

Marshall Public Library – Oral Histories Project

Rose Guinnip

Interviewed by Damian Macey – July 2014

Macey: Rose what would you like to tell us about your family and background?

Rose: Well, I was born Rose Guinnip with a catholic Irish father who was very strict. I was the fourth of five children and we had great times. We lived north of Marshall on a farm. My father was a rural mail carrier. We children went to a one room school with all eight grades under one roof, named Sassafras school. As kids we mowed the yard for the Forsythe, Brandon Forsythe and they were lovely people and as we mowed we took turns and Mrs. Forsythe would come out and serve lemonade on the porch which is still there. We had a great young life. It wasn't fancy, we didn't have all these modern toys and we didn't have all the gadgets and stuff but we kids made our own fun. We in the mud and played ball and we went to Blizzard Ford and swam in the creek. It was country living and it was very nice. We had neighbors and we kids would start a ball game up in the yard out to the side of the house and once in a while we would put a ball through a window and got in a lot of trouble. But we had such good times. There weren't all the serious problems that we have now, there wasn't crime. We never heard the work crime when we were growing up, we never heard of drugs. And of course in our house we never heard the word sex because that was not a word that children were supposed to hear back in those days. But I had a wonderful young life, I was always considered a tomboy, and my sister was considered a lady. She liked to have her hair done and she liked nice clothes, well, I got her hand-me-downs clothes and I played out in the yard and I was always happy. I could find something to like and I still try to do that today. I can get up upset, even at a Bridge table and just think there's going to be something good in my next hand.

Macey: Rose today every child had a cell phone or an IPad or something, what did you do for entertainment and fun at school?

Rose: Well, we played out in the yard and, of course, I tell you, our schools weren't like today. We didn't have a lot of spare time. We walked to school, there wasn't school buses. There was not inside bathrooms, we went outside to the outside johns and we went into class and of course there were eight classes in the same room and the teacher would direct you to the back of the room and she would be working with. We never had our own time. I don't know how to explain it but we always busy preparing something or moving about or working on something. She would have us to do little chairs that was for her even. The teacher, Mabel Harford, lived west of town years and years ago. And she was what relation to Helen Fredenberger? Helen Fredenberger was a teacher also. But I had wonderful teachers and we were taught to respect our teachers whether they were right or wrong. My parents would never until we got older and they would say, well, we knew (the parents) would tell (inaudible). Well anyhow, I really think I had the best years this world had because I went from the horse and buggy time up to the jet set. And I have been lucky enough, and I think all of it is because my father was a mail carrier and I got exposed to town earlier than a lot of country kids. When I got to be in the fifth grade and I was the only child in my class and the teacher didn't want to prepare for one person, my dad said OK, she can ride in with me because the school is a block north of the post office, it was north school, so I started fifth grade riding to school with my dad. Oh, I thought I had died and gone to heaven, because I met friends my age, and then Mr. Arney was here and I loved music, but I hadn't really been exposed to it much. He got me interested in music and I talked my dad, with Vaughn Arney's help, into buying a trumpet. And I played, well later I got a coronet, but I got the trumpet and coronet and I played even after school in the city band, even after I had children. I was happy to be able to have fun with music because I loved music. And then I went to Terre Haute and.... who was the teacher over there... I took dancing lessons, my mother thought I should, her friends had kids in dancing,

Macey: Was it Ernestine Meyers?

Rose: Yes, it was Ernestine Meyers, I went to her and took dance lessons and I got pretty good. And I was pretty thin back then and I could kick up high and they asked me to dance at the county fair. And I will never forget it as long as I live. I got out there and my dad walked out there and got ahold of my arm and marched me off of there...I was not going to show my bare rear end...I had a short skirt on...to the public in Clark County. I was horrified. And I said that was the end of me ever doing anything out in public anymore. So I went to band and had a band costume and I could do that.

Macey: So you are not going to do a soft-shoe routine?

Rose: No, I don't think I will do that today; my arthritis has gotten into my bones.

Macey: You kind of indicated before that there were some strict dating requirements that you had in your family home.

