VILLAGE PRESERVATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Deborah Glick

Conducted and transcribed by Josie Naron

New York, New York

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General Interview Notes

This is a transcription of an Oral History that was conducted by Village Preservation. The Village Preservation Oral History Project includes a collection of interviews with individuals involved in local businesses, culture, and preservation, to gather stories, observations, and insights concerning the changing Greenwich Village. These interviews elucidate the personal resonances of the neighborhood within the biographies of key individuals, and illustrate the evolving neighborhood. Oral history is a method of collecting memories and histories through recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well- informed interviewer, with the goal of adding to the historical record. The recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. Oral history is not intended to present the absolute or complete narrative of events. Oral history is a spoken account by the interviewee in response to questioning. Whenever possible, we encourage readers to listen to the audio recordings to get a greater sense of this meaningful exchange. The views expressed by the contributor(s) are solely those of the contributor(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or endorsement of our organization.

THANK YOU

Summary of oral history with Deborah Glick:

Deborah Glick was born and raised in Queens, New York, and has lived in Greenwich Village for over 40 years. As Lower Manhattan's elected representative for over 30 years, Glick advocated for civil rights, reproductive freedom, animals and environmental preservation, the arts, and tenants' rights. Glick was the first openly LGBTQ member of the State legislature and was a leader in the fight for marriage equality. She fought to pass the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act [SONDA], which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act [GENDA], which protects transgender and gender non-conforming New Yorkers from discrimination. Glick chaired the Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation and also served on the Ways and Means, Rules, and Governmental Operations Committees. Highlights from Glick's oral history include memories of her family's Village-based printing and stationery business, discussions of navigating electoral politics as an out lesbian, and recollections of the Village's vibrant gay cultural and nightlife scene.

Excerpts from oral history with Deborah Glick:

"And so, it really was a working middle-class neighborhood, lower middle-class, I would say, neighborhood. There were lots of shops that catered -- I remember the Golden Rule Liquor Store across the street on Hudson Street. Which is still there, but obviously, the proprietor, Martha, is long gone. They had a screen door. I loved that because that felt like home, because we had screen doors. Not that I went to the liquor store except to deliver some sort of, you know, invoice materials. So it felt different in that it was very much a working area. It wasn't endless restaurants being the primary business. There were other kinds of businesses and shops. There wasn't the same sense of a consolidation as an entertainment and nightlife area. And shopping, high-end shopping. Because clearly, there was no high-end shopping. And Hudson Street itself, not right then, but as it started to change, became a row of antique stores. There are no more antique stores, but Bleecker Street and Hudson Street were replete with wonderful antique stores. And within them, there might be -- a local person making jewelry would have a small little place set up. And there were, you know, the other things that people needed: tailors, shoemakers. There aren't as many of those around as there were." (p. 8-9)

"So it was a show in 1973 -- New York Illustrated [Homosexuals out of the Closet], I believe was the name of it. And they came to interview the Lesbian Liberation Committee of the Gay Activists Alliance. So, the women's auxiliary. And there were a very small number of us. I don't think there were more than 10 people in the room, and half were in shadow. And I was willing to be out, thinking, Well, I have this job. If I lose it, I'll get another one. Not really being, you know, having that sort of carefree early twenties attitude of I don't have -- it's not a great job anyway, what the hell. But then I realized it was gonna show in a certain amount and I had to tell my family before they learned TV-wise. And so that's how I came out. And the LLC became Lesbian Liberation -- Lesbian Feminist Liberation, LFL. I was very involved in that. And I was also a little later -- I wasn't that involved in NOW until later on, but feminist analysis of society was certainly very much a part of who I was." (p. 17-18)

"So we don't have as many active block associations and what the block associations were able to do. 20 years ago, the Ye Olde Village Faire, the Bedford Barrow Commerce Block Association, taking over three blocks for a long day and night. Bloomberg didn't like all of that stuff at night, so it was, you have to close up at six o'clock. Dancing under the stars to

live music was a hallmark of that street fair. So I think the homogenization has been one of those changes. The shift to increasingly more expensive shops. Bleecker Street, there are very few things you can pick up for the evening. It's just there for the tourist trade. And I understand that. I mean, change is inevitable and change is not inherently bad.” (p. 28-29)

“I mean, it is the erosion of the common good and the concern for a community. Why did you come here? Why are you here? Why did you come to this neighborhood? You see what it is. You came from somewhere on Long Island or somewhere in Westchester, or maybe you came from the Upper East Side. And you say, "Oh, I love it because there's so much air and light. And now I'd like to put three more stories on the top of this building." Well, where do you think the air and the light came from? So that -- and it's not individuals. It is a societal problem of people caring more about themselves. And that's the perniciousness of the current political climate that this top-down selfishness, cruelty, and callousness is infecting. And I use that very decidedly.

I mean, one thing that we didn't touch on, and I sort of mentioned it and then we went off in another direction, but the cultural milieu of this community changed a great deal with the AIDS crisis. We lost a generation of creative artists, whether it was Keith Haring or Charles Ludlam from the Ridiculous Theater company. There was an energy and a vibrancy that we lost, and some of it was replaced with a sense of loss and depression without an immediate regeneration. I think that's changed. And I think, you know, things like the Village Vanguard. God bless Deborah Gordon, who's still keeping that going. And there are those markers. But, you know, the coffee houses that encouraged interaction. Now everybody's on a screen. Those screens are barriers. And people have to put them down. And if you want to write something, take a paper and a pen and write it down so people can see you while you're creating.” (p. 29-30)

JOSIE NARON: Okay. I'm just gonna read a little preamble and then we can jump right in. So, it is August 4th, 2025. I'm Josie Naron, the oral historian at Village Preservation, and I'm here today to speak with Assemblymember Deborah Glick, the longtime representative for the West Village, who also has a long personal and professional history with the neighborhood. And thank you very much for joining me today, Deborah.

DEBORAH GLICK: Well, thank you. Happy to be with you.

JN: Yeah. So, as I explained to you off-mic a minute ago, this will kind of roughly follow chronologically your life and life history. So just to start, where and when were you born?

DG: Well, I was born in the Bronx, actually. And when I was about two years old or so, my family moved to Queens. I was the third of what would be four kids. So, my older siblings spent more time in the Bronx than I did, although we went to the Bronx Zoo seemingly every week. My mother, when I was a kid, took us back to the Zoo, one of her favorite places, which became one of our favorite places. And so it was Eastern Queens, fairly close to the Nassau border.

