



Betty Lu Anderson Oral History Interview, June 1, 2017

Title

“Running The Barometer during World War II”

Date

June 1, 2017

Location

Anderson residence, Portland, Oregon.

Summary

In the interview, Anderson describes her family background and upbringing in southeast Portland, her experiences as a high school journalist, and the process by which she decided to attend Oregon State College in 1942. In reflecting on her years as an OSC undergraduate, Anderson shares her memories of campus traditions, the climate during war-time, and her studies in Home Economics. Of particular interest are Anderson's recollections of life in *The Barometer* newsroom, where she worked as a sports writer and, during her senior year, as editor. She likewise comments on social life at OSC during the 1940s, as well as her church activities and living arrangements while an undergraduate.

From there, Anderson recalls the fifteen years that she spent at *The Oregonian*, initially as a clerk and later as an editor for the paper's Women's department. Notably, Anderson recounts the ticker tape parade held in downtown Portland to celebrate the conclusion of World War II. Anderson then traces her career in librarianship and her association with the Western Baptist Seminary.

The session concludes with a lengthy discussion of Anderson's family; her recitation of an unpublished poem that she wrote; notes on activities in retirement; and an expression of her pride in being a Beaver.

Interviewee

Betty Lu Anderson

Interviewer

Mike Dicianna

Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/anderson/>

Transcript

Mike Dicianna: Today is Thursday, June 1, 2017 and we're in Portland, Oregon at the residence of Betty Lu Nixon Anderson. Class of 1945 of Oregon State College. Also here is her stepson Steven Anderson. And my name is Mike Dicianna. I'm an oral historian for the OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project. Well, Betty Lu, one of the things that we always like to do is get a basis on this and how about a quick biographical sketch of where and when you were born, your family, and grade school—that kind of thing.

Betty Lu Anderson: Okay, well, I was born in this neighborhood where I'm living now.

MD: Oh.

BA: I'm living at the courtyard in Southeast Portland, that's Southeast Division and 60th, and I was born in the Portland Adventist Hospital down on 60th and Belmont. I have lived in this neighborhood and gone to grade school, two grade schools: Franklin Primary, which is now Atkinson down on Division. And then I went to Joseph Kellogg up on Powell Boulevard, around 60th something or other. And my parents lived on 71st street southeast near Powell. Then I went to Franklin High School and graduated in 1941, and I have lived, again, in this neighborhood when I was married my first time, so I'm here again. I'm going to visit the 103rd, perhaps I'm not sure on the timing, but I believe Franklin High School is celebrating one hundred and three years of its life. Not at this [points over shoulder]—I don't think it was always right here, perhaps so, but I think it started somewhere else. There are 12 of us we've found who live here who are planning to go down there.

MD: I'm sure the kids will just eat that up. How about family? Siblings and that kind of thing?

BA: Okay. I have one brother and his name is Gaylord Day Nixon, and he also went to Oregon State. He started in '42, but he went into the service, and I don't remember what year he graduated but it was in the School of Forestry, so I know you can look that up. My parents were born in Iowa and came out to the west. My dad worked for the telephone company and planted the poles upon which they hung the lines upon which the telephone messages went up and down the Columbia Gorge, and that was quite a story because that was sort of a pioneering project for those men and the telephone company at that time. Let's see—where am I? I got married, did I tell you that? I married Bob Johnstone, Robert Erie Johnstone. The Erie denotes some of his history, as his mother was born, not in Iowa, Washington—but her parents were born in Norway. There's that side of things. Then his dad was born in England of Scottish parents. So I have some European ties with those folks. Then I got married—Again, I'll tell you a little bit about that later, but I married a Swede.

MD: [Laughs].

BA: [Smiles] Anderson. He didn't drink coffee. Can you imagine a man who's a Swede who didn't drink coffee much? [Shakes head].

MD: [Laughs].

BA: I had a hard time with that.

MD: Well you know now you were growing up towards the end of the Depression era—

BA: Yeah.

MD: Like when you were going to grade school and stuff.

BA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MD: How did that affect you, your family, those last years of the Depression?

BA: I think it was a good thing in a way because my mother was able to sew, and in that time the public schools had a sewing class, I guess you'd call it, maybe classes all over time. My mom made almost all my dresses. How about that? [Smiles]. I loved all the clothes she made me. It was really wonderful. I love sewing too. Maybe her interest in sewing and

home things, canning and all that stuff, because I learned to can at home, set me off for the interest in Home Ec at Oregon State. My folks always had a garden. We ate corn on the cob because they were from Iowa.

[0:05:04]

MD: Okay.

BA: We grew our own [smiles and laughs]. We picked beans and canned them as well as ate them at the dinner table. We had chickens.

MD: In town, you had chickens?

BA: In town, yeah. We were southeast 71st Street off of Powell in a big kind of an orchard behind us, pear trees. Oh, I was a tomboy too. I didn't have too many girlfriends in my neighborhood, but my brother and his little buddies would let me climb trees with them [laughs and smiles]. So that was fun. I also learned to ride a bike with my brother and almost wrecked his bike. Later my husband, Herb Anderson I married in '93, he tried to help me learn a bike again, but I was too scared I was going to fall. You don't fall when you're in your late '60s.

MD: Well, they say you never forget.

BA: [Laughs and shakes head].

MD: Now you graduated from high school in 1941, so that would have been June in 1941.

BA: Yes.

MD: So what prompted you to decide to go to Oregon State? Was it a given or did you apply to other schools?

BA: No I didn't. I wanted to go to Oregon State. Because although they weren't the school of journalism, University of Oregon was, I had an English teacher and advisor for our school paper, which was called the *Franklin High Post*, went to Oregon State, and she encouraged me to think about going on with journalism, since I seemed to like it a lot. So that's what sent me in that direction. I interviewed, since she told me that, I went down and interviewed the two women. We had two newspapers at that time: *The Oregon Journal*, Mary Collins Cottage. I interviewed the woman who was the head of that. Then I interviewed the head of the women's department of *The Oregonian* and that was called The Oregonian Home Institute, which is kind-of trite. They changed it later to the Oregonian Hostess House, when they moved the—let's see, I'm getting ahead of myself. It was fun to work for *The Oregonian* and also to interview her, because that was in the old Pink Lady, pink stone building kitty corner from Meier & Frank's downtown Portland, on 6th Street, I think. Anyhow, that's where I went to work after I graduated.

MD: So you're a freshman and so you're a freshman girl. Were you living, does that mean you were living at the co-op house or were you living in the dorms then?

BA: No. Actually, my first year, I don't know all the reasons why, maybe it was a little less expensive, anyhow my folks were trying things out and I got a little scholarship, but we were watching the pennies and dollars, and so I lived in a private home. Another girl and I who roomed with this lady in the south part of Corvallis, and I walked over to—it wasn't very far to campus. But the second year I moved over to Heather House, which was one of the six co-ops for women there on the campus.

MD: Yeah, because that was a big thing.

BA: By the way, another thing we did as freshman I had forgotten until I thought about it the other day, I think all the girls had to wear green ribbons in their hair. I can't believe that we had to do that, but we did.

MD: One of the greatest traditions of the college: the boys had to wear the little green caps.

BA: Ahh, yeah.

MD: And the girls had to wear the green ribbons.

BA: Thank you for reminding me of that.

MD: That's one of the—

BA: I'm glad the boys had feel embarrassed too [smiles].

MD: They did. They called them rook caps.

BA: Yeah, okay.

MD: And you were the rook-ettes, because you were a girl.

BA: [Laughs and touches top of head].

MD: Well, one of the questions that I'm just always honored to ask. Everybody has a significant memory that is imprinted on them of an event, whether it be, like for me the assassination of JFK and the younger kids the Challenger disaster. I always love to ask do you remember where and when you first heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor?

BA: Yes. It was my freshman year, so I was living in Mrs. Cooper's home. I don't know how we knew that we should have the radio on, but we did have the radio on.

[0:10:03]

It was nighttime as I recall. I don't know if that fits with the timing. But I remember sitting on the floor of her living room and hearing this ominous announcement, and I believe we heard the speech that President Roosevelt gave us. I can't remember everything, but I know that was a [grimaces] scary time. I can't remember my girlfriend's name, it seems like it was Elizabeth, but that doesn't sound right either. Anyhow, I don't remember whether I cried or what, but it was just momentous.

MD: I'm assuming that there was a definite mood on campus that Monday morning, everybody hearing about it. Did you sense that?

