

QUONOCHONTAUG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oral History

JANET RANDALL MORGAN

September 16, 2019

Interviewed by Leah Bradshaw

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- Q: Today is September 16th, and we're at the home of Janet Randall Morgan. This is Leah Bradshaw and Janet Morgan present.
- A: Janet Randall Cook Morgan. I was married twice. I lost my first husband. Dale and I lived next door to each other when we were growing up. We knew him and his wife. In fact, we had spent a vacation with them in Vermont. That's an interesting little tidbit.
- Q: State your full name, date of birth and place of birth.
- A: Janet Elizabeth Randall Cook Morgan. Born in New Rochelle, New York July 31st, 1917.
- Q: When did your family first arrive in Quonochontaug or Westerly?
- A: My father was born in Taunton, Massachusetts. Then his father had a job with some mechanical place in Westerly, so they moved to Westerly. I think his younger sister was born in Westerly.
- Q: is Westerly the first place they came to in Rhode Island?
- A: My grandfather worked in Taunton. I don't know whether he was living in the area. I don't know when they came. Daddy lived there. I don't know where he was born. I can't remember.
- Q: Who was your father?
- A: Albert Gates Randall. My mother was Grace Muller, who lived in Stonington. They were married October 28th, 1914.
- Q: Besides you, there was Joan.

A: My sister. I was the oldest. Oldest grandchild. Oldest child. My sister was two years younger than I was—Barbie. Barbara Adams. My brother Albert was born. He was six years younger than I was. As an afterthought, when we were living in New Rochelle, John was born. John Randall. We had all grown up and gone out in the world, and my folks—they weren't retired, but Daddy was working in New York. They were almost to their retirement. He went everywhere with him. He knew all of their friends, all of their places. He loved it. He was good at that. He called me last night. He calls me every Sunday, bless his heart.

Q: Your brother?

A: Yes. He's in California. The last time I saw him was three years ago. They don't get out this way very often. I don't get out there.

Q: When did your grandfather's generation come to Westerly?

A: I don't know. He worked for a mechanical place. It's still in Westerly.

Q: Is it Ashaway Line and Twine?

A: No. It was Westerly. I don't know the date.

Q: Approximately?

A: I don't know. I really don't.

Q: Who first came to Quonochontaug?

A: George Waterman had a place here. His father, Uncle Will, and mother had a place next door to where Kate lives. It's on the corner.

Q: Doctor Waterman's house?

A: Doctor Waterman's house. Yes. The big house there. They came. Dad and Doctor Waterman were very close cousins—almost brothers. When we came to visit in the summer, we always came down and visited. We undressed in Uncle Will's garage—bathhouse, and went down to Central Beach to swim. That's how we got associated down here.

Q: So, your father came here because his cousin was here?

A: Yes. My father used to sleep on the beach when he was growing up in Westerly. That's what he told us. Some of the guys would just come down. Of course, it was nowhere near developed like it is now.

Q: About what year do you first remember you coming to Quonnie?

A: I would have been a child. I'm 92 now. So, 90 years ago.

Q: Maybe you were a toddler you came?

A: I don't know. We might have gotten as far as Grandma Randall's. We would come up to visit with her for two weeks on my father's vacation. I guess the Watermans were here then. I have no recollection that far back. I don't know. What did I say, 1916? I was born in 1917, so it couldn't have been 1916. That's not very helpful.

Q: You were two, or thereabouts.

A: I guess. I might have been older.

Q: Maybe 1919 or 1920?

A: I don't know. Just put down 1920.

Q: Your first stay here, you would be visiting the Watermans?

A: No. We visited Grandma Randall in Westerly. We'd come down to the beach, and in the Waterman's garage and then go to Central Beach. We generally brought a picnic lunch. From then on, any time we came, we visited with them. My father and Doctor Waterman were very close. They both loved it down here. That was instrumental in my father buying Old Salt next to you.

Q: What year did he buy Old Salt?

A: I think it was 1946. You can look that up at the town.

Q: Where are the locations in Quonnie that your family has had houses?

A: Old Salt.

