February 20, 1981

Stopped by Jon Collett's office to make an appointment to see him...February 28, 4:30 p.m.

He personally knows Lydia Hicks and other Quakers in the area. Jon is a birthright Quaker now actively involved in New York City with the American Friends World Service, Disarmament/C.O. group.

He suggested that I visit the library at Haverford College near Philadelphia, which has the largest collection of Quaker items. Jon's father is a personal friend of the librarian there, if I need a recommendation.

Pendle Hill also publishes many pamphlets regarding the Quakers. He'll get me the address. I can write to see what they have dealing with L.I. groups. Also suggested they may want to publish my research!

Must prepare a list of questions/topics to cover with him on the 28th.

He suggested I read Rufus Jones' book.

February 21, 1981 2:30-5:00 p.m.

Visited Jericho Public Library -- spoke to Frances Walker, Art Librarian, there. She informed me that the library has a L.I. Collection, which consists of many archival materials: tapes of personal interviews with Alice Underhill, newspaper articles, magazine articles, oral histories typed and/or handwritten by Jericho residents, copies of old documents, many maps, etc. She said I could copy whatever I liked.

A woman by the name of Mrs. Lesnick did the tapes on the residents for the early history of Jericho, and she also is responsible for putting the collection together. However, she is on sabbatical now. Her work is covered by the historian Ruby Stern now. She works full-time and can tell me what I need to know.

The L.I. Collection is kept in boxes in a special room in the library. I looked through the early Jericho box. There are two twentieth century boxes, and one on religions, I understand. I was not allowed into the room because computer equipment is being stored there temporarily. Ms. Walker brought me the box. I did not finish reading it yet.

I took Xerox copies as follows:
February 21, continued

1) a copy (by hand) document written by a Robert Williams in 1773 regarding an indenture on land involving the Williams/Seaman families -- 2 pp.

2) A two page outline done by the library re the history of Jericho

3) A one page Genealogy chart of the Hicks-Seaman families

4) A five page document found by Lydia S.H. Field among her mother's papers. Her mother was Pheobe Seaman of Jericho, who married James C. Haviland. The document tells of a marriage which took place between Townsend Rushmore and Amy in Locust Grove, one day from Jericho, on January 29, 1824.

This is a strange writing. The library catalogued it as a Quaker ceremony, but I doubt it. My opinion is that this is a made-up story, or a real story of a Jewish wedding. Evidence:

a) p.3 they were dressed in costly apparel 
b) p.4 there were servants, man and maid, who attended the guests at the feast -- Did the Q. have servants??
c) p.4 the guests drank wine -- Qs are temperate 
d) p.4 fine china and glassware were used??
e) p.4 there is a reference to Elias, the chief ruler of the Synagogue being present?? 
f) p.3 the date is referred to as 1824 of the Christian hegira?? Was this a common way to speak?

TO DO:

- make more Xerox copies
- listen to tape and perhaps copy it
- catalog what they have on the Quakers
- question the so-called Q. marriage document

February 24, 1981

Requested an interlibrary loan on the following book:
As the Way Opens: The Story of Quaker Women in America by Margaret Hope Bacon, Friends United Press.

I also requested that COW library purchase this book $8.95, as I think it would be a good addition. The "book tells the contributions of Quaker women towards efforts for human rights. Included are women in educational, professional, and social reform areas of society who helped to bring about change." (Daughters of Sarah, p. 18, a feminist journal 2716 W. Cortland, Chicago, IL 60647, Jan/Feb 1981, Vol7,#1.)
February 25, 1981, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Went to Milleridge Inn and spoke to manager, Gloria. She showed me through the Inn, pointing out the original parts of the house, which was built in 1672 by Mary Washburn Willits, Quaker, and the sister-in-law of Robert Williams (Roger Williams cousin), who purchased the Williams Plantation in 1648 from the Indians. Mary held Meeting at her home, serving as a minister, because there was no meeting house built yet. Built 1788. Gloria told me that there are tunnels in the basement of the Inn that they don’t understand. I told her that they were probably used in the underground railroad to help runaway slaves.

The Milleridge Inn was once known as the Maine Maid Tea Room. Gloria said the name was changed to Milleridge but she doesn’t know when. I picked up menus and post cards for our archives, as they tell of the history of the Inn. I also copied two wall hangings outside the Victorian Tea Room.

Across Jericho Turnpike is the Maine Maid Inn, the former house of Valentine Hicks (a cousin of Elias Hicks), which was built in 1789. Valentine Hicks married Elias Hicks daughter Abigail in 1804. He was the first president of the Long Island Railroad and the town of Hicksville was named after him. The Elias Hicks house is across the street and the Friends Meeting and School House are nearby. The Maine Maid is a historical site but has been allowed to be run as a restaurant. The house is just as it had been, except the fireplace was removed from the kitchen and a new entry floor was laid last week, according to Mary Anne, the manager. A few minor structural changes have been made upstairs also, in the bedroom area.

Photographs may be taken of these Inns providing it is done before 11:00 a.m. during the week days.

I spent the remainder of the day at the Jericho Library, researching from the L.I. Collection there. Ruby Stern, the art historian, told me that Sheila Lesnick could be reached at the Westbury Public Library on Wednesdays and Fridays 11-5, in The Cottage. The Cottage is the house used for Westbury’s archival materials. I questioned Ruby regarding the Quaker marriage document. She called Sheila who could not help but who suggested that I call Burt Titus, who donated it. He resides in Jericho or Muttontown.

All the tapes in Jericho’s L.I. Collection have been transcribed. I read Alice Underhill Mitchell’s tape, but had no time for the others. (Alice was born in 1901 and lives in Williston or East Williston.)
February 25 continued

Jericho's archival collection is extensive and has a wealth of material regarding early L.I. history, Quaker history, Black history, photographs, and tapes of conversations conducted by Mrs. Lesnick, who started the archives.

Oh yes, I checked the marriage document date against the Westbury Meeting records of births, deaths, and marriages—they are photostated and are in bound volumes in Jericho's collection. There was a marriage recorded between Townsend Rushmore (of Wheatley Town of Oyster Bay) and Amy Willis (Jericho) on January 29, 1824. Townsend's parents names are Stephen and Phebe; Amy's are Samuel and Rachel.

In all, I made 60 index cards of material that would be of interest for our archives. Mrs. Stern is very willing to allow us to copy these materials when we are ready to do so.

February 27, 1981, 12:00 to 6:00

The Cottage - Westbury Memorial Public Library. Mrs. Sheila Lesnick, Local History Librarian, Westbury Historical Society (MS Library Science and currently working on a Masters of History at Columbia University with a thesis on Westbury's history from WW II to present.)

Ms. Lesnick is extremely interested in our project. She is both helpful and knowledgeable. I learned so much from her today that I hardly know where to begin.

Ms. Lesnick received her Library degree from C.W. Post, which teaches courses on conservation of papers, archives, etc. A Prof. Moffat currently teaches there and is a possible source of information on how to do archives. Mrs. Lesnick stressed using proper supplies -- acid-free paper, folders, envelopes, and boxes, which will not turn yellow with age. She can tell us where to obtain these.

