died after four days. And I remember how upset my dad was at the time. When they finally brought him home, I remember him (728) saying to my mother one night, "I wouldn't take a million bucks for what we've got, but I would never try to have any more. This is all we're ever going to have."

(side two)

DD: When I was married and I had children, I had a little girl that I named Cynthia after my sister. Her name was Cynthia Ann, my sister. And I liked Cynthia Ann, but I felt she needed more. So I named her Cynthia Anne with an E hyphen Elise. So her name is Cynthia Anne-Elise. Cynthia about six weeks after birth got very ill one night. And I looked at her, and it's not as though she had a cold, but it was -- There was a wheeze that I couldn't describe. Well, I got her to the hospital, and Cynthia had bronchialitis. And not only did Cynthia have bronchialitis, but my other little baby after that, Brianna, that I named after my brother, she had bronchialitis too. And the doctors have told me it's kind of genetic, it comes from the family. So I did not have it, but my brother did and then both of my little girls have had it. And I think that's interesting. My daughter Brianna was supposed to be a boy. Every guarantee medical science could have given you promised me this is a boy. So she was my brother all over again, Brian Scott was her name. And not until 45 minutes before I left the hospital could I come up with a name for her because she had been Brian through my pregnancy. We knew we were carrying Brian the boy. And when she was a girl, it ruined everything! It ruined everything! We had boys clothes, we had everything. And 45 minutes before I left the hospital, I can remember the nurse rather imploring me, saying, "Have you named this child yet?" And I thought maybe this was what happened to Frank and Bertha, we should call her sister and let her name herself. But they really do want you to name them these days. And I said, I'll name her after my brother. Now I just wished I named her Brian, but I named her Brianna. And I would have named her -- I just didn't think that Briann seemed like a, kind of short to me. So I named her Brianna Scott after my brother. So I have Scott and Cynthia kind of for my mom so she can pick up where she unfortunately left off. So we have four children and I had taken great pains to name the one Cynthia for my mother. I thought she would like that. And I think it's worked out really well. When I was little, sometimes I think that I, because I was so withdrawn and inhibited, I used to think it's a shame Cynthia died and Diane lived. Cynthia probably would have been -- It was interesting because my brother was born with white hair, blond, white hair. I was born with very red hair. And my sister was born with

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very black hair. And I always thought it was kind of red, white and black. And I often thought maybe Cynthia should have lived and Cynthia would have been very
(031) outspoken and very animated the way Ken and Ann wanted her to be. But it ended up, I was just a 'Johnny come lately.' It came around, it worked out.

MNK: I'd say it did. This incredible ability to recall detail as you described --

DD: Yes.

MNK: It sounds like it might be the basis for a love of history or --

DD: Absolutely.

MNK: Things in the past. Can you talk about your development of that a little bit?

(037) DD: My very first introduction to history I'll never forget. It was fifth grade at Warwood Grade School in Mrs. Bishoff's class. First day of school we got our books. So it was probably like the second official day of school. And they passed out our textbooks and up until then -- We had had history in fourth grade, but very general, very bland kind of nondescript. And I remember opening up this history book and when I opened the cover page, there were pyramids, a complete panoramic view of pyramids in the desert, and I was captivated by these pyramids and I thought, 'Oh, this is going to be so exciting, so interesting.' And from that point on, I could not get enough of the past. And I remember when I grew up, I was so hungry -- I have a fascination with World War II that really doesn't perplex me because I was raised in the World War II era after it was over. And I had a love for the music, the fashions, the history. And I can remember staying up late at night watching old TV movies with my dad, old black and white movies. And sometimes they would run those newsreels between the movies late at night. And my dad would show me all this footage from World War II and he'd be educating me on the Maginot Line and all of these things that occurred.
(055) To me it was as though I'd lived that time. By the time I hit the '60s, I was so hungry for the '40s I felt that I was out of place. I enjoyed everything about the '40s. To me that was the ultimate romantic time period in American history. It was probably the happiest time in my mother and father's life. It was, it was, you know, a time period where they knew unlimited vitality and had romance and excitement. Of course mixed with tragedy and despair because of the time. But testing them as individuals and unifying communities and

