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Mollie Alstott interview, 01 March 2003

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Interviewer: Shelly Brewer
Subject: Molly Alstatt
Date: March 1, 2003

MA: Molly Barber Alstatt

SB: Molly, Can you tell me some of your childhood memories?

MA: Growing up in Tremont was really very memorable. We had a wonderful childhood, because of the different kinds of people. Different nationalities and the structured life that we led.

SB: What about things that you did as a kid growing up?

MA: Well. Very early days, it was just a lot of playing outdoors after school. But that came to an end when we were probably in the fifth or sixth grade. By that time, we had to go to a Ukrainian school. So we went to the public school until about 3: 30, had a half hour at home and then went to St. Peter and Paul on West 7th and College. There we were instructed in Catechism, Ukrainian language and also arts and dance.

SB: Can you tell me when your parents moved to Tremont, and why. Were you the second generation? Just your past history?

MA: Both of my parents came from Austria, Hungary. That was before WWI. The years that they came must have been like 1912, 14, in through there. They met at the church, at the Ukrainian church. My dad worked at various jobs. He worked over at the hospital. What's the hospital over on Scranton Road. Cleveland Metro. Metro.

SB: Was it Metro then?

MA: No, it was Cleveland something hospital. Anyway he worked there quite a while and really improved his English.

SB: What did he do there?

MA: Worked as maintenance and also helped one doctor especially. The doctor kind of took him under wing. I think that's why he progressed as fast as he did. And then my mom came, well both of them came to this country really because of conditions in Europe and they knew that coming to America would give them a new life, and probably make more progress. A lot of their friends thought that they would come here and work for a while and then go back. So a lot of them had that in mind, but as they lived here they realized how well off they were. They also realized all of the opportunities that there were. So in time they met. My dad settled, they rented a place on Professor Street, between College and Jefferson. That's where we were born. But when we were about five, I was five, my sister was three, they were building a house right next door to them. A brand new house. A red brick building. And that turns out to be Edisons Pub, which is very popular now. And so we lived in that building. There was a dentist office upstairs.

Another family lived upstairs. We lived behind my dad's business. And at that time he had a confectionery store. It included a lot of candy (laughing) and like a delicatessen and things like that. So in just going to church every Sunday and getting involved in church work. Being protected in that area because a lot of people thought that Tremont was kind of, not a place to raise children, but actually you know it was a very good place. Parents always looked after us, all the time. And of course going to Tremont. We had excellent teachers there. I don't know where those teachers came from, but they were just wonderful, because often time, some of the children didn't speak English very well, so they had that to contend with. And we had a lot of arts too, growing up. I can't believe we went there kindergarten through the seventh, eighth grades. Like fifth or sixth grades, we did things like water colors, painted flowers, some of the gals did embroidery, we did hucking, Italian cutwork, which people don't even know about now I guess.

SB: What is that?

MA: Italian cutwork is kind of doing embroidery stitch around flowers maybe and then cutting out in between so it's like an open embroidery work. It's something different. I don't have a piece here now. And you know what hucking is? I have two towels in the bathroom, I'll show you. It's a stitching back and forth so that you make a designing pattern. So we did a lot of that. We even built a little golf course, a little indoor golf course. The girls helped with that, with the painting.

SB: Where was this? In what building?

MA: This was at Tremont. They had an area down in the basement to do this. I don't remember how different classes did this, but I remember doing some of that. So we had an awful lot of opportunities like that growing up. They helped us. Not only the school, Tremont school, but there was also Merrick house. Merrick house was a social center. What we did there was attend classes. We made things, we cooked, we had help at whatever we needed. I remember making a ring out of a peach stone (laughs). I don't remember how we did that. That was one thing I remembered. And then we had Lincoln park. That was always fun to go to. But also as we were growing up, now when we were in high school, there was Lincoln bath house. And in early days when the settlers, I mean when the immigrants first came here, they used that bath house to shower in because often time the houses that they had, weren't equipped with bathrooms, and they had outdoor bathrooms.

SB: Around what time is this?

MA: This is like before the twenties. Of course I was born in twenty-one, but this is what I hear and what I read about.

