**New Deal Neighbors: Oral Histories of Greenhills, Ohio**

Interviewee: Bernice Gay/ Interviewer: Kevin Rigsbee/ Assistant: Robbie Due

Interview Location: Greenhills Public Library, Greenhills, Ohio/ Interview Date: March 6, 2018

Transcribed: March 12, 2018/Last Edited: April 27, 2018

Kevin Rigsbee: This is Kevin Rigsbee interviewing for the Greenhills Historical Society. First, could you tell us your name?

Bernice Gay: Bernice Gay, maiden name Gurten.

KR: And Mrs. Gay, when did you first move to Greenhills?

BG: I didn't get to move to Greenhills. I was actually born at home, at 15 Foxworth Lane in 1939, the year after the village opened. So I'm a true Greenhillian.

KR: Alright, did your family ever mention why they moved to Greenhills?

BG: They wanted to be out where the children could have a little more access to play. I have three older siblings, two older sisters and an older brother, and they wanted to move a little further out. And it was a new thing coming, a new, a new plan. And they lived down in Hartwell. When they moved to Greenhills, all of their friends told my dad, “Chip, what are you moving those three little kids and them all the way out there in the country for?” And they lived near Vine Street down in Hartwell, and he said, “One of these days Winton Road’s going to be just as busy as Vine Street,” and everybody thought he was crazy. So that's how the family got to Greenhills.

(1:30)

KR: Now, what was your house in Greenhills like? The first house you lived in?

BG: I lived in the same house until I got married, and it was one of the “units,” they called them, and I lived on Foxworth, and we had three bedrooms upstairs and a bathroom, and downstairs there was a large room that was a living room. It was the all-purpose room. And we had a nice kitchen with a little, apartment size stove and a little refrigerator that…You rented the refrigerator along with your monthly rent. And there was a tiny little hallway, and my mother wrote the “Around Town” column for the *Tribune* and the *Journal*, and on the landing going up the stairs there were all these baby pictures of each one of us, but right in the middle of the landing was metal cabinets full of *Tribune* and *Journals* that Mother had written her column in. She saved all of them, I think. That was a long time.

(2:50)

KR: So, I’d imagine.  Let’s see, was there any part of your house that you particularly liked?

BG: Hmm. I think the backyard. The backyard, my mother loved flowers, so she planted borders to separate our yard from the other yards, and that helped to confine the kids into their own yards on to, at the back part of the yard, there was an apple tree and there was also a humongous lilac bush, and as little kids we played in the lilac bush and we took little sections of the lilac bush that were different rooms and they were our playhouse.

(3:40)

KR: Outside of playing in your backyard, what activities did you participate in in Greenhills?

BG: The big one, I was on the coat team, and also the first year that the country club had a swim team, and the coat team came up here to practice during the summer time, and there were four of us girls who were on the coat team, and it was Linda Stafford, and Shirley Hamilton, and Judy Crepes and I. And so all of our activities were in the summer time or all around the pool. We went there when, I was on the coat team for, I think it was two or three years, I swam for them. We would go to swimming practice, then we would teach swimming lessons and then we would go home, eat lunch, change our bathing suits from our tank suits that we were practicing in, to our regular swimming suits, and back to the pool, almost still in clothes, usually. But we spent, the whole family usually spent all their time there. It was a bargain for a family of seven kids to be able to swim all year for the, you know, the cost of the pass. And the pass would gradually go up a little bit but I think it was five dollars or something like that for the early years, it was not very, as I remember as a teenager I think it was twenty five or thirty five dollars for the whole summer, for the whole family to swim ,so that was a bargain for us. And then, when we were little kids we roller skated where the athletic house was, that was, the football field and everything were down behind our house, so as little kids we used to go skating on the, because it was real smooth over there at the field house, and also down at the marketplace we skated a lot. And that was years before skateboards and all that. But we just had a plain old clamp-on-our-shoes roller skates, so we really liked to do that. We played in the woods a lot as kids, and you could walk back through, we had a park at the very back on the other side of where the football field and everything was, there was a park called Beech Woods, and we had Girl Scout activities and Boy Scout activities and everything, but we would have our field days back over there in Beech Woods, and they had beautifully built stone fireplaces for you to grill out and have picnics and so on, and we really loved playing in Beech Woods and going there for picnics and so on, too. Greenhills was planned so that there was something for everybody, and all of the community activities, we had movies on Saturday morning. I got to see *Lassie Come Home.* That I think was a nickel, maybe, to get into the movies, and so everything was pretty much here for us to do and we had different activities that, ran to the art museum sometimes, and school trips that we got to take down to see the children's theater and, and the children's symphony, and all of that that, we did field trips as well. And for school in high school I played basketball and volleyball and I still play-cheer volleyball, can we cut that part? [laughs] No so we just did everything around, everything was still in the community. Those days, you know, we all knew our neighbors, we all helped out our neighbors, they helped us out. During the war we didn't have a telephone and my dad worked for the glass and electric company as a troubleshooter. And so, our next-door neighbors, if there was a storm in the middle of the night, my dad got called out, they called our neighbors and they knocked on our door and told us dad had to go to work. And so the families were just really close-knit. My sisters both married fellas who they met at school as little kids. My oldest sister married Ted Gentry, who is one of the alumni, um, I forgot what they called them, him. He was in the Hall of Fame, Alumni Hall of Fame, and his dad was on the fire department and on the police department, and his Mom worked at the cafeteria at the school and then she also worked for a time at the drugstore. My other sister, Dottie, married Frank Gill and he, and I think they were in maybe third grade and they were seated next to each other cuz we were seated alphabetically then, and he was Gill, and my sister was Gurten, so they were right next to each other in school, and they ended up becoming high school sweethearts and got married and were married well over fifty years. No, sixty years, sixty years. And he just recently passed away. But his mother was the beautician and ran the beauty shop upstairs where the dentist was. So you did everything right here in town. And really there wasn't any other place to go but here in town, so. You know, it was a distance for us to take the bus to go downtown to, to a regular movie or whatever. Yeah.