Rose: Yes, we had some pretty strict dating.... father was a serious dedicated, catholic, Irish man. And he thought we should date no one that wasn't catholic. Well in my past there was one catholic man. And it was Donald Meehling who became a priest. And he was my best friend and he was like a twin to me. Our mothers were friends and they grew up in Edgar County and at the end of World War I they married Clark County boys. So when they go to parties they would take us...that was before babysitters. They would put us in the bed and parents would take turns checking us to see that we hadn't strangled or fell off the bed and broken our heads...but anyhow...Father Don and I grew up like Siamese twins. So we always....even to his dying day...were very good friends. But the most embarrassing thing he ever did to me...and he thought it was a hoot...he got up at a class reunion, and it was about the 50<sup>th</sup> or so, and told the class "class there is something I've been wanting to tell you and I am just going to tell you today...I used to sleep with Rose." You could have heard a pin drop in that place...it was at the Colonial Kitchen...it was like Oh My Lord...everybody said I can't believe this...and he just pulled back his chair and sat down. And then my mind clicked in and I said: "Oh, we did but we were six weeks old...we were friends...we slept together for years....our mothers went to parties and they put us in the same bed because they didn't want to watch us" Well the room just went up to a roar. But I did have a fun life. It's still good but I'm old now I can't do all these crazy things.

Macey: Rose when you were growing up did you have chores and did your family have certain things to do in the house?

Rose: I didn't do housework, I was the tomboy. But I did outside work. I worked ... we had... my dad worked at the post office but we had a dairy farm... we had cattle. So I worked at the farm...I fed chickens, I gathered eggs, went to the barn and fed the cows. Later on when I went to high school...well in fact I drove before I was old enough to have a driver's license. Fenton Fraker was a state policeman and he came to our house and sat down at the kitchen table and he said to my mother, "Get me a piece of paper" and he wrote on a piece of stationery, "Rose has my permission to drive". And he signed it. I should have saved it. It would be a historical piece. And I carried that from the age of thirteen until I was sixteen and got my driver's license so that I could legally drive. So I drove a pickup truck and delivered milk. And I delivered it to some stores. We had bottled milk and we canned milk and I delivered the bottles to the stores and delivered the canned milk to some restaurants and then took the rest of it out to the cheese plant. I didn't think I was overworked. (Inaudible) and then I had the truck. I was the only one that drove and was a freshman in high school. And then high school I took that truck to high school. I would back it up there in that back of the parking lot. And then there was no cafeteria and so we went to the Candy Kitchen and we went down there to eat our lunch. So I would go out and get into my truck...that truck would have some many people standing in the back to get a ride to the Candy Kitchen too get lunch and then we would get in and go back to school. So one day I was going up the street and here comes this police car and Fenton Fraker was sick and he came across there and I thought, Oh, what have I done, because I was by myself then, I had let the kids out and he said, Rose, I know what you are doing and I am not going to arrest you. And he said if you really want me to... I won't

even tell your dad. Because my dad was stricter than the police. And he said if you really want to take those kids downtown would you make them sit down. One of them is going to fall out of that truck and break their neck. Everybody wants to get a ride but I made them sit down all around the edge. Oh, I had good times.

Macey: That was kind of before all the safety standards that we have...

Rose: Oh, yes, we never had seat belts or any of this stuff, but I was a good driver because I started young and I knew I had to be careful because I was working with my truck from the farm and if I'd had a problem it could have been serious. I was a very lucky young woman and I'm glad I grew up in the days that I did.

Macey: To pursue that thing of dating, you must have met another young man somewhere along the way and I think he had a very unusual nickname and I never did understand or hear how he got that name.

