

Interview with Annis Holmes March 18, 2005

This is an interview with Annis Holmes of 24 Theriot Avenue, Chestertown, New York. This interview is being conducted on March 18, 2005 at her shop, 24 Theriot Avenue, Chestertown. The interviewer is Mary Beth Scafani representing the Town of Chester Library "History Through Voices" project.

MBS: Just tell me again, where you were born and raised, mainly?

AH: I was born in Rutland, Vermont, on a farm and I went to a school in what they call Mill Village school; is where I started to go to school, and I was there until I was in the fourth grade and then my father bought a farm in East Dorset, Vermont. We moved down there and I went to school there until I was in seventh grade and then my father had a stroke which incapacitated him so he couldn't run the farm. So we went from that farm to my grandfather's place in Pittsfield, Vermont and that is where I finished grade school, eighth grade, and then I went, next year, and started Bethel high school, and I was in there for three years and due to my father's sickness and all I wasn't able to finish school, cause it was like going to college back then, We had to board ourselves in Bethel. We had to live there during the week, and go to school, my sister and I. And the students hired a room during the week and we had cooking privileges and stuff to get our meals in the ladies kitchen and then we had a place where we slept and studied. It was like going to college today, only instead of a dorm, there were no dorms at the high school, a lot of the students had to board out, you know, but that was the only way we could do it.

MBS: And how old were you when you were there?

AH: Oh, we were sixteen, seventeen.

MBS: You mentioned you had a twin sister.

AH: Yup, we were in school together and she didn't graduate, either, on account we had to help care for our father. But then she went into nursing, LPN, back then all you had to have was two years of high school to go into this nursing. And it was in Brattleboro, Vermont she went. She graduated from there.

MBS: Did you have other brothers and sisters?

AH: Oh, yes, I had three brothers and two sisters, two, besides Alice, but one of them passed away; she was a blue baby and my mother took care of her, and she didn't pass away until she was nineteen.

MBS: Oh, my goodness.

AH: Yes, she lived to be nineteen.

MBS: Now, what is a blue baby?

AH: Well, they are born with a heart defect.

MBS: Oh, ok.

AH: And very seldom, back then, they would live.

MBS: Your mother must have done a fine job.

AH: She was a great nurse. And my sister graduated from grade school with her heart condition because I had three brothers and the one sister older than Alice and I, and they'd bring the work home to her. And then take it back to school. My mother would help coach her.

MBS: She was a home schooler.

AH: She was; then she did needle work for something to do; she could knit, crochet, embroider.

MBS: Oh, my goodness.

AH: Yup, and I was three years old when she passed away; I can just barely remember her. Yup.

MBS: Wow, and did your brothers help out on the farm?

AH: Oh, yes, my brothers stayed on the farm until they got big enough to go out into the world, which is about eighteen years old; and my oldest brother went to a business college in Rutland, and the next brother took a home course for diesel mechanic and then he, after he was married. See there is twelve years difference between my youngest brother and my twin and I, and they were like uncles to us.

MBS: So he would have graduated from diesel in about 1920

AH: Oh, about 1927, 28 and then my youngest brother was a farmer; he was a milk peddler for his father-in-law, (laugh) up in Rutland. He had a big milk route.

MBS: What kind of farming did your father do?

AH: Cattle

MBS: Dairy?

AH: Dairy farmer? Uh huh.

AH: At one time when he lived on that farm in Rutland he had one of the best Holstein herd in the state of Vermont at that time.

MBS: What kind of memories do you have of the farm and your childhood there?

AH: Oh, my! It was a big farmhouse and of course us girls, we had to share in some of the farm duties; like feed the horses and feed the calves; we had to train them to drink out of a pail.

MBS: Oh, and how old were you when you were doing this?

AH: Oh, we were probably twelve, thirteen, oh yes. And drive horses in a hay wagon, oh yes. And we had to ?hawk , calk? The hay, they called it, and get it ready so my father could pick it up and get it on the wagon. You know pile it, they called it? hawking? Calking?

