

# LANDMARKS SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

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## Taped Oral History

Side A

This is an oral history tape for Landmarks Society Oral History Program. My name is Jeanne Ortalda and I am going to be the interviewer; Ruth Wosser is going to be the narrator. We are at Ruth's house at 801 Tiburon Blvd., Tiburon, CA. This is March 30, 2001.

*Ruth, you've had a distinguished history as a teacher and resident of the Tiburon Peninsula for some time and you've also married into a family that has a lot of history in this area. Their history was on the Bay on boats and also on the railroad. Let's start on a little bit of your husband, Jake's, family history. His great-grandfather was Thomas Wosser and he was the First Engineer on the ferryboat, Princess. And we have a picture that you have just given us of him and his two daughters on a boat in Sausalito. Tell us how they happened to be down there on that boat.*

Oh, the two little girls went every day to meet their father when he came in, in the evening off the boat. He was an engineer on the ferryboat and so then they'd walk back up the hill. Also they had a pet deer that their father had saved; somebody was going to shoot it or something. He raised it himself and the deer often came with the children down to meet their grandfather at the boat.

*We have here something that Mabel Wosser wrote, Wosser Family, Sausalito, that you got from the Marin Historical Society. She was the littlest girl in that picture. What about Mabel, then?*

Well, great-aunt Mabel was the youngest of a very large family. I think there were 13 children. I can't remember all their names. She never married. She worked as the organist for the Catholic Church in Sausalito. And then her sister was a librarian in Sausalito. And when her sister wasn't able to be librarian any longer, great-aunt Mabel became the librarian. They lived together; three sisters. I believe the other two were widows and they lived on Pine St. in Sausalito in the old family home that is still there. Until she died at the age of 96 she was a

sharp lady and always had all her faculties and really liked to have her little nip at night. [Laugh]

*Tell about Thomas Wosser's son, Joe.*

Well, Joe Wosser was my husband's grandfather and they, too, had a big family. Originally, I think, three brothers came over from Ireland and each family had a big number of children in their family. They never got beyond their own family for family gatherings. So, for at one time, there were a lot of WOSSERs, not WASSERs in Marin County.

Anyway, my husband's grandfather, Joe, was also an engineer on the ferryboat and they lived in Tiburon. And frequently, Hillary Don, who writes *Hundred Years Ago Today* for The Ark, periodically writes stories about Joe Wosser and his family and Tiburon.

And my husband's father grew up in Tiburon and Belvedere as did my husband. They were both born and raised in Belvedere.

Joe Wosser married a lady named Margaret Whelan and lived in Belvedere. They had these children: Madge, who married Joe Kilday; Harry, who married Madaline; John, who married Mary; Bede; Maud, who married Tony; Anne, who married Doc Redemeyer; Douglas (Jake's father) who married Debbie Irwin; Rene; Alice; Lloyd. It was such a big family.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about my husband's father, Douglas Wosser. He married Debbie Irwin who was born in Marin County. Her family came from Arlington, Mass. They had three children: my husband and an older sister, Jessie Wosser Morrison, and a younger sister, Elizabeth, who passed away when she was 21 years old. She was killed in an automobile accident. Also, my husband's father, Douglas Wosser, was killed in an automobile accident when Jake was 13 years old. So Jake lived with his mother, Debbie Wosser, who was a telephone operator in Belvedere in the office where the [Belvedere] Land Co. is now. Her sister was the chief operator and they ran the telephone system for Belvedere back in the days of yore. [Laugh]

My husband had great admiration for his father; his father, Douglas, was quite a baseball player, evidently. From what I hear, because I never met him. Jake liked him very much and missed him a great deal. They were a very close family and it was hard for him to give up his father at that age.

*Where does the railroad come in? Some of the Wossers were on the railroad?*

Oh yes. Many of them, Harry Wosser worked for the railroad in Tiburon. In this immediate family, my husband's family (Tom Wosser's family), Harry was the only one, but in Uncle Bill's family, (Bill Wosser) who was my husband's great-uncle Bill, he was an engineer on the railroad which ran from here up to Ukiah. Other Wossers worked in Sausalito on the ferry too, but I don't have the names of those people.