SB: Were they actually there when you were growing up?

MA: Lincoln bathhouse was there, but as years went on, they got rid of that. The city took it over for a recreation center. So when we were in high school, junior high, maybe, we used to go to the bath house to do our ice skating. They would freeze over that area behind it. So that was another

thing we had access to. Going back to Tremont, I remember that they had a section for children that had a touch of tuberculosis. They had a wing for that and it was on the third floor, I think. It was kind of secluded, because the kids that went there had heavy robes on, and they had cots, so they'd take a nap in the afternoon. They would get milk and crackers and have you know, kind of a rest period. But everything was all open, so it was cool. In those days, that's what they felt was the thing to overcome.

SB: What was that called?

MA: I have it down some place, I'll have to look that one up for you.

SB: And this was for tuberculosis?

MA: Yeah, because in early days, a lot of children had that?

SB: How did they get it?

MA: I guess it was contagious, I guess using other people's spoons, whatever. But since then, that disease is no longer. So what else? Well the children were great companions. We played with all kinds of nationalities. We got to know their religions and their families and we often went back and forth to each others homes and played outdoors.

SB: What kind of nationalities?

MA: Nationalities included Russian, Polish, Ukrainians, Italians, Germans, a few Irish. There were Lebanese, Serians. People coming from Austria, Hungary in those days could have been anything like Croatians, Yugoslavians, people like that. Not too many of those, they came later. And of course in early days, very early days, Tremont was really settled by industrialists. You know they had the homes on West 14th street. And in time when the immigrants came, why they lived on the other side of West 14th. And also a lot of the people that came in those days worked in the steel mills. It was very easy for them to walk down to the flats and work there all day and then come home. Those people, they were kind of secluded, because a lot of them didn't speak English fluently. That came as the kids went to school and you know the parents would learn from them. Also they had to have some sort of a social hour or whatever, because there was no television or anything like that for entertainment. So often times, the churches would have picnics and take a bus full of people out to some grove out in Parma, probably. Also the fellows would stop in and have some beer or liquor right after work, because that was on their way home. So there were a lot of taverns around. Not only to relax, but to pick up news from other neighbors about what was going on, if they had heard from their families in Europe, or what was the latest work they could get help in. Like if a child was sick, where could they turn to except the church and places like this. So that's why they had these little.. and also they had social homes, Ukrainian national home, Polish library home, I forget what the Russian people had, they probably did it right at church. But anyway, these places became another way where people could relax and enjoy their company, enjoy the children's company. The place on West 14th street, which is a yellow building, it's on West 14th close to Fairfield, and the people in the neighborhood know of it. It's attached to-- it's next to Grace Hospital. Now there's talk about

maybe saving that building for the historical society, I don't know. But anyway at one time it was the Ukrainian national home. And for the children and the parents it was a fun time, because that's where they held wedding receptions, that's where we had plays, that's where I had my piano debut (laughing). It was just a fun place to hang around, because if there was a dance or something, the kids would start in and eventually learn how to dance that way. There were a lot of good things that happened in that neighborhood to really prepare us for future days.

SB: You mentioned that some people thought Tremont wasn't a very good place to raise children, why do you think that is?

MA: Well the time we were growing up there was talk about some gangster, and I don't remember his name now. Maybe you'll pick this up in other interviews. He was supposed to have lived in that neighborhood, I think on 5th street, West 5th street. I guess he was notorious, but we didn't even realize that he existed, because we were so well protected. I'm sure that each family told their children they could go this far on this side, and you could go this far on this side, because they knew where the children were all the time. So that wasn't a problem for us and we were kind of surprised to hear about it. And that's the only reason I say that. Other than that, you know it was great because, just imagine all those nationalities, and what did they have, something like thirty churches at one time. I remember going to a house on West 14th street, there was a girl that was in our class. She was an only child, and she had older parents, and she lived in this great big mansion. Her friends, she didn't have too many friends, but she had a hand full of girls that she would invite over. When her parents were busy she would let us come in and there were sliding doors and little escape places. We were so fascinated with that because there was an area as soon as you came in there was a door--you hardly knew it was there and you pressed a button and it opened, and you went behind the fireplace. So gosh, that was really something. And also we did the ice skating down there. And then of course children want to play with children and be with children, so we started forming clubs. This was high school now. Most of us were pretty good students, because our parents really insisted on that. You study--and some of the girls formed a club. I'm sure that Olga (referring to another classmate) belonged to a club, but she wasn't in ours. We had ours--.