Q: And then here?

A: Yes.

Q: Barbara is down at—

A: Paul bought the house for Barbara down there. I don't know what year that was. You'd have to look that up at the town.

Q: Was that Holiday House?

A: Happy House. Holiday House is where the Glassons were.

Q: June, who is your cousin—

A: Howard and my father were brothers. I don't know what year. You'd have to ask June. She would know about that.

Q: So, you've been here from 1946 in Old Salt?

A: Yes. I would say that. But I was married.

Q: Did you come to Quonnie for summers?

A: I just came down for my week's vacation.

Q: Were you here during the 1938 Hurricane?

A: No. My folks were here. The Henrys came up and stayed with them during the hurricane, because Mother had a gas stove. That enabled her to cook. They were good friends with the Henrys.

Q: Where were your parents at that time?

A: They were living in New Rochelle. Well, they were living in Old Salt in the summer. Daddy would come up for—it varied—either for a long weekend. He'd come up like Thursday night. We'd meet the train in New London. And then he'd go back Sunday night. Some years he came for the two-week vacation. When he retired, then they moved up here. They left New Rochelle. They had an apartment there for quite a while. They sold that, and they came up here.

Q: So, they weren't here for the '38 Hurricane, but they were for the 1954, right?

A: They were here for the '38 Hurricane. Didn't I just say that the Henrys came up?

Q: Yes. But you said that they didn't buy Old Salt until 1946. They must have been in a different house.

A: They must have been. Well, forget that.

Q: What about World War II? Was your family here during World War II?

A: Was that in 1945?

Q: Yes.

A: They had blackout shades, so they must have been. I remember them talking about that. I think Daddy was some sort of a warden. He'd go out and check people out.

Q: It sounds like they were here. I've heard that people had to not let any light come out of their windows.

A: Yes. None at all. That's why they had the blackout. They would pull shades, blinds—anything. I think Dad had to check it out.

Q: That no light was coming out of cottages.

A: And I was vacationing one time down here. I used to walk different times. I remember walking. They used to have boxes on the beach, and a warden would have to stop and check in at a certain box. Then there was another one up a little farther about where Central Beach is, or a little farther. There was a box there that a warden had to check in, "I'm here. All's well." Actually, a German submarine was sunk out there. It got in somehow, and then somebody was alerted to it. You probably have heard this story.

Q: I have heard that. I want to hear it again.

A: I don't know any more than that. They were supposed to come in and establish a beach head here or something, but they got caught.

Q: They were sunk?

A: Yes. I thought they were sunk. The submarine is still out there. Beardsley has taken people out on occasion. They snorkel. He might be a good source of information. Jim Beardsley.

Q: How about during Hurricane Carol in 1954?

A: There were several hurricanes around there. I don't remember whether my folks were here in '54. They were probably here. I don't know. I don't remember. I wasn't here for any of them. The only one I was here for was Hurricane Bob. We went over to Bucky's house in Uncasville. We stopped and got some food at the Dunns Corners. I remember sitting in his place and seeing the big trees. They didn't get it as bad as we did down here. Blowing in the wind, and I thought, "My gosh, I wonder what will be left?" There was another hurricane when they came down here with a loud speaker and informed us to get out. So, we went up to the Presbyterian Church at Dunns Corners. Betsy Jewell made a lot of spaghetti, and there was some other stuff. We had food. We stayed there. People would come down periodically—some of the guys—and sort of check. There were guards at the head of the street here, and they were not letting anybody down on account of looters. They were careful about that. Finally, they said, "All is clear. You can go back to your places."

Q: Maybe because the water had receded?

A: The water doesn't come up this far.

Q: Or the streets weren't flooded, so people could get through?

A: I don't think so. If you follow the road down, it comes up and then it goes down. I don't think the water came up. I don't know about Barbie's cottage—if water came up that far. I don't think so, but don't quote me.

Q: Were any of these hurricanes memorable for you? Shocking, scary or exciting?

