

## ORAL HISTORY OF ZELMA McCORMICK HUNTOON

This is Gina Cressey, today is August 15, 2000, I'm at the Community Hall in Bayside, and I'm about to interview Zelma McCormick Huntoon.

GC: Zelma why don't I start by asking you to tell me how your family first came to Bayside.

ZH: Ok, well I'm not sure I can only speculate, my mother's family, my mother's family were all from Orono, and they were Methodists, and so I suspect that my great grandmother and my great aunt came down here to Bayside, in the late 1800's perhaps, because we've always known about Bayside, and in the teens and the twenties, my family came here off and on, but then when I was born we went to Temple Heights because my mother didn't like Bayside because she said it was too crowded and too tacky. So she liked it down in Saturday Cove and we spent a couple of summers down there and also in Temple Heights. But then we left and went back up to the interior, we had relatives all over Maine so we used to go spend the summer with some or the other of them. So, we've always known about Bayside, that's what I'm saying.

GC: And so what year would you say it was that in all likelihood you first spent a summer here?

ZH: Well, I know the first summer I spent here was 1943, I think it was. And the way that happened is sort of interesting, my aunt and I were up in Maine here staying up at the family's house in Orono, and the family all died and my aunt owned the house, and Orono was a deadly place for a teenager. So (but) she rented it during the summer to Athina and Jason Tibbets, (who) Jason owned the store down here, and she knew the Tibbets because she had had him in school when she was a teacher - he had been in her class at school. So, Athina called up Auntie Fran (wrote to her and said) would she come down to Bayside and take care of her three boys while Athina went up and did canning up at the house. So Auntie Fran thought that was a great idea, because it would get me out of her hair, so we came down and we stayed a week, we stayed at Athina's cottage which is the one that Jackie Facey has now.

GC: OK, so that would be on Main Street near the corner.

ZH: On Main Street, the second one up. And so we stayed there a week, and then Athina I guess liked it being up there without her boys and her husband, and canning, so she said would we stay another week, and Auntie Fran said fine. Now I don't remember anything about the stay - I don't remember staying in that house, I don't remember staying with the boys, of course I remember the boys, nothing. But boy I remembered Bayside. And that second week, I said to Auntie Fran - I want a cottage here. So Auntie Fran, a great thing to have is a maiden aunt, and that was what Auntie Fran was. So we went around that week and found a cottage and she bought it that week.

GC: Isn't that something - now how old were you?

ZH: I was fourteen.

GC: You were fourteen, and that cottage was which cottage?

ZH: That's the cottage up on Main Street, the second one - Well there's the one at the corner, and it's the next one down from the corner. It's next to the Parsloe's cottage. So, of course we didn't stay in it that summer, but we did the next summer and then every summer afterwards until I got married.

GC: Let's digress here just a little bit so you so you can tell me where the rest of your life was being spent.

ZH: Oh, New York City

GC: Where you were born.

ZH: Yes, and went to school. But we always came to Maine - I mean every summer we spent in Maine somewhere. But then once we came to Bayside my aunt and I used to come up. My mother worked, and Auntie Fran was a schoolteacher, so she had me on her hands.

GC: What was her last name?

ZH: Morey. And she was awfully good to me.

GC: Well she must have enjoyed you, too or she wouldn't have...

ZH: Well, she was a typical maiden aunt, and did everything for her nieces. She had ten nieces and one nephew.

GC: Now were any of them up here over the course of the summer as well?

ZH: Let's see. Well they were (some of them), of course my sister came up, but Gwen by that time was already out of college and was working so she came up. She wasn't wild about Bayside because she didn't like the sun. And, some would come down and visit, but there were none staying right here with us.

GC: You were the regular?

ZH: I was the regular.

GC: All right, so we've got you in place, we know how old you were, you were fourteen and the year was 1943

ZH: 1943 we bought it, the first summer we spent here I think was 1944.

GC: OK.

ZH: I may be off a year, it may have been 1942 and 1943, but I think it was '43 and '44.

GC: So when you look back on that period, and we know that's when World War II was happening, was there a distinctly observable absence of men in the community.

ZH: Well, I don't know, but there wasn't an absence of boys, I'll tell you. (Laughter). At that point I wasn't caring much about the men, it was the boys.

GC: Tell me who some of them were and what you did.

ZH: Well, the thing that I remember most pronouncedly is that in the summer of 1944, Jo Huntoon, who at that time was Jo Martin - because he had taken his step-father's name - and I sat on the corner of Main Street and Broadway one afternoon into the evening arguing politics, because that was an election year. And I think he was a Democrat - he will not tell me - but I think he was. So that's one of my first memories was Jo and I battling.

GC: OK, so I don't have to ask you how you met him.

ZH: I'll tell you, that was, what, 56 years-ago and we've battled every year since then.

ZH: And so there was Jo, and then there was Bill Parsloe next door who I had a flaming crush on, because he was so good looking, but he left probably (maybe) even that summer of '44 (must have been) to go into the service, and so I didn't see much of him, but oh gosh he was good looking. And there was Bob Leonard, who was beneath him to talk to me.

GC: Was he older?

ZH: No, he was about the same age, but just like now there were crowds. And my crowd was Pam Short, who was Joanne Coughlin's younger sister.

GC: Was that Steve's mother?

ZH: Steve's mother.

GC: Okay.

ZH: And Arnie Croskill Merrithew, who is Eleanor Fuller's sister. And we all lived on Main Street. And we were the threesome. And then of course there were people like Jean Mullvaney, who was beautiful, and really she was, if you talk about A list, she was AA list. Jean Burbank, who was very nice looking, and oh gosh, well the (Tardif) Hook sisters, Jeannette Tardif and her sister Marilyn, and of course Joanne Coughlin was a little bit older. Sybil, who was just a little bit older, but just a little bit older made a difference.

GC: Still does, I think.

