

Marseilles Daily Press, 1921-1966 the depression
an Oral History

Jessie Dunlap, Interviewee
Of Marseilles, Illinois

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Q: . . .with Mrs. Jessie Dunlap. Mrs. Dunlap, when did you first come to Marseilles?

A: I came to Marseilles in December 1922, as a bride of one month.

Q: What brought you to Marseilles? How did you decide to come here?

A: Well, the--Mr. Simmons, Terry Simmons--had had a newspaper here and he had gotten to old and they didn't have a newspaper in Marseilles, he had given it up. And the Chamber of Commerce thought that they should have a newspaper in Marseilles, so they got a delegation of Mr. Workman, Mr. Spencer, that was Harry Spencer's father, and E. A. Collins and they came to Mazon where the Dunlap's had a weekly newspaper, and asked if they would come to Marseilles, and if they would, they would stand the expense of the moving to Marseilles. So we came to Marseilles then. And we lived on Union Street and there were three families of us. There was Frieda and her husband Elvyn and Claude and I, and the father and mother, Walter and Etta Dunlap. We all moved into the same house, that's the only house we could get at that time. Of course later on we all found a house of our own. And Frieda had a little baby at the time, but I was just a newly married lady.

Q: Whereabouts on Union Street was that?

A: It was just opppsite the Gemberling home, you know where the Gemberling house is? (laughs)

Q: I've seen it, yes. (laughs) And what was the name of the newspaper?

A: The Marseilles Daily Press.

Q: And now was that the name of the paper that the Simmons had run, or did you change the title of it?

A: No, that was--it was changed. That was their own name for their paper and my husband was with that newspaper for 45 years. And they never missed one single time of them you know. . .

Q: Was it a daily paper?

A: A daily paper. His brother died--and his father died first--and then his brother died, and then it was just Claude. And when Claude--and then Frieda acted as the reporter. At one time I was the reporter for the Marseilles Press. And I can remember just one thing that I did record that I really got some compliments on from an old newspaper man, Terry Simmons himself. It was the time that, I don't remember the girls first names, but there were two sisters, Brown sisters, and then there was a Mr. Ross, who is Mr. Hayes' father, was the gatetender. . .

Q: On the railroad?

A: On the railroad. And this train was coming, and these two little girls were on the track, and he knew they were going to get hit. So he ran and pushed one of them off the track, and the other one got killed and so did Mrs. Ross. And I know that that was the biggest story I had ever done. . .

Q: Oh, yes.

A: . . . I had done, you know.

Q: Was that on Main Street?

A: Yes.

Q: What were some of the feature articles that the Press had?

A: Oh golly, I don't remember.

Q: I remember "Looking Back."

A: Oh, yes we had, oh yes, there was "Looking Back." We had it, I think we looked back 25 years. We had it from one year ago and then two and then so on.

Q: Now was the "Looking Back" column always just local events that happened?

A: Yes. From our own paper you know, after a year we started the "Looking Back" and we got it from one year and then two years and three years, until it got, well I guess--45 years--because we had it until the paper. . .

Q: Was the coverage of the paper strictly local news or was there national and international news as well?

A: Oh well, we had the news wires--mostly local news though. We had a lot of local news. Everything that happened, every party that went on in Marseilles, who had the party, and who won and the dainty refreshments, and sometimes we even mentioned what kind of refreshments there were.

Q: The really important things?

A: Oh yes, very important. But very readable, everybody wanted to know about it.

Q: How big was the paper? Was it a four page or was it more than that?

A: Well it started out four pages, it got littler and littler as the Dunlaps died off, I guess (laughs) But it did run. . .

Q: Where was the newspaper office located?

A: We had it in two different, no we had it in three different locations, no two--my isn't it terrible how you don't remember. When we first came it was in the--I think it was called the Goodell Building or something like that, some relations to the Simmes. And they, it was upstairs, and Sam's Bakery, Sam Epstein's bakery was downstairs,

A: and when those presses would go and you'd be downstairs, that building would just sway back and forth (laughs) you'd think the thing was gonna come down. Then we moved to--well the location where we were at the end--that was at the A&P Store, used to be in it, and it was Bolatto's Building, right on the corner.

Q: The corner of Lincoln and Main Street?

A: Yes.

Q: How many presses did it take to run the paper?

