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WOMEN'S COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
ETHNIC WOMEN OF CLEVELAND

Interview with
MARY FEDAK

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY
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Interview with: Mary Fedak
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Interviewer: Jeanette Tuve

JT Mrs. Fedak, what was your maiden name?

MF My maiden name was Rizun.

Jt When and where were you born?

MF I was born in Olyphant, Pennsylvania, in 1916.

JT Where were your parents born?

MF They were born over in Ukraine, at the time my parents were born the place was called Rawa Ruska, in Galicia. At that time it was part of the big empire, Austria-Hungary, and they often talk about Franz Joseph, who was then the emperor of Austria-Hungary. And we even have trunks downstairs that are addressed Rawa Ruska. We were supposed to go back to Ukraine, but things didn't look so good and my grandma wrote and she said, "Hold back." So I know that is where they came from, and of course they corresponded through the years with my family, and I do that now, too. We still write to them.

JT Were your mother and father married before they came to this country?

MF Yes, they were married in Europe.

JT And they came to this country as newlyweds?

MF Yes, I guess you would call it that. They were married in Europe, but due to economic reasons, my dad had to come here first, to the good land or the land of gold, and try to make a living.

Jt Your father, then, came for economic reasons. How about your mother?
Do you think she was anxious to come, too?

MF Well, she had married my dad so she was going to go where he was. And luckily, she was able to learn some reading and writing, because in Europe they did not encourage that. They needed field hands. So, my grandmother, as they say, wanted to "write out the child." They had to register each child for school, but they needed field hands. The professor was a little

bit annoyed at her and chastized her saying, "You don't know where your child's destiny is going to be." So she did go to school to learn to read and write Ukrainian. And it came in very useful when she came here. She was rather venturesome, so she wanted to come over here.

JT Did your father work before he came here and what did he do?

MF Well, he was a weaver, but no future. And, in fact, shortly after he left for America the church services were interrupted on Sunday by the Gendarmes, as they were called, and they called out a list of names of people who had to go into active service, to the army. My father's name was called, but my mother said he had already left for America.

JT So one of his major reasons for coming was to avoid the draft?

MF Not really. As every male was required, he had already served one year. He had to make a living and land was very valuable there. In fact, when a girl married her dowry was usually a parcel of land. In Europe they tried to matchmake and pair off, and they would always try to find someone with a parcel of land. And my dad had no land, so he just couldn't make a living there.

JT What year was that?

MF That was in 1910 that he came here.

JT That was a good time to come, wasn't it?

MF Well, there were just a lot of people coming at that time. Just before the war.

JT Where did they settle here?

MF In Olyphant, Pennsylvania, which is a little south of New York, I think about 90 miles.

JT Why did they settle there?

MF They had friends from Europe, from the same village, and they came to their place. My dad worked in the mines for five years. In fact, I'm a coal miner's daughter.

JT Just like Loretta Lynn.

MF Right.

JT Did your mother work?

MF Not any place where she was paid a salary. But she did take in boarders at \$2 a week. And she would wash their clothes. As they had no bathroom facilities, they used round, galvanized tubs, and she would scrub the back of each miner. She told me that she used to bake bread once a week, using 25 pounds of flour. And they had these outdoor stoves, something like bakers have, where they would make the round loaves of bread and then would shove them in with wooden paddles. Conditions were very primitive.

Jt How many children did she have?

MF Just me at the beginning and then my two sisters followed after we came to Cleveland.

JT When did your family come to Cleveland?

MF Five years after my dad had been in Pennsylvania. I think about 1918.

JT Why did they come to Cleveland?

MF There again, for economic reasons. My dad got rheumatism in the mines, so he couldn't work there. So they came here, again, to friends from their village. If you had a friend from a village he was as important to you as your own family. They called them "krayni," which means you are like my dear friend. Sometimes they were even more important than the family itself.

JT Where did they settle in Cleveland?

MF On the east side, around the Woodland area. There were a lot of Slavic people, ethnic people who settled in that area. That's where they were for a number of years.