BA: Yes. I don't remember anything much on the campus of mood things. I don't know if you can remember 72 years back and get all the nuances and that sort of thing. As I told you before, I remember the day I wrote that editorial when it was VE day. I don't remember V—see we had VE Day, where before that we had VD Day, didn't we?

MD: Well, that was D-Day.

BA: D-day, that was it. Thank you.

MD: The invasion in June.

BA: Yeah. I don't remember that day. I mean, how come I don't? I mean, I do but I don't. Do I remember the pictures I've seen forever? You know of Eisenhower? He's my hero, by the way. I got a cup from his Eisenhower Foundation the other day with his name on it [smiles]. He is one of my heroes. I thought he was a good president as well as a wonderful humani—well, he was a soldier and a tough one, I'm pretty sure, from what I've heard, but he was also very human, very people oriented. Let's see, where was I? Do you want me to talk about campus?

MD: Let's talk—yeah, I really, really want to learn about what it was like during the war years, especially for a woman on campus. We kind of know some things, like you were a Home Ec major. What other activities did you do? I know that you're all over the yearbooks.

BA: Well, I'm on the newspaper. So activities, we were always, you knew what was happening and was interested in what was going on, and all the convocations and I don't remember any specific ones or anything. I remember having a wonderful band that performed quite a lot. What was that guy's name Baird?

MD: Yeah, mm-hmm. One of the famous—

BA: He was a wonderful leader and the kids really played for him. I took all the Home Ec courses, but you also took all the history and stuff, and sometime during my one year, I don't know what year, I sprained my ankle in gym class on one of those horses. What do you call those things you're supposed to jump, leather things you hop up on?

MD: Hobby horse, yeah, mm-hmm.

BA: Never done that before. But anyhow. Guess what I had to do? Use crutches all over campus, even going up stairs because we didn't have any elevators [smiles]. So that was interesting [laughs].

MD: I believe there's a mention in one of the articles in the *Barometer* or the yearbook about, "Remember her? She's that girl who was on crutches all over campus." There's a mention about that.

BA: No kidding. I didn't remember that.

MD: Related to you.

BA: [Laughs].

MD: So when you were at OSU, or OSC—

BA: Yes, that's right.

MD: Did you have any special classes that you enjoyed, journalism, any special professors that meant a lot to you?

BA: [Sighs] Well, what comes to mind first is the one class that I thought I'd never make it through was physics. It was a part of science that I'd never tasted, so to speak. It was hard, but I knew it was important. Gosh, I studied that hard. Now I'm more interested in like gravity or something, there's something about the way things fit [motions with hands] and so on and so forth. But let's see, I don't know that prof's name. Adelaide Lake was one of the journalism teachers. There was a Mr. Burtner on journalism, and Fred Shideler who was the head of the department.

[0:15:02]

Those people were all important. My Home Ec teachers, I can't remember any of their names. Eva Milam was head of the department. I surely remember her. One aspect of Home Ec that I thought was good and I don't think we have that anymore. It has expanded and it's called the department of what? Human Resources—

MD: They've changed their names many times [laughs].

BA: I don't remember for sure, but anyhow ours was mostly foods and nutrition, fashion and style or sewing, and maybe family relations or something like that. And under the family thing we had what was called Practice House, I believe, oddball name. But golly, I think it was a whole semester we had to spend out there, so many of us, how many? Six or eight, maybe more. We each had a specific job for a week, including childcare, which was a 2 or 3-year-old little kid. That was very interesting and very helpful. I never had any kids but I'm so glad that we all experienced it together. It was really a fun thing. It's too bad they don't do that now. I think, doggonit, some people think marriage and family life is not necessarily a part of your future, so why be interested?

MD: Yeah, or your education.

BA: It's a part of our life forever. For everybody. We don't have. We don't have people.

MD: There was a number of houses on campus and they had what they called practice babies.

BA: Oh, did we call them babies? No, we didn't call—

MD: The term that comes up in our records sometimes is practice babies.

BA: No, really? I never, we never called them that.

MD: Yours were a little older though, huh?

BA: Huh?

MD: The one that you dealt with was a little—

BA: Oh, she was a little toddler.

MD: Ah.

BA: I think a little. Yeah, we picked her up. She wasn't too big. I hope they don't still, or didn't continue calling them practice babies. That's awful. We just had a little house child, or whatever [laughs].

MD: The program ended and changed in the late '60s—

BA: You know when it changed?

MD: Yeah, the early to mid-'60s. But yeah, we were one of many campuses that had the whole in-house training, and it's interesting to hear that story.

BA: It was really good. And I made a whole suit for myself. Green suit. I remember that. I wasn't too proud of it, but was sort of proud of it [laughs]. I loved sewing but I wasn't you know every—

MD: Now the journalism part of it is interesting due to the fact that during the war this was the only time on campus that women were the majority.

BA: [Nods].

MD: *The Barometer* and—

BA: *The Beaver*.

MD: *The Beaver*, and all these were run by predominantly women.

BA: Right.

MD: And their editors and their leaders were women, which was unique for the era.

BA: Yes.

MD: So let's talk a little bit about your life in *The Barometer*, and how it progressed to the point where you became the editor of *The Barometer*, in 1945, in January of 1945, which is just epic to have this story.

BA: Well, I wasn't the first editor, but I was the second. And that is due to the fact that Pat Glenn Hagood was only Pat Glen for the time that she as our, well she was on staff a long time like I was, and her boyfriend Mel Hagood had gone into the service and they decided to get married. So she left campus in January, and I became editor in February, but Pat and I had been good friends and there are a whole bunch of women who worked on *The Barometer*. Like I said, you can start being a reporter as soon as you took journalism classes, because you have assignments for that kind of thing. There were some men on campus who were civilians, but not a lot, but we had both I think at the end, we even had some of the, we had a GI page, I know, so I think—

MD: The "G2 Page."

BA: The "G2", okay. I don't remember all the names and stuff. So we interacted with the GIs on campus. I remember personally, I'm sure there are many ways of interaction, because I read a little bit about them at the sorority and at our house too we have them over for parties and stuff, but we went out to Camp Adair occasionally.

[0:20:07]

I went once to the, what do you call it? They had square dances. So we took a busload out to square dance and wore big skirts. Let's see, what else did we do? I'll tell you what, I even dated a guy from Louisiana, and I got engaged. Can you imagine that? And another sign of the times and very good for me [laughs]—I think now, he sent me a letter. Have you heard of a Dear John letter? Sorry, da, da. He wrote me a Dear Mary letter: sorry, don't think this is going to work, bye bye.

MD: [Laughs] Oh well.

BA: So I went home. My parents lived in Portland I think at that time. No during the war my parents lived in Salem. And they had a sawdust burner to heat the house, furnace. I threw in the letters that he had written in the furnace [smiles].

MD: I love it. Now that's another thing that is interesting about the reporting and *The Barometer*, the way that the yearbooks looked. It was a wartime stance as far as how the college was. It revolved, a lot of the college revolved around war news and everything. Now did you guys keep up on what was happening in Japan and Europe and write about it? What were some of the articles that you wrote over the years?

BA: I'm sorry. You know, I don't remember any special articles I wrote. I know we must have kept up, well, in those editorial I wrote a kind of an editorial thing called "As Always," I mean, was it called "As Al—"?" Yeah, as always, and that was the way it was signed. My name wasn't on it, but I guess the staff knew it was mine, and maybe anybody who asked got told, but I don't know for sure about that. In any event, I can read from issues of *The Barometer* I read now that we kept up with it. I don't know how—did we have a ticker tape? I know ticker tapes were around.

MD: Yeah.

BA: I don't think we had them in our newsroom. I don't remember that.

MD: We'll have to look.

BA: I know when I worked for *The Oregonian* later they had a ticker tape to keep track of stuff, but. Gosh, we certainly wanted those men on campus to be a part of us, but we wanted the men who had gone away from us to be a part of us. So I guess we had a system for sending the papers to them somehow. I don't recall that.

MD: Yeah. *The Oregon State Yank* was basically a quarterly newspaper.

BA: [Nods] Okay, okay that's—

MD: About news from the, basically campus news and Oregon news as well as news about the other veterans.

BA: Okay.

MD: Well the other soldiers around the world.

BA: I don't know who edited that. I don't have a history on that in my mind. I'd like to see it sometime.

MD: I'm sure it was—they were graduates from the class of '43 or so.

BA: Really? Okay. I'd like to see it sometime.

MD: Yeah. I can do that.

BA: One little aside from my memory on the papers before I became editor and one of those other years that I was still typing little stories, I became the sports editor [laughs]. But I couldn't go in the men's dressing room.