JN: And did you live in Queens kind of your entire life up until college or --

DG: I lived in Queens through [most of] college.

JN: Okay.

DG: I went to public school, elementary, junior high. What they called middle school then was junior high. And then high school. And then I went to Queens College and I majored in a number of different things over time. I started in sort of a science track but wound up as a theater major. And then took a hiatus for a little while. And while I was working, I came back to school to finish my degree, and wound up finishing it in English lit because advanced theater courses were not given at night.

JN: Makes sense. We'll get back to Queens College, I think, but I want to go back, I guess, a few years before that, and ask what were your first memories of visiting the Village? What types of things would you maybe have gone there for?

DG: Well, my father and uncle had a printing and stationery business on Hudson Street and St. Luke's Place. What was at one time writers and artists, and now is The Clam House or something like -- or The Clam. And so, when I was really fairly young, I would go with my father on Saturday mornings. He'd wake me up and take me to work with him. And I learned how to set type, and I learned other, you know, bits and pieces of the printing trade, as a kid. And my mother would sometimes drive in from Queens to pick my father up. We might have a delivery and my father would drop off stuff on the way home. And I would go to dinner with them at the Blue Mill, which is now the Grange, or maybe something else now. But I remember it as the Blue Mill.

DG: And I would sometimes on days off from school -- I think there was Brooklyn-Queens Day, or also known as Flag Day. June 14th, I would go to work with my father and do things, and run errands for him. And I may have been as young as eight or 10 years old and I would go and pick up the mail at the Christopher Street Post Office, the afternoon mail. Yes, there was more than one delivery a day for -- at least for businesses. And the Christopher Street post office was on the Christopher Street side of the [United States] Federal Building.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: Which is now The Archives and Brooklyn Fare. So my recollection of the neighborhood goes back a very long way. And I made a delivery to a tailor on Carmine Street, and the address was 81 1/2. And I was a kid growing up in Queens. We didn't have half addresses. So I was confused and I asked my father, "Where is this?" And he said, "Well, you'll find it. It'll be in sequence. You'll see. It's not anything as unusual as you think." So I did those kinds of errands on school holidays and walked around the neighborhood. And I remember the commercial enterprises were very different.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: Hudson Street, really from St. Luke's South, was the printing industry. And lots of different kinds of printers and lithographers and on Varick Street as well. And the whole West Side was based on the maritime industry. So there was shipping, there was warehousing. On

West Street, there were businesses that did repair of marine motors. Pier 40 was Pier 40, North River, at West Houston Street.

JN: That's a mouthful.

DG: So, their printing that they did was primarily focused on commercial invoices and bills of lading and shipping invoices and that sort of thing.

JN: So the two industries that were side by side were very symbiotic.

DG: Yeah. Yeah. And a lot of automotive type things too. Because there were trucks.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And then repairs for the trucks. So there were a lot of mechanics.

JN: Mm-hm. And roughly what decade of the Village is this?

DG: I'm talking about the late '50s.

JN: Okay.

DG: And early '60s.

JN: Okay. So what's happening culturally in the Village at this time? Is it still kind of pre-that shift into the folk scene that we think of of the '60s, or --

DG: Well, you know, I didn't venture into -- I stayed in the West Village. And so, it really was a working middle-class neighborhood, lower middle-class, I would say, neighborhood. There were lots of shops that catered -- I remember the Golden Rule Liquor Store across the street on Hudson Street. Which is still there, but obviously, the proprietor, Martha, is long gone. They had a screen door. I loved that because that felt like home, because we had screen doors. So not that I went to the liquor store except to deliver some sort of, you know, invoice materials.

DG: So it felt different in that it was very much a working area. It wasn't endless restaurants being the primary business. There were other kinds of businesses and shops. There wasn't the same sense of a consolidation as an entertainment and nightlife area. And shopping, high-end shopping. Because clearly, there was no high-end shopping. And Hudson Street itself, not right then, but as it started to change, became a row of antique stores. There are no more antique stores, but Bleecker Street and Hudson Street were replete with wonderful antique stores. And within them, there might be -- a local person making jewelry would have a small little place set up. And there were, you know, the other things that people needed: tailors, shoemakers. There aren't as many of those around as there were.

JN: No, certainly not. And I think we'll probably continue to touch on these big shifts in the character of the neighborhood as we continue talking. Let's see. In terms of the cultural milieu that you grew up in, whether in Queens or around the print shop, what are some things that were kind of touchstones from these pre-college years for you? Whether art, culture, politically, you know, wherever.

DG: Well, I will say that anyone who grew up in the '50s and early '60s recognized that you were learning about World War II. But it really had been a minute and a half after. And so what we learned in school, which is part of the culture and part of education, was clearly a very patriotic -- I learned in school every -- I wouldn't call it a theme song, that's not what they're called. But the songs that denoted the Marine Corps, the Army, "America, the Beautiful," "God Bless America." All of those songs were taught.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And so I grew up in Eastern Queens, a part of the neighborhood. My high school was overwhelmingly Jewish. There were certainly Italian, German and Irish students. We had very few, if any, people of color. So it was a very white community. And as I say, on the other side of the high school, there were garden apartments that I think had been built for Jewish war vets. And so, there were a lot of my contemporaries there. Their fathers had been in the war. My father was a little bit older. And my friends, they may have been the oldest in their family, and I was the third. And my mother didn't have us in rapid succession, either. So we were spaced [apart]. Every time the school took one, she had another. So we stretch a number

of years. So some of my music interests were really about hearing my older sister listening to the radio.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And radio was big. I mean, television was young.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And so, it was a very different time. And as I say, in school there was a very strong sense [of shared history and unity] -- World War II and the fight against Nazis. And of course, since it was a Jewish community, there was a great deal of understanding of the horrors of the Holocaust. And in high school, my friends and I probably saw every documentary, every horrible -- which we have, you know, really both the Nazis to thank because they cataloged --

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: -- exactly how they were going to kill all of the Jews. And then, the American and British military for then cataloging the aftermath. [War was horrible -- people wanted more innocence in the '50s.] And the music was very sappy, very innocent. You listen to some of the -- and I say, sometimes I hear some of the songs from the '50s, and I think about how the culture actually encouraged -- I don't want to say domestic violence, but sort of stalking. "Sweet 16" was very popular and when you think back on it, you know, the sexualizing of teenage girls was very much a big part of it. And that sort of reflected returning service members, and a dating culture trying to get back to some sense of normalcy after years of war.

