

Musical Memories Podcast: Mary Ann Platt

[00:01, intro music] *More* by Andy Williams

[00:49] **Greer McAllister:** So you mentioned this was your first dance song at your wedding.

[00:52] **Mary Ann Platt:** Yes.

[00:53] **G:** So where are you from?

[00:54] **M:** The Bronx.

[00:56] **G:** The Bronx. Were you—was that where your wedding was held?

[00:57] **M:** Yes.

[01:01] **G:** Do you have a big family?

[01:03] **M:** No, I only had one sister.

[01:05] **G:** And what about your husband?

[01:06] **M:** He had one sister.

[01:08] **G:** Well, there you go. And what was his name?

[01:11] **M:** John, but I called him Jack.

[01:15] **G:** So what do you feel when you hear that song?

[01:20] **M:** Sentimental, maybe weepy.

[01:26] **G:** I'm sure.

[01:28, narration] **G:** I ask Mary Ann to tell me the story of how she first met her husband, Jack.

[01:34] **M:** That's a story.

[01:35] **G:** Yeah?

[01:36] **M:** I was— One of my friends got married and I was a bridesmaid and her brother was hitting on me and I did not like him. And we went back to her parent’s house for an after party and I didn’t know— I wanted to get out of there. And down the block was a candy store that mother’s friends owned. So I got my coat and I secretly left and walked down the street. And when I walked in, my mother’s friend’s husband says, What are you doing here? I say, I need a lift home. So there were a bunch of boys there. So he says, Jack Platt, you’re taking Mary Ann home. So that’s how—he took me home and that Monday he called me for a date. And our first date was a movie. I don’t remember the name.

[02:55] **G:** That’s awesome. Did you like him right away?

[02:59] **M:** Yes, and my mother liked him.

[03:03] **G:** Oh, that’s important...So how did you pick this song for your wedding?

[03:09] **M:** I guess it was the song that it was around. Andy Williams was kinda big at the time. I picked it. I loved the words to it. And ‘cause he says, whatever you want.

[03:27] **G:** Was he like that? Very accommodating?

[03:31] **M:** Yes.

[03:33, narration] **G:** After marrying, Mary Ann and Jack continued to live in the Bronx, where Jack worked in banking and Mary Ann was a nursery school teacher.

[03:42] **M:** But I wound up teaching nursery school and I loved that. And then, “Miss Mary Ann! Miss Mary Ann!” Close my ears! But they're cute at that age and you love seeing the changes. I mean I only had the one child but I had fifteen others six hours a day, and I didn’t have to go through carrying them.

[4:22, narration] **G:** They were greatly involved in their community and their family life was very strong, thanks to the love that Jack and Mary Ann had for each other.

[4:30] **M:** We did most everything, you know, together. Traveled a little bit and made good friends doing that too. That’s one thing you should do when you’re young— keep yourself open to new things. Don’t be afraid of them. My husband was always the pusher. You know, sometimes I would say, Oh, you know, I don’t know if I want to do that. “No, we’re doing it. Okay.

[5:11, narration] **G:** Jack, a lively man, loved interacting with people. Mary Ann recalls how he liked to sing.

[5:19] **M:** He loved to sing. He thought he had a great voice. At one time, he thought he was like María Alonso. He had a song that Phil Harris sang, *The Texas Ranger*.

[5:37, music] ***Look Out Stranger I'm a Texas Ranger by Phil Harris***

[5:55] **M:** He would get up and sing it anywhere and I'd go, Sit down! Sit down! And that only encouraged him more.

[6:04, narration] **G:** Jack and Mary Ann liked to dance as well, especially to big band music.

[6:10] **M:** And my husband and my song—favorite song was *In the Mood* by Glenn Miller.

[6:19, music] ***In the Mood by Glenn Miller***

[6:42] **M:** So whenever we heard that, wherever we were, we got up and danced. It could be the middle of the street. Our son would get embarrassed if we got up and danced. We'd get up and dance in the living room if we heard a song, and of course he'd shrink in his chair, and no one else was around.

[7:07] **G:** Mary Ann says their favorite dance to do was the Lindy hop.

[7:11] **M:** When we were really young, he would pick me up and throw me this way and that way.

[7:20] **G:** Is the Lindy, like, very upbeat? Is it like...

[7:24] **M:** Yes. Did you ever see Dick Clark and the dance? That was a program on that came from Philadelphia and he always the top, you know, present singers on. And that was the theme song, was a Lindy.

[7:48, music] ***American Bandstand Theme Song***

[8:10, narration] **G:** It wasn't just Mary Ann and Jack who liked to dance. Their granddaughter, Nicole, who is now twenty-seven, danced for much of her life, thanks to Mary Ann.

[8:20] **M:** I got her into dance when she was three. She had to audition because Beverly who ran the studio didn't think—she really didn't like to take three year olds or under, but she listened,

Nicole, and followed whatever she was told. Yeah, she danced even in college. It was in her DNA! I don't know, I don't know. My son doesn't like to dance, so I don't know whether it just skipped a generation. At her age, I was married six years and had a child already— a different time, which was okay.

[9:16] **G:** Jack and Mary Ann were married for sixty-three years. They shared a life full of music, dancing, and of course, love.

[9:25] **M:** He saved my, my life.

[9:28, outro music] ***More* by Andy Williams**