

ARKANSAS EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS COUNCIL
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Official transcript of:

Dorothy Marks

Member of Union County Extension Homemakers Council

Original recording made 24 January 2012

at El Dorado, Arkansas)

Recorded, transcribed and edited by:

Liz McKay

Union County Cooperative Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System





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Oral History Program

Liz McKay, Union County Cooperative Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

24 January 2012

This is an audio recording of Dorothy Marks, member of the Union County Extension Homemakers Council. This interview is part of an Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program, and Dorothy is answering questions asked by Liz McKay, Union County Cooperative Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences Agent.

Questions and comments by Liz are in boldface type; Dorothy's responses and comments are in lightface type.

I am Liz McKay. This is the interview with Dorothy Marks for the Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program. This is being done on January 24, 2012, at the Union County—I'm sorry, it's not at the Union County—it's at Dorothy Marks' home in El Dorado, Arkansas, in Union County. The audio recordings and transcripts of this interview will be donated to the David and Barbara Pryor Center for [Arkansas] Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas. The recording, transcript and any other related materials will be deposited and preserved forever in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, and the copyright will belong solely to the University of Arkansas.

Are you willing to give the Pryor Center permission that the audio file and transcript available to others? And with this permission, you say:

I say yes.

OK, very good.

First Dorothy—I'd like—I'd like you to give your complete legal name and spell it for me and then tell me the city and county in which you presently reside.

My name is Dorothy Anne Marks. D-O-R-O-T-H-Y—A-N-N-E—Marks—M-A-R-K-S. I live in El Dorado, Arkansas in Union County.

Dorothy, this is going to be a very informal interview, and I just want you to share your memories, and your activities and what the EHC program has meant to you, both the good times and the challenges.

Well, I've known about EHC, although they called it the Home Demonstration Club back when my mother was in it in the 1930's. And I've just always liked EHC and especially 4-H and everything involved. My older brothers and sister were in 4-H. I joined 4-H when I was 9 years old. And my first entry in the fair was a dress that I got a red ribbon. And then time moved on, and we went to school in El Dorado High School and they didn't have 4-H. So I didn't get back involved in any of Extension until the 1950's, and I was the one that started our club. And my aunt made me use "Robert's Rules of Order" and we had to practice before we did the first meeting. And we had a big crowd. And it was Rose Hill Extension Club. And then in later years we had more people from Lisbon to get involved than Rose Hill, so they changed the name to Lisbon and it is still going!

And I was the president several times. I've been the vice president several times and other things of leadership. But my favorite things about Extension are the judging the county fairs and the district [fair] and the trips we go on and then our main attraction of the year is holiday foods. And I, I worked in the fair at the Photography Department at the fair, superintendent, probably about 20 years, maybe a little more and did all that. I guess the main thing I like about it is, No. 1 thing is it's educational but it's the fun and the fellowship and it's just doing things. And, you know, we learn a lot and teach others a lot. And we have a lot of young people in our club.

[Clears throat] Back to the holiday foods. Many times, I've been the one that chose the theme, and a large part of the menu for holiday foods. Our holiday foods in Union County is really an extravaganza. And I enjoy it thoroughly.

I've been to just three state meetings that I can remember and enjoyed those. I went to Searcy one year. No, I've been to four. I went to Fayetteville in the [19]'50's. And then I went to Searcy, I don't remember what year and to Hot Springs a couple of times and I've always enjoyed those and they were very educational. And, and I've also been very involved when the Union County Extension made cookbooks. And helped do a special section, on VIP recipes and that was fun.

And, but the way Extension has taught me a lot about people, No. 1, I just always enjoyed meeting people anywhere, everywhere. I like to talk to people, and rarely meet a stranger. Some of the other things about Extension is just meeting the different people that come to our club and influencing other people to come to club. We're still getting new members in our club. We meet at night now and that has helped because there's so many working wives.

And we didn't mention achievement day either. And that's where the—all the county clubs come together and we have a meeting that morning and then we do a service project that we've been working on the same day as achievement day, but we also do a trial run of the foods that we plan to serve for holiday foods and if they pass the taste test they move on. Sometimes we even cull our own. And, but the service project is a project for Arkansas Children's Hospital [at Little Rock] and we do chemo caps for cancer patients that have lost their hair, and we do lap robes, and wheel- chair caddies and all kinds of things for nursing homes and it's just a big fun day and a very productive day. *[Clears throat]*

Dorothy, do you have any other memories, experiences or thoughts that you would like to share?

Well, we did—I did mention that I was in 4-H as a child. Well, also, I have six daughters and I was a 4-H leader for many years while my children were in 4-H. It was a very good experience doing that, too. And helping them with their and projects and workbooks. And one of my daughters was a state winner and went on to the nationals. And, well in fact, two of them. But anyway, members of our club have turned out to be pastors on a national scale. We have one that is a federal attorney in Fort Smith. And then we have one that is a bank president. We have one that is manager of Deltic Timber Parts. And they all

attribute their training in 4-H to their success that they have been. And I agree that part of that is our *[unclear]*. But it's all just been all fun. And one other part of that question was what did I like least about Extension? And there's never been anything I did not like about 4-H or Extension. And I just think it's all pluses and positives.

Dorothy, give me—didn't your dad have a candy company? Can you tell me something about that?

Oh, yes. They made peanut patties *[clears throat]* and stick candies and it was a process that was just fun. And they used to let people do educational tours over there. The peanut patties were not necessarily fun. But how they put the stripe on the stick candy was just really amazing. And, yep, and that went on a very long time.

What year did your dad start that company? Do you remember?

In the 1949, I think. [19]'49. 1949. Yep.

And how long did that company run?

Oh, well, he died in 1987. And then it changed hands, but it went on about 10 more years after that.

OK.

Do you remember anything else that would be of interest historically? You know, things that you did here, what you played, the people that you knew.

One of the persons I didn't mention was when my mother was a member of the Extension Club, back then it was known as the Home Demonstration Club. I do remember this that they made mattresses and made them at the schoolhouse and that was fun, too. It was just a big picnic deal and they carried potluck luncheons and we did go to that. That was big fun.

And now that back to the real history back in the 1800's, my grandparents on

AEHC Oral History Program
Marks/Page 5

both sides came to Union County on a wagon train from the Carolinas and were headed to Texas and got here and liked this farming country so they stayed. And so my history, our history of living in Union County goes back to the 1800's. And I think I'm here to stay.

I believe you are.

[Laughs]

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Not that I can think of.

OK.

Thanks so much. I appreciate it.

All right.

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