

# **ORAL HISTORY**

Of

**Patricia (Pat) Maylone**  
**Secretary – Region 3 Fisheries (Retired)**  
**Fort Snelling, MN**

Interviewed by  
**Dorothe Norton**  
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Oral History Program  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
National Conservation Training Center  
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Oral History – Patricia (Pat) Maylone  
FWS Position: Secretary – Region 3 Fisheries, Fort Snelling, MN  
Interviewed by: Dorothe Norton  
Interview Date: October 21, 2004

DN: Well good morning Pat.

PM: Good morning.

DN: Good to see you.

PM: Good to see you too.

DN: It is good to see, anytime we have a retirement luncheon of somebody else we will probably see each other.

PM: yep. Yeah, any other ones too, (laughter) retirees.

DN: Okay, so first thing I want to know is where you were born and when?

PM: Well, I was born right here in St. Paul, Minnesota on October 5, 1936.

DN: Okay. So, what were your parent's names?

PM: My mother's name was Henrietta and her maiden name was Mayo, like the clinic, only, no relation (laughter) and my father's name was Donald Kelley.

DN: Okay. What were their jobs or education?

PM: My mother was a homemaker. My father was a construction worker. He worked for Local 132, the hod carriers.

DN: Okay, well that is good. So, you spent all of your earlier years then in St. Paul?

PM: Oh yes.

DN: How did you spend your early years? Did you have hobbies or like to read a lot or any special events that you would like to go to?

PM: Oh, I did do a lot of reading in grade-school and I would sit in a chair and read and I would have the radio on and mother would say, you know, shut that radio off because you are reading and I would say no. She'd say I don't know how you can do that read and (laughter) at the same time. But, you know, I guess kids do funny things.

DN: You would read and listen to music while you relaxed? I do that.

PM: Do you? Then I am not so far off the wall huh? (laughter)

DN: I think it's better than if it is too quiet, I think. Anyway, that is good. Did you ever have a job before you graduated from high school?

PM: Oh yes, as a matter of fact, I was 13 and I wanted a job so bad. They were hiring at the A&W Root beer stand as a car hop at 50 cents an hour, and this is up on Arcade and Ivy. The Johnston High School now sits there. My mother had taken me up there. He said, now you're sure you are 16, because you had to be 16 at... there was nothing like work permits then at 13 or 14. I said oh yes I am and my mother is right out in the car. Well, he believed me and hired me and I worked there 4 years all through high school. (laughter) I loved it.

DN: Well good for you (laughter) and he probably got pretty good service too because you knew that you didn't want him to know that you were way too young.

PM: At first. After I was there, they liked me very well.

DN: Did you ever hunt or fish when you were a kid?

PM: I did fish, but not when I was a kid, after I was married, but up until that point, no.

DN: So, what high school did you go to?

PM: I went to Mechanic Arts.

DN: Okay, what year did you graduate?

PM: 54.

DN: Okay. Then did you go on to a university or college?

PM: No, I got married. (laughter)

DN: You were never in the military, so, when and where and how did you meet your husband?

PM: I met him at the root beer stand. I had cousins that lived in Wisconsin and they'd come over to St. Paul every so often, they were twin boys. Well this one time they stopped up where I worked at the root beer stand and they said that they'd be coming by once in awhile to check on me and I said okay. Well, this car came by up there, lets see, I think I was a senior in high school and they waved and hollered hi Pat, and I thought it was Bob and Bill. I didn't think anything of it,

but then the car turned around and came back and a friend of my brother was with these other 2 fellows and one of them ended up being my husband.

DN: What is your husband's name?

PM: Harry.

DN: Harry. So then, where did you get married and when?

PM: I got married in St. Paul, at my First Baptist Church on December 4, 1953.

DN: Okay, so you've had children?

PM: Yes, I have a daughter and 3 sons. My 3 sons. (laughter)

DN: Oh yeah, (laughter) what are their names?

PM: My daughter's name is Cathy or Cathleen, and my oldest son is Harry Jr. and then I have Paul and then Brian.