A: I wasn't here during any of them, except that one. We were here for a little bit, and then we went over to Bucky's in Uncasville. Of course, we were very interested. Mother and Dad came up—I was living in Cambridge right across from the river, and my husband went out for a beer or cigarettes, and he came back and he said, "Come on out, Janet." This was my first husband. The trolley cars were lined up. I guess the power had gone off, and they were just lined all the way up. There was a brick or a cobblestone sidewalk. There were stones—you could see them, because the roots of the trees underneath them were so big. That was 1938. The hurricane was on a Wednesday. We came down Monday from our trip. It must have been Monday that we got down to Cambridge. I was cooking. I remember our first meal was hamburger, carrots and baked potato. My husband came back, and he said, "Come on out quick and see." You couldn't see much. You could see the trees shaking. It wasn't really raining there. It was spray, but I think it was spray from the river, which was right across the road there. The next day, we had planned to go up to Williamsburg or Williamstown. Williamsburg is down south. It must be Williamstown. It was a football game. We had planned to go over there. I don't know if we were stupid or if we didn't pay attention. We got in the car. All of a sudden, a detour—a big tree, so we had to turn around and go back and retrace our steps and find another way. We got over there at 3:00 in the afternoon, and the game was just starting. We watched the game. We didn't get home until midnight. That was funny.

Q: Is that because so many trees were down?

A: Yes. And so many detours that we had to take. Why didn't we just go back home? I don't know. We were young and foolish. My father was driving. I guess they took turns driving.

Q: What has Quonnie meant to you in terms of your friendships and your family relationships?

A: The folks had lots of friends here. I was friendly with quite a few. I remember the Henrys. John would be the one that you should be talking to. Maybe you should send him a copy of this and ask him what he remembers. He might be able to shed a lot more light on things, or see things in a different light than I did.

Q: But right now, we're interested in you.

A: Okay. My recollections aren't that good.

Q: Your parents had friends here, and then you had friends.

A: My parents' friends were my friends. I didn't have any friends here. John did. Cynthia Knight, for example. But I just came for vacations. There wasn't time for me to develop any friends. Of course, our relatives, the Watermans. Harriet Waterman and Doctor George and Helen—we always visited over there for cocktails and stuff like that there. And Howard was here. Are you going to talk to June?

Q: Yes. Bill and June came later, right?

A: Bill and June grew up in the same household. Aunt Carrie and Uncle Howard were married. Aunt Carrie died in 1938 in the spring. I was in Middlebury at the time. I remember the letter that my mother wrote to me. I felt so badly. I wasn't used to people dying back then. She had some type of infection. It was Depression time. Uncle Howard had lost his job. They lived in Long Island. My father went over and gave her a blood transfusion, but things were not good. She passed away. Howie was just a year old. I think June was maybe seven. She can tell you more about that. Virginia would have been a little older. She was the oldest. Virginia, June and Howie. I just remember getting that letter and just feeling—it was my first brush with death. Or my second maybe. My grandfather had died before that.

Q: At one point you were telling me that you received the call from your father that your brother Albert had passed away.

A: I had brought the children down for two weeks vacation in the summer. I lived in Newington at the time. Randall wasn't born there. Bucky was a baby. I was still upstairs in bed. The kids hadn't woken up yet.

Q: In Old Salt?

A: In Old Salt. My mother came up, and she said, "Janet, Marie Gately is across the street. She has a phone call for you," so I came down in a hurry. Mother went back to watch the children. As I'm going in towards the house, Marie said, "Your father is on the phone." She said, "He's been in New York." I guess Albert had passed away. Albert was out in Nebraska. He was working out there. Marie said, "Your father called and said that your brother was killed in an automobile accident." He was driving. He was some sort of a mechanic. He was working on the car that he was driving. A young boy was with him—a fifteen-year-old guy. They took it for a spin to find out what went wrong. I don't know exactly, except he passed this truck, and the truck driver saw that he was going at a good speed. Somehow or other he veered off the road and hit a culvert. He was killed instantly. No; he got to the hospital and they called Dad. But I don't remember whether he was still alive when Daddy was out there. Daddy flew out immediately. That was bad, because that was just about a month after my husband had died. It was a very sad

summer. All these grown men—my father was in tears. My brother in tears. It was a tough time. I stayed to help out where I could. An extra person.

