



1980-07-10

De Groot, Maria Interview

Mary Wedegaertner

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Stockton Immigrant Women Oral History Collection

by Sally Miller

**De Groot, Maria
(Dutch)**

July 10, 1980

Interviewed by Mary Wedegaertner

Transcribed by Cindy Jackson

Start of Tape One

WEDEGAERTNER: The first thing I'd like to know is where you were born and how many there were in your family.

DE GROOT:[Yeah] I was born in Delft, in the Netherlands, and my father and my mother have four children. Three died, almost the same time my father died.

WEDEGAERTNER: When was that?

DE GROOT: [When was that?] When I was four and half years, my father died. So I am now 76. I guess that's... '94 born, I guess that was '98.

WEDEGAERTNER: 1898?

DE GROOT: Nine and a half. '98.

WEDEGAERTNER: 1908?

DE GROOT: 1-9-0-8, yeah.

WEDEGAERTNER: And were there sisters did you say, or sisters and brothers?

DE GROOT: Brothers. The first small one, [one] was a baby. I don't know exactly how old he was. I think, I'm not sure, but was around three months. I know not sure. I think so, but my mother was feeding a small baby and using the hands, what you call [crib death]. And my father died in October. Let's see, the baby died in March and my father died in October. He died in October, and on the day of the funeral, another brother died. A small one.

WEDEGAERTNER: Did the children die of some sickness?

DE GROOT: Yeah, one. The first was a crib death. What do you call it here?

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, I see. Crib death, okay.

DE GROOT: And the other was, how do you call it here? [] [] []

WEDEGAERTNER: Encephalitis?

DE GROOT: Yeah.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right.

DE GROOT: Real bad. The doctor said when he became better, then he was completely crazy. He suffered real bad. And he died on the day when my father's funeral. And my other brother died, he was three and a half. He was two and a half and he was three and a half. And I know not exactly when he died. A short after, [I was told] when my father died, I was in the hospital, [] over my foot. Not an auto. My horseman. On that time, we had no autos. And big trip, he go to bakery and [] on the trip. And he got foot and crushed my feet. So when my father died, I was not home. I was by my grandpa's in the other place. And I stayed quite a bit in the hospital. Middle toe was out, big scar, the doctor [] have to walk my whole life

DE GROOT: But you didn't have to.

WEDEGAERTNER: In the 19 [year] [part time kept babies] and then my mother told me [hospital] they had a place by my grandfather's place and on like the [] home and my other brother [] was on my [] behind me [in the hospital when we had Diphtheria] and I know [] day before yesterday you cannot go in in his room, you have to have to [] outside the place, and the nurse. He pick him up and he say "bye mom" and he died.

DE GROOT: Is that right, so sad. What did your father do for, what was his occupation?

WEDEGAERTNER: He was a, he sold a, he had a store that sold sewing machines.

DE GROOT: Did your mother work outside the home?

WEDEGAERTNER: No, well my mother was [] at that time not working after my father died, mother was a real good mistress. [] 80 years of so [] real good work [] sew for more high-class people. She sewed for them. Not for the cleaning woman later on but rather they were the ladies they take care of the cleaning, so [] started sewing after my father died. And we moved to a little place and I became sick and I was sick for I don't know how long, two and a half year and I had lung TB. [] nothing else to do because doctor says it's impossible that you can make it but first you have to sleep in the winter time with the open window and [my bed] and the window is wide open and outside was snow. [] and you left with fear [across from the street] something like that was the big catholic hospital like St. Joes was like some kind of hospital [] told my mom about, we had a nice room [open doors....office there] we stayed in that one a while [] they put me in the other place on the floor, and in the day time I went to sleep, layed down in the [hang bed] I remember it real well. Then the doctor told my mom take her home [there is nothing more to do he said] a question about money and money and he said there is nothing more to do. At that time there were no sanatoriums yet. So well, as usually my mother start crying, you know I was the only one left over. Doctor said theres really nothing else left to do, after while he said 'Well I have one advise, tell to nobody at this, Doctors advice, doctor tell me, the doctor do not tell you, I personal tell you, go out of the city, we live in the city, go out of the city and live close by the sea'. Doctor [] So my mother know my second father [] was almost two years later [I was laid down for] almost two years so [] his folks, they live close by the sea so that 8 weeks for that [scenery] [] by his folks. And his brother go every day by horse [] through the dunes and pick up shells by the sea you know he sold the shells and I had to go with him. I could not sit I had to walk. I walked an hour through the dunes [] play and help him you know. And on the way back I could sit on the [] and I did for a reason. [] to see he come home [] done working [] walking [maybe come home early]. [doctor] [] close by the sea. Well after while I start eating and eating and I eat so much that when I tell someone how much no one believe it. I start really eating, well when the meal was finished there was no leftovers, [] all the left overs to me [] everything. I [] so much eat in my whole life. And that was it.

WEDEGAERTNER: And how old were you at this time?