JN: Yeah.

DG: But now that you hear some of the songs, you go, Oh, she said no. Three times.

JN: Yeah.

DG: Let go of it, you know?

JN: Yeah. But no, you're right. It is, it's totally steeped in -- but yeah. Okay.

DG: Maybe not what you expected to hear.

JN: No, I mean, now I'm just thinking of the cultural products of the '50s. Whether it's like *The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer* (1947) or, you know, *Beach Blanket Bingo* (1965), whatever. But they all really have that -- some of those same kind of gender and sexualization things going on. [laughs])

DG: They were definitely less overt than what one might hear in [contemporary lyrics] that are very explicit. But nonetheless, there was definitely that element.

JN: Yeah. And then, you mentioned, so you live at home throughout college?

DG: Yes.

JN: Okay. And then --

DG: Well, not through college, because at a certain point I took a hiatus and I left home and worked while I went to school to finish up. So I didn't exactly, because it was the '60s. I graduated high school in '67, in the middle of the Vietnam War, and got very involved in the anti-war movement in college. And that in itself, we had some semesters that were pass/fail where you dropped a couple of courses so you could do more organizing. And so, my college career stretched many extra years owing to working full-time and to being involved in anti-war [organizing].

DG: And then, you know, the women's movement, which again came out of World War II. Women went to work because they had to. The war effort demanded it, and then soldiers came home and you were supposed to go back to just being a housewife. And that's where *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan's book came out of. Women had had a taste of being out of the home. Not that there weren't women who hadn't worked outside the home. Lots of women did. But it wasn't viewed as the middle-class norm.

JN: Yeah.

DG: But women went to work, and then they weren't so happy when they were home just doing laundry.

JN: Yeah. Did you see that kind of manifest in your own household at all, or?

DG: Mm, no. As I say, my father was older and didn't go to war, though he was a civil defense warden, which I don't think was ever needed. But there was a white helmet in the closet. I don't know what ever happened to it. My sisters deny ever being the ones to take it or do whatever.

JN: And so is the anti-war movement kind of the first kind of sustained political activism that you're involved in? Or is there anything before that that you consider the spark?

DG: Well, my father was very involved in the Civic Association. He and his friends traded being the president, treasurer, secretary. And my father printed the local Rocky Hill Civic Association newsletter, and I delivered it on my bike to various households. And I learned early on, you do not put that in the mailbox.

JN: Why don't you put it in the mailbox?

DG: Because only mail, only federally authorized mail is for that. You have to put it in the door. Unless they had a mail slot in their house, because then that wasn't a mailbox.

JN: Okay.

DG: So I must have been riding around when I was seven or eight delivering the newsletter. So that really was the first political involvement.

JN: Yeah. Okay. And then, your college experience is not four years. It's kind of extended. When do you move to the Village?

DG: I moved to the village in '71, '72. Sort of like late fall of '71.

JN: Okay.

DG: And so I was working and not quite out of college yet.

JN: Yeah. What are you working at at this point?

DG: Well, I worked through college, so I had a number of jobs. I worked at the dry cleaners. I worked at a HIP center. That's a health insurance plan of New York.

JN: Ah.

DG: And they had health centers and you, I guess, were a subscriber and could see the doctors. And I did that at night when I was going to school. And --

JN: And were these all in Queens or did you --

DG: It was in Queens. It was in Flushing. So it was close to school. And when I moved out, I moved to Kew Gardens.

JN: Okay.

DG: I was in Kew Gardens for maybe a year. I worked at a gas station, because that had flexible hours and I was still in school. And then I moved to the Village. And I had a couple of part-time jobs, but then I got a job and I stayed there for seven and a half years, at Steinway Pianos. And I started as sort of an inventory manager, keeping track of parts. And shortly was elevated to a foreperson, which is to say a foreman. I kept saying, trying to make gender-neutral terms. Ultimately, I said they should just call everybody a production supervisor, because they called me a foreperson, but they still called everybody else a foreman. So I was the first female foreperson and learned a great deal about engineering, production management, management of people. It was a great learning experience. And not only was it in a factory setting, which was different from the experiences of working in an office, but it also -- people were from everywhere.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: It was an extremely diverse group of people. Many people were -- there were some generations that had worked there. It was a family company at the time. It changed during my tenure, but when I started, it was owned by the Steinway family. And people had worked for the Steinways for years and a couple of generations. And it was in Astoria.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: So I would travel, I had to be at work at 7:10 in the morning --

JN: Oof.

DG: -- from Lower Manhattan. So I would get on a number one at Sheridan Square at like, I don't know, 5:30 or something, and then take the train to Times Square and transfer to what I think was then the RR. There's so many lines that don't exist anymore. The lines exist, but not the designations. And then I'd walk from the end of the line, oh, I don't know, a half mile or a mile to the factory. And I did that for a number of years. And then, when I decided to go back to school, I had to get a car. Because otherwise you would spend all day on mass transit and never actually get anywhere. You'd get to work in time to leave for school and so forth. So, I did buy a car and I was doing a reverse commute. I was driving to Queens, then driving to Queens College, and then driving back later at night to the Village.

JN: Hm. Did you notice anything different about your commute from behind the wheel versus on the train?

DG: Well, I didn't have to leave quite as early.

JN: Yes. That helps, always.

DG: I didn't observe the early morning fights that were happening. The '70s were a rough time on the subways. And Times Square at 6:30 in the morning, five, six, 6:30 in the morning. When I would vote, I'd have to be the first one there because I only had -- I had less time to get to work. So I'd frequently help them put the voting booth together because nobody

else was there. My AD put up the curtain; I'll put the curtain up, so I can vote. And I think I learned [coming from] what had been a very homogenous neighborhood growing up -- working at Steinway was vastly different. People who had lots of different European backgrounds and people from the Caribbean. And different kinds of skills that people brought to bear. And a sense of community and doing for others that I perhaps had not quite witnessed in the same way in a more homogenous middle to upper-middle class framework was -- you know, not every part of where I grew up. I mean, there were other neighborhoods that were wealthier than the neighborhood I was in.

JN: And do you think, or what impact do you think, if any, that had on your civic leanings going beyond that?

DG: Well, I think it was a great formative experience. I mean, I understood that most people I knew spoke English and while we took other languages, we were not fluent.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: When most of the people working in the factory were fluent in English, Spanish, Italian, and they all conversed with each other in different languages. And I thought very early on that that was a different kind of being educated.