MD: No [laughs].

BA: Of course [smiles].

MD: So you were the sports editor. So this was some of the time that collegiate sports were down, especially during the height of the war they weren't able to travel.

BA: Yeah, right.

MD: Intramural stuff—did you write the intramural sports articles?

BA: I can't remember that. I took tennis. I tried to learn tennis. I went swimming [laughs]. I took swimming. But I don't remember writing any stories.

MD: Well one of the biggest sports events that happened at Oregon State while you were there—

BA: I know! [Gasps] of course!

MD: —was the Rose Bowl of 1942.

BA: [Claps hands] Yes! I remember when the guys came back from—they won!

MD: The only Oregon bowl we've won.

BA: [Laughs]. I can remember when they came back how the campus was alive. I don't know if we wrote a story. That was '41, so I wasn't even—

MD: Yeah, the Rose Bowl was about '42.

BA: I was barely a freshman.

MD: But you could sense that it was a big deal on campus?

BA: Oh yes. And Terry Baker wasn't here, wasn't he—

MD: He was later in the '60s, yeah.

[0:25:03]

BA: Later, right. Who was the star then? I think—

MD: Well, Martin Chaves, and there was a Don Durdan was the guy that basically won the game for us.

BA: Did Andy Landforce play on it?

MD: He was on the team, but he ended up being in the radio announcer's booth—

BA: [gasps and smiles].

MD: Giving information to the radio announcer for NBC.

BA: How about that?

MD: But he was there.

BA: Yeah. I have—Andy Landforce, did I give you that? [Chuckles]. When I was a freshman, I know I was in the building close to the Women's Building just next door to it, to its right. What building is that? Some class I had in there. I was walking across campus and Andy Landforce walked me across the campus. He was so kind and big—I called him like a big brother. No dating advances or anything like that. Just a keen guy to introduce us.

MD: He was class president at that time, too.

BA: Was he?

MD: Yes.

BA: Just introducing a young kid to the campus and "Glad you're here," da, da ta. So I saw him a couple more times on campus, but that's it.

MD: Well that's one of the things about the college is the connections, and the connections through this oral history program—people keep coming up.

BA: Is that right?

MD: All the time. Yeah. It's just, this place has been kind of a family for so many people who were there. Now you were around campus. You keep talking about the GIs. During the war Oregon State was one of the locations for the ASTP, the Army Specialized Training Program. So there was a high number of actual GIs on campus. Did they go around in uniform? Did the campus feel military to you?

BA: Oh yeah. They wore their uniforms all the time. They didn't wear their hats in class. I can't remember if we had a lot of—I don't think they were ever in our classes.

MD: They're a lot of engineering.

BA: Yeah. Engineering and I believe two languages: Chinese and Russian.

MD: Yes. And Russian.

BA: And this fella that I dated he was in the band. They even had a band. I forget what he played. Clarinet I think. Anyhow, so that was interesting. Kind of like a unit [motions with hands]. Don't most bases have a music group or something?

MD: Oh yeah, yeah. And we've had a cadet band going clear back to—we're actually Oregon State's got the oldest band on the west coast and in the PAC-12.

BA: Oh is that right? Do we still have an NROTC or whatever it is?

MD: Yes. We have all of the different services at Oregon State.

BA: Oh really?

MD: Back then it was just Army ROTC.

BA: Yeah, okay.

MD: Then now we have them all.

BA: Really? Okay, that's good.

MD: One of the things I always like to hear about is how was your commencement. Because we're coming up on commencement this year. What did getting your diploma from Oregon State College mean to you?

BA: I know I was there [laughs]. But honestly I don't know who the speaker was. I can't remember any detail. I remember it was kind of fun. We flipped over [motions flipping a tassel]—that's the sign that you graduated. It was in the basketball building.

MD: Men's gym.

BA: What is that called?

MD: Well, it's now Langston Hall, but it was the men's gym at the time.

BA: Oh, the men's gym. Right. By the way, the football—I do remember we had football games sometime during that. Because we went—was it Gill Stadium then? Or what was that [motions with hand].

MD: Back then it was Bell Field, but you went to—

BA: What was it?

MD: Bell Field. But you went to the football games?

BA: And you know what we did? We women? We wore corsages of a great big orange chrysanthemum with a black pipe cleaner O in the middle with ribbons. Can you imagine a woman nowadays wearing a corsage to a football game? [Laughs].

MD: A football game. Did you go to the basketball games?

BA: Oh yeah, oh I loved bas—

MD: A lot of the sports events, well, considering you were a sports writer, yeah.

BA: Yeah. Well, I've always—my dad was really interested in all kinds of sports, so I got that from him. And my first husband and I, Bob, I just insisted on him and I going down to a basketball game or two. The only seats we could get were up there high somewhere. We could hardly see, but I got to yell [laughs].

[0:30:07]

MD: They were big years for us. So did you ever get a chance to interview Slats Gill?

BA: No, I just admired him from afar [laughs].

MD: Yeah, and then, yeah, because this was the era of great coaches.

BA: And if I did I don't remember it. Who knows? He was on campus then, wasn't he?

MD: Yes, yes, mm-hmm.

BA: In '45? Before '45 is what I—yeah.

MD: Yeah. He started in late '30s, so.

BA: Yeah, he was a great. We've got great coaches. Oh, Casey, wow, what a baseball team. [Laughs]. When's that next thing going to be? Aren't they in the World Series or something? Or that's not what they call it.

MD: They're doing the regionals but soon, and we'll be going to the World Series, the best—

BA: Yeah, I got a look at that Steven—

MD: Number one team in the nation for 2017.

BA: Baseball is a wonderful sport, I think. It's kind of slow and I can keep up with it.

MD: Yeah.

BA: Soccer I don't like.

MD: Back then the coach for the baseball team was Ralph Coleman.

BA: Yes, I remember that name but I don't think I interviewed him.

MD: Did you go to the baseball games, too?

BA: Oh yeah. Occasionally.

MD: Yeah. Yeah.

BA: I think I liked basketball the most then, and football.

MD: Well, you know, you were, like I say, you were in the middle of everything, being part of the news staff. But what other kind of extra activities did you do as a student? How about dances?

BA: Well, I wasn't into dances a lot. I didn't—at that time for some reason in my church bringing up didn't go into dances much. I wasn't anti-people. I often went to them but didn't dance because I didn't know how. So [laughs] you didn't want to stumble around too much. But my church activities—by the way there's a Baptist Fellowship Group or something. I found my picture in it. I forgot we had one. I went to First Baptist Church.

MD: Mmm. Okay.

BA: And Pastor Ed Hart was the pastor. And we had a lively college group. I went to the Sunday school. They had a Sunday school as well, and any social events that they had. I have a funny story about coming back from a social event down there. I was—I think the church is still there. I lived at Heather House, as I told you, on 15th, I don't know if we have southwest or what. 15th Street and we were coming late. The girls had to be home by 10:00 after events. We weren't making it, so I took off my high heels and walked with my boyfriend the rest of the way [laughs]. Ran in my nylons or whatever we wore in those days. I guess it was nylons by then [laughs].

MD: To get back by curfew?

BA: To be—yes, yes.

MD: Where the guys didn't have that curfew, but you girls had to sign in and out and they kept track of you.

BA: And my co-resident living was very important to me. I liked the gals. We were independent. We had to little chores. I can't remember all the stuff. Sometimes we did the laundry's for—we each did our own laundry, personal type stuff, so there wasn't extra household laundry much. But we helped with the cooking. We had a hostess manager, an adult woman, and the gals did the rest of the housework and stuff. I don't know how many people we had. I guess I could have looked in there and enumerated us, but it was a goodly number and some of those gals were lifelong friends. I was trying to remember if I still had any friends that I keep up with from Oregon State days, and the only one I've kept up with the longest, she didn't live in my house, but she was another co-op gal, she lived down the street at Hazel Ray, I think.

MD: Yeah, Hazel Ray House.

BA: I think it was. And there was another one. I couldn't remember which one. But her name, the woman I'm trying to remember, is Joan Barker Engberg: E-n-g-b-e-r-g. She married an Oregon State guy when he came back from the war. They moved to California. Her job, after she graduated, she more nutrition and that science stuff. She became a nutritionist and dietician type person in a hospital. I was very proud of her. I wrote to her for quite a long time, but I haven't written to her lately. I don't know if I'm the one that dropped the bell, or if she's the one. I can try again. I think I found a letter recently that was 2014 or 2013 or something, maybe I could try. But you know when we get up into our 90s a lot of things can happen.

