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  > Marian Darlington-Hope, oral history interview conducted by Katie Burke, June 1, 2019, "Sweet Souls, Voices from the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in Cambridge" oral history project; Cambridge Historical Society.

Sweet Souls, Voices from the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in Cambridge

Oral History Project

Interview with Marian Darlington-Hope, June 1, 2019

This interview is part of "Sweet Souls, Voices from the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in Cambridge," an oral history project of the Cambridge Historical Society, in partnership with the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House and The Loop Lab. This project was funded in part by Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Interviewee: Marian Darlington-Hope

Interviewer: Katie Burke

Interview Date: June 1, 2019

Interview Location: Marian Darlington-Hope residence, the Port neighborhood of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Length of Interview: 79 minutes

Transcription: Katie Burke, September 30, 2020

Katie Burke recorded the interview.

Marian Darlington-Hope was born and raised in the Port neighborhood of Cambridge, where she has lived most of her life. She and other family members attended programs at the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in her youth. As a teenager, she volunteered at the National Committee to Combat Fascism/Black Panther Party breakfast program housed at the Fuller House. As an adult she continued her involvement with the Fuller House in many capacities, including as a board member. Prior to retirement, Marian was a professor at UMass Boston and Lesley College. She is active in Cambridge-based activism and community-building groups and efforts.

In 2018, Marian did a full oral history with the Cambridge Historical Society. The audio and transcript of that interview can be found here. For this *Sweet Souls* oral history project, Marian was interviewed more specifically about her recollections and perspectives pertaining to the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House.

Start of Interview

Katie Burke: My name is Katie Burke.

On June 1, 2019 I interviewed Marian Darlington-Hope at her home in the Port neighborhood of Cambridge, Massachusetts. This interview is part of the Sweet Souls oral history project to explore Margaret Fuller Neighborhood's House's role in the Port in Cambridge. The project is conducted by the Cambridge Historical Society, in partnership with The Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House and The Loop Lab. This project was funded in part by Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Marian Darlington-Hope consented to have the interview recorded.

Marian was interviewed to document her childhood recollections of the Fuller House, as well as her young-adult experiences with the Black Panther Party at the Fuller House. I conducted a full oral history of Marian Darlington Hope in 2018, as part of Cambridge Historical Society's Caribbean Heritage in Cambridge oral history project. The 2018 interview audio and transcript can be found on Cambridge Historical Society's website, cambridgehistory.org. An earlier interview of Marian Darlington-Hope is published in We Are the Port, by oral historian Sarah Boyer, published by the Cambridge Historical Commission in 2015.

While not a full oral history, this interview is part of the Sweet Souls oral history project.

Katie Burke [00:00:02] Okay, so I don't know how much you've already heard about the Margaret Fuller project that they're doing.

Marian Darlington Hope [00:00:07] I know that you were trying to get some funding so that you could do the project --.

KB [00:00:11] Yeah, exactly.

MDH [00:00:11] And that you were going to try to do some of it anyway.

KB [00:00:14] Yeah. Exactly [laughs]. Yeah. So luckily, they did get that grant money.

MDH [00:00:19] Great!

KB [00:00:19] Yeah, so the project is in partnership with the Margaret Fuller House and the plan is to interview people, like, some people that work there, some people that get services there and just try to piece together a history as much as we can. So specifically, what I wanted to talk to you about today was that we came across some research, but not too much, about this time period, around 1970, where a wing of the Black Panther Party, which was called the National Committee to Combat Fascism, was at the Margaret Fuller House. And there hasn't been too much that we found about it. We know that they were running a free breakfast program for children.

MDH [00:01:04] And I worked in that.

KB [00:01:04] Oh, you did?

MDH [00:01:06] Yes, yes.

KB [00:01:06] Okay, okay, yeah, this is amazing because there -- other than a few articles, we just really didn't know too much about that.

MDH [00:01:14] Mmhmm.

KB [00:01:14] So, yeah. Basically, what I knew was that they ran that program. They had a liberation school. Kids would, like, sing songs and things like that. They had a free lunch program. So, I wanted to hear kind of what your memories were. And then if, you know, like how that happened, like how that came to happen, because I know also during that period, the Margaret Fuller House was having some problems and they were closing and kind of in disrepair and things like that. So, just trying to piece together the story of how they came to be there and what their role exactly was at the time would be really helpful.

MDH [00:01:47] Sure. I can tell you what I can remember because really, because I wasn't a big player in it, but because it was during a period of -- I want to say they took over in 1970.

KB [00:01:58] Yeah, that sounds right to me, too.

MDH [00:02:00] So, because I, well I remember I wasn't in college. I was eighteen, and, you know, it was of the time, I believe, when, you know, a lot of, you know, I missed being -- I wasn't a college student and I missed all the sit ins, right, so I was a kind of a wannabe that was influenced by all of these Black college students that were, you know, sitting in at lunch counters and taking over buildings and all of that. And I was in high school, right? So, when I came out, that energy of wanting to change the world was still very much in the air. The Margaret Fuller House had, for a while, had really struggled. They had a woman prior to that, her name was Helen something. Uhh. She was white and her name was Helen, okay [laughter]? Yeah, I want to say it's Polish, like, Urstrenski, or something like that.

KB [00:03:00] Yeah.

MDH [00:03:01] And essentially, she was told that she needed to step down, and because she was white, and it was about that point a *clearly* African American community. It was -- yeah. I mean all of that. I mean, it doesn't even look the same now, this neighborhood. I mean, it's still largely, you know, people of color, but in those -- at that time, it was *very* different, and the energy was still there. So, and I don't know if Althea Merchant, who was also an Executive

Director who lived on Worcester [1] Street and, at the time, it was Lorraine Scott. She was the Executive Director, and it's unfortunate because she passed away about seven, eight years ago, and I'm not sure if her children kept any artifacts. But I got a small grant, and I don't know if you have any materials, actual, that on the third floor, I had something like fifteen crates of the history of the Margaret Fuller House.

KB [00:04:08] Oh!

MDH [00:04:09] Including a wonderful newsletter from 1930 that began with, "What's a Boy to do at the Margaret Fuller House?" and they were talking about -- because they used to grow vegetables in the backyard.

KB [00:04:24] When was that?

MDH [00:04:25] Oh, in the early 1900s.

KB [00:04:28] Okay.

MDH [00:04:29] So, there were all of these, you know, but I thought it was funny because it was the same question being asked. What's a boy to do at the Margaret Fuller House? And it seems very much a place because I would knit there and sew. And there was Juanita Gosman, whose son is still around, Billy Gosman, who, you know, she wasn't getting paid, but she was there all day and she was a big knitter, crocheter, and it was that -- for me, the Margaret Fuller represented a kind of community engagement, that I would love to see again. I know it's probably not realistic. But it was that there are people who were there -- some had skills, and some were there just to talk to each other. And so, you know, Billy's mother was one of these wonderful people who would make it, you know -- if you have a new baby, "Look, don't worry about this." You know, just that kind of person. Right? And there were a few others, and Juanita -- oh, Lorraine Scott was Executive Director, and I think she had leanings towards the house being more engaged in activism, and if you look at some old Cambridge Chronicles, you see her name come up. It was Lorraine Williams and then she married a guy -- named Lorraine Scott.

And so around the Margaret Fuller House, she was kind of outspoken, was an advocate. And I think because she had that sort of orientation, she was kind of welcoming this national committee and breakfast and whatever. But at some point, they basically told her, we're taking over the Margaret Fuller House, so.

KB [00:06:15] So, they were already doing some programs?

MDH [00:06:18] They were just coming in. They haven't really gotten started much. But I think she -- there was a sort of conversation and negotiation around, "These things we think we need," and, you know, "We need," you know, "the Black community in this neighborhood needs to really --", you know, but then we were, I would say, that it was a neighborhood that was neglected. And in part, there was a sense that, well, if the neighborhood doesn't care then, you know, so we would -- we had, I remember having lots of problems with trash and other things and, you know, remember, there were a lot of movements at that time towards getting cities to kind of pay attention to communities of color, which would have abandoned housing, which would have all kinds of, I will say, symptoms and evidence of neglect. And I think they were neglected by the city. Remember, you're talking to an eighteen-year-old, so, as I remember it. And so, I think this energy around fighting and advocating and rising up as a group of Black people and making the neighborhood better was something that was right up Lorraine's alley.

