

NAME

Mead-Sid-and-Beth-Jun-28-2000 side A.mp3

DATE

October 6, 2026

DURATION

46m 23s

3 SPEAKERS

Roger Leonard

Sid Mead

Beth

START OF TRANSCRIPT**[00:00:03] Roger Leonard**

This is Wednesday, June 28th, the year 2000. And I'm talking with Sid and Beth Mead at their forum. So the first question I wanted to ask Sid was, when your family first came to the area that you're aware of.

[00:00:22] Sid Mead

Well, my father. Was born in Greenwich, Connecticut. And they. He lived pretty much as a teenager up until at least a teenager there. And his father had a farm on the, on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound. And he started work when he was 16. His father died and he had to come back and run the family business and. He soon got into renting and building houses.

[00:01:17] Beth

This is the grandfather.

[00:01:19] Roger Leonard

Well, this is your father's father.

[00:01:20] Sid Mead

Yeah. And he he disposed of the farm that way out of Greenwich. Was just beginning to be a suburb of New York City. I mean, people were the affluent people were able to move back and forth, and transportation was just being developed. I suppose this must have been 18, 60, 70, somewhere in there, maybe 80. He was Nelson. Oh, he was Nelson Bush. And I our our friend George was from Greenwich, and I would imagine there was probably a connection there at some point. I don't know what it was. Yeah, yeah.

[00:02:11] Beth

Yeah. Because they were all when we.

[00:02:15] Sid Mead

I, I've almost never been to Greenwich. We had Nelson's Uncle Nelson's ashes in turn there, and it was just unbelievable. Every third, second or third stone was mead. Mead. Mead. I mean, they were just really my father said that half the registered voters when he was a kid, had the surname of me, and they didn't think anything of marrying third cousins because, gosh, I mean, there was nobody else to bury.

[00:02:55] Beth

So your grandparents were third cousins?

[00:02:57] Sid Mead

Yeah, they were third cousins.

[00:02:58] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:02:59] Sid Mead

Well his father, as he sold things off there he reinvested in land up in In New Milford, New Preston area of Connecticut. And I suppose he assumed maybe the same thing would happen there, but he didn't begin to live long enough to see it. And he died when I was five years old.

[00:03:32] Beth

Grandfather.

[00:03:33] Sid Mead

Anyway, my father worked as in a paper, a wholesale paper firm, same as her father did when he first graduated from college. And he worked for a year and decided he couldn't support himself that way.

[00:03:56] Roger Leonard

Where did he go to college?

[00:03:57] Sid Mead

Yale. And he said that if he was real, real careful and Took advantage of the free meals that beer joints provided. He. He might be able to save up to a dollar by the end of the end of. He might have a dollar left at the end of the week.

[00:04:24] Beth

And it might have been a. Depression.

[00:04:27] Sid Mead

Well, wages were low. That's that was the the that was the way it was. And I don't know just why, but that's the way it was. I suppose, but anyway. He decided that he, he wanted to go into some type of farming and I guess he picked apples and So he went back to college, he went to Cornell and he took the two year course that, that they didn't allow at that time because they, they allowed it for him because he already had a bachelor of arts degree. And, but although he partially grew up in the country, they didn't consider him a farmer. And so he had to work both summers on viable apple farms. And he chose Peter's farm, which was Geiger's farm. And he worked there one summer. Yeah. Right. What was it? What was his name? The son was Roscoe.

[00:05:51] Roger Leonard

Was it William? Bill?

[00:05:54] Sid Mead

Will. Will teeter. Oh, gosh. Maybe I'll think of it sometime. But I may have.

[00:06:01] Roger Leonard

To.

[00:06:01] Sid Mead

Look that up. It may have been Will. Yeah. Yeah. And that's how he became somewhat familiar with the area, how he the first time he came here.

[00:06:11] Roger Leonard

What brought him to upper Red hook? Why did he choose that for him?

[00:06:14] Sid Mead

Well, yeah, it was Wiltshire. Wiltshire. He he was he was renowned

[00:06:24] Roger Leonard

He was known in Cornwall and.

