

LM

TUALATIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TAPE # 4

Gladys May

as interviewed by

Alton Robbins

transcribed by Marian Larson

*ed. note  
old Brown property  
Goodall PNC*

AR Gladys, can you tell me, where were you born?

GM I was born on the old Zenas Brown property. My grandfather came out in 1889 from Chicago, and bought the whole, half a section for foreclosure, tax foreclosure, from Clackamas County and a ----

AR Is that the property now where the hospital is?

GM Yes, the hospital bought forty six acres of it, and the, uh let's see, forty acres belonged to my father and mother, that Grandpa had given it to us. He divided his property and gave it to his children, each one forty acres, and then there was a little bit left and he sold that to Bill Sagert and that's now where the Emmons property is across from the apartments.

AR Ummmmm. What was your father's and mother's name?

GM My mother was Minnie Frobase and my father was Edward Fredericks.

AR What part of the country were they from?

GM Oh! My father was from Chicago. He came out, he came out, grandpa brought him, brought his family out in 1889 and they were all born in Chicago, but my mother was born right up here on Frobase Road back of Frobase' property where the Snyders bought that.

AR They were married here then?

GM They were married at the Stafford Baptist Church.

AR Oh!

GM My grandfather and some of the older Germans, the Adens and the Oldenstadts, and Delkers and the Schotzes, got together and they built that church. My grandfather was a contractor so he bossed the job, and he built most of that church, and that's where my mother and father were married.

AR Did you have any brothers and sisters?

GM Yes, I have two sisters and one brother, an older sister and then my brother and then my younger sister. Hilda was the oldest one, then Kuni or Fred Jr. was my brother and Pearl Alfanelf was my youngest sister. *alplanelp* *coding*

AR Where did you go to school?

GM Well, I went to school at Stafford.

AR Was Mrs. Saum your teacher?

GM No, it was after that. Mrs. Saum was already gone (laughs) then.

AR Do you remember any of your neighbors, your early neighbors?

GM Oh! Yes! The M *alsons*, Bushbaums. The M *alson* and Bushbaums bought their property from Grandpa Fredericks because it was part of that section, and then there was Saffrons where Rolling Hills apartments are and the Nybergs were our neighbors and across the road the Laceys (?) had bought that property and that's where Martha Saffron Worth lived. She and Lloyd Wirth. Martha was Mr. and Mrs. Saffron's daughter, and she married Lloyd Wirth, and that's where they lived at that time.

AR Tell me about the early ferry. *hony (?)*

GM Now, I don't remember the ferry, but I know Grandpa Frobese used to walk down from Frobese Road to the ferry and go across to what was then lake Grove which is Lake Oswego now, and walked over to the Iron Foundry and worked in the Iron Foundry and walked back home in the evening and did his farm work.

AR What was the name of that ferry? Do you remember?

GM Brown's Ferry. It was Zenas Brown's. It was on their property. It was near, sort of between, I don't remember the ferry. I just remember them telling about it. It was sort of between the Camp trailer Park and the apartments. It was down that road. It was down in that general area. The exact location, I don't remember.

AR Did you have electricity in your home when you were young?

GM Oh! My goodness no. We had lamps, and I've got one of the lamps here that my mother had, and we had our water system ~~out~~ in the back yard, and it was a pump and we'd have to, my folks would pump all the water and carry it in the house. It wasn't very far, just a hop and a jump because there were springs all over that place.

AR Ummmmm.

GM We had ample water. It was all heated on the wood stove.

AR Do you remember when you first got electricity? What year it was? Or about when?

GM Oh! Electricity out in this area was, I guess I was grown before they even had thought of electricity, because after my father died, Grandpa built that little house next to the hospital, that little white house in the woods, and my mother finished raising the family there, and I was eleven years old, and we still didn't have electricity. We had her lamps, and we had outside two holers.

AR Yeah. Remember the first car in the family?

GM Yes, it was Uncle Henry Frobase' car, and I have a picture of that and the whole Frobase family.

AR Do you know what kind of car it was?

GM I'll show it to you. No, I don't remember, I don't remember.

AR I supposed you used to get around in a horse and buggy.