ZH: And, Laurel Clements. Now as far as the boys, Bob Witherill who I went out with later on, he was in the navy, so he wasn't here in those early years. Oh and there was Pumpkin Eaton, maybe, I don't know - I can't remember.

GC: Is it a boy or a girl?

ZH: Boy. And then of course there was the whole sailing school crowd. I don't know if they were here in '44, I think maybe they were. And in there were Dick Lagner and Don Knott, and Steve Kenyon, and a whole bunch of neat guys.

GC: That's what brought them into town.

ZH: That's right. I don't remember any of the girls. So that was it. There were about, well I would say 30 or 40 teenagers that moved in swarm, in this place. And they would sort of split off into crowds (into groups), but we all knew each other, and occasionally we'd all assemble in the park, and I remember one time we formed a great line that stretched all the way up the park and into the road, and we walked through Bayside singing songs, because one of the things that happened here was during the war, since we couldn't get out, I mean no one had gas, nothing was going on. I guess out of self-preservation, the parents took on entertaining us, or doing things, to entertain us. One of things were every year they'd had a minstrel show or a variety show. We learned all the words to all the old songs like "Shine on Harvest Moon", and "We Ain't Got a Barrel of Money", and "A Good Man is Hard to Find". Those are the only songs that I know all the words to. So we used to go through town singing those.

GC: Now who were some of the parents.

ZH: Well, Mr. and Mrs. Short, Joanne Coughlin's mother and father. Of course he started the Yacht Club, and Agnes Short, of course I never called her Agnes. She was a big mover in getting the shows going. In the early days they were minstrel shows, and Jean Mullvaney's father and (good thing you're doing it this year, next year I wouldn't remember any of this), and Arnie Croskill's father used to be the sideman. And so she would organize them, and I know Heloise Leonard who was Bob Leonard's mother, and Adelaide Lincoln's aunt, she did scavenger hunts and treasure hunts for us. Eleanor Fuller, whose husband was in the service, she ran dances twice a week, Tuesday and Saturday night dances. So there were a lot of wonderful things going on.

GC: Sounds like it. Did you all pretty much come at the beginning of the summer and stay?

ZH: Yes.

GC: Now, did you have cars?

ZH: No

GC: How did you get your groceries. Tell me about the stores.

ZH: I don't know, I didn't get them.

GC: It wasn't your problem

ZH: Well, there was the Stage, as they called it, was one of the Page women that delivered the mail down here because we had a post office. Athena Tibbets 2v« (for a while there was postmistress. Athena Tibbets, whose house we stayed at, and Adelaide Lincoln, who was Adelaide Barrock (Barrett, ed.), worked in the post office there. So there was a stage that used to bring (and Jo would remember which Page it was) the mail down. Going back, you could get a ride with her, and I guess people got cabs and came in. But there was the Hastings store up on George Street, which is across now from the Townsend cottage is - where Bartlett's is. You could buy milk and eggs and vegetables and things like that - canned goods.

GC: How about candy bars, would kids wander in and out of there?

ZH: Oh yea, it wasn't a candy store, it was more of a little grocery store, run by Mr. and Mrs. Hastings, and anything you wanted that they didn't have, Mrs. Hastings would say, "No we don't have lemons, don't you know there's a war on". So anyway, so you could get milk there, and things that you needed. And then (I don't know) they took cabs in. I don't know how they got in.

GC: The kids didn't ever go in to the movies, for example.

ZH: Oh yea, we hitchhiked.

GC: Oh yea, we hitchhiked.

ZH: Yes

GC: Zelma!!

ZH: Now don't let my dead mother or aunt know that.

GC: Absolutely

ZH: We used to hitchhike in. But, you know, there were very few cars on the road, and we'd go in, there was a late afternoon movie, and you could go in at (maybe like 2:00 or something like that), and you'd get out before dark. And then there would always be someone there who had driven in and you'd get a ride in. So, Pammy and I and Joanne Coughlin and Arnie Croskill and Estelle Croskill, her sister - we used to hitchhike in. Pammy and I used to sometimes by ourselves, and had some really funny and some really scary experiences.

GC: Ooh, do you want to tell them?

ZH: Well, the funny one was just Pammy and me. Pammy and I were buddies, I'll tell you. She was a great, amusing, funny girl - and beautiful, just beautiful. Of course we would walk out to Route One that was then Brown's Corner, and hitchhike in. So these two guys stopped, and they had this big truck with the sides you know that were just sort of loose sides flapping around, and they said "Hop in the back". So we hopped in the back, the truck took off; the last load in that had been manure. Pammy and I got to laughing and we said, "We're going to have the whole theater to ourselves". And we couldn't get off. There we were with this manure, and there were no piles of it or anything there, but the smell was there. So that was one time. Then another time, and this was really scary, we had gotten out and had delayed or something out of the movies - I don't know what we had done, but everyone who was coming down to Bayside had gone. So there we were, and there were five of us - Pammy, Joanne, Arnie, Estelle, and one other person who I don't know who it was. So we started walking, and it was dark. The streetlights came on, and so it was dark. We got down, and there's the last street light there in Belfast - we walked past it and then it was really dark. So we were walking along, and some car comes along and stops, and says, "Would you girls like a ride". There were two guys in there. And we said, "No, No, we're just going a little ways". One of the guys said, "How far are you going"? I don't know, I or Pammy or someone said, "Just down to that white house down there". The white house down there was the home for wayward girls. They drove off, we got past the house, we said, "My god, you told them we were going to the home for wayward girls". So we kept walking. Well they came back around, and they kept slowing down and going by. Meanwhile it was darker and darker, and the houses were getting sparser, and we were scared.