JT Did your mother take in roomers and boarders there?

MF No, she got herself a job cleaning buildings. My husband called them "midnight stenographers," because his mother did the same thing too.

And it was safe enough. They would go by streetcar to downtown Cleveland. Their transfer was like three cents. I don't recall what their salary was, but she made a little bit of money like that.

JT Did she work a full eight hours?

MF They had to leave about six o'clock in the evening and get back at four in the morning. But it was very safe. They didn't have to worry about being robbed or raped or molested. And they didn't have the conveniences that they do now. They didn't have the riding, mobile machine that washes the floors. They had to pull and push these sweepers, string mops, and so on. She was young and she was strong, but it took a toll on her in later life.

Jt It must have been very hard work. So, she was at home with you girls during the day, and then when your father came home she went to work.

MF I can remember standing in front of my dad when we were all washed and ready to go to bed and saying my prayers. It's just such a vivid picture.

JT What language did you speak in your home?

MF We spoke Ukrainian.

JT Did your father and mother both learn English?

MF Well, for necessity sake, and survival. It wasn't until later, when they got their citizenship papers, that they went to school and learned English. And the sad part is, because they so earnestly wanted to learn the English language, they spoke English to our children, which was broken English, and the children did not learn Ukrainian because Grandma and Grandpa were learning English. So consequently the children learned the one language, English. But I didn't know any English until I went to school, to kindergarten. I didn't know a word of English, but it only took a very short time to learn.

JT But you learned it in school?

MF Yes, I learned it in school, and one of the very vivid memories I have is tasting graham crackers and milk, which was such a luxury! We did not have

milk at home because we did not have any refrigeration. And graham crackers was a new introduction. I learned to salute the flag, learned to sing "Up on the Housetop, click, click, click." Those two things remain so vividly with me.

JT You went to Cleveland public schools? Which ones?

MF Case Woodland. I think it is still standing and that it is still used. We walked up there. Of course, my first school was more like to a library where they had the pre-schoolers. Like the kindergarteners. And actually I don't remember the public school until I got up to the second or third grade.

JT Did you complete high school?

MF I completed high school and I have one year at Western Reserve in the School of Education. However, I got pregnant and that was the end of that. Then the children were coming up and they needed money for their schooling.

JT I don't think I asked you what your father did in Cleveland?

MF He worked at Perfection Stove, and he was a punch-press operator. At that time I guess men could work at the same job for years and years and get pins for 25 and 30 years service, and that's where he was all his life. He had just one job.

JT Did he belong to a union?

MF They didn't have unions at that time. No, it was very much a sweat-shop, if I could put it that way, in that class. I worked in a sweat-shop, that I know.

JT We must get to that, but to go back again to your younger years, was you mother active in the church?

MF Well, when she was working she wasn't so much active in the church. However, she was active in an insurance organization, The Ukrainian National Association. She joined that, became an officer, became president, which she served for many years. Yes, she became quite active, even went as a

delegate to the conventions that they had. As we grew older she became active in helping at church picnic, because that was a big social event. In fact, I met my husband at a church picnic. And she became active in another organization called Souiz Ukrainiok. The English title is The Ukrainian National Women's League of America, which is still very active. Yes, she set kind of a pattern for us so that we became active in church and in civic and political organizations. They were anxious just to learn as much as they could, not only that, but to do for their country. They felt such gratitude for being able to be here and the freedom they enjoyed.

JT What kinds of things did your mother do for The Ukrainian Women's Club?

MF Attended meetings, active in the Cultural Gardens Committee. They put up this statue of the Ukrainian poetess, Lesya Ukrainka. They had to go around collecting funds, in fact, I remember (in those days women wore hats, never went without a hat) she had this little black hat perched on her head and went to these beer places collecting money, going to grocery stores, butcher shops, bakeries, just for this statue. It's a huge bronze statue, still standing there. I think it's still there because I don't think anyone could move it as easily as they moved Abraham Lincoln. There is so much vandalism in that park!

