

Juneau County  
4-H Oral  
History Project

Nancy McCullick

Interview

8/8/2013

Nancy McCullick Interview  
Interviewer: Anna Ziebell  
Also in room: Emily Rebhan

Ziebell: Today's date is August 8, 2013. The time is 2:00pm. We are at Hatch Public Library in Mauston, Wisconsin. My name is Anna Ziebell and I am interviewing Nancy McCullick about her years involved in the 4-H program. Also in the room with us is Emily Rebhan. This interview is a part of the Juneau County 4-H Oral History Project.

Thank you so much for meeting with us today.

McCullick: Well I'm glad to be here.

Ziebell: Okay. So, when was the first time you were involved in 4-H?

McCullick: The first time I was involved in 4-H, I don't remember, because I was a baby. My older brothers and sisters, I have three sisters and one brother...my oldest brothers and sisters are ten years older than I am. And so, they were in 4-H, but one of the first memories that I guess that I have about going to 4-H meetings, I wasn't old enough to be a member, but we went to the 4-H meetings and I always thought that they were fun. One day, we had baked a cake to go to a meeting, a foods meeting, and we were going to serve it at the meeting. So what we did was we made it with the 4-H symbol on the top of the cake, and wrote something about 4-H, and what not, and took this to the meeting, ate the cake, and when we got home, there was one sitting identical on the table. My brother had baked it and decorated it because he thought it was pretty cool.

Rebhan: How much fun is that? (Everyone laughs)

McCullick: So that is one of my first memories of 4-H, I guess.

Ziebell: All 4-Hers have club meetings. What did yours look like? Like, who were officers, what kinds of things did you do, how far did you travel to get to the meetings?

McCullick: Well, it was a neighborhood group, so we did not have to go that far. Usually we met in each other's homes, or there was a schoolhouse that was probably about five miles away that we met at. And the meetings, we had a president, a vice president, secretary and a reporter. So we had just meetings, and it was just kind of a formal meeting, so you could get used to running a meeting, and what not.

Ziebell: Because like today, we go meet in a church building, and other people meet, there's different meeting rooms, so that's kind of neat. So, what did you enjoy most about the 4-H organization?

McCullick: Oh there's so many things. Just meeting new kids. Just so many wonderful experiences. Learning things that help me even today, like with the cooking, sewing, baking, money management, child care, home furnishings, I mean, there are so many things that you learned in 4-H. Also the Speaking Contest, and the Demonstration Contest. Going to State Fair for clothing review. Getting chosen also to go to State Fair for the Demonstration Contest, just so many fun things that we did.

Ziebell: Did you ever, were you ever an officer in the meetings?

McCullick: Yes. I think I kind of went down the row on all of them, at one time or another (laughing).

Ziebell: What kinds of projects did you do?

McCullick: I did mostly like the cooking, baking, sewing, like I said before the child care, home furnishings, cultural arts, that type of project. My brother was more into the animals, and that type of thing. And when I was growing up, there were four of us girls, and so we were all trying to get everything backed the day before the fair. So my older sister got up first and she got to use the oven, and my next sister got to use it next, and the next one, so my stuff usually cooled on the way to the fair. And also I had to sew on buttons, or sew on a hem, or something on the way to the fair to, because I didn't get it done on time. (Laughing)

Rebhan: I like to hear those stories, by the way, because it shows that nothing has changed. (Everyone laughs) That was my fair story as well.

McCullick: Exactly.

Rebhan: I just had to share that.

McCullick: And one of the advantages of being the youngest was, I was upset at the time, but anyhow, I had made some clover leaf rolls for the fair, and I was so upset because I had stirred them up, kneaded them, had them all ready to go, and the over wasn't ready yet because somebody else in our family was baking. So I kneaded it and kneaded it, and kneaded it, and I ended up getting the Fleischmann Yeast Award (laughing).

Ziebell: Besides the fair, what other events did you or your club participate in?

McCullick: Well we had a Drama contest. And I know one year we did Daisy Mae and Li'l Abner. I was Daisy Mae. We had speaking contests and demonstration contests, a lot of things that we have now. We had 4-H Club Congress, which I went up to in Madison. I also went to Washington D.C. for the Citizenship Short Course, is what they called it at that time.

Ziebell: So, what kinds of community service activities did your club do?

McCullick: I'm trying to think what we did do for community service. I think we just kind of helped other people, and did things like that. I don't remember anything specific that we did. I know we had a softball team, and I know at different times we helped like the elderly and things like that.

Rebhan: So what was your position on the baseball team?

McCullick: The catcher (everyone laughs). Up and down. Up and down. Up and down.

Ziebell: Was there an adult 4-H volunteer who really helped you learn something that you were interested in?

McCullick: There was several. Ethel Stanek was our leader when I was first in 4-H. She was very good, and she was a teacher, and she was so patient with all of us. Oh my goodness was she patient. You can imagine with thirty, forty kids running around, and she just had the patience of a saint, and just was so good, just a really nice lady.

Rebhan: And was she the General Leader, or a project leader?

McCullick: She was the General Leader, and she also did some projects leader things to. So she had a double hat.

Ziebell: Are you still involved with 4-H, and in what way?

McCullick: Yes I am. I support 4-H first of all, and if I see anything, like just a couple of weeks ago one of the 4-H clubs had a raffle out at the grocery store, and I buy tickets from them, and what not. And I am also a judge. I judge usually the Demonstration contest and I judge probably about eight, nine fairs a year now. When I worked in the extension office, as a staff assistant, I got talked into be a fair judge, because they have such a hard time finding fair judges, and so I did that and I am still doing that. And I enjoy it. I enjoy visiting with 4-H kids, and over the years my husband and I have bought animals at the fair to help kids out, and lots of things like that.