DN: Okay. What are they all doing now?

PM: My son Harry has his own business, contracting business, he does home improvements. My daughter is a homemaker, and my middle son works a lot with my oldest son and when he isn't, he works with a friend of his at a landscaping business. Right now they are out doing yard clean-ups. My youngest son works for a title insurance company out in Canada. He is a computer nut.

DN: Oh, that is good. Okay, so now we will go to your career with, not just with life, all of your jobs. We are going to start with what was your first job, you know, State or Federal, or?

PM: Okay, the first job was, I worked for Northwestern Bell Telephone Company. I was a long distance telephone operator. I wasn't there too awful long because once you were 6 months pregnant you were finished on the job. So, that happened and so I was through there and then, oh, I was a demonstrator for Playhouse Toy Company. Then, I was at home for a few years. Then, I went to work for Standard Battery, which is, they changed the name to Mixon Inc. I was a bookkeeper there for 12 years. I got laid off and so I called my friend Margo and told her I got laid off. She had gotten laid off 3 years earlier, so I asked about Federal jobs. She told me what to do. I had to take a test. So, I was there doing the testing and they had an opening in Personnel, this was 9 months later after the testing. They got my application in Personnel and then they interviewed, in fact, Jane Nelson interviewed me. She said her boss was on vacation, but when he got back that they were going to decide, he had me and somebody else. Well, they called me and said that the other person got the job. She was handicapped,

so she, she wasn't there very long. She was a very young girl. I said, oh my gosh I thought I had a job. I mean, I had a youngster at home, and she said well, there is a job out at Minnesota valley, how would you feel about going up there? I said that's fine. She said it is only up a couple of miles away from the Federal Building. So then a couple of days later she called me back and she said, I hate to tell you this, but that job is taken, but, she said, the gal that got the job was from Engineering. She took my application over to John Ramsour, the Regional Engineer, and he called me and that is how I got started in Fish and Wildlife is in Engineering.

DN: So, you didn't know anything about it until you had talked to Margo?

PM: Right, Right. Yep.

DN: So, where did you go from there?

PM: Well, I was there for 6 years and then I put in for a position, secretarial position, in Fisheries and I got that position and that is where I retired from was fisheries.

DN: So, you started as a GS5 and what were you when you retired?

PM: 7.

DN: 7, okay. And you retired in 2004.

PM: Yep. January 23, 2004.

DN: Okay, very good. So, is it safe to say that the benefits were good with the Federal Government?

PM: Oh yeah.

DN: So you had the most opportunities then just to?

PM: Right.

DN: Did you socialize with any of the people that you worked with?

PM: Oh yes, lots of em. (laughter)

DN: What did you do for recreation when you were away from the office?

PM: Oh, maybe I shouldn't say this (laughter) gamble.

DN: Oh, okay.

PM: Went to the casinos.

DN: Oh, okay. How did your career affect your family?

PM: I guess I don't know what you mean.

DN: Well, I mean, you weren't moving from place to place?

PM: Oh no.

DN: Sometimes we get transferred from one refuge to another and all and sometimes it would make it difficult for families to.

PM: I was stationary and I wouldn't say it had any bad effects on my family. No.

DN: So, did you get any training once you started your job?

PM: Oh yes. They sent me right away for computer training. I had worked on a big main-frame, IBM System 38. I had never worked on a personal computer and I was afraid, really scared to death of that little (laughter) oh yeah, but, they are great. I have my own.

DN: Yes, I see you have your name and address here with your e-mail name.

PM: Yep, Yep.

DN: Mine is on the fritz, but, next week I have a fellow coming out to get it all straightened out. That way I can send information that I get from headquarters about anything you need to know, like next year, the Wildlife service retiree meeting will be in Portland, Oregon in September. And that should be really great. Have you ever been to Oregon?

PM: No.

DN: Oh, it is beautiful up there. Just beautiful! You'd better start saving your money.

PM: I've been out west. I've been in the state of Washington, but not Oregon.