A: Well we had, it was a very small thing, it wasn't small when we started, but it really was small when we left, because everything was changing, you know. We had a couple of big presses, and a folder and a linotype and so on.

Q: Did you print other things besides the paper?

A: Oh yes, we printed the phone books for years, and bills and letter-heads and thing like that--commerical printing.

Q: It's quite a record paper. PAUSE We're talking with Mrs. Claude Dunlap on June 18, 1975. This is a continuation of an interview which was begun the latter part of April. The interviewer is Dorothy Gemberling. Mrs. Dunlap, we were talking about the newspaper, the Marseilles Daily Press, and I think there were a couple of things that, in retrospect, you wanted to change, I think you mentioned a date for one thing.

A: Yes. I said 1922 in December but it's 1921.

Q: December 1921? When you came to Marseilles? Thank you. And we were going to talk about some of the headline news, I think, and you have brought along a copy of the Centennial Edition of the Daily Press?

A: Yes. There was a souvenir edition of the Centennial. It's from

A: 1935--no, it's from 1835 to 1935. And at that time they were having a big pageant, to sort of depict the different things that went on in Marseilles. And they had eight girls that were finalists in the--to see who would be the queen--and Frieda Erickson was the winner and Anabelle Wiley was the second, got second place. And in this edition, George Farrell was the reporter at that time, and he did a marvelous job in getting things about the Marseilles people that traced back, and one of them was 1828 and that was when the Spicer family came here. And. . .

Q: No which Spicer family would that be?

A: That was our present mayor's father, Will Spicer, William Spicer. And he was also mayor of Marseilles at one time.

Q: Okay, was that his father or his grandfather?

A: That was John's grandfather, the one that--our present mayor's grandfather. And oh, there were so many things that--about that National--a big column about that National Bisbuit Carton Factory that was here, and we stated that they had a new building here in 1921.

Q: A new building in 1921? It was brand new when you came to town then?

A: Yes. And in that--this souvenir edition--they had a directory of the local advertisers and oh, there was a whole big, long list of people who were in business at the time, which is very interesting to read about.

Q: Who were some of the people who were here then? This would be Main Street business and otherwise?

A: Yes. Now one of the oldest ones I guess was George Fillmore and he had--there were shoes and also he had a harness making, which is certainly a lot art. And then was Al Smith's barber shop, his father was in business with him. And I think they had three chairs in that

A: shop, it was quite a thing for Marseilles. And of course we had Stickle's Cigar Store, and it has just gone out of business.

Q: That's right, changed hands.

A: After a long time, yes. And then Beulah Timmons had a little sort of a variety store.

Q: Where was it located?

A: Well now, let's see, what is there now?

Q: Is that Dr. Cowan's office along in there?

A: I believe it is, yes, I believe it is. It was on that side of the street. And then was H. R. Loomis Hardware. It's just kind of interesting to. . .

Q: Were there any groceries listed there?

A: Let's see, Trowbridge Drug Store, which is no more. And then there was the Buffo Tavern, it was Buffo's Tavern and they had a bowling alley at that time. There was Pedroni's Shoe Store.

Q: Was that just shoe store, did he do repairing too?

A: I think he did repair work. I don't see any groceries, maybe it's continued. Then they had a picture of I. N. Baughman who was mayor from 1931 to 1934. And also a picture in there of George W. Starrett, from 1927 to 1930. And a very interesting picture of the City Council that was the present city council which was in 1935.

Q: And who were the people on the council at that time?

A: Well I think Frank Simmons was City Clerk. And Harry Coates was-- he had the Department of Health and Safety. George McCormick had the Department of Streets and Public, well Public, well Public, well it says Department of Streets and Public Improvements. And Andrew Buffo, Department of Accounts and Finances. The City Attorney was E. C. Van Hoorebeke, and the mayor was C. E. Fifield, and then there was

A: commissioner Hanson Roberts, he was Department of Public Property. And there was a picture of the new Seals Funeral Home which had come into being I think about not very previous of that time.

Q: Looking at the paper there, what are some of the prices? Are there any grocery ads or store ads there that would. . .

A: Yes, we have some here that. . .if I can find them. . .

Q: Oh, Orsi's there, come in and have some ice cream.

A: Yes, they had an ice cream parlor.

Q: Ben Franklin ad there.

A: Yes, it had children hose, 13¢ a pair.

Q: Thirteen cents?