KB [00:07:34] Okay.

MDH [00:07:35] All right? So, I think she was welcoming them. I don't think she expected them to say, "Okay, we're taking over." And so fairly soon after, I remember hearing her talking about, you know, and they weren't necessarily the Black Panthers, and there was some conversation about whether or not they were the Black Panthers, and she had had some community meetings and - I was eighteen and wanting to march because I missed out on all the good stuff. I really shouldn't call it the good stuff, but it just felt like.

KB [00:08:08] The energy, yeah.

MDH [00:08:09] The energy among the college students that, and, you know, she has different ways that she used to tell the story. Well, they came in and just said, "Okay, we're taking over. The Margaret Fuller House isn't getting any support." So, they came over and I think they were there for almost a year?

KB [00:08:26] Yeah.

MDH [00:08:29] Nine months to a year. I want to say nine months to a year. And, of course, I signed up when they were recruiting people for the breakfast program, and I came and helped out at the breakfast program, and they had it at the house and they, you know, there were just kids in the neighborhood. In fact, Selvin was a kid.

KB [00:08:53] Yeah, I heard that!

MDH [00:08:55] At the breakfast program. Yeah, I remember him, he was a peanut head kid. And I do remember him because his brother was always sort of heavy and he had a sister who, I think she was an older sister, there might have been five or six of them and Selvin may have been the youngest, or near the youngest., but I do remember him coming to the breakfast program. And he was in a family, I think, where the oldest sister, like many groups, you know, the oldest child takes care of the little ones, and so -- where the mom wasn't home, the mother was working, and that's part of what you did growing up. And so, I worked in the breakfast program. They would, you know, a bunch of these guys with big afros and women, but it was rather, I would -- I don't want to use a word as strong as misogynist, but it was really clear that the men were in charge and the women were helpers.

KB [00:09:55] Okay.

MDH [00:09:55] That was very, very clear. And they were sort of young and they were also a little bit into who they could pick up and partly what kind of drove me away, it was this, sort of, sexual energy of, like, you know, “We're having a party tonight,” and, you know, and I was like, I was still too good a girl to hang out, but I did work in the breakfast program. And I thought it was great. I really felt like, “Wow, they're going to be doing all of this great stuff.

They're going to help to turn the neighborhood around." And then they had the liberation school, and I'm not sure how long that was, but I wasn't considered liberated enough, meaning that I wasn't the -- wouldn't be a person who would be singing the songs and, or any of that, because I wasn't part of the group. The Black Panther Party, I wasn't part of that group. And they already had a whole curriculum, which had, I guess, had come out of some of the original Black Panther work in L.A. of the schools and the, you know, all that energy. And you have to remember also, at that time, busing was becoming bigger, the integration of busing, we were getting closer to it. The issues like desegregated schools was becoming -- all of those things were already issues in the city, in Cambridge and in Boston, so that I felt like there was this real, sort of, energy to taking over. I'm not sure what drove them out. Maybe because there was any sort of legal action, and I don't know if there's any records of that in the city, because the city actually stepped in and they -- and I think the house was actually physically closed for some time. But it wasn't the city it was trying to take over, which is really what people felt. It was that, you know, and here this was -- and I think there was a lot of energy on the parts of people like Cambridge Community Foundation. Bob Hurlbut was, he was a director then, but, you know, there are people like him and some of these other agencies because the Margaret Fuller House used to be a Red Feather Agency, which is pretty -- what is it now? You don't talk about it very much, but, you know, they -- oh, they collect money every year. United Way.

KB [00:12:26] Oh, okay, yeah.

MDH [00:12:26] So, Red Feather Agencies were pre–United Way and the Red Feather Agencies, many of them were settlement houses or older agencies that got established to get some funding in order to, kind of, help them continue whatever their mission was.

KB [00:12:45] Okay.

MDH [00:12:45] And so the old history of the Margaret Fuller House, you know, actually, it was immigrant women who lived there. I don't know if you know this, because that's how they were connected with the Y, and they were working in the factories. And so, then it, you know, then there was less of a need for it being a place of housing young women to providing more kinds of services and supports. But take it, because this was a large immigrant neighborhood. You

know, my mother took citizenship classes there, this is before I was born. So, she came from Barbados in '45 and took citizenship classes there. They had a Well Baby Clinic at the Margaret Fuller, so almost anything that we have in our, kind of, much more of a coordinated system of social services in the city of Cambridge existed at the Margaret Fuller House because it was a settlement house. And, I think, because it was its own entity as opposed to part of something else, that it wasn't part of the housing, the public housing. It was its own entity. It was -- it enabled it to, kind of, figure out what the needs were. And there were three of them within just a few blocks. So, it was the Margaret Fuller House, it was the Neighborhood House, which then joined when the Neighborhood House burned down, and East End House used to be at the corner, which is in East Cambridge, which is a major, large organization now, was at a corner of Harvard and maybe [pause] Portland.

KB [00:14:26] Okay.

MDH [00:14:27] Right? At the turn of the 19th century, 20th century. So, you know, there were, so it was clearly, this was an area where lots of immigrants worked. There were lots of factories, you know the tour that I did?[2]

KB [00:14:41] Oh, yeah.

MDH [00:14:41] So they all worked in those and they serviced the -- largely immigrants, and not just African Americans. It was Italian, and very much Irish because St. Mary's was right over there. So, now back to -- I just wanted to give you a little background to understand the context of the history, but I would look in the attic. I had, like, fifteen [boxes] and I organized everything by decade.

KB [00:15:09] You have the records here?

MDH [00:15:10] No, they're in the Margaret Fuller House.

KB [00:15:12] Oh, okay.

MDH [00:15:12] Because they had so many. And, you know, I don't know what they use the third floor for, but they were in actual crates in folders.

KB [00:15:22] Okay. That's interesting. I know Lynn had talked to them and was having trouble finding a lot of archival records, so I'll see if she, yeah.

MDH [00:15:31] Yes. And I didn't know about the Cambridge Historical Society. Either the Society or the Cambridge Historic Commission, which has some information, but it doesn't have programs or anything like that.

KB [00:15:43] Okay, yeah.

MDH [00:15:43] So and I got a lot of those from the basement, because they have had a couple of floods there, and I took them to the third floor and put them in these crates.

KB [00:15:54] Okay, so you know they're there.

MDH [00:15:55] So there's, I mean.

KB [00:15:56] Yeah.

MDH [00:15:57] We're talking a long time now, but if they didn't throw them away, they're there.

KB [00:16:01] How long ago was it?

MDH [00:16:04] Oh, we're talking fifteen years.

KB [00:16:04] Okay. Okay.

MDH [00:16:06] But, there was no reason to throw them out because there were crates and envelopes, and there were some labels on them.

KB [00:16:11] Okay, alright, I'll look in there.

MDH [00:16:12] I even had a work study student a long time ago who worked with me just to kind of go through boxes and boxes of, you know, I mean, it kind of was like my moment in history. I just didn't know how much of a moment that would have been.

KB [00:16:25] Yeah. It would be really useful now.

MDH [00:16:27] It would be really useful, because they had a newsletter. I also found there was at one point, a half a million dollars that was given to the Margaret Fuller House, the Cambridge Community Center, and I believe it was East End House, because they all were initially -- well, they weren't all, because the Cambridge Community Center was never really a settlement house. It was created by a group of ministers in the '30s or something, but money to kind of help them do more facilitation and coordination -- and I also believe it was Bob Hurlbut's mother, because her name, I think it was Edith Hurlbut.

KB [00:17:14] Okay.

MDH [00:17:14] Yeah [laughter], and I know this isn't it but, you know, I really do have a love for the Margaret Fuller House, but, and they tried for a number of years and in the end, they split apart. It wasn't working. There was no facilitation, no coordination, and, at that time, there Mayor Vellucci got involved in helping to disband this -- it wasn't even an agency and it wasn't designed to have staff with this governing entity, and they just gave them each a big pot of money, that at the Margaret Fuller House slowly eroded.

KB [00:17:52] Okay.

