

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

WITH

MARIE MCCAULEY

MAY 17, 2014

ARCADIA, TEXAS

INTERVIEWED BY LINDA REYNOLDS

ORAL HISTORY #816

EAST TEXAS RESEARCH CENTER

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Kelsey Brown transcribed this interview in September 2014. Perky Beisel reviewed the draft of this transcript. Her corrections were incorporated into this final transcript by Kelsey Brown in October 2014.

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ABSTRACT

Marie McCauley, a former resident of Arcadia, Texas, talks about growing up in Arcadia and Fort Worth. She talks about the interesting people and places that impacted her and the memorable experiences in her life. She discusses her time at the Masonic home in Fort Worth, daily life for a child in Arcadia, and briefly mentions her family's experiences during World War II.

Persons Mentioned: Neil Grant, Mr. Smith, Dr. Carr, Effie Smith, Dixie Marie Cobb, Walter Jack Emanis, Eva Gillespie Emanis, Dr. Gault, Emma Durham, Ms. Carnahan, Golda Emanis, Charles Emanis, Nara Emanis, Guy Emanis, Blaine Emanis, Ms. Robertson, and Eloy Emanis.

Places Mentioned: Masonic Home in Fort Worth, Garrison, El Paso, Beaumont, Port Arthur, Center, Nacogdoches, Shreveport, Toledo Bend, Greater Port Arthur Bass Club, Lake Bull Shoals, Chico Lake, Bataan, Japan, Cambodia, and Philippines.

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LINDA REYNOLDS: This is Linda Reynolds. I am in Arcadia, Texas. It is May 17, 2014 and I am speaking with...

MARIE MACCAULEY: Marie Mc... Marie Emanis McCauley.

REYNOLDS: How do you spell your last name?

MACCAULEY: M-C-C-A-U-L-E-Y.

REYNOLDS: Okay. And you were telling me you left her when you were younger?

MACCAULEY: Uh huh. Uh my father died when I was twelve and he was a big Mason and my two younger brothers and I went to Ft. Worth and we grew up at the Masonic home there.

REYNOLDS: Okay so, um, how are you related to Greg?

MACCAULEY: I'm his aunt.

REYNOLDS: Neil's your brother? No...

MACCAULEY: No. I'm his great aunt. His papaw is my brother. His mother is my niece.

REYNOLDS: Yeah I had a slight confused look on my face.

MACCAULEY: It's okay. But no, I'm his great aunt.

REYNOLDS: Okay. So, uh, I was just talking with Neil and he was saying, um that his dad died when he was young. When his dad was young.

MACCAULEY: He did.

REYNOLDS: And, uh, were you here when that happened?

MCCAULEY: Uh, I probably was but I don't remember going to his funeral, we went to everybody's funeral. But I was just telling his, Neil's brother, I said I've carried you on my hip a many a time [laughter]. Cause his uh, his aunt was a year or so older than I am and we used to, our parents were good friends and like on Sunday afternoons a lot of times we would walk up to their house and maybe spend the afternoon and a lot of times they'd come down to our house after church. And I remember that his, uh, aunt and I we used to have an old church over here and it was an old church not a speck of paint on it. Tall with two front doors and uh we used to come and uh sweep the church out and we would, they had an old organ in there, and after we'd get through doing that, and we would clean the yard. But all we had was weed hooks and I slung the weed hook through my leg one day and we walked down this little road over here and there was a Dr. Carr that was an old country doctor there and that's where we'd go when we had things and he looked at my leg and he said, "that skinny leg doesn't have enough meat on it to sew it up, I'm just gonna put some medication on it." And then he bandaged it and said to tell your momma not to let it get infected. [laughter] That was it but uh, after we'd get through cleaning and one would get down and pump the thing on the bottom and then the other one would play and then we'd switch.

REYNOLDS: So would you use your hands to pump?

MCCAULEY: No you'd use your feet but we weren't tall enough to do both of them at the same time so one would get down and pump and the other would

piddle along on it. And, uh, we used to, the lodge here, they used to have a get together every year for the family and uh they would uh barbeque, well yeah I guess you'd call it that. They'd have a pit and they'd put it in and then turn it you know and my mother she'd say, "Well Mr. Jake has done it again." And I'd say, "What?" She didn't like horseradish and he'd always put horseradish on it. [laughter] But the women would all bring other dishes and there were always cold drinks for the kids and it was a big day for us really to come and uh we didn't have those quite often. But we walked to school

REYNOLDS: Where was the school? Was it the school that was here?

MCCAULEY: It's down this road that goes to Garrison uh about a mile over there.

REYNOLDS: So it's that two-story building where the top was...