*Your husband, Jake, was always a sailor and he loved the Bay and the water. Tell me some stories about him.*

Well, his mother used to tell me about him that he never got over having wet pants because by the time he grew out of his diapers, he was into the water in the Bay and from then on until the end of his life he had wet pants on all the time. [Laugh]

Jake was born in Belvedere and learned to sail there by just teaching himself, really. He was very knowledgeable of the tides in the Bay; he knew how to work the tides to sail more accurately. He had sailed in three different classes of boats in his lifetime. He sailed first, completing in races with the Star class and he won many trophies for himself and for the San Francisco Yacht Club. After he sailed the Star boat, he sailed the International One Design (IOD), which is another racing class boat and he raced that boat on the Bay and in different places. We had gone to New York and Long Island and to Marblehead to race in the East and then we raced in Southern California. And also in Bermuda and then we went to Norway to race boats there.

Something kind of interesting when we went to Norway: you know the King of Norway is very active in sailing. His name is Harold and at that time he was the Crown Prince and so on this island where we stayed, Hanko, the Crown Prince, at the final dinner, was my dinner partner. We were competing for the United States and when I found out I was to be Crown Prince Harold's dinner partner, I was so frightened. But he spoke perfect English and he was a very nice gentleman and he was just like anyone else and I said to him, "How do you speak English so fluently?" And he said, "Well, my parents sent me to the United States during the War because the Germans had invaded their home and everything." And he said he stayed over here for three or four years and so he

didn't even have an accent. And he was a very nice hospitable, kind man. That was kind of fun to do.

When my husband was racing in Bermuda, he won the World's Championship there and he won the World's Championship in the IOD class on San Francisco Bay a couple of times. So he was very much interested in sailing, very active and he was a mentor for a lot of young fellows. He had a lot of young fellows sailing on his boats with him and they learned a lot from him and have been able to do well in sailing by just sailing with him and learning how he would race. The thing that helped him most was that he had the ability to hang onto the tiller and concentrate; he never looked around; he watched the way his boat was going through the water and if he needed to come up or go down with the wind, so he knew these tactics that he taught himself. The last time he ever raced, there's a trophy called the Wosser Cup at the San Francisco Yacht Club they race for every year and he raced in that race once and that was the last time he raced. He was very hurt that he had won the San Francisco Bay Trophy from the Saint Francis Yacht Club and the following year they didn't ask him to compete. When he won, he should have been able to defend his trophy. But they appointed someone else and he lost all interest in sailing and he never sailed (only that once) after that. Oh, it was sad; it was sad that he had to give it up that way. But he said he had done what he wanted to do and he was successful in that. He was successful in his business; for 35-40 years he was a stock broker in San Francisco and he did well, so he said he had done what he wanted to do in his life and I'm glad that he realized that.

*I think you told me one time that he made boats. Where did he live in Tiburon when he was growing up and what did he do to make little boats for himself as a child?*

Oh, as a child maybe ten or twelve years old, he scrounged around the railroad yard for scraps of lumber. Someone gave him an old dinghy and he and his friends would try to fix it up so they could sail it and he made his mother cut up a sheet and make him a sail and he'd go out and work on it in the Cove. He'd play around the Cove. Why he didn't drown, I didn't know. [Laugh]

*Where did he live at that time?*

Oh, he lived at that time on the corner of Lagoon Rd. and Beach Rd. in an ark which was brought up there (and a lot of people did it) and anchored in there. They lived there until his father died and then his mother moved down to the Land Co. and lived in an apartment down there behind the telephone company which was on the very eastern corner of the Land Co. building and there's an apartment right back there. I don't know who lives there now. That's where he lived and his grandmother, when he was growing up, lived across the street in a Farr Cottage, the one closest to the yacht club. And his grandmother had some roomers that lived there. I guess you'd call them room and boarders; they were a couple of men that lived in Belvedere and I don't know what they did. That helped them financially.