Rebhan: As a judge, did you ever just have a memorable moment when a kid brought in a project that really surprised you, or kind of blew you away, or anything like that?

McCullick: There were many projects that just kind of blew me away. Sometimes, and this is something that I learned from Ray Saxby who was a 4-H leader, a 4-H agent at one time, he was telling me that these kids, some of them, maybe not the best done project, is maybe not the one that should be the blue ribbon. Sometimes the kids come in, and face-to-face judging really helps with this, they just, they just had all of these things that were just perfect. And then when you talk to them, "my mom did this, or my dad did that," and they didn't do anything on it. And sometimes you have a kid who didn't have any help at all, did the best they could, just a little kid, maybe in the Cloverbud stage, and maybe they didn't do the best job, but by god, they did it by themselves. But some of the things that really amaze me is how talented some of them are,

like with their artwork. This one lady, this one young lady brought in a self-portrait, and I looked, and it was face-to-face judging, and I looked at it, and I looked up at her, and I oh my gosh, this is you. And she said, yes it is. And then another one, this young man brought in this drawing also, and he said it was of his sister. And an hour, and hour and half later, this young lady came in, and I said, your brother had a picture of you that he drew, didn't he? And it was, it was her. So, you know, that amazes me, because I'm not that talented with artwork. I think it's great when I see that. But I do all kinds of other things, like knitting and crocheting, but I don't do the artwork and it just amazed me how well they did.

Ziebell: How does 4-H look different now than it did back when you were a kid?

McCullick: Hum. There are many similarities, but I think that one of the things that I did when I worked in UW-Extension that kind of explained it all, was 4-H isn't cooking and cows anymore, it's a variety of subjects that really help you learn things, and what not, if you apply yourself to them. Another thing, I don't know if they still do it or not, but when I was General Leader of a 4-H club, I required each kid to give a demonstration. And at one meeting, and if they wanted to give it at the county wide demonstration contest they could, but they didn't have to. And I think that really helped a lot because kids I'm seeing now, as they grew up, they are the ones that got the leads in the school play, they are the ones that maybe they have done something where they applied the speaking or the demonstration part of it. So I think it really helped them out in the long run.

Ziebell: Yeah our 4-H club, we did demonstrations, and I love acting and I love speaking, so 4-H has definitely helped me in that way.

McCullick: Me too. (Laughing)

Ziebell: What do you think you gained by being a 4-H member, or volunteer?

McCullick: I think that as a 4-H member, I gained more confidence, and you know, and thinking that I can do more things, or knowing that I can do more things. It also gave me lots of life skills that have helped me out. As a leader it has been so satisfying because when I was a 4-H leader, there was some kids where their parents were too busy to spend time with them, so I kind of took them under my wing, and picked them up for meetings, and helped them do some of their projects and things like that. It was very satisfying. It just made me feel good.

Ziebell: Did you make any childhood friends in 4-H?

McCullick: Oh, many of them. And many are still friends. When we went to different meetings and stuff, and for Junior Leaders meetings, do you still have Junior Leaders now?

Ziebell: Yeah, I think so.

McCullick: Well anyhow, we would go to Junior Leaders meetings and what not, and we just had fun and we could always visit each other. It seemed like even if it was month apart, or if we didn't see someone for three months or something, we always picked up right where we left off. And as a camp counselor too, some of these kids were the same kids that were camp counselors with me, and some were from other counties. And some I still correspond with back and forth.

Ziebell: Do you have any funny 4-H stories that you can think of?

McCullick: Oh gosh, many of them (everyone laughs). When we went to Citizenship Short Course, that might be something that's different, because I think you fly out now, don't you? I think you fly out.

Rebhan: If it's the same one that I went to, I went to D.C., and it's called now Citizenship Washington Focus, and we did take a bus for that one.

McCullick: Well we did take a bus out to Washington D.C. And we had three chaperons for a whole busload of kids from all over the state of Wisconsin. And on the way out we played travel bingo. And the only thing that I can remember, one thing, you had to find a polka dot item on a clothesline, and going through Chicago we found it, and everybody in the whole bus is yelling Bingo! And then, on the way out, we found out that several of us were cheerleaders in school, and so, anyhow, we did "If you want to be a Badger, clap your hands!" You know, and what not in different places in Washington D.C. And there was a big line at the Washington Monument if you wanted to ride the elevator. So all of us girls that were cheerleaders went up and down the Washington Monument, I think it was five or six times, while we were waiting for the rest of them to get up the elevator and back down, and every time we went up we were singing, "If you want to be a Badger clap your hands!" And lots of people stopped us and visited with us because they were from Wisconsin, or they thought it was cool what we were doing out there, and asking why we were there, and what not, and why we were up and down so many times, and what not, and anyhow, that was really fun. And then at Madison, when we went down there, we were supposed to go to bed at a certain time. Well, part of it is meeting everybody, so we kind of gravitated to one of the rooms, and we weren't noisy, we just visited. And our chaperone let us do that. And when I went down as a chaperone, I told the kids, this is the ground rules, because I think it's important, as long as A), you don't make too much noise, and disturb anybody who doesn't want to, and B), you attend every single meeting, and every single class that you are supposed to be at. And they did it. So, they got to stay up and visit. Because, you know, like kids your age can stay up all night and still have energy for the next day.