[0:35:02]

MD: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now I'd like to go back a little bit to the whole fact that you were the editor of *The Barometer* for basically the last part of your senior year. That's a big deal.

BA: Yeah?

MD: What were your duties? What did you do as the editor of *The Barometer* when you were there?

BA: I can't remember in detail, Mike, but I think I would make assignments for one thing. That's what most editors have to do. I would encourage people with writing if they were floundering or newer at the job. I've always been a people-helper person. I like to do that. I can't remember any arguments or anything. You know, in those days we put our [motions with hands] linotypes were used. So we went down to the *Gazette-Times* at night to put our paper together. They didn't let us set the type but we were down there with the guys that did it.

MD: Yeah, and do the columns and—

BA: And when I worked for *The Oregonian* they were also doing the linotypes, so I have a little bit of memory of what that's like to set up a page and watch the headlines go in and so forth. And the smell of the ink [laughs]. It really is stinky [laughs]. I think we were—it was a—is this too corny?—a collegial group [laughs]. And there were some men on the staff, I know it was—one guy, George Mavrodes, he was in our group at the church too and I think he wrote once in a while. There was another guy—George Dewey, he was the student body president and I think he wrote for the paper once in a while. See, as you said, they didn't put bylines on, and I just don't—

MD: Yeah, it's really strange. I mean it's very few do we have any articles who wrote them. So it's hard to tell.

BA: Yeah, well, most newspapers didn't in those days. It's very, I don't know. When did celebrity come in?

MD: I guess that's what it is, yeah.

BA: Maybe the magazines came in later and everybody's got to have their picture and their name, da, da, da, da. I don't know about that. But let's see. Margaret Buzzwell, was a friend. She was in the business side, too. Is that the ques—were you asking me what it was like to work on the paper or something?

MD: Yeah, kind of to be the editor kind of thing.

BA: Oh, I, I—well ,to be the editor we had to be careful because of going down there at night. So I got a bicycle. How did I bring up bicycles before? Anyhow. Yeah, I rode my bicycle down to the *GT*. How faraway is it? Or is it still in the same place? I can't remember.

MD: No, but yeah, downtown, yeah.

BA: So I was kind of worried but gosh I'm glad I don't have to do it nowadays.

MD: [Laughs].

BA: It's more scary on campuses sometimes for kids.

MD: Well.

BA: But you know we have to spend an hour or so down there, and we'd take turns I think and put the paper to bed.

MD: [Laughs].

BA: That's what we called it [laughs]. And as I think you reminded me, we weren't a weekly paper. We were every once and a while during the week. Maybe it cut down during wartime, I'm not sure about that too.

MD: Yeah. Tuesdays and Fridays, yeah. Yeah they did to save paper, yeah. Save resources. It was Tuesdays and Fridays I believe.

BA: I—maybe it's important to remember that we were treated like adults by the profs and I don't remember them hovering over us and saying, "Are you doing it right?" or da, da, da. You know, that kind of thing.

MD: Yeah, because Burtner was probably the advisor.

BA: Not Burger.

MD: Art Burtner? Yeah.

BA: No, no.

MD: Well, who was the advisor for *The Barometer*?

BA: Well, Shideler and Lake were closer, I think.

MD: Oh.

BA: Burtner did some of it. He taught a class, too. But wasn't he in charge of another publication on campus? Kind of having to do with [sighs] agriculture who—

MD: Yeah. There was one put out by them. By the School of Ag as well as Forestry.

BA: But I'm sure he—he helped us with editorials too, I think.

MD: Hmm.

BA: He was a thought provoking type of guy.

MD: Yeah, because Shideler, that's a big name.

BA: Yeah [nods]. He was very good. He passed away too soon, I remember I was so disappointed to read that he passed away.

[0:40:05]

MD: Yeah. So your time at college it's special. And when I have a chance to visit with people about during this interesting time, there's interesting times at campus, you went through one of the—being there during the war years, you went through, you know, an incredible time on campus. Do you have a favorite Oregon State College memory that just sticks out in your mind?

BA: [Smiles] Well, this is going to seem strange, but it's one of my fun things that—I'll probably think of two. Anyhow, this was—the dairy building had ice cream cones. What a treat. We could go over there any time, I think, or maybe it was just certain afternoons [laughs]. And they made good ice cream on campus.

MD: Yep, and you always find a few of the GIs at the counter?

BA: Well, sure. Yeah, uh-huh.

MD: What are your memories of the Memorial Union? It's always been the living room of campus.

BA: Oh yeah. Our office was there.

MD: Yeah.

BA: *The Barometer* office was there. Golly. A lot of special groups had their offices there. So I think that was a center for information among groups on campus. I can't remember any special one that I would go see particularly right now. But it was the living room on campus, as you say. And we would meet our friends in there sometimes for chats or to pick to go to another date or whatever [smiles]. By the way I did have a job on campus. I forgot to tell you about that.

MD: Oh, okay.

BA: I worked in the lab with gooey stuff [laughs]. For not being too good at some sciences I got this job where you had to work with—what do you call it in science? Steven did you ever work in science where you have these plates where they do specimens and—

MD: Oh, the little petri dishes?

BA: Petrie dishes, but as I recall I had some bigger ones that were square. I don't know what big experiment we were working on, but I was the cleanup girl. I got to wash all the goopy stuff. But I got money for it [laughs]. It helped [laughs]. Anyhow, and it was a side of campus—I didn't take any science except I told you I did squeeze through in my physics class, but I was pleased at the end of my college campus career that I had experienced science in its all stages and parts.

MD: One of the other buildings that—now when you were at college the building for the library—

BA: Oh yes.

MD: —was over on the other side of the library quad and there was the bandstand. Then you moved over farther over is Waldo Hall. Do you have memories of the library as it was and—?

BA: Yes, I certainly do. I studied there—I just know I studied there. I don't know. People say you pick up a date there, too. Maybe I did. I don't know [laughs]. I don't remember that. I want to go back someday and see what the campus library looks like now. I know I went back to my high school, Franklin High School, and it doesn't—it's got computers all over the place instead of books all over the place. Interesting change.

MD: Yeah, the library now is where, you remember the bandstand?

BA: Sort of.

MD: Yeah. That's where the library's at now.

BA: I know it's a bigger place.

MD: Brand new building, yeah, brand new building—

BA: I've seen it. I have been to campus once or twice.

MD: It would be one to—

BA: I've been to the Home Ec reunion, one '60—I've been to two reunions: one was a *Barometer* reunion and one was a Home Ec reunion. One was a sixtieth, and I can't remember which is which. So I've seen some of the changes—

MD: Lot of changes—

BA: --in the last decade.

MD: Lot of changes from your era [laughs]. Well let's shift gears here a little bit and talk about life after college. You're a brand new Oregon State College graduate with a diploma in hand, but you ended up going to work for *The Oregonian*, I understand.

BA: Yes, I had my job all ready to go because of that interview thing, I've done. And I kept in correspondence with, her name was Cathy Bollam: B-o-l-l-a-m. She was also a graduate of Oregon State. That probably helped me decide I wanted to go there instead of the journal.

[0:45:03]

So I began my job as a clerk, I guess you'd call it. I wasn't a writer but they let me write what we call leads on recipes. In those days the women's department had recipes and we had a food editor, a fashion editor, a home and garden editor, maybe others. But if you weren't an editor you did two main things: you wrote little lead paragraphs for a recipe that

people would be interested in like marionberry crisp, or marionberries weren't invented yet, or what's the other word, marionberries were—

MD: Developed, yeah, they were just getting started then, yeah.

BA: Developed, right. Okay, and/or you would also be on the telephone because in those days women, mostly homemakers, and other people occasionally, would call *The Oregonian* and want to know a recipe or had an etiquette question, or how do I clean up this mess I've got in my house and my kid just did or when is so-and-so meeting, occasionally. That kind of stuff. We were on the phone. We had recipes in a little cabinet like a library catalogue cards. Okay a whole bank of those, three or four decks. So I was one of the ones sitting at this desk, the desk with the deck and the phone.

MD: And you were answering questions, a lot of questions, or was it a fairly busy thing?

BA: Quite often, yes. It's—can you imagine.

MD: Well, especially around Thanksgiving and all the holidays, especially the holidays, yeah.