country. It was something that in my generation, we had never experienced. In the middle of the Vietnam War, nobody was unified. We were all completely torn apart. And I was really almost homesick for something that I had never experienced but I'd heard so much about. So I became really enthralled with World War II, fascinated, and started to study that in high school. I studied it to the point that by the time I was in college, I was doing professional lectures on Nazi Germany. And I had actually toured the area here and at one point, a professor at West Liberty said, "You're probably the most informed lecturer on Nazi Germany that I have ever met without ever having experienced the time period." And he said, "You've really caught it Diane." In fact for credit I took Nazi Germany history at West Liberty and I went to like three or four classes and I was so bored because there was such a kind of like glossy overview of the time when it was, it went beyond -- That's one thing I find out about history. You can never really understand your one particular point in history unless you try to understand and define the time before that because every generation affects the next generation. And I was upset because there was no discussion of World War I leading into Nazi Germany and that's what really set up the character for Nazi Germany and Hitler was World War I and the defeat of Germany there. And I was captivated with some of the interesting, the aspects, the ingenuity of the German people. One of the things that really intrigued me was at the end of World War I how they took their air force away from them and they said you could never have planes again when they settled their treaty in the, was it the train car, the box car. And how they denied them all of these things and Germany went back and said, 'Yes okay we understand this, would you at least allow us to keep airlines going, public airlines. Could we at least continue with that.' And of course the world said, 'Sure, that's fine.' Well, little did they know that they were training their air force again under the guise of being, you know, their airlines. And I thought, 'How extremely clever and how absolutely resilient they were in spite of this travesty of their history and how they've been divided.' I was never pro Nazi Germany, but there was some confusion that because I was so interested that some people did think that I had leanings towards the Fascist Party. I did not. In fact in college, I had written for a book called *Our Story*, and I was investigated by the FBI because I wanted to read a book

called *Our Story*, their side of it. I was just curious. How could you justify this, and I wanted to know how you would go about it, so I read it. And next thing I know, I'm investigated by the FBI and the CIA for my -- They even came to the college and asked --

(099) I was working of all places in the Foreign Language laboratory. Did I make German tapes? Yes, I took German, that's what my language was. And that enabled me to read German literature. And to me, it made sense. If I'm going to lecture on Nazi Germany and World War II, what better way to understand it than to be able to read German history books. So I took German and became fluent in German. And the next thing you know, different people thought that was kind of dangerous, and they inquired about my political standing. And at the time I was a diehard Democrat and definitely loyal to this country. Anyone knows me, knows I'm a ridiculous patriot. And I thought this is silly, someone thinking of a little weenie girl in Wheeling, West Virginia, in a little rinky-dink college like West Liberty being a Fascist! And I thought, well I guess if Hitler can come out of a little beer hall with a bunch of brown shirts, anything's possible! So I can understand their fear then. But

(110) then I kind of left World War II. After I graduated from college, I left World War II and I didn't do anything with history for a while. And I got caught up in my own personal life and had some problems and situations I had to deal with and history was not extremely important. And then after my second marriage and I had these children. And I had always worked from the time I left college, and I found myself at home raising three babies. And I had to get out of the house. I just could not stand it. I am -- I found out the hard way that I am not a homebody. I thought it was very romantic to think of me in the kitchen with a ruffled apron and making pies and doing wonderful things for my husband. And I found out it didn't fulfill me at all. What it did is made me fat as an old pig! And I didn't accomplish anything, and I wasn't contributing anymore and I had always considered myself well read and on top of current affairs. And now all of a sudden I could only communicate with people that dribbled and needed to be attended in their potty

(123) habits. And if I could discuss anything, it would be formula changes and baby vomit and I thought, 'What have I done to myself?' And so one day in the Wheeling paper there was an advertisement that they were going to audition people to do costume tour guides down at

Independence Hall. And I read it to my husband, and I said, "What do you think? What do you think? It would get me out of the house. Do you think I could do this?" And he said, "You never know till you try. Sure, go ahead." I remember calling my mom the next day and reading it to her on the phone. And I said, "Do you think I'm crazy?" And she said, "Yes, I always have, but try it. How will you ever do something like that?" I said, "Well, I don't know. I love Civil War history." And I said, "I'd taken it in college and enjoyed it." But of course I was overwhelmed with World War II, so Civil War was a popular time for me also. Revolutionary War, I guess if I had rated them, it would have been World War I, World War II first, then the Revolutionary war, then the Civil War. And I said, "So I like the Civil War, I can do this." When I got down there and they give us a script that was written by Beverly Flutie. It was a wonderful script, but as much as it was a good script, there was no depth to that character because they were writing the script for a tour guide. They weren't writing a script for somebody from 1862. And of course, nobody in 1862 was a tour guide. So I decided to make it a personal challenge, not to be a tour guide with a character of 1862, but to be a character of 1862 as a tour guide. So I kind of turned it all around. Then I went to my -- I've kept all my college books and all my notebooks and all my papers and I got back into my college research and I pulled out all of my Civil War notebooks. And I had Dr. Robert Bainy, who was a phenomenal educator in this area. He just died about a year or so ago. And he had intrigued me with the Civil War during the course work that I took from him. He was just a -- He was the teacher that I could sit there with my mouth open all day long and have felt that I had only been in his presence for 15 minutes. He really made me excited about history. And I remember looking at him and seeing an effort in futility that 75 percent of the class was yawning and stretching and we're here because it's a required credit and da, da, da, da, da. And I thought, no I'm here because I cannot imagine this hour really desiring being any place else. That in front of this man who was making it alive to me. And I forgot how exciting Civil