The L.I. Library Resources Council, Box 31, Bellport, NY 11713, 516-286-0400, David Wilder, Director, is also a possible resource on how to do archives, etc.

The American Association for State and Local History, 1400 Eight Avenue, South, Nashville Tenn. 37203, publishes a very valuable magazine, History News, monthly for a $20.00 annual dues fee. AASLH is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to advancing knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of local history in the United States and Canada. It publishes History News, books, technical leaflets, and other materials; confers prizes and awards in recognition of outstanding achievement in the field; and carries on a broad educational program and other activities designed to help members work more effectively. Ms. Lesnick strongly suggested that we enroll for membership.
Ms. Lesnick has given seminars on Practical Information for an Oral History Program and archival seminars for the Nassau-Suffolk Library Association. She graciously gave me a copy of the booklet she prepared for the Oral History Program and orally gave me permission to reproduce what I wanted. She also gave me a copy of 16 lists of questions which may be useful in doing oral history -- again giving me permission to reproduce them. She is very willing to negotiate a seminar on oral history at COW, but in the Fall of 1981, as she is busy now completing her master's work. She has also expressed a desire to know more about the archive position and would be interested in doing this part-time.

The archives at The Cottage is extensive on Westbury history. There is a mannequin dressed in full Q. women's clothing, there are display cases of Quaker clothing, male and female, and other interesting artifacts. The archives themselves consist of many books, photographs, and boxes of materials for both Westbury and Long Island generally. The walls are lined with original oil paintings of the historic homes in the area done by the late Herbert Pratt, who copied his work from photographs now kept in the L.I. Collection at Jericho Public Library. Smithtown Library also houses some of his paintings. These paintings are not works of "art" but do capture a feeling for these historical homes and their settings.

Ms. Lesnick told me that at one time both Jericho and Westbury were rather "close" and it has only been since the construction of the roadway system that the communities have become "fractured." The residents of Westbury fought hard to keep Northern State Parkway as close to the village as possible in order to preserve the historic flavor of the area. After the Parkway was constructed, the town became known as Old Westbury north of the Parkway and Westbury south of the Parkway. Before this, there was no distinction. She suggested I read Power Broker by Robert Cairo, which is a biography of Robert Moses and the damage he did to this area. (1,000 pp.) She also suggested that I read The Lost Village of Wheatly, which is a very good local history book. Late 1800's. It is in their collection.

Ms. Lesnick taped many local residents, and consequently she knows many in the community. My focus on the women and we centered on them.

Mrs. Phebe Smith (Muttontown) and Alice Underhill Mitchell (East Williston) are Underhill sisters. Alice's son, Sam, is head of the Nassau Historical Society.
February 27 continued

The Woodnutt sisters, Katherine and Josephine (who is a poet) live in Old Brookville, and are very private people. They are cousins of Esther Hicks Emory.

Esther Hicks Emory (approximately 78 years old) lives in Westbury, and is part of the early Hicks family. The Hicks Nursery is in her family. She is a prominent citizen and very involved in community activities. She and her mother are graduates of Swarthmore College (Quaker) in Swarthmore, PA. Her mother lived to be 105 years old. Esther told Ms. Lesnick that/the past there was a surplus of Q. women in the area—they all lived to old ages. Rachel Hicks was a photographer in the area, and Grace and Marietta, two maiden sisters, managed the business end of their farm.

Eloise Hicks is the sister-in-law of Esther Hicks Emory. Edwin is her husband and brother of Esther. She lives in Westbury.

Esther Emory has a very large collection of old clothing (mother's and grandmother's) which she keeps, along with other memorabilia, in her home and in the empty house across from where she lives.

Many of the old Qs are now residing in retirement homes near Philadelphia.

Possible leads for more information:

1) Elizabeth Moger, librarian, Friends Library, 16th St. and Rutherford Place, NYC (Main Meeting House). Sheila thinks she lives in Roslyn and that Elizabeth's husband wrote a book on Roslyn's history—manumission documents.

2) Myron Luke, retired professor of history (Adelphi U?), involved in L.I. history -- now living in Garden City?? We can reach him through the Nassau Historical Society.

3) Nassau County Historical Museum at Eisenhower Park has a lot of L.I. history. May have Q. information Richard Winsche, historian.

4) Plainview Library—Carolyn Mernof, is interested in history.

5) Glen Cove Library has a good local history collection.

6) Robert Coles—a Quaker and historial—local resident.

7) Roslyn Public Library

8) Smithtown Public Library has a good L.I. Collection.

9) Possibly Hicksville Library

10) Marion Robinson, asst. librarian Westbury, is a
Interview with Jonathan Collett, COW professor and Quaker

A - Where were you born? brought up?

J - Born in Wilmington, Ohio, a Quaker town which also has a Quaker college. Family is originally from Virginia. I spent my growing-up years in Cincinnati, Ohio.

A - I understand that some Quaker families came north to Ohio before the Civil War in order to free their slaves. Do you know if this is the case with your family?

J - I didn't know that. I don't know if that is true for my family.

A - Where did you go to Meeting?

J - I've gone to meetings all over -- Connecticut, Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, Long Island, Bronxville ... All of them are different. After a while, the meetings reveal who are "weighty" Friends. This means people who are like elders, who connect the issues of the meeting to roots -- the Bible, tradition, etc. For instance, the meetings in Manhattan, while I was at Columbia studying, were different from other Meetings. The issues discussed were social issues and there didn't seem to be any weighty Friends present at first. Issues concerning the community or families in the community were not discussed.

A - Why do you think this was so? Could it be because this is a transient population -- students?

J - Possibly. Other meetings will deal with specific families and problems, rather than broad issues, although they are discussed too.

A - I understand that before a Meeting moves on any issue, there must be a consensus. How does the persuasion work? What if someone is particularly stubborn?
J - Yes. There must be a consensus. If someone particularly feels strong, they may say that while they don't agree wholeheartedly with the group, they will consent to the action. This is called having a sense of the meeting, or consensus.

A - What do you remember about the women at Meeting over the years? I know that Qs accept men and women as equals. Did the ERA raise issues for the group?

J - The women are equals, so they participate in the same issues as the men do, there is no difference. The ERA, of course, didn't affect them because of this -- feminism is just not an issue. In 1977 or 1978, one woman in Brooklyn, at Meeting next to the Men's House of Detention, organized the use of the Meeting House for those who were waiting in the rain, etc. to get into the House of Detention. The basement of the Meeting was used as a hospitality center for the women and children, and child-care facilities were created so that the women could have a peaceful visit with their men. Another woman, an artist, organized a group outside of meeting time in order to discuss personal issues and feelings on the social work done by the group.

A - Do you know any local Q women who could tell me about the women and their concerns in this area (L.I.)?