DE GROOT: At that time I was there [I was][] [fifth to my seventh eight years] I was 8 years [go to school] it was a tough time. But still I was not through recuperating [] through eating I was [] [] Real hard to work when I was young to help my father in the field [.....] country men. He raised [] grow beans, beats, and cabbage, tulips and daffodils, so I have to help him. And he had hot houses. In the winter, wintertime we don't have tulips in blooming and daffodils blooming in the wintertime [] Christmas. So I have to help, [] it's real hard work. I work real hard my whole life and my mom had [] children on her second marriage [] I was the oldest, so you know

WEDEGAERTNER: How many children did she have on her second marriage?

DE GROOT: 13

WEDEGAERTNER: 13? My goodness.

DE GROOT: No no, I said it wrong. [] 10.

WEDEGAERTNER: Now did you start to school when you were about 8 then?

DE GROOT: Ya, I go back to the first grade when I was 8. [I skip certain classes and I go from 8 to] in one year I go for a while in the first, a while in the second and a while in the third.

WEDEGAERTNER: So how far did you go all together?

DE GROOT: Well I go [] in that time of year there were 6 grades.

WEDEGAERTNER: 6 grades?

DE GROOT: Ya, that's all. [] But I was not always in school. When my mother expecting baby, I stay 3 months home

WEDEGAERTNER: Right.

DE GROOT: [] I was [9] years old when my mother was having a, I didn't know at that time, my mother had a miscarriage. I stay home 3 months. And take care of my mom and 5 babies.

WEDEGAERTNER: So you had a lot of work inside plus having to work in the fields too

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: Were your parent's of the Catholic faith?

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: You continued this also?

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: What was your first paid job outside the home? Did you go to work outside of the home?

DE GROOT: I have no memory [of getting paid] I use to work for my father, [] over morning [] married []

WEDEGAERTNER: What did your family like to do for fun? For recreation? When you were young? Work, you didn't have any time for fun?

DE GROOT: no, real no time. [] watch [] when I was 21 when we married [] raised the kids [] and he said not for me. [] house, not my home, how then we were married [] real nice neighbor []

WEDEGAERTNER: Now you said you were 21 when you married?

DE GROOT: Yes, 21 when we married.

WEDEGAERTNER: Your husband, did you met him in the same village or same town where you lived?

DE GROOT: By my [] neighbors

WEDEGAERTNER: So you knew him quite a while?

DE GROOT: Well we [our] neighbors [knew him] for a long time. [] my parents moved a little bit away, not so far [walking] [same place]

WEDEGAERTNER: And your husband, what type of work did he do when you were first married?

DE GROOT: He raised tulips and daffodils, but more he raised beans. Grow beans, different kinds of beans and cabbage, most beans and cabbage. []

WEDEGAERTNER: So you lived out in the country just a little ways?

DE GROOT: Ya, we lived in the country

WEDEGAERTNER: How many children did you say you had?

DE GROOT: I have together 16

WEDEGAERTNER: 16?

DE GROOT: 16

WEDEGAERTNER: 16

DE GROOT: 12 boys and 4 girls.

WEDEGAERTNER: That's a very []

DE GROOT: And the young baby died before, before [we left before] we [came] to the United States.

WEDEGAERTNER: What prompted you, what conditions prompted you to come to the United States?

DE GROOT: What the [intensions] of coming to United States?

WEDEGAERTNER: A'ha.

DE GROOT: Well....

WEDEGAERTNER: How did you decide to come?

DE GROOT: It's like [] whole story. First of all, I tell you really truth, [] at that time we had that [] boys and a girl and at that time you could not make.....let [] put straight. [For] 30 years we [try to get] on a list for a house, even 30, we had not a house, we [not] on a list for a house, it's a hopeless situation

WEDEGAERTNER: Did you have an apartment before that?

DE GROOT: No, we had a [rental] house, a real small house, a real small house. My mother had her own house and own land. So that start me when I kept [] boys [wondering]. [The most body of that was [] was you know [] 16, 17, 18 to go together to wait that long, there was not []]. What was happened [without question] [] was my brother where he having baby before he married get right away a house

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, is that right.

DE GROOT: Right and that bother me very much. I will not say the people are not good, I will not say anything about what I feel [] real set about, think about that. [I live a Christian way of living] [].

WEDEGAERTNER: A'ha

DE GROOT: []

WEDEGAERTNER: Right.