MDH [00:17:53] So.

KB [00:17:55] So one thing I'm just wondering, because I've -- there hasn't been a lot of information that we've found yet about the Black Panther Party in Cambridge, but there has been more about the Black Panther Party in Boston. And so one of the things I was reading about was how there is this conflict within the breakfast programs of them serving a real need for kids who didn't have enough food to eat, and then people and city officials being uncomfortable that the children at the programs were then getting this kind of, like, rhetoric and propaganda, perhaps.

MDH [00:18:27] Yeah, okay.

KB [00:18:27] So do you think that that was happening here?

MDH [00:18:30] Oh, yes, it was definitely happening. And I think there was real concern because by 1970, '71, the Black Panthers were, you know, persona non grata around the country. They were doing similar things. They, you know, in a lot of this is they were carrying weapons and felt like they needed to arm themselves against the police, but they had a lot of, you know, anti-white, pro Black rhetoric. That was always out there. You know, "the cops are pigs" and, you know, "whitey can't tell me what to do in my own land." I mean, so there was really this tension, and I think city officials were concerned and they were getting propaganda. You know, there was all of these songs about revolution, and I knew a lot of them [laughter]. There was lots of singing and just energy around reframing. It was an early attempt at reframing the dialog about who we are. Right? So, it was Black power. It was all of the afros, which I had one too, at the time to my parents just -- oh, they were so upset. They weren't sure how I was going to turn out. You know, it was some -- you had to be there. It's almost like what you see a little bit of this with the Black Lives Matter. The real, sort of, the leaders who are really pushing and angry and, you know, they're taking over Route 93. You know, I mean, it was like that.

KB [00:20:16] Yeah.

MDH [00:20:16] That's as close as I can sort of bring you to something that's contemporary. And I think they were worried that they might become violent. There was clearly anti-white sentiment among this group, and so they saw any kind of intervention or concern, as, you

know, "Who these white people telling us what to do?" Right? So, I mean, these are city officials who really ultimately are responsible, and many of the kids lived in the housing development. Right? So, yeah, I think there was concern and what it meant, and we also had a very traditional social service mentality about what was needed in the Margaret Fuller House, and there's been this sort of struggle -- you know, I don't know if anybody has written about this. I just don't read this stuff anymore -- about that tension between providing social services and empowering people or supporting them empowering themselves around whatever it is. And so, I think there's always been this tension with the Margaret Fuller House, which makes it hard to, makes it difficult for it to be a place for everyone. If what you're focused on is the poorest of the poor and if you're -- the way your thought about is food pantries and providing service for low-income people, but it wasn't -- they were trying to make it into more of a gathering place for people who want to organize. Whether it was organizing where you live, and there was some concern -- I do remember some conversations about making the projects better because they were often fairly dirty and, you know, it wasn't well kept. You know, the design of them, I mean, there now, I think, half of the size they used to be. They took down some buildings and made some larger apartments, but they were crowded and, you know, if you had more than three kids, they'd have to buckle up, you know, it wasn't -- they were like, you'd get maybe three bedrooms, one decent and two small. I had friends who lived in them, and they all had metal doors, and it sounded a little bit like a prison and the people who built them were building prisons. You know, the kind of concrete walls.

KB [00:22:40] Yeah.

MDH [00:22:40] Is that concrete? Well, maybe they were concrete walls. I mean, it just had that sense of it.

KB [00:22:46] Yeah, it wasn't very homey.

MDH [00:22:48] It wasn't very homey. And so, you know, this before they had all kinds of policies that made it difficult. You know, those like you couldn't get thrown out and, you know, it was -- and I think they saw the both, the Newtowne Court and Washington Elms, as a place where they could organize people who could only go up. Right? And so I think the breakfast

program was not just about feeding kids breakfast, but it was about them getting their parents and getting more folks to be, you know, engaged in making demands on the city for better treatment, and equal treatment, and so just, you know, anything that's really designed for kids is often, well, not -- I won't say that's true. I think now when we think about programs for kids, we really care most about the kids, and we, and parents are either good people, which means you're doing all the right things to help their kids, or they are the part of the problem. But we don't see them as, sort of, joint, as collaborators in what happens to children. We don't see that at all, and we're not interested in doing that anymore, where I think that's what the Black Panthers also were about. So, it certainly was race because the white man was the person who was in charge and the problem and was keeping all the Black people down. And there's no simple way I can explain it. And feeding kids was because -- and they were kids who probably were hungry. I mean, so we could tell you about some of that, kids who really needed the breakfast, but clearly, there was another agenda. And that was about organizing parents to make demands for better housing -- same stuff we talk about today! Better housing, better jobs, better life.

KB [00:24:42] Right.

MDH [00:24:43] It's all the same, it's all the same thing. But at the time, it was much more confrontative and there was a lot of animosity, and I'm not sure what got them to leave, you know, and I often think -- I've heard rumors, at the time, there was lots of rumors about -- I don't know if they were true -- but there was actually some illegal behavior going on there. I don't know if it was selling drugs, I don't know what it was, or that they got the board to, sort of, give them permission to step in. You know, because the board really wasn't functioning at all. I mean, so, you know, there -- it would mean going through some old, old board notes. But I do think there was a way that they were able to get them out because there wasn't any money they were getting, and I don't know if there were things happening at a bigger level, like in Boston. So, what happened in Cambridge really came out of the work of Boston. It wasn't that Cambridge was, sort of, rising up, but what they did was they had an avenue. And I think Lorraine Scott legitimately saw this as an opportunity, and she had her fights with the city around funding and support and programming, because I want to think [pause] I don't know if Althea Merchant was before or after, Anita, before Lorraine. I'm not -- but around that time,

because they also lost the United Way funding as well later on. They also lost the United Way funding and, you know, those were funding that was hard to lose. You know, it's hard to lose that kind of funding unless you're, I mean, you almost -- once you had it, you had it for life, until United Way then really restructured around who got United Way funding and in the way it was organized, but it was sort of like, it was the funding that was the safety net.

KB [00:26:34] Why did they lose that?

MDH [00:26:36] Well, I think there was real improprieties in terms of budgeting. They didn't know how much money they had, and they were not necessarily spending it, keeping right records, or I think at one point they were getting close to losing their tax-exempt status. They had people who didn't really shouldn't have been running an organization. I mean, Lorraine Scott had no business running it. I mean, she ran it. She was a community person. She had good intentions. But I don't have a sense that she had any of the management acumen for running an organization with all the financial -- and I would say that problem continued into the '80s. We had another director who basically was using, you know, she wasn't the spending on herself, but she had money that was considered petty cash, so whenever there was a need, she took it out this petty cash amount. Was she putting it on herself? No, she wasn't buying a car or whatever, but she was paying neighborhood people to do cleanup and whatnot, and where she really needed to have done was to have something systematic. And then there were some complaints about how the house was being run and the funding, and I got dragged into that one. That was later. And I don't think she ever forgave me. But it was one of those where I sort of felt like, you know, there's a better -- you can't do it this way.

KB [00:28:05] Yeah. And it was such an important place.

MDH [00:28:09] It was such an important place. And then they would have, the city would have come in. I don't believe the city wanted it. I believe the city wanted it to work, and at that time, it looked like the only way it was going to work was that the city basically took it over, and it was, you know, it was paid for. It wasn't that it had a mortgage or any of those things, and so, then the community fought back. There were some meetings, "No, we don't want the city to take it over." Jill Herold was the head of Human Services at that time for the city because we

had some conversations about it. She had retired a few years ago, but Ellen may know because I think Ellen was working under Jill. Ellen Seminoff, she's the director now. She may know a little bit of that history. Less --.

KB [00:28:57] That was in the '80s?

MDH [00:29:00] That was in the '80s. But less of the Black Panther years, but I do think Jill was the first director of what's now being called Human Services, or became the Department of Human Services, but I think Ellen worked with her for a number of years before Jill stepped down or retired. Ellen stepped up.

KB [00:29:21] Okay, okay that's helpful.

MDH [00:29:24] Yeah. So, she may know and maybe the, and there -- I'm trying to think of others that might give you some background, or have other memories leading to this period of the Black Panthers, which was not a long time. It wasn't more than a year.