MBS: Is that like raking it up

AH: Well, it was raked in a wind roll and then you took your pitch fork and you rolled it, the wind roll, to make these piles so they could pick these up with a pitch fork all at once and put it on the wagon.

MBS: So everyone had a job.

AH: Oh, everybody had a job, oh, yes, but my mother used to say to my father, which was funny, “You got those girls out there in the barnyard, but I will put my foot down if you make them milk cows.

MBS: She didn’t want you to.

AH: No she said “NO, the girls are going to come in the house and do a little fun.” (laughing) so we never did learn to milk.

MBS: So your mother taught you things?

AH: Oh, yes, she taught us to sew, knit, cook; we were taught how to live, keep house and do things, oh yes.

MBS: Did you have responsibilities in the house?

AH: Pardon??

MBS: What were your responsibilities in the house?

AH: Make beds, change beds, do the dishes, “which ones going to wash today?” (laughing)

AH: And we would have to take turns, oh yes.

MBS: And was it your mother who taught you how to knit, got you started?

AH: Oh yes, she did everything, she even used to make all our clothes and sometimes she could just take a piece of newspaper and she'd lay it on us and cut out a pattern and make our clothes that way

MBS: Oh boy, so she made all you clothes?

AH: Oh yes, everything.

MBS: Did she spin her own yarn, by any chance?

AH: No, she never had a spinning wheel, but her mother had one. And it did come into our family. My oldest sister had it and it was stored in the attic. Well, the attic had a little ???????? over the kitchen, I remember, over in Pittsfield and there was a door from the woodshed, which was attached to the house, and there was a ladder there and somebody went up that ladder and got in that little door and stole that spinning wheel.

MBS: You're kidding!!

AH: Yes, my sister was appalled. Never could figure out who could do that.

MBS: And you never got it back?

AH: Never knew where it went.

MBS: Oh my goodness!

AH: It was a good sized one. I guess my mother knew how to spin, probably, cause her mother did it.

MBS: What is one of your fondest memories from your early childhood?

AH: When my father first bought his first car, and it was a Dodge sedan and that was quite a thrill. On Sunday, after church, he'd go for a little ride, but not to far because we had to get back by four o'clock to milk his cows.

MBS: I see. So, when was that, what year about that he got his first car?

AH: Oh...that was when we lived in Rutland, maybe in 1927? It was the year of the flood, the big flood, really took a lot of the lowland around Rutland down toward Bethel. It really ripped through.

MBS: Did that affect you at all, the farm?

AH: No, it wasn't near our farm, but there was a lot of them that had damage down around East Dorset that land was lower, but Rutland was damaged quite a bit, too, cause there was a river run through that too, it was called Mill Village, the river runs through that, can't remember the name of the river.

MBS: When you were boarding at high school, what kinds of things did you do for fun?

AH: Study!

MBS: (Laughing)

AH: And then if there was a pageant of some kind in the high school. One time it was a contest. They had us high schoolers get-together and, my sister could sing, and I was learning to play the piano at the time, and so she had a song that she loved to sing, Clarice+ was the name of it, can't remember the words. Anyway, we took first prize, she sang her song and danced around the stage. That was the only highlight we ever had in high school. (laughing) Of course we played volleyball,

MBS: Volleyball?

AH: Oh, yes. She went out for baseball, soft, girls weren't all that active in baseball as they were in volleyball in high school.

MBS: So you did play volleyball?

AH: Yes

MBS: That's quite a vigorous sport.

AH: Yes it was and we only had a little few minutes because we had to out the school grounds by a certain time after school and then we had to walk to a place where we lived and from then on it was study, until we went to bed, that was it.

MBS: Did you do outdoors sports in the wintertime?

AH: We tried to ski onetime, my father got us some skis and it was just plain straight down hill. It was nothing like today. We went sliding, and we never had any skates other than our feet so we would shovel off a little pond that used to freeze over on the farm and skate with just our feet.

MBS: Slide around?

AH: Oh yes slide around, fall down.

MBS: So, it doesn't sound like the skiing effort went too far?