DE GROOT: So they build, you know how they can build a house for yourself on your land, okay, we can not [] get on the list. [] [] on the list. So you not build yourself a list [] it's impossible. So that was one thing. Another thing was the people from South Netherlands, that part, real small, employee people, [] have 5 or 6 cows, he's have a small piece of land. But these people feel [as] king of the land. But when the kids grow up, there's no place for these kids. So these kids go to the city, and we go to the city, for

work [] family [in the fabrics] [] Phillip's [] you know Phillips men? In the whole city only one employing people. All your clothes, the clothes fabrics [] So [what has] happen when all real faithful people, and the South there are all [cobbler] makers, no [] faith [] in South Netherland, not in the mid and not in the top. In the mid is half [] and half Catholics, and the North is most all Protestant. Now is [] more faiths. [] soon the whole family come to the city, was has to. There's no, no, no more make a living more. And we find out that the most of the people was the faith. And I'm learning about that, why is it necessary so [my oldest boy was a seminary] [for father []] he came home and said "Why have you to watch your faith why you go to the city", I say [] he say "mom we have not to" he said [] he said "well what had happened to people" [] [king of their own small piece of ground house and field] [] always creating [] I got piece of this and got piece of that got piece of that to make a living. [] And always creating. [] king [feel [] king there]. He said [] in the city, [] work in the fabric, [] lose all the interest, lost all the interest. [] this and all the lives that were lost, he said I have not to [but to go is easy]. No interest in faith [] all the people around [kinda dumb] [] people, so he talk to the girls and the boys you know it's [given to pressures] so that is the trouble so that start mind start worrying me. Worrying about me, real worry about it. That happened, then I said really the truth and I wasn't sure so I go to [community] I [hear] someone say 'Mom, [we have to immigrate], mother, we have to immigrate'. But I never say something [] say never. And [] crazy [] I can't do this now, but now okay. But then on one day, I was in the morning [] and the priest came to me and [] [Mother, [] home tonight?] Sure [] time I have to go, [] but maybe [] ya I like to tell him so, ya I know I tell him to stay home. So I got home and I told him what are we going to do? 'well I don't know' I know just as much as you know, I know no know and that's all he say he like to talk to me. [] okay [] he come around 8 o'clock, so he came. [] a couple minutes and he said [] right away I heard my name is Cornelias, [my name] say Cor is short name []. [] say Cor I have come talk to you, you have to immigrate. There's no place for [] big family with so many boys all [hard working] the boys, he said there's no place for you. You have for sure to immigrate. So he talk to me about it more. So there's nothing [] what to do. So I don't know, maybe a week, maybe 14 days maybe 4 weeks later. I [] after my last baby [] miscarriage [] and my last miscarriage I have [not] to go back to the doctor. So I go back [] appointment [] to see if everything is alright, and he said [] he said I like to talk right here, if you have time to wait. Well I have much to do [] have much time. I look at him and he look at me [] I have one patient, [not long] I [say] okay so I wait. So I was thinking there's something wrong I was [] he can talk what he want, I go not to the hospital, I got no time. I say doctor [] no time, that all what he say. So then the doctor came and he said, Mrs. DeGroot, he said I have to talk like this, i said what's wrong doctor? He said there's nothing wrong, he said I have to immigrate. He said [] family [all these] big boys [] there's no place [] I can't do it. [] too. He can not do it and he was [] at the second war and he belong to the Nazis, he was [with] Hitler. So he said he was [public] family [] I don't know what was anyways this otherwise you really have to work on it, and real fast because now is not good. [] start for yourself []

otherwise the priest say too, he said [] you look really a little bit old [] all the boys, you make it, he said you have to do [] [I think] I hear something []

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya I hear a little water too

DE GROOT: He said you really have to do it. So I came home and I [] and wondering [] and then he told [me] when I go to [] that for a long time I [] so long say you have to immigrate, have to immigrate and that's how we start to talk about how to do it. Oh ya, and there's another thing, the second boy, he was in the army, and he came back from army and he asks us if we can immigrate, see that was not before. See that when we talk about a year before [] and we say first no, and then he said well [] we can never start for our self, especially when you have quite a bit land [] least [quite a bit of] land. But has happened you can not live from [] more, that you have to stop that. [] you died. [] you cannot make it. So we have to raise tulips and daffodils and all the things but you need permission from the government. And you show the paper to the government but it was impossible for us to buy bulbs!

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh ya

DE GROOT: So well first we say no, and he said well dad, [] so we talk it over [] over the night we talk it over and I say he is right, he is completely right. So we talk with him and say okay. We give you permission under the condition that you, you can go where you know someone, like can go to, like you have a place you can live and [] have work. And if you have that, then you can go. [] so he was working on it and he [] friend his father they did business with some other place and he [] [South Dakota] and he decide to go there. And he [rode or wrote] over there and well [she not help] go to the priest [] and he said well cannot help him but you can give my name [] take for sure two years [to get over] it take so long [all prepared and all] [how to say in English] test for no sickness, get no sickness, all the papers he say takes for sure two years. Give my name, I cannot do it but give my name so you can start working on it. [] you can look for another one. So okay, [] Marinas, there's a family over in called California [] Duch people [] Excuse me a moment.

WEDEGAERTNER: Sure

DE GROOT: [Well] So I say I like to talk about it. So I did [] look I find out the priest there was the Mexican priest [] who not good English either. So he not understand me at all. [] big accent [] I big accent, some people understand me real well and some people [] understand me, so he do not understand me. So I try and I feel sorry [] I did it, but I tried. Well he will not forgive me. So I go back in the church and I said "God you know what I did wrong, you forgive me, it's your fault that you brought me here, So I cannot help it, so for now on, so nothing can say, I will not say it, I'll tell truth, and you have to [] ". And I was over it. [] [bother with him] no more. And soon [] looks like [] come a

little bit easier [not ..to say..same day..] come easier. You can [] easy to express yourself. And now after my husband died I tried to talk more English []

WEDEGAERTNER: How many years had you been here when he died?