(157) War history was and what it meant. Then when I got into the idea of what Civil War history meant to the state of West Virginia and more specifically, to Wheeling. Then all of a sudden, I had a cause and I had a purpose. And I was always very much offended by people

from other states looking at West Virginia as a backwards, illiterate, bare footed, you know, rural state. We are a rural state, but it's not to be ashamed of. But I decided that people need to know that there's more to the character and more to the people of West Virginia than just being ignorant and what you would see on *60 Minutes* and *20/20*, the snake handlers and all the ridiculous toothless people that they can find in tar paper shacks down state. And I thought, no, we need to be able to present ourself in an enlightened fashion, but at the same time through the past, through the eyes of somebody from the past. I have no idea what Elizabeth Buzby was like. I only know what I tried to make her in my mind. And in my impression of Elizabeth Buzby, she went through many

(171) phases. At first, because I was such a novice at this, she was probably very shallow. She didn't have much character. By my last season there, which was this past year, I think that she had depth and she had understanding and I know she had heart. And she was wounded by what she saw and what she experienced in her community. And I think one of the things that I was finally able to impart to people that visited and I particularly enjoyed tours that came from Virginia. Those were my favorite. And I was able to say, I made it a point to say to people from Virginia, "That it was not for Virginians and I consider myself a loyal Virginian, it's not for Virginians that we saw the separation of our country, but the separation of our state as well." And it was more personal to Virginia, it was a very definitive time for the country, but it was the heart of Virginia. I mean, we were ripped in half. And the feelings of Virginia, what she was. She was the original colony. She was named for Queen Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, and surveyed by Sir Walter Raleigh and by George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. This was a historical piece of property unlike any other state has ever experienced. And I mean every state has its contribution to the whole of the country, but Virginia's something completely different that nobody can lay

(191) claim to. And I think that it was something that I needed to tell other people how we became West 'by God' Virginia and why that's important to people here today. And one day by accident, I had 50 some people from Virginia, and I'll never forget this burly man walked up to me and he said, "I want you to know I'm from Richmond. I came here just to see what the hell went wrong." And I said, "Well, you sit down, I'm going to tell you all about it." So

we went on through the tour, through everything. And in the end -- And we were never to leave character. But I had a problem with that and nobody ever chastised me, they kind of implied that I shouldn't, but I did it. But I would remove a part of Elizabeth, my bonnet or some portion of my period clothing, so I could step aside and I could become Diane and leave Elizabeth for a moment. And I told them because people

(204) had questions, after I toured them, they had questions and they needed to be answered before they left the building. And to just leave them and say, you know, "Bye from 1862 or 1863." It just seemed unfinished. So I would step apart from, step aside from Virginia, from Elizabeth and I would become Diane the tour guide. And I would thank them for being there and being attentive and if they had any questions or comments, that I would be very glad to entertain them at that time. And I said, "I will inform you that I am a tour guide for the state of West 'by God' Virginia, and I'm also a Civil War reenactor." I got such a round of applause when I said 'by God' Virginia that it absolutely made me stop and look at these people. I was perplexed. And when it was all over, so many of them came up and said, "Why 'by God'?" And I said, "Good question. That's what I've been raised with. This is West 'by God' Virginia." And I said, "I think it's because so many people today still assume that Virginia is Virginia. West is just kind of a delineation of direction that has nothing to do with another state." I had a lady from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, say to me after the tour, "Yes, I can understand. That's very nice, but you're still a territory like

(220) Puerto Rico, aren't you?" And I thought, where did I go wrong? Then I've had others who will say, "We have friends in Norfolk." How lovely, it's a shame they're not in West Virginia. They don't understand. So many people don't understand there's a difference. And I think 'by God' is to make the point. It's West, by God, Virginia. So when I start explaining this to people, I noticed that every time I had a tour, and I mean this was 99.9 percent of the time, at the end -- And I started my own little survey, my own little test. If I would say, you know, "I am a tour guide with the state of West 'by God' Virginia," what a screaming round of applause, the people went crazy! It was like hoot, hoot, hoot for our Arsenio Hall. They loved it. If I just said, "I am a tour guide for the state of West Virginia," it didn't seem to mean anything. But all of a sudden, everybody had rallied to the cause of West Virginia.