*Talk about when you met your husband and then how you came to live on the Tiburon Peninsula.*

Well, I met my husband in 1938 when I was spending my vacation with my aunt and uncle who were renting a house on Belvedere Is. My uncle was an architect and he was building the Nash house, I think, up in Tiburon at the time. And so I went to the library one evening to get some books and my husband-to-be was standing out there with another friend. They were standing, just looking, so when I was going into the library ( my aunt had a German shepherd), and so I said to him, "Would you mind watching my dog for me while I go to the library?" [Laugh] And he said "Yes", so he hung onto the dog and then we got to know each other and then he took us sailing and...

*Well, wait a minute...where was the library?*

The library was in the back of the Land Co., a little hole in the wall back there. [Laugh] And they had a few books, not many, but anyway they had something to read and my sister and I were just two girls who didn't know anyone in the community so we were just reading.

*Well, that's a good way to meet somebody - with a dog. Then he took you sailing.*

He took me sailing a lot. At that time Jake was just starting college at UC Davis and I was going to college in Chico where I was born and raised. And so we didn't actually see one another except on vacations all that time and we corresponded with letters every day.

And then when the War came along, my husband-to-be said. "The Army is after me and I don't want to be a foot-soldier; I want to go into the Navy. In the meantime his roommate, who was his cousin, Tom Kilday, they both had an uncle by marriage who was an officer over at T.I. [Treasure Is.] and he said he would see what he could do to get him a good position in the Navy. So he, somehow or other, got both of them in the Naval Intelligence Office in San Francisco and he worked there all during the War from 1941 until 1945, I guess, when the War was over. And we lived in San Francisco during that time. [Note: They were married in 1942] I had no children; I was working at the Federal Reserve Bank for awhile and then I went back to teaching and I commuted to Richmond where I taught for 4 years.

Then it was time to raise a family and so I got pregnant and we had my daughter, Susan. And then we moved, when she was three months old, over to Belvedere to help Jake's uncle (by marriage) who lived on Acacia St. My aunt had died. We stayed there for a year and then we had to get out because he was getting married again. So we moved out, couldn't find a place they'd rent to us with a child, so we moved into Hilarity housing and we bought a lot where I live right now and we started building our house. We finished our house in 1951 and then we moved in. He died here and I want to die here. [Laugh]

We have one daughter, Susan, and she also likes to sail and she adored her father. She has a son, Matthew (15) and a daughter, Amy (14 in April). They live with their father now in Novato and my daughter lives in Ross by herself and she sees the children on the weekends. That's the way life is right now.

*Did you become a sailor, too, because of your husband's interest?*

Well, I did go sailing quite a bit with my husband. My husband had an aunt who lived in Belvedere (his mother's sister) and she was like a grandmother to my daughter and so she would keep Susie for me when she was little and baby-sit her while I went sailing with my husband. He was racing all the time then; we didn't do any pleasure sailing.

*Were you on the crew?*

Well, more or less. I wasn't strong enough to do all the things I'd have to do and then when Susie got big enough to race, I gave it up and she took my place. She loved it and I was glad to get off. I get seasick, so...

*Ruth, you moved to Belvedere and your daughter was born and you were a Mom and then when she started to go to school, you started to teach again?*

That's right. My first teaching job in Tiburon was in the laundry room in Hilarita housing and it was a tiny little place. I had to sweep it and do most of the things you would do in a one-room school. [Laugh] But Jessie Hosh was a first-grade teacher in Belvedere/Tiburon (they had merged by that time) and she had about 35 first-graders. At Easter time they decided they wanted to relieve her and take some of the children out of her class so they gave me about 15, I guess, at Hilarita housing. It was just like a cozy little family, you know [laugh]. I had a very funny experience with a little boy, I will never forget. His mother was having a baby. He was such a cute little boy and he ran in one morning and said, "Mrs. Wosser, guess what! I have a baby brother but they had to put him in the incinerator!" [Laugh]

