

Mrs. Mary McCarrick Ryan's Remembrances of Rocky Point / Shoreham (2001)

This is the text written by Mrs. Mary McCarrick Ryan for a tape she recorded in August 2001 of her memories of growing up in Rocky Point / Shoreham well over eighty years ago. Mrs. Ryan is now 87 years old, and lives in Wading River--- Peter Spier¹

Mr. Spier asked me if I would be willing to put on tape my earliest memories of Shoreham. I happen to be one of the few left of that era.

I remember my brother Hugh and Jimmy would often walk to the Shoreham Post Office in the early evening to pick up our mail. Occasionally they would pull me along in their wagon. I was about 5 years old then.

The post office was located in the Shoreham Store. They would put me on a bench in the store and they would always promise me a candy bar if I was a good girl until they were ready to go home.

There was always a group of men from the Village that hung around the store discussing the weather – politics or their golf scores of the day. Hugh and Jimmy always enjoyed chatting with them. When they were ready to leave, Jimmy would always buy me a candy bar.

The store was a well stocked country store. It carried all the staples – all kinds of canned goods – condiments, jams, and jellies. There were long shelves on the walls that carried all sorts of items, cigarettes, cigars and tobacco – candy – all sorts of patent medicines and a good supply of 1st aid items.

There was a long table that carried a number of the daily newspapers, magazines, paperback books-- all sorts of reading material.

Across the other wall was a large ice box. One side carried all the perishable items – cheeses, butter, eggs, milk and cream. The other side of the ice box was filled with a large selection of fresh meat – chicken, beef, lamb and pork.

Mr. Ebert the proprietor was a butcher from Port Jefferson. When he decided to retire a Mr. George Lynn and his wife Carrie took it over. When it became too much for them to handle, they sold out to a Mr. Frank Beckwith who ran it for some time until his retirement.

Next door to the Shoreham Store was a house owned by the Bellport Family. There were 2 pretty girls – Mary and Alice, and two sons named Joe and Johnny. I believe the girls went to New York to study beauty culture. They always looked so stunning at Church on Sunday. In later years Mary became the postmistress for the Shoreham Store.

¹ The late Peter Spier served as Shoreham Village Historian 1986-2010 and obtained these remembrances from Ms. McCarrick Ryan in 2001

My Aunt Katie Melville owned the house next to the Bellport home. It was often referred to as the stone house. Two maiden sisters lived there-- a Miss Amelia Overton and her sister Miss Mable.

The telephone company installed a switchboard and whatever was needed to bring telephone service to the community. Miss Amelia was the “number please” girl – Miss Mable was a nurse. My oldest sister Catherine worked there on weekends while she attended high school. It gave Miss Amelia a break.

A Doctor McCrea from Port Jefferson was willing to make house calls in Shoreham. He delivered my brothers Tom and Buddy, my sister Florence and myself.

If anyone needed special care the doctor would always arrange for Miss Mable to care for them. She was always willing to listen to the complaints and symptoms of the Villagers. She would always suggest what they might do or advise them to call the doctor. She was a great comfort to many and respected by all.

Aunt Kate and Uncle John Melville lived next door to the telephone house. My uncle was quite an entrepreneur; he was a Realtor-- took care of rentals and sales of the homes in the Village; took care of necessary jobs that the Incorporated Village was responsible for – road clearing, garbage removed. If anyone needed an electrician, plumber, painter, carpenter or just a handy man, he would arrange for the services needed and see that it was done.

Mrs. Walsh lived next to Aunt Kate. She would take turns with Aunt Kate in opening their homes on Sunday for the Celebration of Mass by those in the Village. Mrs. Walsh had 3 grown daughters.

Down the road a short distance was a Country Inn Called “The Maples”. It was run by a Mrs. Frances Warden. She had a very nice clientele from New York. She was well-known for her gourmet cooking. The Inn was only open during the summer months. When Mrs. Warden decided to retire, two ladies from New York, a Mrs. Ballinger and a Mrs. Thorne decided to take it over. It no longer resembled a Country Inn. They changed the whole décor. They painted all the rooms in bright colors. The two dining rooms had planters hanging from the ceiling filled with Ivy.

A Mr. Ludwig Bemelmans, an author of children’s books and an artist, painted pictures on the walls that were conversational pieces. It looked like a place that you would see in San Francisco. It was called the Dove and Turtle.

All the property on the west side of Woodville Road from the Shoreham Store to the L. I. Sound was called the Incorporated Village of Shoreham.

There were many homes built up and down the hillside. As I take a mental trip about the Village I can remember the names of so many of the people that lived there. They were all such lovely people and all so nice to my family.

I remember being invited to birthday parties for the children of my age. My brothers and sisters were invited to the movies in the Club house on Sat. Nites. Some of the names I recall are....[to be added later]