(10:00)

KR: What were things like in the Greenhill, Greenhills schools?

BG: Greenhills schools. Well, my mother knew all my teachers, so if I got in trouble in school I was in double trouble when I got home, cuz usually mother knew about it before I ever got home. But there, too, we still stay in touch with the lady, her name is Miss Sedge, who was our English teacher, and she's going to be ninety years old this year. We were just discussing that at our class luncheon that we had today, that we need to do something special for Miss Sedge for her ninetieth birthday. She came to Greenhills when we were freshmen and that poor woman, oh we broke her in. She was new, just started teaching and it's a wonder that poor lady ever finished out her teaching career. But she did till we, she retired, and she loved us and we loved her. Some of my older sisters, we used, and I had the same teachers even though they were eight and ten years older than me. And there was a lady her name was Miss Slow, and Miss Slow would read all the eighth graders Evangeline and she would always cry at the end, and it got to where the children in the eighth grade looked forward to, not so much listening to Evangeline, but to seeing Miss Slow cry. You know, that's kind of weird, but that's the way kids are. Kids look for the unusual and somebody…and Miss Duncan was a really good friend to the students and she was, she was one of my sister's teachers, but we had some really good teachers. One or two maybe that weren't quite as good. But, all in all, we had excellent teachers, especially our English teachers. And it's really a shame that a lot of kids now with computers aren't going to learn to converse. It's going to be very difficult for a lot of kids to converse, cuz they're just tied to that little, its mine and you know what I do is mine, and to be able to get out and verbalize with other kids and so on, a lot of kids I'm seeing now, at least young kids, are having a really hard time just learning to converse, learning how to write a letter. Little things like that. And we really had that pounded into us. My mother, being a journalist, really, really pounded spelling and grammar into us. [whispers] I don't use it like I should, but don't tell my mother. [laughs] Yeah, we, we had some excellent school teachers, but Miss Sedge really sticks out, I think, as one of my favorites. If you interviewed others who had her, they probably said the same thing, yeah.

(13:30)

 KR: Who lived in Greenhills?

BG: Who lived in Greenhills? I lived in Greenhills.

 KR: [laughs] Of course.