[00:06:26] Sid Mead

Well, yeah. And, and in the, apparently in the, as far away as Connecticut. And Will teeter wanted him to buy what I knew as the Hefferman farm, which was just south of his property. What's now the development a deer run that I don't know, you're familiar with it. It's just north of Spring Lake Road, and the Heffernans lived there for years. When I was younger. And it I think my father made a good choice in not buying that because it's a bunch of rock. But anyway and he, he met my mother at a Grange meeting, apparently, as I hear the story.

[00:07:28] Roger Leonard

At the upper Red Grange.

[00:07:30] Sid Mead

Yeah, the former church building.

[00:07:33] Roger Leonard

Right.

[00:07:34] Sid Mead

And I don't think he went too long after that, but apparently that was maybe that's where young people went. Yes, apparently. I don't know, but the he he told me that he he picked up the First World War. What was that? Not malaria, but the disease that killed so many people. The flu. The flu. So he caught the flu on the ground.

[00:08:07] Roger Leonard

Really?

[00:08:08] Sid Mead

And that would have been. That would have been before he was married. They were married in 1920.

[00:08:16] Beth

But he bought this farm before that.

[00:08:17] Sid Mead

Oh, yeah. He bought the farm in 1916. He worked here. He worked for Will teeter, I think, the summer of 1914, 14. And then he worked at a farm down on the Connecticut coast called Conyers in in 1915. But then he. And then he bought this farm, which belonged to Elmer Boyce, I believe.

[00:08:52] Beth

Yeah. We have papers in the attic.

[00:08:57] Sid Mead

And part of that story. Oh, well, my mother at that time her parents had the house that was Herbie Supports.

[00:09:14] Roger Leonard

And it was owned by the Nelson family before that.

[00:09:19] Sid Mead

And he he was a lawyer.

[00:09:23] Roger Leonard

Now, your mother's name was Faye Kennedy. Yeah. And what was her FAY? Right. And what was her father's name then?

[00:09:34] Sid Mead

Her last name was Kennedy. I I have it somewhere.

[00:09:43] Beth

It'll come to you, probably.

[00:09:44] Sid Mead

But anyway, he got he was a lawyer, and the story She told was that he was on the board of a company, and they hired a new president. And the president had the same name as Kennedy, and he didn't want anybody else in the higher up to have that in in his business to have the name of Kennedy. And so they got him what? They got him a comparable job. Well, this other firm didn't do well. And I don't know whether it actually went broke or not, but it didn't do well. And he didn't have an easy time of it. And he got, he went into teaching, you know, you can't do anything else. You teach.

[00:10:42] Beth

They lived in Westchester, didn't they, at that time.

[00:10:46] Sid Mead

I don't I don't know that it wasn't. Yeah. It was Westchester. They it was The New York no the first one out of New York. Not White Plains.

[00:11:06] Beth

Oh, yeah. This one down.

[00:11:07] Sid Mead

Yonkers. Yeah. Yonkers. This is what I'm trying to say.

[00:11:10] Beth

He probably commuted into the city.

[00:11:13] Sid Mead

Well, he got he got a position teaching in a in a college down south somewhere. Not sure where that was Carolinas or Tennessee or where. And he went down and she was supposed to follow grandma Kennedy was going to go down later when he found a place and this and that got settled. And in the meantime, her mother became ill, a great Grandma Jones. And so. Grandma Kennedy felt she could not go. She had to stay and take care of her mother. Well, by the way, she died, and the next year, she was ready to go down with him or come after he got settled. And he never asked her to come. And this must. Well, and my mother had a younger sister. I guess she was quite a bit younger. I don't really know what her the aging was, but. And she was her father's favor. So I hear the story until her younger sister died. And then this was transferred to my mother. And when she. Told him she wanted to get married. Why? He was very upset. Why? You've had a college education. You've got a good secretarial job in the city. Why on earth would you ever want to get married? And really hit the ceiling, or appeared to. And he finally said, well, he says, if you. If you get married, I'm going to divorce your mother.

[00:13:18] Beth

Isn't that nice?

[00:13:21] Sid Mead

And she did. And he did.

[00:13:24] Roger Leonard

Really?

[00:13:25] Beth

Yeah. Well, you see, Sid's mother and father. And then he divorced his grandmother.