GC: I'll bet

ZH: So finally we got to this house, and I try to find it now and I can't find it. It was back from the road and it had bushes in front of it. And there was a road. I know where the road is; the road was on the right hand of Route One. So they came down past us, and when they got past, we went and ran and hid behind these bushes in front of the porch. The porch was sort of raised up, and we hid there, and we saw them come back and go down that road and come back, and go down. We of course were whispering, then we hear someone say, "Honey there are noises out here". So someone comes out on the porch. Well, of course if we had made ourselves known and told her, I'm sure she would have given us a ride. But we felt so guilty about hiding - no, no, no, there's no one out there, come on in, there's no one out there. So finally we waited and waited and waited, and they didn't come, and we came out. And I'll tell you Gina, we ran the whole way home, we were so scared. That was pretty much the last time that we (not the very last time) thought a lot about before we hitchhiked. I was forbidden to hitchhike.

GC: Of course

ZH: Which was embarrassing the time that I came down into town and my aunt was standing there. Pammy and I are in the back seat of a car with two guys in front and

Auntie Fran says, "Introduce us to your friends". Anyway, so that's how we used to get into Belfast.

GC: Now was this an era when dances would occur right here in the community.

ZH: Oh yes, Eleanor Fuller ran dances every Tuesday and Saturday night. Some years, I don't remember how many, at the end of the season she would have a formal for us. She was wonderful - she would play records, and we'd dance. It was nice, because everybody came - big kids, little kids, there would be parents, and it was just really very nice. .

GC: That is nice. How is she related at all to Gordon Fuller?

ZH: Mother.

GC: She's his mother.

ZH: She was my friend Arnie's half-sister. As I said, her husband was in the army. So she was down here. She was a teacher, so she had the summers off. Both Eleanor and the kids that were involved in the dances remember it very, very fondly.

GC: I gather that from talking to other people. Did you dress up, or was it "come as you are".

ZH: I think we'd wear skirts and a blouse. It was kind of an occasion. And the thing that was great was she'd have a grand march. We'd start out -- first two pairs would come down, then fours would come down.

GC: Sounds like fun

ZH: It was fun.

GC: Tell me a little bit about your memories of the waterfront.

ZH: Well, of course the wharf. I suppose I better tell you one of my memories. The wharf was the gathering place. You'd go down there - and it really saddens me now to see that during the week it's pretty quiet.

GC: You're talking about day and night.

ZH: Well, yes. But I'm talking mostly about day. At night you kind of hid out down there. During the day there would just be a line of bodies sunning on the dock.

GC: Tell me a little bit Zelma about some of the things that used to go on down on the wharf.

ZH: Well, the wharf was the center of the activities for the teenagers on a nice day. And you'd go down there at 10:00 in the morning and it would just be wall to wall people getting tans, swimming, and boating. There were some sailboats, not nearly as much as there are now, but there were a number of sailboats. It was just very active, and that was where the action was. So you used to go down there, and people would go in swimming. I don't like the heat or the sun. So I'd lie out on the wharf as much as I could, and then I'd go into the water and cool down, and then come back up. Of course that gave me a nice tan. But that was the whole thing, was get a beautiful tan.

GC: Sure

ZH: Now, I don't burn or tan very much, and I didn't like the sun, so it didn't wreck my skin. But some of the women now that I knew that were down there -it's really sad. Jean Burbank, for instance. She was a beautiful young girl, beautiful. And towards the end of her life her skin looked like leather. Of course she had the most beautiful tan of anyone down there.

GC: We thought it was the healthiest thing of all.

ZH: Then the boys would come down and pester us and pour buckets of water on us. Or, they would take us out sailing. I used to sail with Jo. He said he always asked me because I was the best ballast. He didn't have a boat of his own, but he sailed Janey (Shaw) Jennings' Snipe. Janey is Richard Jennings' sister. Richard Jennings was Jo's best friend down here. He lived up in the white farmhouse across from the golf course.

GC: Related how to George Jennings

ZH: His younger brother. He was one of the guys down here. There was a close connection between Richard and Jo's family. In fact, Richard went to Boston Latin and lived with Julia and Vaughn Hamilton, who were the people who had our house before we did. So it's all very, very inbred.

GC: Adelaide went to Boston Latin as well.

ZH: I guess she did, yes.

GC: Was there a lifeguard in that era.

ZH: No, not that I remember.

GC: Did people feel free to shove one another in the drink?

ZH: Oh, yeah. All sorts of things. But there were adults around, because there were people spending the summer here - mothers and stuff. The kids, they were pretty good. No one shoved me in ever, because they knew I wasn't a strong swimmer, and I was afraid of the water. The only thing that anyone ever did was, again Jo, who when I was



coming up on the swimming wharf one time, gasping for breath, he'd come over and step on my head. It was so mean, that when I told Pammy Short that he and I were getting married, Pammy said to me, "Zelma, how would you marry him after all the mean things he's done to you". And I said, "Well like what Pammy", because I thought maybe I'd forgotten some. So she said, "Well what about the time he took you to the movies with his slippers on, and remember how embarrassed you were". So that sort of thing went here.

GC: Let's run through the history of this romance. When did you start being an item, actually?

ZH: We dated during the summer, but I always had another boyfriend at home. We were more friends. We'd go out together, and heckle each other, but we were always just really good friends. One year I came up expecting very much to see Jo and date him, and he stayed away for the first part of the summer. He since told me he was "retrenching". So, we were really kind of friends. In those days you didn't get as serious as they do now, because your sexual involvement was very much less.

GC: Different story

ZH: Which in a way was a better thing, because you could go out with several guys. Jo was always there and I was always there, and we always liked each other. But we used to have terrible fights.

GC: Did the other kids think it was amusing to see you two having at it?

