

**John Eckstine and Mildred Finlon talk with Evelyn Shank as she remembers summertime daily life at the beach.**

**Mrs. Shank:** You know what? Mother had a rule at our house cottage — that you had to kill 25 flies before you could eat lunch or dinner. If you killed a mosquito, that counted for ten. You only had to do 15 more. We'd all get a swatter and go swatting before we sat down to eat.

**Mrs. Finlon:** Well, I'm sure there were plenty of flies because when I first taught at the Beach school — I taught there for a year and a half before I got to be supervisor in the County. And there were no screens on the windows. And when they talked about putting screens on the windows, I said, "How are the flies going to get out? They'll all be in here and locked in here." But the Beach school was where the firehouse is now.

**Mrs. Shank:** Yes, I know.

**Mrs. Finlon:** And I remember it was such a lovely view of the Bay. I used to always have the kids go to the window and watch the ships sometimes because I was principal down there for a year and a half before I got to be elementary supervisor.

But she was saying — tell John the story about your mother.

**Mrs. Shank:** Mother made a rule the children couldn't have lunch or dinner until we killed 25 flies. She'd give us each a swatter. This was every day. And if you killed a mosquito, that counted for ten; so you only had 15 flies to kill. (John Eckstine laughed.)

**Mrs. Finlon:** Those were the days when we didn't have screens very much, and air conditioning was unheard of.

**Mrs. Shank:** Those weren't invented yet.

**Mrs. Finlon:** The breeze came from the Bay, and nobody ever thought about even fans. Once in awhile they'd have fans up in the ceiling.

**Mr. Eckstine:** Why didn't you have screens? Was it a luxury item? You couldn't afford it or —

**Mrs. Shank:** No, we had screens. We always had screens. You mean in the schools?

**Mrs. Finlon:** Oh, in the school we didn't have screens.

**Mrs. Shank:** But we had screens in our house.

**Mr. Eckstine:** Okay.

**Mrs. Finlon:** But when Dad first built the cottages, we had screens in all of them. But, you know, the screen door, everybody was coming in and out all the time and the flies were all coming with them.

**Mrs. Shank:** Oh, sure.

My little brother used to have a game they played with him. He'd always save string. And then when anybody — or anybody would come for the weekend, they'd hold the end and he'd unroll and see how far he could go with his string. And he was thrilled when he had enough string to get all the way to the beach.

He was only three when we came — my brother Russell. And he would have been four in November. And that year he learned to swim, front dive, and back dive, and was very very good. And he became the pet of everybody in North Beach.

And they had a picnic — an outdoor picnic every Fourth of July, I guess it was. Maybe it was Labor Day, but anyway, we had a family picnic and all the families would come to it and all chipped in on money to help fix it up with prizes and things.