JN: Yeah, absolutely. And then I guess I am struck -- you mentioned, obviously, the Steinway factory, but also the gas station and even the print shop as kind of very traditionally gendered workplaces. I would love to hear more about your experience of that.

DG: It was decidedly a lot of non-traditional employment and experience. And working -- my language did not improve working in a factory. [laughs]) People's rather casual use of less than pristine terminology ate its way into my everyday communications. But, you know, those things -- and I think it's very good for people. When I was in high school and maybe even junior high -- when I say when I was a kid I rode my bike, I rode my bike everywhere. And I think that physical activity, and it was during the Kennedy years, so there was the President's Commission [Council] on Physical Fitness, so there was a great deal of emphasis on that. And sports. I'm glad to see it has come back --

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: -- as a thing. I'm sorry that there is insanity about transgender people, because there are not that many transgender people seeking to play sports in a gender they weren't initially assumed to be a part of. So that firestorm, that culture war is distressing. But I'm happy to see -- it was important to me. It gave me confidence. I learned teamwork. Those were things that I don't think young women in the '50s were encouraged to have. And so, I think that that's very important for also just being physically fit. I think that that has been very important to me in my general health going forward.

DG: So I think I have to laugh [laughs] at the most recent, you know, some physical fitness test being reinstituted by somebody who couldn't pass any of them. I mean, if you really want exercise, get out of the golf cart and just walk. But so I think that working in jobs that were non-traditional, learning skills that were non-traditional -- but are important. If you're going to fix something in your apartment when you can't get a hold of a super. It's important to not be afraid to use certain tools or to know how to use certain tools.

JN: Of course.

DG: So, those things were very good. And of course, I was exposed to being in environments where I had to be more assertive and push back on, you know, being ribbed or harassed or whatever. And so I think that that was, you know, in some ways, part of being formative for me.

JN: Yeah, of course. I think this is a good point for us to shift gears and fully move over to the Village. So I guess I'm deciding where to start. Whether kind of on the political and neighborhood activism level, or on the Village as a hub for queer life. And I don't think those things are necessarily separate. But I'm wondering when you first moved to the Village, kind of where do you find your home there?

DG: Well, I was living on Morton Street in a walkup. And, you know, it was different. There was no Tribeca. SoHo was still light manufacturing and artists, real artists' homes. There were still real artists there, but they were hanging on by their fingernails. So I think that the sense of the downtown scene; there was a lot of music. The people who were your

wait staff, you saw them three days later singing at a café. So there was much more of a community sense. People knew their neighbors. There were a lot more block associations that started up as people wanted to do things like some neighborhood cleanup you know, neighborhood planting. That kind of thing. The gay scene was -- there were bars, primarily.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: So that, I think, had also -- though at that point, the bars were usually Mafia-controlled and dark, dingy places. It was just after Stonewall. So it still had a Mafia element. But we weren't afraid, particularly, of being raided. The raids were over. Doesn't mean harassment was over, but the raids were by and large over. So, I didn't have that sense. Some of the people I knew had gone out of windows and stuff and had experienced that.

DG: I was very out. I came out in, I guess, '72. There was the Gay Activists Alliance Firehouse on Wooster Street. Friday night, there were women dances. On Saturday night, men. And there were Sunday afternoon -- there was a development of, how should I say, sort of social programming: panels and social events. I came out on a public affairs television program. Sunday night were public affairs shows. Now they're all on Sunday morning. But then, you didn't interfere with people going to church.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And people were supposed to be getting ready for work on Monday. So from 10 o'clock on, on Sunday night, it was public affairs broadcasting. So it was a show in 1973 -- New York Illustrated, I believe was the name of it.[1] And they came to interview the Lesbian Liberation Committee of the Gay Activists Alliance. So, the women's auxiliary. And there were a very small number of us. I don't think there were more than 10 people in the room, and half were in shadow.

DG: And I was willing to be out, thinking, Well, I have this job. If I lose it, I'll get another one. Not really being, you know, having that sort of carefree early twenties attitude of I don't have -- it's not a great job anyway, what the hell. But then I realized it was gonna show in a

[1] 1973's New York Illustrated: Homosexuals Out of the Closet.

certain amount and I had to tell my family before they learned TV-wise. And so that's how I came out. And the LLC became Lesbian Liberation -- Lesbian Feminist Liberation, LFL. I was very involved in that. And I was also a little later -- I wasn't that involved in NOW until later on, but feminist analysis of society was certainly very much a part of who I was.

JN: Sure. I mean, it sounds both like in practice and theory that is how you were living your life even before the feminist movement maybe put words to it. So at the time that you're kind of expanding your community in the Village, does this coincide with you also getting more involved in neighborhood politics? Or do these two things happen on separate tracks?

DG: Totally on separate tracks. It really wasn't until Ronald Reagan got elected that I all of a sudden said, "Oh." I always voted because that was -- I had grown up learning that that was a civic responsibility.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: So I voted and I paid attention, but I wasn't involved. And so when Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980, it became clear to me that one had to pay attention to that very, over there, that sort of not-so-pure electoral politics thing.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And I got involved with NOW. NOW had existed, but it hadn't been friendly to lesbians. In fact, there'd been the purge, the Lavender Menace of -- people had been pushed out of NOW. But then I said, "Well, you know, I'll try that." And I got involved and stayed involved in doing feminist politics at NOW and doing gay politics at Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats.

JN: I would love to hear more about either of those.

DG: NOW was a great group of young women. And they were established. They had a place on 18th Street. Quite a large office space, actually. And they had meetings and they had a hotline and did things like -- they didn't have the ability to counsel people.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: But they tried to refer people. And I learned later on that they were trying to get "member money" from elected officials so that they could hire someone part-time to train people on the hotline, and also to ensure that they had some resources to which people could be directed. That ultimately wound up how I got a little bit more interested in running myself. But LFL, there was a really vibrant, active, involvement in gay politics. We didn't have a civil rights bill. You could be fired. You could lose your apartment. You could be thrown out of a restaurant for holding hands with somebody of the same sex.

DG: And even well-meaning liberals didn't understand the sense of societal oppression. The fear of being hit on the street if you were holding hands with somebody. And, you know, I was gay bashed once. And so that was -- it's that Maslow's hierarchy of need. Which, you know, what's most important to people. Food, shelter. So those things come into focus. So the gay politics was maybe in some ways more immediate, while NOW was a little more theoretical on some level except for abortion.