ZH: Jo was odd man out here. He went his own way. He was in the crowd but not really part of the crowd because he did his own thing. So, they didn't think anything of it, except he was funny. He had this old car, an old '32 Ford, and we asked him for a ride up from the wharf. The reason we wanted a ride up (and Pammy lived up where Mary Ellen lives now, you know up on the top of Main Street there) was that we had to go to the bathroom. So we said, "Hey Jo give us a ride up to Pammy's house" so Jo said "Hop In". So we get up there, and as we try to get out, he would make the car jerk, and every time we'd start to get out of the car, he'd jerk it. Well, I jumped out and then Pammy got out, we got to laughing so, that Pammy wet her pants. She was furious with him. She was furious. She said, "Well I'm glad I hit him over the head with that two by four". I said, "What do you mean". When they were kids one time, he ruined their game of house, and Pammy hit him on the head with a two by four. So I always said, "Well that's always been what's the matter with him".

ZH: It was just a big crowd. Now there was more pairing off and I think more serious romances than probably Jo and I had. But I wasn't one for serious romances. I didn't want to get involved.

GC: And how old were you when you eventually got engaged.

ZH: Oh, god. I was 26, and we got married at the chapel at Columbia because I had gone to school there and I didn't have any other church affiliation. The minister at the chapel at Columbia wanted to interview us before he married us. So we went over one day and the first question he asked us was how long we had known each other. So Jo and I got into one of our usual arguments about whether it was eleven or twelve years. The minister kept trying to interrupt us; well you just don't interrupt Jo and me when we're arguing. And so finally he raised his voice, he said, "Listen, I just wanted to know if you two knew each other more than one semester".

ZH: The thing was, it surprised people up here, because people didn't know that I was seeing Jo also during the winter. His family lived in New Jersey (his stepmother and father). When he'd come down from Bowdoin at Christmas time, he'd call me up and we'd go out together. So we saw each other consistently over those years. Finally when we decided to get married, he said, "I just waited, I knew you'd marry me eventually". And it just felt awfully right because we were such good friends.

GC: Yes, and that's the thing that has to last, and it has.

ZH: Now I went around with several other guys, and beforehand I thought, Oh God, I never (knew) what I needed in a husband. What I needed in a husband was someone who would let me do just what I damned pleased. Any of the other guys, we would have broken up. I don't know how I could have been married to anyone but Jo.

GC: So you found exactly the right man.

ZH: Absolutely, Absolutely. Anyway, you said to think of something that I might forget. I almost forgot - one of the most significant things that happened in my early days in Bayside here was the day they dropped the atom bomb on Japan.

GC: Oh, tell me everything you remember about that.

ZH: Well, here's the story on that. We were living at the cottage, my aunt and I guess my mother was there also, because it was in August, next to the Parsloes. Now, of course Bill was still in the service, but Bill had a young cousin whose mother and father were there - Pete Spillane. Pete was five years old. Brightest kid I've ever seen in my life - incredibly bright child. They were from California. I didn't know them well, but we knew Petey because he would come over and talk and talk. One day he came running up on the porch, and he said, "The war is over, the war is over". We said, "What do you mean?". He said, "We dropped a big bomb on Japan, and it's all over". So we said, "Petey, are you making that up? how do you know that?". "Somebody told me, somebody told me that the war's over". He went around the neighborhood telling people that. But we didn't have a radio. We went up and down the street trying to find someone with a radio.

And we found someone, and I won't say who it was, and they said, yes they had a radio, and we said that there's just spectacular news on, can we come in and listen to it on the radio. They said no; they didn't want to listen to it. So it was really several days until we got a newspaper that we knew the whole story.

GC: Isn't that something. Was it just a rumor from a little kid?

ZH: Apparently, someone had come and told the Parsloes, but none of us had a radio.

GC: Isn't that something.

ZH: We had one, but it wasn't working, that's what the problem was. And I'll always remember that. One of the most significant events of the 20th century and I couldn't even listen to it on the radio.

GC: That does say something about what a different time it was.

ZH: It really was.

GC: Now let's go from there a little bit to what some of the other mundane household appliances that we always use today, and take them back. Now, how did you get your clothes clean?

ZH: Well, I wore all my clothes until I didn't have any clean ones, then I wore my bathing suit all day and washed in the sink (the tub). We didn't have a hot water heater, and we heated water. Of course we didn't have a dryer, god help me if we had a spell of weather like this, I would be going around in my bathing suit and a sweater. That's how we did that. Of course there was no Laundromat or anything. In those days it was really camping.

GC: Yes, more like the campgrounds.

ZH: And they were called camps. As I said, we didn't have a hot water heater. We did have a tub. We had a small electric stove, but we also had a cook stove, my great grandmother's cook stove. We just got rid of that two years ago.

GC: So what would have been involved in taking a bath for instance.

ZH: Heat the water on the stove, and carry it over to the tub, or sometimes just put it in a big wash tub and do a sponge bath. That was it.

GC: So things that we would consider primitive now.

ZH: They were primitive to me, because, after all, I came from New York City, where we certainly had hot water and tubs and all of that.

GC: How about refrigeration?

ZH: Well, for the first few years anyway (I don't know how long it was) we had an icebox that was out on the porch. We had that well into the late 40's, that ice box. There was a guy, Jack, who came around and delivered blocks of ice. I don't know how frequently, maybe a couple of times a week. The icehouse was the house that Betty Hawkins has now.

GC: Oh, next to the Trenholm's.

ZH: I don't know how the ice got in there. I know how it stayed cold, because Pammy and I went up one time and looked into the icehouse, which was a very daring thing. What it was they had a big pit, I'm sure Betty Hawkins has used it as a foundation now, that blocks of ice were down in there and covered with sawdust or straw or something like that, and then there was a walkway around it, and that was what the ice house was.

GC: Gosh.

ZH: Now other people I'm sure had refrigerators, but our cottage came with an icebox. Auntie Fran had lived in Maine, and these primitive things didn't put her off.

GC: She wasn't a New Yorker.

ZH: Yeah that's it.

GC: Did you have garbage pickup.