Ziebell: Did being in 4-H help you decide, or help prepare you for what you wanted to do later in life?

McCullick: I think that it did in many ways. I, like I said, I learned so many life skills, and like the Speaking and Demonstration contest, and things like that, really helped for a lot of the things

that I wanted to do, because I wanted to be able to have the confidence to speak, and to bring forth ideas at work, and have the skills to do that. So, yeah, 4-H did prepare me in many ways.

Ziebell: What is a project that you worked on in 4-H that you were really, really proud of?

McCullick: Oh, gosh. A couple of them that I can think of offhand is the rolls I made that got the Fleischmann Yeast Award. My sisters entered in that too, and I beat them out, and I was the youngest, so I thought that was pretty cool at the time (laughing). And another one that I can think of is that I always loved to Irish knit, but I didn't like knitting as much as I loved crocheting, so I developed my own patter for crocheting with Irish knit pattern, and I made that and I took it to the fair, and I got a blue ribbon on it, so I thought that was pretty cool.

Ziebell: (Looking at her interview question list) I don't know, a lot of the questions she answered all ready.

Rebhan: I know.

McCullick: Sorry.

Ziebell: That's okay. It's great.

Rebhan: Can I ask a question? You said that you went to State Fair for Dress Review and Demonstrations. So, I assume that you were staying in the old dorms at that time. Do you have stories about that?

McCullick: Oh, we just, we just had so much fun going around the fairgrounds. We practiced of course; they showed us how to model. We had different classes on putting, like different things together so they would go together, like accessories and what not. And, we just had so much fun just going around the fairgrounds and eating stuff like the cream puff. So good. And just looking at the displays, the displays are wonderful down there. And of course we went on some rides, and really got to know the girls, and it was just fun.

Rebhan: What did you do for Demonstrations? What were some of your topics?

McCullick: Well, one year I did on collages, and that's what I got selected to go to State Fair for. And I didn't get to go to State Fair for it, because I would have to choose between that and Dress Review. And I went for Dress Review instead. And some of the other things were like baking, mostly baking, some crocheting, things like that that related to the projects, because at that time, you were required to have it relate to one of your projects. And now, its wide open, you can do whatever you want with demonstrations.

Ziebell: Were your parents involved in 4-H when they were growing up?

McCullick: I don't think growing up they were, but they made sure that all of us kids were in 4-H. And like I said it was kind of a neighborhood thing. At that time we had a lot of kids that were

each my brothers and sisters and my age, so we were all in 4-H together, and just had a good time, and did various things together, like playing softball and getting together, and baking, and what not. In fact, my mom tried to teach me how to do a pie, and I guess at that time I wasn't interested, and then I learned from a 4-H leader how to do the pie, but then my mom showed me how to do it better. (Laughing) And it was the best.

Rebhan: Was it a particular kind of pie?

McCullick: Just a pie crust.

Rebhan: Okay.

McCullick: Just the pie crust, because my mom's pie crust was always flaky and nice, and just the best pie ever. Everyone always raved about her pies. And so, anyhow, I got a good compliment from my cousin because she told me I take after my mom with my pies. That was nice.

Rebhan: Very nice.

Ziebell: If you could tell people one story that captures your participation in 4-H, what story would that be?

McCullick: Oh...there is so many, like I said, with being a camp counselor doing that, because I participated in three ways at camp. I participated as a 4-Her, and I went back as a counselor, and then I went back as an adult chaperone. So anyway I had three experiences with 4-H camp which was great. You experience it as a 4-Her, and you have one little boy who was scared to death. The first night he was crying his eyes out because he missed his mom and dad. So anyway because I was a counselor from his county, his cabin chaperone came and got me, so I said, it's kind of late right now to call your mom and dad. Why don't we wait until tomorrow morning. You get a good night's sleep and we'll call your mom and dad tomorrow morning right away. Well the next morning after breakfast I found him right away, and I said, well, I said, should I call your mom and dad? And he said well no, we have this to do, and that to do, and the other thing to do, and the rest of the time he was fine.

But just so many fun experiences that I can think of. You know, teaching kids how to do things like crocheting. My husband and I taught woodworking. Being a General Leader for a 4-H club, we had activities, such as, every month we had things that I tried to plan. We had a Halloween Party where we would all get dressed up for Halloween, and then I'd pick treats for them that they could have that related to Halloween. We had a Christmas Party. Every month we tried to come up with something that was fun. That was neat. The 4-Her, probably just getting together and having fun, and going to meetings and what not. Like I said many of the kids I'm still friends with that I met in 4-H, so that's great.



Ziebell: So what 4-H club were you in? Because they all have these names like Blackhawk, and Cherry, Mills...

McCullick: Yeah. E'erdowell. It's E-apostrophe-e-r-d-o-w-e-l-l all in one word. And what it's for is Ever-Do-Well, but they shortened it with E'erdowell.

Rebhan: And what club were you a General Leader for?

McCullick: Mauston T-N-T.

Rebhan: And do you remember how many years you were a General Leader for them?

McCullick: Oh, I think something like then years I was the General Leader. And then I taught crocheting, and the first year that I taught crocheting I had one kid, and Eileen just came to my apartment because at that time I wasn't married, and I taught her how to crochet, and some of her work ended up going to State Fair. And so she was really excited about it and told all the other kids in the club, and the next year I ended up with thirteen kids and one parent, who was left-handed, and I had never taught a left-handed person before. It was Evelyn Gray, do you know Evelyn Gray?