BG: And my family, we just all inter, interacted with each other through all the different community events that we had going on. My mother was a charter member of Greenhills Presbyterian Church when we were kids. We didn't have the Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, or the Presbyterian church or the Lutheran Church that's down south of town. We met in the community building. And the Catholics had their Church, while we were having a Protestant, it wasn't a denomination at that time, a Protestant Sunday school and we got to go to Sunday school while they had church. Then they took down their altar and put all of that paraphernalia, you know, that every church has, they put all of that away, and then the Protestant church had their regular church service. So, there too, we did everything within the community. And my in-laws lived down south of town, in Finneytown, and they met originally in Liberty Schoolhouse, old school house. And the one regret that I have about Greenhills is that our little Science Hall School, they tore down when they built Winton Woods, and it would have been such an interesting historical marker. You can barely, if you take the little path up through the upper part of Winton Woods, up above the lake, you can see bits and pieces of where Science Hall Road used to be. But that's something we can't get back. My mother always hated it when Forest Park was built, that they wanted to build into the greenbelt and that's something that separated us, that greenbelt around us. We used to watch the herons and you think, “oh, that's something simple.” Well, it was something really special to us, when the herons came to roost is, they roosted in the greenbelt. And that's not something that every little community can get. But the community building was for movies, the community building was our school from kindergarten to, to twelfth grade, and our community building was for extra activities. You know, they sometimes put on different kinds of shows. Those of us who took dance lessons and things like that, that's where they had their recitals. And there, again, in the summertime, they had Fireman's Carnival over at the marketplace. Years and years ago behind where the swimming pool is there was a Bandstand area. And I don't know if it was at the school during one of the band concerts or the, the park down behind the Bandstand, they used to sometimes show movies there in the summer time too. But Rosie Clooney, there was a fella here who had his own little band, and Rosemary Clooney and her sisters sing with that band. And so, we've got ties, you know, lots of ties and, and out of the community. They came, the Clooney sisters came up to visit their aunt, and that's how the kids in Greenhills got to know the Clooney sisters. So that's something that, you know, just really special. So, there’re just a little, so many activities that we had, you know, that were different. We had a guy who came around with a little pony. Kids got their picture taken with the little Pony, I think almost every kid in Greenhills at one time or another got their picture taken on that pony. But he didn't do that until I was older, so my brothers got their pictures, but I didn't. But there’re just all kinds of different situations throughout the years, you know, because we were such a close-knit community. The one thing that totally separated people sometimes, though, was the Democratic Club and the Republican Club. And the Republican Club used to put on this show, and they had a group of girls that my sisters were in, this group. And they were called the Nacilbupers. That's Republican spelled backwards. And they did their little dance up on stage, and they had a special little song that they sang that “they’re Republican kids,” and it was a cute little song that they made up. They were the Nacilbupers. And so those were the two divisions that, that if you want to call it divisions. Rivalry, let's say. But, between those two clubs and it was more friendly rivalry than anything but, yeah. And then, later on, I guess in the late forties, early fifties, things started to change after the government sold the village to the people and GHOC was formed, and that was Greenhills Homeowners Association, and then I think people were getting more cars and being able to go out of the village more. In the early days they had a little Jitney that went over to Mount Healthy, that you could shop over at Mount Healthy if you wanted to. And it didn't run every day, I don't think. But, but in the early days, you know, we were just so close, we did everything together. You socialized, you went to school, your parents were friends, and your friends, and…You know everything was just here. And so you didn't have too much opportunity to, to go out and meet other people when you’re little kids. And each individual block had its own playground, too. And in the playground was a set of swings, a nice big set of swings. There was a set of monkey bars, and there was a sandbox. And so we played baseball, softball mainly in those areas. And then you had your sports. You had track, we had football, and we had basketball. And my dad, in the very early days, they had these metal posts that looked sort of like a tripod, and they had lights on them for our nighttime football games. But, I don't remember how, how long it was, but maybe late forties, middle forties, they decided to erect electric poles, so my dad got electric poles mounted over there at the football field and they put up a, a band of lights up on the post. I don't know what you would call them, but this big bar of lights up on the post. And he would climb up the poles in the springtime and he flipped those lights over to the other side of the armature on the post, to direct to the baseball diamonds. And then in the fall, he’d flip them back over to the football side of them, so we had lights for the football games, and then it was the next thing to next spring, and the next fall they go back. And from doing that they gave him, and my mother, passes to the football games. And I think passes were maybe twenty-five cents each game, thirty-five cents each game, but that was his payment for, for doing that for the school so that they would have lights for the football games and the baseball games. So, it wasn't big time pay, but they enjoyed going to the games. And they always, if they could go, always went to the games, especially if my brother-in-law's were playing now. So, no, everything was family, social. Everything was right here.

(22:55)

KR: We've talked a lot about family and Greenhills. Were there any single people who lived there?

BG: We had a couple of teachers that were single, a few teachers. Mr. Booth and Mr. Bert, they were single, and they ended up…Let's see, Mr. Bert married a lady who was a teacher. And we didn't have a whole lot of single people that I recall. Because, when they first moved to the village, you had to be within a certain income, and you couldn't have boys and girls sleep in the same bed room. We had two girls and my brother, so my mom and dad had to get a three-bedroom unit, and, because Bill wasn't allowed to sleep in the girl's bedroom. Now, I don't know that that would make much difference, but back then, it did. And so then, when I came along I went to the girls’ room, because they, they would switch bedrooms around depending on. By the time my older sisters got married, my brother got married, I got the little room, so my three younger brothers got the big room. [laughs] And so that's just the way it was then. You know that, I just don't remember a lot of single people, except for some teachers that, that we've had over the years, because most everything was geared to families. But there were a few one-bedroom units. So I…they were for young married couples, I guess, or maybe old married couples, I don't know.

(24:50)

KR: In terms of activities, were there any differences between what the girls did and what the boys did?