[00:13:31] Sid Mead

Well, I he Grandma Kennedy never contested the divorce, and mother always felt that he knew that the divorce, his divorce was not legal because it had never been contested. And that was the law that you had to contest it. And every case had to be contested at that point. It isn't. It's no longer that way. But it was then. And so he never he lived in in Chicago, and he never came back into New York State because he married again. And he was a lawyer, and he probably knew that he might be up on bigamy. Well, anyway, the kid's mother never I don't know whether she communicated with him. She must have some, I guess. But we never met him at all. Except for my older brother when he was in the service in Second World War. And he happened to be traveling through Chicago. So he looked him up and spent a meal with them. You know, that was all. But there must have been considerable bitterness. I mean, there obviously was. He was doing very poorly during the depression. And he wrote Grandma Kennedy and asked her to reduce the alimony. She would. She wouldn't do it. She had none of it. So.

[00:15:20] Roger Leonard

Now, your father and mother met at the Grange Hall. And then where were they? Married?

[00:15:25] Sid Mead

Well, I assume.

[00:15:28] Beth

She was a Methodist.

[00:15:30] Sid Mead

Yeah. They were Methodists before they Yeah.

[00:15:33] Beth

His mother's family?

[00:15:34] Sid Mead

Yeah.

[00:15:35] Roger Leonard

So they were.

[00:15:37] Beth

Oh. Maybe they married down there someplace where she was connected to a Methodist church or.

[00:15:42] Sid Mead

I don't know, because she she spent weekends here for several years.

[00:15:48] Beth

They lived down one story. She.

[00:15:50] Sid Mead

She rode horseback. She had an accident. The horse fell and pinned her leg under the horse. And somebody, I forget now who it was, helped her, got her out, but she. She had some. I mean, she was around locally. Before they. Yeah. I guess before they had the house, they were over on the mill pond, that big house north of I think it's north of the mill pond. They had that, that farm for a while. He sold that. But so I I never knew my grandparents. I was five years old when my other grandfather died.

[00:16:41] Beth

But you knew your grandmother because she.

[00:16:42] Sid Mead

Oh, yeah. But I knew I knew both grandmothers. Right. Grandma Kennedy lived with us. I guess after she traveled for the first year that they were married, and then she moved in here and she would always read to us. And in the evening, one child, usually one child at a time.

[00:17:04] Beth

She that was nice.

[00:17:05] Sid Mead

Because.

[00:17:05] Beth

She had a big family. Yeah.

[00:17:07] Sid Mead

And she did the she helped. She did much of the gardening and wash dishes and things like that.

[00:17:23] Roger Leonard

Yeah. When were you born?

[00:17:26] Sid Mead

I was born in 1924.

[00:17:29] Roger Leonard

Okay. And then tell me, your sisters and brothers.

[00:17:35] Sid Mead

Well, my brother was he was the first, and he was born.

[00:17:45] Roger Leonard

In his name.

[00:17:45] Sid Mead

The G.

[00:17:47] Roger Leonard

Gordon Junior and the G stood for George.

[00:17:50] Sid Mead

And he arrived about eight months after they were married. And mother was always very embarrassed about that.

[00:18:01] Roger Leonard

People always counted in those days.

[00:18:02] Sid Mead

Oh, yeah. Yeah. And

[00:18:07] Beth

My he was early.

[00:18:09] Sid Mead

My sister was Elizabeth was next. And

[00:18:18] Roger Leonard

And she was always called PPIs.

[00:18:20] Beth

Yeah. Yeah.

[00:18:22] Roger Leonard

They were. That come from.

[00:18:23] Sid Mead

Liz.

[00:18:24] Roger Leonard

Oh, really? Yeah.

[00:18:26] Sid Mead

There were other Elizabeth's in the family, and they were called Liz or Lizzy. And PPIs hated that. And somehow somebody called her PPIs, and she thought that was a lot better. And it stuck. She still called it.

[00:18:43] Beth

That's right. Yeah. She still called.

[00:18:44] Sid Mead

Yeah. And she's about two years older. Just over two years older than I am. And

[00:18:55] Beth

But she was closer than that, like, a year and a half.

[00:18:59] Sid Mead

Well, I guess you're right. I guess she's just.

[00:19:02] Beth

She's 77 this year.

[00:19:04] Sid Mead

Yeah, she's her birthday is in June, and mine's in September, so it must have been a year and three months.

[00:19:12] Beth

Or.

[00:19:13] Sid Mead

Two months, something like that. And then.

[00:19:16] Beth

His mother was busy.