DN: Oh, Oregon is a lot... they have a lot of roses there; it kind of reminds me a lot about St. Paul, except I don't know population wise, probably not. That is of course where region 1 is. So, we will see people that we have talked to on the phone but never met before.

PM: Yeah, right, that will be great.

DN: Okay, so, for Engineering, you didn't need any engineering training?

PM: No. I worked for Engineers. I started there as a clerk.

DN: So a lot of what you had to do was typing?

PM: Yeah. Whenever they did letters, memos or letters, they would give them to me on a disc and then I would put them on my computer and I would put them in standard form and everything and then get them all ready for them to sign. That is what I did there.

DN: Okay. You just worked the regular regional office hours? You didn't have to work overtime?

PM: No.

DN: Well good. So, your day to day duties were just mostly typing, filing, and payroll?

PM: Yes.

DN: Did you ever see any new tools or instruments that you had to use there that were different from any other jobs? Did you ever go out in the field with anyone while they were on assignments?

PM: No.

DN: So, you didn't work with any animals then either?

PM: No.

DN: Just the engineers? (laughter)

PM: Yes. (laughter)

DN: Okay. So were you ever involved in any certain projects? I mean specific one? If they were building say, like, a visitor center at one of the refuges?

PM: No. No, I wasn't.

DN: Did you ever feel there were major impediments to your job or your career, like you couldn't apply for something because you didn't think you could get, there would be too many others or anything like that?

PM: Oh no, with different ones that I had worked with there and I had mentioned I was going to put in for a position, they encouraged me and said, now be sure and put everything in that SF-171, the application form?

- DN: Yeah. SF-71. That is the only one. You're right. Well that is good. So, do you remember who your supervisors were? All of them?
- PM: I only had 2. John Ramsour and then when he retired, the 3 team leaders were the regional engineers on detail for 3 months each.
- DN: Who were they?
- PM: Jim Kelly was one. Maurine Niesen and Terry Pennaz.
- DN: Okay.
- PM: And then when I got to fisheries my supervisor there was Bob Adair. Our ARD was John Christian. Things changed a little bit there because John Christian went, or, we went to the geographic [GEO] system.
- DN: No, I was gone already, but I heard about it.
- PM: So, that kind of split up the territories. It was mixed, some fisheries with, I believe, some refuge people. It was kind of a mix-up. So, we were without an ARD for, because John Christian went on as a, we were without someone for probably a year. I believe Charlie Wooley was acting and he was ARD over there in contaminants or something?
- DN: The Ecological?
- PM: Yes. (laughter) thank you.
- DN: I don't think they've added any new divisions have they?
- PM: No, I don't think so.
- DN: I don't think so either.
- PM: And then, they did away with the Geo system and John Christian came back for a bit, but then he went on, because he was dealing with birds, the ones they were teaching to migrate? What is the name of those birds? They used like an Ultralight to get those birds to follow it like it was its mother? What was the name of those birds? Whooping cranes!
- DN: I don't know how big were they? That is something, I guess, I didn't see anything in the paper about it.
- PM: Oh, it was a big, big thing. It was on TV and everything. Anyway, they had to teach them to migrate because I guess they didn't do that. Joan Guilfoyle, you

remember her? She was in on that too. She worked in external affairs then. They would go, this person that dressed up in this suit like the bird, those birds, and it though it was its mother so it would follow and he would get in this plane and go and these birds would follow because they thought it was their mother and they would go just so far and the conditions had to be just right for them to go and they managed to get them, was it swans? They did the same procedure coming back, I guess. Oh no, the birds came back, I think one or 2 died, but it was a big thing and John Christian then became, and then Bill Hartwig asked Gary Jackson to become ARD in fisheries. And that was a big turning point.

DN: So, he was more or less your supervisor then?

PM: He was the ARD. My supervisor was Rick Schuldt.

DN: Oh, okay. Do you think any individual helped shape your career and encouraged you to go on? Sometime, we don't see people at a job and they just stay there forever. They don't care or they think that they can't do any better, but, maybe if you mentioned it to people and they said, yes to do it?