J - (He called his daughter, Sarah, to find out the Hick's woman's first name.) Eloise Hicks, her husband is Edwin, her son Fred runs the Hicks Nursery -- is the grandmother of Karen, a good friend of my daughter, Sarah. She would be a good person to talk to and would probably be very willing to talk with you. Another friend of mine, who may give you some leads, is George Rubin, a resident of Westbury and a Q. He's a chiropodist. He is now the chairman of the local region of the Friends Service Committee.

A - Did you get the name of the librarian at Haverford College (Haverford, PA) and the address of Pendle Hill?

J - Yes. The librarian is Edward (I think, or Edwin) Bronner. Pendle Hill is in Wallingford, PA. They probably have some pamphlets that you could use.

A - Jon, I came across a document at the Jericho Public Lib., L.I. Collection, which describes a Q. marriage. It mentions serving wine in glass goblets. I thought Qs abstained from liquor?

J - Yes, but it's like lots of things--some do imbibe alcohol, in moderation. There are varied views on this. Let me see the document when you get a chance.
March 4, 1981, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Westbury Public Lib.

Spent time today going through Friends folder in Church History box. In addition to index carding some of this material, I was able to read some of the documents on display in the room. Index cards were made for some of these also.

March 6, 1981, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. Westbury Public Lib.

The library has many tapes made with some of the older residents. Transcripts of the tapes are available. I was able to read through two of these tape transcripts and make index cards (annotated) for them.

4:30 - 5:00 meeting with Margaret Freeman. We discussed some possible ways to organize the wealth of material available. Suggestions: a resource book cataloging what is available in libraries on L.I. Possibly this could be published by Pendle Hill. Also, compilation of a Quaker Woman List. Margaret has a book put out on this by Scribner, doing this for women generally. This route sounds promising: Could go back to 1600's to present.

March 11, 1981, 1:00 to 3:00 Westbury Memorial Public Lib.

Today I read Ruth Hegeman's tape and one and a half of Esther Emory's tapes. Ms. Lesnick also gave me a verbal list of Quaker women who are still alive in and around Westbury.

I am to go for lunch on the 23rd with Ms. Lesnick and Ruby Stern (of Jericho Lib) and then to a lecture on Lace, at the Library. Esther Emory should be there and I will have a chance to meet her and others as well. I'm not interested in lace, but am interested in the people who will be there.

I have decided to make a Quaker Woman list, starting with the women in Jericho and Westbury. I am particularly interested in the Neighborhood House started by the women of the community, including Qs, in the early 1900's (1918 or so). This is an expression of women's concerns--health, babies, education, sanitation, etc. Now that I have a focus, I think my work will be more directed. I plan on starting to make my list from the information I've gathered so far--I'll probably have to go back to Jericho Lib. to fatten it out. Also, I plan on picking up whatever archival materials I can that are relevant to my chosen topic.

I feel much more confident now that I have a narrow goal. Before, I was overwhelmed by what I was discovering. I've learned, or am learning the importance of deciding upon a theme and then sticking with it. By keeping it narrow, I hope to be able to make a solid contribution to the project, as well as feeling good about making a start on an important
March 11 continued

reference tool both for feminism, Quakerism, and local history. This is a multi-faceted endeavor, a fact which both challenges me and excites me. Doing history is revealing to me what I've learned from Al Rabil--nothing happens in a vacuum. The sociological, ideological, political, religious, and economic climate has affected the way these women have expressed themselves through the almost 350 years of Q. history. I think this is obviously true of Q's since they are social change agents perhaps more so than many other kinds of people.

I hope my works leads to a sense of value for the various kinds of work Q. women have engaged in over the centuries, especially Jericho and Westbury women.

March 17, 1981

Today, I brought a huge stack of books back to the library. This weekend I came to the conclusion that I was "hiding behind" my stacks of books, and that that had to stop. I have absorbed sufficient background information to enable me to conduct a fairly productive interview.

I feel good about discovering this aspect of my approach to my project. Now that I'm aware of this trap, perhaps the next time...

I enjoyed Hedva's talk with us today, and will start this evening to compile a list of questions to ask my women.

March 18, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Westbury Memorial Public Lib.

Today I finished up reading the tapes on the women of Westbury. I took photocopies of the L.I.R.R. article (1922) regarding "The Wonderful Women of Westbury," enumerating the many projects initiated by them. I also copied a letter written by Rachel Hicks, c. 1830, to a friend. Rachel was a preacher who traveled widely.

As a bonus, I met Esther Hicks Emory today. We made an appointment for an interview to be taped on Wednesday, March 23, 9:30 a.m. She is a wealth of historical information--immediately informing me that a Rachel Hicks was also active in the suffrage movement; that Quaker women had started a Children's Home in Mineola, with a school, for orphaned children who were kept in the poor house; her Aunt wrote a piece entitled "Jericho and Westbury: A Unique Quaker Community"; and that the women formed a group which went around checking the boarding homes for their children; and finally her Aunts had started Neighborhood House, which is still in existence. All this without a formal interview!
March 18 continued

I look forward to Wednesday with anticipation. I will give Sheila Lesnick a copy of the tape and the transcript.

at

I also found out that the "Lace" meeting on Monday, I will meet Phebe Underhill Smith, Alice Underhill Mitchell, and perhaps the Woodnutt sisters!

I'm busy now creating my questions.

March 21, 12:00 to 5:00 Westbury Memorial Public Lib. Cottage

Today I read James and Lucretia Mott to check to see if Lucretia Mott did indeed live in Pt. Washington as Henry Hicks claimed in his address celebrating the Emancipation—77th Anniv. 1/9/41 in the Church History Box. I could not substantiate this, although it is possible she came to visit her cousins who lived in Cow Neck (Pt. Wash). The (James) Mott family moved to Mamaroneck in 1803; Lucretia met James in 1806. Lucretia was in correspondence with Phebe Post Willis (her husband's cousin) and they traveled in ministry together. They were friends and confidants.

Wonder of wonders -- I discovered while doing this research that James' great-grandmother is none other than Phebe Dodge, one of my women; I was very excited over this discovery. Phebe was born in 1699, was a traveling minister and in 1752 went to England and Wales on an extended religious trip. In 1776, she freed her slave, Rachel, and the manumission papers are on file in the safe at Westbury Meeting. A transcript of the paper is typed and kept in the Church History Box, Friends folder, at Westbury Lib.

I also read the Memoirs of Rachel Hicks, who traveled and preached as far as Indiana. This book is a journal of her journeys. She was from Westbury and was a Hicksite, even though her father was Orthodox and tried to persuade her to the Orthodox way.

I also met the curator of the Nassau County Historical Society, Dick Gachot. He seemed interested in my project. At least COW is projecting a good image: (For a change.)

Monday, I'm to go to the Lace Lecture and perhaps have the opportunity to meet other Quaker women. Ms. Lesnick asked me to take this for her, as she will arrive late.
March 23, 1:30-4:00

The lace lecture at the Westbury Lib. was sponsored by the Westbury Historical Society. I discovered that Esther Hicks Emory is the President and has been since 1977. I met Phebe Smith and Alice Mitchell (Underhill sisters) and told them of my project. They gave me their telephone numbers and I'm to call them for a visit.