A: Children's handkerchiefs, special, one cent each.

Q: Oh, imagine!

A: Boys and girls sweaters, 49¢. Oh boy!

Q: Oh, there's the F & M ad.

A: Yes.

Q: And the F & M was a market?

A: Yes.

Q: A grocery market?

A: Yes. Well they had roast beef, this was Libby's Roast Beef, a twelve pound can, a twelve ounce can, 18¢. Butter 28½¢ a pound.

Q: And a half cent?

A: Yes. And. . .

Q: How did we manage half cents then?

A: I don't know, but that's in there. Peaches, a five pound basket for 23¢. Now we can go from there to E. A. Collins' ad.

Q: Yes, what does he offer for sale?

A: Well, he had dresses, 79¢ and 98¢.

Q: The latest Paris fashion.

A: And aprons for 25¢. Silk hosiery, well it's--the hosiery's not so inexpensive now--59¢, 79¢ and \$1.00. What was those--they had some other--wait a minute--Nelson Mundel had an airplane at the Hepner Farm and he was giving rides for \$1.00 per person.

Q: Oh my, what was the plane like I wonder?

A: It must have been a small one. (laughs)

Q: Yes, does it tell in there anywhere?

A: No. Yes, a Wasp seven passenger cabin.

Q: Seven passenger?

A: Yes.

Q: Never heard of jet in those days, did they?

A: Heavens no.

Q: What are some of your remembrances of the Centennial celebration itself?

A: Well I can remember the night they --one of the nights anyway--that they put it on it poured rain and was cold. It was--I know I was there taking part in the singing you know, while the pageant was going on, and I don't remember really too much about the play itself because it was so cold and so rainy that you just kept covered up. But they still had a pretty good crowd there.

Q: Where did they hold the pageant, do you remember? Was it down in Matchtown somewhere?

A: It seemed to me it was. Yes, but I can't remember just exactly.

Q: It wasn't at the Coliseum?

A: No. No, it was outdoors and I believe, no _____.

Q: And the pageant, the Centennial itself was in the summer wasn't it, in August?

A: Yes, this paper was August 28, but I think that it ran into September and it was a cold, rainy night. That's when Frieda Erickson got that you know, got that--such a cold, but then she died.

Q: Yes, that's what I thought.

A: It didn't say, it didn't say where the Centennial was though. But I think, practically, when you look at the program here they had most of the families in Marseilles represented in some way. Oh, there was another correction I wanted to make on that other.

Q: Allright, if you want to make another correction.

A: Yes, instead of--I said it was the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce--but it was called the Greater Marseilles Club.

Q: Okay, very similar to the Chamber of Commerce. . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . .I suspect, wasn't it?

A: Yes, the same principle altogether.

Q: The last paper you printed now, and what was the date on that?

A: That date on that was October 17, 1966, that's when we took Claude to the hospital with pneumonia. He was so ill that he never got well enough to--so we just closed the door. And this was a little one that the--that's my own. . .

Q: In looking at the bill there, Mrs. Dunlap, you have there the first editorial and the welcome from the Marseilles, the Greater Marseilles Club, would you like to read those for us?

A: Yes, I certainly would. I'll ready the--what the Marseilles, the Greater Marseilles Club--and the heading is, "Our friend's first words. The Greater Marseilles Clubs and organizations whose membership comprises citizens from all walks of life and who are deeply interested in the welfare, progress and prosperity of Marseilles. For over two years

A: "the club through its committees have certainly endeavored to locate in our midst a Marseilles daily paper. Business and school and church fraternal organizations and citizens individually have felt the urgent need of such a publication. We rejoice now that our efforts have finally been rewarded. The Greater Marseilles Clubs extends to the Messrs. Dunlap publishers of the new Marseilles Daily Press a wholehearted welcome and wishes them every success. They come with us as an up to date printing plant and with many years of newspaper experience and we believe they're equipped to produce a most satisfactory daily paper. The Greater Marseilles Club feels responsible for bringing into existence the Marseilles Daily Press. And we therefore, desire to give it our fullest moral support. The businessmen have pledged sufficient advertising to insure financial success for one year. We ask the citizens and friends of Marseilles to subscribe freely to our own paper, published in and for the interest of our promising little city. Boost for the Marseilles Daily Press and in turn will boost for the upbuilding of Marseilles. Signed, Greater Marseilles Club. E. A. Collins, President, C. P. Trowbrdige, Vice-President, T. R. Harrington, Secretary-Treasurer, R. T. White, and Cy Bogel."