MCCAULEY: No the school is gone now. It was just beyond that old barn that I think is falling down on the right hand side just beyond that. And we walked from our old place over here that was a mile maybe all the way to school and when we'd go to school a man had uh Brahmin cattle and if my brother and I didn't get to the road in time to walk with the other kids and we were by ourselves when we'd get there we would literally run till we got passed his pasture cause he had Brahmin bulls and they would run at you at the fence and we would really take off running. But as I say I uh didn't go to school there except through the sixth grade.

REYNOLDS: So how many kids were in your family?

MCCAULEY: Well, all together there were nine, but I had a brother that died when I was three months old so I never knew him uh and I've only known seven brothers and sisters and there are still five of us today.

REYNOLDS: Are you the youngest?

MCCAULEY: No, I have two brothers younger than I am.

REYNOLDS: I just figured you were the youngest. [Laughs]

MCCAULEY: No I have a brother that's eighty-three and he just had a mechanical heart installed in October and he's doing real good. And then I have a brother that's eighty that lives in Arkansas and we were the three who went to the Masonic home to live.

REYNOLDS: There were only three of you that went? Were you the three youngest?

MCCAULEY: Uh huh.

REYNOLDS: Why did you end up having to go to the Masonic home?

MCCAULEY: Mr. Smith said that that's what our daddy had told him and he saw to it that we went. I don't think that my mother knew anything about it until Mr. Smith came and uh when we went uh she told us when we left now if y'all don't like it, you have them call me and we'll come get you. But she never had to come back and get us, because we enjoyed it was a lot of kids and it was we got a good education. But they had a lot of rules and regulations that you had to follow. But we had fun and my husband never could understand it we would go somewhere and we have a little book that has all our, they keep it updated and maybe I'd call a friend and they'd insist we come by for coffee and then they'd want to stay for dinner and

then they'd say, "Why don't you spend the night?" And he just couldn't understand that. I'd say, well we're not like kids who went to public school. I said, "We're more of a family." And we have a reunion once a year and kids as long as there able they come back and it's always so good to see. Now my best friend lives in El Paso and we have never lost touch with each other we uh lived in a lot. She's lived in a lot of different places but she writes, I have a problem writing, she writes and I phone and so she said it was the best of two worlds so we still keep in touch and talk at least two or three times a month.

REYNOLDS: So your dad died and Mr. Smith was who?

MCCAULEY: Mr. Smith was uh Neil's and um his brother's grandfather. Mr. Smith uh huh was Neil's mother was Mr. Smith's daughter and Effie, who was my age, we did all that, she was the youngest in the family. And you know when you lived in the country back then, people were very neighborly we enjoyed each other. People visit and talk and have a good time. Neighbors next door don't even do that anymore. [9:26]

REYNOLDS: So you were here until you were twelve then. So what kinds of things did you do for fun? As a twelve year-old you know a ten an eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve year-old girl.

MCCAULEY: I'll tell you one thing that we did my brothers and I this is crazy uh I was older than my two brothers so I kind of had to look after them. But we used to play, and logging was a big thing during those times, uh so of course we imitated them, and we would go out where the rag weeds were

growing and they were tall, taller than we were and we'd get mama's, she'd nearly kill us, mama's sharp knife we'd go out and we'd saw it down and say, "TIMBER!" And uh I made harnesses out of thread for lizards and we'd cut those little things and we would hook those lizards to it and make them pull it. That was one thing we did. And uh my brother, oldest brother, one time, I had a girl that lived up the hill up here and she was my closest neighbor and her name was Dixie Marie Cobb. And we visited back and forth and we used to play house and we would make our houses out in the woods and we would take pine straw and make our rooms you know and if you didn't want them to come in you'd say its locked all the way around you can't get in. But my brother one time made us pine saplings he made us a teepee like the Indians had with an opening in the top and mama would give us stuff and when it was winter or bad we'd go and we'd build a fire in there and we would cook cookouts she and I. Um a kids would come spend the night with you and um, but I used to tell them they didn't come spend the night with me because of me they came because my daddy told stories. He could make up more stories than you could ever imagine. And they'd all say, "Mr. Jack, you gonna tell us some stories tonight?" And he'd say, "Well, I think I've got a bag with a few in it." And he would start telling stories and when he got tired he'd say, "All I've got left is rawhide and butter, bloody bones." And we'd get up and go to bed because we didn't want to hear but uh it was fun.

REYNOLDS: What were your parent's names?

MCCAULEY: Uh my father's name was Walter Jack Emanis and my mother was Eva Gillespie Emanis.

REYNOLDS: When did you come back to Arcadia? Because you said you were in Ft. Worth?