JN: Okay.

DG: And --

JN: No, go ahead.

DG: And that was something that had been -- I went to college when abortion was illegal. And I want to remind people, when my mother was born, women didn't have the right to vote. It is a very recent advancement in our country. And the rollback of voting rights and other rights, we see how tenuous that can be.

JN: Yeah. Absolutely.

DG: So, being politically engaged is not just for yourself, but for those around you and those who come after you. So, that was very much something on my mind about not wanting youngsters to feel as isolated as I did as a kid. And wanting to change the laws and change society so that we didn't lose the talents of so many people. And we're back to worrying about

losing talent to other places because of policies. So politics is very immediate and very personal, and the personal is political. Feminists did consciousness-raising groups. So, I could go on about this, but I think it's your job to keep me more focused.

JN: Well, I was gonna ask, so, you're obviously very involved in different civic communities. When do you get the idea in your head that maybe electoral politics will be the way you can affect change?

DG: Well, [laughs] I was never actually sure that that was the case, but it was after the election of Reagan that I not only got involved with NOW, but I also started going to VID meetings now and again. And being more aware of those activities at the same time that I was still probably more focused on gay politics. Because we still didn't have a civil rights bill until 1986 in the city of New York. We didn't have a statewide bill until I had been serving in the legislature for 11 years.

JN: Truly crazy. And so, what was the process of figuring out that you were going to run for office, particularly as an out woman in the Village?

DG: Well, first I was involved with VID, but I was also involved with Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats, or just becoming involved. And the genesis was David Rothenberg, who had been a theater publicist. Who then had worked on “Fortune and Men's Eyes” (1967) and had his consciousness raised around reentry issues, and started the Fortune Society.

JN: Hm.

DG: And he ran for city council in 1985 -- and he was an out gay man. And so that was a real rallying cry for gay activists.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And lots of us worked on David's campaign, which was not successful. And so, that was during the Koch administration. And while Koch never admitted to being a gay man, everybody made their own assumptions. And he -- while he'd been a great liberal, he'd become more conservative. Or maybe being mayor makes it more difficult for you to, as

opposed to being a member of Congress where you're a little more an independent agent. So there was a little bit of a pull and tug, and there was a challenge to him in '85. And that was part of this movement within Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats.

DG: And then the Rothenberg people decided we would take over the Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats. And we met with some of the club leaders and they were like, "Oh, that's great. You'd like to do the newsletter. That's terrific." It's like, Ooh, that's a mistake. But okay. So one person was focused on doing that and then they suggested, 'cause I'd done some work, street work with NOW raising money and whatever. And they said, "Oh, you could put on events and you could raise money and that would be great." And I said, "Well, I don't know. I think maybe I wanna run for president." And that was like -- so in 1986, I ran for president of Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats and won. And then I was in the world of Democratic clubs. And while every Democratic club had some gay people in it --

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: -- they basically were not [that gay-friendly]. And so it was very much a constant coming out process. And I hope it's changed a little bit. But back then, you were constantly coming out in different environments and it was not necessarily what you wanted to do, but you didn't have a choice. So, I didn't think I wanted to run. I liked campaign work. I liked street work. I liked raising consciousness of the public on the street.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And then Tom Duane decided he would run for City Council in 1989. Because that was -- the municipal [elections] are on odd-numbered years. And so, Tom Duane, it was, again, a very big effort. And we fell short. We fell short, really, because of the Gramercy Park area.

JN: Mm.

DG: So the next year was some reapportionment, and ultimately we changed the lines of the district. And I ran in 1990 for the Assembly. In part because I had gone with women from NOW to see my predecessor. And the meeting, he was very nice and he was a good guy and

he'd taken on all sorts of liberal things but not been successful. But he was -- it was a generational issue. And the neighborhood had changed. And he suggested that we women maybe work on something. Not the helpline, which was helping women get connected to divorce attorneys and to maybe be able to fight for child support. But that we work on education. And I said, "Well, with all due respect, the education system at least exists. These other supports do not." And that's what we're focused on: seeing that women get help where they need it. You know, somebody else can work on education concerns. If we were gonna work on anything, we'd work on childcare.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: Which doesn't exist, and didn't exist, and still hardly exists. So, he then told us about a trip to another country where he saw all these wonderful facilities and whatever, and it just went off the rails from there. And we all left thinking, Hm. And I didn't think I wanted to run, because I had worked on campaigns for other people. And I had seen disinterest by the public, a little bit of abuse, and sort of how hard it was to be the person running. As somebody being a campaign activist, it's not you. And I saw the toll it took on the candidate and I was like, never doing that.

DG: But then at some point I had talked to some of the folks in the area about how our legislator was a good guy, but you know, kind of past his prime. And it was a little bit -- you know, I didn't think it was where it needed to be. And nobody responded. I now realize of course, nobody went and told him, "You should retire." I get it. I get it. Being, you know, years later myself, I get it. But he hadn't had primaries, I don't believe, and I have. So the people have had an opportunity to make decisions. They hadn't been given that opportunity.

DG: And I decided I would do it. And there was -- it wasn't just my decision. There were some others that we sat around in a living room and said, you know, we haven't, as gay people, we have no representation. Yeah, there are a couple of closet cases here and there, but we have no out representation. We were finally able to get the civil rights bill in New York City, but, you know, that's not enough. So, we talked about it and we talked about the realities that I probably would run and lose.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: I was going up against not just an incumbent, but he was the speaker pro tem of the Assembly. And he wasn't a bad guy. All we had was like, a major change in demographics.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And the fact that there was this desire for representation that had gone unfulfilled twice. You know? Maybe I wouldn't have run if Tom had been successful after David. But he wasn't, and so I ran. And then, the incumbent decided not to run. And then it completely changed and everybody who'd been waiting for him to retire jumped into the race. It was a very different race than we had assumed.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And so, it was -- we had to really work hard, which I did.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And every day it didn't rain, I was at a subway station, and every evening at a supermarket or a laundromat. Oh, we don't have those hardly anymore. But you know, we had laundromats. People didn't have laundries in their buildings that much. That was unusual. And so people were sitting ducks, literally, in the laundromat, and you could just sit down next to 'em and talk them up. So I did that every day it didn't rain. And I prayed for rain every night, and I was nervous and threw up [laughs]) every morning. And then I understood, Oh, that's why they, you know, the candidates, it takes a toll. Anyway, we didn't expect going into it that I would win. We would just work hard. But then I won.