JT When you were a child did you participate in any Ukrainian plays or dance groups?

MF No, we were too far away from church, whereas my children were able to do more of it. Because we were a religious family and at that time we had like 28 religious days that were obligatory. So we were always going to church, coming home. There were some beautiful holy days that we celebrated in honor of the Blessed Mother. There is a day that is celebrated thanking God for the fruits of the orchard and the field, and we would take a basket of fruit to be blessed at church. Our activities were more confined to around the home at that time.

JT What church did you attend?

MF We attended St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church which is still standing on the corner of 7th and Professor.

JT In the Tremont area?

MF Yes, in the Tremont area. A beautiful church, one of the most beautiful Byzantine architectures that you will find anywhere. It has a beautiful Iconostasis, meaning a wall of Icons.

JT Did you belong to Ukrainian girl scouts?

MF We didn't have such a group when I was young.

JT Did you have a national costume?

MF Several. There are several national costumes. When my daughter grew to the age where she could take Ukrainian dance instructions I became interested in dance costumes and tried to authenticize the costumes by doing a little bit of research. So the costume that she has is one called a "Kievan" version from the Kiev region of Ukraine. It has a tunic which buttons on the side, and it also has this very beautiful woven skirt geometric in design, and then an apron. The boots were red for the girls, black for the boys. The girls wore their wreath of flowers with ribbons streaming in the back. So all the girls wore the same type, and then the boys, of course, wore their colorful baggy pants and colorful cumberbunds and then their white, embroidered shirts. And of course the girls had a white embroidered blouse with a petticoat showing down below with a little bit of embroidery on that.

JT Did you have one of those when you were young?

MF No, we couldn't afford it.

JT Your mother didn't have one either?

MF No, she didn't bring one from Europe with her.

JT And she couldn't afford one here?

MF I was telling my children. I said "You probably don't believe it, but we just couldn't afford it." We were poor, but we didn't know it.

JT You mentioned holidays and that there were so many of them. What was your favorite holiday.

MF Christmas and Easter, because you got a new outfit. Easter was such an impressive, beautiful ceremony. At six o'clock in the morning was resurrection, and of course we had brought our baskets to church with all the foods that we were not supposed to eat during Lent. And all the baskets had these beautiful embroidered covers. They were put out on the church lawn in a circle, and then the bells would ring for resurrection. And after the resurrection services we would enter the church for the mass, or liturgy as we call it now. We used to celebrate St. Nicholas Day at which time we were given presents, which is a custom in many countries in Europe even now. And then Christmas was a religious holiday. You went to mass at midnight and then to church again Christmas day. And then you celebrated the twelve days of Christmas until the 12th day which was Epiphany. That was the day we went to church to get holy water, that was the day that St. John baptized Christ in the water of Jordan. So Christmas was a religious holiday.

JT Did St. Nicholas come to your house?

MF No. There usually was a concert in the Ukrainian National Home, which is still on West 14th near Abby, and parents would bring presents. I can remember that nobody had colored Christmas paper. Gifts were usually wrapped up in newspaper, tied with string, with the name on the gift. There was a play about the little devil and St. Nicholas, and the children that were bad would not get anything and the children that were good would get presents from St. Nicholas. And the first box of hard candy I received was from St. Nicholas at this concert.

JT This was all in Ukrainian?

MF Oh, yes, oh, absolutely.

JT What was your favorite saint's day?

MF Well, of course because my name is Mary, all the saints' days to Mary are my favorite. Outside of Christmas and Easter.

Jt After you graduated from high school what did you do?

MF I also went to Darvis School of Fashion Institute. I was interested in fashion and clothing and I spent about half a year there, getting basics on pattern making, although I had some of that in high school. And I worked in the sweatshop because I needed experience and also money. It was before the unions. I remember getting \$6.50 a week. Nine hours a day and five hours on Saturday. It cost my mother more to send me to work. I was supposed to get a raise after six weeks of training, because you had to learn to use a power machine. By that time the contract had been filled, and so we were without a job.