Q: What was the last name?

A: Cy Bogel. Now shall I read the other one?

Q: Okay, if you'd like to. I was going to ask, ~~what~~ what was the cost of the paper? What did you charge for the paper?

A: I think it was ten cents.

Q: A week?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, your first editorial then.

A: "Friday, December 16, 1921 sees the birth of a newspaper for Marseilles, an enterprise much needed in this city. It is not our intention to make any great splurge in telling what we are going to do or how we intend to turn the world upside down. The paper has been christened the Marseilles Daily Press. We come to you as total strangers and are desirous of gaining your good will and friendship. Please bear in mind that a boost for your own paper will be a boost for your city. You may not agree with us on all points, but that is no reason why we should not all pull together and make a strong team that will put our city on the map as second to none. We shall endeavor to make the Press one of the best small city dailies in the state. Arrangements are being completed for the installation of a leased wire that will give us all the latest news of the state, nation and world. We hope to have this service installed by January 1, 1922. For local news Miss Neta Harrington has been secured to look after the happenings of the local character, and any favors shown her will be greatly appreciated. Churches, schools and societies are requested to send in all their notices of social gatherings, which will receive personal attention. Do not hesitate to send in any item that interests you and the public. Our reporter cannot see you every day so if you have visitors or social gatherings, remember the Press would like to know about it. The businessmen have shown the proper spirit towards the Press for which we wish to thank them one and all. Carrier boys will deliver the Press to your door each evening and at any time that there is grounds for complaint, please notify this office and the matter will be speedily adjusted. The office of the publications of the Press is 430 Main Street and our telephone number is Black 101. The time since our arrival in your city has been short so that we ask

A: "you do not criticize us too severely on account of errors and so forth, as everything has been rushed to full limit in order to get the paper before the people before the holidays. Thank you one and all for any favors you may show us. We remain yours for a greater Marseilles, W. I. Dunlap and Sons."

Q: Very good, so 45 years is quite a record then?

A: Yes, it is.

Q: Where had the Dunlaps learned the newspaper business? Where had. . .

A: Well, my husband's father was in the newspaper business before. He worked in Coal City, Current, they called it at that time. And then they established their own weekly paper in Mazon and then we came to Marseilles.

Q: You really liked the newspaper business?

A: Yes. This little paper was got out by--oh, I still can't think of his name. . .

Q: The successor to. . .

A: Yes.

Q: And I can't remember his name either.

A: Ne's not here anymore anyway.

Q: Yes, I know he didn't stay too long. Then did the Press go out of. . . when the Marseilles-Seneca World Press came in, what was the relationship there?

A: We--the Seneca World was the one --that makes me so mad I can't think of his name. . .

Q: Dickens, Dixon?

A: Dickey.

Q: Dickey, yes. That was it, Fred Dickey.

A: Fred Dickey. He came and he got the Seneca World and then he-- but he didn't--he couldn't take the name of Press at that time,

A: and then after Claude died, well before Claude died--after he closed our doors he got the name of the Marseilles Daily Press.

Q: I see. Then the Seneca World began while then, while your paper was still going.

A: Yes.

Q: Well, I'd forgotten that. Then did he get access to your files, then, because didn't he sometimes reprint articles?

A: Yes. He came after Claude was sick and went through our paper and got our files. But he didn't stay very long.

Q: No. Now what do you have there?

A: This is the 125th Anniversary celebration.

Q: Of July of 1960, would that be?

A: July 22, 1960. We had a--they had quite a celebration that was nine days.

Q: Nine days of celebrating the 125th?

A: Yes. They had a coronation ball at the Marseilles gym and then they had. . .

Q: Who was queen?

A: I don't know.

Q: Janet Stebbins was it?

A: I don't see anything there. We had religious services for all the churches at the Illinois State--no, we had religious service at all churches, Sunday before that. Then at one-thirty they had a horse show at Illini Park and a picnic. And Monday and Tuesday they had old fashioned _____ committees on the sidewalk. And Wednesday they had the Meal-On-Main-Street, and Governor Stratton was supposed to visit but he didn't.

Q: He didn't?

A: No, he didn't get here.

