

FREEDOM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

May 5, 2003

Interviewer: Sally Stoops

Interviewee: Glad Works

Transcriber: Lee Allison

Sally: Here we are today in Eaton at the home of Glad Works. It's the 5th of May, and Glad is going to do a little reminiscing about her time in Freedom. She originally came from out in the west and I'll let her fill you in on how and when they came. Do you want to start Glad and tell about your arrival in Freedom?

Glad: Yes...it's a good excuse to have a visit with you, Sally. I think my first visit in Freedom was the summer of 1952 when my husband and my five children and a dog and a trailer filled with luggage arrived from one of the suburbs of Chicago.

Sally: How long did it take you to get out?

Glad: Well we had a free night in Pittsburgh with his parents and then we drove all the way through from there. It was quite a trip with that carload.

Sally: I would say. May I interrupt a minute? That lady with whom you stayed was Grannie Works.

Glad: Yes. Right. Because his father worked in Pittsburgh. Anyway we did stop and have a free night. We had the use of David Works' little house in Snowville. And I had heard so much about Freedom that it almost made me gag. However, I was very excited about coming. The big thing was to get settled and get down to the beach. And the children were so excited.

Sally: Did you go to the Town Beach, the one on Loon Lake Road?

Glad: It was just the Town Beach, the one on Loon Lake Road.

Sally: Did they have floats there?

Glad: Well no.

Sally: Did they have the house, the pavilion there?

Glad: No, I don't think so. But the whole point is...yes, that particular day, yes it was wonderful, we had a lovely time and on the way back we stopped in at the store to get some provisions. And I think it was a Mr. Whitaker...who ran the store in those days.

Sally: Yes, Bert Whitaker.

Glad: So we walked in the store to get some provisions and there was an older gentleman leaning up against the meat counter with the usual tooth pick hanging out of his mouth and he looked at my husband, who we all called Skrow, which is Works backwards, but when He was a little boy everybody called him Junior, so this man looked up at him, the toothpick never moved and he said, "Well Junior, you sure have fleshed up some". And that was my first native that I met, socially. So...but in those days, anybody who lived in Freedom, it wasn't a club or anything, you could just go down to the Beach.

Sally: So you were staying there at David Works' that year. You would go back and forth from Snowville to Freedom. Was Mrs. Works Sr. there?

Glad: I think she was in a house in the village. The next year I think we rented the Larry Gaskin house on the Burnham Road and that was fun. The children found...they had to have a nap in the afternoon...and they found a little secret closet that had a lot of comic books and they would read them at rest hour and then they would hide them again, because their father would probably have torn them up. So those were very happy summers and we saw lots of people and I met so many people.

Glad: And met some nice people in Snowville.

Sally: Then you would go to church on Sunday and the minister was George Davidson. Was that early on in his time as a minister here?

Glad: Well I don't know....I think he had the camp then, because all of his campers would come.

Sally: Maybe that was before he started the camp.

Glad: Well...that's a long time ago.

Sally: Well we can check on that date, but George was a real part of the community at that point.

Glad: I think the next house we rented for the month was the Black house up on Scarboro Road, now the beautiful Watts home.

Sally: And that was after Granny Black had passed away.

Glad: Yes, because Skrow used to know Jim Black and arranged this through him.

Sally: Ok...Jim Black was Judge Black's son and Judge Black had passed away by that time too. The original Mr. Black, the one who owned the big house, that was Governor Black...he was Governor of New York and then his son, when Governor and Granny Black were at the big house, was at the house at the

bottom of the road. He was Judge Black and he was a Judge in Boston, attorney and judge. His son was Jim Black.

Glad: So that was the one Skrow used to play with.

Sally: Age wise, that sounds about right.

Glad: Well that was a very dramatic summer because my mother came with her car and driver, which was very handy and Phinney, our oldest son, used to play with Peter Nichols, Everett and Betty Nichols' son, and mother's driver would take them to go fishing. And that gave me a bit of a break.

Sally: Well you still had a few more at home. Where did they go fishing?

Glad: Well in the lake...I don't know where they went...Crystal Lake probably.

Sally: Or maybe one of the brooks.

Glad: I don't know. But Peter would have known. So then time went on and one day, that was a wonderful house to be in, and David Works found us a wonderful woman that my mother paid to be house keeper so I had a summer off. And so one day...my mother was there and kind of financed the deal...and one day Skrow went off and he had Phinney with him in the car to do some adventuring and I decided it was a good day to wash my hair and there was no real indoor plumbing at that time and I had washed my hair and had on a beautiful pale blue robe, and I went to the outhouse and just as I was about to throw the ashes down, Hurricane Carol hit. And the ashes blew up in my face and my hair. That was the big adventure on Hurricane Carol day. But the barn rocked, oh yes, that great big barn.

