

OH2018.055

Dudones, Janet Worthington

08/09/2018

Interview Summary

*Interviewed on 08/09/2018 by Kayt Gochenaur at Historic Saranac Lake.*

Janet Worthington Dudones was born in Saranac lake in 1948. Jan's mother was Juanita Hayman, born in Nova Scotia, who contracted TB while working as a nurse at Bellevue Hospital. Juanita or "Nita" was not very healthy as a child. In fourth grade she got sick with pleural empyema, and was in bed for a year. This was possibly her inspiration for later wanting to become a nurse. She attended Bellevue Nursing School, and worked as an obstetrics nurse when she came down with TB. Nita took the cure at Trudeau Sanatorium, where she stayed for a year. Once her convalescence was complete, Nita started working at the Sanatorium where she met Ed Worthington, a TB patient. Ed Worthington had contracted TB from his mother who had died of the disease in 1933. Ed worked with the family business, the Worthington Mower Company. When he started showing symptoms of TB, he was sent to Bellevue Hospital in NY. From Bellevue he moved up to Trudeau Sanatorium where Nita was working as a nurse. After a brief spat over who would carry his suitcase, the two bonded over mutual acquaintances at Bellevue and were married in 1937.

During Ed's Cure, he repaired and sold radios, continued selling Worthington Mowers, and started a personal shopping service for other TB patients. Nita worked as a nurse in Saranac Lake until Janet was born in 1948. Over the course of their time at the Sanatorium and in the town, Nita and Ed made many lifelong friends. These friends, many of whom were former TB patients, were all "Aunt" or "Uncle" to Jan. In 1960 Nita and Ed started a golf course supply business, which Janet later took over. After graduating high school, Jan went to Syracuse University where she majored in Education, and met Tom Dudones, who was studying Russian at Syracuse University. After their marriage, the couple moved to Texas where Tom was training to be a linguist. Their daughter was born in Texas, and then they moved to Fairbanks, and were there for one of the coldest weeks in its history. In 1975 the family moved back to Saranac Lake where Jan took over the family business, and became involved in Historic Saranac Lake. Jan, who is passionate about history, always envisioned a museum where the history of Trudeau and the Trudeau Sanatorium could be shared. She is glad to have the dream realized at the Saranac Laboratory, where her father's radio, and her mother's nurses uniform are featured in the display.