Q: The Meal-On-Main-Street then marked the beginning of. . .

A: Yes, they served 5,000 dinners.

Q: The feeding of the five thousand. (laughs) And that marked Harold Danelson's beginning then. didn't it?

A: Yes. And Wednesday and Saturday they had exhibits and rides and concessions _____ downtown. Wednesday night they had a beard contest and at 8 P.M. they had a band concert. On Thursday and Friday nights they had water fights. Saturday they had a parade, and at eight o'clock they had a huge street dance. And Sunday was boat races, at the you know. . .

Q: The river.

A: The Illinois River, and then a picnic. And a baseball game and what have you, bocci ball and dancing, and then the grand finale was the fireworks.

Q: Right. Looking back at the way we celebrated the Centennial and the 125th, how do you think we should celebrate the Bi-Centennial?

A: Well, with the Bi-Centennial we certainly ought to take some place in there because Marseilles is one of the oldest towns I think in LaSalle County, isn't it?

Q: Yes, I believe it is.

A: Why I should think we should rightly have some part in the Bi-Centennial.

Q: We're older than Ottawa, aren't we?

A: Yes we are.

Q: Which is something of a record I guess, right?

A: Yes, indeedy.

Q: Looking back then at the old newspapers and all, I was wondering did you ever bring out any special editions when world news was great, was there an extra edition or anything of that sort?

A: Oh no, we were lucky that we got one a day because we didn't have a great big staff you know. And so if there was anything that was real outstanding we got it in on that edition that day.

Q: I was thinking. . .

A: Once in awhile we'd have a bulletin, you know, on the paper of something that happened.

Q: You didn't publish on Sunday so Pearl Harbor would have gone over to the next day, wouldn't it?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of headlines did that get?

A: You know I don't know because that was the day that my father was buried. And I didn't know, you know, until I got home. I really wasn't--I didn't know about it until I got home.

Q: It's truly an unforgettable date for you then?

A: Oh yes, I should say.

Q: Do you remember, well the end of World War II, any headlines then?

A: Oh yes, I can remember the end of World War II because I was heart-broken because Evelyn, my daughter, had lost her husband and he had been killed in March and I know they had the--was it the Japanese that was over first?

Q: Germans were over first, I believe, in May.

A: Yes. And then when was the Japanese?

Q: V-J Day was August 14, about three months later.

A: May. Well I remember that day, there were a lot of celebrations going on on Main Street but I know I went to church with Jeannette

A: Galloway, my heart was just about broken.

Q: Yes, that was quite a day.

A: Yes it was. Well some of them had--some of them had you know, a lot to rejoice about but I didn't feel like I had. Oh I was very glad that the war was over, that nobody else was killed, but it was too, it was too close, close to home.

Q: Many people went to church that day.

A: Yes, I think they did too.

Q: Because the news came late in the afternoon.

A: Yes, and I was downtown that night and everybody was really celebrating but I was in no mood to celebrate, so I went to church. I thanked God that the war was over.

Q: Can you think of any other major stories that your newspaper covered? I was thinking of world headlines as well, back over those 45 years. How about the Depression? What. . .

A: Oh, the Depression, my goodness that was such a thing for so many people in Marseilles. I can remember Willo Dix's mother, Mrs. Long, told me one time--this is quite an interesting little story I think. We were at a food sale at the church and we were sitting there, the Depression was on. Mrs. Long said to me, "Jessie, if you want anything get it, don't try to save too much money," because they had lost I know at least \$10,000 in stocks and things. And she said, "All my life I ate day old bread and oleo," and she says to me, "you have butter," she says, "because just overnight you have nothing." And she thought of all that sacrificing she did. . .(laughs)

Q: For what? (laughs)

A: Yes, for what. I never did forget it. That was one--well she was one of the many, but I know that that was when a lot of the homes were on this HOLC, you know. And the Dunlaps had built three homes up

A: on the hill at the time and Allan's Lumber Company was the ones that built them you know, and they went under and so we got our houses in that HOLC, that's what saved us from--that we didn't lose our homes.

Q: What did that stand for, do you remember?

A: Home Owner's Loan Corporation, I believe that was it. It was through the government and they reduced the payments, you know, so that you could meet them. But, oh so many people that had had money, were in the bread lines, you know. And why we just didn't--well nobody had any money, that I know of, it was really hard times. And I--it was a struggle to keep your newspaper going too.

