

Julia Berwager

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Manchester was the center of the area. We lots of activities in our town, and then the country people would come in to the town too for these experiences. But basically the area around was a farming area and we enjoyed you know having the farmers come in for a visit with my father who was a cabinet dealer, and they had a lot in common. He just definitely catered to his clientele and enjoyed having them as his friends.

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Well it was limited... My playmates were mostly boys. I could keep them straightened out; they could bend in the direction that I wanted them to bend. And we played in the allies. It was between a garage area on one side and fences and gardens on the other side. If the ball went over the fence the fellows always used to say, "Julia you know it's your turn, circle in and get that ball." (?) Well we had two maiden ladies who they were very unhappy when their garden was disturbed or their yard was disturbed. So you know I would just try to make the bridge between our ball game, which was more important than the property that was affected by our ball going into it.

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I know we played with the sponge ball and a paddle and you would hit the ball and it would like any other ball; they would have to chase it and throw it back in. And if I got to home before the ball got there, I scored a run. A fly ball which was caught was an out I think we played if they threw a ball and crossed the path, your path between the base and where you were going, it was an out. It took a mighty ... a very good arm to throw the ball so that it would go in front of the runner. We played "catty", that's ripping a piece of wood that was sharpened on both ends, it had a circle, and you put the catty in the circle. It had a paddle. You hit one end of the catty; it would lift it and you would see how far you could hit it. And the object was to get home before it was recovered and brought back to the base.

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Some other games that we played, I don't want to describe them but lame soldier was a dirty game. You have to have somebody who was acquainted with the game or they wouldn't respond. We won't get into that because it was a dirty....

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I didn't know anything else but playing ball, and well we had roller skates and we had brick walks that we managed to get our skates over, and the brick walks before we had pavement or concrete walks. Other than that there were picnics, church activities; I don't think Bible school was started until later in my younger life, and I helped out with the recreational part of the Bible school activities.

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I can't remember other than going camping and that was a family group, three kids my mother and grandmother. We went to (?); it was out at Hanover. We were housed in a cottage and the tabernacle was at the center of the community and you would regularly go to the tabernacle for singing activities. Other than that I can't think... We made our own fun, let's put it that way. We weren't transported by parents to another community or another area for an activity. We had our activity right in our own community, regardless as to where it was located.

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It's very interesting to know and I recovered this, reviewed this with my sister. We never heard mother and daddy talk or gossip or who was running with who, or who ran down who, or you know, or any of that or anything about anyone who was going to be listed in their will, who was going to get what you know, and all that, but we never heard any of that talk at all. So I guess they had their private moments too. But my sister doesn't remember any of that going on here which is, I think is, a tribute to the family.

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When he gathered calves from the farmers on Wednesday he would bring them in on the truck. Well of course he weighed them with a board that went between your legs and hung on a tree, or whatever so he could pay the farmer for the price of the calf. Anyway then he brought the calves in on this big truck, that we went to camp in. So mother made a solution of flour and water and I don't know where these old beer bottles came from but she would fill them with this fluid and daddy was up on the truck and she passed the bottle to him. And he'd put the head of the calf back, the bottle in their mouth, and it didn't hesitate at all, but it drank it completely empty. So that's the way he fed the calves before he took them into Baltimore to Ruppertsburger Brothers for slaughtering. So mother made and filled and daddy fed those calves; that was calf day.

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We had a neighbor who had a department store just across the street, he was very kind, he had children; we played with them. But anyway he took us to Westminster for a ride and on our way out close to Leisters Church area, but it was on Rt. 30, I was unhappy. I was in the back of the car, 4-door car, I was in the back of the car and I opened the door to close it tightly and it flew open; I was on the door, I fell off of the door onto the road, my head, my nose were damaged. I got up and saw that the car was continuing to go on, so I got up and ran after the car and somebody in the car, I guess it was my brother, said, "Julia just dropped out of the car."

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Anyway so then they waited and I caught up with them. Took me into... I think it was Dr. Meyers in Westminster, and he put some kind of salve or something on my nose and on my head. And then he said now downstairs there is a soda fountain so you take these children downstairs and treat them. So we went down, I don't whether it was a chocolate sundae or chocolate soda but that was you know alright (?).

I had already been plastered and bandaged and came home, and mother was sitting in her rocking chair, she put me on her lap and started rocking and soothing my pain. You know that the mother's care of it.