AH: No there was nothing, um, it was just something we tried; if it succeeded maybe you could with it but we didn't get that far.

MBS: What was summer like?

AH: Working, feeding the chickens, gather the eggs; and go after the cows when it was milking time, get them in down in the barnyard, and my father had us? treading? -hay when he put it in the barn so we had to pack it down so he could put in more hay. That was our exercise.

MBS: Did you have family parties, picnics?

AH: Oh, yes, we used to go sometimes. We were in the 4H club at one time too, and we used to have some of the meetings in our house and we had a schoolteacher. She was excellent. That was in East Dorset and she had a radio. Radios were kind of rare then, but she had one and for music we had to go Friday afternoon from school down to her house, which wasn't too far, and sit on her floor and listen to opera music. She was trying to get us out of the routine of ordinary music into the opera and stuff. And it wasn't really the big band era, Walter Damerush (?) was the conductor of that orchestra; he was very famous as I remember. We had to learn the names of each so that if we heard it, yes that was one of the music courses we had.

MBS: Do you like opera still?

Ah: I enjoy it. And I like what they have on TV now, channel 17 -----Irish singer, -----oh, very good, did you ever hear of him (her)-----

MBS: So she instilled in you a lifelong interest in opera?

AH: Oh yes and I took music lessons, My mother had an organ but my but my teacher had a piano and she had a daughter, her only child, and she wanted her to learn right, but she wasn't to enthused about it. So she asked my mother, when she found out I was learning on the organ, cause my mother was teaching me at that time, she said send her up and maybe if my daughter had some companionship maybe she'd take to the piano better. So she did, and we used to pay duets together. My mother was a teacher at one time.

MBS: So when did you meet Mr. Holmes, the lucky Mr. Holmes?

AH: Oh my, he was in the CC camp in 1930, 1932, He was stationed in Reading, Mass and when he came home we were allowed, we lived in Pittsfield at the time, we were allowed to go over the bridge to the dance hall, right in sight of my mothers house. And that is where I met him, on the dance floor. My mother let us go over that bridge to the dance hall.

MBS: What time did you have to be home?

AH: The dances then were 11 o'clock, it started about 7 until 11, and that's where I met him.

MBS: Was it live music, did they have a band?

AH: Oh, yes, they had a violin, guitar, piano and a drum, a four piece band, so we learned to square dance, the fox trot, I never did learn the Charleston, that was before my day, but my older brothers and sister learned the Charleston.

MBS: And they didn't teach you in the house?

AH: My youngest brother used to come over to see my mother, he lived in Rutland at the time and come over on Saturday night and come to the dances with us. He was a great dancer so he taught us some. He was about 12 years older than my sister and me.

MBS: Did you go to the church in town?

AH: Oh yes, it was a Congregational Church and we were in the choir, and Sunday school. And we used to help with the suppers, wait on tables, and that stuff, you know.

MBS: So you met Robert Holmes at the dance? And how long after that were you married?

AH: I was almost nineteen when we were married. I went with him off and on when he was home, he would always come and get me and we would go to the dances after we got acquainted. Well, he didn't phone, cause they didn't have one, but we did. And he would stop by and say "You going to the dance with me?" He was the only boy friend I ever had.

MBS: He must have been special.

AH: Or else he couldn't find anyone else!

MBS: Did you marry before your sister did?

AH: Yes, and after she became a nurse, then she got married. She married an Italian from Mass. She still lives down there, not in the same town, she lives with her daughter, because her husband has been gone a long time.

MBS: What year did you get married?

AH: June 19, 1937

MBS: And where did you live?

AH: Indian Lake. After he got out of the CC's he went to work for his brother in Indian Lake for the ?Ward? Lumber company, so I went from Vermont to Indian Lake as a bride.

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MBS: So that was your first home in the Adirondacks?

AH: Yes

MBS: How long were you in Indian Lake?