PM: When I was in engineering, there was a gal in there, she was there about a year after I came and she was a secretary there then. Her name was Heather. She was very instrumental in it and she would put in for positions and she'd be all excited you know and then, well, I'd never worked with the Government before, so, I got a lot of what I found out through her. I would ask her different things and she'd tell me. So, yeah, she was a big help there.

DN: Okay, so, who was some of the people you knew outside of Fish and Wildlife Services? Did you ever feel they'd be able to work for the service too? Like people where you used to work? Any friends or neighbors? Relatives?

PM: My one grandson was in the service, maybe a year or so after I had started fish, and he was an engineer. I tried to talk him in to that. But, I guess engineering wasn't his bag. I told him that I thought that would be good for him.

DN: Did you ever talk to people and tell them you worked for Fish and Wildlife and they said oh, DNR?

PM: Yes. All of the time and they still do that. Even my neighbor and I've been here 20 years. (laughter)

DN: Yes, I know that. A lot of my friends would say she worked for the State of Minnesota and I'd say no I didn't. It's the DNR. And I would say it is not the DNR. So, now I say I work for the Department of Interior. When I meet somebody that I haven't told where I work. They'd say you work for the Government? They would say who do you work for? I'd say the Department of Interior. Oh really what part? I'd say Fish and Wildlife Service because they just

seem to get so mixed up, and of course we work so closely with the DNR people on so many of the projects. Our refuge system has nothing to do with the DNR, you know. It is just amazing.

PM: Fisheries does with all of the states.

DN: Yeah. Have you ever stocked with any of the fisheries out in the field or did you ever get to go out and see any of them or?

PM: No, I didn't, but, all of the people that I dealt with of the clerical and the project leaders, you know, they'd have something going on up in the regional office and they'd come up and they'd stop by and see us. So, I got to meet a lot of them.

DN: Well Pat, now that you are retired and as you travel, this is one thing that we've learned to do for ourselves, I instigated it, of course, anytime I see a refuge or a fishery while we are traveling, we stop. When you are going down toward, of course it is by Omaha, The Desoto National Wildlife Refuge.

PM: Is that the one they have the buried boat?

DN: Yeah, and it promotes the most wonderful, wonderful display of what they were able to obtain because Ken Dipsinger was refuge manager down there and did all of that. Remember Ken?

PM: No.

DN: He was the refuge...I thought he just worked in the regional office. I never knew that he had been on a refuge, but because of the level it had sunk too, it was below a certain level, and the water preserved a lot of the things that were there and the visitor center is controlled heat and light and moisture and everything and it is just amazing. A lot of the stuff was glass, bottles, it is just so interesting and it's free. It is just very, very nicely done. We've stopped at some fisheries too whenever we see one. When you are traveling if you get... and they are always happy, You know, you say I'm a retired Fish and Wildlife, they are always happy you stopped.

PM: It is so strange. I used to go a lot down to my brothers who lived in Prairie DuChene, Wisconsin and I go through all of the time and I know there is a fishery there. That was before I worked for Fish and Wildlife though, I didn't know, then you get to know the names of the people too that worked there.

DM: Right.

PM: Yeah.