I'm glad I went because it gave me the opportunity to meet these women on a social basis first.

I went to the Cottage for an hour and continued researching the Mott family.

March 25, 9:30 to 5:30

Esther Hicks Emory
Box 648 (Jericho Tpk. next to Hicks Nursery)
Westbury, NY 11590
334-0569

Today I visited with Esther Hicks Emory. I taped our "formal" conversation and had some trouble with my recorder. However, most of our conversation is recorded.

Mrs. Emory is a walking history book. She is very well informed on the history of Westbury and is in research herself now. She had to empty out her aunt's house, which is across the street, and brought all its contents into her home. The house across the street is now an historic house which the County has renovated and will rent out.

There are all kinds of documents and books all over the house. Her vestibule contains three marriage certificates which are of huge proportions--her's, her mother's, and her grandmother's. They are interesting documents because not only do they record the wedding, and all the guests in attendance, but they also are used to record the 25th, 40th, and 50th anniversaries on the back. All the guests sign (or are signed for if they are too young.) It's fun to see how the signatures change from a childish mew to a firm, confident signature.

Esther has many documents in her possession which are extremely old. For instance, I held in my hands the Minute from the London Meeting to the Westbury Meeting dated 1753, telling of the visit and ministry of Phebe Mott Dodge. What an exciting moment. I also held Elizabeth Willis' penmanship book (1818) -- of which Mrs. Emory will make a copy for me. The things written in it were very interesting--moral sayings were practiced along with letters. These sayings reveal the things of importance to these people.
Esther's Aunt Marietta was an historian of sorts, keeping a book on the history of Westbury. She was also the clerk of Westbury Meeting. Esther admired her and kind of followed in her footsteps, keeping a record of the family's history as well as that of Westbury.

I had lunch with her and we could have talked right on into the night. She has so much she is willing to share.

Eloise Hicks came while I was there and I told her of my project and got her telephone number. She is very active in the Friends School.

All in all, it was a most profitable and enjoyable day. I will have to return there, however, because Esther has photostats she's making for me and because I have something written by her aunt which I am copying.

Friday March 27, 1981 Westbury Memorial Public Lib, Cottage

I finished up by research on the Mott family, going through Adam and Anne Mott by Thomas Cornell, 1890.

I had started to transcribe the tapes from Mrs. Emory. This is a very difficult job. I don't know if I'll have time to do it since it is a tedious task. Perhaps I could do this in June. We'll see. Mrs. Lesnick said that the Library pays someone to do her transcribing--she just makes the tapes. As long as I have the tapes, I'll be happy, although ideally they should be transcribed.

April 1, 12:00-4:00 Westbury Memorial Pub. Lib, Cottage

Had lunch today with Ruby an Sheila, and Sheila told me about the Spring Meeting of the L.I. Archives Conference on Saturday, April 25, 9:30-4:30 at SUNY Stony Brook. The cost is $13.00, paid to Agnes K. Packard, 18 Homested Path, Huntington, NY 11743. I was invited to join them and probably will, especially since there will be a presentation on Oral History and interviewing techniques.

Ruby and Sheila are both interested in my project. I promised them copies of my tapes and my Womanlist when it's finished.
April 1, continued

After lunch, I looked through the Thimble Club records in the Westbury Community Organizations Box, copied the penmanship book of William Willets (1824), and went through some photographs, looking for Rachel Hicks' work. The original work is at the Nassau County Museum.

Rachel Hicks' photos are works of art. She seemed to have a real feel for people, taking many photos of working people busy with their everyday tasks: sheep sheering, haying, working in the cornfields. In addition, her communion with nature was evident--snow scenes were captured, walnut trees, a beehive, cows along a snake fence, orchard, foot path, Old Westbury Pond, Post Road, Powells Lane, etc. Her work was done in the 1890's.

She was a sensitive artist, capturing the essence of her subject. One particularly good picture was of two black women probably returning from work--Priscilla Pearsall and friend.

After spending four hours in the cottage, I went to Esther Emory's. The notes of this visit follow:
Went to Esther Emory's today to return her aunt's notes regarding Jericho and Westbury. We had an opportunity to talk some more and the following is a summary of what I gleaned from this visit.

What year did you start the PTA summer camp and did it continue?
It was called the Happy Day Camp and was started in 1942, continuing for approximately ten years. At I served as President in 1942. Ask Eloise Hicks, she and Edwin were both presidents.

What about Neighborhood House, when was it started?
It was started in 1916 and was concerning principally with public health, nursing.

Who started the Westbury Historical Society? I understand you've been president since 1977.
A group of public spirited citizens including Esther Emory, Kathleen Small, and Richard Gachot got together and formed the Society in the Fall of 1976. There were public meetings and in 1977 application was made for a provisional charter. The charter was received in May 1978. They thought it was a good idea when the Cottage, which was built to house the Children's Librarian, became vacant. Two librarians had lived there since it was built but the present librarian decided not to do so since she was married and lived with her family in their own home. Mr. Gachot was appointed curator (he lives in my great-grandfather's house now, its been renovated and declared an historic building). Our vice president is Robert Ernst, who teaches history at Adelphi, and our program chair is Muriel Tatem (she's connected with the Bethpage Restoration).

Your brother, William, died in WW II. I thought Quakers were pacifists. Would you tell me about it?
William is buried in Luxemburg. He was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. Of the people I knew, more went to fight in the was than didn't. William felt it would be wrong not to go when so many were fighting. This was supposed to be a war, as WW I was, to save democracy and was thought to be the war to end all wars.
April 1, 1981 visit with Mrs. Emory continued

What were the dates of the marriages of your grandparents, parents, and yours? How long did you and your husband court?

She drew the following chart for me.

She courted for five years, they were both very shy.
For the last eight generations, the Hicks family was lived within a 1/2 mile of their original settlement.

Sarah R. & John D. Hicks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isaac Hicks &amp; Mary</th>
<th>Lydia m. Joseph Hicks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward m. Emma Jarvis 1866</td>
<td>Rachel (1857-1941)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c1840-1920) (1845-1928)</td>
<td>(photographer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Cooperstown</td>
<td>not Quaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry &amp; Caroline Jackson 1900 (from Jericho, nr. fire-house)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1870-1954) (1872-1978)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Edwin Esther m. John M.G. Emory</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Eloise</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Marietta Hicks 1874-1960 Aunt lived across the street
Grace Hicks 1867-1970 Aunt

Emma Jarvis boarded with the Hicks after she answered an ad to become a teacher. She can here to teach and met and fell in love with Edward Hicks.

Mrs. Emory, the map you showed me the other day, does it show the College on it? The map was made in 1890 and does not show the estates. It does not cover that area.

In talking with Esther, the following information emerged on some of the other things she has been involved in over the years.