SB: What kind of club?

MA: It was just a social club. We called ourselves the debutantes (laughing), but anyway, it was a time for us to kind of talk about school if we were having any problems at school, gossiping, who we were dating, things like that. But we did stay together, and we even went out and had a vacation out at Chippewa.

SB: Was this in high school?

MA: This was in high school. We had to have a chaperone, you know it was very restrictive, but we had a good time. And that was kind of a change for us.

SB: Is that something where you met weekly or was it just a group of friends?

MA: I think we met every two weeks or something like that. One of the people--one of my friends, was Ann (). Her daughter draws that Cathy cartoon. So Ann and I went through elementary, high school and Kent together, and that's where both of us met our husbands to be. So Ann married Bill and I married Louie. So anyway--Along with that, let's see.

SB: I want to focus on high school right now. You went to Lincoln and graduated in '40, what classes did you take?

MA: I knew that I wanted to go on to college, so I took Latin for my foreign language. I took chemistry, general science, biology, history, civics, and started in with some gym, because gym was important too. Latin was a class a lot of people were taking because we knew it would be very beneficial. We had a lot of people that did very well in Tremont, that went on to Lincoln. Some became doctors, a federal judge. That neighborhood really produced a lot of good citizens.

SB: Did you have favorite teachers and subjects?

MA: One of my favorite teachers was Ms. Miller and Mrs. Henry. They both taught sixth grade at Tremont. They taught geography and history. I think that was such a good foundation for us, because I know now when you talk about countries and history, we're all pretty aware of it, but the children coming through now don't know where half the countries are in this world. In high school I liked biology and journalism, that was another thing we did. Photography, I was teachers pet for photography (laughing). I enjoyed that especially. Journalism, we had Ms. McCoy, and she was really a hard task master. She would keep us after school until about seven o'clock when work wasn't done, but it was real good training for us. I think a lot of us benefited by her really insisting on top work. Eighth grade there was an English teacher, I don't remember her name, but I remember her face. A young blond haired--she was such a wonderful person, very low keyed young person. By eighth grade, some of those boys were pretty hard to handle. What was she doing? She was asking us to read Shakespeare, also playing it out in class. And things that ordinarily--you wouldn't have that exposure today. So we developed a love for reading, and history. Also, the library on Jefferson Street was kind of a haven for us. Most of us loved to read and there was always little contests about reading books and being interviewed, and you had a little file box that you kept that in. And then you would have a race with your sister to see who would read the most books (laughing). So again that was a lot of fun.

SB: How did your school guide you into a career path?

MA: Well, along the way, I guess, probably, we were influenced by all of these wonderful teachers. To know that they gave so much to us. And to know it would probably be something that I would enjoy, because I was pretty structured and really enjoyed history, geography and English, journalism. So I thought that's the field I want to go into. And I did, I pursued that. I started off thinking I wanted to be a high school teacher, but then eventually changed to elementary.

SB: So you were a teacher then?

MA: Yes. When I married, this was during the war, I met Louie at Kent. That was like 1941, I guess. He got into the Navy before the war started. He was interested in flying and he did some flying at school, he got into one of those programs that they had for if you wanted to become an officer. I forget what it was, but anyway, so when he was at Corpus Christi training, I was at Kent, studying to become a teacher. The war broke out December 7, 1941. At that time he came home on leave, we were engaged at that time, and we said let's get married. Because he would be going overseas, and of course going along with that--after that I moved around quite a bit. During the war I went out to the West Coast to meet him, we lived on the East Coast, we lived in Virginia, then he went on a shakedown cruise on a carrier. I met him in San Diego, then after that he came home a second time, this time we went to Virginia Beach. Then the West Coast again. But after the war he was a reservist, so he settled at being what they call a station keeper. The Navy had like twenty-four reserve stations all over the country. He was sent to __ Michigan. From that you are supposed to move around every two to four years. So we went to Virginia, a naval air station down there. Then he was sent to Washington, Bureau of Naval Affairs. Then we were sent out to Guam for two years. And then back home again. In all that time I was really away from Cleveland. He retired and we settled in Cleveland around 1966.