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Cigar factory was the industry. Our first industry in Manchester was the cigar factory. And it was right in the center of town. At one time we had eight cigar factories in the Manchester area as such. The folks, some of them, were women who were farmers' wives and their children were no longer with them so they didn't have to stay home and take care of things. So they would come in and make cigars. Basically it was a man-made industry but that was what they you know what they started, that went from that into clothing factory and they made uniforms and coats and jackets and trousers.

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Then after that it was just a community that people stayed in until it was time to go to work the next morning. It was traveling into another area for work. That's the only thing I can remember.

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No, I said that it did not have it own tobacco supply. It was brought in from the eastern shore and some from Pennsylvania. But you know with train transportation and wagons drawn by horses; that's the way supply was brought in. It was an interesting thing that they used... that the cigar factory would take the cigar leaves, they were big leaves, and they would bring them out to our home and you would sit and put the leaf over your knee, rip off the stem, and throw that to the side, smooth out these other leaves, and put them on a pile, and the cigar factory came the next day or a couple of days, and picked up what we had smoothed out for them. And it was taken back to the factories and made into cigars.

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My grandmother put the finished product into a cellophane cover and my sister one time helped her do that. I didn't have any part of that...I was too busy playing ball or doing whatever else I was doing outside. But basically it was a man's job, the cigar manufacturing and the whole product was done right there under the surveillance of the person who owned the cigar factory.

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You know...I really can't remember... I know we went through the Depression and I know that we went through savings, using sugar stamps, and cash stamps, but I can't remember that it had any effect on our family life because daddy had a field, and he had a garden, he raised some things. And the farmers were very generous with their products and had more than they needed, so they would bring things in with them when they came into town. And the farmers used to bring things in and sell them door-to-door so our supply of food was not missed and our appetites were geared to what mother made and put on the table. That's what we ate. We didn't have any ifs, ands, or buts, we got to eat and we weren't punished for not eating but that was the way we were disciplined. This is

what you have, this is what you eat. It was interesting, quite a change from today's adventures.

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All our towns changed but our town in Manchester still remained a country town, a municipal county town just like Hampstead, New Windsor, Taneytown, you know all of them have gone into big production now for homes, businesses, so I just think it's sad that we have lost that taste, but we have to grow, we have to progress, and it's part of progress I guess.

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The town had grown considerably. I think we did at one time have a movie house, that was one night a week, I think it was Saturday night. And you could take peanuts, this was a silent movie, and you could take peanuts and peel them and put them under your feet and crack them. The silent movie had a pianist and so that was when you would read what was being said, and the pianist would give you the sound effects. But that was, that was our, one of our recreational activities while I was growing up.

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And then when I came back to the town there was a need...there was a bowling alley. They had two allies, and pin boys would set up the pins...but that was the only...pool table, but that was the only outside recreation. After returning the town had started a recreational program and I was asked to come in on teaching tennis. Oh exercises...we did exercises; that's adult group exercises, and it was increasing awareness of action which was very important from what we had done as kids.

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So it grew and now they have you know a bigger program, the Lions Club has a swimming pool and it has been made larger so it can accommodate more families. And there are picnics and recreational activities, tennis courts are just wonderful. It has improved considerably so more power to them, but now the children have to be taken to practices by their parents so they no longer sit together at a table and have a meal because they have to get up and take their children to their activity, or whatever it might be. And that was you know...We didn't do things like that, my parents didn't do things like that and I don't feel that we suffered. But it's a big change and it's for the better.

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It's an over-night stand for people who go to Washington, to Baltimore to Pennsylvania wherever they can find employment or where they have found employment. Some people are going two hours on their road to get to their job, coming back at night. The traffic through Manchester is unbelievable. The road is completely blocked in the afternoon from two or three o'clock in the afternoon to six o'clock in the evening; the traffic is on its way into the area and through our town. But it is an unbelievable, noisy town for living.

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But the people who are coming out from the cities to live here want to get this good country fresh air and then when they get this good country fresh air it's the manure from the manure that has been spread to grow the crops and then they don't like that. So you know you can't win. It guess it's over as far as winning but I have fond memories of my childhood and early adulthood.

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I think we have already started development. It looks like a city now from Manchester to Baltimore, practically built completely up. And businesses are coming in, some of them have gone into bankruptcy because it didn't work, you know it didn't pay for them. I'm not very happy about what is going to be happening to this little old area of Carroll county.

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The bypass was scheduled to go through 30 years ago and it was taken off the books. And they put 795 in and instead of bypassing Reisterstown, Hampstead, Manchester, and going right straight into Pennsylvania, they bring traffic on going up through Rt. 30 to bypass Hampstead and comes right back onto 30 back into and through Manchester. So that problem hasn't been solved unfortunately...poor planning.