DE GROOT: I been here I think 12 years, Twelve and a half.

WEDEGAERTNER: Twelve and a half?

DE GROOT: Ya, he died 16 years ago, last April. I lived down in Stockton on California Street. And I live there now [3 or 4] years.

WEDEGAERTNER: How old was your youngest child when he died? When your father or your husband died?

DE GROOT: I think [Benny] was a 17? Ya, 17 [] ya sixteen and a half he's now 34 so []

WEDEGAERTNER: So you had already moved into town at that time, on California Street did you say?

DE GROOT: Ya ya [] [high school] he went on to high school.

WEDEGAERTNER: So you gave up your dairy business?

DE GROOT: Well, no, I give not up, it was [] the 4 boys together. So my husband died, I go out but still the dairy stay

WEDEGAERTNER: I see

DE GROOT: Later on when [Danny came to school] []

WEDEGAERTNER: Did some of your son's still have the dairy then?

DE GROOT: No, it's not more, [] maybe three ... two years ago, to sell the cows [] the cows. I said later [] creamery on the Airport Way [] [build a big] creamery. Now this spring [] sell the whole business.

WEDEGAERTNER: I see, But you did have, you built a creamery?

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: What and your son's ran this?

DE GROOT: The sons [they] ran the creamery. [] four sons together, one son was head of the creamery, one son [did have] quite a bit land, take care of the land, [] enough hay for the cows and sometimes change [] The other boy, [] he was for the cows and one more, he run the creamery and he was [] the head of [more of] the business . [] over the cows he had workers for them , he go over the cows [] and that is Leo. And then he

stay a while and did not like it and he go back to school, he go to college. And after college he go [] took a state job in Sacramento, he work for the state.

WEDEGAERTNER: Before your husband died, were you and he belong to any organization or clubs?

DE GROOT: A, let's see... I was at that time I was on the [altos] society, and he was on the, what was he on, [] [family out] I think the [family society] he was [he was always] on one, more like one public organization always. I will not more [] I been on more than one, on two, but always one like the [] another one two [third]. I believe not to have your family [got four] take so much time, I believe not, I like go little bit in the volunteer in the community [bring] people together he said, well [] not alone by yourself. [] he right away too. [] now we go on to [castio] [castio] Oh ya, [third order] [third order] [] you may always [] for sure [] They not only live by yourself. [] live in community. I believe not belongs on many things, I think you cannot get rid of family [] other things

WEDEGAERTNER: Just a few special things.

DE GROOT: ya [] somethings [] community [come at] people

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha. Your boys regarding to high school here, did they...were there anything they complained about or unhappy with? Or were they really happy with the schools?

DE GROOT: Oh, I think so, they never really complained. Complained. Only the youngest boy had a hard time [over in Ireland] real small kinder school, 8 grades like 4 teachers. And he had a hard time to learn the English. My daughter was 7 [] hard time and that was I'm sure [] was 7 [favorite] school see. Well when [] ask something, [they] say: Look [evil] [] not favorite. So that he...

WEDEGAERTNER: She [really] they didn't really spend any time with him.

DE GROOT: No not at all. Not at all. So then my son, second son of the third son [] he came, [] moved to [] priest [] to Stockton. And we asked if he can go down to Catholic school. Well, I was not mad about it [] 53 kids in the class, so there are no place. So and when he came he noticed [] so that he, he make place. And then after that it got so much better. [] older [] Oh no, I said it wrong, first he go years to Lodi to school. See Lodi in Catholic school. [] Joseph [] was placed in the Annunciation, he can go, but other go out to the Lodi [] Lodi. One day he was real sick, he was so sick [] I do not know word [] sleep. [] one day [] So doctor [here's what] best for him. So and then [] go to the country school. Well we do not see him. I hate to say it but it was true. [Was no good] [] was the same thing. And now [] same [came] invite him [immigrate over there] [] old men and he asked me if we can help him after school [] I said well so long I know when we can pick him up [] husband in dairy milk the cows [] right now [] not come home till

4 o'clock after school, then 5. then 5 [] oh boy and that [picked real up] it's better. [then he go to] 8th grade then go to Stockton, to Annunciation [High School]. []

WEDEGAERTNER: How many grandchildren do you have?

DE GROOT: 52

WEDEGAERTNER: 52

DE GROOT: And 6 great grandchildren. [I think] and 4 or 5 more coming.

WEDEGAERTNER: Is that right?

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: Do you see in your children's families that they're carrying on any of the traditions or customs that you had in your family as they were growing up?