BG: Well, the girls had their own sports, and the boys had their own sports. The girls weren't allowed to play on the boys’ sports team and the boys didn't want ‘em. Except when we played in our, in our playgrounds and then the neighborhood got together and played together. And we played things like “Kick the Can,” and I know you're going to look at me crazy, but there was one called “Three Steps in the Mud Puddle,” and “Mother-May-I,” and “Go Shoot Go,” and “Tag,” and “Dodgeball,” and we played all those kind of things. When the street lights came on, we knew it was time we had to go home, cuz they came on automatically. And then I played, for instance, I played basketball. The girls weren't allowed to play full court, back in those days, because it was too strenuous, so you had guards on one end, and forwards on the other end, and the girls weren't allowed to go over the center line, if you were a forward, or the guards to go to the forward side if you were guard. So most all of our activities…Then we finally, by then, had the bowling lanes and it was a good hangout place for a lot of the teenagers, when we finally got the bowling lanes. But, before the bowling lanes came, it was the movies, sports, or playing in the woods, or you know just taking a hike. And we’re talking before Winton Woods was built. That became a big activity sports-wise, you know, the kids going in fishing in some of those smaller lakes and going out in the row boats and, and boating. But that wasn't in the early days of Greenhills. Actually, in the very earlier days of Greenhills, over by where the athletic fields were, there was a hollowed-out area in the ground, and the fire department would go over and fill it with water and that was our ice skating rink, and we built a bonfire by the ice rink, and that was our winter activity. The other activity wasn't exactly a sport, and that was picking blackberries. We had some good blackberry bushes, good blackberry cobblers, too, blackberry jelly, but can't classify those exactly as sports. But those were just some of the things that took up your summer times and, you know, cuz you didn't have the transportation, and a lot of us just couldn't afford to go out to go, you know ,when we were young, to go to movies and things like that. Back in those days you still collected pop bottles for spending money. So yeah, sports-wise it was, was very different with the boys and the girls, at least school wise. But when they got the kids together in the neighborhoods, at these little neighborhood parks that we had, we played baseball, we threw sand in each other's hair—I guess I shouldn't tell you about that—loved to swing, sat around, sang songs, as the girls played “Jack's,” the boys played “Mumbly Peg.” Things that, oh my goodness, you dare let your child out with a knife, that would that would totally be unheard of today, cuz it was very dangerous. In fact I, I had a step-grandfather who lost his eye playing Mumbly Peg. So that game has been around for many, many, many years, but not one that I would encourage my grandkids or great-grandkids to play. But sports were a big thing. But our neighborhood sports were all…Now there was one sport we have that you can't exactly call a sport, but we had these wars, the wars were between this group on F block and that group on F block. And we would have mudball fights, and you'd use garbage can lids for shields. And pity the poor guy that ever put a rock in a mud ball. It was like snowball fights. So it was the one street against another street. It was fun for the kids, and it gave them something to do, and they would run out, you know, tearing up things and so on. It was, it was just good fun between the kids, as long as you kept the parents out. Instead of, you know, “He hit my kid with a mud ball,” well, “Your kid hit mine with a mud ball, too,” kind of thing, you know, these things.

(30:40)

KR: You mentioned that you didn't really go to Cincinnati very often. Was there, what sort of occasions would there be where you would go.