Q: I was going to ask you, how did you keep it going?

A: Well, we weathered it. We didn't have to go in the bread line but we didn't live lavishly, I'll tell you.

Q: Did the advertising go way down then?

A: I really don't remember. It was--I guess I was--I had so many-- I had a new baby for one thing, Elizabeth was born in 1933 and I know that I just didn't--I was interested in. . .

Q: More home centered then?

A: Yes. But I know that it was quite fierce, but we weathered it a lot better than a lot of them did, because it never did have to go in the bread lines.

Q: There literally were bread lines?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Where in Marseilles?

A: I don't know just exactly where, but I think there would be a big truck come in, they would give provisions to a lot of people who didn't have anything. And that was when a lot of them that had gardens were-- that was good for--they had vegetables at least. But I know that--I don't know too much about the bread lines but there was a lot of people and a

A: lot of them, it just hurt their pride to go you know, but there was no alternative, they had to in order to survive.

Q: And it hit people from all walks of life?

A: Oh yes. I remember my little neighbor, I think her name was Savage. I don't know whether she was related to the Savages down here or not. But she told me that she and her husband lived on \$4.00 a week, the two of them.

Q: Imagine that, it's hard to imagine.

A: Yes. They wouldn't have things so plentiful.

Q: Any other impressions of the Depression? Or should I take you back farther?

A: Than the Depression?

Q: Yes. We were going to talk about entertainment. . .

A: Oh yes. . .

Q: . . .entertainment, when you first came to Marseilles, entertainment and good times.

A: Oh yes. The first play that I saw, they had it at the Coliseum and I was so impressed with Helen Hammer and Floyd Adler, and oh they put on the cutest skit. They had a buggy and they were sitting in the buggy, you know, and they were singing all these old time songs and I thought it was just wonderful. I was sitting in the audience at the time. The first play I was in was given by the Congregational Church and I played a brat in it. And then, oh we had all kinds. After that, it seemed in the fall they'd have--and in the wintertime too--they would have home talent plays. And usually a church would have some company come in with all the costumes and everything and put on a play. But the one that the Congregationalists did, they had a Mrs. Kincheloe I think

A: her name was, from Ottawa, who you know, put the play on and what do you call it, you know, coached that play. . .

Q: And directed?

A: Yes, directed.

Q: What plays did they do?

A: Oh my, I don't remember. I know one time they did "Charley's Aunt." Oh in that one, Ralph Ashley was the aunt. (laughter)

Q: He had quite a flair for things like that, didn't he?

A: Yes. And then George Farrell put on plays and some of them he wrote himself.

Q: Did he really, I didn't realize that?

A: Yes. But I just don't remember the name of them, it's too long ago. Oh different organizations put them on. And George and I were in all of them and then Ralph Ashley, us three we was always in them, all of them.

Q: I was going to say, different organizations sponsored them but it was the same people who were in them many times, is that right?

A: Many times, yes. I think they'd be getting the cast for a play and they'd get George and I and Ralph Ashley and then (laughs) they'd start from there to get the rest of them.

Q: You sang, didn't you?

A: Yes, I used to sing. And Dr. O'Neill put on a play one time and it was all singing.

Q: And Mrs. O'Neill was quit e. . .

A: Oh yes, she helped.

Q: What were you saying earlier when we were talking about the chorus line?

A: Oh yes, they would have--that would be this company, seems to me it was Rodgers and Sons or something like that--would start a play and you would get the whole thing in ten days, from the time they started until they put it on.

Q: Oh, you worked fast?

A: Oh, they did intensive practicing and rehearsing. And they'd bring all the costumes and then in between--the play had a little, sort of a story--and in between they they would have the chorus line. And all of the girls in the high school and any place would be in the chorus line and they wer quite the thing with their short costumes, kicking their legs. (laughter)

Q: The chorus line?

A: Yes, the chorus line.

Q: Were any undiscovered talents found there, people who really went on to do something in. . .

A: I don't think so, not that I know of. The only one that I know that ever been into show business was Floyd Adler, he was in the "Student Prince."

Q: He was?

A: Yes, and another of the big plays, but I do know that he was in the "Student Prince."

Q: And Mrs. O'Neill had been on the stage, hand't she?