MCCAULEY: I graduated in 1946 and some man in Center, I won't repeat his name, he told the superintendent that he had a job for me. So I came back to Center and I went in to check on the job I was supposed to have because we had the same uh we had to pass the same test in typing and short hand as you did at business school we had business and English. Anyway, I got home and the lady said, "Well I don't know what he means by having a job, we don't have an opening." So I had to get out and find me another job so I did. I went to work for Dr. Gault in Center and uh I met Emma Durham who would have been in my class if I had stayed here and uh she said, "Why won't you move to Beaumont and we could live together." So I was dating my husband and uh he was living in Port Arthur and so uh I went to Beaumont and I uh called a man that had graduated from the home, same as I did, and he helped me get a job working for Gulf States. And Emma and I are still friends she lives in Mississippi and we used to go visit her a lot, but her husband is dead now and so is mine. So lately I haven't been able to get her because she must be doing a lot of travEloyng she has a daughter that lives in Hawaii so uh. [laughter]

REYNOLDS: That's kind of nice.

MCCAULEY: Yeah she had twin girls and one of them lives in Hawaii so.

REYNOLDS: Did you come back and visit very often when you were in Ft. Worth?

MCCAULEY: Oh we had the whole month of December uh, August, the whole month of August we got to come home and I remember mother was living in this house right down here. And she had she was just a little country lady and but she had chickens we liked chicken so she had all these chickens that she raised that came off and was ready to kill them when we came home. We had chicken for breakfast we had chicken for dinner we had chicken every way she could think of fixing chicken. And when we started back to the home she'd say, "Okay kids I want to tell you something don't expect this anymore." she said, "I though I would burn y'all out on eating chicken and you're eating more today then the day when you came home so enjoy because that's it!" [laughter] Right. But my mother was a wonderful lady and I admire her so, because she would take a bus she came to see us twice a year. And she would take a bus and she would ride the bus to Ft. Worth and then she'd have to take the trolley out so far cause we were out of the city limits and she'd have to take a trolley so far and then get a pass and catch a bus and then it would let her off at the gate. And uh when we were there the first time she had met this lady in the sewing room and um she told her anytime you come, she said "I'd be glad to rent you a room." And she would rent a room from this lady and she would as I told walk up the long red brick road up to the home and uh she'd always take us out and we'd go into Ft. Worth and go to the movie and go out and eat and visit. And we had a big living room there that you could visit or we had

playgrounds and uh you could go outside and sit in swings and visit so it was always enjoyable we always had to do things the boys could do too.

REYNOLDS: Was your mom a quilter?

MCCAULEY: Yes, oh yes. And uh I'm not. I have she made me after she was in a nursing home, she made me a quilt, a king-size quilt, only one she ever made, no she made the top. I am in the process of trying to quilt it but I found out she made me two big pillows and uh I'd worked on one of those and I found out with my hand I have a worn out wrist and the bones scrape together and they won't fuse them make it stiff and I'd rather have a little pain and be able to do what I want to do. So I couldn't do this, so now I'm doing it on a sewing machine and I'm going to use it as a bedspread.

[17:43]

REYNOLDS: Um so did your mom have a quilting frame in your living room?

MCCAULEY: She had a quilting frame in the top yes. She'd roll it down during the day and roll it back up at night because we had beds in there and uh sometimes my grandmother and some of my aunts would come over and they would quilt in the evenings but my mother was always busy. She would sit at the sewing machine and sew at night, she made all of our clothes and she was a wonderful seamstress and...

REYNOLDS: Did she use this kind of machine or did she have an electrical?

MCCAULEY: She had one like that.

REYNOLDS: With the foot pedals?

MCCAULEY: Right but later, she uh she had it made into an electrical one and then she traded it in on a new Singer one because after my dad died she made a living by sewing for people uh huh. And uh but she did she could make some of the most beautiful things. And she had regular customers. One was Ms. Carnahan, and she worked for her husband, I think he had a construction company, and she loved beautiful suits but she wanted fro-fro blouses and my mother used to make her some of the prettiest blouses with lace insertion and tucking and all kinds of stuff. But...

REYNOLDS: Did she have you kids do any of the carding of the cotton or the batting?

MCCAULEY: No we uh no.

REYNOLDS: I know some quilters did that with their kids.

MCCAULEY: They did but she and my Grandmother she really did that but no I was too young for that. Maybe some of the older ones but not cause see when I grew up, my sister that's here with me, she's next to me and she's eight years older than I am, so she was gone um when I was little and uh we did a lot of things that they didn't get to do. I told her one time about my mother she would bake, she called it her two-egg cake, and she would put jelly or jam just between the and the top and let us cut it and eat it while it was hot. And my sister said, "She never let us do that!" and I said, "Well there were just three of us." [laughs]

REYNOLDS: So in your family you kind of group you and your two younger brothers as a group and then there's the older set of kids?