And I thought, then I've made my point. I've made my point. I've gotten there, I've arrived because now they understand it is West Virginia and we are, we do have our own unique history. And I was able to express that to these people, and I was excited about it. I'm, I'm very saddened that I don't do Elizabeth any more. I did not

(236) pick that time to quit. I think it was kind of picked for me. And I'm sorry because I felt Elizabeth was unfinished. She had so much more to go through and to experience. And she could have become very full bodied and a complete individual. I do believe she would have become a complete personality given the opportunity. I did her for three years. And the first year, she was nothing. A gentleman from North Carolina complimented me, and I was so flattered. He said, "I came here a year ago Mrs. Buzby, and I was very entertained by your talk." And I said, "Well, thank you." He said, "When they told us we were coming back again this year, I thought 'same old, same old'." He said, "You have enthralled me one more time because although you are the same, you are every bit as different." And he said, "I did not think that you could keep my attention one more time." Well, she had changed though. And every season I tried to make her change because I believed that through the four years of the war, they did change. There was a rebellion, there was a despair, there was an acceptance, you know, resigning to what you are in the middle of

(252) this, will it ever end. You have to learn to live with it. And then ultimately, she would have seen the end of it coming. But I do believe that a character -- You have -- It's kind of like you go through the stages of accepting a death. That anyone that lives during a, you know, a time period like that when death was every day, was an every day affair for the Victorian person, that they had to grow and they had to become different as an individual. And she would have been changed in those four years. Nobody would have ever been the same.

Even if she did not have sons in the war, there's nobody that was not untouched by it. They would have gone through a dramatic change. So I was hoping to see Elizabeth

(260) round out and end. I don't believe, as far as I'm concerned, that she has ended yet. And then I thought it was a good thing that I left when I did because to so many people, they will always know me as Elizabeth Buzby, which was kind of disheartening after a while.

Because I do other people, other than Elizabeth Buzby. And I thought, gee -- A couple of

times I've gone out to the graveyard at Greenwood and I've looked at her grave and I thought, 'Elizabeth, you'll never be dead as long as I'm breathing. People still recognize me as you, and people if they can't think of my name, oh, Mrs. Buzby' They can call me that. I hate to think in Wheeling I've become typecast, but I have in a sense. And I thought that limited me as a historian and it limited me as a reenactor, and I did not want to become limited. There were so many directions and opportunities in Wheeling that I could have expounded upon and that's what I wanted to do. So, although I had not chosen the time, it was probably a good time. I wouldn't mind going back every now and then and just doing one old Elizabeth just for the heck of it. I don't know if I would ever be able to because she does technically belong to Independence Hall and the state of West Virginia. I couldn't take her with me. But I have other people that I do, and they are as different as night and day.

(277) I have an Irish woman that I do and how she came here and she is living in the middle of the Civil War and her husband is off to war and her experiences of being an immigrant coming to this country, an Irish immigrant.

MNK: What -- How did you research that?

(280) DD: Basically because I have a Celtic background with my husband's family and I'm very much into the Celtic society. In fact the sheriff of Belmont County and I are trying to develop a Celtic Association and bring it here to the Ohio Valley. And I thought -- We have the Italian Fest, we, you know, have Serbian festivals and Greek festivals here, but I don't hear anybody talking about the Irish community or Welsh community. My family's pretty much predominantly Welsh. And I thought -- But I think that would be an interesting aspect because it's such an exciting people. So I started to research on that. And there were so many Irish that fought in the Civil War and the great migration, the immigrants from Ireland and from Scotland and Wales that came over here right prior to the war, that they got caught up in it. And the Irish Brigade out of New York that fought gallantly and had such a wonderful history with them in the Civil War, I thought, 'What an interesting character to develop.' A woman that comes from the trials and tribulations of Ireland to avoid oppression over there, to avoid the potato famine and try to make a new life in the