A: Yes, she had been. And she==when she came here she--well then after she went to Ottawa she coached a lot of children in dramatics.

Q: And Ralph Ashley of course was the magician.

A: Yes, very good too. He did a lot of entertaining. We had a lot of fun. Because we had--most of the churches put on plays. Now I don't

A: think I ever remember the Methodist Church put on one, but oh a lot of organizations put them on you know.

Q: Were they usually held at the Coliseum then, was that. . .

A: Always, always there, always at the Coliseum.

Q: Was that a movie theater as well?

A: Yes. It was the movie theater, they had movies. That's Hartfords you know that had that, Nona and Clarence and I don't believe--used to being in the booths back there, you know, and running back and forth all the time (laughter) It was a lot of fun.

Q: Big time?

A: Oh yes, we thought. . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

Q: . . .night life of Marseilles during 1920's. And we were discussing earlier the plays and theatrical productions and now you're going to tell us about the dances that went on?

A: Oh yes, we used to have dances out at the Ivy Way Gardens. Oh, they were quite the thing, they were like open air, although there was a roof on it.

Q: There was a pavillions there?

A: Yes, there was a pavillion. We had the Fireman's Ball and a lot of dances--people danced a lot in those days. And then we had Craftsman Club.

Q: Now what was that?

A: Well, I don't know--everybody went to it, you know, but there were a

A: bunch of young people, young married mostly that went. I don't know where the Craftsman came in, because I don't think it had any connection with the Masons or anything like that. I don't know, but if it did I didn't know it. But we--we had dances there oh, probably sometimes once in two weeks. I can remember one dance we went to, it was a masquerade, and Jeannette Galloway and I spent the whole day making for ourselves paper dresses. (laughter) And we had them sewed onto a slip, you know, and they were crepe paper, oh fancy, and like (laughter) the dance hall girls, and oh, we had a lot of fun. And went like we were the Gold Dust Twins, we were both dressed the same, (laughter)

Q: How did your husbands dress?

A: I can't remember what they dressed like. But I don't think maybe dressed, I think maybe that just some of them did and some of them didn't. But Jeannette and I made that paper dresses. Then we used to go to the Legion a lot and that was later and the Legion would put on dances. And I remember the one time I went to the Legion dance and I had a Hawaiian outfit and oh boy, was that some outfit. (laughter)

Q: What did it look like?

A: But anyway I got the first prize.

Q: Oh, you did?

A: Yes. It was really cute. It was a real cute outfit, the skirt was instead of being like a grass skirt, was real heavy white nylon, my gosh it was heavy you know, and then you had the leis around your neck and around your ankles, bare midriff at that time, which was supposed to be quite daring you know. But that was quite a dance. And then we had them on New Year's--they would have a dance and sometimes they would come-- I can remember one of the Macaccis come dressed with a lampshade, a big lampshade was her skirt--beaded lampshade. (laughter)

Q: Beaded?

A: Yes, beaded. They had quite some outfits there.

Q: It sounds like it.

A: Yes.

Q: Good times, though?

A: Oh, real good times, on New Year's especially.

Q: Now were those dances at the Legion also?

A: Yes, they were at the Legion.

Q: Your husband was very active in Legion wasn't he?

A: Oh very, yes he was. I didn't go to the meetings, he went many a year before I started to go, I didn't want to go, I don't know why. But, I just didn't go, but after I did go I really had a good time.

Q: Who played for your dances?

A: Oh mostly we had Ray Johnson.

Q: Ray Johnson?

A: Yes, Ray Johnson at the Craftsman Club.

Q: Where did the Craftsman Club meet then?

A: Up over the _____, it was called Halligan's Hall at that time.

Q: Oh sure, that was on Lincoln Street then when the paper was at Main and Lincoln?

A: Yes.

Q: Who all was in his orchestra, do you remember?

A: The only one I can remember is Ray. They were very good, very good.

Q: They were popular for years weren't they?

A: Oh yes, and they were so much fun. And then we'd have at these Craftsman Dances, we'd have round dances, you know. I can remember

A: us taking off one shoe and putting it in the ring and then a fellow would pick up the shoe and come and fit it on the girl and then you'd dance with him.

Q: Cinderella?

A: Yes.

Q: What were some of the dances. . .

A: We had so much fun and they were you know, quite simple, it was just a real good get together. And nobody ever thought of having a bottle or liquor at that time, you just went up there, you had enough pep you didn't need anything like that.