BA: Well, of course, of course. And of course we'd try to have the cookies recipes in the paper, and they'd have lots of—I think the women's section was one, two, three [motions with hands], three or four pages with pictures and all and different columns, because each of the editors would have a column. Maybe not every day, but I think the food editor had a column every day. Another thing that I did, well, I think I'm forgetting one of my jobs, but I didn't write an etiquette column, but I wrote another kind of a column, what kind of column was that [pauses closes eyes with hand to head]? I can't remember right now. Anyhow, oh I know what I wanted to tell you. I became the makeup editor. Now that has nothing to do, as you probably know, with makeup and lipstick. It was putting the paper together from a plan that we had decided—

MD: Yeah.

BA: --which was the lead article, which was going to go here and which picture went there and da, da. I would make my little pattern and layout and go into the newsroom, and that's how I got the smell of ink even more than I had as a worker on *The Barometer* down in Corvallis.

MD: And that was for the women's section?

BA: [Nods] Mm-hmm.

MD: Yeah.

BA: Yeah. So I liked doing that because as the makeup editor sometimes I could make assignments. I worked with my boss, Katie Bollam. Did I call her Katherine or Katie?

MD: Well, Kat, yeah.

BA: It's Katie. We called her Katie Bollam. Her name was Katherine, but we called her Katie. She was a great editor.

MD: Now you had a story in our emails that really—now you were on campus when victory in Europe occurred in May of 1945. But as the war came to a close in August, you were already at the—downtown.

BA: At *The Oregonian*. Oh yeah, [claps hands] that was a thrilling thing too. Yes. Okay, it was in August? Okay, how long had I been working? Only a couple months I guess. And lo and behold there was shouting in the streets. Well, first there was shouting in the newsroom, because they got it on the ticker tapes that they knew the war was over. So on VJ Day, people ask me, younger people here, what was VJ Day? And the gal asked me, the activity woman, here I was telling her you were coming to interview me because of that story I wrote, "VE Day, I've never heard of it," she said. I couldn't believe it. Okay, VE Day for all your listeners is Victory in Europe, which was in May 1945. VJ Day is Victory in Japan, and that was in August.

[0:50:14]

MD: Well, the bombs were dropped in August, and actually it was right in the beginning of September when the actual—

BA: Was it really? Then why do we call it VJ Day?

MD: Because it was the end of the war.

BA: Ah-ha. Because the bombs settled it.

MD: It was all right then.

BA: Ah-ha. Okay. Thank you. I didn't have that fact right in my head. Anyhow, what happened there was we heard too—because our offices were just across the hall from them, from the newsroom, so we all ran over there too, and they were running out to the windows that, we were on the sixth floor and hung over sixth street, and people were gathering down there. There was a mix of soldiers and regular citizens, and I got to throw my first ticker tape, just like New York City [laughs]. I was—what a crazy thing to be excited about [laughs]. But it wasn't just the ticker tape, it was the fact that it was going to be over, and all this sadness and blood spilled and blood given would come to an end for a while, for sure.

MD: That's a special memory to be able to be part of that.

BA: To be part of that and it was just wonderful. The people who were the news people were so friendly. And I think we had one woman reporter. That's something I'm proud of knowing, that *The Oregonian* had one woman reporter on the regular news staff.

MD: Yeah. That's something.

BA: Yeah [nods].

MD: How long did you work for *The Oregonian*, then?

BA: I worked 15 years. So what would, add up that for me. What would that be?

MD: Well it's '45, '50, '60. So basically during the 1950s you were involved with the newspaper.

BA: 1960—yeah, I was home for a while. Thought maybe could have babies. Ha, ha. That didn't work. So I got restless and walked down the street to help a friend who was a librarian at Western Baptist Seminary. It's just a few blocks away. And I love books, of course. Always had been a reader. And I asked her if I could help, you know, some summer job. Didn't have to pay me. And of course they didn't. I think my first paycheck was about a dollar and a half an hour. Well, I know what that's like. Anyhow, I liked it. So I kept working. Got a little more experience and our editor, [shakes head] I meant our librarians at the school had always been profs in the History department. Church history profs made good library directors. So I worked for two of them as an assistant. I got to be the person that would train and oversee the student helpers. So I got to learn the ropes enough to do that. Then I got to thinking, "Hey I kind of like this. So I wonder if I could get a library degree?" Well, somebody suggested I might like it too. And I agreed with them. No library school in town. I mean, there was a library school in town. I'd only heard of the library school at the University of Washington. I didn't think I wanted to go up, you know, how could I do that?

Okay. So we found out they had a school of librarianship at University of Portland. So I decided to take their classes and I could arrange it for summer school hours and night school. Because they taught a lot of folk who wanted to be school librarians in the public school system too. So that worked out fine for me. Because it was a religious school, a catholic school, my prof knew a lot about libraries for seminaries. So that was an extra bonus. That was really super. He knew about books that would help me in an extra way so that I felt I really—so I finally got my degree in 1971 in the summer, and I became then the library director for Western Seminary and I stayed there, I continued there as director for about 7 ½ years and then the school itself was growing. Not only the library itself but the school. Technical stuff had come in.

[0:55:01]

I learned to use a computer for the first time because we were putting our catalogue on that nowadays and hooked up with the Library of Congress, for goodness sakes, and other libraries in the state as well as other states. And so I told my boss, the dean of faculty, that I thought maybe we should look for another librarian and I'd like to continue working but I could be the reference librarian. We agreed on that, and we got a full-time librarian and that person. And we had two of those guys. One worked for a shorter time and now the same one that came a few years later. I retired from my job totally on the library staff in I think it was early 1992.

MD: So you had quite a long career in—

BA: So that was 29 years I worked in the library.

MD: Yeah.

BA: I can't say I was *the* librarian all that time, but I worked on the library staff, and I became a librarian in '71 and from then on I was a trained librarian. But I enjoyed it!

MD: It fits in with our program, yeah.

BA: I put things into the library, which they didn't know they needed, like poetry and some history and I was adamant about, because we were getting more and more women and diversification of training for being a Christian leader, wasn't just being a pastor. It was broadening. Not only missionaries and you need to know about countries and people. It was a whole lot of stuff.

MD: Counseling and, yeah, all that kind of thing yeah.

BA: It was really interesting to work with the profs and the students to enlarge not just the number of books but the scope [motions with hands] that we covered. Then as I say the computer and the worldwide world of library of books.

MD: Yep.

BA: [Laughs].

MD: And you were right there right through the development of that too.

BA: And we had microfilm, but I understand microfilm—I wonder if they're digitalizing stuff at the seminary too. I think you are on your campus.

MD: Yeah, we could be. But, yeah, we still have microfilm.

BA: Do you? [Smiles]

MD: Oh yeah.

BA: Okay. I guess not [laughs]. They don't deteriorate. They don't fray at the seams.

MD: Yeah. Well, also we always like to know a little bit about the families of our Beavers. And so we have, you know, like where and when did you get married and how did you meet him and all those kinds of things.

BA: Okay I've got two marriages to tell you about. The first one was 1947 was to Bob, Robert Erie Johnstone. I think I said that before. I met him at our church youth group. We were both, he was getting out of the service. I think he just got out of the service. Maybe I met him in his sailor outfit. You suppose that did it? I'm not sure [laughs]. I'm not sure about that. But anyhow. By the way, he did finish, you know when guys got, they got some of their service time devoted to education, so then he went back to get his degree. He went up to the University of Washington and finished and I stayed in Portland and had my job and I went up there occasionally to Washington. Which is interesting because later on I have more relatives from my second husband who live in the Washington Seattle area. But Bob and I lived in Southeast Portland [points over arm] on Southeast 57th Street, which isn't very far from where we are now. We had a yard and flower gardens and little vegetable garden. He worked for his dad in a fruit and produce business and then he was a real

estate man. So he knew Portland pretty well. We traveled a wee bit. We went to New York City and Washington, D.C., one time for a very interesting time. I had never been to anything way back there, so that was fun. We also visited some of the friends that we had down in the California area.

[1:00:00]

So we went in those two ways. His family liked to go to the beach at Newport, and subsequently I have another time at the beach in a different way. Let's see what else? Oh, we were very active in our church. He was a singer. A baritone singer as was his brother, so they were sort of keen in and they were very good singers. They even sang solos and duets and so forth. But because I was dating him to begin with and then I stayed on as a choir member because we could go to practice together as husband and wife. But I'm not a good singer. I love singing but I'm not a good reader, so when the tunes were a little tricky I'm not the best one to have singing with you.

I quit that after a while but continued my job at the library and we were very, we liked having friends over. We had a piano. We would play our piano that my parents had so we could, even though I couldn't play the piano we could have a piano just sitting by as well as friends who played the piano come over and we had a lot of sings with both the married people and the young people because Bob and I worked with the young people at our church. We were—in those days we didn't have a youth pastor. So we were the high school kids' sponsors with another couple. We helped the kids plan their evening meetings as well as their social events and acted like chaperones for their outings and stuff like that: going to the beach and mountains and so on and so forth like that.

