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Oral Interview of Carolyn Blouin by Jenny Meagher for a Project on Activist Women in South Berwick, Maine

Carolyn Blouin

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Oral interviews for a project on the history of activist women in South Berwick, Maine

Interviewer: Jenny Meagher (JM)

Photographer: Susanna Ross (SR)

Interviewee: Carolyn Blouin (CB)

Date: June 18, 1992

Recording number: 1992.2.8.c2.b

Length of recording: 7:13

[transcript begins]

CB: —is now a fine artist. It's been, many years ago he left. Um, and we kept in touch. And I had a letter from him maybe a couple of years ago. Um, and his letter said you know was just so good to be in touch with South Berwick. He'd been back and I had written and told him how nice it was to see him, that it was so great to see him again. And he said, you know, he said, I miss South Berwick, he said. And it isn't that it's such a beautiful town. It is a beautiful town. And it isn't a lot of things that people think are good about South Berwick. It's basically the people. And what he said is true. He, for example, for instance, he is a very, a very well-known artist and he has a lot of his paintings, he's realist, and a lot of his paintings are in embassies. Our embassies in other parts of the world. The government has bought them and he's very, very good. But his point is well-taken. And again, you know I tell people when, when I'm meeting new people and so on that, no way do I have to apologize. But when I tell them about it's good they're in South Berwick, because I'm not a basic, you know, born in South Berwick person, so I can brag. And it's just, it's just a most remarkable wonderful talent. And basically, it's the people.

JM Can you think of one or two characteristics that you would characterize the people of South Berwick?

CB: They're very honest. They're very honest in their opinions. And they will tell you how they feel.

JM How about the women of South Berwick since we're doing an issue on that? Can you think of one or two characteristics that would make them stand out?

CB: Yeah, I think, I think they probably are willing to stand up for their convictions even though perhaps their main male counterpart doesn't agree.

JM That's a very important and difficult stance—

CB: It's, it is.

JM You have to have a lot of courageous women. Like courageous women.

CB: Yeah. Yeah, I, I have just, you know I went back to my 60th reunion a year ago, two years ago. This is 1930 I graduated. And it was, you know, great to be back and so on. But, and I still have and I'm in contact with them regularly, several friends. We have one who just came who was here for almost 10 days. And they come every year and, and it's just great to be together. But when I think about friends and how dear, for example, they are to me. The ones that I have here in South Berwick are just as dear. I mean they are that meaningful, they're that deep. They're that, they're that caring. This is a very caring town. And, and people just go out when anybody's in trouble or when they've lost somebody dear to them. It's just, it's just a giving town.

JM Can you, do you, can you think of a story where someone's gone out and helped someone? Maybe for you or... [laugh]

CB: Um, well, yeah, I think they're probably quite a few that I could think of if I had enough time but, but, for example, if somebody has a child that has done something wrong and

something that a parent is ashamed of. People never, never go to that person and, and say anything other than kind things and understanding things. Now that's not that easy. And that happens, that happens because there a lot of, oh I just think so, I just think it's amazing that there isn't more crime in the world today when you consider what's happening to these kids that have nobody at home. Nobody there, letting them watch violence on TV hours on end and all these things and letting them stay up until all hours at night and, and not having any supervision and so on. And it's just amazing to me that there isn't more crime and more drugs. And by the way, there are a lot of people now in South Berwick that are working this MADD, M-A-D-D, you probably know about that, that's a very active group in South Berwick.

JM Is there—that's Mothers Against Drunk Driving, right? Is there a woman that you can think of who would be the head of that?

CB: Uh, you ask Gloria.

JM Gloria. Okay.

CB: I think, I think it's a gal whose name is Kenny. I think her last name, I think. I'm pretty sure. Ask Gloria about that because she would be a good one.

JM Okay. Great.

CB: You know, I think that, I think that's who it is. But Gloria can tell you. You see Gloria. No matter how many others you see or don't see.

SR: Okay. Definitely.

JM: Great, well, do you have any other questions?

SR: Um, I just wanted to ask something. I saw something in the center of town.

CB: Wait a minute.

SR: I saw something in the center of town and um, it had to do with some Indians or something like that.

CB: Said what?

SR: About maybe Indians? Some sort of tribe? [unclear] something tribe? You don't know anything about it?

JM: Right in the center of town. A few streets, I mean a few stores down from Flynn's Lunch. There's, there is a storefront, and it has a red claw on either side. And it's Tribe of—I think it's Alberticus or something like that?

CB: Must just be up because I didn't see it yesterday.

SR: I was just wondering because I had no idea what it was.

CB: I can't tell you.

SR: All right.

JM: So it had the letters I-O-R-N. So.

CB: Gloria will tell you.

JM: Gloria, Great. She sounds great.

CB: No, but be interesting to find out about that.

JM: Yes, yes. I'll let you know if we find anything out. But um—

CB: You don't, don't want any, any ginger ale or something?

SR: A little bit— [laughter] Thank you.

[end of transcript]