DE GROOT: Ya, I have a two [] groups [of children] . And that's fine. The one he go the Netherlands school and [] Finishing school [] different [the others go] here to school. [] real [] each other, no no real separation but [] have to talk together or something then the older one hey all be together and the young one together. Really I have two groups of children. See the others been raised in [homeland] and they [tiny bit] old fashioned []. Now [] little bit too loose [] go to school [they have to grow more] so [] little bit [] still [] they have no money when they're old [30 years] And You [know] [] deep down [] my young son, my young son, [] 6 years he came that deep down he's [] that old fashioned that's real in him. Still. But little bit, little bit different like the older ones. [] really there's two groups. Not [] separate, so that not want it mean.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right, no.

DE GROOT: When it come to really talking, [to care about something, not all things] [young] and the oldest one, they have the same feelings.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right

DE GROOT: And the young ones have other feelings. They complain about it but you see it.

WEDEGAERTNER: You notice it.

DE GROOT: You notice it.

WEDEGAERTNER: After your husband died, you moved in on California Street, how long did you live there?

DE GROOT: No my, my my my husband lived [] on California Street.

WEDEGAERTNER: You both lived there, right.

DE GROOT: See we lived [there nine months] and [otherwise] the lease was almost over, not quite [] wait over [but too] late, so that 2 years for the lease was over the boys looking for another place. For that reason, the [] was real good land, was farm land not dairy land. See [it is so] muddy

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha

DE GROOT: And the cows that many times in the winter times go to the belly in the mud. One time the cow, calf we cannot find, and the calf was all in the mud. So the boys said that [] Dad... My husband like to say 'you know roll over, lay down []' the boys said Dad we can't even [] you can't even, just working the whole winter for the mud. The cows lost quite a bit less[milk] [] with sawdust, you make no profit, he used for the mud. And then my husband was not well at that time at all. So [] looking for the [] find on Airport Way and [Seamus] it was 500 acres, and we leased the place. [] barns and later on it's a [bogged] land beside that land was a piece of land, that was a viaduct and that [] barns and corrals, and that was first and later on bought all the 50 acer farm there, on Seamus too. And that's where the creamery up [] and later on built [] on the other side from the field [] land

WEDEGAERTNER: What was the name of your creamery? DeGroot Creamery?

DE GROOT: Ya. See the land was...now, see the boys [] when the lease is over on Seamus, then stop completely. One boy, he liked grapes, and he have enough land [] enough land to raise grapes. See, and Leo, he have [] sell [] farms, the whole thing. Work for a year [] for some farms, he do not know what he want to do, I think he now know what he want to do [] show that he did some work what he did, work what he did by himself [] He start buying old houses [] and he was always fixing the barns too on the dairy [] everything, fixing. He real good [] build and fixing it. He was now [] houses, he fixes up and sales again. So that's and [] too young to not just to, to retire, but has not to [] make find something that has completed to live on. From the Dairy success split that was enough to care to live, something work with it. You know what it means?

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya. How long did you live in California Street before you moved here?

DE GROOT: [I left ...] He will not go [] California Street, he said I cannot live in the [] We know he have to die, I know, we know he can not live long more, and a [] and he have to move for the baby, he have hay fever from the [] trees from the neighbors

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh Ya

DE GROOT: And we have to steam by the bed [] so we have to move for that. So the doctor, ya [] ya house for one year, he said you like it not in the city. You never live in the city, how

can you say you not like it? [] Take us for one year, and you not like it, then we build in the country nice place [] well mom that's the bestest we can do it. And I was

End of Tape One

Start of Tape Two

DE GROOT: [] I left [] around 4 years, then I start sick

WEDEGAERTNER: Why did you choose to move to Manteca, do most of your children live in this area?

DE GROOT: Ya, that's the reason, I was sick do not know why I was sick and [] doctor said [everything is well] [the operation but] I stay sick. He said its lonely in Stockton, [] before [] tractor was broken [] I move to Manteca, first in the [kids two] later [] on the other [] boys, we sell here [] so we left for the people, so the people have to [] how do this [] tractor fixing in Manteca. So [] that was one [] reason I think about. So [] asked me if I like to move to Manteca.

WEDEGAERTNER: You have a lovely house here.

DE GROOT: Ya, big house []. Sometimes it is too small.

WEDEGAERTNER: Is it really? When all your family comes

DE GROOT: [] and the children. One time I have [] came home [] youngest [] know why at that time [] and another two [] say you have to sleep in the sleeping bag. So

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya, how often do you go to the Senior Citizens?

DE GROOT: I go every week. About

WEDEGAERTNER: [] just one day...

DE GROOT: Make sure [] Always Thursdays

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha, do you live in walking distance of a Church well the Catholic Church here also?

DE GROOT: Yes, in the back []

WEDEGAERTNER: Right There

DE GROOT: Before I go quite a bit to the city [] for the city for all faiths together [] and I go a one day I stop at [] too early [] 10:00 [] for lunch time. Ya, I no like that.