AH: His job moved down south this way and then when Bill Ward gave up the lumber business up there he went to work for Ken Murphy, above Friends Lake, and he used to be woods boss, but then he became a sawyer. His brother was a lumber sawyer and they were short of sawyers during World War 2 and Bob was 1A listed to be drafted and of course he thought he was going in the Army or something wherever they were going to put him; and this was after we had our first child, and I know he was planning what he was going to do with me while he was away. Well, I could go home, my mother was a widow at that time and he went to work one morning and the boss said to him, "Well, Bob, you are not having to go in the Army. I went down and got you and your brother deferred because I need you to run that saw mill, to be lumber sawyer, because we can't find the men to do what we did to. He had to prove that it was necessary. Well, at that time they were sawing out boat material, you know, boats for the Navy, so, he got deferred through that.

MBS: And that was up around Indian Lake?

AH: Well we lived down here on Friends Lake Road

MBS: So you moved in the early 40's to Friends Lake Road and he was working in the sawmill here?

AH; He was first a log roller, they called them, with his brother at first, and then the boss wanted him to go in the woods and run the woods crew, so he was transferred into there, and then when they were short of lumber sawyers, they looked to him to learn it because he had been in it all his life and so he did. He sawed for about twenty-five years.

MBS: And all that time you lived on Friends Lake Road?

AH: We moved down here in the village to Foster Flats Road, behind the dentist. We lived there and then every where we moved, they sold the property, so finally my husband said, I'm going to build me a house, so he bought this land here, he sawed this house out. We worked together and finished it. This was in 1944, cause Karen was born after we moved here she was born in '47, we finished the house in '46, so we could move in and we just worked on it ourselves. We just hired the plumbing, the electric, the basement stuff and he did all the woodwork.

MBS: You got your hands in there too?

AH: Oh, I pounded as many nails as he did. When we put the sheet rock up, when he got home from work, he had me help him do the sheet rock in the ceiling, he put a few nails in it and during the day, in between taking care of my kids, I climbed up the ladder and pounded nails and finished nailing the sheetrock. I was fun.

MBS: What was life like as a young bride and homemaker in the '30s and '40s?

AH: Oh I just kept my house and took care of my kids. And then I joined the Rebecca's Lodge, an auxiliary to the Odd Fellows; it was in the building next door. That used to be the Odd Fellow Lodge. And my husband was a past master, he joined the Masons. I never joined the Eastern Star. I had my kids, and my Rebecca work, and of course I joined the church down there and between church and lodge, that was my activity. My husband went into the Masons, he was a past master, and he was also a 52-year member of the masons in Chestertown. He joined in Pottersville, but then they all went down to Warrensburg, that's an active lodge.

MBS: There never was one in Chestertown?

AH: No, Pottersville and Warrensburg.

MBS: And then you were in the dressmaking business?

AH: Oh I was in the dressmaking business when Bobby was a baby, about 1947 and from there, when we got up here, I started my yarn shop on the porch. I opened that and then I put in fabric and stuff. And then it moved into my dining room, and I said, I'm not going to live inside a store, so one night we were down her, this was his garage and workshop, and we were packing meat for the freezer, cause he bought half a carcass of beef and he was looking all around and he said, Well, you want to move your shop, I will build a garage and get out of here and I will fix your shop. He said, well, draw your blueprint and I will try and follow it. That's been how I got my first business, that was a good business.

MBS: Was that dressmaking?

AH: Dressmaking, alterations, knitting, everything, sewing patterns, everything to go with the knitting, everything to go with the sewing, quilting, zippers, thread. It was like a little department store.

MBS: That must have been convenient for this town of Chester.

AH: Oh, this town needs one like that, and after my husband died, the girls, some of the girls that like to knit, said put in some yarn.

MBS: Who were your customers?

AH: The local people, and it was from them coming in saying, do you have this, do you have that, and when I had people coming in and the same thing was asked for several times that I said, well, I guess this is worthwhile trying and I would stock it. That's how I built this shop, from the customer's requests, mostly.

MBS: What other stores were in Chestertown at that time?