KB [00:29:40] Yeah.

MDH [00:29:41] I'm 90 percent positive it wasn't more than a year. I mean, they may have had some leftover things. Like, the liberation school I think was the first thing to go because I think there was just some real, what was called anti-American kind of propaganda, you know, the -- I think they learned, I mean, I think everybody learned from the '60s. So, you might find a little bit about this in the police department.

KB [00:30:07] Oh, that's a good idea, yeah.

MDH [00:30:10] I wouldn't be surprised that there might be some old records. I'm not, I don't know the new commissioner well, but Ellen knows him very well. Ellen Seminoff, if you need, you know, I knew the last chief very well. So I just said, "Look, I'll give the chief a call and tell them that Lynn is calling --," I'm not -- I haven't been involved with the police department the way I was a few years ago.

KB [00:30:39] Yeah.

MDH [00:30:41] But, I would, you know, I'm going to call Selvin and ask him about the third floor and, you know, they may have gotten moved back to the basement, so I don't know what happened, but --

KB [00:30:52] Yeah, I'll check with Lynn, too, because maybe that was mentioned like when she was meeting. Selvin before, too.

MDH [00:30:57] He may not have known.

KB [00:30:58] Yeah, maybe.

MDH [00:30:59] Because the director who was there, I had been doing that project with the director who was there before Selvin, and knew I was doing that project.

KB [00:31:08] Yeah.

MDH [00:31:09] And then we, you know, we didn't get - I mean, I wasn't a historian, so I -- the only thing I knew is you put them in crates, and you organize them by date.

KB [00:31:15] Yeah, that was smart because sometimes people just throw stuff out.

MDH [00:31:18] Well, it was like a lot of boxes.

KB [00:31:20] Yeah.

MDH [00:31:21] And I know we lost some because there was a kind of a flood in the basement, and so I know we lost some, and I, you know, and I loved, as I said, I love history. It was only because of my love for history. And I had pulled these and then I was pulling up things from the '20s and stuff that talked about what the kids were doing and what the girls were learning.

It was very clear. And then, of course, I -- my own experience, I was there when both -- when Hawaii became a state. I remember standing there and, you know, when they raised the flag with 50 stars and then we would have juice and cookies in the morning prior to any activities. So there was a real, you know, so I just wanted to say, I grew up at the Margaret Fuller House because that's where, and then when they had the three camps, the Margaret Fuller House, Cambridge Community Center, and I want to say East Cambridge, we all got on busses at the Margaret Fuller House and then we'd be driven out to some -- it's Camp Cowemoki, which is now run by the Cambridge Camping Association in Cambridge. And those were, you know, those were all places. So, the house, I was there from the time, I was probably five or six, and then I got involved later from the time I was about eighteen.

KB [00:32:53] Okay, when you [inaudible].

MDH [00:32:53] The records have me there for a good fifteen years. I mean, I'm off and on the board, kind of thing. I was off and then I was on and then I was all off and I was on.

KB [00:33:04] When you joined the breakfast program, was that because you were already tied to the Margaret Fuller House or was it specifically because you were interested in this group?

MDH [00:33:15] I think a little bit of both. I wasn't active at all in the Margaret Fuller House. I wasn't on anything. I was eighteen and, you know, here was this opportunity to change the world, take it back. Black power, all that. So, I think that's why I joined, and they were looking for volunteers. So, they were actively looking for volunteers. And there were some cute boys there.

KB [00:33:35] Yeah [laughs].

MDH [00:33:37] I'll admit that. But it was really an opportunity to help and to make a difference, and I really, you know, and that also, in so many ways, I think helped to shape my own civic engagement. I went on to work with children for the next several years. I worked in a couple of after school programs, Head Start, so, it really, for me, was also the beginning of being of service, so it had a bigger meaning than just doing that for a while. But I remember I felt very

uneasy with all the maleness that was there. You know, I just wasn't into hanging out, and I didn't smoke, you know, it was a little too much for me.

KB [00:34:21] Okay [laughter]. Yeah, that's understandable. You were just out of high school.

MDH [00:34:25] I was out of high school, I was brought up at that little Pentecostal church on the corner, and even though I liked to sort of -- I rebelled against the church and a whole lot of that, like many young people, but I, what -- I didn't come from a world where people engaged in that kind of sexual behavior on the, you know, you could see a lot of it. I would watch people sort of half flirting and whatnot, and it just made me uncomfortable.

KB [00:34:52] Yeah.

MDH [00:34:53] So, after a while, you know, I felt I couldn't even participate in the breakfast program. So, I probably did it for about six months.

KB [00:35:00] Okay. That's a good chunk of time, yeah.

MDH [00:35:02] Yeah. But it was growing. So it was, kind of, easy in the beginning and then it was really clear that the men were in charge of the programs that were there.

KB [00:35:12] Do you remember, so we read -- there was one article that Lynn found about this program at the Margaret for her specifically, and it said that there were both white kids and Black kids that were served in the program. Is that your recollection, too or do you --?

MDH [00:35:29] Not during the -- I don't remember that during when the Black Panthers were there.

KB [00:35:36] Okay.

MDH [00:35:36] I do know that there were programs for Black kids where white kids were also served because they -- it wasn't like it was the only breakfast program. There used to be

breakfast programs before the Black Panthers had come but weren't really in operation. Right? So, all their summer programs, we all had breakfast. We would be in the yard, and then, you know, we did the Pledge of Allegiance, raised the flag -- which is why I remember the fiftieth- when Hawaii became the fiftieth state. We had, they had done that, and then you would go in and you would get breakfast. You'd get cereal and, you know, Frosted Flakes, and milk and those were the kinds of things you would get in the school. So, I didn't know if there was any funding in that area that they had gotten money to do the breakfast program. So, they had breakfast programs prior to the Black Panthers taking over.

KB [00:36:28] Okay, but after they took over, it was more focused towards Black kids in the neighborhood.

MDH [00:36:34] Yes.

KB [00:36:34] Okay.

MDH [00:36:34] I mean, the neighborhood was changing from becoming a very mixed, white, Italian, whatever. I mean, I remember the names. Portuguese. You know, I went to school with people's names were, you know, O'Hennessy and Souza and, you know, de Silva. I remember that very clearly, but over time and I think I found -- [phone ringing]

[Marian talks briefly to daughter-in-law on the phone]

KB [00:38:19] Okay [laughs]. One last question.

MDH [00:38:24] Sure!

KB [00:38:26] So, we're wondering, like, I know this was just a small, kind of, blip in Margaret Fuller House history is like this nine-month period when the Black Panthers were there. Do you remember, by any chance, the names of the people that were running the program and that you worked with in case we can maybe track them down?

MDH [00:38:46] No, I was really trying to – because I didn't know them. There weren't that many Cambridge people that did that. There were maybe four or five of us, you know, and but --

KB [00:38:55] Okay.

MDH [00:39:00] No, I can't.

KB [00:39:01] Okay. Yeah, that's fine.

MDH [00:39:02] But it was mostly Boston people.

KB [00:39:04] Yeah. That's interesting. Okay

MDH [00:39:06] It was mostly Boston people.

KB [00:39:08] Did you feel like there was a presence in Cambridge of the Black Panthers here, or was it, kind of, like just centered in this one Margaret Fuller House [program]?

MDH [00:39:18] Yeah, I think they were mostly centered in the Margaret Fuller House. You know, there was tension with -- the NAACP was very active in those, during that period, and I think, as Cambridge people, I think we were much more comfortable with the NAACP, even if they were out of touch, and even if they were all Oreos. You know that term, right?

KB [00:39:37] Yeah.

MDH [00:39:38] Okay.

KB [00:39:39] I know. I know [laughs].

MDH [00:39:41] I'm at the age where you say something and it's, like, "Could you explain that to me?" So, yeah, I'm not sure. So, you know, even if that was the feeling. I do think that there

was a sense that the NAACP and some of the other groups were adequate, were more than adequate, and that, you know, they're needed, and I do think they, the Black Panthers who came, were trying to, kind of, radicalize folks by doing their programs and, but there wasn't like people taking up with it. I mean, there were other folks that said, "Yeah. We need more of that!" And I do remember that the NAACP became more active in the '70s. They weren't as quiet in Cambridge. I mean, I think nationally they had a big name and there was a way that people looked to the NAACP as being significant in the city, so. The only person who might have -- Donald Harding. He's a person that was also in that, his family was in that book.