SB: Did you settle here in this house?

MA: Yes in this house. He was young enough that he didn't want to just retire and not do anything. So he worked at Navy Finance for awhile, and then he had heart problems. So with that he left the Navy finance and became a substitute teacher. I talked him in to that. He did very well with that because the kids enjoyed his teaching. What he did was apply his flying and his experience to his teaching. So that's always a seller for kids. So I straying away from the subject now.

SB: It will come back around.

MA: So when I got back, I was teaching, he was having heart problems, he was at St. Vincents for a while, back and forth, he had infections. So he lived about five years after his open heart surgery. Then I just stayed on and didn't want to do any substitute teaching anymore, which I had been doing. I wanted to be with some adults. So my sister was over at Deaconess Hospital, and she was at the receptionist desk. When you're over there and they interview you for what you want to do, when they mentioned plants, well I really enjoy gardening. So I went over there and they put me down in the basement with plants to be transplanted (laughing), so I thought this is not for me. So in time one of my friends said come down to the zoo and come to one of our meetings, I think you'd like it. So I was hooked, I've been there for twenty-one years doing volunteer work and I've been their president and vice president several times. I'm in organization, I do sixth grade programs now, I give tours of the rain forest, of the zoo--numerous things. So I still enjoy that. Having the time I also got involved with our church, did some of that work.

SB: What church is that?

MA: St. Josephs, that's out in Parma. And we helped build retirement homes. I'm on the board for that. Along with that, I got very involved in the community. At first I wanted to join one of

the political parties but that was not to be, unfortunately I didn't find that very interesting. So then I also joined our historical society here in Old Brooklyn. Also I'm on the board for the Sun Journal newspaper. So doing that, you get very involved in history and I've done tours of Tremont for the Metro parks. I still do that twice a year. Then through our historical society, I've managed to give tours there, so we've went to other parts of Cleveland. We're working on our centennial now, so I'm keeping busy.

SB: Whenever you and your husband came back to this area, why did you decide not to buy a house in Tremont?

MA: Well I forgot to tell you that when we went to Kent, my family moved. My mother and father bought the house directly across the street from where I live now. My sister and I were there of course until we married. Then my dad died and my mom continued to live there. When we came home from the military, we lived with her, just to decide where we wanted to live. And we checked Ohio. We drove down to southern Ohio because Louie had an Aunt and Uncle there. I was fearful that we might be living in farm country, because I'm a city gal (laughing). But eventually we knew that wasn't a place for us, because at that time, he had some heart problems, so we decided we better live closer to home, to my home, where we had access to a hospital. It worked out well.

SB: I'm going to ask you some questions about teenagers. Where did teenagers go on dates when you were in high school?

MA: Hmm.. Let's see. We went to dances. We did a lot of dances. The dances were held at churches, they were held at schools sometimes. We'd go to a movie. Once in a while we'd have parties, celebrating a birthday or Halloween. I can remember on time my dad over on Professor Street had a fairly new garage, so we asked if we could use it for a Halloween party. So we cleaned it out, this was our girls--debutante club. We cleaned it out and decorated it, and my sister was always inquisitive about who was coming and whether she could come, no you can't, this is my party. She's younger, she was always, can we do this with you? So what they did was snuck around and peeked in the windows to see what we were doing (laughing) at our party. We had some music there, an old victrola, and records, that's what we danced to.

SB: What kind of music?

MA: Music, it was before the forties, so. You know I don't remember. Frank Sinatra was just coming out, he was popular in the Forties, not the thirties. So what else did we do? We went out on picnics too. We went out to the parks and had picnics, wiener roasts, things like that.