GM Yes, we used to drive up and down and come across the bridge at Saum's pond and come down which is now Prosperity Park Road. That was the wagon trail. The horse and buggy always went that way to get over to Highway 212, which is now Borland Road, and through the main road in Fox Hills and down to the old place through the woods -- that Fox Hills was all woods, virgin timber. That forty acres was my uncle's and he sold it to one of the Sagerts. I think it was ~~Earl~~ Sagert that he sold that to, my uncle did that, and then they cleared off all the timber, but that was, oh! my goodness, it must have been fifty years ago, at least forty years ago that my uncle sold it.

FRED  
SAGERT

AR Are any of your brothers and sisters still living?

GM I just, my oldest sister, Hilda, is still alive. My brother passed away about ten years ago and my sister, Pearl, passed away in August, just this last August.

AR Whereabouts does your sister live?

GM She's in a foster home on Vineyard down near Oak Grove.

AR Oh! She lives in this area then?

GM yes.

AR Tell me about your brother.

GM He was a bosom pal of Loyce Lee's father, Art Matanzi. Grandpa and my family always called it "Matanzi" -- Art Martinazzi, they call it now.

AR You knew Art's mother and father real well? My family knew then real well, yes, Julius, my stepfather. Yeah, Art's mother was my aunt's sister.

GM Oh! That's interesting!

AR So we're kinda related in a way, but not ---

GM Art's.

AR Nettie, his mother was my Aunt Rose's sister.

GM Oh! I see, that's interesting!

AR Can you tell me about any of the other early families here? Much about them?

GM Well, I know my aunt was a real good friend of, I don't know if it was Bill Avery's sister or his mother. I suppose it would have been his mother. They were real good friends, but as far as the family, I don't know much about them.

AR Did you ever know a Reverend Mr. Blake?

GM No, I didn't know him.

AR Do you remember any of the early families up around Stafford?

GM Those families, I do know. The Oldenstadts and, of course, my grandmother's sister was Grandma Mosier and Grandpa and Grandma Mosier came from Switzerland and took out their claim. There some of the Mosiers still have that. Mary Ann Nealy lives on part of the Mosier property, and she was Ben Mosier's daughter. The the Oldenstadts farm joined them. The I knew the Delkers real well, the old Grandpa and Grandma Delker, and the Schötzes. When I was just a child they all went to church at the Stafford Church --- and the Adens were real good friends. George Aden and my father were bosom pals.

AR Did you ever know the Sharks/Sharfs(?) ?

GM Yes, my grandmother was a real good friend of the Sharfs/Sharks/Sharps/ Did you know them?

AR Uh huh.

GM One of the *Sharp's* committed suicide in the pig pen, and they found him all demolished from the hogs, and I think it was Perry Sharf(?), if I remember. I was very young at the time and I know it was quite a news item, and everybody was really quite shook up over the event.

AR Yeah.

GM And Grandma knew Ella *sharp* Sharf(?) real well. Now Mr. Angel's mother was a *Sharp* Sharf(?), I believe, wasn't she?

AR I don't know.

GM Mr. Angel, that lives up off of Prosperity Park Road.

AR There was a family of Thompsons down there too.

GM Oh! Yes, I --

AR Vic Thompson, remember?

GM Pardon?

AR Victor Thompson.

GM Oh, yes. Victor Thompson later on was deputy sheriff of, of --

AR Yeah.

GM Clackamas County, and I worked in the tax department for Clackamas County at that time.

AR Oh!

*Wood*

GM So I knew Vic real, real well and his sisters and brothers and Enza ~~Wellwood~~(?), I knew her real good and I knew her daughter too. She had one daughter. Then the Boeckmans, of course. The Boeckmans went to the other church, the Frog Pond Church. The Frobase', my Grandmother Frobase, and all my aunts and uncles went to that church, the Frog Pond Church.

AR The church you talk about in Stafford, is that the one by the cemetery?

GM Yes.

AR Now when was it built?

GM Oh, that was the first church i attended. It must have been built around the turn of the century -- probably 1902-03, in that general area.

AR The cemetery was it before that though, several years?