Rebhan: Yes. I did an interview with her actually. (Everyone laughs)

McCullick: Well anyhow Evelyn sat across from me because she is left handed, and so like a reflection, she could see what I was doing, and that was the only way that I could teach her. And she still does crochet. (Laughing) Did she mention that?

Rebhan: Yes, she did! I didn't realize it was you that she went to learn from. It's fun when the circle gets completed without you even trying. (Everyone laughing)

Ziebell: Did you have any children that were in 4-H?

McCullick: My husband and I weren't lucky enough to have children.

Ziebell: I'm sorry.

McCullick: But I encouraged other kids that I knew, to go into 4-H, because I think it would help them so much with everyday life. But no, I don't have any children.

Rebhan: But it sounds like you adopted a whole mess of them through the years.

McCullick: (Laughing) Yes.

Rebhan: Could I ask a question? You said you were in the Junior Leaders, so what kinds of activities would the Junior Leaders try to do?

McCullick: Well some of them were education things that we did, and then we did fun things, like we went on hay rides, we would go to like skiing, sometimes we just would go sledding. Every time we would do something, something different, but that type of activity is what we did.

Rebhan : Did you ever like go into schools and do 4-H presentations and things like that?

McCullick: They didn't have us do anything like that at that time. When I was in school though, when I was a senior in high school, I took sewing the first semester, and the teacher was a new teacher, so she had to have the teacher that was, you know, teaching for quite a while there with her. And anyway we got talking to her, and while we were doing it, I volunteered to help sew all the costumes for the Sound of Music. So anyhow, we had to make all these costumes that were all alike, and what not, for the Sound of Music, and that was fun, and while I was talking to her, she says, now, let me ask you a question, your taking baking for the second semester, cooking and baking, and I said yeah. Why? She says, well, what am I supposed to teach you? You've been in 4-H for ten years. You've been a Junior Leader, as well as Leader in the Foods project, what am I supposed to teach you? I said, I don't know, I just enjoy it. So unbeknownst to me, she went to the principal, and asked him if the second semester, because she would not have the other teacher with her, she asked if I could be her assistant. So she had me do demonstrations on different foods, like making different foods and baking different things, and helping her do things like that. So that was really cool I thought.

Rebhan: That was quite an honor.

McCullick: It was. I was shocked when she told me she had talked to the principal, and he had agreed to it. But I thought that was pretty cool, and that I can attribute to 4-H.

Rebhan: Certainly.

Ziebell: So in the fair, you have all these projects, which category project was your most favorite?

McCullick: Probably baking. And my husband says I bake and cook too much (laughing).

Rebhan: It can be fun to give away though.

McCullick: I do that too (laughing). I do that too. We have a ninety-three year old friend, and he lives by himself, so he usually comes out a lot of Sundays to our house, so I make food for lunch and for supper, and I make something specific for lunch, and something different for supper, and then I send home a goody bag with him as well as desert, and what not to. So...

Rebhan: Fun.

McCullick: I do give things away to (laughing).

Ziebell: I think we are out of questions.

Rebhan: I have a couple.

Ziebell: Okay.

Rebhan: And this is kind of a philosophical question, but do you know how the clover has four leaves, for Head, Hands, Heart, and Health. Which one of those is your favorite, if you had to choose?

McCullick: Probably my favorite would be heart. Because I think you, you give from your heart, and I think you also receive to your heart, in 4-H. Head is also good to.

Rebhan: Certainly.

Zieble: I think I would say Heart as well.

Rebhan: You said you were in a play, Daisy Mae and Li'l Abner, and I guess I'm not familiar with that play, so could you please tell me what the story line for that was?

McCullick: Well, what it is, have you ever heard of Sadie Hawkins Day?

Rebhan: No.

Zieblee: Sadie Hawkins Day is when the girls ask guys...

Rebhan: See, this is why we have her doing the interview. (Everyone laughs).

Ziebell: There's a song, so...

McCullick: Yes, every four years is Leap Year, so on Leap Year, a girl can ask a guy out. So that's basically the story line, she has a crush on Li'l Abner, and anyhow she asks him out, and then we had to sing and stuff during the play, and that was fun.

Rebhan: I don't have any other questions.

Ziebell: Okay. She answered like five of them without me even asking. (Everyone laughs)

Rebhan: That is the mark, I think, of a very good interview. (Everyone laughs)

McCullick: You brought out the questions, and some of the things just...

Rebhan: I do have one. I believe that you are involved with the Boorman House, is that correct?

McCullick: That is correct.

Rebhan: Would you please tell us a little bit about what you do there?

McCullick: Okay. I am the President of the Historical Society, and so, we do many things at the Boorman House. When I first became involved with the Boorman House, a project that I worked

on was writing the history of Juneau County, Juneau County, the First 100 Years. I was working at extension at the time, and one of our county board members wanted to get the history of Juneau County written, so I formed the committee that wrote the book, Juneau County, the First 100 Years. And then, at that time, I wasn't involved with the Historical Society, but they asked me to be on the board, because the first place I went was to the Historical Society to ask them about that, and then we bought the Boorman House, and I helped negotiate the price with the president. I was secretary at that time, for the Boorman House, and to get, to obtain the Boorman House. And then we had to completely repaint and, you know, take out like four kitchens out of the Boorman House, so that took a lot of time to get that done. And after that was done we got displays set up and it got to be a little easier. But we give tours, and we have a historiographer who does genealogy for people to come in and find their family history, and what not. We have all kinds of scrap books that we have there that are really interesting to look at, and really old court records that tell about the really funny court cases that are in the history, like the bank robbery in Lyndon Station that went awry because when they put the dynamite to blow up the safe, they put a little too much in and blew up all the money as well. (Everyone laughs)

Rebhan: Whoops.