MD: Taught Sunday school?

BA: Oh yeah. I did. I taught first grade for quite a while. In fact, that's an interesting story to show how life is intertwined [motioned with hands]. I had two young men whom I taught who were in first grade Sunday school—they were six years old—I know now as a young man and then part of my mentoring team, one's named Chuck Ferguson and one's named Jim Gordon. And he still sings at that church. Jim as a soloist [motions over shoulder]. He became a soloist. So that's interesting. People in your life if you stay in the same town don't go away too far. Find them again.

MD: Yeah. Even metropolitan Portland.

BA: Yes, in metropolitan Portland [smiles and nods].

MD: And so your second husband comes in--?

BA: 1993 Herb and I married, but we had a very short [giggles] short courtship. As I said I retired and my parents had moved to a retirement community and so I moved to an apartment quite close to them. They lived in Willamette View Manor on the ridge of the Willamette River out there in Southeast Portland and I moved to an apartment close by so I could go over and visit them. My dad had passed away in '91, so my mom was alone over there, so we were visiting quite often and so forth, but I also was still active in my Sunday School Class, and adult Sunday school classes keep the widows and the widowers. That's our lifetime social group, so to speak, in the Sunday school class.

So I went to a retreat one summer in 1992 in the fall of and—probably October, late August—and lo and behold this fellow who used to be our pastor named Herb Anderson was a special speaker. And for some reason I was attracted to him. Well, he was a good speaker. Our family always loved him really as a speaker and a leader. My dad was on the deacon board and so was my husband. We knew him. We didn't know his kids very well, but we knew he had them, so that made him a good guy. He had kids [smiles] okay. So Herb and I were on a game group. We had games as well as speaking and eating, of course, like all retreats. And we played 20 questions I think it is or something, and anyhow during the course of this game we had to draw symbols for people to guess or something. And by golly this pastor I knew as a speaker was drawing cartoony stuff. Interesting. So I was interested in that.

[1:05:01]

Later on we were playing lawn bowling thing. For some reason he'd be down, well I guess he was down at that end of the little ally, which was a carpet [chuckles] to catch the ball in case it didn't go in the holes, right? [Laughs] because it was a channel thing that you were supposed to get your balls to roll into.

MD: Yeah.

BA: And get some to kick over I guess. Anyhow for some reason this guy at the end of the ally had the twinkliest blue eyes, that Betty Lu started thinking she was a 16-year-old. No kidding. I told everybody that [smiles]. It can still happen, folks. So we didn't pal around down there at all, Herb and I. But when I went to bed that first night after that so-called encounter, I just knew something was different, and I told a girlfriend that I drove home with that I thought something was happening but I didn't know so don't say anything please [laughs]. Wait, please. Nothings happened. You have to trust people sometimes. You've got to spill the beans.

Anyhow, sometime a couple weeks later he calls me up and wants to know if he can stop by on his way to somewhere, to visit his son. He had a handicapped son who lived in a group home out in Hillsboro and Milwaukee was on the way and he had a dog that needed to have a run sometime betwixt, in between, the two points. He lived in Salem. So I said, "Sure, come along. It'll be fun." So that was our first date. He took me out for lunch too. We ran the dog on the hillside outside my apartment area. That was the beginning. That was the fall of '92. We were married on March 17, 1993. He was a part-time pastor at that time. They call them interim pastor?

MD: Mm-hmm.

BA: But it kind of became full-time over in Prineville, Oregon. That's just over the hill [motions with hand]. That's over the hill from Bend where OSC has a place too now. In those days it was a part of Oregon country that I had never seen or visited, really. Sun shines every day. Anyhow, I didn't tell you, did I tell you we got married?

MD: Yep.

BA: Okay, and that's where we lived.

MD: Oh, so you went to Prineville, yeah.

BA: Yeah. That was our first home in Prineville. We lived in a duplex over there across the street from a grade school I think it was. I don't know if they had middle schools at the time. Anyhow they had a track, and that became a daily routine for Herb and Betty Lu. Walk around the track [motions with arm]. So this is an introduction to the fact that Herb was a very active person [smiles]. I believe he was 77 when I married him and I was 69. Is that about 7 years apart?

MD: Yeah, about yeah.

BA: He biked, bicycled, and walked a lot and exercised. Did his daily dozen in the morning [chuckles]. He was an interim pastor as I said. He also was an interim, I think they call them adjunct professor for Bible at what was then known as Western Baptist Bible College in Salem. So he'd commute down to that every once in a while. That's now called Corbin University. He kept that up for quite a while, even after we moved back to Salem where he had built a house. He was quite a property man. His first wife, Betsie, had sort of started that, didn't see [Looks over to Steven]. They bought some property down in Salem on a corner. They built one, two—did they build Mark's house, I forget how that happened [looks to Steven].

Steven Anderson: No they didn't, but they built the three houses.

BA: So he bought property around that corner and built one that he and Betsie lived in and we stayed overnight in it a couple times. But this other house, his son Peter was a builder for it, actually, but his dad financed it of course. And that was our first home that we owned and we lived there about 15 years approximately. And we moved, as I said he was an adjunct prof at the college.

[1:10:00]

I—what did I do Steven? Did I do anything? I don't think I worked at all [chuckles]. I volunteered stuff. I liked to be with kids and so what could be a better activity than to go to a grade school and help a kid struggling with reading? So I did that for 5 years at one of the grade schools, Highland Grade School in Salem. Read for a half hour twice—half hour with one kid and a half hour with another kid. So I spent an hour once a week for five years. I guess I—well, I was starting

to write poetry a bit then, maybe, a little more. Earlier I had mentioned that to you, I think at the end of '91 I went to the University of Iowa had a what do we call those retirement activity weekends that you sign up for and learn something while you're having fun? [Chuckles]. Anyhow, it was the University of Iowa's famous for its writing program. And I went there. Gosh what do they call it?

SA: Workshop? Or—

BA: You know, it's very interesting. It's a lot of folks go on these trips I'm trying to think of for retirees when you want to study and be together as a field trip kind of thing but they also have classes like I had. It's somewhere in my brain, but I can't think of it. Other people maybe be hearing remember it. But that was encouragement time for me, because I was printed in their yearbook that they put out for each season. And the teachers on this program encouraged me, so I've been writing bits and pieces of poetry. In fact, I don't know if you want me to read a poem. I have a poem that I wrote for—it's kind of sad, but it's grownup sad. This appeared in one of the editions in my husband's memorial. I thought, since I am a poet, but an unpublished poet I get in other little things. I was published in my Salem church bulletin one time too. So that's about as far as I've gotten. So far. We'll see.

MD: Well this will be forever part of, you'll be part of the archives forever.

BA: Okay, okay.

MD: And this is part of the Beaver Nation forever, so this is perfect.

BA: Okay. Okay. Thank you. It's called "Sorrowing Together, Yet Alone" [Looks down at booklet in hands].

"Sorrowing Together, Yet Alone"

"How difficult to be one's self and yet blend with others at a time and a place of grief?/How does one sorrow alone and yet console another?/How does one speak to soften heartache?/Do not sounds of forgotten tunes bring words to mind that oft lift one's spirit?/Do not rich memories flourish as minds hear the comfort of the scriptures?/Empowering quiet permits the Holy Spirit's presence./Words of remembrance burst alive into scenes past and recent./Sorrow grows into joyous hope of coming days together again and with God./Individuals have come side by side, yet each alone./Some cry within. Some sigh. Others blot tears./Some eyes speak consolation to free another's isolation./Words spoken, written. Hugs given. Humor shared. Hands clasped. Ears listening./Voices singing together as family and friends blend into this fellowship of grief."

[Closes booklet]

I like to write all kinds of poems [smiles]. I like to write poems about flowers, which I love to pick, and I have a little garden.

[1:15:02]

Not many things growing in it yet, but I'll pick other people's flowers if they let me. I have a couple little bouquets around my place here. I like to write about people and incidents. I like to stick humor in there if I can, even when I'm sad. I like to bring to remembrance something that may be hidden. And I love looking out the window today and seeing those bright blue fluffy clouds that Oregon always has some of against the blue sky, and, by golly, we've got gray underneath [motions with hand].

MD: It's Oregon.