[00:19:18] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:19:18] Sid Mead

Rachel was next, and she was a little over two years. Or was it under.

[00:19:30] Beth

Oh, it doesn't matter.

[00:19:31] Sid Mead

No, she's about two years younger than I am.

[00:19:34] Beth

I think her birthday was in June, too.

[00:19:37] Sid Mead

And then there was a fifth who was mentally deficient. And she lived with us until she was, oh, 12 or so, and then she was institutionalized and spent most of her life at Wassaic and was later moved up to Walden or Wilton. Wilton?

[00:20:07] Beth

She just died?

[00:20:08] Sid Mead

Yeah, she just died several years ago at 65. So.

[00:20:15] Roger Leonard

And Rachel died when she was.

[00:20:18] Sid Mead

30 years ago.

[00:20:19] Beth

She was only she 42 or something?

[00:20:22] Sid Mead

Yeah, she was 42. Yes.

[00:20:24] Roger Leonard

She was with two small children.

[00:20:27] Beth

Three.

[00:20:27] Roger Leonard

Three small.

[00:20:28] Sid Mead

Children. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:20:32] Roger Leonard

So tell me something about the early days growing up in upper Red hook. What was it like growing up on this farm? They were already here at this farm when you were born? Oh, yeah. You never knew any other home, right?

[00:20:53] Sid Mead

Yeah.

[00:20:54] Roger Leonard

So what was it like growing up here?

[00:20:56] Sid Mead

Well, it was like a farm.

[00:21:00] Beth

That's all I.

[00:21:00] Sid Mead

Knew. I had the usual small kid problems. I can remember falling in the drop in the barn, and one time I fell through a second story floor in the chicken house. Or I fell from the hayloft above, through the. Through that. Into the chicken house and scared the heck out of those chickens.

[00:21:28] Roger Leonard

Not to mention what it did to you.

[00:21:29] Sid Mead

Yeah, I wasn't hurt.

[00:21:31] Beth

But you must have bounced.

[00:21:32] Sid Mead

I was I was scared.

[00:21:35] Roger Leonard

I guess.

[00:21:36] Sid Mead

And then I fell off. I was riding a horse. I fell off a horse broke my arm and a few things like that. I spent eight years in school across from the church.

[00:21:54] Roger Leonard

Yeah. Tell me about the school. Who were your teachers?

[00:21:57] Sid Mead

Miss Jick was the first one. She was from Rhinecliff. And Henrietta Fraley was the the upstairs teacher.

[00:22:17] Roger Leonard

And downstairs, which were which classes? And upstairs were which classes?

[00:22:23] Sid Mead

First floor downstairs. And the second floor. Four were upstairs. Oh. Then the the fourth year it was

[00:22:33] Beth

Sally.

[00:22:34] Sid Mead

Sally. Sigler.

[00:22:36] Beth

Yeah. I remember you telling me about that.

[00:22:39] Sid Mead

Yeah.

[00:22:40] Beth

Yeah. She was still here when I.

[00:22:42] Sid Mead

And Rachel lost her. She got glasses, and she was quite young. She must have been. I guess she must have been third or fourth grade. And she lost them. And they couldn't find him anywhere. And she wasn't very popular around here with with her father for a while for that. And when the school was closed there, when we centralized Sally Sigler bought the piano that was downstairs. She was having it tuned. And inside the piano, they found Rachel's glasses.

[00:23:27] Roger Leonard

And how many years later was that?

[00:23:29] Sid Mead

Oh, it was I. It it must have been 5 or 6 years later, something like that, because Rachel was in the first Class that went all four years through the new centralized school. But Sally Zeigler was the teacher, and she remembered those classes were.

[00:23:54] Roger Leonard

And nobody noticed that the piano kind of plunked a little.

[00:23:57] Sid Mead

I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. We we there was a kitchen in the in the back of the school, but we didn't have hot lunches once in a while, they'd have one hot dish or something, but there was no nobody really to do the cooking or anything. And we usually took our lunches. And when the weather was decent at all decent, the we go out and sit on the south side of the church.

[00:24:37] Beth

On the wall.

[00:24:38] Sid Mead

On the well, on the Or right at ground level.

[00:24:41] Beth

Right.

[00:24:42] Sid Mead

On the south side, and the sun shined down and keep you warm. We ate our lunches there and we played in the cemetery. We oh, we we the I guess the sheds were gone. The sheds that ran along the Star Barrack Road. Right. They, they.