GM The Robert Bird cemetery was, but the Baptist cemetery was at the same time, the property, the church was built, the Baptist cemetery. I imagine the church bought it to bury their members.

AR I know the Bird cemetery has been there because I have a lot of relatives buried in the Bird cemetery, way back in the 60's and 70's.

GM Probably, the Baptist people when they built that church bought the rest of that property for their cemetery because it's two separate ones. There is no separation, you can't tell where one ends and the other begins, I don't think.

AR Well, I think the part closest to the church is the --

GM Yeah, that's our cemetery, and my grandfather and grandmother are buried there, and so is my father and mother, and Grandpa bought several plots so there was one empty plot. There were three graves which weren't being used, so when I lost my husband, that was where we put him because he was part of the family, and he said that was home. So he hadn't, we hadn't lived here two years when he passed away. We lived at Lake Oswego before that.

AR Oh! Uh huh.

GM He was the Baptist minister at the First Baptist Church in Lake Oswego.

AR Oh! Was he there for several years?

GM About thirty, '48 to '72.

AR Oh! Uh huh.

GM Yes.

AR How long have you lived in this house?

GM We moved here in 1970. It was only four years old. It was fairly new at that time.

AR Um. Do you remember much about the town of Tualatin then?

GM Oh, yes!

AR That's what we're interested in.

GM It was one mile from our place, and we always walked to Tualatin. There were very few houses. Just one main street down Boones Ferry, and where Rich's Kitchen is now was a grocery store, and that was your forefathers. Wasn't your father or your---

AR No, it was no relation of mine that had the grocery store. It was Robinson, Newt Robinson.

GM Oh, Newt Robinson, oh.

AR Ed Robinson had the other grocery store.

GM Yes, and they were brothers. Well, I can faintly remember. We'd come to Tualatin and then ride the Oregon Electric to Portland. That was our means of transportation.

AR That's right. Did you ever know a fellow by the name of Charlie Casteel?

GM Oh, yes. The Casteels, we knew the Casteels, that's Andrews, what's her first name?

*ed note* Fred Dangel said <sup>4-6</sup> Ed & Newt were not brothers

AR Evelyn.

GM Evelyn Andrews, wasn't she, no she wasn't a Casteel, her mother was.

AR Her dad was.

GM Oh, her dad was. Her mother was a May?

AR Her mother was a Jurgens.

GM Evelyn Andrews?

AR Charlie Casteel was my grandfather.

GM Oh, is that right?

AR Evelyn Andrew's father and my mother were brother and sister.

GM Oh, then you are related to Evelyn?

AR She's my cousin.

GM She was out at the Lees'.

AR Yes, she lives right next door there.

GM Yes, I know where she lives.

AR Do you remember any of the other people in town? Remember when the Methodist Church burned?

GM Yes, I believe I do, but by that time I wasn't living in Tualatin anymore.

AR Oh.

GM After my father died; I was eleven when my father died, and my grandparents. I had moved to Pete's Mountain, when they divided their property. He bought forty acres up there from old Peter Wise and built a little house, and my grandmother was from Switzerland and she didn't like Tualatin. So she wanted to go someplace that looked like the Alps (laughter). She loved it up there, up on the hill, the tippy top of Pete's Mountain. So he built her a house up there, and then I lived up there with my grandparents and my oldest sister went to Portland with an aunt. My mother had to go to work. She took Pearl with her, she was only a baby -- she was only about 4 1/2 years old at the time. We lost my father and Kuni went to live with Frobases. So this is how the family got separated. Then, after she married Julius Skogg, well she took the two little ones back home with her, but we never did go live at home. That's why I went to Stafford School and Hilda went to Tualatin and so did Kuni and Pearl. So this way I---

4-Coony

AR Now how is Pearl Fredericks related to you?

GM She was my youngest sister. She was Fredericks.

AR Is she red-headed?

GM yes, everybody knew Pearl.

AR Yeah, I went to school with her.

GM She was seven years younger than I am.

AR Hmmm. Well, she was a good friend of the Saums.

GM Oh, yes! Her and Hattie were inseparable and Kuni and Steve were inseparable also.

AR Yeah. Last I heard, Steve was living up in Central Oregon.

