

Marstons Mills Historical Society
Interview with
Barbara Hill
(by David martin)
November 25, 2012



P.O. Box 1375 Marstons Mills, MA 02648
marstonsmillshistorical.org

Barbara Hill is much appreciated as Past President of the Marstons Mills Historical Society and for her numerous oral-history interviews with Marstons Mills residents who recalled early days and stories about the Village. Accordingly, it was only fitting that she would be the subject of her own interview in this case.

Barbara was born in Philadelphia and lived in Williamsport, PA for a considerable time. She married her English Professor husband, who was British, in New York City. Barbara has a long line of German ancestors.

In the 1960's, the Mills was a small place with only about 1000 year-round residents and a considerable summer population; in the 1960's there were only about 20 houses. Barbara moved to the Mills in 1971, and her house had been the office for the summer colony which had been along Route 149; in fact, only three houses in that region of the Mills were year-round; one of those was occupied by Marguerite and "Grandpa" Lawson. She first worked at the Osterville Library and was a member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She and her husband lived for three years in England during the mid-1970's, where Barbara visited all of the cathedrals in the U.K.; she has for 18 years drawn a picture of a different English cathedral on her Christmas cards. Barbara was a founding member of the Marstons Mills Village Association, which had many members at meetings in the early years in Liberty Hall. One accomplishment which Barbara clearly recalls was the Association's firm stance that the shops along Route 28 were NOT part of Cotuit (as residents of Cotuit tried to claim) but were part of Marstons Mills.

Big changes started to come to the village during the 1980's, with significant development of homes by builders on sub-divisions, with the population now close to 10,000 residents.

Some of her recollections from past interviewees with whom she worked will help to provide further detail on those transcriptions. Among those are the following:

The first librarian of the one-room Marstons Mills Library was Mrs. Thew; she had delivered planes for the Air Force to Europe during World War II.

A car dealership was for a time on the site of the Cash Market.

Frank McCluskey and Junior Jones then bought the Cash Market, and sold vegetables as well as meat which was sliced on the marble table; a state inspector then forbade any further selling of meat that been sliced on the counter; the nearest market of any size was the A & P in Hyannis. Frank ran a liquor business also, but was only allowed to sell during summers, to prevent competition with other local liquor dealers. The Cash Market was also a gathering place for conversation and also sold gasoline to car drivers and even for some airplane operators. Tony

Medcor bought the Cash Market after Frank died; his wife interfered with the ongoing conversations at the market. Then the Market was bought by Don McKay.

Sue Johnson operated a Montessori School in the village.

Hannah Hord was 18 years old when she arrived from her native Sweden; there was a group of Swedes who lived in Centerville. During her marriage to Hilding with the dairy business, they had a customer in Wellfleet who had bought a large delivery of milk for a party. During the day, the customer telephoned that she had forgotten to order whipped cream and that it was needed; Hannah then drove the whipped cream all the way to Wellfleet.

The Society thanks Barbara Hill for her recollections and insights into the Village.