AH: Well, there was Fisher's store down there, and then there was a Archie Meade had, I think it was Firestone where the bank is. Well he carried tires, dishes, a hardware store combined. In fact when he sold out I bought their cash register and I still use it. a National Cash Register. That's a real antique. I don't know, he said he bought it second hand, I think if anyone can lift it, on the bottom is a piece of paper with the date that that machine was made, if it hasn't fallen off, you know disintegrated. I can't lift it because it weighs a ton. It is awful heavy. It counts my money, it does the job. I make out slips because it doesn't do tax, but I have to do slips to prove my tax. so that's no big deal.

And when the snow mobile craze first came in and Austin Smith had the dealership, Janie came up and said "Annis, I have so many people coming into my store asking for knitting patterns for snowmobilers, she said, "its time you wrote a book. I said, I don't know how to write a book, she said, yes you do, and I pondered about it, and this is my first book.

MBS: My goodness, **Snow mobile Fashions**

AH: And I had to get 18000 copies to get the price of the book down so that people would buy it. And I sold all that first 18000 in about two years. Boom, boom, boom. I really went to town with that book.

MBS: And this was in 1969?? Now, how did you go about publishing it?

AH: I did it myself. Baker printed it for me; I typed it all out and did the layout and my husband did the photography.

MBS: Very professional looking.

AH: It was and I wanted to get a second run and he had destroyed all my transparencies. So I never got a second run and so, after my husband passed away, my kids thought I should have a computer. I said I don't think I could hack that. They said, Mom, you are going to do it. You go buy a computer. And I have one of my grandsons, he is a computer person, he takes care of all the computer problems in Cobleskill Hospital, that's his job, and he picked out my computer and brought it to me and got me going. And he showed me how to print my book on the computer, so this is my own printing. So I print some at a time. I have written four books. My customers, after I got this one out, started asking me for a family knitting book of just plain classical stuff for men, women and children. So they could make the same sweater for Daddy, for the girls and their mothers, so I put out that basic, and that's still going strong.

MBS: Now do you have someone publish that or do you do that yourself?

AH: I had Baker publish that. I did all the publishing, but Baker did the printing and I made up graphs of hobbies and things. I did all those.

MBS: So what usually decides what you are going to do, what people ask for?

AH: People ask for it; they say, we need this, we need that, so I study the companies books to see what they have, because I don't want to put out something exactly what they have. So I stay with classics. Those books are good forever. I've got people writing to me now, I had a letter a while ago from California, and she said I have had five of your basic books and I have worn them all out. She said I need another and I need an extra to give to my friend whose borrowing my book.

MBS: How far away has your ever-sent one of your books?

AH: Australia, I used to send to Europe once in a while, England and then they were looking for old fashioned mittens, like double knit mittens, and trigger finger gloves. So I made up this mess, and my husband took that picture of our granddaughter.

MBS: He was a good photographer.

AH: He was. He did it as a hobby, but the printer picked that picture for the cover because that pattern is in that book. Adirondack Life came out with a picture of these old fashioned mittens, but the generation from this generation came to me because the acrylic material came out and they didn't want to use wool. But you have to use pure wool to do that method because it will mat and stay in; the acrylics will fall out, so they said, Annis, make that stitch so we can knit it out of acrylics, so like this is my way.

MBS: Now what were buff? mittens used for?

AH: It was the river drivers, the woodsmen. Here a bunch of them That picture is from the Blue Mountain Museum, from there. These mittens are from Blue Mountain Museum This girl worked at the time at Blue Mountain Museum, when they wrote this article, I know her, McIntosh. And here's a family with the mittens on. History and how to for the heirloom hand warmers. So this is Katie Cross, from Johnsbury, and she is well known for making these. And she got killed in an automobile accident and so that was the end of her line, but there are a few women left who are as old as me or older here in the Adirondacks, who still do the mittens this way. But you have to use pure wool. I use pure wool in my because I like it but you can make my way out of acrylic and it will not shift, you can't pull it out. So they asked me to make that stitch so they could make it out of acrylic or whatever. And as I was making it I thought that stitch could be adapted to more than mittens so that's why I put in my book, hats, sweaters, slippers, everything.