BG: School shopping and Christmas shopping. And when my mom would go, especially Christmas shopping, I guess, she would go down to Shillito’s or McAlpin's usually. She liked to shop at McAlpin's. And my dad would take us down to the river to watch the boats go up and down the river, and there was a train switching station down by the river too, that he’d take us to, and we could watch the trains go back and forth, and back and forth, and switch, switch the engines around, or switch the different cars around, and it was, it wasn't really real interesting, but Dad thought it kept us entertained while mother was shopping. And that was usually at Christmas time, because Swifton didn't open until, and that was our first shopping center in Cincinnati area. Swifton didn't open until I'd say, early fifties maybe. I’m not positive exactly when, but there were malls. We we usually went down to “the valley,” as they referred to it, because it was down along the mall’s creek, and we would shop, because we, I lived in that area before moving, we would shop down in like Carthage, and Elmwood, and those places. And there were separate shoe stores. There was a dime store and things were really a dime, not like the Dollar Tree now, that's really a dollar, these were really a dime. And we would go to the separate little shops that, school clothes, and Christmas, if we got clothes for Christmas. And when we got to be a teenager, of course you had to have a pair of Spalding's. Well, one year, I think it was my junior year, I got to get a pair of Spalding saddle oxfords for Chris…for…No, they were for my birthday, which was in August, and we started school right after Labor Day. So that year I was lucky enough to get a pair of Spalding's, and for Christmas I got a pair of Spalding penny loafers. So I really had it made that year. So other than that, you know, a lot of people took the bus over to Mount Healthy to shop. But otherwise you had to take the bus, and it was almost an hour, I think it took like 50 minutes, to ride the bus downtown, go down through North side. When I was on the swim team we had to go down to Northside then catch another bus to go to St Bernard, where we’d practice during the winter time, and so sometimes we'd stop in some of those shops, and buy a little bit of makeup or whatever. We all had to wear makeup to school, except lipstick, yeah it…But you know all the girls wore dresses, too. So that was another thing, you know, you went school shopping, and to get a new dress for either Easter or a new outfit for, for Christmas and new outfit for, to start school. So you know, we didn't have the closets and closets and closets of, of clothes, and I didn't have twelve pair of shoes like I do now. No we just were very limited, especially since we had so many children, and you know. So the boys, you know, all got a couple of new shirts, and a couple of new pairs of pants, and we were happy with that. My brother always says, we were poor, but we didn't know it. And that kind of sums up our family, we were poor but, we didn't know it, and you know, with having seven children in the family, so shopping was here in town. There was the grocery store and we did have a little variety store, and we had the drugstore, and you could get almost everything, from your hamburger, um, really good malt, to your medicine at the drugstore. And that, too, was a gathering place for the kids. You know, they sat at the at the counter, we had a counter with, with stools at the, right there in the drug store, which was in the corner of the shopping center. And we did a lot of socializing there. You could get a phosphate, get your malt, or milkshake, get a hamburger…Can't ask for much more. And then they eventually put a little trolley type place over next to where the police station was, and it was called the Pioneer, and you could get a really good bowl of chili and a Coney in there. But we did a lot of our shopping here. The beauty shop was here, the dentist was here, the doctor was here, the, you know we had about everything you really needed, with the grocery store and then, eventually, there was a bank. So, early days we didn't have quite all that, but Greenhills grew, and it's, that's a good thing.

(37:10)

KR: Greenhills was originally built as an experiment to be a cooperative community. How do you think that played out in everyday life?

BG: I've often said I'd like to go to Greenbelt, Maryland, and Green…Greendale, I think it is, in Wisconsin, to see how their villages turned out. Really, the plat was laid out to kind of coincide with some old English Villages, I've been told. And that's why there were so many, like, plantings of flowers, like the lilacs, and so on, that we had. We had a lot of dogwood trees and we had some of the flowering cherry trees along through the different apartment buildings. There were, there just flowers everywhere, and I think it gave us an appreciation of some of the things of nature, being in Greenhills, that you might not have had in other places, because we had the woods to play in, and we knew through Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, we learned the different kinds of trees, and we learned the different kinds of flowers, and we grew to appreciate those. And maybe it was because of my mom, she absolutely loved flowers and had so many different kinds of flowers that, that made us have a big appreciation of that too. And, and the village having these little neighborhood parks was so unique and different, too. And then having, having all of your entertainment and your socializing here in the village, you know, you learned as kids, you have to get along together because you're playing as neighborhood kids, and you're all together. Yeah there’re going to be disagreements, yeah. But let the kids work it out, you know. In today's society we have too much of kids wanting to think like adults, and “I can take care of it my way” instead of “How can I work it out instead.” Cuz we were taught “You got to go with school with these kids. You have to go to Girl Scouts with these kids. You go to church with these kids. You better find a way to work it out and on common ground.” And children today, and there too, I think maybe because so many electronics, we haven't learned to verbalize, and we haven't learned to work things out. Because they aren't verbalizing and socializing except the little bit of time that they're in school. Well, there's a long weekend in there, long evenings, and it's a long summer, and you'd better learn how to work it out, and that's what we were told, you go out and work it out. So, a lot of the early Community, I think of, because we were so isolated, you know it, it was good for us because we did have to, you know, just in general, you knew that you were going to get up and play with this kid the next day, you know, so I can't be too mad at him, because my graduating class only had sixty three people in it so, you know, there weren’t a whole lot of others around. You know, you had your neighborhood group and, to some extent, we did stay a lot to our neighborhoods. Like the kids in F block all play together. The kids from B Block didn't come over too often to play with us. But sometimes we had really close friends, because of school, or on the swim team or whatever, that we would go, and you walked everywhere, you didn't have parents to drive you. I'll take me, you know, over to Forest Fair Mall, or take me to Tri County or whatever, you know, you didn't have parents to drive you there. My mom never drove. So, when we did go to away games it was either go with a friend or my dad drove me but…But early on the concept was to have close-knit communities and so, therefore, you know, early Greenhills we were all remained friends. I’ve got friends that I had since I was in kindergarten. And so, I think the early development of the, of the concept of Greenhills was a good idea. I've heard that one of the other communities in particular lost their greenbelt, and there was a time when Forest Park was being developed that they wanted to develop in the greenbelt, and I think it's really a good thing that they preserve the greenbelt, because it has kept us a more close-knit community, I think. So I just…I'm really glad I was raised here. I can't imagine being raised someplace else. Although, when I was little kid I thought it’d be really neat to live in a regular house. But there weren't too many regular houses in Greenhills, until they built those on Damon and Gambier.