BA: It's going to sprinkle somewhere, maybe not here today, ha, ha, I hope [giggles]. Anyhow, I have been happy to be an Oregonian and I chuckle when people say, "Oh yeah, you guys have to put up with a lot of rain, don't you?" And I say, "Okay, sure, but look what we have? We have green all around the calendar." So much green and beauty popped in besides, you know, with the flowers. The rhododendrons this spring of 2017 are just gorgeous.

MD: It's been a strange year, but they're catching up I think, so yeah. One of the things also I, now, Herb passed away just in this last, what this last January?

BA: No it was actually the 28th of December, 2016.

MD: Mm. And you said that he was, how old did he end up being?

BA: He was a hundred and 3/4ths. I was planning his 101st birthday. I had it on my calendar. He and I traveled a lot. I want you to remember that. Everybody. And myself, I like remembering it. Because not only did we travel as a family with hiking trips every summer. Their family had always hiked in the mountains around Washington and Oregon. Not mountain climbing like Mt. Hood to the peak.

MD: Yeah, but still, yeah.

BA: But woodsy trails and that sort of thing and picking Huckleberries perhaps along the way and having fun and just having a wonderful time with the outdoors. So beautiful. And taking pictures, oh my. We've got so many pictures. And it was before smartphones, too.

MD: Yeah, real pictures.

BA: But they do have smartphones too. I don't but they do. And Herb and I also went in a motorhome twice across the country, and one time it was just us in a motorhome and I think—anyhow, we visited friends and relatives. It was a wonderful, wonderful trip. The only thing I didn't like about motorhome trips is you have to have two kitchen accoutrements, so to speak. I was often end up with something I didn't want at home or one the way. But it was fun cooking for ourselves as well as visiting people. One time we went. I drove the motorhome mostly as he rode his bike with 15 or so college kids from Western. Now he has gone 3 times across country on a bicycle.

MD: Wow.

BA: Well, not every single inch.

MD: Right, but.

BA: But you know, 750 and, I don't know how many miles. I don't think he ever went over 900 miles. But some of the kids did. They would drive up to 1000+ a little. But it's 3,000 miles to Washington, D.C., from Salem or Portland, and he's done that and enjoyed every single dingle minute of it. He would have a staff person on, one of the people who was going on it we had to have two motorhomes to make it possible for us to have everybody transported and their gear. We usually had two motorhomes and a truck for their bikes to get in as well as the kids. He would plan ahead to stay overnight at either at a campground that we would find out by calling people in a certain town where we think we would get to. A lot of planning beforehand. [1:20:00]

Or a church. And it's churches often would offer, even if we didn't ask or hint, we'd like a meal, either a breakfast just before we started the next day or a dinner just when we came in that night. And that worked out so beautifully. We got to meet a lot of people that way and people got to meet the kids. If it was a Sunday night, well, they'd put on a program for the church folk and it was good. And we had one couple, a couple of kids, a gal and a boy. They weren't girlfriends and boyfriends. They were a team that did puppet shows, and they were a hit. They were super. We're still in correspondence with one of those kids. So that is not the only adventure he did. He led trips to Israel as a bible teacher.

MD: Oh, wow.

BA: With an associate who was a travel agent person. He had many friends that he developed in Israel and he made himself, I believe, 20 something trips to Israel, but I got to go with him 10 times in our marriage.

MD: Cool.

BA: So wonderful. Don't ever think that if you've been to Israel once you don't ever need to go again. Perhaps you don't need to, because it is expensive, and part of our way would be paid because we got through the travel agency. He usually didn't have to pay, but I did. And I went gladly because every time you go you have different people to be with you, you have different guides, often. And you do go different places. You go to the same key places, but there's some other little side light places that maybe fit in better this time because of the weather, because the itinerary's changed or whatever. It doesn't. It's a wonderful place for history, history of our world, history of our faith and for getting acquainted with other people. It's just wonderful.

MD: That is neat.

BA: Yeah. We had a great time over there, and friendships made that we keep, too, actually. The guides in Israel as well as the ones that went with us from here.

MD: Now you said that you didn't have any kids with your first husband, with Bob, but with Herb you married into some kids.

BA: Oh yes. Yes I certainly did.

MD: An instant family.

BA: Yes, I had an instant, grown-up, didn't have to diaper or train [laughs]. Oh my goodness. I have wonderful kids. I had six kids, folks, step-kids. And I'll name them for you and for me to remember: the oldest one is Mark, and he's married to Bambi and he has the only grandchildren that Herb ever had who are David, the oldest now a businessman working in New York City and Sarah, soon to be a graduate of Portland State College on June 18, 2017, and I believe she has a job already waiting for her. But he's got a trip to Europe first with her mom, but anyhow, that's the first family. Mark, oldest son. Retired, by the way. Oldest daughter, and only daughter, Karen Nettler. She has been a wonderful daughter to me and she's been a wonderful mother in places since her mom died in '91 to her family, her brothers, and helper to her dad. She's a wonderful woman. She's been a social worker. She knows all the ropes about caring for people and she still has a retirees, she heads up, what would you call it, Steven, a social—oh it's not a social, a policy promoting—

SA: Advocacy group.

BA: A what?

SA: An advocacy group.

BA: Advocacy group right, that helps to—

SA: For faith and justice.

BA: Speaks to we the people as well as to the legislature. And Karen is a great friend to me now and helper so many times. She's my driver, because I don't drive anymore often when I need one and I can't get the—if it's past 10 miles my courtyard people don't take me on a ride free.

[1:25:01]

Okay then we have Steven, who's with us today. He's the next to age. He's also retired, and he's my chief financial advisor. Steven's been with Nature Conservancy, so he knows all about trees. Whenever I want to know what's the name of a plant or something, Steve can help me. He's a great walker and advocate for the environment. He's a great friend, too. Let's see, then next in line is Tim and he's retired, and he worked for the city government as a printer. He hasn't printed any of my poems yet, but he probably would be helpful [laughs]. He doesn't have a print shop either but he's a great helper. He loves cats, too, which I don't have one of. But he's a friend of flowers and a friend of plants of all kinds in his house. And everybody in our family has a house, not an apartment like I do. So everybody has a house. That's just kind of fun.

Now the fifth son isn't with us. He's in heaven. His name is Ted. And there's a sad story but a glad thing too, I think. Ted fell when he was 3 ½ I think about, and when his dad was working one summer on the lookout station out in Central

Oregon because the kids were visiting their dad and they were all going down, not all at once, but several were going down at once, but for some unexplainable reason Teddy lost the grip on the hand and fell several feet to cement. And since then he had been paralyzed on his left side, I believe it was. He was a wonderful—I have many pictures. He had a wheelchair. Oh, he crawled a lot too when he was younger to get around. His mom worked, the family worked with him a lot to get him as much mobility as he could as the doctors can help you with that, but he was never able to be totally mobile and independent. So he lived in a group home for most of his adult years. But he lived to 61, and he had the most wonderful sense of humor [smile]. And what else Steven would you say about Ted? He was so affable.

SA: He had a big heart, yeah.

BA: He had a good heart.

SA: Big heart.

BA: Yes he did. He was definitely a member of our family. He went on some of our hiking trips. I remember one we went on that had a special—somewhere up on our wonderful Oregon woods there's a trail a boardwalk trail for part of it, so Ted got to go on that one. That was really fun. We miss him. It's been three years I think now since he passed away. A very important part of our life and our living together. And Peter he came along seven years later. I guess he was called the little kid of the family. But he's still working, so he's keeping us all on our toes. He has a degree in architecture, and he's very clever with his hands. He works with a woodshop and makes furniture for businesses, you know like for bars and restaurants.

MD: Oh yeah, specialized stuff. Yeah.

BA: Yeah. He can make things for me or you. Sometimes he had a little shelf or a little, or—what do I want?—drawer thing that could be separate and somebody's going to put a computer screen on it. It didn't work in the long run, so he gave it to me and it's perfect for my little desk area, it sits on top of my desk but plenty of room for my computer on top of it. I have a drawer, a top drawer [giggles]. It's great. And he does a lot of other things for us. He helps with my car. He helped me spruce it up so I could give it away and get some money back on it. I gave it to a charity. He's a helper. A helper person, also. So that's my family that I—

MD: So you ended up with a great family.

SA: There's Tracy, also.

BA: Oh, Tracy, yes, Tracy.

SA: My partner.

BA: Tracy is Steven's partner. You know what, she's a schoolteacher with an art background and training.

[1:30:05]

She's a beautiful arranger of flowers and also, you know that resonates with me. She's a very happy person most of the time too, but she's had an illness that keeps her low-key sometimes too. I'd like to have her more often in my house, but we're working on that. Well, the weather's been crumpy. We had a terrible spring, didn't we? It wasn't even spring.