Rose: Well, I did meet and marry a wonderful man; he's the father of my five children. And he was also my next door neighbor. And he had a nickname that he picked up when he was a freshman in high school. And country kids, when they went to high school they were all laughed at. The high school kids thought we were really dummies. So he went to high school and took his lunch ... it was before the day of cafeterias... and his mother had put a fresh peach in his lunch that day for his fruit. And when he got it out and was eating out in the parking lot, someone opened up the door and he was sitting there eating the peach and some of these town kids...who later became very good friends... thought it was funny.. Some country kid coming to town and eating out of his car and one of them grabbed a piece and they smeared it on the back of his jacket. And I will tell you the two people that were involved and later became lifetime friends as long as they lived—Sporty Darr and PeeWee Hoggatt and they lived out by Auburn. They were the ones who did this and they smeared this peach on Peaches' good jacket that he wore to school. And then he went to class...first class was Mr. Hollars, class in history ... and when he walked in here was this peach smeared on the back of his jacket. And Mr. Holler said, "Bobby come up here" ...of you didn't know Mr. Hollar, but he said to turn around and let Mr. Hollar see what is on the back of you. And here was this peach smeared all the way down his jacket. And he said what is that? It's a peach, I should have taken my jacket off but it was cold out there. And Mr. Hollar asked how he got that there, and he said, "Oh those kids from Auburn." Of course they always came together and were in trouble. He said they smeared that on my jacket and my mom's really going to be mad. And Mr. Hollar said "Oh I think it will be alright. Would you like for me to call your mom." And Mr. Hollar said, "I think we should call him Peaches today. That would make a nice name." So it started in a class in Mr. Hollar's room. Oh, you know, the kids came out of there and laughed and called him "Peaches" and that was where he got his name.

Macey: I had never heard that.

Rose: That's the true and full story of where he got his nickname, "Peaches".

Macey: You've kinda indicated that you had a little interest in music, and that was perhaps a hobby or an interest of yours, did you have some other hobbies, maybe even some hobbies that have continued on even today?

Rose: Oh....I have lots of hobbies, but music was my main one. I was lucky enough that I got to go to Martinsville and take piano lessons from a lady in Martinsville, and I got Mr. Arney interested in me because if he'd call and ask me to do something, I'd do it, so I was his "Gopher" in the music department. Oh.....and I always got out of school to play "Taps" at military funerals, and I was not even in high school yet. Mr. Arney said, "I think you should do this because, a lot of it, it seemed like at that time, .....The Catholics....he said, "If it's alright with your parents that you get out of class at school to do that" and I said I was sure it would be ok, but you better talk to them. So I got out of school, oh I was thrilled to death, I got to go to all the funerals and play "Taps" ...in the Catholic Cemetery, I'd go over the hill. And then I had an "answer", over the hill, I'd play by myself...he played the cornet and trumpet, we played cornets and trumpets and were good friends all of our lives. He'd play over the hill or I'd play over the hill and the other one would play up on the high and we'd be the echo.

Macey: I guess I didn't realize that you'd played in the city band for 35 years straight and retired last year.

Rose: I played while in high school, and then I don't know what year I gave it up, but in the 1950s, I think by 1955 I was out of it. I remember going up those steps pregnant. I also sang in the American Legion choir and that didn't work because we went to Springfield and we went to....anyhow, I had to get a sitter to keep the kids, and the farm, and it was overnight stays and it just didn't work out.

Macey: Have you picked up the cornet or trumpet recently?

Rose: Oh, I've got one around here someplace, or maybe it's at your house, Donald, yes, I can still play. One day I was messing around and I thought "I can still play this", I'd hate to have to play in public.....I also liked to play some on the piano, but just simple songs like some Christmas carols, melody with the right hand and some chords with the left, and I could do that, I could get along fairly well

Macey: What year were you married and where was that?

Rose: I was married in 1950 at the Catholic Church here in Marshall by Father Donohue. My husband had an aunt who disliked Catholics and she was not from Marshall but she had been told that the Catholics were ? And so we had this church wedding which was considered a big wedding back in those days. And she wanted to come to the wedding, the Legion was brand new, now in the Legion they gambled, they sold alcohol, and everything but when Aunt Rose came she would not come in to the Catholic Church. At our wedding service her family came in and Uncle John sat in the second row but she sat in the car, she would not set foot in a catholic church. But we walked two blocks over to the Legion Hall for the big hoopla, having a big dinner and a band and all this reception. She was the first one out of that car into the Legion. And I laughed over that for fifty years. I thought that anyone who wouldn't set foot in a church but would run in to where they gambled and drank..... But these were the good old days.

Macey: Did you ever live away from Marshall?