Sally: It was right up at the top of that hill..

Glad: And Skrow and Phinney came in and had to try to get into the garage. My heart just sank and I thought that's going to collapse. So that was quite an adventure.

Sally: Of course...now you'd go to all the parades and things like that when you were there? Were the children in them by any chance?

Glad: Well I think that they and the Kidder....Sandy and Bette's girls....used to get together and we'd doll them up and they'd go in the parade...and that was marvelous. And it was quite a fun summer. I really had a holiday and I met so many nice people in those days. That was really fun. I remember Avis Goss so well and Freddie used to play with the boys.

Sally: He was about Andy's age?

Glad: I don't know...and he still keeps his eye on me.

Sally: I know...he's wonderful isn't he.

Glad: Yes he is. And while I am living here he checks on me and does nice things.

Sally: Did the children ever go into Avis' barn and

Glad: I don't think so.

Sally: That was Gerry Towle's era. I think that he used to spend a lot of time there.

Glad: After that summer, when we went back home for the winter, we were seriously considering buying a lot on Burnham Road and building a camp.

Sally: There was a field near Larry Gaskin's house.

Glad: Yes, it was just north of the little 9 hole golf course that used to be on that road.

Sally: I don't remember that but you said that would be the Cunningham's or the Ross family?

Glad: I think so.

Sally: And they really played golf on it?

Glad: Yes, 9 holes. And the phone rang some time that winter and the little house on the Scarboro Road owned by Dr. Smith from Philadelphia...he had decided to sell it because his sons were not interested in coming up there. They wanted a bigger house I guess.

Sally: Yes, because they eventually went to Wolfeboro.

Glad: They wanted a big boat and so on....And so we bought it sight unseen. However Skrow remembered the house. He had played with those boys years before. And he knew the house, so we bought it sight unseen and it was supposedly going to be completely equipped. However, it wasn't in totally.....going back a pace, we loaned that house to Johnnie Works and Lucy – ex Lucy Brooks – the twins had just been born and we loaned it to them for two weeks before we ever saw and they found it in rather difficult condition and the woodstove was not safe and Johnnie went out for \$25.00 and bought us a different wood stove. That was very kind. So they did the best they could and they never complained, so anyway I think Grannie Works (Harriet Works) in the village and some other people didn't think that I would spend a night there...it was that bad.

Sally: So they cleaned it....

Glad: No. They just waited. They were sure that I wouldn't....but we just put newspapers down on the beds and slept there. The next morning, Skrow went down to the village and gathered George Allard up with his truck and he took three truckloads of junk down to the dump. I had never even heard of a dump before, and so then Skrow went down to the store. We picked out what we could use. There was painted furniture that could be painted. We started painting. We went through all the yellow paint they had at the store and then all the blue paint and painted the little pieces of furniture that you could use. But by then we had accumulated enough things living in the other houses that we had a lot of equipment. Most of the kitchen equipment was unusable. I think they had a helper who wasn't a very good housekeeper. So anyway that was a wonderful summer.

Sally: Now Phinney was probably a teenager?

Glad: I can't remember.

Sally: So your children were out of diapers at that point.

Glad: Back at the house...and when we bought the house, a piece of lake property came with it, so we had our own beach.

Sally: Oh that's interesting. So you used that at the time instead of the Town Beach. Your beach had a little boathouse?

Glad: No, it had a little shack which we gave to Johnnie Works, because he had the cabin up on Moulton Road and he turned it into a privy.

Sally: And then eventually, you built the boathouse there.

Glad: From then on we used that house and developed it...it's the same house...we added on...the year after we came back from Australia...we missed a year or so...Was there a man named Dow who had oxen? Well Skrow got a hold of a man and there were two teams of oxen that came and cleared the ten acres we bought from...this was a couple of years later...from Fred Truelove and Andy Gordon. The land was across the road from the house...and then we had a pond put in.

Sally: Going down hill....so that's where that came from.

Glad: I think that was the year. I don't think it was after we retired. Yes, because we negotiated from Australia and when we arrived in the village, those men had marked blocks and put signs up and the lot that we were interested in, they said Sold and we hadn't bought it.

Sally: But you were the ones they had in mind.

Glad: Well, yes, anyway...but there was some joke about that...I can't remember.

Sally: But you got the right lot.

Glad: Well, yes, it was ten acres.

Sally: More than a lot...a nice piece of land.

Glad: I think I've got this in context.

Sally: Then you had animals there. You had the horses ..