JT What was the name of the sweatshop.

MF You know I can't remember. All I know is that we made Marie Dressler dresses. We started at size 40 and went up to, I think, about 60. And my job was to sew tucks on the front blouse or to sew sleeves or to sew belts because it was all production. You'd get a stack of these sleeves to do and then the finish seamstresses put the garment together. And it was a whirl of needles and bobbins going all the time.

JT How long did you do that?

MF I think I was there about six weeks.

JT Were any of your girl friends there?

MF No, because my girl friends had different interests. My one friend did go to work for a professional seamstress and she learned much. The other one went to Cleveland College, which was on the square at that time. And she went on to get a degree as a librarian. And the rest of us never questioned about going on to school because we just couldn't afford it. But my dad did want us all to graduate from high school. And he gave us all

further education to be able to make a living. I even sew to this day, just love to. When I have time.

JT Where did you meet your husband?

MF At a church picnic. We didn't have many cars, but that didn't matter. They'd get trucks and put benches in the trucks and we'd either ride the streetcar to the end of the carline and then the truck would be waiting there to take you to the picnic. We had just a glorious time. My husband just got out of the service. He wanted to go on to school, but there again there wasn't any money, so he joined the service, the Army Air Corps. Since then they've divided the Air Corps from the army. So he had come home right after he was discharged and I met him at the picnic and we just dated for a couple of years and have been married for 47 years. We were married in 1940 and our son was born in 1941, the same year as Pearl Harbor.

JT What is his name?

MF Michael Fedak.

JT Did you ever go with anyone or consider marrying anyone who wasn't Ukrainian?

MF Heaven forbid!! Anyone who came to date us would come to the door and before he got very far my mother got an entire history, what nationality, that was question No. 1. And they wanted us just to date people of our own nationality.

JT Nationality was the number one question. That's interesting. My mother always asked, "What kind of a car does he have?" Did you work after you were married?

MF No, I didn't work because my husband went on to school. He's an industrial engineer, so he was continually going to evening classes at Fenn. He did go to Huntington and then to Fenn. I believe it remained Fenn until it became Cleveland State.

JT Yes, it did.

MF So he was busy and I didn't have time to do anything but take care of my son, and then it wasn't until several years later that my daughter and her two sisters were born. And it wasn't until after our youngest was in kinder-

garten that I went to work. But I didn't mind. I had this interest in home making. I love to cook and sew.

JT What do you like to cook?

MF Well, ethnic foods, because that's what he had at home, like pirogis, stuffed cabbage. Even now I go every Friday to help make them at the church. We make the best ones, absolutely delicious.

JT Did you use the pirogi recipe that your mother used?

MF Yes, she taught me. I don't know if you are familiar with cooks that don't use a cook book. They'll put so much flour in and then so many eggs and butter, whatever, and then they can feel with their hands when they have enough. And so this is the way she tried to teach me. I said, "Wait a minute, Mom. I don't have a bowl this size, I don't know how much flour you put in. Let me measure it." So I used her recipe. She was a great paska baker. That's an Easter bread. That usually has a little more butter and eggs in it. For flavor some use vanilla and some use mace and some use saffron, depending. They can tell each other's breads by the fragrance of it. And her breads were so light. I wish I had learned to make the breads from her. It's an all-day affair.

Jt What language did you and your husband speak in your home?

MF English. We tried to teach the children Ukrainian as they were growing up, but for some reason they just seemed to resent it. Ironically, My youngest daughter with the baby says, "Mother, will you speak Ukrainian to her?" Because you see she reads a couple of chapters ahead about what the baby is supposed to be doing and it says "Speak and read to your child because they absorb so much at that age." They may not use it now but the retention will be there and when they need it it will be so much easier. And any languages you can speak to them, do so. So I speak Ukrainian to them. And so does my husband.

JT Your children don't speak Ukrainian, but you and your husband speak Ukrainian

to your grandchildren?