KB [00:40:49] Oh, okay.

MDH [00:40:50] *We are the Port*, Donald Harding, and he's around and he's also active in the Elks.

KB [00:40:57] Okay.

MDH [00:40:59] It's on Bishop Allen Drive. Selvin I think is connected somehow. He might be on their board or whatever. I'm not sure. But they've got programs there with Donald, and I only think of Donald because I do remember seeing him there. I wasn't sure if he was active there, and he's about two years older than I am.

KB [00:41:16] Okay. Yeah,

MDH [00:41:16] So, it's who your peers are.

KB [00:41:19] Right, yeah.

MDH [00:41:20] I would -- I could, sort of, I would say, but I don't remember -- I had a friend, but she's passed away, Jackie, kind of came over. No, but I want to say Donald is probably the one person I can think of.

KB [00:41:32] Okay.

MDH [00:41:33] I was thinking about that before you came. Who else was there? Who else was there?

KB [00:41:37] Yeah, it was a long time ago.

MDH [00:41:40] It's a long time ago and, you know, people come and go.

KB [00:41:41] Yeah. And it wasn't that long of a period.

MDH [00:41:43] And it wasn't long of a period. I mean, they're almost gone, and the only reason why I remember, I'm just over here from the Margaret Fuller House and I was already there for a significant part of my life so, you know, because we even had Girl Scouts there at one point. I don't know if that's come up in any of the records, but it'll be great to see if you could get those crates.

KB [00:42:03] Yeah.

MDH [00:42:04] I kick myself now and, you know, that I didn't somehow take them because I have most of the history of the Area 4 neighborhood, of the Area 4 Coalition. I Have a lot of that history. I brought it --.

KB [00:42:19] You have that here?

MDH [00:42:20] I have that here.

KB [00:42:21] Oh, okay [laughter]. So, you're just saving these records.

MDH [00:42:27] Yeah! I mean, I don't know why. I felt like it was important.

KB [00:42:32] I think, yeah, it is important.

MDH [00:42:34] And so I've got a lot of those records. I mean, they were being kept at different people's houses, you know, who said, "Look, okay, I'm no longer involved. Who's gonna take this?"

KB [00:42:42] Yeah. Yeah. And sometimes I think people are like, "Oh, this is so old. Who will use this anymore?".

MDH [00:42:47] Exactly!

KB [00:42:47] But then, like, it comes up in something like this.

MDH [00:42:53] It tells the story.

KB [00:42:53] Yeah. So, it's just so helpful to look back and see.

MDH [00:42:57] Yeah.

KB [00:42:59] But Lynn had a question too, that, I don't know if you might remember. She came across this article about a radio station being run at Margaret Fuller House.

MDH [00:43:08] Yes!

KB [00:43:09] You remember this [laughs]?

MDH [00:43:12] Yes!

MDH [00:43:12] Okay.

MDH [00:43:12] And Donald Harding I think was one of the people who was active in the radio station.

KB [00:43:17] Oh, okay.

MDH [00:43:18] But we had a radio station at the Margaret Fuller House, and this was before the Black Panthers. This is in the '60s. And I want to say, yeah, mid '60s.

KB [00:43:28] Okay.

MDH [00:43:29] And it was, because we had a teenage kind of program that was in the basement and the radio station came out of there. Yeah.

KB [00:43:38] That's really interesting.

MDH [00:43:40] Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I mean, I remember being able to catch it on the transistor [laughter]. I'm really dating myself! No one even knows what a transistor radio is. But I do remember that it actually broadcast and, you know, it was -- yeah, Donald Harding, definitely.

KB [00:44:00] Okay. Would they play music or was it talk radio?

MDH [00:44:03] No, it was mostly music. Music and some talk radio.

KB [00:44:06] Okay.

MDH [00:44:07] Yeah.

KB [00:44:07] Okay, that would be cool. I wish somebody had kept those recordings.

MDH [00:44:11] And I wonder if the radio station actually then moved to the high school. I hear, I've heard something that somehow it got picked up and moved to the high school because it was a teen program thing.

KB [00:44:24] Okay. Okay.

MDH [00:44:30] Yes.

KB [00:44:32] Okay. I'm glad you remember that because, yeah, there are just, like, all these little things that we're coming across, but we don't have any context.

MDH [00:44:38] There's probably not very much records of the, well, of the citizenship classes, up there. Now, remember, it predates me, I'm 67 next month.

KB [00:44:46] Okay.

MDH [00:44:46] And so my mother became a citizen by 1950, which meant she went in the '40s to take the classes to become a citizen.

KB [00:44:56] Okay. So, were those like they would teach you about U.S. history?

MDH [00:45:00] Yes.

KB [00:45:00] For when you took the exam and, like, maybe English classes for people who it wasn't their first language?

MDH [00:45:05] Yes, yes.

KB [00:45:06] Okay.

MDH [00:45:05] Yeah.

KB [00:45:06] Okay.

MDH [00:45:07] But I remember that's where she went. And, you know, she told me about it, growing up, that she didn't know anything about U.S. history, and it really was about U.S. history.

KB [00:45:17] Yeah. Okay.

MDH [00:45:18] You know, it's just the structure of government. The three branches, the, you know, she said you only know enough to be able to pass the exam.

KB [00:45:24] Yeah [laughs]. I know, they always say the people who take that test sometimes know more U.S. history than people who grew up here.

MDH [00:45:32] Yes, I think that's probably right.

KB [00:45:34] Yeah.

MDH [00:45:34] You know, but I know that voting was very important to her. So, but those were things, and the Well Baby Clinic was before we had the neighborhood health clinics. I mean, the visiting nurses used to come there to the Margaret Fuller House because for years and years my mother had a scale to weigh my youngest brother. And remember, when you were nursing, the idea that they could -- you know, it was like, you used to push a bottle because if you were nursing, you didn't know how much the baby took in, and so one of the tools was, get a little baby scale. I remember seeing it in the basement, which has now been thrown away. I should have kept it [laughter]. But I remember them weighing him on the scale, so I had a connection to that. And that's how you knew the baby was growing or not growing in the early days, and you would go -- that's where you would go for early- well, baby things.

KB [00:46:33] Okay.

MDH [00:46:35] And the first senior citizens program was in the Margaret Fuller House. That's how they got the money to build -- that no longer works -- that defunct lift.

KB [00:46:47] Oh, okay. What was that program about?

MDH [00:46:50] The senior citizen?

KB [00:46:51] Yeah.

MDH [00:46:51] Well, I think it became -- when Ellen stopped being the director, she ran for a little bit the senior citizens program, and it's -- they would have lunch there and little programs would exist. All this is now part of the city.

KB [00:47:09] Okay.

MDH [00:47:09] But there was one at the Margaret Fuller House and it's easy to have programs in a place that belongs to you as opposed to, it's a program space you're renting or it's a space that's been lent to you by the city. So, and I want to say that it was a way of helping the Margaret Fuller House too, by giving them this, by having this program for elders, but I did know they had lunch there.

KB [00:47:39] Okay.

MDH [00:47:40] And they had -- my mother wasn't quite a senior at that point, but she knew people who went to the Margaret Fuller House senior citizen program.

KB [00:47:52] Yeah, and they still have that lunch [3] for senior citizens, right?

MDH [00:47:56] That's right.

KB [00:47:57] Okay.

MDH [00:47:57] And now that's a -- I would say that's a new iteration for seniors that my friend Renee Gray was in charge of, and she did it until, you know, she passed away about three years ago.

KB [00:48:12] Okay.

MDH [00:48:12] Renee Gray. She's an activist but that was a sort of, a new iteration of let's have something for seniors that bring them together, not just as recipients, and so the breakfast is something that the city was funded. It was something that the house put up a little bit of money to get bread and cheese and all those kinds of things that were bringing elders together.

KB [00:48:37] Okay.

MDH [00:48:38] But I do know one person who I think is still going.

KB [00:48:40] Yeah, you actually suggested last year when I was during our oral history project to go there and I met one person, Elba, to interview, yeah, and it was a great interview.