But it's hard to remember, boys especially, who have had me in school. There was a young man who came here about a couple of years ago; he just knocked on the door and he said, "I'm Rick \_\_\_\_." (I can't remember his name now) I couldn't remember him because it had been so long and they change, you know. You can always remember the trouble-makers, you can always remember the ones who are very bright, but you never remember those nice little kids in the middle, the ones who are going to be the best. So, anyway, he came and he said, "You were my favorite teacher." And then, about a year later, I think it was Christmastime, he came with a big bouquet of flowers for me and I thought it was so nice that he does that. He now is an attorney and recently I had had back surgery (I had just got out of the hospital) and he came here. My sister was here and she said, "She's resting now." So he said, "Well, I'll come back." And they'd had a baby so I guess he got married and had a child, so I was hoping he'd come back again. I tried to find his mother's name in the telephone book because his folks live here and he comes back to visit and I missed him.

So, anyway, I taught in Reed [School] District for 27 years and most of the time I taught in Reed School and Tiburon School first, second and third grades. And then....

*Where was Tiburon School?*

Tiburon School was where the retirement home is up on the hill above the railroad yard. The Bradley House. [Corner of Mar West and Esperanza]

*But that was a two-room school house, wasn't it?*

It had an auditorium and it had two rooms upstairs. Yes, it did; it was just two rooms and then they tore that building down and then we all went over to Reed School and then they built the new Tiburon School which had four classrooms.

*Where was that?*

At the same site where the Bradley House is and now that same school has been converted into apartments at the Bradley House. But it was such a nice little school and the teachers; Doris Hunker was there with me and also Marjorie Hollis and Edna Wessel. It was such a sweet little school and the parents were so cooperative. Anything we wanted, they would get for us, you know and we hated to see it close but we couldn't keep it open any longer. Sorry they didn't ; I think they could have used it sometime in the future, but it's gone now.

Then after I taught first, second and third grade, I went into Special Education where I taught the children who were not testing well and not functioning as well in the classroom as they might and I took them out on a one-to-one basis and helped them with their skills in Math and Reading. I did that until I retired in 1979 and then, at that time, before I retired, I could see that there was a need for more children needing help in Reading so I had gone down the Peninsula to study a program down there called SCORE (meaning Success Control Optimal Reading Experiences) and I brought the program back. I talked to my principal and asked if I could buy the materials I needed and she said, "Yes", so we got them and we started the SCORE program where I coordinated it and I hired volunteers to work with the children as well as I was working with the children. I did that until I

retired and after I retired, I carried on with the SCORE program for about, oh, eight years, I guess. And I hated to give it up but they were so crowded and they had no place and the volunteers were being pushed around and they didn't like it because they were giving their time and they weren't.... And at that time we had five different principals in six years and so it was kind of hard to stay there, so I finally decided it was time to stop, so I gave it up.

*How many years, then, were you a teacher all together?*

Thirty-four years. I taught half a year in Sierra Mill, Calif. up near Lake Tahoe. I taught a half a year in Weaverville and then they had fired all their teachers except me and I thought I've got to get out of here; I don't want to stay here. So then I went to Susanville for two years; that was in 1939-40. And then I got married. And so I came to San Francisco.

*And then you were teaching in this area for 27 years.*

That's right. Thirty-four altogether counting four years in Richmond.

*You were a Reading Specialist and then here was this award..*

Yes, the County had what is known as the Golden Bell Award that they give out to teachers. A group of people go around and observe different programs that teachers have been innovative and have been working with. My principal, Cathy Townsley wanted me to make an application and I said, "Well, I don't know." She said, "I'll help you." So she got me the forms and I wrote out the program and then the people came to visit the program. And then they came back a second time and observed the program again and they said it was very innovative in as much it didn't cost much of anything and it was using volunteers in the community. And so we got the Golden Bell Award. They do that every year and they have a dinner at the Elks Club and they then award the winners. Our school district has won it two or three times but I was the first one to win the Golden Bell Award. They give you a golden bell.

