

Gloria: Ok, um, you want me to start?

Adam: Sure!

Gloria: Ok. My name is Gloria McGalagly and I'm a retired teacher. I used to teach math in high school and since I've been retired I've been doing a lot of traveling and now I've come to live at Wartburg, which is in Westchester County, and I've chose to come here and live because it's near where my daughter and my son live, so I've able to see them and my grandchildren more. And I came here in March of this year.

Adam: That's fantastic, thank you. And why are you here in this class? What brought you- what really drew you to joining this class?

Gloria: Oh, well first of all I think the idea of being challenged by learning at my age is wonderful. Other than sitting around and reading silly novels all the time this is a nice challenge and also meet and work with young people. Which I love to do, I always love to do that since I taught high school and also loved being with young people and... it was so convenient! It was right here. Emily has her office right here, the classes are held across the street, and it just seemed like this is a great opportunity. And no tuition!

Adam: Excellent. Well we did talk about some music related objects and memories last time we were talking and you've brought some fabulous objects right here, could you start off by describing that one on the top please?

Gloria: Oh the one on the- this one on the top is a record album from a group called the Choraleers which is an all-female singing group, pretty large, and this was when I was in college. Well, I always sang from when I was in high school I belonged to different chorus groups and this group I joined when I was in college as I said and I loved it. We did local concerts, we also got to travel to Montreal for the World's Fair in 1967 I think and we had a couple of performances up there. And of course that was quite exciting.

[musical interlude]

Adam: What memories and significance this record brings up for you about it?

Gloria: The joy of all these friends that I had that I was able to travel with and... we sounded pretty good. I haven't heard the record in a while because I don't have a record player, but I must say we did sound good. And everybody had like a lot of respect for music. Nobody was professional, but there was still that commitment. And most of the time we memorized the music, we didn't stand there singing with sheets of music in front of us, so. And of

course, what an experience to get to leave college! I went to college, by the way, Oneonta which is a state university college in up state New York. So to go up to Montreal, that was a pretty big deal. And we had some free time... You know I really don't remember that much about what we did in the free time other than party. But I'm sure we went around the fair. You know, we did have time to do that. And then, well then we did leave there and we went down, the bus, we went on a bus. And we were up there for probably two days, something like that. And then the bus took us down to Long Island where we did some community performances, I don't remember what town we were in on Long Island, but we did some community performances and a couple of the high schools, again we were there like a day or two, and I got to stay in one of my sorority sisters- she was also in the choral group and we went to her house so we had homemade food, her mom made us spaghetti, I remember. When you're in college and don't get homemade food too much that was kind of a treat, so I do remember doing that too.

Adam: Now, I see the stack is- we've only just scratched the surface of this stack of items, now you mentioned this next one being one of your favorites?

Gloria: Oh Elvis Presley?

Adam: Yes!

Gloria: One of the first albums I purchased. I liked music as a kid-

Adam: I'm shocked.

Gloria: When records first came out they were individual, well it was a small record. There was one song on one side and one song on the other side. And you stayed there by this record player and you had to, of course, when it finished the song you had to lift the, I don't know what you call, arm I think you call it, arm with the needle in it-

Adam: You had to really *work* for your music.

Gloria: You had to work! You had to work. And then you had to turn it over to listen to the other side, you had to work the whole time. But those were the early ones. And then, I don't think this probably was the first time they came out with the big records, but it was the first for me when Elvis Presley was on the Ed Sullivan show.

[The Ed Sullivan show clip]

-Announcer: And now ladies and gentlemen, yes that's right, Elvis Presley!

-Elvis sings

Gloria: I was probably about ten years old and my parents had to watch Ed Sullivan every Sunday so we got to see Elvis which, they were outraged by what was going on on the tv but I just, I couldn't believe it, it was so wonderful. So that was like, either that was the first, probably the first big album that I purchased. And by album, now we had several songs on one side, probably there's about eight songs on each side. Again, you had to turn it over, but there was another eight to ten songs on the other side.

Adam: That's eight to ten times the value!

Gloria: Then they came out with hi-fi, a couple of years later, and that was wonderful, the hi-fi. Because you could stack records, you could stack albums on there. So you could put three or four on there, sit back, and they'd just keep playing. And I had an uncle who really liked music, not saying music that I liked, but he really liked music. So if he was going to a store to buy records, because everyone bought records back then. We didn't have CDs and cassettes and these other things, we had records. So if he was going to the store, most of the time he'd invite me to go with him. And I'd pull through and get a record and I was very happy. I have a best friend, we've been friends since I was five years old, we're still friends. And when I used to go over to her house, her father used to play music. Like really listen to music and sit down and it wasn't just in the background. And unlike my uncle that I mentioned used to take me to the store, my uncle liked heavy music like opera music. Somehow it just never did it for me. Even my whole life opera

music... My husband liked opera music, I'd tell him to go in the other room, close the door, and listen to opera music. I never liked it. But my friend's father played show tunes!

Adam: Really?

Gloria: And I was like “what is this?” you know? I LOVED the show tunes, I love them. South Pacific, he had I remember, My Fair Lady, Carousel, and I just thought these were wonderful. Somehow when that played I could almost picture the people dancing and moving. That really did something.

[musical interlude]

Gloria: Now, that was wonderful. And then I started buying those kind of albums. And then I used to love to sing. Those were the things that I would start singing with. Of course I was a ten-year-old star, you know on Broadway there, belting it out in my house. When I was cleaning out my parent's house in about 2016, I found LOTS of records. Lots that I never took, like when I got married, I never even took them from the house. And um, unfortunately, this box full of records, my father stored in the attic. And they were useless. I mean, they were so warped. These I had with me, and these were kept at an inside temperature so they were ok, but there were many of them in 2016 that I had to dump.

Adam: A tragedy.

Gloria: But the one cool thing, when we were dumping them, is my son said to me, “Oh ma, you really listened to some really cool music! Too bad we can't play these, these are really good.” I'm like, ok the kid's figuring I'm not such a square after all. Let's see, oh this one I kept because our wedding song was on it. Close to You by the Carpenters.

[musical interlude]

Adam: What made you pick that specific song for such an important event?

Gloria: It was the craziest thing in that, almost every time we'd go out in the car, go on a date or something, we'd turn on the radio and that song would come on. So it became, when we went to go pick the wedding song, it was like I guess this is a no brainer. Every time we're together, this song comes on!

Adam: It's like it's meant to be.

Gloria: Right. When our son got married, in 2004, of course they played this song for my husband and I.

Adam: So that has many important associations throughout your life.

Gloria: Right.

Adam: What do you think of when you hear that song?

Gloria: I think of him, of course.

[musical interlude]