JN: Yeah.

DG: And then we worked to [redistrict the council] district so that it would be possible for Tom to win, which he did.

JN: Wow.

DG: And the early days, it was still very hard. I mean, I was in office. It was in my third session that the sexual orientation, non-discrimination bill passed the Assembly. And it took 10 years to pass it in the other house, which was Republican-controlled. And we did not include -- I mean, there was some legal theory that the trans community was included, but ultimately we had to pass GENDA later on. And there was a rift. And of course, that was all on the backdrop of the AIDS crisis.

JN: Yeah. Oh, I have a lot of questions that stem from there, but I guess to stick with your campaign and the idea that kind of one appointment can really move the needle both on a neighborhood level, but also on a state level. How did the experience of campaigning and then being elected kind of change your relationship with the neighborhood?

DG: Well, it was -- [pauses] even as a very progressive community -- and I had been very involved in abortion rights, women's rights, obviously voting rights, but also environment and tenant's rights. Those had been very much a part of things I did before I was elected, and yet the whisper campaign from other campaigns was that I was a single-issue candidate. And that was true for, at the time, for every [out] person who ran in other parts of the country. That was the way we were diminished. When in fact, many of the people who ran as openly gay ran because they had been focused on, you know, the clean water issue in a particular neighborhood or community. So, it was interesting. And my pushback was, what single issue are you talking about? You're talking about my two decades commitment to abortion rights, or are you focused on my activism on protecting the waterfront from overdevelopment?

JN: Surely not either of those things.

DG: So even in a liberal area, there were -- and people did not like that I was running against Bill [Passannante], because they'd known him for years and respected him and liked him. And as I say, he wasn't a bad guy. He just was no longer focused on the neighborhood issues.

JN: And just to clarify timeline, so your work surrounding the waterfront started before you were in office, or --

DG: Oh, yeah.

JN: Yeah?

DG: Westway was underway. There was a -- the Senator. He must have been the head of the Appropriations Committee: William Proxmire.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: These are names nobody knows anymore. William Proxmire was, as I say, I think he was Appropriations. I had written him letters as just Deborah Glick, resident of the West Village, that had to do with federal transportation dollars that could be used to create a bikeway walkway without doing Westway. Like, you could create alternative transportation. Which at the time, I don't think we called it alternative transportation, I'm not sure. But I think it was -- alternative modes of transportation. Which was shortened to alternative transportation.

DG: Anyway, we didn't want commercial development [along the waterfront]. There was a $40 million payment for the right of way, as I recall, and we didn't want to pay it back. We wanted the waiver of the $40 million. And you would get it waived if you banned commercial development. I have to go back into the files. But my recollection, the big fight was the payback waiver. We wanted a waiver on us saving us $40 million. So we didn't have to pay back money for the right of way. And then we wouldn't do commercial development, but we could use transportation dollars for a bikeway walkway and the landscaping thereof.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: That was the fight. And I was not in office at the time. The fight continued into my years of service, but I had written to the Senator as a, you know, Deborah Q. Public.

JN: Civic engagement. I'd love to hear a little more about some of the, I guess, historic preservation-specific work that you've been involved in in office, since this is for Village Preservation. So whether that's, you know, thinking about the creation of the Historic District in the South Village or other things related to the River Park.

DG: I think a lot of the work was with the Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront [and Great Port].

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And so a lot of that work -- and then at some point before I ran for office, I was on Community Board 2.

JN: Okay.

DG: And so some of the local preservation issues were things that came up before the Community Board. So, sometimes you forget things, but yes, I was on the Community Board for a number of years. And that was also a different kind of civic engagement.

JN: Yeah. That didn't dissuade you from running for office?

DG: No, no, actually -- and at part of the time, I was working for Housing Preservation and Development. So I worked for the city. I worked at HPD for about two years. Not doing housing preservation, which of course -- I did in-house general services. Because again, it was a production background. And so running the mail room or overseeing the mail room, the motor pool, purchasing and that kind of thing. That's what I did, all in-house stuff. I actually didn't start at HPD. I started at what was then general services, and I was the director of print services.

JN: Okay. Got it.

DG: And print services and office supplies. So, we did things like print the building code, the electrical code. Which were done very poorly, I must say, until we got new equipment. And that was my job. Get new equipment. You're charging people for this and it's illegible. People are gonna be making mistakes. So it's like, let's get some new equipment. Anyway, I did that. Then the people from that agency went to HPD.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And they recruited me to go over there to run a bigger area of general services. So I was both on the Community Board and working for HPD, and they told me that I couldn't vote. I had to recuse myself on the votes. Which was fine 'cause I usually wasn't going to be supportive of what they were doing and -- or the way they were doing it. Maybe if they did it better, I would've been supportive. But an abstention counted as a no, so I was fine.

JN: And then, I don't know, what was your awareness of historic preservation as a movement that certainly in the Village was active at the time. I think Landmarks Law is '65, so it would've been on the books for quite a while into your tenure.

DG: Well, you know, I think -- while I wasn't involved officially in those things. I mean, Lower Manhattan was great in the early '70s and well into the '70s because all of Lower Manhattan on the weekend was a bike lane.

JN: Sounds great.

DG: Outside of Independence Plaza and the Seaport, there was really no housing. It was all commercial and on the weekend, in those days, people didn't work on the weekends as much. The Stock Exchange was closed. So everything was empty and you could ride all over on cobblestone and visit historic sites and really enjoy the city on weekends in a way that is impossible to do now.

DG: So, I feel very fortunate. The West Side Highway, the elevated highway, existed. Not in good condition, but a lot of us rode on it. And you'd ride, get up at 14th Street and ride right down to the Battery. And I was always a history buff. So, reading about the Dutch, which -- in some ways, New York has never recovered from what was totally a commercial enterprise. And the monetizing of -- it didn't start now. I mean, people feel like it just happened, but everything was about commerce. And seeing old New York and the history of Wall Street and our neighborhood as a refuge from yellow fever or other diseases, and people.