*It sounds really marvelous. Now would you tell about when you stayed with your aunt and uncle?*

Well, from the time I was about seven years old. I lived in Chico and it was hot in the summer and I had this aunt who was a surrogate mother to me and my favorite person. She'd take me every summer and I [also] spent every Christmas vacation in her house because she didn't have any children and I guess she enjoyed having me around. I was a quiet little girl so didn't give her much trouble. But anyway, we had a good time together and she did nice things for me. She made me a whole wardrobe of new clothes to go back to school and then she took me to all the parks and bought me roller skates. I didn't have roller skates because we didn't have cement where we lived where I was a little girl.

She married a man by the name of Carr Jones who graduated from U.C. in engineering but became an architect. Well, I guess you'd call him a designer. He designed all the working plans of the houses he built. He was an unique type of person in as much as he built the kind of house that you don't see many of. They were brick, steel reinforced with slate roofs and slate floors in the houses. There's no upkeep in the houses and they are earthquake-safe and they are very interesting-looking houses. He was very conscious about the architectural design in the houses that he built.

Well, he built two houses, two complete houses, in the Belvedere/Tiburon area. He built the Albertine Nash house on the Tiburon hills [Diviso St.] and he built what I call the Boulton house on the West side of Belvedere Island and that house is quite small and now has historical designation. It's not a very big house but the lady who lives there loves it. And the people who like it also like it. He designed a nice house in Mill Valley for Dr. Allen Scott who has two houses there that he built out of brick and steel and slate. They are very expensive to build. I guess, in his career, he built a hundred houses at the most. He didn't build that many houses in as much as it took him a long time to build them and they were so costly, it was hard for people to come up with that kind of money.

*We are just looking at his beautiful book by Ruth Scott about Carr Jones and Doug Allinger. Who is Doug Allinger?*

Doug Allinger is my cousin. And he's the builder, the contractor.

*The book is fantastic. So how did you know Ruth Scott?*

Well, Ruth Scott I knew through my cousin, Doug Allinger and my other cousin, Richard Allinger. They did some work for her. Doug built her house; Carr Jones designed her house and then Doug built it because he understood; he had worked with Carr Jones, his uncle.

*Tell us what's unique about his houses.*

The unique thing about these houses is that they are all made of brick, inside and out, with steel reinforcement and all those (where he could find the materials) have slate floors and slate roofs and they are easy to take care of. He put together some kind of solution that he made with paraffin and gasoline that he puts on the bricks on the inside so they wouldn't weep and they wouldn't ....Instead of painting, he'd just put this paraffin mixture on there. Well, Dr. Scott decided one day that he would do something for the walls in his house, so he gets out the paraffin (and I don't know how they heat the paraffin and put the wax together, the correct way to do it) but the paraffin started to solidify so he puts the gasoline on the stove. [Horror] Oh, it blows up in his face and he's an eye surgeon and he just...he had to get skin grafts on his hand and he's all scarred up, the poor man, and my cousin said, "For a bright man, you're sure a dumb SOB. [Laugh]

He didn't build many houses like this because they were so expensive, people couldn't afford to buy the bricks. It'd run to millions of dollars to build a house like that today.

*Looking through this recycling book (Ruth Scott's) It looks like they are all used bricks .*

He did prefer to use used bricks, but if he didn't have them, he'd use new bricks. But most of them are used bricks, inside and out, you know. They keep the heat in and they they're cool in the summertime. And they are beautiful to look at; they're really gorgeous.

*You were here during the '20s and '30s. What were the early years like in Belvedere and Tiburon?*

Well, actually, I wasn't here in the '20s. I came here to visit, you know. I came from Berkeley with my aunt and uncle and we'd bring a picnic lunch and come to Belvedere and drive around and look at the houses and look at the view. And then we'd drive over on Tiburon Peninsula where we'd find a little spot of grass and have our picnic lunch.

My recollections are in the '30s when I first met my husband and, at that time, Tiburon was very much a blue-collar community where most of the people were workers from the railroad yard. They also had a lot of bars downtown, as they still do, and there were a lot of working men in there in their overalls. The people in Belvedere didn't patronize these places because they were a different class of people. There was a lot of animosity between the two communities and it was that way until almost all of the old people are gone and now I think it's kind of leveling off because there are a lot of big homes and expensive places in Tiburon as well as Belvedere.

