

Nina June (née Swan) Parry (1923-2012)

Nelva (née Seaburn) Wentz (1923-)

Schoolmates to Madelyn Payne

Oral history recorded October 1, 2012 (Run time about 1:10:50)

Nina Parry and Nelva Wentz were interviewed together in Nelva’s home on October 1, 2012, with Teresa Baumgartner as interviewer and Steve Cless as videographer.

Nina June (née Swan) Parry (June 23, 1923-October 30, 2012) and Nelva (née Seaburn) Wentz (February 24, 1923-) both knew Madelyn from school, though they were a year behind her class. Although Nina was closer to Madelyn Payne, both women are able to share some recollections of Madelyn along with quite a bit of contextual information about Augusta in the Depression and during World War Two.

Nina reminisced about a group of local women, including Madelyn Payne, who spent time together during the war years. She and her daughter Stanley Ann would have been living with her parents while Stanley was overseas. Both Nina and Nelva were raised for at least part of their childhoods by single mothers, and both talked about those hardships and how their mothers coped.

00.00-00.03	Camera, sound adjustments
00.04-4.24	Nelva Seaburn Wentz was born February 24, 1923 in Sycamore OK, is 89 at time of interview. Nina June Swan Parry was born June 23, 1923 in Augusta KS, is also 89 at time of interview. Her dad was a ballplayer for White Eagle. They asked him to come to work so he could be the catcher for their ball team.
4.25-12.15	Early memories Nelva: Nelva’s dad died in 1929. She lived on Walnut, close to uptown and remembers the grocery, bakery, library, a town curfew, and the park by Main Street. Later they moved to Gregg Street. She remembers walking to school with friends, including Madelyn Payne. She worked at McCaslin’s (dimestore) her senior year and remembers crying on graduation as she couldn’t go to college. The children were 7, 5, 3, and 13 months when her father died. Her mother took in laundry and did housecleaning. She remembers her mother’s parenting and discipline style.
12.16-31.35	Early memories Nina: Nina lived in Texas and Indiana for a time growing up. Her father was badly injured when she was in 2 nd grade. Her parents were separated. Her mother worked for \$5 a week at a little dimestore. She remembers being terrified of school because of a humiliating and undeserved punishment in the 3 rd grade. She also remembers an influential high school teacher. She worked at Draft Board for 25 cents an hour. Students were allowed to work senior year. She shares how she learned about the war beginning and how people pulled their children out of the all-girls school she was attending for fear of invasion. How Nelva met her husband: She and her husband met in the summer and were married in January. He was drafted in July. She shares memories of the announcement about Pearl Harbor. She reminisces about living with two friends who had husbands also in training, as they all

	followed their husbands. She moved back home when he was sent overseas. He went with Patton's third army across Europe. She shares memories of life in a small town after the war. She recalls how, after the war ended in Europe, some men in his outfit were shipped out Japan, and their ship was sunk.
31.36-35.34	Nina's memories of her war experiences: She finished out year of school. Then went to work for Socony-Vacuum (White Eagle, Socony-Vacuum, then Mobil). Her mother started a store in 1935 and the family lived above the store.
35.35-44.44	Entertainment in town; Madelyn, taking photographs to send to the local boys: Nina and Nelva describe the skating rink, movie house, slumber parties, many working at Boeing during war years. They reflect on losing many friends during war, and about the lack of men in town and how this affected the feel of the town, how the women passed the time, married and single women together, all ages, all friends. The classes of 40-42 began to mix together in high school and continued after. This included Madelyn. They took photographs on Sunday afternoons to send to the local boys overseas. Many were taken in Garvin Park which at time had a swinging bridge.
44.45-57.30	About how times have changed for each generation; about Madelyn's friendships and her family: Nina and Nelva reflect on how their generation influenced the next, emphasizing obedience, work, a desire to please their parents. When asked what traits Madelyn may have passed along to her daughter and grandchildren, they note her intelligence valuing education as a high priority, as well as a sense of community and loyalty to classmates. Madelyn was a private person. Her best friend (Francine) moved away when she was a junior. Madelyn really missed her. It was after that she became closer to Nina and other schoolmates. While she was still in school, and later while living at home when Stanley was overseas, though she was married and with a child, Madelyn participated in the women's outings and picture taking, doing fun things together. Nelva's sister went to school with Madelyn's sister, Arlene. Madelyn's parents were fairly strict.
57.31-1.00.29	Memories about the end of the war: The whole town celebrated. They remembered where they were and what they were doing when they heard the news. Nelva's husband told lots of stories about General Patton.
	End of first DVD. Last 7 minutes of interview on second disk.
00.06-5.20	About class reunions: Madelyn called Nina after receiving an invitation one year, to say she would not be coming back for reunions. She continued to keep in touch. About walking to school with Madelyn (Nelva): Nelva walked to school with Madelyn during Nelva's 7 th grade and part of 8 th grade years (Madelyn was a year ahead). She talks a little about Madelyn's siblings.
5.21-10.50	Class photographs from 1940 (Madelyn) and 1941 (Nelva and Nina)