SB: Can you describe what dating was like? How did that work? How did boys ask you out, what was the appropriate protocol?

MA: Well often times in high school, there wasn't a direct--like a fellow saying would you like to go out with me. Sometimes we did it in groups. Like the high y would be doing something and they would invite a bunch of girls to attend that. Nobody was really going steady, except for a few in maybe 11th or 12th grade. But most of them were group dating. And at dances we just

met each other, saying I'll meet you there, save a dance for me, whatever. And it wasn't until the 12th grade that people kind of started dating seriously. I can remember sharing my locker with somebody in high school that a--we we're both honor students--she was smoking when she wasn't suppose to be smoking (laughing). So things like that bring back memories. And also, in those days some of them were drinking beer and wine. That was the beginning of having alcohol at parties. But not too much, it was just that some of them over did it. Our group avoided people or parties like that. We did some of that our selves, but not to the extent that maybe some others did. But we also went to movies, especially downtown, that was a treat. And what we did often times was walk across the old viaduct bridge, which is no longer and we would do that Saturday afternoons. And we had a nice old theater in our neighborhood, the Jennings Theater that was on 14th street. 14th and Fairfield. That was demolished when 71 came through.

SB: Did you go to the movies at the Jennings Theater?

MA: Yes, but that was like when we were in elementary or Junior high. But often we would go there on Saturday afternoons, movies were five cents, ten cents. We would stay until the usher said it was time for you to go home. And often times we would see a movie two or three times (laughing). And of course our parents knew where we were all the time.

SB: What kind of movies would you see?

MA: Westerns, cowboys, and Dracula was one of them, mainly the cowboys.

SB: Where did you go to church?

MA: I went to church at St. Peter and Paul, that's where I got most of my religious training, and also learned the Ukrainian language. We did some dancing, we had a lot of customs for Easter and Christmas that we observe to this day. Then we I was away from Cleveland I attended all kinds of churches. In fact after we came back to Cleveland, Louie decided he wanted to make a trip around the world. That was very memorable because, it was 1971, and we took a freighter trip around the world for four months. It was really enjoyable. It was to visit different areas and to see some of our navy friends that were there.

SB: What language did they speak in church?

MA: In early days, growing up in elementary school, it was Ukrainian. And then eventually the Priests realized that people were learning English, and people were also making money, and they were also leaving Tremont, to go elsewhere to Lakewood, Parma and they were establishing new churches, sister churches. So St. Josephs, where I attend now was a Sister of St. Peter and Paul. And I taught there, too, for a while.

SB: Where did you or your parents grocery shop?

MA: Oh, that's a good question. Because of course my dad had a few canned goods at his store, but mom would send us, Irene and me to the grocery store. So there was a grocery store on Jefferson and Professor. And she was a Ukrainian lady, and she was very inquisitive. Irene and I

hated to go there because she would keep us for hours we thought (laughing), but it was just minutes. She wanted to know how mom and dad were doing, what we were eating, what we were doing at school, just so much that we hated to go to be questioned all the time. Later on there was another grocery store on College and Professor in the same area. There, it was a Polish lady that ran that one and she had three children and we played with them. So they were over at our house--Mrs.(), I remember Isabel was the older girl, Regina was the younger one, the youngest boy was Joseph I think. But he was also a nuisance for the girls, always tagging around (laughing). Oh, and the West Side Market. The West Side Market was very important because there my mom would make a trip with my dad, and of course my dad had a car. That was a weekly trip to the market. We would go along with my mom to help her with the packages. There were all kinds of goodies to eat there. Those were the three sources.

SB: What about when the bridge went out, wasn't there a bridge to the West Side Market?

MA: Yes that was temporary, and of course we were gone then. But coming back, I had something else to say about what we did.

SB: What about memories during the depression? What was it like?