MBS: Has the book been a big seller?

AH: Well, a lot of people seem to be afraid to try it, but it's not that hard to do, and if you are a knitter and do Irish knits, you certainly can spend some time doing that. It's a little more time consuming, and I teach that. I signed a contract to go up to Sagamore on Racquet Lake this summer, I was up there last summer, to teach this. And they want me back. I am going if I am able. Blue Mountain called me. I've been up there twice teaching this. So they want me up in September, I think it is. We didn't set a date yet, but September or October would be the better time to do it, because people are getting into the knitting. Sometimes they sell those books up there, in their gift shop.

MBS: Oh, you are quite a celebrity.

AH: Oh I don't really call myself that. I did it for a living.

MBS: You were telling me the story about the man who came that wanted the sweater custom made?

AH: Oh, should that be in this. Would he come back on me?

MBS: You don't have to give his name.

AH; This gentleman came in and he saw that little sweater I had, that Buff knitted sweater, and he says, "I'd like one of those". But he says, I'd like slash pockets and I'd like the sleeves with zippers on them so I could zip it out of the body part and wear the body as a vest. And then he says, "Well, you could line it". And I thought about it for a while and I thought, Oh dear, that's an awful lot of work, my material, I could see the price of the material going up and he says," do you have any idea of what you would charge. He says, now don't short yourself. So I said, how about \$500 and he said, I'll pay it. It took me two months to make that sweater, steady knitting.

MBS: It was a big size?

AH: Oh, a 52 chest, and he was over six foot tall. He was a big man. And when he came to pick it up he said now you have to make me a pair of mittens. He was very thrilled with all his buff stuff.

MBS: You are knitting all the time?

AH: I do order knitting, Right now ----- tentatively its is sold, but I'm not sure yet because she wanted to have it for a Christening and I'm two-thirds done on it and I have to finish it this weekend and maybe she will take it and maybe she won't, cause I had said I didn't know if I had time to do one. But it is two-thirds done and it will sell if she doesn't show up.

MBS: What are you most pleased with that you've knitted or designed?

AH: I don't care what I knit, just as long as I knit. I crochet, too. I teach both knitting and crocheting.

MBS: What's the most unusual thing you have ever knitted?

AH: It's the buff stuff. It's the most unusual knitting in this day because people are curious about it and I have run an ad in the Adirondack Life for my book. It keeps me in the news. I used to run ads in McCall Needlecraft, Vogue Knitting, but it got so expensive, I couldn't do their ads.

MBS: You seem to have a very good business sense

AH: Well I felt I had to help my husband support us, the girls both wanted to go to school and college; both girls won scholarships; my son is a barber, he graduated from -----Beauty School in Albany. He has his own shop on Central Avenue, Albany, still cutting hair. And my oldest girl was a nurse, she specialized in the operating room; she retired a couple of years ago but they won't leave her alone. She and her husband go to Florida in the winter; he's a retired mechanic from the state and so they have a fifth wheel travel trailer, summers they're home in ?Central Bridge? And winters they go to Florida. Well they have a place in Tampa, you know a RV place, where they park their trailer and she joined that nurses traveling association. So she has a nurse's license for Alaska, Nevada, Florida, and of course, New York State. So she got called back in this winter, into the Tampa Hospital where she knows the nurses, and they are trying to train nurses for the operating room and it is very hard, and they were short of help, so they called her and said, Ada, could you help us out? She said, well I am officially retired, but she said I'll help you out, so she works three days a week, but they are like ten-hour days, some days twelve hours. She said I'm getting to where I can't hack that, so many hours. And then my youngest girl, who was teacher in Schroon Lake School. Then she got married and moved to Las Vegas, because he has a sister out there, relatives, and he took her out there on their honeymoon and she got sold on it. She loves it because they don't have to shovel snow.

MBS: Did you do any traveling?