Glad: Until we retired we just had...I don't think we had animals until we retired.. So we came a couple of summers...by then we had moved to Greenwich, Connecticut. And we put in a basement and a furnace. And then we came up one Christmas...we were living in Greenwich, CT one year. John Brooks was our caretaker...for years and he was wonderful to us. And one Christmas we came up from Greenwich and Skrow drove my mother and a couple of the children and Christmas presents in the station wagon and Emily and I went up in the Jeep, and we got up as far as Mary Birnie's field and the station wagon went off the road in the snow and so Skrow got out and he was going to walk up to the house and call...we had a phone by then, and call John Brooks to rescue us and John was already in the house with the lights on and the furnace going when he got up there, so we were rescued. We used to rent the house to skiers through Doug Coates, a group of doctors from Boston.

Sally: In the winter time, they would come up there..

Glad: And I guess it was that house where Granny Works lived. It certainly wasn't at the farm. I don't think we ever rented the farm house.

Sally: So you mean Granny Works' house.

Glad: yes. I can't remember what year we bought that for her.

Sally: You bought the house for Mrs. Works to come back to.

Glad: And Skrow's siblings and their families.

Sally: So they could come in the summer time from Ohio, or wherever they were.

Glad: That's where we started the Museum because Skrow was such a collector and he started in the upper floor of the barn and we brought a copper funnel so that it could be used as a broiler up there. One of our friends was in the business in Pittsburg. No this was in Greenwich.

Sally: So you could broil?

Glad: So anybody could. You could have a fire and then there was a brick hearth....it's probably still there. And then he put in a little bathroom and we fixed up a bedroom and Jimmy Gibbs used to use that. We don't need to go into all of that.....

Sally: But that was interesting that that part was fixed up and then little by little Skrow moved in his things that he wanted to save.

Glad: Well he started collecting things and made a store for the Gibbs children to play in up there

Sally: The Gibbs were staying there that summer?

Glad: With Grammy...in the yellow house that we bought for their use.

Sally: That's the house that the Llama lady lives in now.

Glad: Yes. We sold it actually to Jill and Chris Kaechele.

Sally: And they only had it for a short while.

Glad: And then they let us leave the museum there until we could figure out what to do with the stuff. We couldn't afford to endow buying a building and establishing....that way.

Sally: That is something we could talk about now.

Glad: Because I don't think a lot of people know the origin of the museum.

Sally: Talk about that, because after Margie Allard died, she left the house to the Historical Society.

Glad: Now that's another thing I could say, bringing Margie Allard into it...because when we were up on Scarboro Road, the children could walk down to the village and have lunch at Margie's.

Sally: That's right. Margie's for lunch. That was an oasis in those days.

Glad: She must have raised most of the children in Freedom. I still have a Pyrex pie pan that I bought at one of the auctions for the benefit of the museum and it had Margie Allard's name scratched in the glass.

Sally: Hoping she would get it back....

Glad: I bought it and I still have it.

Sally: That's great. Margie was a really well known town personality....and George too.

Glad: Oh yes. Do you remember how Charlie Gibbs used to ride around in the truck with him? Well I'm not going to get into that.

Sally: Maybe Margaret can talk about that, but that's Ok it's interesting to see how they fit in to your life. Then after Margie gave her house to the Historical Society, then at that point Skrow and you turned everything over to the Historical Society.

Glad: And then he led the charge to raze the barn. The barn was dilapidated on that property. And so he organized the volunteers to...I don't remember how they did raze it, but it had to come down and the whole new barn put up....and he organized all the volunteer men to do that.

Sally: They worked together themselves on building it, literally.

Glad: Yes, Jerry Brooks and all sorts of...and Skrow had it organized so that there were things for the older men to do. They could whittle the dowels...all those things. And then he got volunteers to donate trees and he got a good price at the mill to have it turned into boards and then what I did was I rallied the women and then on Saturdays we would serve a hot lunch so that the men wouldn't go home for lunch and stay. And Elizabeth Acton was in on that. And we would paint, stain the boards, before they went up.

Sally: So it was a real community....

Glad: It was a real community effort. A lot of people know nothing about that. A lot of people remember. And the Kaecheles said we could leave the stuff there until we could move it and then it all had to be packed up and moved over and Skrow got all the volunteers.

Sally: Who were some of those people that worked on it....

Glad: Oh ever so many, countless people...

Sally: Just all the town turned out for it...

Glad: Well I can't remember who all the men were that worked

Sally: But they did...it wasn't as if someone came in from the outside and ...that's wonderful....