(299) promised land and only to find herself here caught up at a completely devastating time period where the country's ripped in half. So here she comes seeking refuge and a new life and to put her family together and they're going to make it good in America. And oh, my golly, they're falling apart. So we have Subina and Subina talks about her situation and what's happened to her husband. And he ultimately loses a leg from the knee down and then he has to come home. And then he's out of work because he -- You know, they didn't have hire the handicapped back then. So then he is limited in what he's able to do and how much work he's able to get. So she has a completely different perspective of an immigrant with a handicapped husband that has come home from the war, and her trials and tribulations of keeping the home life going. Contrary to Elizabeth who had a husband that was home, that had money and position, and she had servants and assistants and she lived a completely different lifestyle from my little Subina. So I kind of liked the dichotomy there of the two different types of characters that I was able to do. And I --

(313) To me it was a personal challenge after being a lady of position that had her dresses made for her and could identify with the war. She had two sons serving in it, yet she was still politely removed to some degree from the pain and the anguish because she did not lose a son, which was absolutely unusual. She did not lose any sons to the war, they both came home. Her husband and she prospered in their business, they made wagons. And absolutely they were the designers of the Wheeling Ambulance, which was patented by the federal government and used in the battlefields. The Wheeling Ambulance. So she had a completely perspective of the war. The war was painful to her, but it benefited her as well because her family's business thrived. After the war, they even opened a business in, a branch, in New Orleans. So they were very well to do and benefited from it. Subina did not. So she was damaged before, came to repair, and did not, and was damaged afterwards. So I had worked on Subina for a long time and she's not even really done yet. I've done her two different places and she was very well received. I did her at Paden City schools, just happened to be several days before St. Patricks Day. She went over real big. They liked that, they liked that. And it was different for them. And so I've tried to work with her. And

there's other characters that I would like to do. One of the characters that I have thought of doing would be Governor Pierpont's wife, Joliette Pierpont. She was the founder of Memorial Day. We have the lady that founded Mother's Day in West Virginia. We also have the founder of Memorial Day in West Virginia. So I've thought about doing Juliette Pierpont. And I'm kind of researching her now to see how much, how much character we could get out of her.

MNK: That's fascinating. Do you feel like, talking back to the beginnings of Wheeling -- Was it, was it a forebearer of yours on your mother's side ?

DD: Yes, my great great great grandfather was the first mayor of Wheeling. Three greats. Three greats. My fourth great, I think my mother's third great. I have to check with her. But, yes, George Miller, George W. Miller was the first mayor of Wheeling. We don't have a great deal of information on him. There is great suspicion that he probably was quite an outrageous gambler. And within the family there had been a rumor that one night during a great gambling game, card game, they had actually gambled away a block of North Wheeling that he had owned. He was wealthy. He had a residence in New York City for a time, and traveled between New York City and Wheeling. His son later on had the opportunity to invest in LaBelle Nail Works and declined the offer, which we know today what a foolish thing for him to do. I'm sure he felt that later on, but my mother's father told her that he could have been a very wealthy man if he had done that. There are several homes in North Wheeling now, brick homes, where my mother's families lived. And one is right on the corner of 7th Street where the Firehouse Restaurant is. It's the little yellow brick building right next to the Firehouse as you come down on 7th Street, right on the corner. That was one of the homes of the Millers. And then up on Market Street there is a house that they have recently repainted, historically painted, and have restored it somewhat. And that was one of the Miller homes. And then there's another one up there somewhere that she knows about. The mayor's house, I believe, and I may be incorrect, was where Ohio Valley Hospital is today. It was in that block right there that OV owns right now. And I know his son lived possibly in his home. And there was -- When my mother recalls, my grandfather having had possession of the mayor's desk. And she remembers it

being awesome, beautiful, heavy piece of furniture. And the reason my grandfather gave it up is because it was so huge, they did not have the room in their home to accommodate it, and she remembers her oldest sister Bernice begging and pleading him not to part with that piece of furniture. But he did. And she says, "To this day, I've often wondered what happened to that." She said she just wishes that she had -- There's so many things that have been lost to that family. Her sister Bernice was the oldest, and she would be in her 90s now had she lived. And she had restored the entire family history, historically researched it. And had all of it and she was two ancestors from the DAR when she died. And when she passed on, all of her records, all of her documentation really meant nothing to her son then and his wife. And they disposed of them. They just trashed them. Years and years of effort and work and research, they garbaged. Just threw it all away. Now, he is in his 60s, greatly regretting his actions and now he is trying to redo all the work that she has done. And he has turned over to my mother everything that he has been