ZH: Jack did garbage pickup.

GC: Did you have a police officer?

ZH: Yes, Joe Muzzi was the constable. He lived up on the corner of Main and Broadway.

GC: Did he get along well with teenagers?

ZH: Oh yeah. There wasn't really too much trouble with the teenagers that that I knew of. Every once in a while we'd have a tough kid come in, and I can remember John Short got in to a battle (a fist fight) with one of them, a real rotten kid. But there were a number of men that were here all summer. John Short was here very often because he was a salesman, and so he'd be here. John Mulvaney was a teacher, so he was here all summer. Kelly Croskill worked for Sears, but he was down here every night. So there was a male presence here. There were men that people cared about, and respected. They were all a presence here. So I don't remember any sort of, well there were some street fights and that sort of thing, but no heavy drinking, or anything like that.

GC: How about stuff like sneaking up to the mansion or the golf course

ZH: Well yes, sure. Wendy was telling me about her escapades. I think the only bad thing that we did - well we did a number of bad things, crazy things, but we were in college at this point. A friend of mine came up from New York and she said she wanted a souvenir of Maine. So, Jo and Richard Jennings said, "Well how about a pine tree". So Grace thought that was just fine, and mind you, Grace came up here by bus. She took - the train from New York to Boston and the bus from Boston. Well, she'd like to take a pine tree home. So at about 2:00 in the morning, we went out and dug up a pine tree that was right across from where the Burbank's house. It was nice - they were all planted in a row there - little pine tree seedlings. After we dug it up, Jo said that you know he thought that it might be one of the Burbank's pine trees. So we dug it up and they wrapped it up for us, and we brought it home. We got home at about 4:00 in the morning, and my aunt got up. She said, "What are you kids doing". So there was this pine tree wrapped up and she said, "My god", she said, "Grace you can't carry this home". She unwrapped it and those two bums had filled the wrappings full of \*\*\*. So she, god love her, she wrapped wet paper around it and wrapped it up nicely. Meanwhile, there had been a big clod of dirt that the boys had taken off with them. So Grace wraps this thing up, she walks from Bayside to Browns corner to where the store is to get the bus, carrying the pine tree at 5:00 in the morning, because the bus came through at 6:00. She goes to Boston, checks it at North Station because she's going to have lunch with a friend of ours who was from Bayside, Harry Williams, but who was working in Boston. She takes it down by train to Grand Central Station, changes and takes train out to Yonkers, comes to the door and says to her mother, "Mom, look what I have for you", and her mother says, "Oh Grace, why didn't you bring two". But in any case, the next morning, I come down and sitting in the basketball basket is the big clump of dirt, and it's pouring rain. Well John Short was furious, and he was going around asking who had done that. Well, I knew who had done it, but John was so angry I didn't dare to tell him. To this day, Jo will not admit that he did that.

GC: Do you think that he honestly forgot?

ZH: No, the day after he wouldn't admit it. To me, that was really vandalism.

GC: Well I like to think that there could be a tall pine tree in Yonkers today.

ZH: Oh there was, a couple of years later we went down and looked at it and that thing was probably ten feet tall. But then they moved, and I said to Grace that if they ever moved I wanted the tree, but living in an apartment in New York it would have been hard to get.

ZH: But the other excitement during that time was the Coast Guard boats that used to come down. We used to play around with those

GC: Now why were they coming?

ZH: Well, they were patrolling the bay during the war, and there was an antisubmarine boat that used to anchor off, because it had live depth charge on board and it couldn't come into the wharf. One night after one of the dances, a bunch of us rowed out to it and tried to board it.

GC: How far did you get?

ZH: Well we got up to just standing up and holding on to the sides, and then there was a seaman there with a gun pointed at us.

GC: That sends a strong message

ZH: So we said, "Oh, excuse us". And then they had one that was a motorsailer - 60 foot. Pammy and I got to go out on it for a whole afternoon.

GC: That sounds like fun.

ZH: Yes.

GC: Did these guys ever come in Bayside and walk around?

ZH: They just came on to the wharf. But they always had delicious food - oh god - of course we were rationed, and they had roast beef and all the stuff and they'd give us some to eat. They were nice guys and they were stationed out of Rockland.

GC: Did you have to do blackouts here?

ZH: Oh yes, all of the streetlights were painted black. Of course I guess there was some enemy submarine activity out at the mouth of the bay. We were always told there was.

GC: Did you pull the shades down?

ZH: Yeah, yeah.

**Now I'm going to turn the tape.**

GC: Okay Zelma, what's the next anecdote that you've got for us.

ZH: Well, this is another thing. I tell these stories, because my daughters said, "Now you have to, if they interview you, you have to tell these stories". So that's why I'm telling these stories. Well, again it was the fearsome fivesome, and Arnie Croskill came up one day and said that she'd met some guy who was teaching people to fly up at the Belfast airport, and why didn't we go up and see the planes. So we went up, and there were these five guys up there with five planes. So we got to talking with them, and they said, "Wouldn't you like a ride?" Now mind you, my mother that summer had been trying to

persuade me to fly up to Maine from New York, and I had never flown. Mother loved to fly, and she said, "Why don't you fly up there". I said, "I'll fly back, I don't want to get killed before I go to Maine. I don't mind getting killed at the end of the summer". So we went up there, and there were all these guys with these little planes. They said, "Hey girls would you like a ride". We said, "yeah". So each of us got into a plane, with a guy whom we had never seen before in our life. And so I'm talking - naturally I talk -- you know I talk. I said, "Oh I knew a guy who used to fly his own plane, a guy named Harvey Braun, Do you know him". "Oh, yeah we knew him, poor Harvey, he bit the dust about six months ago." So they said, where are you all from, we said Bayside down the road there. So they flew us down to Bayside, and they buzzed the wharf. They flew down, they said, "What street do you live on", and I pointed it out. They flew at treetop level down Main Street. They flew out and around - they used to have a flagpole on the top - Gina, they had to pull up to clear that flagpole. I was scared to death.