Esther served on the board of the Children's Library and on the Public Library board. She was also a trustee on the Public Lib. board. She served on the Committee which formed the Public Library War Memorial. She served on the Community Center Committee. The PTA also helped in getting the Public Library started. They worked with the committee.

Esther worked for Mrs. Overton, who wrote L.I. Story a history book for children. She read her manuscripts etc. while she was writing the book.
When she was 1/2 way through college, a friend of hers from Westbury invited her to join the College Club. It was started in 1922, and she came in at the beginning. (Marion Bennett was her friend) The Club later became a branch of the AAUW. Hempstead and Rockville Centre teachers were in it. Until 1940, she was involved, then, because of the gas restrictions, she could not longer attend the meetings which were held in the members homes. They had speakers come in and give cultural lectures. First she served as secretary, then as President. It was a 2 year term. They used to say "if you want out, just get pregnant), but nobody ever resigned, even though many got pregnant. Esther was PTA president in 1944 when she had her last baby. She was out for several months, and during that time, they got the men involved in PTA work. The PTA helped during the war with setting up the rationing. It was done by volunteers.

Re Rachel Hicks -- the photographer. (1857-1941)
She raised money for Nassau Hospital by exhibiting articles of old Quaker homes in her home (Old Place) once. She charged admission and gave proceeds to Hospital. She was active working for women's suffrage. Times they were.

The House across the street was built by her grandfather in 1837. For 100 years, father and son were members of the school board. The high school was built in 1920. Henry Hicks built his home in 1905, and this is now Esther's home.

Esther drew the enclosed map showing the present locations of Rachel Seaman Hicks' (the preacher) house and the house of Rachel Hicks, the photographer; The Old Place.

The following is a copy of a penmanship book that Esther Emory has in her possession. It belonged to Elizabeth Hicks 1819.

Honor honesty and a good name stands under no fear.
Animate true genius.
Many have by far too much but nobody enough.
Good humour pleases.
Encouragement promotes ingenious performances.
Noble actions adorn.
Persever in accomplishing a complete education.
Fame attends merit.
Wretchedness most commonly succeeds disipation.
Omit not your duty.
Honour honesty and a good name stands no fear.
Live in mutual love.
Knowledge is the most advantageous acquisition.
Trades not merit.
Variety tends more to amuse than to instruct us.
Defamation is mean.
Never countenance immorality or profaneness.
Good humour pleases.
Zeal in a good cause will always command applause.
Promise with caution.

It is interesting to compare this with William Willetts' copy book that is on display at the Cottage in the Westbury Memorial Public Library: (1824)
Assiduously endeavor to improve in learning.
Scorn a mean action.
Youth cannot improve without much application.
Redeem lost time.
Wretchedness most commonly succeeds disipation.
Bounty is admired.
Repentance is the consequence of wicked actions.
Omit not your duty.
Religion conduces to our present and future happiness.
Fear is the constant companion of wicked actions.
Temptation awaits us.

Two of the sayings are in common.
April 3

Spent five hours organizing archival material. I took Xerox copies of all and the chapters of certain books, so I would have them for my records. I feel really good about spending this time to put things in order—to indicate the source of each piece I have included, and to see just where I am in relation to the larger goal of my woman list. I was surprised at the amount of material I have and wish I could record here all I have learned so far. This is certainly a challenging project and a rewarding one. Going about "doing" history is a realization which excites me and frightens me. It is frightening because I realize now the tremendous power an historian has in just selection, for example. It makes me appreciate the tremendously difficult job women historians have today digging up our past. Women themselves just don't put any importance or value on their accomplishments. Perhaps my journey in this search will enlighten people along the way as to just what is important and just how history becomes history. The subjectivity and relativity of history has been revealed to me experientially. I knew this intellectually, but I know it in a different way now.

April 5

Today I wrote up the questions for my interview with Eloise Hicks (April 8, 1981). I also wrote a thank you for Mrs. Esther Emory.

The question list is certainly a custom-job, building on knowledge accumulated from reading and from other interviews. This information gathering is a critical step if the interview is to be effective and productive.

April 7, 1:00 to 4:00

Spent this afternoon at Jericho Public Lib. going through Hinshaw's genealogy of Quakers. Was able to trace back the Townsend Rushmore and Amy Willis families. This was just for fun!

Also contacted Alice Underhill Mitchell for an interview on April 14. Phebe Smith will see the the week of the 20th sometime.
April 8 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Interview at Eloise Lane Hicks
61 Drexel Avenue
Westbury

This interview was a pleasure. Eloise is so gracious and so full of information. She is a well-educated woman (BA Wellesley, Masters' Hofstra) and is a community-minded person. She is extremely knowledgeable about Friends School in Westbury, being one of its founders, and Neighborhood House, still serving on its board of Directors. Her experiences with the Hiroshima Maidens after the war are fun and revealing.

I realize, however, that it will be an absolute necessity for me to transcribe these tapes. Not only do I need the information for my Womanlist, but it is also much easier to retrieve information when the tape is transcribed.

Ester Hicks Emory came in at the end of our conversation and it was good to see her again and to reassure her that her tape would be edited according to her wishes. (She asked me to do this last week and after consultation with Margaret Freeman, we felt it the ethical thing to do.)

Both women are encouraging to me in my work, being very interested and supportive. They want a copy of my finished project for the Westbury Meeting. I feel very flattered and humbled by the tremendous responsibility to do these marvelous women justice and to be accurate in reporting my findings.

11:00 to 4:00 I spent at the Cottage (Westbury) hunting through some of the other archival boxes. I discovered Caroline Jackson Hicks' obituary, and an article about my much loved Neighborhood House. I Xeroxed both and also took some copies from Ethel Albertson Post's tape and the Westbury Manumission papers.

The interweaving of history (Quakers, blacks, immigrants, etc.) is fascinating. It is certainly hard to keep focused on a microcosm, such as Quaker women are, when the macrocosm keeps intruding and bidding me to come and look there too! It is like a siren playing sweet music. I must be constantly on guard and yet be wise enough to follow my instincts and keep a broader view in mind.

The richness of black history still to be uncovered intrigues me. I read in the paper yesterday that there is a rich black history oral program at Cow Neck Historical Society (Port Washington). In addition, the L.I. Archives Conference is including a workshop on oral history for blacks on Sat., April 25. This should prove a fruitful investigation for a future sleuth.
Battle Over a Tape: Place in History
April 10, 12:00 to 5:00

Today I spend reading the tapes of interviews done by Sheila Lesnick at the Jericho Public Library. Alice Underhill Mitchell, Phebe Underhill Smith, Doris Doughty Cullen, Katherine and Josephine (the poet) Woodnutt, and the Nassau County Historical Society at the Friends Meeting House on February 9, 1978.

These tapes have been invaluable to me in giving background information that is vital in the creation of my questions for my interviews. This information, plus what I glean from previous interviews, helps to flush out my question list and greatly facilitates "ad lib" questions during the interview itself.

April 11

Created the questions for the Alice Underhill Mitchell interview on April 14. Also the legal release form.