Q: So, you had a double whammy.

A: I had a double whammy. Albert's funeral was held over in Stonington. He's buried over there. That's the way it was.

Q: What year was that?

A: It was in 1938. Wait a minute; it couldn't have been 1938. That was the year I was married. September 10th, '38. It was 1946, I think.

Q: You said they bought Old Salt in 1946. In 1938, you got married. Then you went on to have Barbara and Helen.

A: I didn't have children. I was married for three years before we had children, because my husband went to Harvard Business School.

Q: And that's when you were living in Cambridge?

A: Yes. We were living in Cambridge at that point.

Q: So, you were married in '38, and then Barbara was born in '41.

A: No; '42.

Q: Followed by Helen?

A: No. Followed by—'42, '44, '45 and '48.

Q: Randy was my age. I always enjoyed it when he came to play. And his cousin Matthew. I loved it. They wanted to play with each other, and I'm sure I just tagged along. How old would your children have been when your husband passed away?

A: Randall was just six months old. Randall was born in November, and he died in June.

Q: So, he died in June of 1949?

A: Yes.

Q: And then you were at Old Salt with your children.

A: In July.

Q: Albert died in July?

A: Yes. I think that's right.

Q: What a terrible time for your family.

A: It was not a good time at all. It was difficult. I was glad I could be there. Sometimes a third person helps a little bit. It was sad.

Q: So, you were grieving for your husband, you were caring for your four young children, and then your parents were grieving for their son.

A: Yes.

Q: You can't believe these tragedies happening so close together.

A: They say things happen in threes.

Q: What has Quonnie meant to your four children?

A: Of course, they don't have the same attachment I have to it. I don't know. I really can't answer that. I don't know if it means much of anything to them. They come down here to visit and all, but I don't think that they care that much about it.

Q: They don't care about the location as much as they care about seeing you?

A: I don't think so, because they have made their fun where they live with their friends.

Q: How has the experience of living defined your family?

A: They're busy in their places. They would come down maybe for a day. From where they live, it's like two hours. They would come down to visit us and so forth. I don't think any of them ever stayed very long, because they had other things to do. They're not about the ocean like I am. They're not really swimmers or ocean lovers. They like to visit here.

Q: Is Bucky a surfer?

A: No. I don't think he ever surfed. Nobody ever surfed back then that I know of.

Q: Bucky lives in North Carolina now?

A: He has a home in Uncasville. He worked in insurance in Norwich. He had an insurance company there. When he was working, that's where he lived. But he's been retired for quite a few years. They come up a little bit before Thanksgiving, and they stay through Christmas, and then they go back down south again.

Q: Did he build a house in Nicaragua?

A: Yes. He was—not a founder; people who are on the governing board of the hospital, being a business man. Two of the doctors there knew a developer. This was how it all came about. They decided that it would be a good investment. It's one of these investments that helps you so that you don't have to pay taxes—a tax-deductible shelter. He bought a place down there. Helen, Rick and I flew down last January. We were there for a week. It was delightful. I think about it every so often. There was a little star that came out in the west right about up here, and I could see it when I got back here. I said, "That's my Nicaraguan star." So, we went down, and we spent a week. It was just lovely swimming at that time of year. It was wonderful. The guys did all the work. They did all the cooking and the waiting on Helen and I. In the morning we'd get up and we'd have breakfast on the terrace facing the water. You could hear the water at night. It was very secluded. There was one house that was right next to Bucky's. Then there was nobody. The beach was nothing—nobody. Just rocks. Way over here somebody had built a house, and way down there somebody had built a house. We enjoyed that tremendously. We went down to Yolanda's for dinner one night. Yolanda was a Nicaraguan. A short, stocky darkish woman—not black. Not real dark. But a good sunburn or sun color. Yolanda put on—they had little tables and strings of lights around the place. They brought out a big bowl of rice. I remember that. And something with fish in it, and something with chicken. And some salad. I ate sparingly, because I wasn't sure about who was working in the kitchen or anything like that. Actually, Rick was awfully sick that night, but he had been drinking beer too. That combination got to him. He was just washed out that night and the next day. I felt a little uneasy, but I got through it all right.

