

Washington County Museum
Oral History Interview with Sally Bunnell
Date: May 7, 2013

Informants: Sally Bunnell (SB)
Lou Bunnell (LB)

Interviewer: Liza Rosier (LR)
Transcriber: Pat Yama

Liza Rosier: This Lisa Rosier and this is an oral history for Washington County Museum. Today's date is May 7th, 2013.

Let's start with your full name including your maiden name.

SB: Sarah Alice McMillan. There's a number of ways people spell that.

LR: I saw on some of the census records they had an 'ian' on a couple so it just depends on how they spell it. And what's your date of birth and place of birth?

SB: April 12th, 1931, Colville, Steven's County, Washington.

LR: And what's your family heritage?

SB: Scots, Irish, English.

LR: Let's start with your grandparents—what names and maybe occupations.

SB: Dad's was Colin Riley McMillan and my grandmother was christened Sarah but called Sallie Dicks McMillan. And mother, Arthur Eugene Buchanan and Alice Deborah Crox.

LR: And the same question I asked Rod—what upbringing did your family – like religion, morals, politics.

SB: Religion was Congregational church and there were also Presbyterian churches in grandpa's background. And then the church in Colville when I was growing up was a federated church because this was during the Depression and the congregational church and the Methodist church didn't have enough people to run both of them. And so they kept their buildings but we changed ministers. The Methodist minister we'd meet in the Methodist church and then there'd be a Congregational minister, we met in the Congregational church. And then sometime after the Depression was over then they went back to the separate denominations.

LR: Interesting that they would combine during that period of time. So the 1940 census for Steven County shows that both your grandfather and your father were working on

the same farm.

SB: Yes.

LR: What was that farm like growing up in Steven's County?

SB: This was grandpa's farm which I didn't think about when I was growing up. And it was in the valley they alternated wheat and alfalfa and raised cattle.

LR: So they did both?

SB: They did both. Yes. The way my dad looked at it you didn't want to depend on just one thing. And so—.

LR: Especially during the Depression.

SB: And plus the fact you needed to change crops too because you needed the alfalfa to put nutrients into the ground and both crops did better if you alternated. You'd raise wheat on it for awhile then you'd raise alfalfa.

LR: So it doesn't kill the soil.

SB: And this is drier country than the coast and so then raising wheat, well we also raised oats. And you needed for the land to lie foul for a year to absorb moisture. So you were also alternating ploughed ground with wheat growing or oats growing ground.

LR: So it was kind of like you had to constantly—every year it was somewhere different.

SB: So you were constantly—.

LR: Alternating plots, alternating crops. Considering all the farming going on weren't affecting those techniques in that period of time. What do you remember about grammar school in Oron/Oren Washington? Any stories like games, events that you went to.

SB: Well first of all the first day of school or maybe even before that is that there was a huge saw mill. The Colville River ran through the middle of the valley and there's a huge saw mill out in front of the house and it burned in August.

LR: August of what year do you remember?

SB: I suppose we're talking 1937. And I'm always getting off. My birthday is in April and so it's easy to get the years confused but it burned in August. My first day of school grandpa took me to school on the horse. He put a gunny sack behind the saddle and

then he took me to school. I gather according to my sister he did this two or three days. It was probably quarter of a mile, half a mile to walk. But after that I walked. I walked when I was in first grade after I got used to it.

LR: And the rural setting I would assume that you lived in probably constituted a lot of walking, right?

SB: Horseback riding.

LR: A lot of horseback riding.

SB: Both.

LR: So that's interesting that Rod didn't do much horseback riding.

SB: He didn't do any. *[laughs]*

LR: But you did so that's cool.

SB: Oh a lot.

LR: What an interesting difference considering you were in the same region, areas. Who taught you to ride, your dad?

SB: Actually what they did when I was just little he put me in front of the saddle and then we'd ride up the hill to the field and back down. This was just a really big deal. The big deal was having your picture taken on the saddle with my dad holding me. And then my sister came along and all of a sudden I went down to the barn and my sister was getting a ride. So I sat outside the barn door and howled. And she got the ride. So we learned to take turns.

LR: We can talk a little bit more about the Depression and if you have maybe any stories about that. How did that affect your family's economic status if at all?

SB: That is kind of hard to judge but like going to school your Oxfords would go through the soles well you'd wait until Saturday to go to town when you'd do your grocery shopping and get your shoes resoled. And I didn't think about it. You don't think about it at the time growing up. You don't have that many changes of clothes.

LR: Did you family have the attitude—I know there's sort of a Depression attitude of saving everything.

SB: Well they're Scots, they're savers. You save up for it. *[both laugh]*

LR: What were their attitudes towards, especially with you being a woman, what were your parents' attitudes towards education versus work? Would they have rather you

stay home and be a house wife?

SB: Oh no you got an. Grandpa had five children. He sent every one of them to college.

LR: Wow. So that was a very important aspect of—.

SB: Now he maybe had grade school education and he didn't go on. And he was a younger son living in Ohio and there were older brothers and didn't see any future for him on the farms. So he was probably 17 or 18 he left home and worked his way West. He worked on a farm, met his future wife, went to Colorado and learned to be a farm miller. Came on to Portland and then ended up in the Colville Valley which he thought was the prettiest place he'd ever seen.