MF Not to all of them; just to this baby. My daughter-in-law comes from so many nationalities--French and Polish--but she doesn't know any of the languages.

JT When your children were young were you active in womens' organizations?

MF Yes. I joined the group at church which at that time was called the Ukrainian Junior Women's League, and later the Mothers' Club, similar to a PTU.

JT Do you mean Ukrainian School?

MF No, parochial, under the supervision of the Catholic Diocese. They did have an hour or two of Ukrainian, but they taught in English. I'm very much opposed to this bilingual that they're trying to teach in schools now. I think that's wrong.

JT You think we should all be educated in English?

MF That's right. You speak enough of your Hispanic or whatever it is at home. We did it. We learned. Now, what are these children going to do when they get out in the world? And they can't speak good English? They're going to be terribly handicapped.

JT I think most people would agree with you. Did you, then, have a Ukrainian school on Saturdays?

MF No, we had a daily school, after public school. We came home, had a glass of milk, maybe a cracker or two, took our tablet, our primer and a pencil and went off to St. Peter and Paul School where we were from four to six. We were taught Ukrainian, to read, write and speak.

JT How about your children?

MF Now, because they do have the all day parochial school. . . . My son graduated from the 8th grade there and went on to public school. My girls also went to public schools. My oldest daughter, who is a teacher, took Russian in high school, so she does understand and speak a bit of it. But

we do keep all the beautiful Ukrainian customs, especially the beautiful Christmas customs; the children were baptised in the Ukrainian church. So there are many traditions that we do adhere to. You cannot dictate your children's pattern of life. They're grown up and on their own; they do what they need to do. You don't interfere. You can voice an opinion--that's free.

JT Were you active in other organizations? I see you have a list.

MF I was active in PTU (Parent Teacher Union), and then the PTA when our girls were in elementary school. I was a Girl Scout leader for four years. I really wish everyone would belong to these organizations, because you learn to respect other people's religions, cultures and heritages. One of our Ukrainian poets, by the name of Shevchenko, wrote, "Absorb all cultures, but never forget your own." In girl scouting we learned to respect other people's cultures, religions and their customs. Of course, that is what girl scouting is all about anyhow. And I belonged to the Ukrainian National Association. I was also a convention delegate. This association has done more for the Ukrainian community than any other. They have helped many people come from Europe after World War II, they have published books. It is an organization that encourages the culture and the heritage and the knowledge of the Ukraine. Of course, the film on the man-made famine in Ukraine was produced with the support of the Ukrainian National Association.

JT "Harvest of Despair?"

MF Yes. I also belong to the Nationalities Services Center, and I was president of the women's committee there. My husband and I belong to the language bank and we interpret when needed. I was with the USO for 15 years, when my son was in Viet Nam. I did it because I felt that I wanted to do a little part there, too. I got to meet a lot of these boys that resentfully went into the service. It was an experience I wouldn't have missed or traded for anything else. And I met so many lovely people there. Among them was Robert Pyle, who is part of Hough Bakery. He invited us to his home for service awards. And

my husband and I are consulting rosarians. We have about 250 rose bushes of our own and we help with the Cancer Home rose garden and at the present time we're taking care of the Jesuit Retreat House rose gardens. We're active in the Rose Society and are officers there. I teach piano. And I'm president of the Ladies Guild at church. And I go on Fridays to make pirogis, and also am in the choir.

JT You've had a very active life. Have you taught piano lessons all your life?

MF No, maybe for the last 25 years.

JT What have you done in politics?

MF I haven't done too much outside of working in the booths and that is an experience I think everyone should have. And my husband ran for precinct committeeman at one time and we got out this very beautiful letter with a quote from Socrates. That isn't what the people wanted. He missed being elected by just a few votes, but it was interesting that we were part of this process of election. Our girls got involved in it. They came after school to help pass out literature.

JT Is this Parma or the county?

MF Parma, the county and state, too. We were invited down to the governor's mansion this past summer as a member of the Nationalities Services Center, of which Mrs. Celeste is a member.

JT Mrs. Celeste has been active in women's studies.