McCullick: And we do that, and we give tours. We are open Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend. And we give tours from one to four. Each of the volunteers come in different times, and do that. We have a quilt show. We have a tea where we concentrate on a nationality, whether it be German, or Irish, or Norwegian, or whatever, and we have people come in and they have been to the country, or are from that country, and so they come in and talk about it, and show different things from the country. And then we have a style show and a tea. We have the Christmas Open House which is Thanksgiving weekend to the next weekend, and we are open from one to eight then. And we have different organizations and individuals come in and decorate the rooms. We have people entertaining during the whole time, and we make homemade Christmas cookies, so everyone can have homemade Christmas cookies with coffee or punch. It's just a fun weekend. We set up displays and tell people when they come through about what different things are. Something that I like to do is quiz people, hold up something and say, well, what is this? And it might be how they used to make candles; it was the mold for the candles. The one that I think is kind of neat, it's kind of like a ridge, and what they used to do is put the material in there, they would press it down, they would get it warm on their cook stove, their wood stove, press it down, and that would make their accordion pleats like you have now.

Ziebell: Yeah.

McCullick: And so things like that, we like to show them that, and try to quiz them a little bit and tell them about some of the people in the past, like Doctor O'Brien, we have his office at the Boorman House, and the two Doctor Hess', who were instrumental in getting the hospital in Mauston, their pictures are up. And we were able to obtain some things that were family

heirlooms of the Boorman family, which, of course, built the house in Mauston here that we have the museum in. We have classes come in, like one time, sometimes, schools come in, and I'll just pick out of a hat, third grade, and they will come in, and bring a sack lunch, so it will be like the old days when they brought in their sack lunches, and dress up, and get dressed up for them, show them how they used to dress in those days. Just a lot of fun things like that.

Ziebell: This is kind of a throw back to school, but did your school have Student Council, and if so, where you involved in it?

McCullick: I don't think we had Student Council members at that time, so no, I was not involved in it. I was a cheerleader and I played basketball and did some things like that, but no, we didn't have Student Council.

Ziebell: Because Student Council and 4-H, I was just the Treasurer for our Student Council in eighth grade, and Student Council and 4-H are very similar. We've gone to like these conventions, one was in Green Bay and one was in the Dells, and we met with all these Student Council people, and I realized that it's just like 4-H, and that's why I was really glad to be a part of it, and I felt really comfortable being a part of it because of 4-H because it's similar.

McCullick: Yeah, and I think in school it was because of 4-H that I had the courage enough to try out to be a cheerleader, and also to go out for Forensics. So, because otherwise, I don't think I would have had the confidence to do that.

Ziebell: What kinds of other things did you participate in Forensics?

McCullick: In Forensics?

Ziebell: Yeah.

McCullick: I did poetry, and reading of stories, prose, and different things like that, and theater as well. Between my junior and senior year when I went to state for Forensics, they had a class that they picked twenty people out of three states, and I don't know how many people applied, but I happened to be one of the ones that did it, and we stayed six weeks at the University of La Crosse, during the week, and we had actually a semester course, college course for poetry, prose, and theater. And that was really interesting. They gave us an assignment, and we had a lot of reading to get done, and we had to prepare either a prose or poetry reading for one class, and for another class we had to read at least part of a play for the next day, if not the whole play, and be ready to start acting in it. And then at the end, they invited the parents, and each of us had, like if you were a lady you had black skirt, white blouse and a shawl, and the guys just had black pants and a white shirt. And we played like six or seven different parts. And just by the way you used your shawl and spoke was how you ended up being that person. So we might go from being a very religious lady to someone who was loud and boisterous, or whatever. So it was kind of interesting to play all of these parts, all at the same time. And sometimes it was bam, you were

this person, and right away you were that person, just by the way the play was going. So it was interesting.

Ziebell: Were you involved in school musically, like the band, or solo ensemble, or choir?

McCullick: I was in choir. I enjoyed, I always enjoyed singing. I may not be the best, but I always enjoyed it. And when I was growing up I went to a country school, and so we didn't have band. We had, we turned on our radio and this program had just music that you could sing to, and so they had the words printed out and we just sang to that, and by the time I went to the school in town, it was pretty late to try to learn the instruments and stuff, and I had a lot of other things that I was interested in, so I never did learn. I mean, I can play chopsticks, and a few things like that on the piano (laughing) but...

Rebhan: (Mimicking playing chopsticks on the table)

McCullick: (Watching the pretend piano playing) Exactly. (Laughing)

Rebhan: Before we finish, Anna, we have visiting royalty with us. Would you mind just telling us a couple of the things that you have done. She was Junior Fairest.

Ziebell: No I wasn't Junior Fairest. I was in the competition though.

Rebhan: Okay, would you please tell us about your experience.

Ziebell: So Junior Fairest of the Fair, and Fairest of the Fair are representing Juneau County at the fair. Fairest is like the first part, and Junior Fairest is like her assistant. And so when you are applying for either, Junior Fairest is thirteen to fifteen, and then Fairest is eighteen to twenty-five. I applied last year, and I didn't win, and I applied this year to and I didn't win, but it's okay. So what they do is they give you this sheet, and it tells you what you need for the day, the big competition day, so there is an interview, and there is a big group interview, and you are supposed to have a memorized thirty second introduction, and then you go behind a curtain and have a radio ad. And then they have a desert auction to raise money for the Junior Fairest and the Fairest organization.