[00:25:04] Roger Leonard

Two different locations.

[00:25:06] Sid Mead

Well, they must have been removed before I started school because I can remember them, but I don't ever remember playing with them. And our parking lot was, was the ball field a baseball diamond?

[00:25:22] Roger Leonard

Who were some of your friends?

[00:25:26] Sid Mead

Well the, the Lewises were, were my closest friends.

[00:25:35] Beth

Jim and John.

[00:25:35] Sid Mead

Jim and John Lewis. They lived over on Wales back.

[00:25:39] Roger Leonard

And then Elizabeth married John.

[00:25:41] Sid Mead

Yeah. Yeah. Well, that was a different that was a different John. Oh, that's a, he was a he was a cousin. First cousin.

[00:25:49] Roger Leonard

Oh, okay.

[00:25:50] Sid Mead

Of that one. Yeah. And

[00:25:55] Beth

The Buckley's Buckley girls.

[00:25:58] Sid Mead

Oh, yeah. The the redder girls are girls. Oh.

[00:26:00] Beth

Excuse me. Redder girls.

[00:26:03] Sid Mead

Alice was a contemporary of Elizabeth, my older sister. They were. They were in the same grade. Right along all the way up through. And we played hockey together. And you're on our pond. Yeah. Edmund and Henry, redder. And the who were, who were cousins to Alice and anime and and Edith Edith was older. It was. It was Alice, an anime that I played with. Yeah, the one we visited in in Alaska. Yeah.

[00:26:54] Beth

Yeah. What her name was.

[00:26:55] Sid Mead

Oh. Oh, Mary.

[00:26:57] Beth

Oh, yeah. Mary.

[00:26:59] Sid Mead

Yeah.

[00:27:02] Roger Leonard

What was the typical day like at school? That school?

[00:27:06] Sid Mead

It was a typical it was a typical day, I guess, but I spent I, I didn't do any work. I just sit there and listen to the teacher teaching the other grades. And most people did that. I mean, they, they talked almost continually. They had to because they had four, four grades.

[00:27:30] Roger Leonard

So you learned.

[00:27:32] Sid Mead

Well.

[00:27:33] Roger Leonard

Before you even got to the grade.

[00:27:34] Sid Mead

I, I learned some of it. I didn't learn grammar. I missed a lot in in seventh grade, I guess. I was sick and also had went to Florida for a vacation with a two week trip I guess. So I must have missed 30 days of school and I never learned to diagram a sentence or anything like that. Just it's just isn't there. And I never, I never learned to spell.

[00:28:14] Beth

People don't diagram sentences very often in life. Yeah. Yeah. But you but you basically know good grammar because you heard.

[00:28:23] Sid Mead

Well, my parents spoke.

[00:28:25] Beth

Yeah.

[00:28:25] Sid Mead

I spoke good grammar.

[00:28:26] Beth

Yeah.

[00:28:28] Sid Mead

Sit down. And Eddie Payton were the bullies at school when I was there.

[00:28:34] Roger Leonard

Oh, I'll have to speak too soon.

[00:28:37] Sid Mead

But we still. We played with them. We used to play down at Sid's a lot. Yeah. His I wasn't too careful, I guess, when I was smoking and his mother Must have seen me. And she very nicely sent me home. And I said, oh, I don't have to go yet. Well, then she told me in no uncertain terms to get the heck out of there.

[00:29:14] Beth

How old were you then?

[00:29:15] Sid Mead

Oh, I was I don't know, I was young. I was seventh or eighth or sixth.

[00:29:22] Beth

What were you smoking?

[00:29:24] Sid Mead

I don't remember. We used to smoke anything.

[00:29:27] Beth

Anything.

[00:29:27] Roger Leonard

You can get your hands on.

[00:29:29] Sid Mead

Corn, silk. We couldn't get anything else.

[00:29:31] Beth

Okay. Oh.

[00:29:34] Roger Leonard

Yeah. Tell me about the church. What was what was going on there? Who was the minister or the minister? Well, French.

[00:29:42] Sid Mead

French was the first one that I remember.