(396) able to come up with for her to verify inasmuch as her memory will allow her. But she was born in 1919. Her sister's all much older than her and would have had even more recall. She has one sister, I believe, that's 82, 88, something like that. Her memory is gone. She lives in Baltimore, and her memory is pretty much gone. And although she lives pretty much on her own, she's real no interest in this. And at times my mother can call her -- That's the one that's kidnapped from the gypsies. She can call her and talk to her and maybe she will be very lucid for a moment and she can recall, but it really is of no importance to her. It has no singular value to her whatsoever. She's -- If she remembers, fine, if she doesn't fine, it's no never mind to her. So I have asked my mother to please try to contact Faye on a regular basis. Hit her on her good days and get her to recall, because of course, then she goes back a complete other generation. I hate to have -- She won't be around that much longer. I hate to lose what's in her mind, which she could tell us. And then of course, the memories that she would have been given from her older sisters. So Faye has the ability to really reach back into time. She remembers two brothers fighting at the dining room table, the Civil War all over again. My mother's family was predominantly

(418) Confederate and their two brothers, I guess, had opposite views. And they would fight at a dining room table, ... and Faye. And they would argue vehemently over who did this and who did that and why this happened and why that happened and they would fight the war all over again. And so I think that's interesting that that's just my mother's sister that could remember that. And if we could just tap her for one good lucid day, God knows what we could pull out of her, you know. Now my mother has a friend that lives in Brook Park out here, which her orientation is from the Ohio side. But her grandfather shook hands with Abraham Lincoln. She has a book on her grandfather that was written by a minister. And it recounts his participation in the Civil War. And she can remember as a little girl on Memorial Day and Fourth of July, he would take a picture of Lincoln out and display it in the window, along with his service ribbons because he was very proud of his participation in the Civil War and the fact that he had shaken hands with Mr. Lincoln. Now, that woman is living right out here at Brook Park, so her grandfather shook hands with Mr. Lincoln and she's still alive. So, I mean, it's that close that she can relate to that. And I think that's what's fascinating about the Civil War. It's far enough ago, yet it's just as close as -- I read in a magazine, it's as close as grandma's chest in the attic. And that's basically how close it is. There's somebody living that I know whose grandfather shook hands with Abraham Lincoln. To me I think that's really exciting. And somebody tracked her down and gave her the book that was written about her grandfather and his participation with the Ohio regiments that he fought with. And has different stories and documentation about his, his involvement during the war years.

MNK: Are you, do you intend to record her?

(449) DD: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, absolutely. She is a very good friend of my family. In fact she and her husband were very, I guess, companions of my mother and father all their life. And she and her husband are still living. They live out here Brook Park. I did not, I did not really care for my father's mother, my grandmother Davis, didn't care for her very much. So this Lenore Bachmann lived right across the street in North Wheeling from my grandmother Davis. And Lenore's mother lived upstairs of her, Mrs. Mallory. And I would go to Mrs. Mallory, preferably to visiting my grandmother Davis. And I just dearly wanted to call her

grandmother instead of Martha across the street. We just did not gel at all. And I was so -- I was broken hearted when Mrs. Mallory died, but I was married and had children when she died. She lived to be quite an elderly lady. And she moved to Warwood because a lot of the North Wheeling people moved to Warwood, and have since kind of left the Warwood area now and they're migrating back out here, out the Pike. And my mother tells me that she has so many friends that live at Brook Park and she's very desirous of leaving Warwood, the high rise there, and moving out here to Brook Park. And as soon as finances permit her, she will. Because she said, "My old neighborhood is all back here now. That's where I want to go." So she has lots of friends out here that she went to high school with.

(473) There's several women that she keeps in touch with that went to grammar school with her. And they are still very close. One lives in Poughkeepsie, New York. And Betty Metheny, and she calls my mother, oh about four times a year or so and they keep in touch. And when she comes to Wheeling, they visit. I've known her for years and she was my mother's friend from grade school through high school and here's my mother, 70, what is she 77 years old and they're still very close. And there are several others that they went all through Wheeling High School together and they're still close. Washington Grade School, which (483) Washington is no longer there, and then Wheeling High School, and they're still close. And that's her old crowd and some of them still live in this neighborhood. So she gets, she has real longings to come out this way now. But that's what I see, the migration from North Wheeling. And my mother lived in North Wheeling, and she knows every house there, who built it, who lived there, and she's -- The house where Gretchen Figaretti lives. My mother went to school, Wheeling High School, with a girl that lived there. She'd been all through that house. She knew all about that house. She knows about all those houses on Main Street. She remembers Mrs. List driving the last electric car in Wheeling. She was just telling me on the phone today how she can remember that car with bright, shiny black. And we have big brass lanterns on the front of our house, and she said, "It had lanterns on the front of that car. Just like you have on the front of the house, Diane." And she said, "I can remember her driving downtown with the last electric car in Wheeling." And she remembers so many of these wonderful little things, you know. These people and these