But it was a lot of fun. On the weekends the yacht clubs were active. People were downtown, you know, drinking. The yachting (two yacht clubs here; the San Francisco Yacht Club and the Corinthian Yacht Club) there were lots of people who belonged to those two organizations and they were very active. The two clubs intermingled some but not a great deal. When I first came to Belvedere, I remember the Allen's, Lemuel and Marian Allen, had a little store in the Belvedere Land Co. building and they sold a minimum amount of groceries. They didn't have to have vegetables or milk or things like that because we had a vegetable man who came around and rang each bell and everybody ran up the street to get their vegetables. Also, the milkman would deliver the milk to the door. But they had a little ice cream stand there where you could get ice cream cones and things like that. It was nice; they were such nice people. Marian Allen gave me her china cabinet. We had rented the house right next door to her and I got to know her. We were young kids, Lemmie liked to tease and he teased us all the time. And a clock; she gave me a clock and she gave me some of her linen. She didn't have any children. Marian and Lemmy came out here from Reading, Mass. to live with her ...Lemmie was not very well; I don't know what she meant by 'not very well' but she thought the weather out here would be better for him. And he had a brother who had something to do with the codfishery on the West side of Belvedere Is. So they moved out here and bought a house and lived in Belvedere for many, many years. Nice couple but they never had any family and they weren't very social.

*They didn't belong to the Winifred Allen group?*

No, it's not the Harry Allen group. No. They didn't have any family here; she had a nephew who lived back East and she went to church and that's about all. She didn't have a lot of social activities. But she loved to garden; she was out in her yard all the time. She helped Lemmie in the store and then when they closed the store, she just stayed at home and Lemmie was there and they just enjoyed being alone there. She seemed very happy with him.

*Where did they live?*

They lived up the hill, up in Belvedere, very close to where Roger Felton lives. She had a nice view looking down to the harbor and had a nice garden on two lots. She had a gardener but she liked go out and putter, too. She had a lot of nice little things from her family in her house. Her nephew didn't want them so she gave a lot of things to Ellen Kipp and some to me and some to Beverly, I think, because Beverly Bastian bought her house. Beverly wanted my china cabinet, but I said, "Oh, no." [Laugh] It was fun, anyway.

*Let's see. There was a golf course in Belvedere, wasn't there?*

Yes, there was and I have a funny story to tell you about the golf course. My husband, being raised in Belvedere and growing up here, he had a dog that was named Mustard that his mother had picked up on the road because they were great animal lovers and so she brought him home. He was a white, like a Spitz, dog and he was very proud. If he got a bath, he would strut around; it was so funny to see him nice and clean, but most of the time his fur was all brown-looking because he'd roll in the dirt. But, anyway, Mustard disappeared and they couldn't find him. Days went by and days went by and one day, the street-cleaner heard this dog whining up near the golf course. And there was a well there and the dog had fallen down into the well. But he had been caught on a cross-bar or something so they got the dog out of the well. And he lived to be quite an old dog. It must have been a harrowing experience for the poor thing and to be gone all that time and then to show up [there].

[Laugh] I don't know if I should tell this or not.

*Sure. Go ahead.*

There was a water tank up there by the golf course (I guess they used it to water the grass) and..this is my husband's story as he told it to me. [laugh] He was up there and they had a BB gun and they started shooting at a target put on the side of this water tank. And then, all of a sudden, out comes the street-sweeper [laugh] (I can't remember his name, but everyone knows him) [laugh] and out comes this girl! They'd been on the water tank making love! [Laugh] It was so funny. And they thought they were being shot at. [Much laughter]

*When Jake was alive you used to go on sailing trips and that's the only kind of trips he liked to take. But what happened after you retired, what did you do then for travelling?*

Well, after I retired, I stayed on as a housewife; Jake never retired. But when he passed away in 1990, my sister said, "I'm going to go to Europe and you're going with me." I'd never been to Europe (I'd been to Norway) so I said, "Oh, I can't; I have all these things to take care of, my trust and everything." "It'll wait" and she finally talked me into it. We went and we spent a month. We spent a week in Munich and we drove around the area and that was fun; we weren't on a tour. After we finished that, we met up with a tour that was going to go down through Austria and Yugoslavia down to Greece and then over into Turkey and back up to Hungary and Bulgaria and then back to Munich again. It was a long trip and a lot of riding.