DG: And we are really on farmland. I remember when NYU was building an annex to its law school and I think it was probably the law library below [UNCLEAR?]. Their big problem was the Minetta Stream kept running through their construction. And Canal Street, and understanding Canal Street is because it was a waterway. Our history goes back to its

earlier, non-developed, more pristine nature. And then to have Greenwich Village in the early 1800s become the province of the merchant class.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: And Merchant's House, and our fight to save Merchant's House as a reflection of what it was like for the mercantile class. As opposed to all of the, you know, wonderful buildings that have plaques on them that have had, you know, successive generations of people who have no real connection to the 1800s. Architecture. Just taking walks. I never made a lot of money, so my entertainment was taking long walks and observing. And I still like that.

JN: Right. The classic Jane Jacobs view from the street.

DG: Yeah.

JN: Yeah. I think the backbone of a lot of these things is, you know, the Village changes constantly. But in a lot of ways, the architecture remains the same, the streets remain the same, but things move in and out. People move in and out. I don't know, kind of what would you identify as some big shifts in the character of the neighborhood in the time you've been living there?

DG: Well, aside from the dramatic change of all of the warehouses along Washington and Greenwich Street becoming residences.

JN: Yeah.

DG: That's one thing, but they became residences for successively more well-to-do people. And that changes the culture and the nature of the district. So we don't have as many active block associations and what the block associations were able to do. 20 years ago, the Ye Olde Village Faire, the Bedford Barrow Commerce Block Association, taking over three blocks for a long day and night. Bloomberg didn't like all of that stuff at night, so it was, you have to close up at six o'clock. Dancing under the stars to live music was a hallmark of that street fair. So I think the homogenization has been one of those changes. The shift to increasingly more expensive shops. Bleecker Street, there are very few things you can pick up for the evening.

It's just there for the tourist trade. And I understand that. I mean, change is inevitable and change is not inherently bad.

JN: Sure.

DG: And that's why it's important for us to maintain things like -- the Landmarks [Preservation] Commission should actually be worried about maintaining landmarks. And not being concerned about a very well-to-do person deciding that they can't find anything that's move-in ready for $17 million. That is the thing that is disturbing. The need to eliminate affordable housing to create single-family McMansions. That is not helpful to the community.

DG: And those people, they may be very nice people. I'm not impugning their character. But they're generally not going to participate actively in a block association. They may be happy to write a check for new tree guards and new plantings that somebody else will do. As opposed to showing up on a Saturday in, you know, dirty chinos with gardening gloves and a cup and a trowel and a shovel and planting. And that's what's changed. And that changes the nature of the community. And the concern and the institutional memory, if you will, of the neighborhood.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

DG: I mean, it is the erosion of the common good and the concern for a community. Why did you come here? Why are you here? Why did you come to this neighborhood? You see what it is. You came from somewhere on Long Island or somewhere in Westchester, or maybe you came from the Upper East Side. And you say, "Oh, I love it because there's so much air and light. And now I'd like to put three more stories on the top of this building." Well, where do you think the air and the light came from? So that -- and it's not individuals. It is a societal problem of people caring more about themselves.

DG: And that's the perniciousness of the current political climate that this top-down selfishness, cruelty, and callousness is infecting. And I use that very decidedly. I mean, one thing that we didn't touch on, and I sort of mentioned it and then we went off in another direction, but the cultural milieu of this community changed a great deal with the AIDS crisis.

JN: Of course.

DG: We lost a generation of creative artists, whether it was Keith Haring or Charles Ludlam from the Ridiculous Theater company. There was an energy and a vibrancy that we lost, and some of it was replaced with a sense of loss and depression without an immediate regeneration. I think that's changed. And I think, you know, things like the Village Vanguard. God bless Deborah Gordon, who's still keeping that going. And there are those markers. But, you know, the coffee houses that encouraged interaction. Now everybody's on a screen. Those screens are barriers. And people have to put them down. And if you want to write something, take a paper and a pen and write it down so people can see you while you're creating. So, and obviously we're on a Zoom, so I'm not a Luddite. Although I will say, I'm happy to hear that there are Luddite societies springing up on college campuses.

JN: Yeah.

DG: Because there is a recognition that as much as it opens the world to you, and you can do research -- or run down a rabbit hole.

JN: Pick your poison.

DG: There is this post-pandemic isolation that everybody feels. This sense of entitlement, I think, is a reaction to "I was deprived and now I have to have."

JN: Yeah.

DG: And I think that that entitlement is one of the things that is disturbing about the current culture and what that environment is doing. And the fact that a lot of the cultural activism shifted to the East Village or Brooklyn. And now what we have is tourism.

JN: Yeah. I mean, what is to be done about that?

DG: Well, obviously I think we have to push hard on the Landmarks Commission, because they are not fulfilling their mission. They shouldn't have to think twice about some of these proposals that come before them.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: They've always said "height is not our issue." No, it's not. But it is the visual impact of height. So is it in character? Is it in keeping with the architecture of the time, et cetera? So we have to push hard.

JN: Mm-hm.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

DG: Because there's a great deal of push that says if we're going to have affordable housing, we have to throw out all the rules. No, we don't. We've thrown out too many of the rules --

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: -- on individual variances that have allowed -- and zoning changes that have allowed for luxury development only. And we have more units now than we had before. We just don't have any affordable units. And so the fight has to be around saying yes to things that have increasing amounts of affordability. Still say no, regardless of how we're attacked on things that are primarily luxury development and out of scale. Some of what makes this community unique is that there is air and light, and we cannot sacrifice it in its heart. We may -- and we have done things on the edges. We can allow a gateway to be out of scale if we get a lot for it. We have to get a lot. We can't get BS. We have to get a lot. So that's what we should be doing.

JN: Yeah. No, thank you for that. I can't agree more, but it remains to be seen what the next couple of years hold. I do want to be mindful of your time and I won't keep you for too much longer. Do you mind if I have a couple more questions just to wrap things up?

DG: Nobody's knocked on the door. You know, the good thing about August is this neighborhood empties out.

JN: Yeah. All those parking spots --

DG: You can either get a reservation in the dead of August or a snowstorm.

JN: Yeah. No, it's nice. I mean, I'm in Brooklyn, but my neighborhood doesn't really empty out in the summer. Like, it's pretty busy. I'm in Flatbush. But then I come into downtown Manhattan, usually to go to the movies, and it is a ghost town, and I remember that that is a thing that happens. So one of the last things I wanted to wrap up on is kind of from, you know, from a historical perspective, I think. Both organizations like Village Preservation and independent historians; local historians; many, many community members, have done a wonderful job recently surfacing particularly queer histories in the Village. But there's certainly still work to be done on that, as well as just other alternate histories of the Village. One that, you know, maybe spans a little beyond the 1960s and then a hard cutoff at Stonewall. So for you, are there any particular chapters of history that you'd like to see better woven into the historical fabric of the Village?