Q: Is Rick Helen's husband?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any special Quonnie memories or experiences you'd like to share?

A: My husband and I and Bucky and Helen—we came down off season. It was in September. We let them out. I was busy doing something in the house. I don't know where my husband was. Maybe he was gone then. I think he was gone. All of a sudden, I couldn't find the children. I was like, "Where have they gone? They've taken off." And I got a phone call from Doris Slater, and she said, "Are you missing two little children?" I said, "Oh, yes." "We saw them out there, and we brought them in the house, because we thought they were awfully little." So, I went up and got them. They just wandered off. Just taking a little walk on their own and not realizing that they really didn't know the territory, the people or anything else. That was funny. Otherwise, I don't know. It's nice. My folks would have people in for drinks. My father was a very strict disciplinarian. Boy, when the kids were around him, they knew they had to behave. They were sent outside when we had our cocktails. I enjoy the people here. Mary McSweeney—not Bill, but mostly Mary. I loved Mary McSweeney. She was a lot of fun. Always jolly and so forth. And I remember the Henrys. The Knights who lived

next door. You on the other side. People from New York who lived on the corner house on Spray Rock.

Q: The Thorntons?

A: No. It was before the Thorntons.

Q: The Barstows?

A: No. The Barstows are on the other side. It was way before that. I cannot remember. It seems to me that it was sort of an Irish name.

Q: I remember playing croquet on that lawn. At that time, the house was much smaller. It didn't belong to the Thorntons when I was growing up. I am supposed to ask you about this picture, because this was in Ann's collection that she got from your sister, Barbara.

A: I remember that.

Q: Apparently, it's you and Barbara.

A: Yes. They had the parade, and Barbara and I, unbeknownst to one another, had bought the same bathing suits. We came and went, "Oh, you got the same one. I got that too." John had just come back from Germany. He had shipped a lot of Joan's stuff over to our house. They weren't married then, but they were going to be. There was a lot of this fuzzy stuff. We just decided what we were going to do. So, this is what we did. We put on our spectator sports—I loved those shoes. They were so comfortable. So, we put on our spectator sports, and we put on our bathing suits, and, "Which twin has the Tony?" I love that. I have pictures of this too. The old fire engine and the bang-bang-bang. The boys—John and—who was the other guy? Next door to Kate. Robinson?

Q: The Robinsons from Vermont.

A: Okay. They put on bathing suits, and they put grapefruits up here. They were really something. I don't know if there were any pictures of them then or not.

Q: Do you recognize the people in the fire truck?

A: Not really. The guy who drove it—

Q: Bob Frost?

A: No. Brad.

Q: Brad Fisher?

A: Yes. That's Brad Fisher, I think. I can't tell who this is. I don't know who that is there.

Q: Did you win that year?

A: I don't think so. I don't remember who else was there. I don't think we won. We should have.

Q: That's probably Brad Fisher driving. Which one is you and which one is Barbara?

A: This is me. This is Barbara. I was sitting on the fender. I was a little taller than Barbara. This is me on the left.

Q: That must be Red Top in the distance.

A: I guess so.

Q: I hate it when those wonderful houses change.

A: I know. You're taking me way, way back.

Q: You've been here a long time.

A: I know.

Q: How about any other special Quonnie recollections?