WEDEGAERTNER: And this is sponsored by the Catholic Church

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: I see

DE GROOT: [] the citizen from the city. All the faith together. And I know [I can start] I not against that, I love the people [] I love [] the only thing is I stop, see there was [] Stockton [] 10 o'clock and for a while [] by the second group. See [] 10:30 [] [hour] too early

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya

DE GROOT: [] the second group. So [] second group [] first people go in [] still [] taking long, so, come back later on [] I go in the morning every [month] [] home and back 8:30 [] 8:30 [] 10:0'clock [] then I stop it. And I, I work my whole life and I [] [just boring] I just sit there in Stockton and do nothing. [] I always do something. [She] sit at the table, I have free time [] I start something.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right, you probably work in your yard quite a bit.

DE GROOT: The yard, oh ya, [] the yard [] mow the lawn [know what I mean, by myself]

WEDEGAERTNER: Is this a picture of you up here?

DE GROOT: Ya, [...Sunday best...i was sitting here] he fix me.

WEDEGAERTNER: That's very nice. Have you ever tried [painting]

DE GROOT: No.

WEDEGAERTNER: Are there some government policies that you don't like about the United States? Or in the United States?

DE GROOT: I am not a policy lady, is all.

WEDEGAERTNER: What are you feelings on the, like the women's liberation movement?

DE GROOT: Oh I don't like those.

WEDEGAERTNER: You don't like that either.

DE GROOT: No, I don't like that, I don't like that. For me [it says] no I don't like it.

WEDEGAERTNER: Do you think the woman's place is more in the home?

DE GROOT: It was [] ask me before was [] strange when I came here [] I cannot remember what. It was one thing strange to me [] marriage is 50 50 . I call [] it was [] I don't understand that. Was so strange

WEDEGAERTNER: That the marriage was 50 50 [you said]?

DE GROOT: Ya, was for me strange. It was [] we all together, stuck together. [] talk about, [] how do it, have difficulties, different feelings about something, well talk it out. Most the time come to agreement. Not agree, [or I not] agree [] okay, after 10 minutes okay, you feel that way, I feel another, I cannot agree, so [] that on the family so, you go your way. Fine. [] and I think, I feel real strong the husband is the head for the family. He's not [] it never happen to [] he thought] he was head for the family. Just the head. He take care, he was the head and he take care of all the things, [] if he asked me to help I helped him. So I believe [.....I think against nature] God make, God make, God make it that way, the men is the head, not the boss but the head of the family. And He make the woman, man and woman from nature, is really from [nature...leaning on the man] one does not like to be [I am] but still deep down [she leans on her husband] she likes [that] she like to be, that is the nature, the woman [can't] go against her own nature, that is what I feel.

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya, sure. Do you have some daughter-in-law's that feel quite differently about this, or?

DE GROOT: No, I cannot say that. My daughter-in-law [] [Dutch] and they not that way. And I have an American daughter-in-law too, but they not that way too.

WEDEGAERTNER: Are most of the Dutch girls though?

DE GROOT: The old boys, the Dutch girls ya, [] Americans [] But they not that way either too.

WEDEGAERTNER: Do you have friends now that are Dutch that are your age?

DE GROOT: Ya, not too much, not, not special. Not, special. Real not special. I have never, first time not too much time, and then I believe not in, in hanging on [Dutch] I feel [base, try in the beginning] In Dutch group and I don't believe that. I say I been here [been in here long time] live here, and speak English here and we have to live with the people, how the people here are. And not, I will not against [] I cannot [] can do and not [] together [] no, I don't like this, I don't know. Every one of my friends.

WEDEGAERTNER: Now, none of your family went back to the Netherlands to live, did they? Do they all live here in the states still?

DE GROOT: Ya [] no not all in the states, some live in Canada, [New Brunswick]. Live first here, then moved later to Canada [New Brunswick].

WEDEGAERTNER: Do you travel around very much to visit your children?

DE GROOT: Well, when I can I stop a little bit, but most the time I [visit] not too often, [every] two or three years. Now next year [] [Canada] four years. [] daughter [in Hawaii] [] between here, so I have been planning [Gods willing] go next year to [her]

WEDEGAERTNER: To Hawaii?

DE GROOT: No to Canada

WEDEGAERTNER: To Canada

DE GROOT: And to Ohio.

WEDEGAERTNER: Ohio, aha.

DE GROOT: Ohio [] are there. See [] go to Canada and I go to a, go out by [Chicago] and I go []. Three years ago, [] ya, three years ago [] was it three years ago? Ya, it was three years [later] [my son] first my daughter here in California was 25 years married [] so I go to her celebration, now my son [in Canada] now is 25 years married so I go to Canada, then I go from Canada to the Netherlands to see my family. Now [] I see my [six or seven] sisters over there [].

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, so you're going from Canada to the Netherlands?

DE GROOT: Ya, [from there] I go to the Netherlands.

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh. Will that be your first time back?

DE GROOT: No, that's third time.

WEDEGAERTNER: Third time back, oh.