Rebhan: It sounds like a wonderful experience.

Ziebell: It's a lot of fun, you make friends because there are these girls from all over the county that come. We have to, during the time when we are not being interviewed, we are making this booth, and so we have to come up with these ideas and themes for the booth.

McCullick: Interesting. Try out again.

Ziebell: I will.

McCullick: I also tried out for Fairest of the Fair, and I was a runner-upper, and I was in the parade and what not. And we had to, as runner-up, we had to be there at the fair and help out and what not, and it was really a fun experience.

Rebhan: Well I am so proud of you that you tried for that.

McCullick: Me too.

Rebhan: And I hope that you keep going because it certainly sounds like it was a lot of fun, and it sounds like you gained a lot from the experience. So keep going.

Ziebell: I will.

McCullick: Yes, do it, because I think one of these years you're going to make it, because with your personality you have to.

Ziebell: Thank you.

Rebhan: And I have no more questions for you.

Ziebell: I'm out. (Laughing)

McCullick: You're out? (Laughing)

Rebhan: Well thank you so much, so much for meeting with us. This was very fun.

McCullick: Well you're very welcome. It was fun. It brought back lots of memories. Ever since you called me, Emily, I've been thinking about all these experiences in 4-H, and all of the things that I did in 4-H, and it was just fun bringing up memories.

Rebhan: And thank you, Anna, for being here.

Ziebell: Thank you for allowing me to come and help with this.

(Interview closed and recording stopped. Anna Ziebell left, however while filling out interview paperwork, Nancy McCullick remembered one more story she wanted to share.)

Rebhan: Okay, so we have one more story that we need to tell with Nancy McCullick, and I believe that it is the story of how you became a General Leader.

McCullick: Yes. I went into the extension office right when I graduated from high school, and told them that I still wanted to be involved in 4-H as a leader. So, Ray Saxby told me to contact Bette Riddlestine, and so I called Bette, and Bette was telling me about all the kids who were in the 4-H club, and how cool they were, and everything, and by the time I got done with the conversation with Bette, she had me being the General Leader and her stepping down. So I went

from being a year out of high school to becoming the General Leader, and it was fun. I really enjoyed that. And to this day when I call Bette, if I call her and tell her I'm Nancy McCullick, she will go, who? But if I say that I'm Nancy Ziese, which was my maiden name, then she knows exactly who I am says, well, why didn't you just say so to begin with. (Laughing)

Rebhan: Okay then. So how many kids would be in your club when you were General Leader?

McCullick: Probably about thirty.

Rebhan: And then all ages?

McCullick: All ages. In fact, the first few years that I had it, a lot of them were nine and ten year olds. So it was quite a challenge with the nine and ten year olds. There were a couple of them that were older, but a lot of them were younger kids. And they were the ones that stayed until they graduated then and became adults at that time, or graduated from high school and then went on to college and couldn't participate anymore, and because of the age limit as well. But I thought that was an interesting story about Bette. It was Bette. (Laughing)

Rebhan: So did you have kids in your club that are now grown up and have kids of their own who are now in 4-H?

McCullick: Yes.

Rebhan: So how does that make you feel when you can see the generation layer there?

McCullick: It makes me feel great. In fact, one of them would be the Pufahls. I had both Becky and Chris in my club, and now their kids are in 4-H, and it's neat to see because I know like, Becky was such a beautiful seamstress, always, and now it's carried on to her daughters, and that's kind of cool. And Sharon of course was a seamstress too, and that was kind of neat, you see it going from generation to generation. And some of them have moved away from here, so I'm not sure if they still are. But another one would be the Grays, Evelyn and Bob Gray. I had their kids in 4-H, and now their kids are in 4-H, so that's kind of cool. I'm trying to think who else. A lot of them moved away from this area so I'm not sure if their kids are involved in 4-H or not, but a lot of times that happens, when you have a 4-H background, you continue to have a 4-H background.

Rebhan: It's something that you want you kids...

McCullick: To experience.

Rebhan: To experience.

Rebhan: So I can ask this because you were a General Leader, so did you ever have a family come up to you, and they were like, oh, we're thinking about joining 4-H, but we really don't know. Did you have a sales pitch (both laugh) that you would use to bring them in?



McCullick: I don't know if it was a sales pitch or not, but I would just tell them about all the experiences that we were doing in the club now, and some of my experiences as a 4-Her, and I think that they really, it really convinced a lot of people to join, because if nothing else the kids were going to have a good time. And sometimes I guess the secret to 4-H is you make them think that they are just having a good time, when really they are having a good time, and learning something new.

Rebhan: Very true. There is a line in Calvin and Hobbs, do you know what I am talking about, the comic strip, where Calvin says, "Be careful, we might learn something from this." (Everyone laughs) It just reminds me of that, but I think everything in 4-H is a learning experience, no matter how small, even just sitting in a meeting, and watching the big kids, the officers run it, that's a learning experience. You are learning parliamentary procedure, and you don't even know it.

McCullick: You certainly do. And you know, like with the reporter, I know that, one of the people in the 4-H club that I took under my wing was the reporter, ended up being on radio as an announcer, so I kind of thought that was cool too.

Rebhan: Fabulous. It's neat when you can see the skills that they were empowered with, and then they turn it into careers, or service projects.

McCullick: Yes, very definitely so. It's fun to watch them grow up and still have the values they had when they were growing up too.