DG: Well, I think -- [pauses] perhaps a -- I know I have somewhere at home in a folder a thing that talks about all of the literary history of, you know, who lived where. And having people know and feel that connection. And then maybe having connected -- maybe more programs connected to the literary history of the Village. James Baldwin for a little period of time was at 81 Horatio.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: Which is like, to me, a very special thing. And he used to go to Chumley's and nobody knows where Chumley's is. And I don't think anybody -- and this is not in the Village, but in SoHo -- I don't think anybody knows where the Firehouse was, and it was so vitally important. And the history of St. Vincent's as a really important place for the AIDS crisis. Yes, there's the AIDS Memorial, but I don't know that people connect that to that big building.

JN: Yeah.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

DG: And I think the history of the women in the Village, many of whom were lesbians, and some of them later in life.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: I think that's another thing that's -- there are more women who were married and had some sort of heterosexual life. And became -- were always lesbians, but didn't live that fully until the kids were out of the house or until the kids were in high school or whatever. And so, I think understanding a little bit more about that and the history of journalism. This was a hotbed of journalistic brilliance. And I think nobody -- you know, like someone said to me, "Oh, I think the *Village Voice* was over there." I was like, "No, that was -- they were over on Christopher."

DG: I think making certain -- and the Oscar Wilde bookshop on Christopher Street. Knowing some of those kinds of places that were literary, that were -- because the *Village Voice* was really important to the gay community. Really important. And Jill Johnston was particularly important as a journalist for the lesbian community. And Bonnie and Clyde's, a bar on 3rd Street, was really important to the lesbian community. We don't have much in the -- we have gay bars, but there aren't lesbian bars. Henrietta Hudson's [and Cubbyhole] on 4th and 12th.

[BREAK IN AUDIO]

DG: And then, I'm gonna go out to Fire Island this week. And the connections between the Village and Fire Island is a whole other area. And I had to explain to people in Fire Island when they needed money for the dock, I am not the representative for Brookhaven. Yes, but you're my representative. And when you have a problem on East 9th Street, you call me. But so I think for years there was this cross-pollination. Now the good news is that we don't live in one place. We were always everywhere, but now we're everywhere and out.

JN: Mm-hm.

DG: That's the good news.

JN: Yeah.

DG: The bad news is we're in some ways a little more diffuse, and so maintaining our history or what had been a real subculture is over.

JN: Yeah. And do you think -- obviously bars, restaurants, et cetera, disappearing, there's no new story for the Village. But in terms of particularly lesbian spaces, is that more of an affordability thing in the Village or culturally just a shift in the demographics of the neighborhood?

DG: I think a little bit of both. I mean, I think people go -- this may not be true for people. Because people come from Brooklyn and Queens and go to bars in Manhattan and go home at three in the morning. So [laughs]) I chose to go to bars that I could walk to and walk home from. So to some extent, I had the great good fortune to be in the Village when it was affordable for someone who didn't make a lot of money. I didn't have a fancy place. I still don't have a fancy place, but everything works better in this place [laughs]) compared to where I was. So, but I had that great good fortune. And I think it's too bad that the real estate speculation with the collaboration of the city administration has destroyed many neighborhoods, not just ours.

JN: Of course.

DG: It has undermined many communities. It has led to incredible displacement. And when I was growing up, there were homeless people, but they were generally people who suffered from substance abuse. They were not families. They were not kids going to school despite the fact that they lived in a homeless shelter. That is a disgrace. That is unacceptable, and it is shocking in a city as rich as ours. And while I say that people have come into the neighborhood -- and I wasn't joking about move-in-ready ready at $12 or $17 million.

JN: Yeah.

DG: People buy a place and then gut it, and spend four years rebuilding it because they're digging up a swimming pool in the basement. And changing what was a perfectly fine -- you can update the kitchen. You can update your plumbing in your bathroom. And you can change whatever, but to have to strip things down to the brick and have to rebuild it from scratch for your own ego. You could actually give money to help people who are less fortunate. And that erosion of the public good is, I think, a constant irritation and reminder to me when I see the amount of resources that go into really just personal self-aggrandizement in --

JN: Many projects. Yeah. [sighs] Yeah, absolutely. It, I think, has maybe never been more stark. I guess to close, I feel like we've gone on kind of a winding journey around several decades of the Village. And I'm wondering what the Village means to you now, and also maybe what participating in a project like this that is specifically about documenting memory of the Village, both in its current form and maybe in past forms. Like, what does that mean to you?

DG: Well, I'm very grateful for the opportunity to share some of these remembrances and give my take on some of the historical markers along the way. But on quiet nights when I walk around the neighborhood, I still reminisce and remember things. There was a pony ride on West 11th Street that my mother would lure me with to my father's workplace for a visit. "We have to go see dad." "Oh, can I go for a pony ride?" "Yes, yes. Well, I'll take you for a pony ride." And --

JN: The greatest parent bait in the world. [laughs]

DG: And just walking these streets and hearing the echoes of the Marine motor repair shop, that became the start of the Hetrick-Martin Institute that became a school and is now in Astor Place. And now is, you know, now just somebody's home on the waterfront. Very, very lovely. I guess I'm very happy to have had the opportunity to share some of this, because most people will not know any of these things existed and that this was a very different place and a very special time in the city's history and in this part of the city. There was a very different ethos. And the community cared about each other, and did a lot to support each other. Block associations made sure people knew their neighbors and did things collectively

to improve the neighborhood. And maybe we can, with a new generation, rekindle some of that flame that burned so brightly.

JN: Thank you. [That is], I think, very good food for thought and a message to close on. And I thank you so much for your time and candor. It's great having these memories on tape. I certainly learned some things. Yeah. Thank you so much.

DG: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

JN: Yeah, of course.

DG: And you take care.

JN: You as well.

[END OF AUDIO RECORDING]

Oral History Interview with Deborah Glick

Narrator(s)	Deborah Glick
Address	Office address: 853 Broadway, NY, NY 10003
Birth year	Dec. 24, 1950
Birthplace	Queens, NY
Narrator Age	74
Interviewer	Josie Naron
Place of Interview	Remotely - NY, NY and Brooklyn, NY
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Order in Oral Histories	58 [#3 in 2025]