

Reminiscence

Dottie Lull

By Suzy Norris
Andover Historical Society

All the quotations in this article come from an oral history given by Dottie to the Andover Historical Society in 2006.

After living nearly six decades on Depot Street in Potter Place, Dorothy Lull has moved to Henniker to live with her son, Greg.

In Potter Place, a town that was "a busy place then," she and her husband, Gordon, raised their family; a daughter and two sons: Jackie, Gordon, and Greg. She remembers, "We didn't let them out of our sight. The traffic was a lot more than it is now."

Dottie recalls her beginnings: "I born in Lynn, Massachusetts; we moved here (New Hampshire) when I was four, to Grafton, which needed a doctor. My father was a surgeon in World War I, and my mother was a nurse."

"I went to two one-room schools in Grafton from the first to the fifth grade, and then from sixth, seventh, and eighth was another one-room school in Grafton. I went to my first year of high school in Lowell, Massachusetts because I wanted to be a nurse, and my father felt I'd get more out of it in a bigger school. I lived with my grandmother in Lowell. I always came home summers

of course.

"And then my grandmother died, and I didn't want to go back [to Lowell]. So I went to Andover for my second and third year, and I got acclimated there, and I liked it. But the kids I rode down with were two older boys, and they lived in Grafton, and they drove so I had transportation, but they graduated so I couldn't go there anymore. So I came up and graduated from Canaan."

"My father was a doctor, and when I got older I went with him when he went out on a call. And when patients came in to him, he did everything. He pulled teeth, he operated, he did everything."

"I went to nursing school, but then I saw a sign that said 'The Navy Needs You,' so I joined the Navy. I was going into the medical corps of the Navy as an X-ray technician."

For two and a half years, Dottie served as a Navy X-ray technician stationed in San Francisco and Oakland, California. She recalls: "I use to have to go down to where they came in to take some X-rays before they even got to the hospital, and the ones that were the best were the ones who made you cry. I was taking a name and everything one day, and this guy says to me, 'That's the prettiest dress you've got on' although I

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built it himself, it would have fallen down years ago.

"Ed would be measuring and measuring, and Don would say, 'It's only a cottage, Ed, nail it up,'" she adds. "I used to joke and say Don would fix the plumbing with a piece of chewing gum. In spite of these differences, together they got everything done."

The work was hard but progressed rapidly. They got the Cassidy cottage framed, the windows in, the roof on, and put down felt paper. With a dry roof overhead they moved right in, even though the sides were open.

But late that first summer their work suffered a setback in the form of a raging storm that grew worse as the day progressed. As the wind whipped and the rain sheeted down, Ed and Don climbed up on the roof to try to keep the felt paper on — a futile and dangerous effort. Only later did the two men find out the raging blow was actually a hurricane.

Eventually the storm was too much, and they retreated to Don's brother's house in Concord and holed up there until the storm blew through. "We came back and resurrected whatever we could. It was wide open, so it wasn't watertight," Ed says.

Don and Ed worked hard to make up for lost ground, coming up every Saturday morning to work and leaving late on Sunday afternoon. By the end of the summer, Ed says his cottage was nearly done.

The next year the two men scraped together enough money for materials and got started on the Teschek cottage. They worked on it into the late fall and had the roof shingled, the siding nailed down, and the windows in when it started snowing on a Sunday afternoon. The early snow was a bad sign of a wicked winter to come.

"That winter we had a lot of snow, rain, freezing, and the roof was loaded with snow and ice," Ed recalls. "A lot of places collapsed, including commercial buildings, and that place collapsed too." Under the weight of snow, the roof fell in, pushed the back wall of the cottage flat, and knocked it off the platform. The end walls got damaged, too. More rework ensued.

"We had to dismantle everything," Ed says. "We took off all the shingles very carefully and piled them up. Some of the boards were broken, some of the roof rafters were cracked in half, and we had to eventually replace those."

Fortunately they were able to salvage half of the roof rafters and most of the



The cottages on Highland Lake in 1955, shortly after they were built.

siding. "Money-wise, it didn't cost us that much to rebuild," Ed says. "Time-wise, we lost a year."

Eleanor, who remained home alone with her three children, says it was a period of struggle for her and for Kay. But the finished cottages and the expanded beach eventually turned out beautifully.

For a time the two families rented out the cottages to pay off the mortgage they needed to finance the Teschek cottage — a mortgage that all four (Don, Ed, Eleanor, and Kay) signed together. In the years after the cottages were completed, renters got more use out of them than the Cassidy and Teschek families.

Later, Teschek daughters Karen, Janet, and Joyce, and Cassidy sons Jeff, Bruce, Gary, and Allen began coming up for summer vacations with their parents, and renting the cottages soon was no longer necessary.

The two cottages have been reworked and added to over the years, including an extensive overhaul and addition on the Teschek cottage in 1989 by local contractor Pat Frost. But although the cottages have been expanded upon and updated, their sturdy frames are still very much Cassidy and Teschek.

These days, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the two families continue to use them and to enjoy the fruits of the labor and sacrifice of Ed Cassidy and Don Teschek. Their unique friendship, hard work, and lasting legacy as members of The Greatest Generation, are not forgotten.

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