MF She's a very dedicated person. We knew her when her children were growing up and the problems they would have. She did mention at one point that they would give each of their children a chance to go and live for a year in Europe with her family there. Their Ohio mansion is beautiful; she has done so much to beautify it. She and her husband have promoted local Ohio artists, displaying their works, and I think that is great.

JT You said you made national costumes for your girls' dancing group. What group was that?

MF A group called Ukrainian Dancers of Ohio. Since the children didn't have costumes, we made patterns and the parents cut them out and sewed them.

JT What kind of material?

MF There you had a choice. You could have a velveteen jacket or a wool jacket, and the skirt was a woven star pattern in the skirt. Predominant colors that we used were black and red. And then, of course, you had your boots. Red for the girls and black for the boys. The boys' costumes were just very colorful balloony type pants and colorful blouses and then the sash. We presented the main library with a book called "Ukrainian Arts." This was the culmination of a group of people who danced at the World's Fair in Chicago. They danced and won first prize in that category.

JT Where did your group dance?

MF Wherever they were requested. In schools, women's groups, or nationality programs, or concerts. We were even invited by a Jewish organization once. There is at present a professional group that dances by the name of Kashtan. They are very well known and they perform in big theaters like the State Theater, and are invited to different cities. These are mature boys and girls.

JT From what you say it sounds as if Ukrainian dancing is at a more developed stage now than it was 40 years ago.

MF Steps that they were taught 40 years ago were more or less the steps that were learned in villages in Western Ukraine. Since then the dances have become a little more theatrical, more of the ballet type. In fact, I think they encourage all of their dancers to have some ballet. They have increased the number of steps. Because the Ukrainians back then were more or less from Western Ukraine. Since then there are so many that they have come from the east and the southern and northern part of Ukraine. And they have other dances that they have learned.

JT So it has been added to by people coming from Europe?

MF Right.

JT Do you think any of it has been developed by Ukrainians who were born in this country?

MF I don't know, but I believe a lot of them are recently arrived or the children of recently arrived.

JT Do you do embroidery?

MF I did, but I don't now. I received much of embroidery from my cousin in Europe. She sent me Easter basket covers, pillow covers, scarves of all kinds. In Europe the long embroidered scarf was used to drape over a religious picture. All of our children received one, and they use it more like on a table or the top of a piano. But we are into Ukrainian baking. We bake our paskas and kolachs. The top of the breads are decorated with roses, cross and braids around the bread, all made of dough. At Christmas three braided bread rings are baked. They are placed one on top of another with a candle in the middle. These three breads signify the trinity and the candle Christ, the light of the world.

JT So actually the food and the cooking has lasted longer than the language?

MF I think so.

JT Did any of your children marry Ukrainians?

MF No. They all went away to school so they met people of different nationalities. But they all love our Christmas customs, especially Christmas Eve. We observe this beautiful meatless dinner of 12 dishes, foods from the field, the orchards and the streams.

JT They all come with their spouses and children?

MF But of course it is a family tradition.

JT Where did they go to college?

MF Our Dan went to the University of Toledo, then he received his masters degree from Purdue. Nancy is a graduate of Ohio State, and then has a

masters degree from Cleveland State. Christine is a graduate of Slippery Rock and she started her masters degree, and Mary Paul is a graduate of Kent. Yes, they all went away to school. There were three things their father gave them. When they graduated from high school they all got a sewing machine, as they all sew. And when they graduated from college they all received money for a car. And of course they all have their education.

JT That's a wonderful record!

MF Nancy, the schoolteacher, lives in Cleveland. And Dan lives in Cuyahoga Falls, and Mary Paul lives in Twinsburg and Tina lives in North Ridgeville, so they are all close. We are very proud of them.

JT And none of the grandchildren speak Ukrainian, except one who is listening?