MA: Well we knew that there was a depression because people were out of work and you can tell by the way the children didn't have extra money to get milk at school, that was provided for them. Irene, my sister and I were fortunate because my dad had a business so we were probably better off than some of the people that were really struggling. But it wasn't real noticeable to the kids, the families did the best they could and it seemed that the children were not aware of how hard the times were. But something else that I felt Irene and I were very fortunate about was that my dad and mom always thought about the relatives that they left behind. Of course we always kept in touch with them, dad would write letters, send packages home, to their homes. When I was in the tenth grade and Irene was in the ninth grade, 1937, my mom took us to Europe to visit the grandparents. That was quite an experience, because at that age we got to New York. I forgot how we got there, I think my dad drove us. And we boarded the ship, the old Aquatania, which was a four stacker, and later the Aquatania was used in World War II as a transport ship. Of course they had classes in those days, and at that time all we could afford was third class. I can remember our little state room, it wasn't very large, it had four, what do you call it, upper birth and lower birth on both sides. And hardly any rooms to turn around in to take our clothes out. But we had to pass through this open area, where we saw some of the engines and I forget what you call that part that churns the water up and down, to make the boat, or ship go forward. It was kind of wired over so that we were protected. We always had to go through that to get to the dining room. It was kind of scary. But anyway, we got to France and then we took the train across through France. In Berlin we picked up a soldier and he spoke English very well, so he and I kind of hit it off and we wrote letters to each other for quite some time after that. I was thinking that was in 1937, and where was he going? He was going to Japan. So even in those days Germany had a tie in with the Japanese. They were planning long before the war broke out. So then after that we went to Austria, Hungary, Ukraine, that were divided, and it was Poland then. So we got to see both our parents, got to see all of our relatives, and Irene and thought, three months, how can we stand it here (laughing)? But we really got to know the people well,

of course we got to use our Ukrainian language, so we improved that. By the end of three months we were pretty happy, and we were sad to say goodbye. So that was another trip.

SB: You weren't in Tremont when Carl Stokes was elected mayor? What about your memories of the construction of the interbelt?

MA: At that point I really was away from there because I went to Kent in 1941, and I think that came shortly after that. Our nice old high school was demolished. I guess they built that Junior high there in replace of it. But Lincoln high was really a wonderful school, because there, too, the teachers were wonderful. Got an awful lot of experience and knowledge.

SB: Do you know why they changed the name of Tremont? I've heard that it was called something else at one point in time. Do you know?

MA: No, I always knew it as Tremont. I know it was the largest elementary school.

SB: I meant the area.

MA: A lot of called it the south side. That's all that we knew. Tremont, actually the south side, because when we were living there we were south of the city. So then Tremont played in. Something that I've really been trying to find out is why it was called Tremont. I've gone to the library and I can't seem to get that information.

SB: Can you tell me about some of the games you played when you were younger? Any memories.

MA: You know, hopscotch was really a popular game, and hide and seek. This was early days. We had a lot of yards to go through and climb over fences. Oh, in our block, which was Professor, joining Jefferson and College, but the other street that was parallel to Professor was West 7th street, and that's where they had that big old building that now is--I guess someone has purchased it and wants to make an art gallery out of it. You know which one I'm talking about? In those days, the Gospel Union Press worked there. And what they did was have young ladies come from Kansas and Missouri and places like that to work there. They were really kind of secluded. They wore uniforms, blue uniforms, and straw hats, high boots. We called them "Sallies". And we always wanted to get in to see where they were living, what they were doing. It was always blocked off. Nobody could approach those people, they were very private. There was an ally running through that area. West 7th, Thurmond and Professor, so all the kids made a nuisance of themselves, trying to find out what was going on there. But you know the ladies there, I learned later on, that were--it was very secluded, one of my cousins was employed there in the office, said they were very strict about time off and leaving your desk. You were supposed to stay at your desk until they allowed you to go to the bathroom. It was almost like being in prison really. But this is the way they lived there, so. We didn't find out too much about that. But I also wanted to say that Professor street was a very lively street, because Professor and West 14th were the two busy streets. The rest of the neighborhood were just tiny little streets, with maybe a business or two. But Professor had all kinds of businesses, a hardware store, banks, a flower shop, photography, grocery stores, taverns, funeral parlors, two of them. That was, of

course, important, too. It seemed like each nationality had their own funeral director, their own grocery stores. But it all tied in and we dealt with all kinds of people. And they also had a street car running on Professor street. That was a lot of fun too, because you know we got on that to go downtown sometimes on special occasions. I can still hear that clanging of the streetcars as they left one area to go on to another. And they had a special kind of a horn that was really kind of a clanging horn to get people out of the way, to make them aware that they were coming.