- DM: It is on the river, well, it is not on it, I mean, there is a lot of water there. It is very, very, interesting. So keep that in mind when you travel.
- PM: You bet I will.
- PM: Now my brother is retired, here 3 or 4 years ago, but he moved from Prairie DuChene to Siren, Wisconsin. So, I mean, he is up at the other end now. So I won't purposely be going by there, if I ever do get down there again I will...
- DN: So do you remember who the President of the United States was when you were working for us? Or who the Secretary of the Interior was? Or any of that?
- PM: I remember Molly Beattie. She is the one that died of cancer wasn't it? Yeah.
- DN: Yeah, she was pretty impressive. It seems like she had a good head on her shoulders and she had her head on straight. I can't even remember now when I started who it was (laughter)
- PM: I believe she came one time to Minnesota here and she came to the refuge Minnesota Valley. She came out there and we went and she spoke to everybody and she was quite a personable person.
- DN: Do you think that changes in the administration made any effect in the work that we were trying to get done? Like as far as the money?
- PM: Well, I wasn't that close to that part of it. Like with my supervisor and that, I know that there were times he would be quite worried, you know, but, it really didn't touch me.
- DN: Who do you think some of the individuals were that might have helped shape the service into what it is today? Any special names that you heard about a lot? Because they were doing so much or people like that?
- PM: Well, I know that fisheries ARD Gary Jackson has, for fisheries. We had been without an ARD for so long and then we only had a couple of people, biologists, and so let's see, when I left there were 5 and there was a student that would come in and I guess he was going to keep one of those college students that they get. They intend to go into that field. He helped a lot there. He also got started this booklet called Fish-Lines. I was in on that and Dave Radloff was. Dave would do all of the computer work and pictures and that and then he would give it to me and I would take and put the booklet together and we had 230 people that we sent that to. Washington, all of the State Directors, everyone that .... And in the Fish-Line it told what was being done on the different fisheries and so the work was getting out.
- DN: It was kind of a special project then.

- PM: Yes.
- DN: Now since you have been retired, have you gotten the refuge one that they do?
- PM: No. I didn't know that they did one.
- DN: Yeah. It comes out twice a year or something.
- PM: Fisheries was by the month, but I know that when I left there, they were going to do it in the wintertime semi-monthly.
- DN: Now when you filled out your papers to retire, did you check that you still wanted to get information?
- PM: Oh yeah.
- DN: Okay, then you will. Jerry Grover who is in Portland, he has everybody's e-mail addresses so you will get information from him too. He sends e-mail to people telling them of any of our past employees who have passed away and if there is somebody you know you can send a card to the family or, he is very, very busy and very good. He is part of a group that gets the meetings together. This year, the Law Enforcement meeting was in the last week of April.
- PM: At NCTC?
- DN: Yeah, and the other one, that was at NCTC also, but they had to have the last weekend in April. So, next year, Law Enforcement will be in September. I think that will be a good thing that they decided to do because it gets to be kind of expensive too, course, I flew out for the Law Enforcement one and then Jackie Westberg and I drove out for the other one. Did you ever get to go on the training center?
- PM: No.
- DN: It's wonderful.
- PM: That is what I heard.
- DN: It is like being in a sanctuary. You don't hear any planes going over and there are nice walkways that are all paved, and there is lakes... it is beautiful. It is very beautiful. Did you work when Bonnie Shires, was she still on the region or was she already transferred to?
- PM: She was here a very short time and then she went, yes.

DN: Now she is head of Personnel. I think so. She either got married or is getting married now. Okay, so what do you think the high point of your career was? Did you ever get a special award or anything that made you feel really good?

PM: Not long after I was in fisheries, well when I was in fisheries, they had been without a secretary for, oh gosh, over a year. I mean the filing was piled up and it was a different filing system than what I had had in Engineering. That was all contract folders and files, but in fisheries it was different. So, John Leonard helped me a bit there because I would take the different documents and he would tell me where they went. Then I had a list that told me where these different folders were and what particular name they were under so, I was able to find them that way, but oh boy. And then, they had some folders that were to be sent out, I believe to the partners, and it was a big, oh, a big thick manuscript, so I started going through this and I found spelling mistakes and different things and they had 5,000 copies of these. What I had to do was go in the computer and find out where who ever it was that had done these, had them and correct the spelling and different things and then I would have to run a copy and change them in all of those manuscripts. I got a big award for doing that.

DN: Well, I bet you did. That is great.

PM: I didn't mind that at all though. When I was in grade school, I had a very good English teacher that taught me very well, so.

DN: I agree with you Pat, because for me, I would go and get the Regional Director Signature and I didn't ever want to say that you have misspelled words in it and I know that a lot of people, not necessarily in Law Enforcement or even in Fish and Wildlife Services where I worked part time after I retired, they would hear a name and if they don't know how to spell it, they would spell it how they think it is and never check.