A: It was always fun going over to the Watermans. I enjoyed Helen. She intrigued me. She already read *The New Yorker*. She was up on a lot of things. Doctor George was sort of quiet. I was living in Providence at the time, and I got pregnant with Barbara. I was going to have Doctor George for my obstetrician, but then the war came on, and one of our classmates at Middlebury, who was working in Providence—Doug Weatherhead—went down to Pratt & Whitney. They were hiring for good pay. He went down. He told my husband about it. My husband went down. Cookie had high blood pressure from way back, and they wouldn't take him. They were very good. They said, "Go lie down and rest a while." They had him do that, but they couldn't get his blood pressure down. We were staying with friends in Hartford on Blue Bills Avenue—friends that we had known up in Boston when we were at the business school. That was quite a jolt. We didn't know what to do. Paul knew Ellsworth Grant, whose father, Horace, was the head of [inaudible 39:29] Manufacturing—screws and wrenches. So, he said, "Let me call," so he put a call in, and they said to come down. Ellsworth had gone to the business school, and so there was an in there. They hired my husband, so we were able to stay. We spent the war years on Blue Hills Avenue. That was before we bought our house in Newington. That was all that happened.

Q: You were married in '38, the same month as the hurricane.

A: Yes. September 10th. We went to Quebec on our honeymoon, and then we drove around. That's a stupid thing to do on a honeymoon—drive. There was a lot of driving. It was also the hay fever season—not up there, but people who had hay fever would go up there, because it would be free. So, they would go up and spend a week or two. So, we stayed up there. It was pretty. It was nice. It was a lot of driving around staying at various inns. We got down to Cambridge to our apartment the day before—was it the day of the hurricane, or day before the hurricane? It must have been the day before the hurricane. The folks came up the next day from New Rochelle, and they had some tall tales to tell about it. There was a huge boat right up at the front by West Beach Road. It had floated in. They wanted to see Grandma Randall and Aunt Molly who were living in Westerly. I think Grandma Randall was down in Virginia. I guess Molly was alone there. But they were all right. They lost their power with some big branches and stuff. And I guess the wind was pretty bad.

Q: Did they call it the wind that shook the world?

A: That is a book. That book was written by a classmate of mine at Middlebury. I have it.

Q: Whoever wrote that book wrote several other books. It was a noted author.

A: Here it is.

Q: You have a copy of it?

A: Yes. Everett Allen. He was in my class at Middlebury.

Q: Where is Middlebury?

A: It's on Route 7. It's the west side of Vermont, not too far from the border of New York. In fact, if you go up a little farther, you can see Lake Champlain. New York is on the other side. It's halfway between Rutland to the south and Burlington to the north. He was a nice guy. He was in my husband's fraternity. I knew him quite well.

Q: Is Middlebury where you met your husband?

A: Yes. The fall of junior year. It was interesting. At freshman year, I was going around with a young man by the name of Dean Kent. He lived with his grandparents on South Street, and our dorm—he used to pass by. He was really good looking. He'd go by on his skis. I dated him for part of my freshman year until the beginning of my sophomore year, and then I decided that we were getting serious and I really didn't like him that much. I don't know. At any rate, I worked on the college newspaper called *The Campus*, and Ed Hayward and Everett Allen were Sigma Phi Epsilon. Ed would occasionally carry my books up the hill. He invited me over to the Sigma palace, and I thought, "Oh, good," so I went. I had a ball. I loved those boys. I loved to dance. Informal dances most of the time in fraternity houses, and also the gym dances. So, I spent my off time dancing and working on the campus.

Q: It says in his obituary that he was a writer for *The Campus* and [44:48] in college.

A: That was more of a literary magazine. I don't have any copies of that. I have some of *The Campus*.

Q: What was your husband's first name?

A: Carlos. His mother—maybe it was his grandmother was reading a book or something and was mesmerized by the name Carlos. His father's name was Carlos Cook. My Bucky is Carlos Cook the III.

Q: You son, Bucky?

A: Yes. But he didn't name any of his children after him, so there is no Carlos Cook the IV.

Q: Is there a B?

A: Carlos B? Yes. Bucklin. That's a Vermont name. B-U-C-K-L-I-N.

Q: Is that where Bucky got his nickname?

A: Yes. Buck.

Q: And Carlos passed away in '49 when Randy was about six months old?

A: Yes. It was six months after my brother died, because I have a letter in there that somebody wrote to my father, and my father remarked on how he had just lost a son-in-law.

Q: When did you remarry?