GC: With good reason

ZH: And then we come in, and they start to bank to land. And I grabbed hold of these things on the side and he screams at me, "Let go of those, that's what controls the flaps". And I look and there are these wire things coming down held together not with friction tape, but with adhesive tape. So we're coming in for a landing, and he cuts the engine. And I'm screaming at him, "Put that engine back on". He says that this is the way we have to land. Well we came out just - my knees were like jelly. However, Lee Ann Trenholm has a picture from her mother's album of me standing looking like Amelia Earhart, leaning on the wing of that plane. Anyway, we come down to Bayside, and everyone was just irate about these planes flying.

GC: Little knowing that you were on them.

ZH: Oh no one knew. And no one ever knew.

GC: How did you keep that a secret?

ZH: We didn't dare to tell anyone, because people were just furious.

GC: Just as they would have been today.

ZH: Of course, and I went in and my aunt was just beside herself. My mother was arriving that night from New York. I always told my mother everything, because that relieved me of guilt, and I know now mother would rather have not heard it. Anyway, I said to my mother, "Well you'll never guess what I did today", and she just looked at me, and she said, "I don't know how you did it, but you flew, didn't you." And I said, "Auntie Fran told you, Auntie Fran told you. Auntie Fran looks at me and said, "Were you up in those planes", and I just didn't answer her. But that's what we did.

GC: Isn't that something. Well it's nice that there's a picture to commemorate the occasion.

ZH: Yes.

GC: And how old would you have been when that happened

ZH: Well that was before I was in college. I was probably 17.

GC: Young enough to do it, but old enough to be scared to tell anyone about it.

ZH: And old enough to know not to do it.

GC: Yes, absolutely.

ZH: So, that's probably the capping my summer. Well, my seventeenth summer here was a wonderful summer, and in fact my sister used to say, "Oh for God's sake Zelma, you sound like some movie or something." She said "Seventeenth summer, I'm sick of hearing it".

GC:  
You were having a wonderful time.

ZH: We had a wonderful some.

GC: Now was there a period between your teenage years here and your adult years that you were absent for a while.

ZH: No, not really - because I went to school in New York and I used to come up in the summer - I'd work maybe part of the summer in New York, then come up. My aunt wanted me up here for company, and though we still didn't have a car, I didn't get a car until 1950. And even after 1950 I went to graduate school and I came up, and then through - well Jo and I left New York, we got married in 1955, and we moved to Atlanta in 1956. So until 1956 we were up here every summer, at least for two weeks on our vacation. It was too long then to really come up on weekends from New York; that was a long drive. But we were up here on vacations.

GC: Would this be a good time to make the transition to the house you are in now, and talk about when (can't understand remainder of question), or was there anything in between.

ZH: There was in between, after Jo and I got married. I got kicked out of my house. Well my sister and her children were coming up at that time because my niece and nephew were five and three years old. They were coming up and staying with my aunt. So Jo's Aunt Ev (Evelyn Flanders Robinson, ed.) let us use Ralph's cottage here, and Aunt Ev



was just wonderful to us. Jo was like her fourth son, because Jo's mother had died when Jo was 18, and Ev kind of took him under her wing. She was wonderful. So we used the cottage there, at first for two weeks. Well, just for two weeks, because that's what we had for vacation. And then also we were in Atlanta, and so we would really only be in the cottage for about a week each time. But we came up pretty much every summer except the summer I was pregnant with Lindsay. It was too close to - she was going to be due in October, and the doctor didn't want me to travel. And then another summer before Wendy was born, I had some problems and I had to stay in bed for six weeks. So I didn't get up. But I used to sob.

ZH: But we came up and I think there's a gene for Bayside, because when we brought Lindsay up for the first time she was four years old, and we brought our maid up with us. And when we got ready to go home, Lindsay came and she said - she had an idea - that we should go home and leave her here, and then she'd see us next summer.

GC: Doesn't that just tear at your heart

ZH: We thought it was a great idea. And so I said to her, "But Lindsay, I said who would take care of you. Who would cook your food and do your wash for you." She said, "Well, Ella Mae would". And Ella Mae said, "No ma'am, not me". Ella Mae was black - she was all set and happy about coming up here. Well in the south, when people went on vacation and took their maids with them, the maids had a wonderful time. Up here Ella Mae said she didn't think there was a person of her color within a hundred miles, and people would stop and stare at her. And she didn't tell me that until Lindsay proposed this staying up here, and I think Ella Mae thought I might take her up on it.

ZH: So anyway, we came up pretty much every summer. We missed a couple of summers. And then after we moved up here, that's when Ev let us use the house all summer. The first summer, I guess I was up here for most of the summer. And then after that I hired the Lincoln girls to come down and take care of the kids, and I worked part time - I worked three days a week.

GC: Up here?

ZH: No, down at home.. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. And one of Adelaide's girls would take care of the kids. Then I'd come up Wednesday night, Jo would come up Friday night, and then we would go home on Sunday. So they were here all summer, they were here growing up. And it started when Lindsay was probably around nine, and Wendy was seven. We had family around, my aunt was here, my sister was here, Ev was here, but we left the kids up here.

GC: At the time it seemed fine.

ZH: Well, it was a different time, there were so many families here, of course Adelaide was here all summer, and she kept her eye on them. And of course Adelaide's girls are as trustworthy. So that's what we did

GC: That worked out fine

ZH: So that's what we did after we moved-back from Atlanta

GC; How many years were you in Atlanta?

ZH: We were in Atlanta for ten years; that was 1966 when we came back up here. We've just come ever since. And then in 1976 we inherited the house from Jo's grandfather's cousin's wife.

GC: We'll be interviewing Jo, so we'll get all the details.