SB: I forgot to ask you a question that I wanted to ask. What about sports whenever you were a teenager. Did women have the opportunity to play sports?

MA: Well we did our ice skating behind Lincoln Park, the section behind St. Theodosius Russian church. Meadows, what was it called, Meadows, it had another name. I thought I'd never forget that. But anyway, that open area there is where Lincoln high football players practiced. We would go down there sometimes to maybe do some ice skating in the winter time. So the sports that we did really were just our gym. Which would be basketball, baseball. And it wasn't until we got into high school that maybe we would do . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

MA: It started in junior high that we had gymnastics, we did running, exercises, body exercises, and sometimes in class the teacher would make us stand up and kind of make us swing our arms around just to get us motivated. So we did a little bit of that, but it was a lot of just gym work in early days and later on. Of course, you know they weren't equipped with any kind of pool to go to, that was always going to another neighborhood. Dancing, we did a lot of dancing.

SB: How has the neighborhood changed?

MA: Well I was away, my folks had left the neighborhood in about 1940. From then on it was war time, living elsewhere. I understand that the neighborhood changed drastically in the seventies. Because by that time a lot of people had left the neighborhood. Work was difficult to find, so in that respect I understand that a lot of people moved away and we even heard about some people burning properties because they were so destitute that they really needed finances at that time. So at that time I really lost touch with it because I was away. Once I settled into Cleveland and did my volunteer work, Miracles was the first business there to--kind of start coming there. Pretty soon we knew the rent was very reasonable there, so a lot of the artists came in and established galleries. About that time the Ukrainian--the sisters that taught at St. Josephs. I'm sorry the sisters that taught at St. Peter and Paul when we were in elementary school. They lived in the house across from Lincoln Park. So that house was kept by the church and eventually became Ukrainian National Museum. It's very --uh-- Andy Fadinski is the manager there, they are really trying to enlarge it and also make it a stopping point where eventually they will have a walking path from Tremont to the inner part of the city. Reaching the lake. So all that, I was thinking about the art gallery. That would be a wonderful thing too, but I guess he doesn't have finances to do what he wants there. So I find that Tremont now, ever since that first Miracles came to being, pretty soon Fat Cats came along and several of the others. So there's an interest there, especially Edisons pub, because I have been down there. I haven't met the owner, but I've talked to the girls and I've taken some of the family down to see our old place. Irene and

I are always saying, that's our kitchen back there, and oh my goodness, this was our bedroom. And oh is this where we played, it looks very small. And then too, the driveway between the houses were so narrow and I thought, how did I ever get a car through there? Because I started driving when I was sixteen.

SB: So you had just a sister. What were your sleeping arrangements?

MA: I'm glad you asked that, because Irene and I had to share a double bed. We had a chest of drawers and then another chest. So each night I would draw a line down the middle of the bed. Don't you dare put your foot over on my side (laughing). We had little squabbles like that, always a little competition. Also I had my clothes.. I was very orderly in those days. I guess Capricorns are suppose to be that way (laughing). Then I found that she was sneaking off with some of my clothes. In high school I caught her with one of my sweaters. Well that created a big problem between us, so, after that I'd make sure that I'd see her in school. Because in those days, because sometimes you didn't have your first period, and you didn't start until the second period. She avoided me, I'd find her in the hallway and make sure she wasn't wearing some of my clothes. We laugh about that now (laughing).

SB: Did you have to make any money when you were little.

MA: One of our courses in high school was a business course, I forgot what it was, but through that we had an experience of working at the dime store on West 25th street. That was really something. And then we got paid for doing little jobs around the neighborhood, watching kids or something like that.

SB: Did you have any children? (Molly shakes her head no) No, ok. What about when you were married. Did you come back here to get married?

