



# TRANSCRIPTION COVER SHEET

**Date of Interview:** Month: June Date: 10<sup>th</sup> Year: 2022

**Interviewee(s):** GRACE MAYER

**Interviewer(s):** DONALD JOHNSON III

Place & Address of Interview:

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Recordist: [same as interviewer

Other People Present: Grace Mayer's daughter (signature on release form)

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## Project Info

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This is an oral history interview with **GRACE MAYER**. It is being conducted on **JUNE 10<sup>th</sup> 2022** at **DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY** and concerns **Mayer's time of being a student at Rosary college (now Dominican University) she is class of 1948**. The interviewer is **DONALD JOHNSON III**. This interview is a part of the **INSTITUTIONAL LEGACY PROJECT**. This interview has been **RELEASED**. Documentation of permissions is included in the **MCGREAL ZOTERO 'INSTITUTIONAL SAGA PROJECT' LIBRARY > ORAL HISTORIES** archival record.

# Grace Mayer Interview

Sat, Jun 11, 2022 4:39PM • 6:50

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

1940s, roommates, dorm life, iron lung, polio, Dominican sisters, class reunions

## SPEAKERS

Donald Johnson III, Grace Mayer

### Grace Mayer 00:00

I graduated in 1948. And I was a resident here for four years. And I met wonderful people. And my roommate was from Rockford, Illinois. But the – we've had friends from Wilmette, Illinois and California... California...there were three sisters that stayed across the way from us. And then at our– my roommates sister or cousin, Mary-Al Durkin from was from Rockford, Illinois too. And it was just a wonderful, wonderful experience. And we just– we were able to go in and out. We would go out and have– oh, go take a walk maybe over to Peterson's ice cream store. And then we would– we did a lot of walking, so we didn't get the usual 20 pounds for freshman. And there...everything about it was just a real good experience. And we love all the people that we met. And thank you very much for interviewing...bye bye. Yeah. Is that all I need?

### Donald Johnson III 01:42

Yes—I mean we–

### Person accompanying Grace 01:43

Why don't you tell them about the guy in the iron lung?

### Grace Mayer 01:47

The what, honey?

**Person accompanying Grace** 01:48

The guy in the iron lung.

**Grace Mayer** 01:50

Oh yeah.

**Donald Johnson III** 01:51

Yeah, we have plenty of time. If there's any— we have plenty of time, if you want to talk about it.

**Grace Mayer** 01:55

Oh, well, no— the man in the iron lung—he had polio. And we used to go and visit him all the time. After the class was over, we'd go down to his house. And the poor man. We were very impressed. But I feel so bad for him because he had polio. And he couldn't...he had like...oh— a mirror attached to this iron lung. He had the, you know—couldn't breathe—but then he'd smile...and so we'd talk and tell him all the good stuff. And— and he lived...there were— there was a house across the street from Rosary— from the entrance. And this young man would go over there and live there—his parents would pull him outside and he'd stay there until it was time to come in and...oh, bless his heart. But he was good, and I think...we probably gave him a little knowledge, too, because we used to tell all the good stuff...what we were doing and where we were going. And we were going over to the ice cream store and would he like a little ice cream? But it'd be all finished by the time we got to his house. And...we just loved it. I mean, the experience was so great at Rosary and I wouldn't have given it up for anything. And my sisters were here too. I had two sisters that—partially, anyway—the second one was a nun. And then the first one was...she only went here for two years and—but she loved it too—but then she got married. So that was the end of her. Okay, thank you. Alright.

**Donald Johnson III** 04:02

Yeah. And then maybe do you have like any other stories about maybe your times with the sisters or any teachers you looked up to?

**Grace Mayer** 04:10

Oh, the nuns that we l— well, Sister Sheila, you [re]member her? Well, you don't know her. But she was—

**Person accompanying Grace** 04:20

—Gretchen, Sister Peter—

**Grace Mayer** 04:23

What, hon?

**Person accompanying Grace** 04:25

Sister Peter.

**Grace Mayer** 04:27

Oh—

**Person accompanying Grace** 04:28

[inaudible]

**Grace Mayer** 04:30

—oh yeah. She'd go—because I had a messy roommate—and, you know, Peter would come in and clean up her area and polish the sink and polish the mirror and—

**Person accompanying Grace** 04:44

—Sister Peter was the roommate's aunt.

**Grace Mayer** 04:47

Yeah, and the...I don't know what it's like now that we certainly had a super time and I would not give up this—four years at Rosary—for anything in the world. Alright. Thank you.

**Donald Johnson III** 05:05

Alright, thank you. And then maybe just for one final closing thing, maybe you just want to give...like just a little thought to how it feels to be back here for the reunion and how it is to see everyone again—

**Grace Mayer** 05:15

—How what?

**Donald Johnson III** 05:05

How it feels to be back for the reunion.

**Grace Mayer** 05:18

Oh, oh, of course. I was here for 25 years, I think, and now I'm here for...70 years?

**Person accompanying Grace** 05:30

74.

**Grace Mayer** 05:32

Well, so, it's—it's a real great experience, school looks the same. And everything outside is the same and everybody—all the class—we were...there were girls in our class that we were sitting with and that was a real good experience too because it was just fun to be back with them. And we'll never forget Rosary because it's a great place. And I hope that maybe it will be here another 100 years. Thank you.

**Donald Johnson III** 06:12

Thank you, alright, then, pretty much our interview is over. But just so that we can file this can you speak into the mic and tell us your full name? Your class, your again? And today's date?

**Grace Mayer** 06:24

Today's date?

**Donald Johnson III** 06:26

Yeah, just those three things.

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:28

Start with your name, Grace.

**Grace Mayer** 06:29

Oh, Grace—Grace Wright Mayer.

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:32

And then 1948—

**Grace Mayer** 06:33

—1948.

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:35

And then 6/10/22

**Grace Mayer** 06:39

6, what?

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:40

10.

**Grace Mayer** 06:42

Oh—

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:43

—June 10—

**Grace Mayer** 06:44

—June 10—

**Person accompanying Grace** 06:45

—2022—

**Grace Mayer** 06:45

—22. Yeah.

**Donald Johnson III** 06:46

Alright, perfect.

**Grace Mayer** 06:47

Thank you.