MF Our children were growing up at a time when their grand parents wanted to learn to speak English. So little Ukrainian was spoken. We used to have an all-Ukrainian service in church, and soon the children, especially the teen agers, didn't understand Ukrainian. Now we have the English services, at which time my husband reads the epistle. It's a case of must, you know. If you don't, they will go to other churches. Our church, I hate to be quoted on this, but it's true, is very nationalistic because almost 75% are those who came across from Europe after the second world war. They want to cling to this tradition and language and culture in Ukrainian, and they just seem to shut themselves out from the rest of the world, which is wrong. You just can't do that.

JT It will probably be a different story by the time they have grandchildren.

MF Oh, yes. It's already happening. It's breaking their parents heart.

But what are you going to do? You have to accept it if you want to live in harmony. I always feel that if the children have the desire to learn Ukrainian, they will. Once you learn the alphabet and the diphthongs or whatever, you learn to speak it very quickly, and write it. Of course,

when I write to my cousin in Europe I have to consult my little Ukrainian primer because sometimes I forget the words. We use the Cyrillic alphabet.

JT You do correspond with relatives in the Ukraine?

MF Yes, my cousin. And that's another story all by itself, very, very sad.

JT Why is it sad?

MF Well, it's like if you'd seen the "Harvest of Despair," conditions are still the same. You are restricted as to what you can send in packages. Now this is Ukraine. Poland is a different story, and there are so many Ukrainians living in Poland, too. When I send a package I can only send three items. They must be new, with prices attached. Now, my cousin writes back and says I have received so and so. And what they don't need they will sell and buy what is necessary. Nothing is ever written about religion, nothing is ever written about politics. There were letters that my cousin would ask me and I would reply to her and the second letter would come with the same questions. So apparently the first letter never reached her. The censor just threw it away. I don't think Americans quite realize the conditions they live under. There are still these farms where they work for the government, and they have to plant and gather so much, whatever is left is theirs. Now that condition still exists. My one cousin is studying to be a doctor, and you must accept the Russian philosophy if you're going to get anywhere there at all. Now she wanted a stethoscope. I couldn't send it to her. I had to give it to someone going there that could probably hide it in their suitcase and hopefully be able to give it to her. It really is so un-Christian-like, but it's true.

JT What is the name of the city where she is studying to be a doctor?

MF Lviv. At one time, under the Germans, it was called Lemberg, under the Polish it was called Lvov and under the Ukrainians it's Lviv. Religion is alive underground. There is resistance underground. But you cannot tell who they are because they will be sent away to Siberia. So you just have

to wait. Maybe the proper time will come.

Jt Your cousin sends you gifts from the Ukraine?

MF Not any more. She used to send me packages of embroideries of all kinds, and little wooden articles and ceramics. She did send me the last package through Canada through someone who came over there, and hid the articles hoping the customs officers would not examine thoroughly. And then she sent it to me from Canada, beautiful embroidered things.

JT You haven't been to the Ukraine.

MF We haven't been to the Ukraine. We were supposed to go back to Ukraine when I was about five years old and my sister was two at the time, about 1919. We never did go back, and neither did my parents. At the time that we could have gone to Ukraine my husband was working on government classified material and they wouldn't grant him a passport. Conditions would depress me terribly. You are not permitted to go into the villages; you have to arrange to meet your relatives in the big cities. There are people who do sneak in, so to speak, into the villages, but they are not permitted. My cousin doesn't write anything of the conveniences they have there. Just as primitive as when my parents were there.

JT Do you receive Ukrainian newspapers or magazines?

MF Oh, yes. One of the finest magazines is "Forum" that is printed by The Ukrainian Fraternal Organization. We will be celebrating a thousand years of Christianity in the Ukraine in 1988.

JT Oh, St. Vladimir and all that.

MF And St. Olga and all the martyrs who gave their lives for this cause. We also receive "The Ukrainian Weekly" which is put out by The Ukrainian National Association. There's another Ukrainian paper that is called the "Fraternal Voice." Then, belonging to the Ukrainian National Women's League of North America I receive their monthly magazine called "Our Life". Plus, we have the Ukrainian Encyclopedias and we have the primers and we

have books of the Ukrainian poets and poetesses and historical books.

