

Marilyn Takaro

Side 1:

[1/1] Born in Algona, Iowa, in Kossuth County. When she married Tim Takaro, his father insisted on referring to her Hungarian name Kossuth during the wedding ceremony performed by Tim's father. Her childhood to age 10 spent on a farm 3 miles out of Algona with brother 6 and sister 12 years older. Her mother insisted on school in town and drove them to school, even picking them up for lunch at home. They were often held up at a train crossing during the noon hour. Mother, Hazel (Fellows) Keen had taught school in order to learn the "value of money" before going to college. Then, mother left college after only one year to marry Roy (father). Mother highly valued education. Father lost the farm and thereafter had intermittent jobs...janitor, campus policemen at Penn State. [Tim Takaro, Rev. Takaro, Hazel Keen, Roy Keen]

[1/51] She entered nursing to be useful in WWII and because there were no men at colleges. Her mother was pleased with her nursing, for she had secretly wanted to be a nurse, but did not because her father, an MD, thought it beneath her abilities. The cadet nursing program paid for her training in exchange for wartime service. She was studying at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minn. when she met Tim Takaro, her husband. Nuns had told students to pay no attention to MD's because they were all married. [Tim Takaro]

[1/74] When Tim said he was short of money and she indicated she was not a Catholic, the first date followed. She was a Methodist but sang in the Presbyterian choir in Rochester. Later, they served on a mission in India under Presbyterian sponsors. Asked her "philosophy of life," she said she had none. Asked her approach to childrearing, she said she could "thank goodness it was over." Though it isn't ever over, she now thinks "that's their problem."

[1/118] Recent rafting trip became a canoe trip down Green River in Colorado with two younger sons who met them in Utah. They have frequent contact with all their children. Only older kids accompanied them to India. She thinks each child "had a different set of parents." They knew the youngest kids best, for they were around longer. Marilyn reared the children, never waiting for dad to come home for discipline. Their father was always busy. From 1956 they lived in Kenilworth, and since 1958 in same house. Chose it to be near VA Hospital. Thought of moving to N. Asheville, as a cut through Beaucatcher would come soon...it took 16-years-wait. Kids went to Newton School, then to David Millard. Boys went to prep school after ninth grade in Northfield, Montana. [Tom Takaro, Martha Takaro, Kenilworth]

[1/194] Asked about civic activity: once in League of Women Voters. "Not a college grad." Worked in McGovern campaign. Tim not politically active due to Federal employment. Asked if she studied Russian with Tim...said no foreign language skill. While he was in Russia for three months, she watched and cared for three children. In India, she had difficulty with Hindu cook who spoke good English but did not want to discipline the mistress. She communicated much better with wife of Hindu cook, a woman who spoke no English. They could always get along with each other. Cook, when asked, "when will dinner be ready?" always said, "soon," or "right away," trying to please.

[1/247] She says, "I was young for that," meaning being mistress of the household. It was only six years after partition of India and Pakistan and Hindus wanted no one advancing alternate religion. All missionaries had some expertise other than divinity school. Hindus preferred Americans to British. She was mother, did only emergency nursing in India. She returned to nursing when Mark was in second grade, taking a refresher course at Memorial Mission.

[1/283] But she did not practice, feeling they were only interested in money. Later she worked nights for eleven years to help pay the expense of kids in college...and to escape housekeeping.

[1/325] Kids went to Dartmouth (Tim's school), Middlebury, and Yale. She worked on urology and nephrology wards at Mission. Asked to remember Rev. Welch she said he was kind and gave of himself freely. If you asked his wife, "how are you today?" she would tell you at length. She did not interfere with Rev. Welch's work in the church. Marilyn was involved in the Unitarian Women's Alliance, remembers visiting the Adams house in Montford. She never held church office or any other, taught only one Sunday School class. Asked about friendships in the church, she knew Stones and Reeds. She preferred the privacy of her home. [Dan Welch, Walter Adams]

[1/380] After church, they often went hiking. Sometimes crossed railroad on trestle to watch trains. Since kids dressed up for Sunday school in those days, she put old white shirts on them for train gazing due to soot off engines. There were passenger trains then. She took picnics by railroad to Black Mountain and kids went on train excursions to Old Fort.

[1/440] She remembered the Drooz family but said they had moved away. Asked about Sandburg gift for church expansion, she knew little. She said Mrs. Sandburg attended often and loved children. Asked for most pleasure in church experience, she said it was not vital in her life, but that the new building was nice but only a building. She spoke of three trips to Mexico with Stones, Ema and Mel. First to the colonial city, to Baha to watch whales, then to Yucatan and Maya sites this year. [Lillian Steichen Sandburg, Mel Stone, Ema Stone]

[1/538] Asked for final statement, she said people like Sarah Walters were important, reminding her of the candor of mid-westerners, a more relaxed manner than southerners. Sarah was a reader and an Oberlin graduate. Sarah had recommended reading to Rev. Gross, who had had a narrow up-bringing. [Sarah Walters]

[1/615] Working the night shift worked well for them. Other shifts interfered more with family routine.