A: In 1974. Dale and I grew up—we didn't grow up together. The Morgans lived right next to us. There was Elwood, Tom and Dale Morgan. Then Winnie Morgan, their sister, was my age. Marjorie Morgan is my sister's age. We were sort of back and forth, but there was no interest. My mother belonged to an organized called The Mother's Club, and they had what they called a subscription dance, and I didn't have a line. I was shy with the boys. I think my mother and Mrs. Morgan cooked this up. Mrs. Morgan probably said to Dale, "Ask Janet," so he asked me. I went to the dance. It was nice. I'm sure he met his first wife there. He went his jolly way, and then I met my husband. At Christmas—Cookie's parents had died when he was in high school, so he used to come down and spend Christmas vacation with me at the house with Mother and Dad. We went over for eggnog with Mrs. Morgan. I think he was the one that suggested, "Why don't the four of us get together for a vacation this summer up at Star Lake in Belmont?" We all thought that was a good idea. So, we went. We'd go to dances, like they used to have here—what kind of dances?

Q: Square dances.

A: Square dances. We'd go to square dances and different things like that. We just had a good time with the four of us together. We were really good friends.

Q: When did you come to this house?

A: My father passed away first. I don't remember the year. My mother—actually, they were both in the nursing home. He passed away in the nursing home. My mother was there. I couldn't understand that he was in a room down here with this nice guy, Henry Howard, and they got along fabulously. My mother was up here. I said, "Why can't they be in the same room? They're married." But the woman said, "We've run into problems. If one has a problem, then the other gets upset, and then the nurses have two problems." But they brought Dad up every noon for lunchtime. They dressed him. He would sit next to Mother, and he'd hold her hand. If we were around, we'd generally take them up a cocktail. Mother liked her cocktails. I'd take Daddy his also. When he passed on and she lived on. She was there for twelve years. Unbelievable.

Q: Were you living here in this house when she passed away?

A: No. We were still in Pleasantville. We came up and we stayed here. After Daddy died, I guess the money was running out, so Dale bought the house. The Morgans owned the house, but before he died, Dale gave half of it to me. I still own half of it, and the Morgan family owns the other half.

Q: Do they ever use it?

A: No. We moved up and use it. They come up. They were here. We have a Morgan reunion the first weekend in August. They're in various places down here—in area motels and so forth. In fact, Bonnie, their daughter—a lovely girl. They've very nice to me. The boys are very nice too, and very helpful. She was just up here last weekend. They live in Saugerties, New York. [inaudible 51:17] lives in Maryland. He's the next-farthest away. Tom lives in Tolland, Connecticut. Kirk was the youngest. Kirk was in that drug culture, and they had problems with Kirk, and he died because of it. It was sad.

Q: It's nice that you have family reunions for the Morgans. Did you or your family have any other special Quonnie-oriented activities?

A: Dale was the treasurer of the Sunset Drive Association. He was very good with figures. He was the treasurer for that when he was alive. We used to go to those meetings. We knew quite a few people around here. Mary McSweeney—I remember especially. Otherwise, no. Just swimming. We both enjoyed swimming at the beach.

Q: You've been a beach person all your life.