Ruby Stern, Jericho, told me about a black Quaker woman yesterday--Geraldine Gillespie of Westbury. She said that Geraldine may have been responsible for the institution of the counseling program at Friends School in Westbury. I called her today. She's an evangelist and full of the love of Jesus Christ. We have an appointment to meet on Friday, April 17, at 9:30 a.m. This should be a very interesting interview. I have very little information on her, so my questions will not be as pointed. I guess I'll have to do more "thinking on my feet."

April 14

Alice Underhill Mitchell
30 Meritoria Drive
East Williston 11596
747-6413

Today I had an interview with Alice Underhill Mitchell. She lives in a 50 year old house which she had built after her marriage. (East Williston)

In the foyer of the house is the Underhill coat of arms. Our interview took place in her cozy study to the right. The walls are lined with pictures of the Underhill Farm in Jericho and on the mantle over the fireplace is a bed-warmer. Her bookcase is lined with various Quaker texts plus four beautifully bound volumes of the Underhill Genealogy.

Alice is a gracious woman and before we started our talk, we have a cup of tea. The table setting consisted of
April 14 continued

Some beautifully engraved silver teaspoons which were a gift to her by a "negro" man who liked her. His name was Jackson. He was descended from a slave owned by the Jackson family and when freedom was realized, took the Jackson name.

Alice grew up in Jericho and the Jericho Library has tapes regarding her childhood. She is now clerk of meeting (Jericho) and lives with her son, Sam (who is the president of the Nassau County Historical Society).

Our afternoon together was an interesting one. I realize how broad the interests of these Q. women are. Alice is actually a convinced Q. since her grandfather was written out of meeting when he married a Brookville Reformed Church woman. Alice's mother and father both had to become convinced but did so later in their lives. Alice became a convinced friend in 1915 (she was 14 years old then).

Alice's mother, Carrie, was the same age as Caroline Jackson Hicks, Esther Emory's mother. Alice and Esther roomed together at Friends Academy.

In addition to her world cruise, Mediterranean cruise, and African safari, Alice visited the Orient in 1973, Japan.

She taught in Jericho Station, in a one-room schoolhouse, all grades together, 28 children. This proved so challenging that she decided to go on to Courtland to continue her education. She then taught in Mina for one year.

Alice lent me a booklet on Friends Charity which she received in 1948, when she became a member. Book, therefore, dates before 1948. (Probably 1918, ARW)

Also, I will call a Mrs. William Curtis (Dolores) 47-5484, to ask for a copy of the Women's Club of the Willists 1980-81 Year Book.

April 15

Typed thank you letters to Eloise Hicks and Alice Underhill Mitchell, organized files, and prepared questions for my interview Friday with Geralène Gillespie.
I arrived at Sister Julia's a few minutes after 9:30 and she greeted me with a warm handshake. After entering the living room, the door to the living room was bolted twice. I wondered about this, but didn't say anything. Oh yes, posted to her front door was a notice which said that this was the Christ Quaker House and all who wanted to study the Holy Bible were welcome from 3-9PM Monday through Sunday.

The living room was stark, containing two large sofas covered with throws, two or three armchairs, and one table. A huge, old Bible, the gift of Eloise Hicks was in the middle of the table. We began with a prayer and then Julia presented me with two brand new books -- the King James Version of the Bible and a Concordance to go with it. I asked her how she could afford to give away books like this and she said she doesn't worry about it, the Lord always provides.

Julia began to tell me about Christ Quaker House--a term she has given to her home. She thought of selling it and being rid of it (as she had gotten rid of so many of her other possessions) in order to be free, but then she got this idea. I taped her conversation, which turned into a testimony --very beautiful words from a committed person. She allows people who are searching for who they are, to room upstairs for very cheap rent. But, they must be serious about their search, she says. She has learned not to be so free with her help now as she once was and requires a genuine, sincere interest in the person seeking.

Darleen, her 20 year old adopted daughter, came in early in our talk and I was also able to tape her reflections on Friends School, where she attended Nursery through third grade.

Julia said she also raises money for the Bibles she uses by creating health food cakes. She served me a piece with some fresh grape juice and it was very good. She invents her own recipes and hunts diligently for just the right ingredients to put in them.

She has been a resident of New Cassell/Westbury for 22 years. She is a member of Westbury Meeting and receives encouragement from her elders Eloise and Lydia Hicks. According to Julia, they are most supportive of her work, giving her advice whenever she seeks it.
April 17 continued

I really enjoyed my visit with Julia and she has
certainly added a new dimension to my knowledge of Quakerism.
In addition, her religion of the heart was beneficial to me,
as I have a great deal to learn in this area. I left,
receiving not only two books for my library, but with an
invitation to return again.

Notes: May Kayson (Scott), her grandmother, worked in
the fields and saved money to buy 17 acres of land on Idisto
Island, South Carolina, for her children to do the Lord's
work. The land grows white pine. Her children never lived
on it (except for one daughter only briefly). The deed is
still in the family and she had it written so that it can
never be sold. Her husband never lived on the land either—
she bought it for her children. Now Julia's cousin, Daisy,
cuts timber from it and sells it. Kayson Rose, her great-
grandmother bought property on Idisto Island, S.C. also and
had a house on it. Her sons let it go for taxes. They
were "a trifling lot."

April 20 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Today I started writing my Womanlist. I am so excited
to be finally putting down on paper all the information I
have gleaned for the past two and one half months. What
I have discovered, however, is huge holes in my narratives,
which must be plugged. It will mean more research and per-
haps contacting Esther Emory and Eloise Hicks again. I am
also handicapped because a lot of my information is on the
tapes and they must still be transcribed. I'll have to lis-
ten to them in order to draw out what I need. Many hours
of work are entailed in this job, I'm afraid.

I called Phebe Underhill Smith for an appointment to-
morrow. I've decided to make that my last tape since I
simply cannot process all the information I've gathered and
do it justice. I hope I'll have enough time to pull it
together decently.

In addition, I called Nassau Hospital and spoke to the
Assistant Public Relations Director, Kevin Miller (259 First
Street, Mineola 663-2234) regarding a history of the hospital.
I wanted this because in my research I have seen a
connection between some of my women and the hospital. Mr.
Miller was not too much help but said he would send me a
15 pp. history of the hospital, the first one on L.I. The
Vanderbilts, Morgans, Pratts, and Whitneys were contribu-
tors to its funding. I told him my research revealed that
Ethel Albertson Post's mother was a founder. He seemed
surprised and wants a copy of what I turn up since his early
history is so scant. He did tell me that in 1924 a Women's
Auxiliary was formed to help raise funds for the hospital
and to promote good will. We'll see what his records show
about this.

Now, I must create my questions for Phebe Smith.
April 21, 1981  
1:00-4:30 p.m.  
(Notes taken after taped interview)

Today's interview with Phebe went very well. She is also a very interesting woman, very different from her sister, Alice Underhill Mitchell. Phebe says they have different personalities: Alice loved to read as a young girl, while she and Nellie got into all kinds of mischief. They were into everything, the barns, the fields. One time she and Nellie got into the lime in the barn. Grandfather came in, took hold of each of them by the hair, and brought them outside. She liked spending time with her father, too.