[00:29:47] Sid Mead

I was pretty small when when he came and he was there quite a while. And David was a good friend of mine, too. We we played together a lot. He was at the reunion, right? Quentin Moore, Quentin and Ivan Moore. Quentin. Quentin was at the reunion two. The first time I'd seen him in 50 years or more. And he lives right out there in Elizaville.

[00:30:21] Roger Leonard

Oh.

[00:30:21] Beth

Yeah.

[00:30:23] Roger Leonard

Where did he live at that time?

[00:30:25] Sid Mead

On Star Back Road. The first house. The house on the corner. They had a farm there.

[00:30:33] Sid Mead

Small farm.

[00:30:36] Roger Leonard

Do you remember Chester McCann?

[00:30:38] Sid Mead

Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. Well, see, he came after French, I think, directly after French. Yes. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Oh. One of my. I remember one early impression in school. I was around Christmas time. I don't remember how old I was, and they showed. I suppose I must have been upstairs the fourth or fifth or sixth, something like that. And they showed a painting of Christ on the cross, and he was big, you know, life size on the. They showed on the on the wall or on screen, and it was half blood at least. And I, I had an awful time with it. I. Nobody had told me that crucifixion was the common way to. The ordinary way to treat people in that day for almost any wrong. And I wondered why they picked on Christ, you know, to crucify him, do such a horrible thing. And I had an awful time with it. It was in color and realistic, I guess, and and too big. And we didn't go to many movies once. I mean, if the I bet in grade school, I didn't go to three, three movies in the whole four years.

[00:32:19] Sid Mead

As I recall, we had a, a small milk route in upper Red hook, and each customer had their own set of two pails And on the. When my mother took the kids to school in the morning. Every week one of the kids had to deliver the milk around the upper village. And we took turns. I mean, one week would be my week and then I wouldn't have to do it again for 2 or 3 weeks. And it wasn't wasn't much of a job, but and then when we all finished with that school and my father sold the milk route and they used usually ma came and got us after school too, because she didn't want us walking on route nine. Too much traffic. It had well, it had it was the main route between Albany and New York. There was no thruway and y there were accidents continually. I can remember accidents lots more than there are today. For. For the number of traffic. I. As I remember, there were. They were just continuous.

[00:33:46] Roger Leonard

And do you remember when the road was straightened when route nine was straightened?

[00:33:52] Sid Mead

Well, this would have. It was done in in 1929. I was just a very. I must have been five years old before I started school. But I used to have to ride the school run sometimes. I guess if grandma wasn't around or something, because they wouldn't leave me here alone.

[00:34:14] Beth

And I was before you went to school?

[00:34:16] Sid Mead

Yeah, we had a a dodge like a suburban, only it kind of had isinglass that you rolled down on the side. No heater. And on the way home one day we hit the battery store. Somehow or other they had a police dog and of course mother stopped and went in to see what you know to report on it anyway, and left me in the in the in the car. Boy, I got so cold. There's no heat or anything. And I probably wasn't dressed for it because it was just a short run. In fact, it may have been even before the milk route. It may have been just a trip to take the kids to school because I don't remember when he started the milk room.

[00:35:13] Roger Leonard

But now, how did you two meet? You could take turns on this.

[00:35:24] Sid Mead

Well Dorothy Hayes Was Beth's aunt and Dorothy Hayes.

[00:35:37] Beth

Freeborn. Oh, I remember her.

[00:35:39] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:35:39] Beth

Yeah, she was memorable.

[00:35:41] Roger Leonard

Yeah, yeah.

[00:35:42] Sid Mead

At that point, she lived over on nine G. And her husband was the bursar at Bard. And we had long since sold our milk route. But my mother had a few cream customers, and I guess they had. Dorothy heard about the. Mrs. Mead sold cream, so she investigated and she became acquainted with my mother. And I guess I had met her. She knew who I was because she had been here, I guess. And then she got Beth a job at a summer camp at To.

[00:36:31] Beth

It was over at Ford Manor.

[00:36:33] Sid Mead

At Ward Manor. They had.

[00:36:34] Beth

A.

[00:36:34] Sid Mead

Summer camp, and her. She got me a blind date with Beth and.

[00:36:48] Beth

It's still going. I was wondering if. It doesn't.

[00:36:57] Roger Leonard

So you got a blind date?

[00:37:00] Sid Mead

Well, that's how it started. Yeah. It took a while. It was five years before we got married. From the time I first were careful.