(43:35)

KR: Greenhills was originally a planned community. Do you think it was used the way the planners intended?

BG: Today, since I don't live here, I really can't speak a whole lot on that except some of the things that I've seen, I…It breaks my heart to see some of these old buildings being torn down, um. But I understand why they're doing it. Some of them, apparently, have been in great disarray. But when the government owned it, they were painted a certain time, the roofs were, were replaced during a certain time, siding was replaced if it needed to be. I think there could have, over the years, been better upkeep to the community building. I think, I think they got away for a little while, of the hist…the actual meaning of the historical event that took place during that time. Because, those workers who came, you know, they were coming out into the country, to work on this village that looked like nothing, you know, except a big farmland. And I think over the years with the development around Greenhills, I'd like to have seen more businesses stay here instead of in and out, and in and about. But I think a lot of communities go through that, anyway. You know, look at Over-the-Rhine, for instance, it really went down [sorry] really went down for a while until they decided to revitalize. [BG’s cell phone began ringing, and she turns it off] I'm so sorry. Until they decided to revitalize the Over-the-Rhine area, you know, a lot of downtown, I hate to see stores like Pogue’s and McAlpin’s and Shillito’s and all those that were bought out by a little bit bigger conglomerate and then bought out by another little bigger conglomerate. And I'd rather just have McAlpin's back, or Shillito’s back, and go to their bargain-basement and shop or whatever, you know…And I think some of that happened with Greenhills and some of the, the stores that used to be here that aren't here anymore. I think now that's, I can see that coming back with some of the newer restaurants and businesses that they have now, but over the years I've seen so many different changes, some good, some not so good. But I think of, every era has that. And so, you know, we and, we really need to go back and look at that, and take from that, you know what was really good about this, and we need to keep that. And what wasn't so good, okay, your opinion of what really was good and what really wasn't good, it's going to differ with different people. Different mayors have different ideas of what should be done. I do think that the basic idea of what Greenhills was at the beginning was a really good idea. It had some faults, and there were some flaws there, you know, things that they probably could have done a little bit different, but everything that you do has some of those. So, I know a lot of the New Deal projects weren't as successful maybe, as Greenhills was. But, you go back and look at what overall it did, some of it good, some of it not so good. And, you know, any development that's a new and different like Greenhills was would have that quality. We used to complain all the time “there's nothing to do, there's nothing to do.” Well, yeah, there is something to do. Go out and pull the weeds in the yard, you can go out and shovel the snow, you can go build a snowman, you know, there are things to do, but you have to find your own sometimes and kids don't always want to do that. Some adults don't always want to do that. But, you know the different groups in town, the firemen always had a firemen dance. They had a, the Fireman Carnival, you know, some of those fun things, that were all family things. So the, the thing that I was sad about probably pertaining to the actual building of the village, and not many people would care one bit, but where the teacher’s lounge was built, just, was originally in the original plans to have an indoor swimming pool. Lot of people don't know that, but it was in the original plans. Well, they never followed through building that indoor pool, because we had in an outdoor pool, so we didn't need an indoor pool. That was only for me, though, because I love to swim. I was at the pool all the time. But other than that, you know…There’s always good and bad in any project that you do, and you just have to kind up follow through and take the, take the good and remember the better times. Don't focus on the bad times, and that's true with every situation. Focus on the good times. Cuz no matter what you do there's going to be some good times and some bad times. And, and really, the basic thinking of building these kind of villages really showed some foresight into some of the villages that we even have built today. But I, but I think a lot has to do with the people who are running the village at that particular time or running any kind of a concept at that time. It’s what they can make out of it, and of the cooperation of the people. And, and we had a lot of cooperation of people early on. There were some that didn't want to participate, you know, and that was their choice. But you had a lot more fun if you did. So it was good all the way around, I think. And I'm glad for it. It was home and, you know the saying goes, no place like home.

(51:35)

KR: Are there any things that you miss about growing up in Greenhills?