MCCAULEY: Yeah that's true. But my sisters, my sister Golda and my sister Charles and I we always got along really good together and we did a lot of things together. My sister Nara was the oldest she was, we called her a stick in the mud sometimes. But uh we all went to Denver one time together and we didn't ask her and I think to her dying day she was mad at us for going and having so much fun and not taking her with us. But she lived out here in the country and we really didn't think she'd go but I don't know where we'd put her. But uh no I wouldn't take anything from my childhood here or my childhood growing up at the home. Um I still have lots of friends and um I try to keep up with quite a few of them. And there's only three in my class who are still alive so and one of them is my friend Scotty in El Paso and one is in Dallas but she's in a nursing home now so.

REYNOLDS: What about Arcadia do you love or just connect with? What is it about Arcadia?

MCCAULEY: Well it was a tight community. Everybody liked each other. As I told my sister, she doesn't remember this, I remember when the old old church, we had a new one that was built later a little Baptist Church but this was an old church and we used to go on Sunday cause during the '30s and early '40s well I left here in '41, um you couldn't afford a minister for every Sunday and the Church of Christ met in that building one Sunday and we met in it the next Sunday but a lot of times we went to church with them too. But um Sunday was church time and as someone said my sister, "Did you go to church?" And she'd say, "It's Sunday isn't it?" We grew up, that

was what you did on Sunday, you went to Church and when I was at the home, we didn't have a church. We had Sunday school and church in the school auditorium. So my friend Scotty and I we were the ones that showed the masons around when they would come and so we decided we would hit them up for a church. And we'd whatever group we'd have we'd tell them how bad we needed a chapel, that it wasn't very good for us to go to school and then have church in the same place. So about seven years after I graduated they got a chapel and it's neat. But uh I guess I'm a person my glass is always half full and I love friends, I love to cook, I love to laugh and talk and uh I know sometimes on the phone, my sister and I probably talk two to three times a week on the phone and I still can stay in touch with my brothers and...

REYNOLDS: Were you here when the church and the Masonic lodge were here that are now up the road?

MCCAULEY: Yes.

REYNOLDS: Did you go to church there?

MCCAULEY: At one time I think we did before, no I don't remember it seems like we did for a while before the new church was built cause it was just a little church over here. Seems like we did cause it seems I can remember sitting in the back while my sister taught us our Sunday school lessons. I may be wrong.

REYNOLDS: Did you ever go down here picnic by the rocks?

MCCAULEY: We had a school picnic one time and there was a prize egg and I wanted to find that prize egg so bad but I was talking to my sister and I said, “I don’t even remember who won it now.”

REYNOLDS: So was it they just hid the egg somewhere and you had to...

MCCAULEY: Yeah it was a special egg and it had prize written on it I don’t remember what they got but oh I wanted to find that egg so badly! And we have a picture somewhere of all the kids and my sister came as uh a chaperone to help and uh I we are all in the picture.

REYNOLDS: So did you go down there for like family picnics or?

MCCAULEY: Not too much family picnics but uh well I have been down there fishing [laughs].

REYNOLDS: It doesn’t look like there’s much down there now.

MCCAULEY: Not anymore that used to be, it used to flood and uh get over the road to go to school yeah and this little one down here it used to get out of banks and I’d come home, I went to school for six months in Center and stayed with Golda and I would come home in the evenings on weekends and stay with my mother. And it rained one day and I was trying to get across and I fell in and the water took me way down. I never did tell my mother that uh I finally caught on to a willow branch and pulled myself out and I lost my shoes and I told her, I said, I fell in the water and lost my shoes but I didn’t tell her I was swept way down the thing. And I had to borrow shoes to go back to Center.

REYNOLDS: So you would walk from Center to here?

MCCAULEY: Oh no. I would take the bus out and um I'd walk from Snow Hill and that's quite a ways up. And one time we were coming out and I told my granddaughter, "See that road right there?" And she said, "Yes." I said, "I used to get off the bus right there and walk to mother's." And she'd say, "Really?" And she said, "Well tell me where you got off." And we'd drive I said, "I'm still walking." And we kept coming and we'd pass the cemetery and I'd say, "I'm still walking." and I said, "and I got off walking on the road right here." And then I had to take it you know to go down to Pam and Dick have a house pretty well close to where ours used to be and she said, "You'd walk that far?" And I said, "Honey in those days we walked everywhere." Because I can remember and my dad and mom paid for us to take singing lessons and we walked from our place way down this road that goes here to another little community down there, Walnut Road everyday to singing school and paid for it [laughter].