JT Are any of these things in Ukrainian?

MF Oh, yes, they are all in Ukrainian, but they have been translated.

JT I see. You read the translations?

MF We read the translations. We can read the Ukrainian, but when you don't use it frequently, it takes a little longer to translate.

JT Do you listen to the radio programs?

MF Oh, yes. We listen to the Ukrainian hour whenever possible, but it comes on on Sunday, at which time we are in church.

JT That's about the end of my questions, but I'm sure there's something we could add. Did you have a Ukrainian wedding?

MF I would say yes. You knelt at your parents feet, asked for their blessing, then drove to be married in church. There was a big reception in a hall with traditional Ukrainian foods, a bridal dance, and we stayed until all the guests left. Traditional Ukrainian wedding bread was a must. It was baked round with braids, decorated with myrtle surrounding it and with apples on top for prosperity. At the Ukrainian weddings now the bride and groom are greeted at the door with bread and salt and liquor and they would toast, and the bride's father would welcome the groom and vice versa, and then they would march in introducing the whole bridal party.

JT Do you think weddings are more elaborate today and more Ukrainian than they were forty years ago?

MF Yes, that seems to be the trend, no limit for expenses.

JT Did your daughters have Ukrainian weddings?

MF Yes, similar to the one I had.

JT You say that you love being Ukrainian. What do you love about it?

MF Just everything about it. Its language, its beautiful Ukrainian melodies, its customs, its heritage, its dances, its songs. We have such beautiful holy days, many to the Blessed Virgin. It is nice being a Ukrainian.

JT Did your mother feel that way?

MF Oh, yes, very much.

JT And your husband?

MF Yes. You see, we are both Ukrainians as far back as we can remember or our parents can remember. Our son-in-laws, who are different nationalities, like our food and our daughters like to cook them.

JT Were you or your husband ever interested in the liberation of the Ukraine?

MF Yes, all peoples should have the privilege of freedom. Our families helped in their way, sending packages and money to help them back home. Now the more recent immigrants who came from Europe, who were born there, their roots are there and they have an entirely different philosophy about situations, whereas we have already accepted our roots as here. We're sympathetic and help wherever we can. Letters, now in regard to this Chernobyl incident, to this sailor who jumped ship and was not given asylum here. We feel that he wasn't treated right. There you can protest by writing to the congresspeople and telling them your views. But outside of that we're not as strong activists because we don't have that same feeling. Outside of our families being over there, our hands are tied. Our love is our country right here, our America. I remember when my son Dan came home from Viet Nam and he got off the plane in Seattle, he knelt down and he kissed the ground and he thanked God for being back home. It's a feeling that you develop for your country. And I always feel that anyone who has a chance to serve his country and doesn't, is missing so much. It's that feeling you get when you give of yourself. You know, like President Kennedy said, "It's not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." It's this philosophy that our children have been brought up with from childhood. And my husband was in the service and his brothers served in the service, and so it's that feeling that we ought to do our little part for our country.

My husband's family had a more colorful past, because he had a very active political family in Europe. But my parents were more of the rural, farmer type, peace loving people. They just accepted things as they came along day by day. That's our philosophy and feeling here at home too. Now my husband would give you an entirely different viewpoint; we differ on so many subjects.

JT That's interesting. Do you and your husband have some political differences in the way you feel about the Ukraine ?

MF Not about the Ukraine, just the philosophy of the more recent immigrants who came from Europe and their intense feeling of going back to regain their lands. It's just that we feel we're here in America. Our priority is here. But because they are so recently connected with it and have family there, that there is a stronger feeling, and I understand it. I'm sure in years their children won't feel that way. I'm sure in years this will all be settled or eased in some way or another. On the other hand, you can't just sit by and say nothing. You've got to make the world aware of what is going on. My husband is more active in politics than I am, more vocal about his opinions. But we are all entitled to our opinions.

JT We thank you very much for your interview.

MF Thank you for giving me this opportunity.