BG: Well, when I was a kid and didn't drive, I thought it was very confining. Because we didn't, we, we couldn't walk down the street to go to the movies, except for when we were little kids they. By the time I was older, you know, they didn't have those movies all the time, or else I wasn’t interested in what was going on. But, I think living in Greenhills was very healthy for us kids, because we had a, a place where we could get out and play. We had, we’d play in the street, but it was a dead end street that, everybody knew that there were kids there. And the idea of the winding streets was to kind of slow down traffic. One reason that my mom didn't want to live particularly, like on Burley Circle, was because the bus went around Burley Circle and down Farragut, and she didn't want us kids on the bus line, or we would be near where there was more traffic. And so we were on Foxworth, back a couple of blocks. So, we weren’t out there right next to the traffic, that was one of her thinking was. [When they chose where they were going to live] I always thought of it would be neat to have a basement, because we didn't have a basement, we just had a crawl space in the utility room. There are just so many different, different things that we really did have, that were going for us. The kids from Wyoming, who might have had a pool in their own backyard, came up here to go swimming. And so we got to meet some other neighborhoods, because we had the swimming pool, we had the social thing going on. And so, kids from Glendale, kids from Springdale, those kids, a lot of the kids knew us because they rode the bus from out of the Springdale area, out from Winton Road. Winton Woods, Winton Road used to be a windy, real curvy road, and going down towards the lake, it went down the hill and across a little creek and up the hill, you know. So it was just, you know, we had kids coming to our community, so we did meet people outside of our area, you know. We played basketball against them, football against, we were big rivals with Wyoming. I married a guy who went to Wyoming High School, you…But that was okay, we’d spend half the game on his side, and a half the game on my side, and that was okay. But no, we just, I think, the concept of Greenhills and the way it was laid out gave us an opportunity to be closer-knit. And we knew our neighbor, We weren't afraid of the guy who lived down the street from us, cuz everybody knew him, and if he wasn't a good guy we were told, “Hey, don't go in their yard.” It was just that simple. You just knew, you know, where you could go to, where you couldn’t, and everybody's parents set limits. So the concept of Greenhills, I think, was a really good one. And the idea that we had sidewalks to walk on. Well, now they're building sidewalks, because they didn't build them during the fifties and sixties and seventies, you know, to walk on. Now they're building walking trails to walk on, or we can walk anywhere in the village we wanted to. There was a path that went from A block and came out over by the Catholic Church so that you could take a shortcut to school through the woods over there. All of the kids did it. So, you know, it, it was just easy to get around, easy to go shopping, easy to go to church, easy to go to school, cuz we walked everywhere. And it was good exercise. We just weren't told it was good exercise, so yeah. Loved living here, I miss the closeness that Greenhills had. And I don't know if they still have that because I haven't lived here in the village for a long time. But it'd be something for the kids…I think a lot of the, the little neighborhood parks that we had taken out, might be able to be replaced, to where those kids would have a closer-knit community. Course now, with so many moms working, it’s maybe not as important as it was to us then, because our moms were home and stuff. So, you know, moms put the babies in the baby carriage and pushed them around town, and the little kids trotted along beside or else our moms would just go sit on one of the park benches and watch the kids. Or you were right across the street, and you knew that when you were called for dinner, it was time to go home. And now everybody wants to get out in the car, and I'm just as guilty about that as anybody else. And well, we’ll just take a drive on. Sunday afternoon drive was about the driving that we got. Or to go shopping, you know, once in a while, great to go downtown. You know, as teenagers we went downtown to the movies, but as little children to have the, the places that we were able, and the things we were able to do, and the places we were able to go was fantastic, with having Beech Woods and having these little neighborhood parks. I think now, I'm not sure why they don't have the little neighborhood parks like they used to do. I don't know if it's because they're too expensive to maintain or, or what, but I would like to see those little neighborhood parks come back. When we were kids we weren't allowed to walk out on the commons. That was a no-no. You didn't walk on the grass. Now, they have a festival out there. First time I saw that I thought “Not only are they walking on the grass, they've got rides set up all over the grass and we weren't allowed step off the sidewalk.” [Video ends here, audio continues] But that's, it's still, Greenhills is still very, very special. Very special. Like I said, I would love to see how those other two communities, communities if they turned out near as well as Greenhills. I think Greenhills had a lot of individuals supporting their community and preserved a lot of the history. That's good, yeah

(59:55)

KR: We've just about reached the end of all the questions I had, is there anything you'd like to add that we haven't talked about yet?