Rebhan: So no question in your mind, when a child joins 4-H, it is going to be a beneficial experience for them?

McCullick: It's going to be a great thing for them, and the more that the parents and family participates the better it is for everyone.

Rebhan: Yes, and I think that is what separates 4-H and makes it distinct from say the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts, which are fabulous, fabulous organizations, but 4-H is a family organization, and it's not just something for the boys in the family, or the girls in the family, or for the high schoolers in the family, it is something that the whole family, the baby through the high schoolers through the college student who is home, everyone comes.

McCullick: That is certainly true. And I experienced that with my family, because like I said from the time I was a baby, they were taking me to meetings, and I was there until I graduated from 4-H, and then started in as a leader then.

Rebhan: Fun. It is the source of some of the best memories that I have. And when I look back and think of all the things that I've done, I can trace it back to some experience in 4-H, where I thought, oh I would like to try to do that. No matter what it was, if it was running for secretary for the club, oh, I would like to try to do that, or even the job that I have right now as the 4-H

intern, you know as a little girl I saw the 4-H interns of the past, and I thought, oh, that looks like fun, I would like to try. And I think 4-H does a very good job at that. It builds dreams in a child's mind of what can be possible.

McCullick: It really does, and like I said, one of my jobs was the staff assistant in the 4-H office, and that I would never have gotten if I hadn't been in 4-H.

Rebhan: So quick question, you've had multiple 4-H perspectives, you've been a member, you've been staffer, you've been General Leader, working in the office, what did you learn about 4-H that kind of surprised you, kind of from that administrative end?

McCullick: Well it was kind of interesting because I learned how much work went into all of these projects. You know planning; say for instance, 4-H camp. As a Junior Leader, you had, we had one training session before camp, you might want to call it, where we all just kind of met and sat down and we went to the Dells afterwards for a fun couple of hours, or whatever, and then we went home. But then when I got in to the extension office, I learned all of the hours and hours that went into planning this camp, and getting together, and having projects, or activities to keep them busy every single minute of the day, including, when we planned a bike trip to Circus World Museum, part of that would be, because we weren't going to get the lunches at the camp, we had to buy bread, and make sandwiches, and get fruit and a desert, and I baked cookies and what not, for that. And then how do you keep all that stuff cool...

Rebhan: Exactly.

McCullick: So that they don't get food poisoning. So I would freeze the sandwiches, I put them in a cooler, and we got them out when we got there, and they carried them around for lunch and we grilled out for supper, and had hotdogs and hamburgers and stuff. There was a park that was just outside of the museum.

Rebhan: So you came and you were chaperoning this?

McCullick: Yes. That was through the extension office. So anyhow I learned to do that as well. And then like Clothing Review, you think, I make this dress and I show up. Well, you have to have a judge there, you have to have everything organized, you have to have an order to it. You have to know which kids are in which area, and what not. So I learned a lot of the planning things that went behind the scenes. You know you come in and you think it's just seamless, bam it's there, and it's not. (Laughing)

Rebhan: A lot of work goes into it, and I think that's one of the biggest things that I've learned from being an intern, is just how much time does go into it to make it look so effortless. And I think it should be. It should be effortless for kids, it should be effortless for parents, but it isn't magic. (Everyone laughing)

McCullick: No it certainly isn't. And that's probably the main thing I learned through 4-H. It's helped me, because I know another one of my jobs, I got hired because they have so many events that they sponsored, and what not, and so they hired me because I had a 4-H background, and I knew how to plan events. So I planned state meetings, and all kinds of stuff for that job, so it was neat.

Rebhan: You never know when those 4-H experiences are going to come in really, really handy.

McCullick: No you don't. (Laughing)

Rebhan: And it can be simple things, like keeping record books for example, learning how to take notes, learning how to think about what you want to learn in a project. And then in a perfect world you think it through at the beginning of the year, and then all year you work on your project, and then at the fair of course you are so stress free because of course it's been done for a while. But in the real world you know it doesn't happen that way. But just being able to think about something, as in, I want to learn about this, and then at some point learning about it and doing a project, and coming into a fair and at face-to-face judging being able to explain what you did to another person, and educate them about what you did. It's those experiences, even in college, I can tell the difference between kids who got to do that for years and years and years, and those who didn't. And it is a real difference for kids who had that opportunity, and it shows in their academic work, it shows in their student government work, it shows in sports. It seems almost second nature to 4-H kids because you are just a part of it, but it really is something really incredible.

McCullick: It really is. And like you said, so many things, unless you actually sit down and think about it, you don't think, oh, 4-H taught me how to do that.

Rebhan: No.

McCullick: But, especially like when we are having this interview today, so many things that relate back to 4-H. As we talked about when the recorder was off, you know I am president of other organizations as well, like the American Legion, and the Cabane, which is the ladies equivalent of the 40et8 where we give out nursing scholarships. I've been involved in Relay for Life which I strongly believe in because I've lost a lot of friends and relatives to cancer. And just so many different activities you don't think about, even in daily life, just doing like the books that you have at home, and getting organized and getting a project done at home. I mean, it's the same thing as being in 4-H and getting a project done.

Rebhan: It is the same life skills. And I think that this is part of the real success of 4-H, that you don't think, I learned this in 4-H, or I didn't; it becomes a lifestyle. And it becomes so holistic, and it becomes, if you are in 4-H, this is what you do.

McCullick: It becomes you.

Rebhan: It becomes you, and the world becomes a learning opportunity, and you really start cultivating this attitude, because you are in 4-H every year, every year you are learning about projects, it creates an attitude that I am going to be a learner for my whole life.