REYNOLDS: Was there a lot of you that went to get singing lessons?

MCCAULEY: Quite a few kids, yeah because um I can't remember the name of the man who taught us, but yes.

REYNOLDS: Did your younger brothers go with you or just you?

MCCAULEY: Just one. Not, the baby didn't, he was too little cause he was only six years old when my dad died and uh we're three years apart so I was twelve and my middle brother was nine. But someone said, "Did you learn how to sing?" And I said, "Yes, I did." I said uh when I went to the home we had

uh a quartet and we had a trio and I said one of the biggest thrills of my life was I got to sing at the Grand Lodge of Texas.

REYNOLDS: That's really cool.

MCCAULEY: Yeah.

REYNOLDS: You obviously have fond memories of your time at the home.

MCCAULEY: I had fond memories there and I have fond memories here. I can remember my mother, after my dad died, we called it a big hill its uh between here and the Nacogdoches Highway and we always wanted to go over that big hill, now they'd call it a small mountain I guess but we called it a hill. So one day after church I remember my mother had fried a chicken before we went to church and uh when we got home she got a fruit jar and filled it full of water and she said all right and we changed clothes and we walked we didn't realize how far it was over there we walked to the top of it and it was dark when we got back. But we walked and we ate after we got to the top of it and when we came back and she said, that's another time she said that's it [laughter] but she did a lot of things I don't know how she did because you know women in those days they cooked, they washed, they ironed, they sewed, they milked cows and uh she decided one time that it was time Guy and I learned to milk cows. Well, we weren't very good at it cause we had, we didn't tell her, we had milk fights and we would write our name on the fence and we'd go back and she'd say you must not have stripped that cow because you're not bringing enough milk home so she decided that we weren't milk so she took it over again, isn't that terrible?

REYNOLDS: Was your daddy a farmer? Was it cotton or...?

MCCAULEY: Oh yes. We raised just about everything. We had cotton, we raised peanuts, we raised cane, we raised corn, we had peas we had a peach orchard, we had peaches, we had fig trees, we uh, uh, had potatoes and sweet potatoes and uh yeah one of the jobs that I hated was they'd lay the potato slips out stick that had a little hole in it and you punched it down and then you'd hit it with your foot. And I used to have to do that [laughter] and I've picked cotton. I never was very good at it, but I was the talker and our cousins would come down and my dad paid them to pick and uh I kept them entertained where for a while they...they'd have to pick me up and put it in my sack to keep me up with them. Well when my dad found out about that he said don't you dare pick another cotton letter [laughs] I was good at finding ways to not do things I didn't like. I had a happy childhood. I said we were probably poor but we didn't know it because we had plenty to eat and my mom sewed for us we had good clothes, um I never went hungry in my life we gave food to other people, I was happy.

REYNOLDS: That's good you had a work ethic and knew what it was to be charitable it sounds great.

MCCAULEY: And we all worked. We all had jobs. My sister would cut the, why you call it stow wood, I don't know, and my brother Guy and I we'd carried it in. She would cut the splinters to start the fire and we would carry them in and put it where it belonged. I had to churn, yeah I hated, that mamma

would say, “You’re spatting it all out!” And uh, uh I remember one time that she took all these peaches and put them on top of the roof. She cut them in half and at night she’d get up there and cover them and then the next morning we’d take them off and then we’d have to turn them and but they made the best fried pies so. [laughs] But we worked we didn’t and when we played we tried to get out of her, where we couldn’t hear her cause we used to go up in the woods and play and we’d climb a tree and Blaine was little and she’d make us take him with us and we’d climb a tree, this is terrible, we’d say, “Bear’s gonna get you.” And he’d go home crying. Well of course when we got home we got punished.

REYNOLDS: Did your momma whip you with a switch or anything?

MCCAULEY: Uh she killed a peach tree in the back yard right around your ankles and it stung like fire, but my brother she used to laugh she’d get so tickled before she’d get to him that she couldn’t hardly switch him, she’d try to keep from laughing cause he would stand up and jump up and down and scratch his little hinny and she would get so tickled. And we used to we had a big rock out in the back of the yard and we would um pick up walnuts the old yeah and we would crack them with a hammer and we’d take, she’d take one of her hairpins and wash it and we’d take it out you know they were metal we’d pick them out and she’d make walnut cakes, oh they were so good. I still have the proof my brother hit my finger instead of the walnut and it never grows. But...

REYNOLDS: Yeah I used to take the walnuts because it was like black dye and I'd start covering things with it.

MCCAULEY: Right, but we had a happy childhood we really did. [35:38]

REYNOLDS: So on Sundays you did, you basically went to church.