MDH [00:48:52] Oh great!

KB [00:48:52] It was really helpful.

MDH [00:48:53] Is she the one, she's the one on the website?

KB [00:48:57] Yeah, yeah.

MDH [00:48:59] Okay.

KB [00:48:59] She lives right, like, right around the corner from you probably.

MDH [00:49:01] Yes.

KB [00:49:01] I can't remember which street but, yeah.

MDH [00:49:03] Yeah. Yes.

KB [00:49:04] Yeah, she's a nice person, but yeah, it was interesting when I went there too because it seemed like some of the people who go to that program had actually gone there [to Margaret Fuller House] when they were kids too.

MDH [00:49:16] Yes! Yes, I know particularly, I think her name is Sheila. She's one that goes there now. It's an interesting mix. I'm not exactly sure what the issues are, but I did -- I went, I forgot why I went, but I went too, because my friend was running it.

KB [00:49:36] Okay.

MDH [00:49:37] So, I went one Tuesday morning.

KB [00:49:39] Oh okay, yeah. It seems like a nice program.

MDH [00:49:41] Yeah, it is. And I think it's twice a month or that every week now? I don't know. They were --

KB I think it was every week. Yeah.

MDH [00:49:49] Yeah. That's great. I'm trying to think of what else. But that's all I can really remember from that time and a little bit about the context I think around why it got there in the first place.

KB [00:50:02] That's so helpful. Yeah, I didn't know -- I didn't know any of that stuff.

MDH [00:50:07] And it's unfortunate Lorraine Scott passed away seven, eight years ago.

KB [00:50:12] Okay.

MDH [00:50:12] Kind of suddenly. She had surgery for a torn rotator cuff and she never made it out.

KB [00:50:19] Oh, that's awful.

MDH [00:50:21] She never, you know, and then a week later, she passed. It's pretty sad.

KB [00:50:26] Did something go wrong in the surgery or was it just too much?

MDH [00:50:29] I don't know exactly, but she never came out of, you know, she ended up in a coma and then she passed away.

KB [00:50:36] That's horrible.

MDH [00:50:37] Yes. So, she was still energetic. I mean, she might have been maybe 80 this year, or something. So, it wasn't like she was an old woman.

KB [00:50:44] Yeah.

MDH [00:50:45] And she is also in the book, the Area 4 -- does the office have a copy?

KB [00:50:53] Yeah.

MDH [00:50:54] Okay.

KB [00:50:54] Yeah, they do.

MDH [00:50:55] Good.

KB [00:50:56] Yes, they've been using that too, as reference.

MDH [00:50:58] So she -- and Donald, the Harding family is in there.

KB [00:51:01] Okay.

MDH [00:51:01] So that would be a place that I think is worth following through with him. And you might want to see if there's any available police records around that time, because I'm sure they might have been, had stepped up patrols or something because, you know, there was also some violence that was beginning to erupt in the neighborhood, and so we had for a very short time, the Guardian Angels.

KB [00:51:33] What is this?

MDH [00:51:34] Oh, they were a little offshoot of the Black Panthers, but it was really -- came out of New York Latinos, where they would wear these redcaps, with a little thing to the side and, you know, and jackets, and they were, like, watchdogs for a community.

KB [00:51:52] Oh, okay.

MDH [00:51:52] But they were organized that way, and I'm not, and I think that might have come from the Latino community because they were sort of starting in some Latino communities in New York. And then you saw a little bit in Boston and then, you know, so that was, you know, I think I remember I saw them a few times and then that was it.

KB [00:52:14] Yeah. Was most of this activity happening, like in the Port specifically, or was this and other places in Cambridge, too?

MDH [00:52:21] Mostly in the Port. Maybe a little bit on the Coast, or what's called Riverside and that -- because that was also a large Black community. Both of those were. And, but it was mostly the Port. I mean, it was a -- yeah, because I think, you know, we -- if you look that the neighborhood was, that the neighborhood over time became Black. I would say it was an immigrant neighborhood when it started, and then it became mostly Black.

KB [00:52:54] Okay.

MDH [00:52:54] Because my mother worked with people who were also immigrants who were from Ireland, and Italy, Italian, you know, Portuguese from Cape Verde. Yeah, so that's her,

and, you know, and I just remember her telling me stories about -- because it's up, many, they were very Catholic because we had the Catholic Church and we had nuns. We had nuns in habits at one point. And telling these stories about, you know, that, because our church, you know, we were Pentecostal, so that means extreme Protestant [laughs] for a lot of people, and I think this idea somehow that other people were not as religious or as faithful as we were, and I remember her telling me about a woman named Mary who would not, or did not, you know, didn't eat fish on Fridays, and she would always go to mass before lunch and didn't eat lunch until so -- and Mom said, "Well, if Mary isn't in heaven, then I don't know because I don't do all that." But my mother was a very practical, like, not wanting to put others down, but when she saw people being, from her perspective, at least as religious as she was, and I don't believe in praying to saints, but Mary was, you know, Mary really was a real Christian from her perspective. So it was that and, you know, when President Kennedy was running -- so I might have been nine or so? He ran in 1960. Was that it?

KB [00:54:50] I think that's right.

MDH [00:54:51] So I would have been eight. But I remember her being very angry because it was the -- what was it? There was a commercial [on television] that said, "This Sunday, worship at the church of your choice while you still can," because there – yeah.

KB [00:55:10] That's a little frightening.

MDH [00:55:11] Well, this whole idea that if Kennedy became elected, that he would have to --because the Vatican was the head of the church, and there was this whole, you know, I mean, I can't believe that we would, you know, that we were, you know, that's who we were. But that he couldn't really -- he would have to take allegiance to the Vatican and not to the American people, and so we equated the American people with Protestantism, Protestants, with being Protestant. And so, if that's what you do, then anybody whose religion is outside of that, you would be, you know, that's what we did when Mitt Romney first ran for president about being a Mormon. You know, it was "He's not really a Christian. And what does it mean to be a Mormon?"

KB [00:56:03] Yeah. And mean to have a Mormon president

MDH [00:56:05] And to have a Mormon – what would that mean? So, you know, that was our most recent version of that. But I remember there was this commercial, and my mother was very, very angry.

KB [00:56:13] Yeah.

MDH [00:56:14] "Oh, that's wrong! They shouldn't," you know, "this is a place where anybody can worship God." And, you know, she was very -- so, you know, you usually remember the times when your mother got exercised about something.

KB [00:56:26] Yeah, that's true [laughter]. I know, I think that's true of everyone.

MDH [00:56:29] That gets me – I'm thinking with *anyone*. I think that the few times when your mother was really upset about something, other than you didn't make your bed, you kind of remember.

KB [00:56:40] That's what sticks out sick [laughs].

MDH [00:56:43] Yes, so.

KB [00:56:45] Okay.

MDH [00:56:48] Yeah, so, you know, let me know what else I can do. But I know those -- I mean, I hope they just didn't throw them away. But

KB [00:56:54] Yeah, I'll check into that.

MDH [00:56:56] There were old, you know, there were these little newsletters and just stuff.

KB [00:57:01] Yeah.

MDH [00:57:04] That's how I know it was a Red Feather Agency. There was information. That's how I know about the Edith Hurlbut Trust. I mean, that was a real eye opener.

KB [00:57:11] Yeah, okay.

MDH [00:57:13] That there was this Edith Hurlbut Trust, and I knew it was connected to Bob Hurlbut, who was Executive Director of Cambridge Community Foundation.

KB [00:57:22] Okay. Yeah, it would be really nice to go through those because I'm sure it has a lot that we don't know yet.

MDH [00:57:29] Yeah, And I even wonder, there might be, you know, the city probably didn't keep as much records as they do now because they're much more organized, but I'm trying to think of all the ways where there might be documents through the city and different agencies. But, you know, even, you know, agencies these days throw stuff away, which I think it's really bad.

KB [00:57:50] Yeah, and I think back then there – yeah, like you said, people just didn't realize the importance of keeping records, so yeah.

MDH [00:57:59] Yeah. I'm working on a, you know, I'm part of a team working on renovating 56 Magazine Street, which our church, the head church right on the corner, purchased five years ago. And just, you know, I mean, it was largely Norwegian.