Rose: Not permanently, I've had a place in Tennessee and I had a place in Florida but it was just seasonal. No, I've always been a permanent resident in Marshall. And for most of my life my address was Rural Route 3, Marshall, because when I was married I was on the East side of Route 1 and when I married Peaches he was on the West side of Route 1 but it was still Route 3. And I have the same Rural Route 3 address. It was that address until I moved to town.

Macey: Is that something that bothered you – that we lost the rural route addresses? Now we have the big numbers...

Rose: That is one thing I am very blessed with – I roll with the changes in times, and I try very hard, some of my kids and grandkids have done things that I just have a hard time swallowing but I'm sure my folks also had a hard time swallowing some of the things I did and my grandmother lived with us for fourteen years as I was growing up and I don't know how she put up with all of us I don't know. When you look back and think about it, I tried to broad-minded and I didn't cause too many "ruffles" in the family. If they have a problem and I can help work it out I will. I have some good daughters-in-law and I am very fortunate for that. I stay out of their business and they tolerate me. If I really want something from my son and I say I want this, they don't say, no he's not going to do that then we do something else. But basically I do have 3 good daughters-in-law. I am very blessed. My son-in-law went by the wayside somewhere but they still like me so, (laughter)..

Macey: Is there a particular person or event that really influenced your life?

Rose: Yes, Helen Moore. Helen Moore took me under her wing when I was a young teenager and she was always, she got me into the right things, doing the right thing and with the right people. And she always knew it if I did something wrong, and she would be right on my back. She was the best influence in my life in fun and serious things.

Macey: Did her wonderful talent with music help inspire you in music?

Rose: She didn't set me down and make me work or anything but I always admired her talent. She could just do anything, and do a wonderful gracious job of it. Yeah, she was one of my favorite people.

Macey: Are there any world or historic events that have taken place in your lifetime that you say "wow" that really stands out as unusual, special or had an influence on you?

Rose: (Don Guinnip in background says : what about the Pearl Harbor announcement) Oh, Yeah, we were living north of town and it was on the radio and we all laid down on the floor and listened to it. It was so scary because this was all going to come to us. And my parents were very concerned. But that was the biggest jolt that I can remember when I was young, that affected me.

Macey: Do you remember the days of the Black-Outs?

Rose: Oh, yeah, I remember those. One of them, of course I remember the days before car washes and we washed our car...(Don says it was a black-out already because they didn't have electricity out there) Oh, yeah, we didn't get electricity until Velsicol and they ran it up, Edgar County ran it up Route 1 and that was when we got to hook up to electricity. We lived with coal lights.

Macey: How did that change your household?

Rose: Oh, we thought we had died and gone to heaven, but we had oil lamps and we sat around the fireplace, it was a wood fireplace, and it was good country living when I was young. But then in the 1940's when Velsicol came in and they ran electricity down route 1 from the north we got it ran up our lane. We didn't have electricity when I first got married.

Macey: I had uncles and aunts who lived in the country, and I never could figure it out, they had refrigerators that they were running with kerosene.

Rose: Oh, we had that, used a Delco generator. We got a generator, we had a dairy and we had to have refrigeration, we didn't have door to door and restaurant to restaurant and things forever...we did stuff in town

Macey: Did you have a milking machine?

Rose: Oh yes, we got a Surge milking machine, and oh were we glad because we used to have to milk them this way and I can remember when we got the third milker, oh that was wonderful.

Macey: Were all these changes of electricity and the modern conveniences we have today, what of those modern convenience would you say changed your life the most?

Rose: Well, everything is just so easy you have time on your hands and you have to figure out when you never, when you had all these old-fashioned things to do, you never had spare time. No time when you sit down and think, what am I going to do? Washer and drier ...I have to remember handing clothes...I didn't have an automatic washer and drier and I would hand diapers out. So, my biggest gift was a washer and drier, cause I had a family and when that came along and I got rid of the old wringer washer and hung clothes out on the line and froze dried and had to bring in the basement and finish drying. But you know, I watch the kids now and I honestly think from watching

just their facial expressions, I think we were happier than they are. They had too much, they know too much, anything they want to do, they are given too much money without earning it, not knowing what it really means. And I think it's bad, at this stage I am just going to weather it out.

Macey: What about television? How has that influenced you?

