



Wasatch Hollow Community Council

Interview Summary and Index – 001

Interviewee: Diane McMaster McCoun

Interviewer: Melvin P. Thatcher

Date: August 7, 2015

Location: Salt Lake City, UT

Summary

Diane McMaster McCoun, daughter of Clara Watkins and J. Stuart McMaster, shares memories of growing up in the neighborhood between 1935 and 1949. The family lived at 1420 East Kensington Avenue. Diane remembers the daily flag ceremony and some of the teachers at Uintah School. She recounts the leisure activities of kids and their parents, telling about the games that kids played in the alleys, the boys in vacant lots, and girls at the homes of friends.

Diane talks about home delivery of eggs and milk and the shops at 15th and 15th where her first job was at the Paramount Milk Depot. She recalls winter time sledding from 14th East down to 11th East on Kensington. She tells about local transportation, particularly the 13th East trolley, and catching rides to University of Utah in the limousine of the president of the LDS Church.

Diane recalls the lack of modern conveniences at home and the chores that she and her brothers performed. She remembers her parents, their love of music, and the service that they provided in the community through it. She provides a warm view into family life which was filled with music. She then continues to talk about musical performances by her father (banjo player for the Harmony Night Hawks), mother (Utah Opera and University of Utah productions), and her brother and herself and her mother's musical background and training.

Diane remembers the impact that WWII had on her family and women in the neighborhood. "Spam," she says, "was a big thing!" and served to appear like ham.



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Diane introduces LDS ward roadshow performances, which included Mormon and non-Mormon youth, and monthly LDS ward dances with live big bands that were open to the community. She concludes with some memories of her brothers John, Tom, and Brent.

Note: Diane’s mother, Clara McMaster, is a well-known composer of children’s songs. In a second interview, Diane shares memories of her as a composer. The interview is found in the Community Culture section of wasatchhollowcc.org.

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Time	Brief description
00:00:00	Introduction.
00:00:28	Background. Lived at 1420 Kensington. Had three brothers. Attended Uintah School and Wasatch and Edgehill Wards.
00:02:08	Uintah School. Daily flag ceremony. 4 th grade teacher Matilda Cahoon wrote songs for LDS Primary children. Principal Mrs. Anderson. Learned social dance in physical education. Music teacher had hard time maintaining discipline.
00:04:32	After dinner activities. Children played in street under the arc lights. Adults sat on porches or went for walks.
00:05:20	Kids’ games. Played “ditch” on bikes in the alleys and Washington poke (a kind of hide-and-seek). Boys played “pot” with marbles in vacant lots.
00:06:52	Girls’ games. Paper dolls. Monopoly with Betty Dierdorf. Dierdorf’s moved out and Arch Tueller, orchestra teacher at Uintah School, moved in at 1400 East and Kensington. Jacks, hop scotch, jump rope.
00:09:18	Autumn leaves. Piled up and played in leaves.
00:10:10	Lesson learned. Returned apples picked from Wally Castellar’s tree at instruction of father.
00:11:06	Egg and milk deliveries. Vander Endes from Holland lived in The Gully raised chickens and sold eggs in the neighborhood. Milkman Marv from Winder Dairy came in the back door and put milk in the refrigerator.
00:13:10	15th and 15th shops. Loveridge’s gas station, Economy Drug, Pat’s (boy’s



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	hangout; mother forbade her to go there) on east side of street. Safeway (fresh meat only cut to order), bakery, OP Skaggs (manager Mr. Gygi), A&G Market (fresh vegetables), Folland Drug (soda fountain) on west side. Got first job at Paramount Milk Depot on east side of street; ate ice cream in lieu of paycheck.
00:16:32	Sledding on Kensington Avenue. Snowpacked streets. Sled down Kensington from 1400 East to 11 th East. Ted Beers had eight man sled.
00:18:28	Transportation. Bus to town on 15 th East. Streetcar to U of U and town on 13 th East had reversible seats. Walked to schools (Uintah, Irving, East, University of Utah). Caught rides with LDS Church President George Albert Smith's limousine from East High to University of Utah.
00:22:00	No home conveniences. Wringer washer, clothesline. Coal bin, clinkers. Hand washed dishes. No TV; went to neighbors to watch "I Love Lucy". No air conditioner.
00:25:23	Family cars. Four family cars. First car was 1936 Dodge; learned to drive in it. Last car 1961 Oldsmobile.
00:26:25	Parents. Mother (Clara Watkins) was called to music committee of Primary General Board of the LDS Church. Composed words and music of many children's songs which are still sung today. Father (John Stuart McMaster) was an attorney and Western Regional Director for the Bureau of Land Management. Received work recognition from President Nixon. Mother and father received music service award from BYU.
00:29:51	Radio programs. Listened to Jack Armstrong the All-American Boy, My Gal Sunday, Inner Sanctum (mother intervened), Helen Trent, Amos & Andy, Gunsmoke.
00:30:54	Opera music. Mother was a member of the Utah Opera Company from the start. Carlos Alexander, Glade Peterson. Went with mother to meetings. Brothers complained about hearing an opera recording every Saturday morning but learned to love it.
00:31:57	Piano. Music was always in the home. Family sang on front porch. Father purchased a Mason & Hamlin singer's piano for mother.
00:35:20	World War II. Saw father tear up for the first time on the Sunday of the



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	Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Gas stamps. Lard with orange coloring for margarine. Mother canned everything. Ladies made kits for servicemen. Women worked in manufacturing and at Hill Field. Cutback ice cream consumption. Food rations. Mother added cloves and pineapple to Spam to mimic ham for Sunday dinner.
00:41:28	Roadshows. Mavis Hickman was in charge of producing her LDS ward's roadshows (like a variety show). Involved all ward youth and included non-Mormons. Had to be original with dancing, singing, and acting. Performed from ward to ward. Judged.
00:49:24	Ward dances. Monthly event with big bands. Not a couple dance. Open to community. Always live music.
00:51:10	Musical performances. Father played banjo for the Harmony Night Hawks at Hotel Newhouse, Salt Lake Theater, and on Mayor Earl J. Glade's radio show. Mother sang in operas, was president of Utah Opera Association, and performed in musical productions at the University of Utah. Glade Peterson, Maurice Abravanel, Lowell Lee, [William F.] Christensen. Started "Promised Valley" musical. Diane and brother John sang in the choruses.
00:56:10	Mother's musical family and training. Brothers played professionally with nationally famous bands. Mother studied classical voice at Utah State University.
00:58:12	Brother John. Shares memories of John and his tragic debilitating accident. Died in 2014.
01:00:42	Brother Tom. Always mischievous. Learned to make backyard ice rink from Chet Pratt. Lost teeth in clothesline accident. Told school teacher his mom was "doing the best she can" in raising him. Always inventive. Could fix anything. Died of cancer in 1997.
01:05:49	Brother Brent. Curly headed baby. Showed entrepreneurial propensity on his 4 th birthday.
01:09:12	End time