

## **An Afternoon with Mrs. Eloise Snyder**

Mrs. Eloise Snyder smiles big and says, "I'm 94 years old, and I could talk about Malvern Hills....well....how long have you got?" She began her story by reminding us of the Sulphur Springs, the old hotel and golf course and all of the people coming here by horse and buggy back in the day. "I had some bricks from the old hotel" she says. "They were used to build a doghouse in our backyard."

"There's more history in Malvern Hills. Mr. (Harvey) Firestone built the Firestone house (44 School Road) for his two sons to live in while they attended Asheville School. The boys had a chauffeur to take them everyday. And back then there was underground wiring."

Mrs. Snyder is a life-long member of the Malvern Hills Community Club. She and her husband, Clyde, built their first home at 16 Clarendon Road sixty-two years ago in 1952. She laughs and says the cost of the property and house was \$7,840. Around 1970, "We sold the house for \$11,000 and moved to 30 Chester Place...but enough about that!" (Note: She recently sold the house to a current Malvern Hills resident.)

"So, do you know how the live Nativity Scene got started? Clyde was in the Air Force, and we were living in Washington, DC. Our neighbor took us to see a live Nativity there. Anyway, when we moved to Malvern Hills we brought the idea with us. Along with it, there was always the Christmas decorating contest every year. Clifton Andrews (47 Bear Creek Road) and Arthur Kiser (167 School Road) won the contest a lot."

"Lib Belz organized a bridge club. There were 7 or 8 tables, and they played once a month. I took bridge lessons, but I really liked to be outside. I'd wave at the bridge players while I was out with the children having fun."

"I had a Girl Scout troop in Malvern Hills. We earned our way everywhere. We went to the National Girl Scout Headquarters in Washington, DC. We stopped in Williamsburg too. We took two trips to New York. We went to the World's Fair, and Vince Lombardo danced with all of the girls. We earned enough money to take a girl from the (Presbyterian) Home in Black Mountain with us. We rode the Greyhound bus."

When asked about her best memory of Malvern Hills, Mrs. Snyder replied, "We always had good snows back then. My best memory is of sledding on School Road. One adult would stand at the top and one adult would stand at the bridge. Afterwards we would all go to the Brookshire's (125 School Road) for hot chocolate and marshmallows."

These days, Mrs. Eloise Snyder lives in Burnsville near her daughter. And, even though her home is a cozy little refurbished barn on the banks of the South Toe River, her heart is always in Malvern Hills.

*Written by Ann Clayton after a visit with Mrs. Snyder on February 25, 2014.*