Now Phebe likes to travel, has been to Florida, her place in Canada, and Israel (recently). She is also a member of the New York State Button Society, and is a member of the National group also. She collects decorative buttons and has a beautiful, varied display of many of which are works of art and historical mementos.

Re Phebe's children: Phebe Alice has one 4 yr. old girl  
Morley has 4 children

WASH DAY
We had tea on a bench that was used at the Underhill farm to hold the wash tubs on wash day. There were two benches like it, one for each tub. Mother would work at one, and the maid would work at the other. They would scrub the clothes on scrub boards, then boil them, then hang them on the line up on the hill to dry. The water to boil the clothes was from a furnace kettle.
The sanitary cloths (napkins) were kept soaking in jardiniere jars. Now when ever she sees one of these jars, she remembers this. After they were washed, they were brought up to the hill and spread on the grass to dry. They tried very hard not to have the workers in the field see them. Phebe said that she got her period late (13 approx); Nellie got hers at age 11. She didn't know about it until Alice stained the bed one night. Alice was erratic since she was anemic. When her mother told Phebe, she was very impressed to learn that every woman got her period. Alice and Phebe slept together, even though they had separate bedrooms. They both hated making the bed and this way only one got messed up. They slept in one room in the winter, and the other room in the summer.

Arlene Wilhelm
Thebe said there were many home cures. Salt pork and a sock around the neck was for sore throats. Her mother also gave her goose grease to swallow for a sore throat. One time, since she hated it so, she poured it out her window, but not far enough. It left a stain going down the house.

Women:
Jericho Jackson was one time clerk of Jericho. She held an office in the Underhill Society, too. She was on the Board at Friends Academy.

Lerry Titus knows about the canteen during WWII. She lives on Titus Lane.

Grace Jackson Woodnut is related to Esther Emory. Grace is the daughter of the first wife of Solomon Jackson. Solomon married Esther Post, Esther's grandmother, later and they had Caroline. Esther Post taught school in Jericho. (Prince Family?? check this)

Thebe's grandfather was born at Jackson Corners, Syosset. Her great grandfather died at 36 of appendicitis. He left his wife with three children and she returned to Jericho to live.

Thebe Post Willis -- lived by Pond in Old Westbury. Her sister was married to Gus Albertson (Ethel Post's mother)

Lydia Hicks worked in an adoption agency. Now she is a resident at Pennswoods where she cares for her friend, Olive Millitz, who once taught at Friends Academy, at Tockville, and Locust Valley. Her husband taught at Adelphi (Greek and Latin) and adults at Jericho Mtg. (Bible study) lived in Westbury but belonged to Matinecock Mtg.

Emma Underhill spoke at meeting. She was President of the School Board of Jericho. She helped poor Quakers but kept quiet about it. Helped Mary Tolliver.

We discussed the consolidation of the Wheatly-Jericho School Districts. Thebe remembers the school bus that brought in the children from Wheatly to Jericho. There were 10-12 kids from the estates who were transported. They called the bus the Peanut Wagon, since that is what it looked like. It was green with red wheels and was horse drawn. Al Simonson drove it; he was uncle of Ruth Hageman.
Amy Willets - spoke at Meeting, beautifully

Alice Willets - taught Phebe at Jericho school.

Dr. Mary Willis - practiced in NYC

Marilyn Hicks - her father was a minister in Rochester.
   She is Eloise Hicks' daughter-in-law.

Ella Jackson was Emma Umerhill's sister. Phebe's middle name was named for her. She was married to a man named Robbins, had three children, then divorced. She then married Phebe's first cousin, a Jackson. Ella and Emma are both Albertson's, Augustus (Gus) is their brother. He married Mary Willis?, Phebe Post Willis sister. Their uncle was Gideon Frost, who started Friends Academy. Another sister was Eula who lives in Glen Head in Gideon's house, which was left to her mother Phebe. (siblings: Gus, Emma, Ella, Eula)

Ethel Post - Mary(?) Willis Albertson was her mother.

Phebe Seamon - left money to Swarthmore in memory of Willès' (her maiden aunts who raised her: Amy & Lottie) Lottie Willès was a shrewd businesswoman and taught Phebe how to manage money. Lottie and the Woodnutt sisters sold parking space during the Vanderbilt Cup Race. Lottie used the money to install a bathroom!

Phebe told me that on Thursday, April 23rd, at 8:15 P.M. the Nassau Historical Society will meet at Old Westbury Gardens. Speakers will be Ruth Nægeman, who now resides at Pennswoods, Newtown, PA 18940, and who will speak on her farm life in Westbury. Also, Ambrose Clark's chauffeur will be there. I called Enid Baker to let her know about this so that she could tape her portion and I will tape my portion. I was wondering how to get to Ruth and this will be my opportunity.

Directions to Gardens: Jericho Tpke west to Ellison Rd. Take a right by Lutheran Church. It is the Phipps Estate on right side of road, past IU Willets Rd.
April 22

Today I spent the entire day on my list, typing a rough draft. I have approximately 15 women done. They do look a little like Swiss cheese," however, with many holes. I will have to fill these in with further research. But, I'm pleased!

I have decided that I will make no more taped interviews. I have entirely too much material to process now. In order to recoup needed information, I must spend hours listening to the tapes I now have. I will do Ruth Hegeman tomorrow, however, and I will tape the conference (L.I. Archives) on Saturday.

There is a wealth of women's history out there for the picking! I love talking to women and hearing their stories. Each one is so different. I am also amazed at the little value many of them place on the experiences of their lives. Maybe I am leaving behind a sense of value in them for what they have lived.

One amazing observation to me is that many of my women say that their most important contribution to society was having their children. I think women today need to hear this. So many times our work is devalued and yet many women feel this is their most important work. Hearing this, helped to affirm something I have always felt to be true. I am still a feminist, but I also salute those women who prize their motherhood above all else!

Oh yes, today I called a few women who hold offices in the Women's Club of the Willistons. Alice Mitchell belongs to this group. I'm trying to get hold of a copy of their year book for our archives. This group was formed c 1937 and has as its purpose to promote the social life and welfare of women.

Audrey Rom 741-2687 (whose name was given me by Dolores Curtis 747-5484) will check with the President to make sure it is all right to send it to us. I thought it would be good to have for our feminist angle of the Archives. The fund-raising that these women do for charitable causes is part of women's work and is a part of our "herstory."

(Per Delores: they have allocated funds for: Red Cross, Northport Veterans' Hospital, Meals-On-Wheels, three scholarships, community needs, respirator for fire dept.)

April 23

I found out this evening, after a phone call to Sheila Lesnick, that the meeting of the Nassau County Historical Society may not be open to the public. I called Muriel Tatem, who is program chair, and she said it was restricted. (I quickly told Emid Baker.) But, Sheila will try to tape it and we can copy the tape. So, it may not be a total loss.
April 27, 1981

Saturday, I attended the Long Island Archives Conference held at Stony Brook, SUNY. I went with Sheila Tannick, Tuby Stern, and we met Susan Benard-Bade there.