Q: Good clean fun. Did you dance during the Depression years too? Or were they done--was that kind of passed by then?

A: I think they were.

Q: What were the dances you did, I know you didn't do the twist, but what did you do?

A: Oh, we did the Charleston, I should say so. I have to tell you a joke about the Charleston. Dorothy Anderson and I were doing the Charleston, and that was when the Moffets lived up over Charles Balchowsky's store, (laughs) and Charles Balchowsky's store was lighted by gas that had mantles. And Dorothy and I were dancing and Charles said he just as soon we wouldn't dance, that we had (laughter) destroyed all the mantles (laughter) in his lighting equipment, (laughter) with the bouncing.

Q: That's funny.

A: Oh there was lot of funny things that happened.

Q: What else did you dance besides the Charleston?

A: The Lambeth Walk, that's another one. And then they have a lot of those round dances where you change partners and all of them left or whatever it is, change partners and then you'd dance and then they'd say everybody dance, they'd mix the crowd that way.

Q: Did you dance out at the Country Club at all?

A: Yes we did, not very often, but yes we had dances out there.

Q: Tell me something about it, about the country club itself, the Marsattawa.

A: Oh it was lovely, and I just was heart broken when that left because we played golf practically every day during the summer. And early in the spring and late in the fall we played golf and we had tournaments, we had two-ball mixed foursome, you know, on Sundays, and blind bogey and they'd be some little prizes. And then at that time Laura Kiner and Verne was running the country club and they were serving dinners out there. And then we had a weekly card party and I know Madge Lewis was one of the presidents at that time. I remember at bridge tournaments we would all play during the summer and those that had the highest scores got to play in the tournament. And we went that day and she had a whole table full of prizes, beautiful prizes, and the one with the high score got the chance to pick the first prize, you know. And then we also had a lot of mixed tournaments where we would go to the different clubs, at Deer Park and at Streator, at down by Henry, and Lacon, Lacon Golf Club, and a lot of times we had a ladies day at Deer Park where we would play golf all day and _____ for blind bogey and then whichever flight you got in _____ there'd be prizes for that and we always brought something home--Nona Hartford was a very good golfer, very good.

Q: Now that's called the Marsattawa, right? And that was a combination of Ottawa and Marseilles?

A: Yes.

Q: And where was it located?

A: Where Illini Park is now, on the. . .

Q: The west?

A: No, the east--east of the bridge. It was a beautiful course, real sporty. We had a lake, we had an Indian mound, we had a circus ring, oh we had just a beautiful course--adog-leg, we had--you know it was really sporty to play, it was. And so much fun.

Q: It was an eighteen hole course, right?

A: No, nine hole.

Q: Where was the clubhouse located? Near where the big main shelter is now or where? Or was it closer to the river, do you remember?

A: No, it was closer up to the--see it was closer up--I don't think it was where that. . . You know, you just lose sight of where it was. But I know--it was close to the--you see, they had a field and you had the first and the second and the third tee in place, you know, to _____ the holes and then the club was just opposite, it was closer up to the road and to the--it wasn't too--I don't think you could see the river from it, maybe you could, but we didn't look at the river at that time, it wasn't--it didn't smell very pretty. (laughs)

Q: And it was a different bridge then too, wasn't it?

A: Yes.

Q: Because this bridge was built it. . .

A: I don't remember when it was built.

Q: . . .in 1931 or 1932, something like that.

A: Yes. But that's what we did for entertainment.

Q: You had good times?

A: Oh, we certainly did, real good times.

Q: What did you do in the wintertime? Is that when you had your home talent plays?

A: Well we had home talent plays and we had a lot of bridge, we played in a lot of bridge clubs, you know, and . . .

Q: Daily refreshments?

A: Yes. And we had, at that time I did a lot of church work, you know, singing in the choir and Louise Kiner and I sang at all the funerals in Marseilles. And there were a lot of things that we did that we don't do not at all, and I wouldn't think about doing them.

Q: But lots of good times?

A: Oh, many good times.

Q: Good. Thank you for telling us about them. Thank you, Mrs. Dunlap.

END OF SIDE TWO

END OF TAPE

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PLACE Marseilles, Illinois

DATE July 5, 1975

Jessie Dunlap
(Interviewee)

Dorothy J. Dunlap
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