GM Up in Burns, uh huh.

AR Up in Burns, hmmm, yeah. Do you remember anything about the Saum house, the Castle?

GM Oh, I used to play in that house. We had a ball. We'd climb up to the tippy top. The only part that was finished was downstairs, the living area.

AR Yeah.

GM Did you go in it too? You were in it too? Yes, oh, yes.

AR Yeah, I was in it. I remember it.

GM Grandpa Saum came from Germany, and he liked those castles in Germany. And he had all this wood, these trees, this forest. He had big dreams, that he was going to build a castle and so this is how that house got started. Of course, then old Grandpa Saum passed away and George never did finish it.

AR Well, Grandpa was an architect, wasn't he!

GM Now this I don't know, but I know they had that sawmill.

AR Yeah.

GM He sawed lumber for everybody in the county. Even Grandpa Fredericks bought lumber from him to build. I guess he didn't have time to finish his own house. Then Gramma Saum, well, one other thing, Gramma Saum died, and she wanted to be buried on the property. So they buried her, you know, where Wilkie Road goes off of Borland, where on the right all those trees are. She wanted to be buried there.

AR Under those trees?

GM Yeah. Then later on they transferred her remains, and my father helped them transfer the remains to the cemetery.

AR Yeah. The house I was born in which is just across the road here, the lumber came from Saum's sawmill in 1904.

GM So! I was about four years old. I can remember that my father and my grandfather built that big barn, probably 1910 is when they built that barn, and after we moved here that barn was still standing, but then the Emmons tore it down and put in a new barn a modern one. A -- but before that, the buildings were the ones that Zenas Brown had built. He had built this big prune dryer, and he dried prunes for everybody around the country. See, Orchard Hill Road used to be Wilke Road because that, they plotted that property then. It was all prunes. It was orchards of prunes, and they plotted that as Orchard Hill and they named that Orchard Hill Road. That was across from our property.

not  
RKHFT

AR Ummmm.

GM I know back of Emmon's house was a big orchard that my grandfather had, and I think it probably was the original orchard that Mr. Brown had. I don't think he ever married because there were no heirs at all.

AR Did they raise anything besides prunes, or mostly all prunes?

GM My parents? My grandparents? oh, well, the prune orchards were there, he didn't plant them;. They were Browns' and whoever else, and he built the prune dryer, but Grandpa raised onions; onions and potatoes. It was an onion farm. He used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning and take his onions to Portland. There was a store on Barbur Boulevard, a store --. He always delivered his produce there, and then he'd go to all the other stores in Portland in his horse and wagon and deliver onions and potatoes and my father did that too. Every week they would take a big load of potatoes and onions into Portland.

AR There used to be a lot of little momma and papa grocery stores in South Portland.

GM That's right.

AR I suppose that's where they --

GM Well, Palishes (?) <sup>Paleskis-</sup> It was one of the stores that was right on Barbur Boulevard.

AR Yeah, we used to take strawberries down there in a horse and buggy.

GM Oh! You did the same thing!

AR We's pick strawberries all day, and the next morning we'd get up at 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock and --

GM -- and just in the wagon.

AR That's right!

GM Oh, you did the same things! Isn't that interesting to talk to someone that did the same thing!

AR That's right! My dad and older brother and something I'd go along too, and we'd get back about dark that night, and if we'd made \$25 we'd had an excellent day.

GM I know. That was a fortune!

AR That's right, yeah.

GM A lot, we'd go in. My aunt lived in Portland, and then we'd stay all night and shop the next day or play around town and then come home, and when we really wanted to splurge, they'd, my folks, would take the Electric train and go into Portland and spend the weekend. Usually, we'd go in, leave on Friday and come back on Monday. I don't know who would take care of the animals. They were taken care of. There was always an extra man there, a hired man, somebody stayed there.

AR What kind of animals did you generally have? Did you have any cows or --

GM We had cows and horses and a lot of pigs. The pig pen was down below the hill where Mrs. Emmon's house is, and that was a lane for the pigs. Grandpa would let them run in the orchard to eat all the fruit that had fallen and was not usable.