Rose: I don't watch TV. I watch news and sports. I have friends, you say TV and they know, what is the series that comes on, soap operas, that's on, everything that is in these stories day to day. But I do watch TV to get the news and the sports, quite religiously at the news time. Usually channel 10.

Macey: I can remember your dad and it was really the end of World War II, a lot of people could not buy cars but the fact that he bought a new car every year that was just marvelous. Staying on this subject of transportation, what is your take on that and all the stuff that is .....

Rose: (inaudible). I would never have driven a car this old. For all my life this is the oldest car I have ever driven but there is not one thing wrong with it, it has run over 100,000 miles. And I think, why do I think I need to get a new car just because the speedometer says I've gone that far? The first time it stops, believe me, I will call Don and say come and get me to get a car. It's been taken care of and serviced regularly, it doesn't have cigarette holes in the seats. Who knows, I may drive it to my grave.

Macey: Over all these years you have seen a lot of changes in transportation. What is your reaction to ?

Rose: Oh, I don't know, I have always been very comfortable, I have been in a couple storms in my lifetime which I was praying, and the good Lord answered my prayers. But I am a person who believes that you do what you think is right and when it's your time, you are going to go anyway. So I do not steer away from anything that is sensible. I have even put my foot a little heavy on the gas now and then, and I've been lucky I haven't gotten into trouble over that. Nobody has ever touched me.

Macey: Does your family know about that?

Rose: You mean driving fast? Oh yeah, I've heard a few words from the back seat a few times. But I was a good driver, trained well and very careful, but I exceeded, that was probably my biggest thing that I might be in trouble with, but I did never got into trouble because I did it out on the open road when nobody was around me. Well, I was in a hurry, I had a lot to do. But I did probably driver faster than I should, but that was my biggest mortal sin.

Macey: Now the whole world will know that.

Rose: Yes, and I don't care. I'm still here and I don't do it anymore. They can't get me now.

Macey: This has been so much fun and entertaining. And to kind of wrap it up here, if you were to talk to someone from another country, let way on the other side of Europe, and you were trying to tell them about Marshall, why would you say it was such a great place to live and maybe convince them to live here.

Rose: I have done that a few times, and they think it would be lovely and a few of them have said, "We would like to come and see you sometime," but they haven't knocked on my door. But I used to travel extensively and go to other countries and meet nice people and see wonderful places and I would say, "Come and see me in Marshall and the country and I will show you what the American Midwest is." And they all said they would, but then they couldn't get over here. I don't think I ever had any foreigner come. Who did I used to have come? (Don responds Onalisa Bates) She was German but she married Phil here and they became friends. And she would visit after he died. She became a good friend of mine. He was a Velsicol person and he and Peaches became good friends. Onalisa, she was so tickled that I would be her friend. She said, you know I am a foreigner and so many Marshall women don't like me. And I told her she was misinterpreting them, they just couldn't understand her. But she

became a good friend and she was just a wonderful person. Yeah, I had some good friends, but she was probably the one that was closest to us, she spent a lot of time with me. Well, she had her accent and a lot of people didn't want to talk to her because you really had to listen.

Macey: Well, especially during World War II there were very much the anti-German feelings.

Rose: Oh, yeah, especially German , that was true and she would go someplace like the Legion and people would say unkind things. I liked her, she was a wonderful person. She taught me to knit. That's when I knit everybody booties for Christmas, house slippers for Christmas, and I made Peaches a sweater vest. I made him wear it to Lions Club every time he went. She came and she had the patience to teach me how to knit. You know, I was busy busy busy but I sat down. And I bet out there on the farm up in the attic, there is my knitting stuff, I had all the stuff she told me I had to have. And she had the patience to teach me and I knit some pretty nice stuff. But those were some good days I had

Macey: Well, thank you so much Rose, it's been fun talking to you. I learned some things I didn't know. And what you have said here is going to be in writing and be available for a lot of other people. I bet they will find some entertainment in reading this too. The Friends of the Library appreciate your time.

Rose: I want you to know that we really appreciate the Friends of the Library and the things that they do. A lot of people use it and enjoy it. So I think it is wonderful that we are blessed with that.

Macey: Thanks again, so much.