characters and -- My father was born in 1915. And he had -- He had an exceptional memory. He could remember everything. An unfortunate thing, I remember my father when he was very young telling -- Well he was my father at the time. When he was a young boy he experienced going through a graveyard here in Wheeling where he and his sister had gone through a graveyard, and unfortunately their foot sunk down into a hole. And he says that his sister, and I don't know if it's the one that's still living or the one that's deceased now. Here somebody had been buried, and of course, they didn't use crypts then, and the wood had deteriorated, and they got their foot stuck, and it was way, way down in there and it was just like an open hole after a point in time. And the foot was down in there, and he said how horrible it was for them to try and get her foot out of this grave and run home and didn't want to tell anybody what they had done and he felt very guilty for being in this graveyard and falling in this hole, so to speak, the sister. And I remember him telling me about that and I was in college, it was 1975. He had died in October and this was spring of '76. And I was trying to help my mother research her family tree for what had been lost from her sister Bernice. And she told me that she had relatives buried at Mt. Wood Cemetery in North Wheeling. So my cousin on my dad's side, we left college, we left West Liberty campus that day and we had a two hour break between our next class and we ran down to Mt. Wood Cemetery and thought, 'We'll be able to run all over that cemetery, we'll find the Millers, we'll find them. We'll find these two brothers.' One's name, I think is Orlaf, real weird name. And so we went down over the hillside, we couldn't find him. My golly, there's gravestones that are -- You'll never know who they are because they're like 15 feet from where they started out. They're completely fallen over the side of the hill and there's nobody taking care of the cemetery at that time. As we walked back up through the cemetery, I took a shortcut across the road and the road into Mt. Wood is nothing more than a carriage trail at the time, it was designed to be. So it's definitely a one lane little road. And I went between two old private mausoleums and as I walked up between this little dirt path, I looked down, as I live and breath, here's a human head laying right in front of me. And I'm not one to really get excited about much of anything. After reading the books at the State Police, there's not much that could alarm me. And I looked

down, and I called to my cousin Susie, and I said, "Oh, my golly, come over here, there's a head." And she's laughing, "Oh sure Diane, sure." And I said, "No, there really is." And I looked and this one side of the mausoleum, they had vandalized it. And this mausoleum is like 1883, 1893, I'd have to think of the date. Definitely old. And here they had gone in and torn the bricks out of the mausoleum and opened up the caskets on the inside and drug the bodies out. When I looked in there, I said, "Oh my gosh, look at this." Talk about desecration. Well my dad had just died in October, so I really took this personal that somebody would violate, you know, somebody's resting place. And I, I didn't know what to do. And it was funny because I was enrolled in a class with Dr. Campanese on death and dying. And I thought I've got to go back to campus and tell Camp that what I found. And I notified the police, and I went to my professor and told him. And it ended up that Kuzima Photography Studios, Photographic Studios from Martins Ferry, Ohio, felt obliged to get involved in this. He was very upset about what had happened. And he was so appalled by the desecration at a graveyard, that he went there and took night pictures

(571) of the graveyard. It was horrible. There were bodies everywhere. Gravestones overturned, mausoleums broken into. It was really very, very disgusting. And he took the pictures and he gave them -- He took them down to the Wheeling newspaper. And I think the community needed something that graphic to shake them up, wake them up. That's where Noah Linsley is buried. There are people there from the Sixth West Virginia Volunteer Infantry. So many notable figures from Wheeling's history buried up there and here are these graves being just desecrated terribly. It was filled with beer bottles at the time. It was just a dump. And that's where the young kids, little crappy kids were going up there and partying all night long at a graveyard and tearing the graveyard apart. After those pictures hit the newspaper, city of Wheeling, city council moved to take that graveyard under their wing and now the city of Wheeling maintains that graveyard. They keep the grass cut and they did go in and replaced the bodies and they, as best they could. And they sealed up all these private mausoleums because there was nobody -- There was no board of trustees any longer, it was so old, there was nobody left to take care of it. It's interesting because there is a Jewish section and then this Gentile section, if you will. The Jewish