Glad: And I think Skrow kind of designed it, not that he's an architect, but between him and Jerry Brooks, we had one of those ceremonies....old fashioned thing....a roof tree. ...I don't know. There's something about that I can't remember.

Sally: And you had a ceremony for that.

Glad: But it certainly kept Skrow busy...

Sally: We wanted to come back just briefly to an earlier period when Mrs. Lincoln was living in the town, in the house that is now....

Glad: She had an apartment.

Sally: One of the houses along the Old Portland Road. She was there from Ohio with her two daughters and she was very active in the theatrical side of Freedom

Glad: She used to do readings"The Old Peabody Pew."

Sally: "Wild Nell, Pet of the Plains"....we used to perform during Old Home Week. She was a Freedom fixture and her two daughters...

Glad: She was Skrow's mother's aunt.

Sally: So, Granny Works' aunt. I certainly remember her...

Glad: She was an institution. She gave us that painted furniture that I had in my house...the sleigh bed and all the little pieces that I had in my guest room.

Sally: And she gave you that from her house..

Glad: When we bought the little house..... and that had belonged to her mother...and Sarah has it now.

Sally: So that has really come down through the generations...five or six generations. I think some of the people from way back will remember her in the village. Now let's go back up to Scarboro Road. You had horses up there.

Glad: Well, once Skrow retired.. We went to Australia for a couple of years so we didn't use the house in the summer. The children did, but then we came back and retired. We even brought sheep shearing equipment from Australia for the Museum, which has been well established.

Sally: Well, you had sheep.....

Glad: We had sheep and pigs and (changing to other tape) had them processed for freezing and some of our friends asked us to raise a pig for them, so it was a little business proposition.

Sally: So you fed the neighborhood. And you had chickens?

Glad: Chickens, yes. And when the children came to visit, Skrow would forget and pick up the eggs and I made him put them back so that they could collect them.

Sally: So they could harvest them...and tell your story about the Bantam eggs.

Glad: Well, somebody gave me a pair of Bantams and they laid blue shelled eggs. They were beautiful and the Trueloves were having a little cocktail session and asked me to bring some deviled eggs and I thought that since I had blue shelled eggs, I should dye the yolks blue too. I added blue dye and of course they turned green....but they still ate them.

Sally: And then you used some of the...the wool from the sheep.

Glad: Yes, we used to send that to some place in Maine and we'd get an exchange value for the wool that we sent in, into yarn. And then I would use it for knitting or weaving, or whatever. Sally: And talk about some of the things that you did about your rug making...don't be modest, don't be shy.

Glad: Well actually Bette Kidder and I took rug hooking lessons from a very nice older lady, Winona Bailey, in Tamworth....anyway, she was quite a character and we did rug hooking and I still have some of those around my house. I had learned to weave when I was at a school in Michigan where they had a wonderful Swedish woman who taught weaving and I got the taste for it, and when we retired...no I guess before we retired....we got a big loom for me and I did a lot of weaving....curtains and upholstery and place mats and all sorts of things that kept me out of trouble a little bit.

Sally: And made a lot of people very happy....And talk a little about your horsemanship days.

Glad: Well I always liked riding and horses and so when we retired, Skrow got me a little governess cart ...little wicker cart...just big enough for maybe two little children and a driver and Arthur Nason used to provide me with a retired Trotter or whatever for the summer, just for boarding the horse and I was able to drive....and I used to drive down to the village and do my errands and cruise around, and at that time Pat Hatfield had a little nursery school in her barn and she'd get permission from the parents and I'd take the cart and the horse down to the ball park and I'd give the children rides around. That was fun.

Sally: You appeared in the Freedom parade at Old Home Week.

Glad: Oh yes. I had learned to ride side saddle, so I rode...one of the horses could be ridden...I think we got that horse from a different source and I rode and as we came up past the store, there was sort of a curb and a big crowd standing there, and a dog rushed out and jumped up at the chest of my horse, who put on quite a show and I got quite a hand for handling the situation without going off on my head. The year that I drove the cart...that was a different year.. in the parade, Gerry Towle walked along to keep us out of trouble and his son, Johnnie, dressed like a stable boy with a cap and whatnot, and he rode with me in the parade and that was fun.

Glad: After Skrow died I sold the farm and it has now become the White Mountain Mushroom company and they are doing very well and I am happy that it is being put to good use. And then I bought the

wonderful little house on Old Portland Road that had belonged to Wilbur Harmon and Clem Harmon and the Supernants had fixed it up charmingly and I enjoyed that house for a couple of years and now here I am in Eaton Center.

Sally: Well we all appreciate Glad giving us this time and I'll say thank you.

Glad: Well you are more than welcome.....it was fun.

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