PM: And that is wrong.

DN: To me, that is the only thing that you personally have that is yours and yours alone and I have always said, be sure you get correct spellings on these names. I think that is appreciated by other people.

PM: Oh absolutely. Like I said, my maiden name was Kelley with an E and I tell you, you could tell people, and like my name now, Maylone, people call me Malone and it is not. So, you're right there. You do want to pronounce.

DN: I know my maiden name is Glypson and you'd be amazed at how many people don't spell it right, you know. It is Goods, they put Guttz, they put 2 n's it is not good and it is, you have to, I tell them to you know, that be sure if you don't know how to spell something that you ask or you look it up, but, please, work on doing that, you know.

PM: I am a big believer in proofing, you know, having someone proof. When I would do a memo or whatever there in fisheries, Lynn, oh, she was great with me, I would get something done and I would give it to her to proof for me and she did a real good job with that. You do it no matter what it is. You know, if somebody else goes over it they can find what you have looked at over and over and over and never found. So, proof reading is a very good thing.

DN: I could tell at your party, that you did a very good job for them and they were very appreciative of that. I think that is so important. You get a good secretary or assistant, whatever you want to call them, if they are doing good work, you get to where you really depend on them for that. You know, and it is important. Okay, well, did you have any low point in your career?

PM: Maybe when I was laid off from the job I was on before I went to Fish, but, I kept telling myself that there was a reason for that. Something better will come and it sure did.

DN: Well that is good. Okay. So, did you ever have any dangerous or frightening experience when you worked for Fish and Wildlife?

PM: Well, I did one time here maybe 2 years ago or so. They had a fire drill. I can't do a lot of walking so, I was to stand in the hall with all of the other disabled people. It was really scary because nobody came up to see how we were or anything. I mean, we didn't know that there wasn't a fire or, and out of that we found that the phone that they had by the elevators there where we had to wait was locked. You know, I mean, it didn't work. Peggy Nelson from OHR came along and she says I will go down and check for you. So, she went down and came back up a little bit later and anyway they found out that there was nobody to come and check on us. It was really a frightening experience. You see, they got on that and out of that came, they got a bench that they put out by the elevators for those of us who can't stand very long, they could sit during that time, and they also got this chair so that if need be, it is a chair, and it doesn't matter your size that 2 people can get down the stairwell. You can't walk down, it is made for that. It is a heck of a thing. Yes, that is what came out of it. Yeah.

DN: So, your low point turned out to be some better points.

PM: Well, I mean, it was frightening standing there and not moving. You know there were 5 of us wondering what was happening. There were so many people gone because it happened about 3:30 in the afternoon. Some people went home at 3. So, it was bad, but it turned out okay.

DN: Well, we will go from the dangerous and frightening to the humorous. What was the most humorous thing that you can remember?

PM: Well, this might not be really funny, but I guess when you look back at it, it could be. A couple of years ago, shortly after this fire drill thing, they were giving flu-shots. Our office decided we would all go together this particular day. So, we all did. We went down stairs, it was down in the conference room down on the lower level there, and we are standing in line waiting and all of a sudden all of the lights go out. They were working out in the front of the building. They cut the cable so all of the power went out. I mean it was really dark. You couldn't see or anything. I mean, just lights out. I kind of staggered through and got in to the cafeteria because there were windows, you know in the back there, but, you couldn't go out that way, you know. But, they sent everybody home that afternoon.

DN: Well, we are getting down to the end here so, you notice any changes in the services like in the personnel or in the environment or anything?

PM: No, I don't think so.

DN: Where do you think that the service is heading in the next decade? Do you think it will just keep going on the way it has been or do you think there will be any changes?

DN: If you don't know that is okay too, I mean, I don't follow that closely.

PM: Well, to keep, I think fisheries because that is the office I was in. I think they will do better and better things. I really do.

DN: Well, that is good. Well Pat that is about it, so I want to thank you so much for the time. You did a very good job and I thank you so much. I really appreciate this.

End of tape