AR Did you have dairy cows, or did you sell milk or anything like that?

GM Oh, no, just for our own use. They just had a couple of cows so they could have their own milk. I don't know what they did with -- oh, yes, I know! Daddy didn't like to milk cows and neither did Grandpa. They would take the cream off of it to make butter and then they'd feed skim milk to the pigs, raise the pigs on it.

AR Oh, yeah, that's the way it used to be.

GM Yeah. Oh, farmers, that's the way they did.

AR That's right.

GM Yeah.

AR Did you ever have horses?

GM Oh, yeah, we had a team of horses, the ---

AR Oh, I mean did you ever have riding horses that you --

GM Oh no, just --

AR Could you tell me about where you went to school?

GM I went to Willamette Grade School. My three children also attended Willamette Grade School, when they were growing up, and Mabel Larson was their teacher. She was my teacher, and she was also their teacher. And Etta May Holly was my teacher when I was in the eighth grade, and she was also my two oldest children's teacher.

AR They really stayed at it in those days, didn't they? They made a career out of it.

GM Yes, they did. Then the first year, we used to high school at Willamette, in the old Willamette Grade School. They had the high school also. But the first year after I graduated, was the new high school at West Linn so everybody went to West Linn High.

AR Did you go to school beyond that?

GM I went to business college, I took, for about two years and I took business.

AR Uh hmmm! Then worked --

GM Secretarial course. My first job, and only job was in the Sheriff's department. I worked in the tax department. I worked in the bookkeeping department there.

AR In Oregon City?

GM In Oregon City, yes. Then after my youngsters were in school, I went back to work and I worked until I retired in 1966.

AR You always worked for the county, huh?

GM Yes, the only job I ever had. I always went back to the the same thing because the job was available whenever I wanted one.

AR Yeah.

END OF SIDE 1 COUNTER AT 508

SIDE 2

AR Okay, start now.

GM Start in again? I started with a cross cut saw that Grandpa Fredericks had. I had them down in the barn until last month, and my grandson from California saw those saws and he said, "Oh! Those are collector's items!" And I said, "Why don't you take them because they are just hanging there." Well, then, I had a lot of tools that were my father-in-law's. He was a mill wright at Crown Zellerbach mill, and he was killed in a

mill accident, and he had all these mill wright tools and that was 1923 when he was killed. So this is his chest of tools that were his own. Well, my husband later on acquired that tool chest full of tools, and my grandson, who is now twenty-four, was up here in August, and he was those tools in the barn here. I didn't know what to do with all those tools. I knew they were collector's items. He gathered up all those tools and packed them up in his BMW and took them to California where they live down at Monterey, and my son told me the other day that he prizes those tools! He cleaned them all up, and he's wrapped each one separately and he treats them like he's got a fortune! He said he did have a fortune, because he does, because those tools really found a home. I was so happy because they were here, we had them in Lake Oswego, we had those tools, and when we moved out here, he brought them along, and they were down in the barn all this time, just sitting down there waiting for someone to want them.

AR Hmmm, that's interesting, because a lot of that stuff is really valuable.

GM Yes, that is really collectors' items.

AR Do you have any old Bibles or anything in the family that's been handed down?

GM Oh, yes, I do have! The poor thing is just really dilapidated. It's a great big family Bible. Right here!

AR Tell me about some of the furniture you have in the house. Did any of it come west with your family or was it acquired after they got here?

GM I think that love seat came with the Gear family, from across the \_\_\_\_\_ (dishes rattle), because it was my sister-in-law's, Kuni's wife. And Kuni's wife was a gear and it's two or three generations, this love seat's old. I'm sure it came, but the other things didn't. They were purchased in Portland, second hand stores, like the piano. My uncle got the piano second hand or my aunt really did; the aunt that was Mrs. Avery's friend. And then they got that hall rack also. She had that as long as I can remember.

AR That's a very unique piece, isn't it?