I attended the Oral History workshop in the morning, given by Elly Nagler Shodell, who is Head of the Black Oral History Project at the Port Washington Public Library. She told us of her techniques and I discovered how much I knew about doing oral history. Sheila was a good teacher. One thing I learned was to take a document inventory. I think this is a good idea. Some of what I did myself was following my gut reactions, and I found out I was right and have a good feel for doing this kind of thing. For instance, I have made genealogies as I went along, because there is so much intermarriage in the Quaker families that I had a hard time keeping them all straight. When it is down on paper, it is much easier to see relationships. Elly said a good transcriber is the key to the project. People don't listen to tapes, but they do read transcripts. She told us that it takes 63 hours of work to process a 1 hour interview. Transcribing costs $2.00 per page or $35.00 for an hour of tape. I think she said she has done 15 tapes in 7 mos. I have done 5+ tapes in one month. I felt good about that fact.

SUGGEST: that we purchase the "Kit & Caboodle" $15.00

From Columbia University
Oral History Research Office
Box 20, Butler Library
New York, NY 10027

this kit gives you all the oral history resources that you need to set up a program.

Another important suggestion: TAPES SHOULD BE REWOUND EACH YEAR

In the afternoon, I attended He\lène Gerard's lecture on Eastern L.I. Jewish history. She is a school librarian, and a published author. She is self-taught, whereas Elly Nagler Shodell received her training at Columbia University. I did notice a difference in their presentations.
Some facts gleaned: it takes eight hours to transcribe a one hour tape, using a transcribing machine.

Even though oral history is not always described as accurate, she has found that there is an amazing degree of accuracy in the dates people give her, usually within a year.

Most of what she said I already knew, either learning it from Sheila or by myself. One very important lesson I experienced on my first interview: know how to use your machine before you start. I learned this the hard way, as she had, and missed 1/2 hour of our talk.

Also, an interview is not a conversation. The interviewer must learn to keep the mouth shut and let the person do the talking. You can acknowledge what they are saying with body language, i.e. a smile, a nod of the head, an occasional uh, uh, eye to eye contact, etc. I found this out also on my first interview. That tape will be the most difficult to transcribe, I think, because I interjected too much. I think I got a lot better as I went along.

I did tape record both of these lectures, so all the details on technique will come out when I transcribe these tapes. I hope to spend June in transcribing them. I think this is absolutely vital if this project is to be a success. Students just will not take the time to listen to the conversations, but they will take the time to read the transcriptions. I will donate my services to the school as a gift for our Archives on the condition that I will have a transcribing machine available to me to do this.

P.S. Norman Jung attended this conference also and picked up the hand-outs that were available. Since this is the case, I have decided to keep what handouts I took, for my own use. I will include an Oral History bibliography, however.
April 29

Spent three hours at Westbury Library re-reading Rachel Hicks' Memoirs for my womanlist, and photocopying manunission documents that Norman Jung said he would like to have for the archives. My work is done at Westbury!

May 1

Stopped by Alice Mitchell's to return her Charity Society booklet and to ask her to fill me in on some data for her profile. She was clerk of Jericho 34 years, since 1947. Sam's birthday is 1931. Mary Pearson, superintendent of nurses at Nassau Hospital, was the nurse who took care of sister Phebe when she was born. She left Nassau Hospital and went to South Side.

Stopped by Julia Gillespie's to drop off release form for Darleen, her daughter, to complete, as well as a genealogy data sheet.

Last week, I wrote to the curator at Haverford College, Pa., Ed Bronner, and asked him for a list of women he had compiled. Also wrote to Margaret Hope Bacon and asked her for a list of NY women, LI in particular. I read about these lists in As The Way Opens by Bacon.

Also, wrote to Lydia Hicks and Ruth Hegeman, who are retired Westbury women living in Pennswood, Newtown, PA.

May 2

Today I received an answer from Mr. Bronner at Haverford. He enclosed a list of women he had compiled. They are all from Pennsylvania and all need to be researched. This may be a fruitful search for someone in the future.

Came to the realization that I should call my women "Friends" and not "Quakers". Read somewhere that they refer to themselves as "Friends." Better late than never!

May 7

Margaret Hope Bacon answered my letter. It was such a thrill to receive a letter from her. She gave me a short list of NY State women, and one LI woman, Lady Deborah Moody, whom I already knew about. Now, however, she has heard about SUNY-CCM and its new Archives Collection.
May 8

Spent most of the day at Jericho, researching genealogies for dates and relationships. This is a most difficult, tedious task but can sometimes be fun when discoveries are made.

May 10

Spent most of today typing my good copy of the Womanlist. I didn't realize how much I have. I have come to have a good appreciation for the task of an historian. I have come across discrepancies in my research and it is sometimes difficult to decide who is right--I've had to do more digging at times in order to ascertain the truth." The myth of the truth of the written word is undergoing a transformation for me. The truth is, many times, what I perceive it to be. I am enjoying a small "power trip" in making certain decisions, i.e. what to include as important, and what to discard.

Historical research is hard work, requiring diligence, perseverance, many long hours, concentration, and exactness. I feel good about what I have done and hope the women concerned, who are alive, will also.

May 11

Spent the entire day again, typing and rewriting and collating information for the list. One woman took me two hours of work to refine, plus untold hours of research.

I called Esther Emory to get some more facts on her aunts and mother. She is a delightful person. She said she's going to come to our tea! I'm so glad.

Also, called Myron Luke, who used to teach history at Adelphi I've been told, and who I met at the LI Archives Conference. He is involved with that organization as well as being the historian for his church, United Church of Christ. He was too busy to talk and asked that I call back on the 21st, which I will do even though I should be pretty much done by then. I can always tack on what he gives me since this is an open-ended project.

May 15 12:00-5:00 Jericho Public Library

Spent time today Xeronoxing articles, etc. from scrapbooks. Have gone through several of their scrapbooks--two on Jericho, one on people, and have made some good finds. Copies several poems written by Josephine Woodnutt. They are touching and so revealing of the feelings of the people at Jericho for the 'good old days.'
May 16 through May 21

I have spent this entire time in preparing the archival materials for presentation; completing my list (writing, typing, collating, and binding); writing thank you letters to Margaret Bacon, Edwin Bronner, Lydia Hicks, Ruth Hegeman, Ruby Stern, and Sheila Lesnick; mounting pictures for the list; and typing this journal. Hours and hours each day and into the small hours of the night were consumed. The only unfinished piece of business is the legal release form from Darleen Gillespie. If I do not receive this, I will not be able to use her tape in the collection and may not be able to include her profile in the list. I will check with Margaret Freeman on this.

I will be ready Friday and I will then see the top of my dining room table, which has been buried since February.

Arlene Wilhelm
May 21, 1981