ZH: Jo's grandfather was Ralph Flanders, who owned the Big House, Beverly's house. And he was a very important man here in Bayside. He was head of the Village Corporation, head of the golf club. There was this whole musical crowd because he was general manager of the New England Conservatory. So there was this whole musical bunch, and Vaughn, who was his first cousin, was violinist for the BSO (Boston Symphony Orchestra), and his wife was a piano teacher. So, they used to come up here before they owned the house. Then they bought the house - I will have to tell you all about it since I'm researching it. Just found out lots about the third owner of it.

GC: Do you want to talk about it?

ZH: No - so Vaughn died in 1957, and Julia was there. Jo knew Julia all of his life. I met her when I was sitting in one of her apple trees, stealing apples, when I was about fourteen or fifteen years old. And Julia and Vaughn came down the driveway to the house - there's an apple tree, which happens to now be Jerry's apple tree - it was Julia's at the time. There were five of us, six of us in the apple tree stealing apples, and Vaughn stopped the car and Julia got out and said, "Vaughn, there are five thieves in our apple tree". And someone said, "No there are six". Then when I found out after we were married that Julia was Jo's relative I thought, "Oh my god". So when I first met her I thought, she's going to remember me. And she didn't - so my penchant for confessing - I told her and she didn't even remember it - she thought it was a riot. And Julia was a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful person. Boy, would it have been great to have an oral history from her - now she could tell stories that were just wonderful.

ZH: So she had no children, and she had a cousin and niece that lived in Iowa, and she and Jo's Aunt Ev cooked up the division of the properties here, because Ev wanted us to have a cottage, and it was a question of whether we would get Ralph's or Aunt Ann's, which is the white one down the hill from the big one, that Jo's cousin Snell used to stay in. And apparently one day, Julia and Aunt Ev were sitting there, undoubtedly over a drink, and they decided that Jo and I should have that cottage, because Julia said she knew they'd love it the way she and Vaughn did.

GC: Well they made a good choice.

ZH: And she was right.

GC: It's a wonderful cottage.

ZH: It's one of the nicest things that anyone has ever done. Because, the thing that's interesting is that she left it to the both of us equally, not to Jo and me as his wife. That was a wonderful gesture.

GC: So what year was that?

ZH: 1976.

GC: And you have done what to it?

ZH: We've added that room, and winterized the kitchen and winterized the room. It used to have a side porch on it - we took that off. Off that porch there was a maid's room with a toilet and a shower, we took that off. That became our bath, and we insulated that whole wing.

GC: Let's think of a way to describe where this wonderful house is for people listening to this tape.

ZH: Well, I can tell you because I just wrote it in the history. It's down the last driveway on Broadway as you go to Belfast. The last driveway on the right just before the stop sign, down on the left of the driveway, right on the water. And it is a yellow Victorian, with a mansard roof, and a slate second story - the roof used to be slate. It's interesting is that it's the same color as it was when it was built.

GC: Oh that is interesting.

ZH: And the reason we know this is there's a beam - see I know all this now because I'm researching my cottage - and there's a beam that goes across, partway into the room - part of the wall over the door that goes down to the cellar that is the outside of the original house, and it's exactly the same color that the house is. .

GC: Now that you've given us the data on your house, why don't you give us just the basic biographical details on yourself and your kids.

ZH: Ok, I was born on January 15, 1929, Jo was born January 1, 1928, I always thought Jo was lying when he said he was born New Year's Day. But after we were married, I thought that if there was any day Jo would choose to be born it would have been New Year's Day - and it turned out to be New Year's Day. So we're just a year apart. Then we have two children - Lindsay, who was named after his side of the family, who was born in 1958 in Atlanta; and Wendy whose name is Gwendolyn, after my sister, and she was born in Atlanta in 1961. And Wendy is married to Amro el-Jaroudi, who is from Cairo, a wonderful, wonderful young man, and they have two children - Rasha, who is now eight

(born in 1992) and Nadim who is going to be six a week from today (born in 1994). So Wendy and the children have taken to spending the summers with us, which is a mixed blessing, but is in the main a positive thing.

GC: For those kids - it will just be the source of all kinds of wonderful memories that you're recounting now.

ZH: Well, it's different now. It's different from when - I think the last generation that was like ours was our children's. And their children are not having the same thing.

GC: What changes do you see?

ZH: Well it's because the mothers are working, which I'm not knocking. But it's a fact of life and I think that a lot of the young families can't afford houses up here now, and they can't afford to have the summer off, and so what we're finding with Wendy's children is there are not children here that are here all summer.

GC: They're renters

ZH: Or they're children of my friends, who are here for a couple of weeks. And it's just changing the climate of things - I mean, they're making good friends, but we had friends that we knew all summer, that were solid friendships, and it's just not that way now.

GC: No, it's not. And they still may, as my kids have, keep in touch with them.

ZH: Do they?

GC: Sure.

ZH: Because it must have been more of the same with you.

GC: I had the good fortune to be here all summer, but most other families are not, and yet both of my kids have made good friends.

ZH: Oh but that's good, I'm glad of that. I'm glad to hear that.

GC: Now I want to give you an opportunity to toot your horn a little bit, because as an adult, have had an ongoing caring relationship with this community, and I'd like you to talk a little about some of the things you have done.

ZH: I haven't done much really. What I've done has been married to Jo and Jo is the one who has really done a lot for Bayside. He was an overseer, then president of the corporation, and he had I think really - someone said to him the other day that someone had said to the person who was talking that Jo had held this community together over a very tough time. Jo doesn't feel that way, but I think he's been a very strong presence, and

I think that he did. I really haven't done that much - I don't know - I've talked a lot, and god knows I love the community.