DE GROOT: I go one time with my husband, and two times by myself.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha. But you still have sisters and things []

DE GROOT: Ya, no, six sisters and one died last year. And one brother.

WEDEGAERTNER: Have they ever come over here to visit you?

DE GROOT: Some, not all, but some. So, and my husband's family lives there.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: His brothers and sisters.

WEDEGAERTNER: Have your children been over to visit?

DE GROOT: Some. [] go over to the Netherlands. See the first one [] mother was 80, go [go to mother's] 80 birthday. Brother and sister []. [Dominique], his wife, his father, [in

Holland], [] wife and his sisters to see the [father] [in Holland] and Al, his wife [] [in Holland]

WEDEGAERTNER: So you've kept in communication with people in Holland..

DE GROOT: Ya

WEDEGAERTNER: ... all this time in the Netherlands.

DE GROOT: But I cannot [] sometime [] the family [] to long [] family whole family that's all. [My daughter] in Ohio, his folks live in the Netherlands. And my daughter, my oldest daughter her husband's folks both live in the Netherlands. []

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha. How long has your son been the priest at Saintliness?

DE GROOT: Last year, [] 55, now 56

WEDEGAERTNER: That long?

DE GROOT: [] 56. And next year [] [Lodi]. [] Next year, the one in Lodi [] priest.

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, you have two sons that are priests?

DE GROOT: Three.

WEDEGAERTNER: Three of them, Where is the third on?

DE GROOT: He's now in South [] in the [tropical] [] India, [tropical] India []

WEDEGAERTNER: Tropical Indias, aha.

DE GROOT: [] Franciscan. Home of the brown habit on. [] Stockton

WEDEGAERTNER: St. Mary's, aha.

DE GROOT: Ya. He belongs to the St. Order.

WEDEGAERTNER: How does it, or How did your sons decide to go into the different orders?
What determines this particularly?

DE GROOT: Ya, I don't know. Well, when the two in the Netherlands, the two oldest ones [] real nice priest from [the order] [] orders from the Pope. Just, what you call it, [] real priest, just an order. Well, [St Peter] was the [first] Pope and he spread out. And that [belongs] []. And [Maceys] in Netherlands [] just one year, and he go to Franciscan [valley, I think]. He liked to become Franciscan. So, I have another son, a Christian Brother.

WEDEGAERTNER: Christian Brother, aha.

DE GROOT: You know about [them the] [] teacher, [they be] all teachers.

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, I see.

DE GROOT: Christian Brothers. They no priest, just brothers. It's like you have nuns, you give the life to God to work, work for God and so do the Christian, Christian Brothers too. But no priest.

WEDEGAERTNER: I see

DE GROOT: [again] no gifts, sacraments [] just work, work for God. [] boarding schools.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: Christian Brothers. He now has most kids from the father died, mother died [or broke] separate, boarding school. Stay there the whole week, on Saturdays go home.

WEDEGAERTNER: Well, I think we covered just about everything.

DE GROOT: I think so.

WEDEGAERTNER: What were your greatest concerns as a mother about your children? You kinda covered that already in the ...

DE GROOT: My most concern was they not lost the faith.

WEDEGAERTNER: And in most the cases, is this true?

DE GROOT: Ya, and when this over, I real thankful to God for. Really.

WEDEGAERTNER: And what were you especially proud of running your home?

DE GROOT: What you mean?

WEDEGAERTNER: Well, were you always happy because you, your children had nice clothes to wear because you sewed for them so much? Things you were proud of?

DE GROOT: No, I when, all I can say is I am only thankful

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: I cannot [] I thank God all the ways, just thankful, thankful. I am happy [about] the family, I'm happy we're a real close family, [and] in-laws are real close together. Sure there's been sometime [been] not real difficult, you know someone had a different attitude

WEDEGAERTNER: Right

DE GROOT: but all understand each other, ya understand, and if someone in trouble [] everyone understanding, and I real thankful that. [Except] my young son he was maybe [] so he go off. [he told that he did it, he fault] to not look out, but anyway he would not come home and I ask him [Beny] please come home for Christmas. He said mom I can't. He believe he was so ashamed [] psychiatrist for he feel like he was a bad, bad person. So and I ask and he say mom I can't. I can't. [] come home after Christmas. [said] Okay mom, I will. So he came down the day after Christmas, [] and what happened, I feel a little bit bad about it. It happened that my daughter and son-in-law [] and son and [his wife] [] I have the feeling that he maybe thought that [I] asked them and not true. [I feel] [] God knows I had not asked, it just happened. And [we] start talking with him and he was completely [] over and I said the whole family have never put him in the [dump] and [not while] that happened never. I'm just, I'm proud of the family.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: And he get married again, [] he get, he ask for an annulment, he get right away but [] no children after while, [] reason [] too. So he married, married a [widower] had three children. She lost her husband [] age 3, 5, and 7. [real] happy, the whole family happy, just take them in. She's [] She's a really [oh, how say America, how can say]. Well, she's the type we are, really. She's a wonderful lady. She's [all good] [] Well, the other type is, maybe you understand what I mean. She not in this lady [] ladies in most times feel the need to [] and clean the house. And that is she not.