MD: It didn't quit, yeah.

BA: Yeah, Tracy. Tracy's the other girl in our family. Everybody doesn't have a girlfriend, either. That's too bad. Well, I guess Peter has somebody that, but he doesn't—does he call Lisa his trick, his special girlfriend? I'm not sure. You know in the modern age, there's so many arrangements that I'm not always sure what the connections, how we speak of them. I know what's going on, but I don't know the wording. A new vocabulary is coming upon us.

MD: Yeah, new wording, yeah.

BA: Does Mr. Webster know all about this? Is he keeping up?

MD: They seem to change him every year. They add new weird words [laughs]. The ones that are kind of trendy I think, but—Well, you have led one of the most interesting and fantastic lives and the fact that you were part of Oregon State College during some dark years of the war and are still here to fill us in on that is so important to this oral history project. You filled a void in the storyline that we have been putting together.

BA: Yeah the school kept doing it's thing. You know it really, it didn't close down at all. I don't know how low the student body went, but with those influxes of soldiers, and I'm sure the school professors served them well or they would have left.

MD: And some of the professors left to go serve in the military.

BA: That's true too, isn't it? Yes, I forgot about that. I didn't know anybody of the profs yet that left because I was just a freshman and I was hardly getting acquainted with the guys that I was—I knew I had some teachers, so that was good.

MD: But you're a Beaver through and through. You still are.

BA: Yes I am.

MD: I mean it's one of those things that—

BA: Should I show you my pillow, again?

MD: We'll put that up on, so we can—and there's a story about this, isn't there?

BA: Yes there is a little story. [Holds up pillow]. This is my favorite Beaver logo. I call him the big tooth beaver. He was retired some years ago, I understand.

MD: Yes, we call him Sailor Benny because he has the sailor hat.

BA: Sailor Benny. Oh that's a sailor hat isn't it? But I don't know how long it was that that was there, but it was surely there when I came in '41.

MD: That was being used, it was official more towards the '50s, but that was being used. And then he lasted through 2000.

BA: Okay. And then these letters I earned [points to embroidered "OSC" on the front of the pillow], not because I was on a sports team. Even though I was on the sports staff one time as editor, but anyhow I took a course in debate. I had never done that in high school. I don't know why. Anyhow, I guess I was trying to learn to speak up. In any event, my debate squad gave me this set of letters and one time several years ago I saw them in my pile up in a drawer, and I thought, "Hey I should do something with that."

And I had one of those stickers that had Benny, the Sailor Benny, and I asked a clever and well-talented seamstress friend of mine, Jane—okay I won't remember her name, Jane Vanzanten—ooh, do I have it down there before? I can't remember. Her husband's name is Tim [laughs]. Sorry, can't think of it. Anyhow, if she would embroider this Benny picture. Well, she did. If you can see it up close. And because her husband is a cartographer, or something, he's done work for some state organization which I can't remember but he could transpose that into an outline that Jane could then embroider for me. And I think it's just beautiful. And the backside is beautiful too [turns pillow around] if I want to turn it this way. It's orange and black. [1:35:05]

MD: It's orange and black.

BA: And I'm very proud of it and like to show it off to people, because he's happy as all Beavers are most of the time.

MD: Yeah [laughs].

BA: My activities, are we talking about—? Yeah, post college.

MD: Yeah, being a Beaver today. You know, you were a Beaver then but you're still a Beaver today.

BA: I'm still a Beaver, yeah. I've gone to those reunions with the Home Ec department with its new name and all, and also to *The Barometer* had a reunion several years ago and Herb and I both went to that. He went with me down to the Home Ec one too. He likes—he used to be a pastor in Corvallis, Herb did.

MD: Oh okay.

BA: He was a pastor in Corvallis, Portland, Lebanon, The Dalles, Gladstone—did I miss one? [Looks over to Steven]. Not Salem.

SA: Those were the main ones. And around a dozen intern.

BA: Those were the main ones, well.

MD: Yeah.

BA: Anyway, a child was born in every one. They spaced them out real—well, one or two were born back east. I forgot about that.

MD: That's how families work, yeah.

BA: [Chuckles].

MD: Well, one of the things I like to do is make sure that we've covered all the things that we want to in this life history, but also to give you an opportunity to say something—this is the Beaver Nation is going to be able to see this and if you have any final words of wisdom about being a Beaver, your time at Oregon State, we'd like to give you a chance for that before—

BA: Yes, it's very important to reach out to other people. I'm a retired person now, and I've lived in two or three retirement communities and I really do make it a point to smile at everybody if I can, when I meet them in a hall. But also to speak to people who seem like they're very busy but they're always alone. Because I know that there's somebody behind those lonely looking eyes sometimes, and I've just discovered since I've been a retired person that as soon as that is opened up once with you it sometimes helps them open up again with someone else. And certainly with me. Because I've made some new friends. But that works at school, too, and any kind of business, I think. With life in general.

And I'm so glad that I had a group of people that I lived with and I went to church with and I went to school with at Oregon State time those four years that I had friendship ties with, because a lot of those women, not nowadays I don't, as I said before, Joan was the only one I think I wrote to for a long time, but some of those people I wrote to intermittently earlier in my life after school and it was good to learn from each other, still, you know, and cheer each other up when things got tough sometimes, too. That's one thing. Be a part of a group of some kind or two. Give as well as you'll be sure to get if you share yourself. Let's see, what else? I guess it would be nicer if we could all visit the campus once in a while, too. I know it's easier for us who retire in Oregon, but I know sometimes, in fact this next year I guess we're going to have a big sesquicentennial [sic]...

MD: Sesquicentennial—it took me a while to learn how to say that too.

BA: Wow, that is a big word. So that's a hundred and—

MD: Fifty.

BA: Fifty. Anyhow, any opportunity you get, I think that's important to try to meet up with people. I think in the internet age perhaps we have opportunity to do it more quickly. I know it's hard to learn, because I'm still in the learning stage with some of these internet possibilities, I call it. But we all have younger friends and relatives, and I do have the relatives. My sons are all pretty good at the computer, so they can help me.

[1:40:00]

But I think if we reach out and ask people to help us they'd be glad to. But Oregon State, because of its wide interest in our land, you know, we started out as an agricultural college, and we haven't lost that.

MD: Huh-uh.

BA: And Forestry. And what are the other things do you think we reach out to our state particularly, but it's transferrable to other states and communities, where a person might live or work? Even overseas. How many students does Oregon State train each year who come from overseas? It's been amazing.

MD: Thousands.

BA: Yeah.

MD: So we have a world-reaching impact around the world.

BA: Do we have an English as a second language-helping situation, sometimes?

MD: Yeah, yeah.

BA: Great, yeah. That's wonderful. Well, I think that's about most I can think of. I don't know if I wrote everything else. I think you've covered it.

MD: This has been an honor to capture your story for a permanent place in the Oregon State Archives, the Oregon State University Special Collections Archives. So on behalf of Oregon State you are now a permanent part of the Sesquicentennial Oral History Project. Thank you.

BA: Could I say one more P.S.?

MD: You sure can.

BA: Most women do this. You know, because I did write this little thing down about my family, my nieces. My brother had four daughters I didn't mention that before, I don't think.

MD: No, okay.

BA: But this coming week I'm going to have two of them visit with me. My brother's name was Gaylord Day Nixon, but his name on campus I think was "Nic": N-i-c, they called him, no k. His daughters Lisa and Allison are coming from Georgia and California respectively, and they will take me for a little tour of Portland. Two things I haven't seen: one is the Tilikum Bridge, which is new, and you can't go there unless you're walking or biking.

MD: Yeah, you can't drive across it, yeah.

BA: So I believe we're going to walk. I don't bike [chuckles]. And the other thing is our newly renovated Japanese garden.

MD: Oh nice.

BA: I'm so excited that we're going to be able to do that. And then we're going up to British Columbia.

MD: Oh neat.

BA: I must mention my brother's other two daughters, who won't be with us for this trip, but I'll be seeing and I write to pretty regularly. Janelle is the oldest one and she lives with her husband, Mel, in Spokane Valley, Washington, and the other one is Sharon Bacon, and she lives in someplace in Michigan. I can't remember the name of it, doggonit, right now. But that's the end of my story with my four living grand nieces. So I've got boys and one daughter on one side and daughters on the other. I'm well-covered.

MD: You're well-covered.

BA: Thank you.

MD: Thank you, Betty Lu.

[1:43:35]