MA: We were married in Louie's church in Cuyahoga Falls. He was a Methodist and I was a Catholic, so that presented a problem. And My priest, in those days were pretty strict about rules, so you had to post bands and there wasn't time for that, eventually we were married in a Navy chapel down in Norfolk.

SB: Do you have any other memories or anything else you want to add?

MA: Well it just seems like that knowing we were living in a depression, there were an awful lot of people that looked after the children. Sometimes people coming to the store, coming to my dad's store you know they would know the situation if maybe somebody was walking alone they were protected. Not protected, but keep an eye, just to know where they were supposed to be going. So we never felt that we were being spied on or anything, it was just the feeling of knowing somebody was there in case we needed them. Maybe some of the fellows didn't have any work to go to and they were probably young men in their twenties, didn't have a job, so they would kind of hang around and do odd jobs for whatever families needed help. Maybe washing down a car, washing down a driveway, whatever, so they would do things like that and we were always aware of that. There was always help when you needed it. We help each other I guess.

SB: Did you have a telephone when you were younger?

MA: Yes, we had a telephone. It was one of those old fashioned ones that the ear part hooked on to the phone. One of those black ones. We used it quite often, in fact, my dad would say, don't you think it's time to stop talking (laughing). But we found it very convenient of course. A radio was something else we had, and records, we started buying records.

SB: Were they the 33s or the 78s?

MA: They were the 78s. I still have some (laughing).

SB: Someone else had made a comment about food being delivered. Did you have food delivered or any other way?

MA: I don't remember food being delivered especially directly to your house, but they did have wagons. The fellows that drove their wagons had food to sell. Sometimes they were fresh vegetables. I think there was one wagon that came along that sold those funnel cakes, you know, and of course ice cream, watermelon. Also there was no refrigeration, we had ice boxes and the ice men would come out and he could always tell how much ice you needed by the sign that you put up in your window. Then in time, we had refrigeration. And often times, you could tell he was coming by the way he announced his Watermelon (with accent) and other items he was selling (laughing). Actually individually, no, your parents usually did the shopping.

SB: Well if you have any other comments.

MA: No, this is all kind of jumbled.

SB: Did you want to share any of the pictures?

MA: Oh yes! (Showing pictures) This is my dad's confectionery store, so it shows you canned goods in the back, and it shows Irene and me in front of the counter and my mom. I can't read the date on that, it must have been thirty something. I remember that blouse because it was a () blouse. That's a silk material that some of the children had those. That is a fake fur coat that Irene had. But see here's the refrigerator right there.

SB: Did your mom work in the store?

MA: Yes, because sometimes my dad was called to work and do something else. He became a member of the Ukrainian bank board there. He was a very social person, and he helped a lot of people, too. Because often time in depression, people didn't have a lot of money, so he made sure that some of the families were taken care of that really needed help.

SB: What did you do for socializing with your whole family?

MA: Well what we would do is on Sunday afternoon we would, my dad would drive us, and we would go over to Edgewater Park. Sometimes we would visit other families, like our godparents.

So we got to play with them. They lived in different sections of the neighborhood, of Cleveland, so we got to see them. Then sometimes, when it was beastly hot in the summertime, with no air condition, and difficult to sleep because the rooms were small and houses were close to each other. In fact, I remember hearing snoring from the house next door (laughing), when the windows were wide open. And the cat screeching in the morning. What my dad would do sometimes, is after he closed the store, he would take us for a ride over to Edgewater Park, and we'd spread blankets out to kind of cool off and maybe fall asleep. I'm sure they carried us back to the car and then to bed after that. I can remember doing that. At times you didn't notice the heat but others it was unbearable.

SB: Actually we're over an hour already, so I'm going to end it now.

MA: One thing that we would do for recreation was, my mom and my aunts, sometimes there were three ladies, my cousins, Irene and I would pack a picnic basket and we would go down to ninth street and get the boat that went to Cedar Point. That was really thrilling because, going through all the actions of going down to the pier, getting on the steamboat and going over there. Once we got there, to Cedar Point, it was a long, long walk to the park itself. After that we were thrilled with all the rides and being able to be on the lake.

END OF INTERVIEW