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Simon's Rock Oral History Project

Interviewee: **Ruth B. Ide**

Interviewer: **Russell Miller, College Archivist**

Transcriber: **Russell Miller, College Archivist**

Date: **September 29, 2005**

Location: **Bard College at Simon's Rock, Great Barrington, MA**

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Contact: **archives@simons-rock.edu**

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Interview with Ruth Ide

September 29, 2005

Simon's Rock of Bard College (aka Bard College at Simon's Rock)

Selected excerpts from the Oral History Project interview. The full transcript may be restricted. To request access please contact the [Simon's Rock College Archives](#).

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“The story goes that it was a wet, wet, wet, windy night on the Mass Pike, and [Betty Hall and Doreen Young] saw this dog racing along beside the Pike, and they couldn't bear to leave her there. So they picked her up. Gypsy went everywhere. At the time that the ARC was being renovated, she drove the carpenters crazy, because she climbed the ladders. They would find her up in the rafters with them, and that was just no good.”

“[Betty Hall] was not at all the high heels and pearls type lady. She and Doreen [Young], for instance, on two different occasions, bought old – and I mean old, maybe seventeenth, eighteenth century – buildings, and completely, with their own hands, renovated them, restored them. [...] [Betty and Livy] were great sailors. They didn't own a sloop, but they would go up, either to Maine or to the Caribbean, and they would hire a sloop – bare boat – and they would take the boat out and run it themselves, and provision it. Livy was a great guy for maps. He would have maps and maps and maps. They were very, very outdoors people. Betty knew the Latin names of all of the plants and trees and bushes. She would just not say, ‘That's a blueberry bush.’ You'd get the whole history. She had an incredible memory for things. [...] Somewhere there's a picture of her haying with the men. I remember seeing it. I don't remember whether she was driving or not, but I wouldn't be surprised. She had a little pony cart when her children were small, I'm told, and it ran away with her one time. She got the children out before the thing got really underway, but then she stayed with the cart, and it dumped her, and she smashed a hip badly. Which never, ever really healed well. She had it one time – and I've never heard of anybody doing this – she needed a repair on that hip which had been damaged. Before the week was out she had persuaded the surgeon to operate on her other hip. She really hadn't even started therapy or to recover from the first. She said, ‘No, if I'm going to have to be in bed, and if I'm going to have to have therapy, I'll have it on both hips and get it over with.’”

“Betty and Livy were the most wonderful partnership. I don't expect to ever, ever know anyone like them again. They were generous. They were loving, in their own way. They were not demonstrative. They were just a really, truly remarkable...and Betty always knew she could depend on Livy. And Livy on her. I don't think either one of them ever had a question about that. It was a wonderful relationship.”