KB [00:58:18] Really?

MDH [00:58:19] I mean, it was, well, a Norwegian background, because when we got in there, they had, you know, things like Newfoundland and, you know, all of this.

KB [00:58:31] So, is this the Pentecostal Tabernacle on Magazine Street?

MDH [00:58:34] Yes.

KB [00:58:35] Okay.

MDH [00:58:36] So it's -- the first church is right on the corner.

KB [00:58:37] Yeah.

MDH [00:58:38] Right? And then we purchased it five years ago and -- because we just outgrew, and we were having three services and we're still crowded.

KB [00:58:48] Yeah [laughter].

MDH [00:58:49] So we purchased that one because we just needed the space, but there was still old, you know, old artifacts that were still up on the walls and just, you know, and there is a -- what's her name? Zonnabel Clark who, there -- she has a collection now at the Cambridge Historic Commission, you know, including services and whatnot. That's how we knew that Martin Luther King came and spent time at the church. I think he was ministering around, and so he was there, like, for a meeting and breakfast or something.

KB [00:59:31] The one on Magazine Street?

MDH [00:59:32] The one on Magazine Street.

KB [00:59:33] Okay. That's interesting.

MDH [00:59:34] So, we know those -- that information from people like Zonnabel, who kept that information.

KB [00:59:42] Yeah.

MDH [00:59:43] So.

KB [00:59:44] Okay, well yeah. I'll look around and see if Lynn or anyone has heard about the records and, I mean, hopefully we can try.

MDH [00:59:50] But there was like fifteen crates. I want to – well, a lot of them, and it was in a metal cabinet on the third floor.

KB [00:59:57] Okay [laughter]. Good to know. I know, I trust you because you were the one who carried them all up there, so [laughs] I'm sure you remember every box.

MDH [01:00:04] Well, only because, I mean, I didn't really -- to me, it was just mind blowing that all this history, and it was also a place I love, and maybe I should have studied history. Maybe I would have.

KB [01:00:17] Yeah. You still can! Well –

MDH [01:00:18] I still can. I, you know, this is one of the ways I am studying history is by doing the walking tours, and, in fact, my daughter does this in North Carolina.

KB [01:00:31] Oh really?

MDH [01:00:32] Which just really blows my mind because she's been doing it for a while in the Hayti Center in Durham on what used to be called Black Wall Street in Durham because of all the insurance agencies that were there. And then I had started doing walking tours with the Society. But, you know, I've been really meaning – I need to, I should get more involved in the Society because I really do love history.

KB [01:00:57] Yeah! Well, this is the things that you've already done, like, within the oral history program has been so helpful. So, I know for you it doesn't maybe feel like you're being a historian, but your memories are so helpful, and they really are giving a lot of historic information.

MDH [01:01:13] I'm glad. I'm glad.

KB [01:01:14] Yeah.

MDH [01:01:16] I would like at some point to figure out how I could be of more help. Like, you know, somebody's asked me to do a walking tour of the neighborhood, which is fine. I have done one for Brandeis students. You know, and I'm not sure where, and maybe I'll have a conversation with Lynn, so where are we going? You know, where is the Society going in terms of -- because I do think the tours, whether it's in different neighborhoods, or whether there is a way of keeping history, or the context for why things are here now. I also did it for Get to Know your Neighbor Day, back in September. You know, there's this monthly, I think it came out of some of Bob Putnam's work, you know, Bowling Alone Better Together, and it's sort of a natural of getting to know your neighbors, and so I did, it was a small one, but I did one last September on that Sunday, and people were really – first of all, they were all young and they all had recently moved, and they were very excited to know more about the neighborhood. So, I've actually continued to study the neighborhood.

KB [01:02:28] Yeah. That's great too.

MDH [01:02:30] As just a way of knowing more and so -- being able to pick out more, you know, getting a little bit to know more about who Captain Roberts was, who was -- the school was initially named after. So, I've been thinking about, how do I, sort of, take on a -- for myself just kind of a stronger connection. And it really began because I really -- the question for me was, why do so many Bajans live in this neighborhood, and
other islands didn't, you know? And I was trying to figure that out because there were four churches in this neighborhood that were all generated from people who were from Barbados and some came through the Panama Canal and ended here. But still, you know, why? I'm trying to answer that question.

KB [01:03:28] Yeah. Have you come up with much?

MDH [01:03:29] Well, I think there were some -- there was already a Black community here because of the ability to cross the bridge. You know, when Boston segregated its public schools in 1833, there was a fight and they lost, but you could walk over the bridge. And there was also work here. There was the factories. So I think, you know, people always move where there are other people that, you know, they always move where other people who look like them live. And also, I think after the building of the Panama Canal, Simplex Wireless -- it's the company that laid the Atlantic cable to connect the US to Europe by phone.

KB [01:04:28] Okay [laughter]

MDH [01:04:20] And people say, "A cable?!" [laughter] Yes. *Long* before the Internet. But, on the other side of the bridge, because I, my family has been in this country since 1911. And I had a great uncle who worked at Simplex Wireless and Cable, with a lot of other Bajan men. So they -- he had also, many of them had worked on the Panama Canal, came to Boston, was able to get a job at Simplex Cable and Wireless.

KB [01:04:55] And that was based in Cambridge?

MDH [01:04:56] That was based in Cambridge.

KB [01:04:57] Okay.

MDH [01:04:58] Right behind, do you know where the old Star Market was on the other side of Mass Ave.

KB [01:05:05] Yep

MDH [01:05:06] Simplex Cable and Wireless was there.

KB [01:05:08] Okay.

MDH [01:05:09] Right? And people -- they had a lot of jobs. So, you know, so that people come where they know there are other people who look like them and talk like them. You know, the -- I didn't know enough about this, but there was a church. It was kind of a fringe Protestant church at the [inaudible] something or other. I remember Father Ford on Allston Street and so many of them went to that church. I mean, it's just interesting that the more I'm learning, the more connections that I'm finding.

KB [01:06:43] Yeah.

MDH [01:06:43] But I do think that is probably one explanation because both Barbados and Jamaica were colonized by the British around the same time. Now, Barb -- Jamaica is one – Barbados is 1/25th the size of Jamaica, but I didn't see many Jamaicans here the way I saw Barbadians. And so I really think it's the connection, because at one point, more than a third of the island, the men on the island were building the Panama Canal and they have a little relationship and celebrated one hundred years of that relationship in 2016 in Barbados, in Panama, there was a whole -- and there's a community that's very much a Bajan sort of.

KB [01:06:37] Yeah. I wonder, do you know other than the Panama Canal, were there more reasons for Bajans to immigrate at that time?

MDH [01:06:44] Well, yes. And in fact, I forgot the young man's name who I did it with. I'm terrible at names at this point in my life. He did the tours with me.

KB [01:06:52] Oh, Joe?

MDH [01:06:53] Joe.

KB [01:06:54] I can't -- I don't think I know his last name, but yeah.

MDH [01:06:58] Well, there was also what was happening in the sugar industry, which is why they went to the Panama Canal. Where Jamaica's so much larger, they grew coffee, they grew – Barbados only grew sugarcane. They wiped out the forests and built sugarcane. It's a tiny

island. And so, by the time you get to 1840, we're not only having sugar cane, we're having sugar beets, and so the market for sugar was changing, and we were getting it from Cuba and other places, so it wasn't -- yes Barbados may have the oldest rum in the world because of it, but it became not the only game in town, and so looking for work and looking for opportunities for work, the Panama Canal was it was a natural for that.

KB [01:07:42] Okay. Yeah, that makes sense.

MDH [01:07:45] Yeah. And it was so cheap. My mother, you know, grew up with stories about somebody dying on the canal from either illness, or from a fever, or getting hurt, so -- because she was born in 1922, it was over, but those who came back, she remembers hearing of those stories.

KB [01:08:07] Yeah.

MDH [01:08:09] Growing up with grandparents who told her about -- every household had somebody who died there, so.

KB [01:08:16] Wow

MDH [01:08:17] Yeah. And I'm not sure how true that is, but there was a lot of people. Almost half the men on the island at one point were building the Panama Canal. Which only took five years, I think. It wasn't long, I mean.