[00:37:15] Beth

No, I wasn't. No. I went to college in the meantime, and I was a bit restless, you might say. So where.

[00:37:22] Roger Leonard

Did you go to.

[00:37:22] Beth

College? Well, I went to Green Mountain and then I went to Skidmore. You know, Green Mountain was a junior college at that time. I graduated from Skidmore College. I wasn't ready to get married and settle down.

[00:37:34] Roger Leonard

You went to college?

[00:37:36] Sid Mead

Well, I started at Cornell. Cornell and I just completed one term there. And then it was either. Go in the army or come home and and work. And I had already decided I wanted to farm. My father was short of help, and we had one in the service anyway, so they didn't think there should be another one.

[00:38:07] Beth

But I think Sid has said that he always felt kind of cheated because all the young men were going off to war. Oh he was.

[00:38:15] Sid Mead

Oh, yeah. Yeah. But the other side of it is I'm alive.

[00:38:23] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:38:23] Sid Mead

Right.

[00:38:24] Roger Leonard

Right. So what did you study best?

[00:38:28] Beth

Oh, I majored in sociology. Took a lot of English as well.

[00:38:35] Roger Leonard

Yeah, well it shows. So then you decided to get married?

[00:38:42] Beth

So then we.

[00:38:44] Roger Leonard

Did.

[00:38:45] Sid Mead

Well, her father didn't think much of her marrying a farmer.

[00:38:48] Beth

No, he. He wanted me to. My father always wanted me to be a secretary. And so when I got out of college, I looked around for a job. And I couldn't find one in the city at that time. It was so hot, you know. I was walking around. I remember you know, at that time you had to wear a girdle. And I remember I melted one, it was so hot. But anyway, that was my experience job hunting. So I kind of gave up and went to secretarial school. But I mean, my heart wasn't in it. And I just had a terrible time with the, you know, the shorthand. This is this is the pits. I just couldn't do it. So then I did get a couple of jobs not doing that. And then we got back together and we got married and I. Oh, well, he, he wanted me desperately to, you know, be a secretary and to live down there. And in fact, which was on Long Island. And in fact, he offered Sid and me the upstairs of their house.

[00:39:53] Sid Mead

Yeah.

[00:39:54] Beth

We were going to get married.

[00:39:55] Sid Mead

He got me a job in his firm.

[00:39:56] Beth

Yeah. That's right. He wanted it to be a businessman. He wanted me to be a secretary, and then everything would have been just normal. Yeah, but I don't think I was ever. I don't think I ever did the things that he hoped that I would do. So. But anyway, I think he got reconciled. Well, he had to get reconciled to it after a while.

[00:40:15] Sid Mead

Oh, especially the grandchildren.

[00:40:17] Beth

Oh, yeah. Oh, they they doted on grandchildren. Especially my mother.

[00:40:22] Roger Leonard

Where did you come from on Long Island?

[00:40:23] Beth

Well, I grew up in Springfield Gardens, which is in Queens. And then the family. When I was in college, the family moved to Hewlett, which is in Nassau County.

[00:40:32] Roger Leonard

Yeah. And what did your father do?

[00:40:34] Beth

He was a wholesale paper salesman in the city.

[00:40:37] Roger Leonard

Which was this just a coincidence that your.

[00:40:40] Beth

Oh, yeah. They didn't know each other.

[00:40:42] Roger Leonard

Well, there were in the same business.

[00:40:43] Beth

They didn't know.

[00:40:44] Sid Mead

Well, it wasn't the same. It was the same business.

[00:40:46] Roger Leonard

Same kind of.

[00:40:47] Sid Mead

Business. Yeah. Same kind of business.

[00:40:49] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:40:49] Beth

Well, he did that his entire career. In fact, through the the depression, he kept his job. And he said that it was was a good kind of job because during a downturn, people do more advertising. And during the upturn, they have the money. I don't know, it was just it worked for him. So he never lost a job. But during the depression things were kind of tough for us. Right. And I remember, you know, we I guess most kids only had one pair of shoes at the time. But that's one thing that I remember. And at one point they didn't have the money to buy me shoes or a or coat or anything, but, you know, we kind of toughed it out. Yeah. It worked. It was okay. Yeah. And my mother was very imaginative, you know, with the food. Yeah.

[00:41:37] Roger Leonard

Did she she work outside the home?