MCCAULEY: We went to church we went home and the preacher liked to go home with us to eat. Cause my mother was a good cook, and uh I uh my daddy was a good man he really was. But I always had a way and I always got whipped I'd say, "Please don't eat my piece of chicken." Oooh lord. I was bad.

REYNOLDS: Was there a specific piece you liked? Was it the legs or something?

MCCAULEY: No, I liked the pully bone. That was Charles's piece before I before she left then it was mine but that was the piece I liked oh but...

REYNOLDS: There was none of that huh? The preacher gets what he wants.

MCCAULEY: Well, right but we used to have company all the time, we really did, and uh I always got in trouble. One time we had some company and they were kin to my cousins, I think they were from Ft. Worth, and uh she was teasing me and uh I threw a spoon at her and hit the lamp. So I wasn't the good child I told somebody there's eight years difference in me and my sister Charles, she was the baby for eight years, and I came along long and she's still the baby so I think I was bad to get attention.

REYNOLDS: That's a big age gap.

MCCAULEY: Yeah and now we're best friends.

REYNOLDS: It's all good. How did your dad die?

MCCAULEY: He had cancer. He had cancer he uh went to Shreveport and was treated that was in '40 and he had radium treatments and actually radium, I think, burned him up because I remember his skin was brown and it was like leather and uh he came home and we had water problems we didn't have deep wells like you do now and they'd go dry. My brother and I we used to, we had a running spring down by the creek they had uh encased it with cedar and we used to have to use water from that and mamma would have to boil it and he had to have a sits bath everyday. And my brother and I used to have to, it was up a hill, and we used to carry water everyday for him to have his sits bath.

REYNOLDS: That's a lot of work.

MCCAULEY: Yes.

REYNOLDS: You'd have buckets you'd have to take with you...

MCCAULEY: Yes two buckets one in each hand.

REYNOLDS: Four buckets all together.

MCCAULEY: Yeah well that would be enough to fill a tub up like this enough for him to sit in and I could remember he had lost so much weight that my mother could just pick him up like a kid put him in there pick him up and put him back in the bed but..

REYNOLDS: What happened to the farm and everything? Did somebody take over doing all his work?

MCCAULEY: My mother seemed like she rented it out for a while, um and then it just stayed there and I don't know, I think my brother did some work over

there, the one who used to live here. But then it was divided up among all of us and I sold mine.

REYNOLDS: So you just come back for the homecomings and things like that?

MCCAULEY: I sold mine with the thing that I could come back and fish when I wanted to.

REYNOLDS: There you go. So is there still a pond over there?

MCCAULEY: It's a big lake. It's about I don't know how many acres, I guess, um its got bass in it but my husband and I bought an acre down on Toledo Bend and after we got that I asked my daughter, well my daughter's passed away a couple of years ago, but uh we asked her if she wanted anything to do with it and she said, "No." So I sold it to my brother and my brother sold it so. But anyway that was my agreement that I could still come back and fish. But we fish down there then my husband died seventeen years ago, so I still fish. I uh I started out because I was the first woman to ever join the Port Arthur, Greater Port Arthur, Bass Club because he was not allowed in a boat by himself. Uh he had a lot of problems mostly from the war he was in World War II, he was a Marine, and anyway, I learned to fish and I loved it and uh I used to go fishing and I'd be the only woman in the group. But then and after a while they found out they let me in and so they started getting where it were a bunch.

REYNOLDS: When you joined this Bass Club did you have any problems from some of these men saying who do you think you are?

MCCAULEY: No, because I never got around them when they were in their groups. No I left them be their own and then they knew he couldn't fish unless someone was in it with him and it was more convenient for me. And we'd and we'd stay and it was generally overnight well we'd get a cabin or something but I kept to myself and I let them do their bull shitting and whatever and they accepted me so...

REYNOLDS: And you enjoyed it though?

MCCAULEY: I did, I enjoyed it I really do. I still like to fish he taught me to, thank goodness, to learn to cast with my left hand and use my right hand because I couldn't cast with this one now. So when you learn he made me get out in the yard he gave me a, he had a piece of lead on the end of it and he would put something out there and he'd say now hit that and I had to. He was one of these when I started to learn how to drive he thought I had to be a mechanic before I could learn to drive.

REYNOLDS: Well, just in case something happens with the car you know...

MCCAULEY: But anyways that's how I learned and I enjoyed it and we enjoyed going together and we took a lot of vacations and we'd take our mother we'd go to lake Bull Shoals and a lot of different lakes and we'd take her with us and she enjoyed it so much and uh we used to go to Chico Lake in uh Louisiana and stay a lot and she loved to go and she'd cook for us.