section has always been kept very meticulously manicured, nobody's ever bothered it. It's always been maintained, nobody has done anything but kept the grass mowed. There are no, no desecration in the Jewish section. But in the other part, it was destroyed. And I -- I go up there quite frequently because I'm still trying to find these Millers. I go crawling around. I'm always crawling through a graveyard looking for ... I can dig up. And I'm always in the graveyards and I always find something more and more interesting. More and more interesting. There's so much history there. And sometimes I just sit out there and I don't buy into any of the cult or past lives or anything, but I just sit there and try to get a perspective, a picture from the past, something of what this must have been like. These people. Here you are now, but I would give anything just to talk to you for five minutes. And even Greenwood Cemetery, you know, was designed by a landscape artist. And it was just not a piece of property that they picked out and started burying people in. It was landscaped professionally and laid out by a professional architect to make it looked the way it looked. Special trees were purchased and brought into Wheeling and different plants. It was all very carefully designed. And it was, it still is, it's a beautiful, beautiful cemetery. It's more than a cemetery. There's people go there all the time just to walk through. Some people learn to drive there because it's very nice and slow and you can make the turns and learn how to negotiate if you're driving a four speed, you know. You can learn to handle the clutch in a cemetery. There's a lot of people that really facilitate Greenwood Cemetery for more than a graveyard. And I go there quite often for just moments of quiet contemplation. Nobody bothers me. We have a captive audience and everybody listens to me if I talk. And I can go find these people and I can, I can relate situations. You can see when the plagues went through here, when diphtheria went through. You can see when cholera went through by looking at the dates on the older cemeteries. And, and if you look and you're very, very careful, history will reveal itself there. But you just have to be very perseverant and go through those graveyards and then compare between the two. And that's one thing about the mayor we don't know where he's buried. There is a suggestion that I had come across that he was buried in the old Chapline Street Graveyard. Chapline Street, obviously is now Chapline Street. And I was told that there was a point in time

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where some people, if you had money, when they decided to put Chapline Street in, that you could have had you loved ones removed. Those that did not have money or maybe their families weren't around here any more, it was simply paved over. And also, there was that unpleasant task of the deteriorations of the coffins, and there wasn't really much left to remove. So in some situations of the recent graves, they did remove them to other graveyards, but some have remained there today.

MNK: So you can almost get a sense of history from communing with these --

(664) DD: Yeah, and I don't mean to sound the least bit -- As I said, I do not buy into any of the occult. I'm not into reincarnation or any time travel or that. What I do is I believe it's just through the comparison of dates, reading of the old newspapers in town, the old history books, just going back and doing basic research within the city of Wheeling through newspapers and books in the Wheeling Room and at Bethany College and just making comparisons. Then go out to the graveyard, you find the people. The people are there, the dates are there. And the dates on the gravestones, sometimes there's a misprint in the newspaper, but it's usually right on the gravestone because it was done then, and it's still there. So it's interesting how sometimes I've been able to find different dates and things. And then my mother was very helpful because she would tell me that when she was young they talked about when diphtheria, which was long before her time too. But to her mother and her mother's family, her father's family. It was within a generation or so of them.

(689) So, by her telling me oh, yes there was an influenza that went through Wheeling and many families died and there was diphtheria and so on, I was able to go out and just walk through the old section and all the children you find out there. There are so many children.

Interestingly enough, a lot of people would name children the same name. They would have a baby and maybe it only lived four months. They named it, you know, like Christine. And then a year or so later they'd have another baby girl and maybe name it Christine and it had died, maybe it only lived to be four. And usually -- I've never seen it repeated more than once or twice, you know, two names. They didn't try a third time. And -- But there's a lot of duplicated names for babies out there. And definitely for sons especially. Always important to have a junior, I suppose. It was interesting that there are fathers who had

children. The baby died shortly after birth or within a year of its first year, sometime during the first year. And then they would have maybe another son a year or so later, and they would name him after his dad again. If that one perished, you don't see another one. Then they went onto a different name. And I think there must be a superstition or something there, you know. Better not try that again. And I would assume that that would be very logical to them at that time period. That this would be a superstition, we'd best not try this. And then you can see if you sit there just for a minute and you look at children that have died. And of course, we look at it differently now because our children usually survive to adulthood in this day and age, but then, they did not. And it's very interesting to just see and really you can experience, you can imagine the agony that they must have gone through. It was not easy -- It's never easy bringing a life into the world. It's not easy at all. And that's one thing I tried to impart as Elizabeth. Very difficult for a