BG: Just maybe about my family. When my family moved here my brother was, I think four. My sister Dottie, I think, was in the third grade. She's 8 years older than me. My sister Margie, I think, was in the fifth grade. And we didn't do a lot because of my dad's work. He was the, either first shift, second shift, or a split shift. It seemed like all the time, you know. So a lot of times we couldn't do a lot of thing, things as a whole family. But whenever there was church, we were at church. We walked to church. Dad didn't go to church, he stayed home and cooked dinner. If he happened to be off shift he cooked dinner for us. But mother always made sure we went to church. And it became, then, eventually, the Presbyterian Church rather than the Protestant church, but my mom stayed in touch with all of those guys, the former pastors, for a long time. And then it became the Presbyterian Church and she sang in the choir, and she was one of the charter members of the church. My mom was the original “Around Town” column from the *Tribune*. The *Tribune* had a big discrepancy going on, differences of opinion and so on. There were several fellows who left the, the *Tribune* and in retaliation, some of the other journalists also left, and my mom was also was one of them, and that became the forming of the *Journal*. And she took her Around Town column from the Greenhills *Tribune* to the Greenhills *Journal.* And it was mainly a gossip column, it was about anything that was going on in town. If your, if your family had a new baby, it went into the “Around Town” column. If somebody graduated it went into the “Around Town” column. If you took a trip to Detroit, it went into the “Around Town” column, you know, everything was kind of filtered in and out, so mother knew almost everything that was going on in town at one time or another. And my two older sisters both married guys from here in Greenhills, and one of them ended up being the commandant of Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy, one of them became a State Farm agent. And we still come back to Greenhills for the alumni thing. So my sister's class gets together when they're able to, the class of forty-nine, they’re referred to as the forty-niners and my class is fifty-seven, just had a luncheon today, and we get together about every three months. And so we still try and stay in contact with our Greenhills friends. And during the Second World War, my mom used to write to different men who were in World War Two fighting battles. One of our close family friends was a photographer and got to take some of the last pictures of the Yorktown before it sank, and he wrote so many letters to mother about the dealings and the goings-on. And I think that the war put us in a perspective of what could happen here and fortunately hasn't. We haven't had an on-land battle in America for a long time. And I think we kids being raised knowing about what was going on throughout the world and how bad things could be. My…you guys down from UC where Dixmyth Avenue is, my grandparents lived on Dixmyth Avenue about halfway down the hill, and they were air raid wardens. I can remember as a little tiny girl, maybe four, having air raid warnings going off and sirens would go off, and my grandparents would go downstairs and stop all the traffic down on sixty-seven and going away from Greenhills. This happened throughout the land where we had these warnings and sirens would go off, and little kids as young as I was didn't really realize all of what was going on, but we knew that it was something really important. And I think when you put that into perspective, and you look at our World War Two monument out here…My sisters knew the guy who was the first name on that memorial. My husband's uncle was the second name on that memorial. He was killed in a training mission in Texas, in an airplane crash. So, things like that, every Memorial Day, which was Separation Day in those days, we would go to the memorial and we would, some of us little kids, would lay flowers at that memorial, and we were taught the importance of recognizing those who have gone before. Sometimes we don't keep that perspective. Now my kids don't care much about saving history. But yet, when one of their kids has to do a project, but who do they call, they call Grandma. “Oh, what about that Aunt that was, she was something really big in Virginia, but I forgot what it was,” or “What about that memorial out there, what does that really mean?” And my parents were very patriotic, and we were told to stand for the national anthem. We weren't told twice. We were told when we were little kids, “You stand for the national anthem.” We were told “You put your hand over your heart.” We were told “If you had a hat on, you take your hat off if you're a guy.” You didn't have to be told those much more than once, because you might be picking yourself up out of the floor if you didn't know. Really my dad was just, my dad served in the First World War, so they always made it very, very important, the meaning of patriotism. And in Greenhills we always had parades, and we were reminded of that because the VFW and the American Legion, those men were out marching in those parades, and it was always a reminder to us that no matter what's going on in our country, no matter who you agree with or who you disagree with, you are an American, and you are to remember that you are an American. And early Greenhills kept those reminders for us kids, because we always went to the memorial, and we always remember that, and we were taught it, you know, when you're older and you have kids that's what you teach your kids. And we're not finding that today. And we need to get back to our roots, we need to get back to why our country was founded, we are first and foremost Americans, then we're Greenhillians. And no matter how far away I've been, I move to Florida or whatever, when I come home, I come home to Greenhills, or I come home to the Cincinnati area, but that's where I come home to. And when I come home, I come home to Greenhills. And I just have a love for this community, just more than I can say. And, and my classmates, I think, are right there with me too, you know. We just find it very, very important to remember our roots, remember where we came from. Even though we’ve all gone a bunch of different directions, we still come together every three months, and we have lunch together, and we talk about what's going on with our families, and, you know what's going on, what's new and different, but just really, really have a heart and a love for Greenhills. I thank you guys for recognizing the importance of keeping the history alive.

KR: Thank you very much.

BG: Because a hundred years from now they won't know unless somebody preserves it.

KR: Thank you very much.

BG: You're very welcome. I thank you.