GM Yes, it is. As long as I can remember they had that. I also had a throne chair that was way over a hundred years old, and I just have too much furniture so I'd keep giving it to the family so my son took it to California with him one time when he was up here, so he has it down there. I also have a phonograph that my grandfather had bought. He bought that in, I was nine years old, so he bought it 80 years ago, any my son took that home too. And then my grandfather bought a piano about the same time. It was a player piano. He just loved music, and he'd sit and play that player piano. He had about 250 rolls. Well, my son took that one too, so he has antique room down in Monterey where he lives.

AR Ummmm. I notice a spinning wheel. Is that ----

GM Oh, that's my spinning wheel! That's not ancient. That's modern. After i lost my husband, my son decided he was going to get a sheep and a goat to eat the grass, but he made pets out of them, so he still had to mow all this lawn! Then he said, "Mom, you

4-12

COONY = so nicknamed because he  
liked to hunt racoons

need to learn to spin" so he made the spinning wheel for me --

AR Oh, he made it!

GM Hmmm, so I've been spinning.

AR Do you still use it?

GM Oh, all the time! I haven't had it too long, eight or ten years, maybe. Yes, I do spinning all the time and knitting.

AR Where can you get the wool to spin?

GM Well, Sunday, we went off to Beaver Creek to B. J.'s Wool Farm because every year they have a craft show and a wool sale, a fleece sale. So that's where we buy our fleeces. We choose the special kind, and then we bring them home and whatever we want to do with them. I wanted to color some, so I colored this and then dried it and carded it. Now it's ready to spin.

AR It must take a lot of work to card it, doesn't it?

GM Why, I have a carder, a \_\_\_\_\_(roll?) carder. (Laughter) No, that's the easiest part, yeah.

AR 'Cause it is in it's natural state, it always looks so kinky and curled up.

GM Well, you do like this to it. You have to tease it and get it all separated. Then you put it in your carder and then --- *run it through your carder*

AR Is it generally pretty dirty when you get it, and you have to clean it?

GM Yes, it's quite dirty. I have a lot of it. I'll show you. I bought three fleeces.

AR When you say you have three fleeces, is that the wool off of three sheep?

GM No.

AR How much is a fleece? Does it go by the pound?

GM This one is four pounds. I have two four pound ones and one three pound. This is the one I colored. This one I'm gonna color raspberry, real pale raspberry, just almost pink. I think this one is the best one I have.

AR Do you know what variety of sheep they came off of?

GM Yes, this is "border leister" from, I guess they call it Leister, England. They are imported, I mean, they were imported. They are mixed with something else. See, they make good spinning fleece. They are soft and not scratchy.

AR That's interesting. Last year we went to Australia and New Zealand.

GM Oh!

AR There was one sheep ranch down there they had nineteen varieties of sheep, and they gave us quite a story about each kind of sheep and what the wool was used for. They raise special kinds of sheep for special wool, and it was very fascinating.

GM Oh! Sure they do. Oh! That's something I've always wanted to do was go to Australia and New Zealand and see those sheep. We have a spinning group that gather here every Wednesday, not specially at my house. We just meet at different peoples' houses, and a -

AR That's why you wanted me to come today!

GM Yeah, we're spinning tomorrow. That's right! Wednesday I always keep open, Wednesday and Thursday. 'Cause Thursday, I always go out to lunch; used to be Norma Schauber, Norma Miller, you know who she is, Millie Wells. We had Pearly, but Pearly's gone, she can't meet with us any more on Thursday. So Wednesdays and Thursdays are full.

AR What do you generally make out of your wool?

GM Oh, sweaters, garments. Lots of the girls weave, they --

AR Oh, yeah.

GM But I knit mine. I do knitting.

AR Well, that's very fascinating. Your wool is very fascinating. Tell me about the rabbits you have.

GM Well, I have Angora rabbits. I have a gray rabbit and a fawn color, and I have two adult white Angora and four young ones that were a month old last Sunday. And I comb them all the way from two weeks to a month, and you get this beautiful Angora fur off them and we spin it.

AR You comb it off? You don't clip it, like you do a sheep?

GM Oh, no! You just brush it or comb it like you would a dog or cat or your pets, and the loose hair comes off and then you have that beautiful hair.

AR How often do you comb them?

GM I should do it every two weeks to a month, to keep it nice and soft. It comes off --  
(Tape comes to an end)

Tape counter 234