WEDEGAERTNER: That's not the most important thing to her.

DE GROOT: No. She's not dirty, that is not true.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right

DE GROOT: [] there's no fun in family the, the likes not for that reason. So know that [] she's a wonderful, that's all I say, she's a wonderful person. She's real good for the kids, real good for Beny, for kids, for all the people, all once again do is good. [] the whole family take it. The whole family, there's no one to give one, [] once a feeling you are uncomfortable, only once she told me, says, first when came she was nervous, [] boy, she says I cannot understand [that] people are so friendly to me, so friendly to me, [says] I never see so friendly. I will not say the family is so good, I will not say that. But I will say I [] thankful [] understanding.

WEDEGAERTNER: Now most of your sons married Catholic girls?

DE GROOT: Ya, but she not a Catholic.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: She's Mormon.

WEDEGAERTNER: When your sons started dating and things, did you, were they encourage to date Catholic girls, or did you have any strong feelings?

DE GROOT: Well, deep down I'm hoping, but I never, [trouble] never...

WEDEGAERTNER: None of them every really presented any real problems?

DE GROOT: No. No problem at all. No problem at all. No, she's wonderful, [] like I said, she's not Catholic, no one let, from the whole family, let her feel that's not []. there's no one....that I am thankful for. Well she was born that way, raised that way, so...

WEDEGAERTNER: When you look back over your life, what would you consider the best age, and also the worst age to be?

DE GROOT: Well the worst age for me was when I was [a child]

WEDEGAERTNER: When you were what?

DE GROOT: When I was a child.

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh. Aha.

DE GROOT: I had no childhood at all.

WEDEGAERTNER: Ya, 'cause you worked so hard.

DE GROOT: I never played, I never seen doll.

WEDEGAERTNER: Is that right?

DE GROOT: And, I never played. I was [20 years when I married] my husband was 24, and when I, honest then we start, I start playing. [we played hide and seek together] [] a small [] I had never played in my whole life. [] married life is, is most wonderful [life] in my life. And my mom say to me, [Maria] she says oh I know what you been doing, [] marriage life is so hard. And well I was prepared for real hard, I [] real hard. [been] difficulties, that was never hard times, that is not true. I never feel hard. Never.

WEDEGAERTNER: That's great.

DE GROOT: Never feel hard. I'm always happy.

WEDEGAERTNER: Essentially you and your husband had the same goals in life, more or less?

DE GROOT: Ya, but he was not so a, he wasn't a fine man, a wonderful man. He was real good for me. But he was a, oh, real old fashioned.

WEDEGAERTNER: Was he?

DE GROOT: Ya, he cannot so easy, a, see the new things.

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: I many times to fight with him, not real fighting, but fighting in love for my kids.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right. You took their side a lot of times.

DE GROOT: [] go someplace. He wasn't [brought] up that way. When I really was [] movement, was the best father in the whole world there is, for the kids, when the kids was young. But when they grow up, he likes to hold the kids in that [corner].

WEDEGAERTNER: Aha.

DE GROOT: No one can go out, no one can go to anyplace. He was always, well he [think no] place is good.

WEDEGAERTNER: He was much more strict than what you were.

DE GROOT: Ya, ya. Way more stricter. [that's why] last words when he was sick. He's 'oh mother, oh mother that could never happen, you've been way too easy.' So... he was a real good [] the kids had a real [] wonderful father. When he was young he'd go play with the kids , he walk with the kids, he do everything with the kids. [So when he's] 40 or 50 he make him life hard for himself and hard for the kids. And really [] really was sick for me too. See what he was, was a real good man, and he knows, and he agreed with me. Was so hard to do. When he was healthy, [] real healthy, never [] but still hard enough to fight it, so don't fight it, he saw the other way was better. By when he really came to real sick, [son comes] [] inside come [] by himself, you know what he means?

WEDEGAERTNER: Sure

DE GROOT: So [the youngs] [] last year was sick was he [] 14, 15, 16 [all he died real sick] [] a hard time. He never did, all he did was no good. But still I been thankful for all the kids, that they never complain, they never complained. One day [] I don't know what he said, one of the boys, he said, 'Oh Mom, we know dad, he's the father, [] the father, [] he's sick, [] was sick [no more in] the house, [want all] out the house. [see that's a no], He mean it, but later when he really sick [] [wrong habit] [to comfort] he know what he mean.

WEDEGAERTNER: Right.

DE GROOT: All the kids saw it, they know it.

WEDEGAERTNER: So they understood.

DE GROOT: [there's more but] yes, [] they understood it. So that's all that I can [say] I only thankful.

WEDEGAERTNER: Sounds like you have a wonderful family.

DE GROOT: Ya, I'm real happy with it. Ya, I real proud of it. You have to see the picture []

WEDEGAERTNER: Oh, I would love to.

DE GROOT: The most []

End of Tape Two