GC: Tell us about some of your work with the Historical Society

ZH: I started the Historical Society - and for nefarious reasons - and I don't think I'll go in to them. I perceived the need, let me put it this way, for the convenience if there was a non-profit organization here in town. People can draw from that what they want to. And it occurred to me that what would be a viable thing was a Historical Society. So when I formed it, and I did pretty much - well the germ of the idea came from Jean Witherill - the idea of a non-profit. So I thought what kind of a non-profit. And I thought - a Historical Society, a reasonable thing to do. So we took some money from the Bayside Improvement Association, Jean and I were the ones who controlled the money, and Jean and I talked about it, and we figured that it was a worthwhile thing to do. And we went and had a for-real, honest to god non-profit set up so everything is totally the way it should be with that, so people can donate money and all that. And a lawyer said at the time, well it has to be a real nonprofit and it has to be a real organization and not just a couple of members. Weill said - how many members do we need. She said - how many members do you think you'll have. I said, "Oh maybe thirty". She said that would be enough. There just have to be other people who are contributing; you just can't go fund it yourself. Well the first year we had 132 members, and it just overwhelmed me. And, that's when I decided we had to be an honest to god Historical Society, and we really are. And I am so pleased with it.

GC: You should be

ZH: There were obviously people waiting here for a Historical Society. I was president for four years and I loved it. But, I am obsessive, I am an obsessive person, and it took me a long time to acknowledge that, but it was what made me successful at work. But, it wore me out, and I hated to have to leave it, but I thought, "Time has come", and it's going on and will go on. I'm very pleased with it, and I guess maybe that's one thing that I have done for the Bayside community.

GC: That's a huge thing. The office that we are sitting in right now in the basement of the community hall...

ZH: That I have to say, that was my idea.

GC: Was it your idea?

ZH: Yes because, not only am I obsessive, but I'm competitive, and when I saw the overseers' office, I said, "I want one, I want one just like that". Well, poor Beverly, her house was being taken over by Historical Society stuff, and it is a beautiful room.

GC: Does Dick Tardif get a lot of credit for the hands-on?

ZH: Well I hope so, I mean, he did all of it. Oh I certainly acknowledge it every time I see him. He's the one who did it, absolutely. First Dick Lagner and then Norman James drew the plans, and then Dick and Alden built it. And it is a great thing. And what we've got to do, as I was outside the door, there, we've got to have a sign made that says "Bayside Historic Preservation Society".

ZH: So I've done that, and that's all I think I've done. I was on the damn Planning Board when Jerry (Savitz) was doing his subdivision. I was only an alternate though; I wasn't a regular member on that.

GC: You mentioned the Bayside Improvement Association.

ZH: Actually Ann Rice and Don Rice started that. That was a funny thing, that was - do you really want to hear all of this.

GC: Sure.

ZH: Ann Rice came up one time, and it was like Chicken Little - the world is coming to an end - she had just by chance gone to the overseers meeting, and they used to meet down at the Yacht Club - and AI Keith had come in and suggested that they sell the Community Hall because it couldn't be repaired, it was in such poor shape. And the intimation was that AI Keith might buy it. Well Ann Rice came up and said, "They're going to sell the Community Hall. They're going to sell the Community Hall". Well you know that Community Hall is dear to our hearts of this generation. So Ann Rice and Don Rice and Jo and I - but Ann and Donny were the primary ones - and Bob and Jean Witherill, got together to raise money to fix that Community Hall. And there were amounts bandying about that it was going to cost \$20,000 to fix it and we couldn't afford it and all that. Well we got people out for estimates - oh they had said that it was condemned - so I took it upon myself to find out who condemned it and why it was condemned. It was not condemned, you see. But the word was passed by people who would not be named that it was condemned. Well, the reason they did that was indirectly my fault, because we were up in the cottage next door, and my niece Susan Lopez, who is now Susan Woodrow, very efficient young lady, had a sock hop here, or whatever they call it, one weekend, and she advertised it all along the coast of Maine, and it was bedlam. It was bedlam. We were up at the cottage there and the walls of that cottage were just vibrating. Well, Mr. Pitman, who lived right across in the big house, and Fred Kelley who lived where Jane Phillips lives, were naturally not happy about this.

GC: Indeed.

ZH: So my suspicion is that they decided if they got to AI Keith to have it condemned, I think that's what happened. So I called up the state, I called up the town, and there was no condemnation. So with that, Ann and Donny, well we started raising money, and just like with the Historical Society, where we got memberships without doing a thing, we got money with hardly doing a thing. And Don started - he funded having the roof fixed, and then eventually we had underpinnings fixed. The Bayside Improvement Association was

for the sole purpose of maintaining this building. And that's what we did. It was a wonderful thing, the way people all rallied around it.

ZH: But the organization wasn't formal - I mean we didn't register it with the state or anything like that. So then when I - well it was Jean that had said if we wanted to keep some of our property couldn't the corporation donate it to the Bayside Improvement Association. But it couldn't because we weren't registered as anything. So that's where the Historical Society came in. If the corporation found the need to divest itself fast, then that would have been the appropriate thing. So that's the connection. The Bayside Improvement Association was one of Bayside's finest hours, because they did rally around and save this building. .

GC: I'm glad you just told about it because I can't think of any other place where that is actually described.

ZH: Oh well, yeah, there are those of us who know it.

GC: Exactly

ZH: But, it's funny how memory isn't genetic for a community, and I know I was pointing out to someone the other day that John Coughlin who the memorial service is for next week, that the reason the Coughlins and Trenholms are going through the Yacht Club of giving this money for books for students, is because they've had a long association with it. Joanne's father started the Yacht Club, and John is named for John Short. But when I told that to this person, he had no idea.

GC: Look deep into your memory bank before we finish this tape, and see if there's anything else that you know that others might not.

GC: Zelma, thank you very much you have been an entertaining and informative person.

ZH: It's been my pleasure. I have just enough ego to love talking about myself.

GC: You have had an interesting life. Thank you.