A: Oh, yes. In New Rochelle, we belonged to the New Rochelle Shore Club. It was a yacht club, and there was Echo Bay. It was on an island. Dale's family belonged to that, and we belonged to The Shore Club. They had a pool. It was a salt-water pool. We'd take a motor boat ride like from here over to Sunset Drive—a very short drive to get there. Then we had lockers. One summer I had a crush on the locker boy. I used to dream about him. We'd go in that pool. There were boys our age—his nickname was Pretzel. Pretzel Priestley. I often wonder what happened to him. Then there was Eddie. The Wright brothers were twins, but they didn't look alike, but they were the same age. We had a great time. And Winky. I sort of had a crush on him too. And Bud Sacious was a lifeguard, and Joey Mills was the other lifeguard. We'd go up. My mother, bless her heart—I said, "Mother, I don't understand why you never learned how to swim." But when you look at Stonington, there's no beach there or anything. Where she lived, she never had a chance to swim. But she'd sit there on the porch—a nicely covered porch—very patiently for a couple of hours. First of all, John was a baby, and I'd go up and down North Avenue, "John, go to sleep. Go to sleep." Until he had his nap, we couldn't go. I guess she left him at home. We had live-in help. We had a lot of fun. In the wintertime we'd have house parties in New Rochelle. One or two of the guys had cars. They would drive. One of the girls had a car, and we'd go in the house. We'd have Coca-Colas and sandwiches. We ate. Cookies and stuff like that. We laughed. We had a great time. One time before I had experimented with mascara—I thought that would be a nice thing to do, so I experimented with it. We were there. We were laughing so hard, the tears were just coming, and my face got all streaked. "What's the matter with your face? It's dirty." I had to go and wash my face. It was really great fun. I had a girlfriend, Betty Mahoney. She lived two blocks down from me. She used to walk up and meet me in front of the house, and then from there, we'd walk 15 minutes to the high school. There was a boy. His name was Gilman Treadwell. Gilly's father was a scoutmaster, and Gill was into scouting too. His mother used to bake for the Women's Exchange. She'd get up about 4:00, and she'd bake pies and cookies as much as she could. And then Gilly was elected to take the car and take them down to the Exchange first things in the morning before high school began. He'd always come around our street and pick up Betty and I and take us to the school. That was after he had delivered what he was supposed to deliver.

Q: What was the Women's Exchange?

A: It was something that I think happened where the women got together and they'd make their specialties—the baked goods, and then they sold them. People would come in from the public and they would buy. That would give these women money to buy food, because it was Depression time. Some people were really hard hit. My family was lucky. I remember Mother had help all the way through, but we had to be careful. I couldn't have the clothes I wanted. One of my girlfriends—she was the only girl in the family. She had a brother. Her mother gave her everything. She had all these nice sweaters—buttoned down the back cardigans. I went down to Klein's at Union Square in New York. That's where I got my college wardrobe. We survived. My folks sacrificed. But my father did not lose his job. He worked hard. He commuted back and forth to New York every night. He'd take the bus down in the morning, and then at night Mother

would go down. We always parked on North Avenue almost always next to a store—a federal bakery. They had the most wonderful buns with frosting on top—like hot-cross buns. We'd wait for Dad to come up from the train, pick him up. That's what she did. She always had help. That was good. Very different times. But I had a lot of good times. A lot of good people.

Q: How about Quonnie activities? You're a gardener.

A: I used to garden when we got up here. I had a full-grown garden. Most of this was a meadow. It's just a small garden in the front. Mother had started some Daylilies. She had a bed or Iris out here. I have given up on that now.

Q: Do you enjoy looking at it?

A: It's fun. It's wild.

Q: You've got Hasta, Yarrow and Queen Anne's Lace. They're pretty.

A: Yes. I love the Black-eyed Susans.

Q: They make me happy to see them.

A: Yes. And the daisies. They all just pop up on their own.

Q: Don't you love that?

A: I do. I had a very nice Daylily bed there. I had a dozen of them. A couple of them come up. There comes a time when you can no longer garden. It just sits there. I enjoy what I have.

Q: Is that a stone wall with the trumpet vine?

A: Yes. That trumpet vine drives me wild. I've given up on that. It's funny. I know it's a trumpet vine, because I can tell by the leaves and all that, but I can never find any blossoms.

Q: I can see them from here.

A: I was walking in front of Lowe's, and they were all facing towards the sun. It was so funny.

Q: Is there anything else you can think of to tell me.

A: I guess not. Albert is buried in Stonington in Mother and Dad's plot. They're buried there too, of course. He was buried there first. And Bobby is buried over there.

Q: Bobby is in Stonington?

A: Yes. Dale is buried in our church—the Presbyterian Church down here on the side—his ashes. He was cremated. I want to be cremated. I will be buried next to him. I think I have put my instructions to divide the ashes up a little bit, and take some of me up to Vermont with my first husband, because he's buried up there. I think it would be nice if we were together—part of me up there and part of me down here. That's about everything I can think of. You have taken me so far back. I'm going to have a problem getting back to what I'm doing here.