McCullick: That's true. Very true.

Rebhan: So I have to ask, do you have record books stories. I know that we were talking about that. (Everyone laughs) And I have to ask because my experience with record books was not always pleasant (laughing).

McCullick: That was probably my least favorite part of 4-H, was the record books.

Rebhan: So we have something in common (laughing).

McCullick: But we had to do it in order to achieve that year. And so I always did a record book, and I hated it. You know, when you think back on it now, it was probably fairly easy, but it was just taking the time to sit down and write down all of the things that you had done that year, and in each project. And you know we had to cut out pieces of material for our outfit that we made for clothing construction. You had to tell what you made for Baking or Cooking. For Money Management you had to tell what you did. For Knitting and Crocheting you had to tell about all the different projects, and what not. And it just seemed to be, I don't know, some of the pages I think were a little repetition, but when you get to the real world and you are doing things, some of that is repetitious as well. And so you learn that, like, yeah, I have to write my name, my address, my 4-H club, my project, and you know, and some of the things are exactly the same, but they still have to be done.

Rebhan: Yes. That is a life skill that you can learn in 4-H too, you can learn patience. (Everyone laughs) Just take a deep breath, and do it, whether or not you see value in it, or purpose in it. But it is fun looking back at those record books years later, and realizing that, oh, I did this.

McCullick: I should have looked at it before I came today, because then I would have remembered all of the projects that I did.

Rebhan: Exactly! The longer you are in 4-H, it feels like the more projects you are in, and you just, you lose track of it because it just becomes a part of you.

McCullick: It does, and when you are getting ready for the fair, it's just so fun. Some of the people that were on the fair board at that time were really nice people, and I got to know them as well. And I didn't realize how many hours and hours and hours they put into the fair, until you got older and you were involved in some of the planning for the various events, and what not, and then you knew how much work was involved.

Rebhan: Nothing is free, I think that...(everyone laughs)...somebody somewhere put the time into it. And you mentioned you competed for Fairest of the Fair, so was that 4-H inspired?

McCullick: Yes. Definitely. I was one of the runner-uppers. And we were in the fair parade, and we had to be in the fair and act kind of as hostesses, and help people find different places, and what not, and that was an interesting experience as well, and I would encourage everyone to try that, because it was really fun. And like our interviewer...

Rebhan: Anna.

McCullick: Anna, said, she said that she got to meet new girls, and they just had fun together, and you do, you just have a good time.

Rebhan: Certainly. Did you every have an experience where a little girl looked up at you, and think, oh, she's the 4-H equivalent of Cinderella, because I think that that's what they are thinking. Did you ever have an experience like that?

McCullick: Yeah, little kids would come up to you and they would just take ahold of your hand, and just look up to you, and you would kneel down and talk to them, and stuff. And it's nice for every little girl to have a fairy tale dream.

Rebhan: I think so.

McCullick: Of becoming Cinderella someday.

Rebhan: I think that little girls need it. It's important.

McCullick: I do too. I do too.

Rebhan: I think it's so cool that in 4-H that you have the Fairest of the Fair option, to compete for and try for. I never have, but I have friends who did, and it just sounds like it is one of the most amazing opportunities just to try for.

McCullick: Well it is, it's just a fun experience, and it's something that you should try.

Rebhan: I think that 4-H has a lot of those things. Just try, you know, what's the worst that can happen? For everything that you tried, there is an experience that you gained from it which will help you somewhere else. Maybe you didn't get the result that you wanted, for that pie that you baked and it just didn't come out the way you hoped it would, and you had to bake it right before the fair, so there is no redoing it, and yes, that was my story, but for everything that didn't work out the way that you wanted, you still took away an experience from it, that at some point later down the road, you benefit from.

McCullick: You certainly do. You certainly do. I would have recommend 4-H to anyone.

Rebhan: And on that note, I think that we will...I will thank you for this interview part two, (laughing).

McCullick: You're welcome.

Rebhan: This was very fun. I'm glad that we were able to talk about those things and catch them on tape, so thank you.

McCullick: Me too.

Another 4-H Memory from Nancy McCullick:

4-H Food Stand:

When I was growing up, adults and 4-Hers would go to Sharon and Ray Saxby's house to make Bar-B-Que for the 4-H food stand. We did not have hamburgers or fries, we had the bar-b-que, hot dogs (boiled) and chips. The food preparers were from all over the county and of course different clubs, we got to know more people and had fun preparing the food and of course got to sample the bar-b-que for lunch!!!! Ray was our 4-H agent and Sharon was always involved with 4-H things.

As a 4-H leader after no longer being a 4-Her, I volunteered to manage the food stand. One of the memories from that was that while setting things up, someone mentioned that every year the kids who stayed with their animals at the fair had to either drive or catch a ride some where to get breakfast. Therefore, I talked our 4-H club into making breakfast at the food stand, we made eggs and pancakes the fixings that go with them from 6-8 A.M. or 6-9 A.M. and we had a quite a few kids and others come for breakfast. We even had some of the food delivery men have breakfast there as well!! Every morning we had fresh buns and milk delivered to the food stand, not sure if that still happens.

Another memory was collecting the money at night after the food stand closed. At that time the bank did not a night box where you could drop off the money at night so I had to take the money home with me and deposit after the bank opened in the morning. I was worried because I was had the 4-H money so I slept with it!!!!

You can see how many new things evolved over the years with the food stand. Imagine if now, you came to the food stand and no fries or burgers!!!