REYNOLDS: When you were in the group home you didn't mention World War II. Was there any idea about what was going on?

MCCAULEY: Yes mam. My mother and my sister Nara and her two boys had come up to see us and they always came before Christmas we had a big Christmas out there and they came before Christmas and we had been into town and going to a movie and eating out and on our way back we learned about Pearl Harbor. Well, I was in the seventh grade and I had the most wonderful teacher her name was Ms. Robertson and she was a carver she carved horses the most beautiful horses you've ever seen big and small. But anyways, she had a short wave radio and the day after Pearl Harbor she took us down in the basement of the school and we listened to the short wave to all the news that was coming in all day long, all the school time and that was wonderful. And I just thought how thoughtful that was of her and uh it made us realize what the war was really all about. And then at the end of the school term our whole football team joined the Marines at one time.

REYNOLDS: Wow. [45:00]

MCCAULEY: They had showed them in the paper in a circle and he got in a took their picture looking up at them. I can remember that and also um during the war we had a little club out there its called, it was called FBM and it meant daughters of the free masonry, the actual initials, and we made slippers out of cloth for men to wear we made afghans for them and we sent them to the Naval hospital. And we had an all girl orchestra out there and uh we'd play for them several times at the hospital out there and but we did we worked. We also did stuff picked up scrap and stuff did all that

thing and uh another thing I can say we studied the Constitution of the United States and we had a test on it and uh the city ran a contest for high school kids. And another girl and I won, um no she came in better than me, she won a bond and I won a book of stamps well they were, yeah it was full so I finished mine out and got me one. But anyway, no we definitely knew and the boys would come back and some of them had joined the RAF before we were actually in the war and they would, cause they went to Canada and joined. And they'd come back um sometimes a flyer from England with them and they' would give us a talk and told us about the world and that was very interesting. And then one of our teachers had a sister that was a nurse and she was captured on Bataan and when she was released she came and spent a week out there with her sister and she'd come over to the building and talk with us girls and tell us how horrible it was. And she said the good thing was she said, "We were nurses." And she said, "That they needed us, they did not molest us because they needed us." And she told about how when their underwear would disintegrate they would crochet them get strings and crochet them. And yeah it was and how they didn't have food and how people'd get caught trying to steal food and how they were so hungry and oh I thought it was real strange many years later. I belonged to the Department Club in Port Arthur and she came and she was a speaker, but she had gotten married but she'd gone back to her maiden name and after I went up and I said aren't you Ms. So and So's sister? And she said, "Yes." And I said I

was one of the girls out at the home that you used to talk to and she just hugged me and she said, "What a small world."

REYNOLDS: That's really neat though its like wow, having that first hand account.

MCCAULEY: But she was a registered nurse and she said, "You know." She said, "We didn't have very much medication to deal out but she said we did the best we could with what we had."

REYNOLDS: That's a lot uh so I don't want to say it didn't seem to affect this area so you didn't have any, were there any of your relatives that joined?

MCCAULEY: All my brothers were in the Air Force uh FA didn't go over seas Guy did, Guy went to Japan. Blaine joined, but he went places he was but I think he was a civilian at that time working for somebody but he went to Cambodia and was over there for a while. And we went to El Paso one time a few years ago, together, and I asked him about it and he said he still cant talk about what we did he said it still hadn't been, whatever they do, declassified. And uh yeah he had something to do with radar I think. And uh but yeah all three of them went in the Air Force and my brother Eloy was too old at that time so yeah. And we were lucky no one ever got hurt. My husband was injured but he was First Marines, First Division and he was stabbed by a Japanese and when he came home he had a, it just missed his heart uh he was asleep and they crawled into camp and uh long story.

REYNOLDS: He got real lucky that it just missed.

MCCAULEY: It just missed his heart. But anyways he had, he died with two bullets still in his leg.

REYNOLDS: It is just astonishing when I hear stories like this oh yeah I'm still carrying this bullet. Really?