[00:41:39] Beth

Oh, no.

[00:41:40] Roger Leonard

Not ever.

[00:41:40] Sid Mead

She was, she, she was.

[00:41:42] Beth

I think.

[00:41:43] Sid Mead

She was in the in the Navy during the first.

[00:41:45] Beth

War. Yeah. They were both in the Navy. Oh really? The First World War. I have a lovely picture of them in their uniforms. Mother with a long skirt and a blouse. Yeah. Looking very demure. And my dad, you know, with a big grin and his sailor suit. You know, so he he I think he lied about his age. And he was only 16. He joined the Navy, and he went out on a ship, and they set off a cannon, and he said he fainted. He admitted that. Oh, but you see, he had sensitive hearing. Yeah. It's one of those characteristics that gets passed down. Nelson, our son Nelson has very sensitive hearing. I have very sensitive hearing. It's one of those interesting things. But anyway.

[00:42:33] Roger Leonard

Now what year did you get married?

[00:42:36] Beth

51. It was the end of 51.

[00:42:39] Sid Mead

December 50th.

[00:42:42] Beth

And I came up here and I didn't know how to drive at the time. And we moved into a little house over on Pitcher Lane. It's the house that Teresa has now.

[00:42:52] Roger Leonard

Oh, yeah.

[00:42:52] Beth

It was much smaller at that time. They had little parts. It was very small, but.

[00:42:56] Sid Mead

It was a lot.

[00:42:57] Beth

Because they were doing over the kitchen on the other side of the house. So we couldn't, you know, we didn't move in here right away. And I remember we had things were tough on the farm at that point. We had \$100 for, for the month, for each month. And out of that, we paid the rent and the food and very little else. But so I took driver training at the high school. I had been instructed in driving before that, but it never really took. I mean, I was I think I was a difficult student and my father tried to teach me and that didn't work. And then some other. I guess he tried to teach me.

[00:43:39] Sid Mead

Well, you didn't want me to.

[00:43:41] Beth

You wouldn't I wouldn't cooperate. So. But anyway, you know, this was kind of impersonal. And there were three, three women on that road. One of them was Lael Finkel, Gary's sister. I think the other one might have been Louise Dillinger. We ask her. I'm not sure. We took driver training and I learned how to drive. And then, you know, I felt much freer because I felt kind of boxed up down there. You know, I was away from the farm. I was there all day. My aunt, I used to call her up and ask her what to do with things. For example, I had, you know, I, I really hadn't taken any interest in house housewifery or cooking or any of that stuff. And I remember one time I had company, we had a roast, you know, with all that gravy and the drippings and stuff in the pan. And I didn't know what to do with it. So I put it, I didn't know how I could ever clean it. So I put it on top of the, the cabinets up there. And then sometime later I thought, oh, that pan is still up there. And it still had that yucky stuff in it. I didn't know what to do with it. So I called, I called my aunt and she came over and I guess she helped me clean it. And the other, the other thing I did was there was a washing machine there that was on three wheels. You had to wheel it out over to the sink.

[00:45:01] Sid Mead

And it was quite narrow wheels here. And then way down here, it was a single wheel.

[00:45:06] Beth

And it had a hose that went hooked over the sink. And because it was a sink, that.

[00:45:10] Sid Mead

Was exhausting.

[00:45:12] Beth

The water. So what happened? Oh, I had the thing going around with clothes in it, and it was in my way. So I gave it a shove and it went over. Fell And of course, the water was gushing out because it came off the sink. And here was this thing that was seen to be alive because it was still churning on its side and the water was gushing out. So I called my aunt. I said, what am I going to do now? So.

[00:45:39] Sid Mead

Well, then when we moved back here, we didn't have a phone. We had used oh, what was his name?

[00:45:51] Beth

I can't remember his name. We used his phone.

[00:45:53] Sid Mead

I guess he was ill. He was in the hospital or somewhere. That's why he rented the house or staying with somebody. And so we used his phone, which was okay with him while he wasn't there. But then we got here and and only phone was here next door. Oh, that that didn't suit Aunt Dorothy at all. No, she.

[00:46:15] Beth

She was trying to run my life. Oh. And then the other problem when we first moved here is that there was only one bathroom upstairs.

[00:46:22] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:46:22] Beth

And we were on that.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