Then, the next year I went to Siberia with my sister. We flew from here to Anchorage and then down to a place near Vladivostok. It's on the railroad that runs from Vladivostok to Moscow, the only railroad that runs through the eastern country of Russia. It was very interesting; when we got there, we got on the train and we went for five days and four nights on the train over to Lake Bakal and then we flew back and got on a ship and then we went down the Amur River to the Sea of Japan. We stopped all along the way in these little villages. It was very interesting; one of the best trips I ever had.

Then, after that, I went to Hawaii a couple of times; the Big Island and Kauai.

And I went to Italy for three weeks and we spent a week in Rome and a week in Sorrento and a week in Sicily. And we went to Pompeii and to Naples and all the places around Sorrento. In Sicily [we drove] all along the eastern coast and we stayed at Taormina, a little village on a very steep cliff. Then we took trips out of there. We took a trip up on Mt. Etna to see where the thing keeps erupting and covering up all the buildings. We had a nice trip there.

And then, I think the last trip I took was through the Panama Canal with my friend, Anna Jean Cole, and that was great. We were disappointed because we wanted to go to see the Indians where they make this applique and fine stitchery that the ladies put on their clothes - well, we call them costumes - they all wear them there. So we didn't get to stop but the ladies came aboard the ship while we were in the Canal. We picked them up at one of the locks as we were going through.

And then we went over to Columbia and from there to St. Thomas and then from St. Thomas to Miami and we flew home from Miami. And it was a very good trip because I enjoyed going through the Canal.

*This is exciting talking about needlework because you did some needlework as a volunteer - some beautiful needlepoint cushions. Tell about that.*

Well, I think Beverly Bastian got the idea of making these cushions for Old St. Hilarys Church, for the pews. They have three cushions on each bench. So a lot of different ladies have been working on the needlepoint for a long time now. I did one and I finished it. As they were finished, Mel Pierce was putting them together and finishing them so they could be used in the church.

*Have you gone up there? The church is open on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons.*

No. I'd like to see them. I must go up to see them. They were a lot of work. They are about two and a half or three feet long and about two feet wide and we had the pattern to do in the middle and they are all of the wildflowers that are up here on the hill.

*What wildflower did you do?*

I did the Mariposa Lily, I think. It was a lily. And I didn't have to do the name on it. They put the name on the flower but there are three cushions with the same name. They put the name on the cushion in the middle and the other two didn't have a name on them. Someone else did the names; I didn't have to do it. It was a lot of work but it was fun. I like to do needlework and I sit in the evening and either do needlework or knit and watch TV or go to bed and read. That's my evenings. [Laugh]

*You have a pretty good life, haven't you?*

Yes, I have. I've lived here a long time and I feel like I'm really a part of this community, having lived here fifty years. It's sad to see all your friends your age passing away; you hardly have any left anymore. That's the hard part. But, anyway, I have a few younger friends and I have a daughter and she's younger, too, so that's nice.

*You seem very much younger than your years anyway; it must be your good genes.*

My doctor doesn't think I look my age. [laugh]

*You sure don't.*

*Well, you've been a quite a contributor to Tiburon Peninsula society with all the things you've done, the people you've known. I've enjoyed very much interviewing you and thank you very much.*

Well, thank you, Jeanne, it's nice to know you, too. We've got something in common you know; we're both from Chico! [laugh]

**Note:** See: Research Report on Wosser family tree.  
Wosser Family, Sausalito by Mabel Wosser  
Volunteers SCORE with Tutoring