MCCAULEY: Yeah and but he had a field operation, and he had we knew he had a plate but he had to have surgery in later years due to an ear infection that was really bad. And they had to do surgery over there and the doctor came out told me he said did you know that he had a plate and I said yeah and he said, "But it wasn't metal." And he said it's a piece of bone and so I guess they took bone from somebody else and put it in because it was a field surgery. But uh no he never talked about it hardly until the fiftieth anniversary and he got to watching the programs and he was taping it and when it was over he said I'm gonna show you something and he taped it. He said he was a BIR man and he had ammunition barer and he said I want to show you, he got killed after he got back to the United States, he said I want to show you I don't remember his name now and he said I should be there somewhere. So we kept rolling it back and when he would talk a lot of times he would do this and I said about the third time, I said there's your hand. And it just didn't get his and they were all sitting around drinking coffee and in the background was stubs, where it had been bombed and there was trees no more no leaves or nothing just looked like in the background. But anyways it was quite interesting, then he talked about it kind of then and he was one of them that was on when they

went to um oh what is that big island over there? The ones that Bataan was next to. Anyway he was one of the ones who it was occupied by the Japanese for the whole war and he told some things that would make your blood curl. But he said that it was bombed heavily before they would go in and he said they found all this money, they had hidden their money in a stone wall and he found some and they took it some of it and they turned it in and said oh it wasn't any good, so he kept a few pieces as a...

REYNOLDS: Souvenir.

MCCAULEY: Yeah and he came home and they wanted to know if they had anything to show and he said yeah I have some money but it isn't worth anything. And the man looked at it and said what makes you think it isn't worth anything and said it had to be stamped victory on it before it was any good. He said, if you look right here it says it's been backed by the United States of America. He said this is just as good as any money and he came back with baskets full. But uh I gave those to the grandkids and he had some coins and stuff he'd brought back so I gave it to them. But I've had a happy life.

REYNOLDS: Yeah it sounds like you've done a lot have, you met a lot of people.

MCCAULEY: My daughter used to say, "Mother you need to write a book."

REYNOLDS: [Laughter] Its one of those things for when you have spare time and can sit down. I've had some people get a little recorder and just start talking about their stories, their life.

MCCAULEY: I have one of my mother.

REYNOLDS: What?

MCCAULEY: Yes I do. And then when my grandson was a senior in high school they had to interview somebody and give a report on them. And he did, on his granddaddy, and I wasn't there but they sat and talked and he came and spent a whole weekend with my husband and he had it all on tape and then he made it into he had to type it up. And they wouldn't give him an "A" because he called them Japs and he said that's exactly what they were called back then.

REYNOLDS: You can't take that out of historical context.

MCCAULEY: No. But I've never heard it. I asked him about it one time. He said it's at the house, at his mother's house. And he said, "She put it up somewhere." And I said lord we don't know where she put a lot of stuff.

REYNOLDS: Yeah that would be something really great to hear.

MCCAULEY: I would like to hear it myself because he told him stuff that he never discussed because he had lots of problems, he really did. And one time, he nearly choked me to death before I could get him awake he was having a bad, bad dreams and he apologized. I was beating on him screaming wake up.

REYNOLDS: That happened with my mom, my dad's military so I understand that a lot and not everyone understands that.

MCCAULEY: No, but no it is something you I knew he had it before I met him so it was something you have to deal with. I know at the end, the Philippines, he was one of the liberators, our doctor was from the Philippines and he couldn't get over it when Mac told him that, what he did. Anyways that

his dad was a doctor in the Philippines but he was just a kid then and when my husband died he said between you and me we have given him ten extra years of life, so that was good. I'm taking up all your time.

REYNOLDS: No that's okay we just try to stop after an hour and if its all right I could call and meet with you later and kind of do some follow up questions that I may have.

MCCAULEY: I live in Port Arthur.

REYNOLDS: It's a reason to get down that way.

MCCAULEY: No.

REYNOLDS: I could also just call on the telephone.

MCCAULEY: I drove up yesterday, but I have a place over on Toledo Bend and I...

REYNOLDS: We could go fishing. I'll bait my own hook and everything.

MCCAULEY: Well, you'd have to I know when my granddaughter was a baby she wanted to go fishing. And she came over and I said you can go fishing, but I said you have to bait your own hook oh granny [Brian] baits my hook, and I said if you're going to be a fisherman you have to learn to do it yourself. So this is my favorite tale about her. She came over finally and she said I'm ready to go so I got in the pickup and a put me a chair and took me a book and she had her little rod and reel and her little box, and we got down there and I looked up she had a pair of scissors she had a box of Kleenex and she reached in the thing to get a worm with that Kleenex and she cut it with the scissors then she picked it up and she put it on the hook. I didn't have a camera, I would have loved to take a picture.

REYNOLDS: Now that's too funny. No, I bait my own hook. I just don't cook fish. I'll take, I don't cook.

MCCAULEY: My husband didn't, he loved to fish but he would give all his fish away at the dock. There was a black lady that learned that and we were at the lake she would always manage to be at the dock when she thought he was coming in because he'd give her his fish and I used to say if you catch fish today you better bring them home. I cleaned them. I love fish so every so often he'd bring some and I'd clean them, but that wasn't his thing.

REYNOLDS: But I see there are a whole lot of people are already showing up and everything... [59:53]