KB [01:08:30] Yeah, that would be interesting, too. I guess I didn't realize how dangerous or how many deaths there were.

MDH [01:08:35] Oh, a lot.

KB [01:08:36] That would be interesting to explore.

MDH [01:08:37] Yeah, and my brother and I are interesting, or interested in actually visiting.

KB [01:08:41] Yeah.

MDH [01:08:42] And it's unfortunate because, you know, they said it's not very touristy. You know, if you're looking for places to go, Panama isn't it.

KB [01:08:51] Yeah [laughter]. I don't really know anyone who has been on vacation there.

MDH [01:08:55] They have a canal, and they have a train ride, but there's nothing, like, really, you know, so it would be really an exploration for us to sort of find out more. There's a church [sound of door opening] oh! [inaudible] be comfortable.

KB [01:08:11] Mmhmm

[Marian's son and granddaughter arrive, and she and KB speak to them briefly]

MDH [01:09:51] Oh, okay. So, yeah. There are just so many things but, you know. Just the factories themselves would be interesting thinking about. Well, that was 'What does Cambridge make?'

KB [01:10:04] Yeah.

MDH [01:10:06] Right. And what is next year's thing?

KB [01:10:11] I can't remember right now, but I can let you know, I think it has to do with women's history.

MDH [01:10:17] Oh, yeah. Well, I'm on the suffragette committee.

KB [01:10:19] Oh, okay.

MDH [01:10:20] Yeah. Which is sort of exciting. It's an area that I didn't – wasn't very active in. You know, I mean, I'm a woman and there are things I care about, but I wasn't very –

KB [01:10:29] Yeah. What is that? I have not heard of the suffragette committee.

MDH [01:10:32] Yeah, the city of Cambridge. I got appointed by the city manager. There's a -- who heads it from the city? Lynn Peterson?

KB [01:10:40] Okay.

MDH [01:10:41] From the city manager's office. And then there's a person from -- Kim [pause] It's the group who – what's the division called? It's not the trash people [laughs]. It's the bigger department because they are -- they're responsible for all the land. Because they're going to -- actually we're going to have, at some point, we're going to put out to bid to artists to do some sort of sculpture monument for women.

KB [01:10:18] Okay.

MDH [01:10:19] So, we're actually right now going to look at sites where we might place a statue. So, we're looking at a number of different sites.

KB [01:10:30] Wow, that's great [unclear, voices overlapping].

MDH [01:11:33] So this is not a huge commitment, there's maybe eleven of us. And I know tomorrow they are going on a, kind of, a tour to look at spaces, potential spaces on – there's north, so we're looking even as far as Northpoint. I mean, the easiest place would be to put it in is Harvard Square, which is where I bring people whenever someone comes.

KB [01:11:52] Yeah [laughter].

MDH [01:11:53] But we're looking at things around Central Square and whatnot, and I guess the other part of the, you know, in New York is struggling because they're putting up a

memorial of Cady Stanton and one other person who was at that time, I forgot the name because I'm -- all the names now [inaudible].

KB [01:12:11] Yeah. You have a lot of names in your head.

MDH [01:12:14] I have a lot of names. But the women's movement.

KB [01:12:16] Yeah.

MDH [01:12:17] In Central Park, and the significant issue is that the women's movement, the suffragette movement included more than just white women that we read about in the [literature], and the people who did women's studies know that, but for most of the public –

KB [01:12:35] Yeah. Susan B. Anthony.

MDH [01:12:36] Susan B. Anthony, Cady Stanton. That's who it is, Susan B. Anthony, Cady Stanton, you know, here we know about the Grimke Sisters because they were from New England. So, but there were also a number of Black women who were very active in that movement and, you know, somehow coming to terms with what happened when Black men were given the right to vote and women weren't. You know, I mean, yeah, I can see how people would say very racist things. I'm not surprised. I don't know why people are surprised. You know what I mean? I just think when people are angry and disappointed, and the fact is that -- I'm blanking on his name, too. He was an abolitionist, Black man, friend of Abraham Lincoln.

KB [01:13:36] Frederick Douglass?

MDH [01:13:37] Frederick Douglass actually fought for, not just for Blacks to have the right to vote, for women included in that, and he lost that, and he was very disappointed it didn't happen. But what happened is that a real separation came as a result of getting, you know, do we get what we can, since women weren't given the right to vote anyway, so should we make sure we include Black men, or do we make sure we include everybody?

KB [01:14:05] Yeah.

MDH [01:14:06] That was a real source, which I didn't know, you know, I mean.

KB [01:14:09] Yeah, that is interesting. I didn't know that either.

MDH [01:14:11] I didn't know that either. And so you've got some pretty not nice statements. You know, something about, "How can a Black man tell me anything?" And "I have as much right to vote as --," you know, and being quite derogatory. But I get it.

KB [01:14:25] Yeah, I can imagine. Yeah.

MDH [01:14:27] And you know what, I get it. I get it. I get it. It doesn't take away, because I'm -- I don't know where you are with this, but I do think some people who are considered heroes are also victims of their time.

KB [01:14:41] Yeah. Yeah.

MDH [01:14:43] And so yes, was he anti-Semitic? Okay, I get it.

KB [01:14:48] Yeah, I know, I've thought about that a lot too and kind of feel the same way because, yeah, the attitudes about things were so different.

MDH [01:14:57] Were so different. It would have been, they probably wouldn't have received the stature they received if they had been arguing for the rights of everybody.

KB [01:15:05] Yeah, and there was just a strategic element of making progress.

MDH [01:15:09] Yeah, that's right. And, you know, or folks, you know, my daughter is, you know, as she's doing the story and it's like, "Well, you didn't have any people from the gay community listed here." And she said, "Because I don't know of any." I mean, "If you have

them, please. I would include them. But, you know, we -- the story is told by people who are making this story."

KB [01:15:33] Yeah.

MDH [01:15:34] In the history and her story, that they're -- not everyone is included. Not all those voices are included. And I'm not a historian, so I tell the stories from what I know. But there, you know, but she does sort of struggle or hear, you know, when people sort of want to get another part of the story, so until people are studying that and including that -- even now it's still a struggle to include women.

KB [01:15:58] Yeah. Well, that's kind of what the historical society has been doing because a lot of archives have this problem where their records are mainly white men who were wealthy because that's who could write or who have more records about them. And so part of what they were trying to do with the oral history project is capture more people in the archives because there just aren't that many people of color, there aren't that many women.

MDH [01:16:23] I mean, well Sarah Burks knows a lot. [inaudible, voices overlapping] I don't know if there's tension between the Commission and the Society. I mean, I think both are important, but Sarah knows a lot. Sarah really is on the committee, and she's the one who's provided us with information in terms of Cambridge and Boston historically about women who lived in the city. I guess there were some public meetings in the central square area that she has from old, you know.

KB [01:16:56] Okay, yeah, okay.

MDH [01:16:56] So that's great.

KB [01:16:57] Yeah. Yeah, I don't know too much about it yet but, yeah, I think that's what they're doing for next year.

MDH [01:17:04] That's great.

KB [01:17:06] But thank you so much for this today. It's been so helpful.

MDH [01:17:09] I'm glad, I hope it is. I mean,

KB [01:17:10] Yeah, it really is.

MDH [01:17:11] I sort of feel like I kind of blither on, but --

KB [01:17:12] No, it's great.

MDH [01:17:14] There's so many stories I need to get told about all this.

KB [01:17:17] Yeah, definitely [sound of door opening]. And so there might be a chance I'll be back in touch at some point if we need more help.

MDH [01:17:22] That's fine. That's fine.

KB [01:17:23] Okay, great.

MDH [01:17:25] And if I think of more, and I will be thinking of more [background talking]

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[1] Marian corrected the transcript to read "Worcester" Street, not "Pine" Street.

[2] In 2018 Marian led a Cambridge Historical Society walking tour about the Caribbean community in the Port.

[3] Marian corrected the transcript to read "lunch," not "breakfast".

End of Interview

This interview is part of "Sweet Souls, Voices from the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House in Cambridge," an oral history project of the Cambridge Historical Society, in partnership with the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House and The Loop Lab. This project was funded in part by Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.