AH: Bob and I we had a camper and a truck, a small camper and we drove out there a couple of times and we flew out there when her husband was living. And I have been there since her husband passed away, which he passed away in November and my husband passed away the following February. She works for the city of Las Vegas, in the Finance Department. She wouldn't teach school out there. She tried it, but she said there was only one school that she would teach in out there, cause she subbed for a year. But Schroon Lake liked her, She was a young teacher, but they said she had very good discipline, kept her kids busy.

MBS: Did you do any other traveling besides going out west?

AH: Well, we've been to Prince Edward Island, Canada, and camping around here. It's great camping. And before he bought the camper he said he was thinking about buying a cabin or something on a lake, but he said it's a lot of work and it won't be where I can keep my eye on it. But if I get a camper I can store it in my driveway. That was his idea.

MBS: How many years did you have the camper?

AH: Probably ten, twelve years up until he wasn't able to get in and out of it, then he sold it.

MBS: Didn't you have a shop in another location?

AH: No.

MBS: But you gave up your shop?

AH: O, I sold that first shop, it was down here it didn't survive. That was in the "90s. I was sick so much, and when this couple came and asked to buy it, I told my husband about it, and he said you might want to get rid of it. You're in Glens Falls Hospital more than you're home. So, I hated to do it, but I sold it. And then he was busy making Adirondack furniture, that's what kept him busy. That was his highlight, making that Adirondack furniture.

MBS: It was in the 90s when you sold this?

AH: They moved it from here up to Potterville. They were there a while in her mother's store, and then they moved in back down here in a house on Riverside Drive. And they moved it into the theatre building and that was the end of it.

MBS: So here you are in business again. How did that come about?

AH: Well, I was here selling my husbands furniture, and I kept my knitting book business and my knitting for something to do, and so that's when the girls said, come on, Annis, time to put some yarn in, and so we don't have to go to Glens Falls. That's what started me in this little bit. And I asked my doctor about it, and he said, sure, but play it low key. So that's low key.

MBS: Well, there is a lot to do with a shop.

AH: Well, in this town, this community needs one, and of course since I opened up, they seem to think I have fabric like I had before, but I can't handle it. Most fabric bolts weigh twenty pounds. I can't pull and haul anymore.

MBS: So you are in full swing with the knitting business.

AH: That's it and I enjoy it and my kids are glad. It keeps me going.

MBS: I notice you have very regular hours.

AH: I do, and my regular hours I try to keep, and if anybody can't make the regular hours, I take appointments and I can let them in. That's the best I can do.

MBS: Well, I think you have done a marvelous job. Are you planning any new books?

AH: No, I haven't made anything on my books, to tell you the truth. I have all this inventory left over, and it costs so, probably my children will unload this mess. At least in my will, my oldest girl is very adaptive, and now since she is retired maybe she will take it over. Of course she would have to move it, and she lives in Florida in the winter, so she may just sell it out. I don't know if any book dealer would buy out my inventory or not, but those books can be used forever. You can't go into a flash style, mod style, and all. It's only seasonal, but you get the good basics, and there is always a call for good basics, and I kept them classic and basic.

MBS: I think you have found a great many good secrets.

AH: Well we have fun in our knitting classes, and down in the library, I was teaching there too. Saturdays, to help Kim out, and then Kim said they love you, and I said, well you can come up to the shop and chat anytime. So that's why they like to come here.

MBS: The changes in Chestertown, have they been-----? (Talking over each other)

AH: Well, you see, it off and on cycle with handwork. All of a sudden everybody is doing rugs, all of a sudden the majority are doing needlepoint, and the knitting got pushed aside there for a while. Now it is back, bigger than ever. But of course it's on little stuff, like scarves. I sold more scarf stuff than I ever did of this. This doesn't go now. The scarf stuff. It's a cycle, every ten years your styles change and they revert back ten years. It's a cycle thing.

MBS: Has Chestertown changed itself since you first came her?

AH: A lot more building around. Not really, it's like one big family. Everybody knows everybody and is helpful to each other. And is very friendly place to live. I have always been happy here.

Tape ran out.