And so as I say basically you saved up for it. We had a car and Spokane was about 80 miles away and so you'd make your list for things you couldn't get in Colville. In some respects I think the area was, I mean this is a country situation. This is not a city situation. So you can raise your food and you had livestock. You had pigs, chickens.

LR: So fairly self-sustaining.

SB: There was certainly self-sustaining about that and then you had a crop you could sell.

LR: Did you help on the farm with the work on the farm also or were you just always in school? *[both laugh]*

SB: Actually Oron school was interesting because this was when teaching was six grades and so you have to do a lot of things. At recess you went out and we played together. You changed your games, we swung on the swings so you were sort of independent. So growing up at the very beginning we followed grandpa around. And we'd feed the chickens and I'd turn the wheel on the—you know to sharpen knives—on the wheel. Yes, I turned that while grandpa sharpened knives.

Then we'd hold harness so when he was mending harness we could hold it still and he'd put a rivet in. So I think that we grew up with the idea that there're things—that you always have chores.

LR: There could always be improvements.

SB: Grandpa taught me how to saddle a horse and so eventually by the time I'm in the sixth grade I could go get the milk *[inaudible]*. Or we'd bring in the wood. And we were all supposed to weed in the garden. And mother watched me weed one day. You'd get a nickel a row and mother watched me out the window. She was sewing and then when I'd get done—"You better go back and do that right". This is not really my thing.

So then like in grade school we were old enough that we had thrashers for [inaudible]. We had hay hands. And we had a cherry tree. It had little pine cherries. And we'd have a little bucket of about like this and you'd get ten cents for a bucket of cherries. Then you had to pit the cherries. But in the summer time we had a girl that helped out mother with the cooking and then you'd have hay hands to feed and the week or so of thrashing you have hands to feed. That was what was what the girl helper did. So then during the fall about ten when I learned to saddle the horse and was then considered big enough to go get the milk pails out which were about three.

And then eventually I think I was in the sixth grade they did have a piece of property that you could ride [inaudible] river that grandpa owned. And also later on they could pay the wildlife refuge to feed cattle. But when I was six I rode out to the place grandpa owned [inaudible] and what had happened they brought some cattle home but a little calf got left behind. So dad and I went back and he actually found the calf. It was still living. So it would work with his horse—he slung the calf back of his saddle and rode home and I came up behind.

And so he thought I was old enough that I could feed the calf. And then later on he added—so my sister and I traded calves and milk cows as they came along. And we'd teach them to drink. Now this was no milk bottle or anything. This was holding their nose down into the bucket. It was kind of messy until the little calf got the idea that this is how he got his milk.

And so dad decided that when fall came there was usually some new cows and he'd pick out a couple he didn't think would do too well during the winter so we'd end up, we'd each have a calf and we'd milk those calves. And so then when that calf got big enough to be sold then we'd get half.

LR: Of the meat or them money?

SB: Of the money when he sold the steers. He had this worked out so that we got paid a quarter for cutting the lawn. Now this is kind of hard because this was hill side. One side had a flat piece and a hillside and the other side had hillside so we had to take turns. But bringing in the wood and collecting the eggs and other things, we didn't get paid for.

But eventually when I was in junior high—this was after grandpa had died—we had a new little thing for sharpening sickles so we got a nickel. And then a sickle bar for mowing machine there were 20 sections. And he had a big stump and you would knock out the section that was where rock and cut out the piece and then you had a new section. I was looking forward to more sections being gone but he was of course looking for far, far fewer.

But then as we grew older like when we were in high school we'd take salt up the hill to the cattle. And then the other part was when there were crews working like thrashing that would be a week or so and then we'd take water to the field. And this is one thing I

never understood. Mother would go to town and get a wine jug, two wine jugs. And in town there was a tavern across the street from each other. And of course we were instructed not dare look at the tavern.

But she would come home with a couple of wine jugs and as I got older I went in. She'd go in and my dad would go in. But I think that she went in the taverns and got the jugs and then would come home and then wrap them in gunny sacks, in burlap. And then you would soak them as evaporating water. The evaporation would cool the water in the jug. But then when you're riding the saddle of course your knees were going to get soaking wet. That was some of the kinds of things since there were no brothers the girls did it. We both did. We had to dust in the house and hang out the washing, iron. So I had inside and outside chores.

LR: Did you have electricity?

SB: We had electric washing machine which you had—.

LR: And then you hung your clothes?

SB: And you hung the clothes but this is the sort of thing you had to fill up and heat your water on the stove. This is the washing machine with the ringer and then you rinsed the clothes. Yes we took turns hanging out the clothes on Monday. Wash on Monday, iron on Tuesday.

LR: So it was every week you had the same schedule?

SB: Yes.

LR: So let's go on to the high school then. So that's during the late '40s. Any social activities or what do you remember about clothing, cars, anything?

SB: Well this is the sort of thing where I was in the seventh grade, I rode the puddle jumper and I was unhappy because the bus driver [inaudible] hit and he died. He was Indian and he had died during the summer. And I thought this was very unfair. I wanted to ride the bus to town with him. But we had the puddle jumper, the oldest bus in the fleet which meant that there were two seats, one on each side of the length of the bus. This wasn't seats across—.

LR: Like down this way.

SB: This was down this way. So we rode the puddle jumper.

LR: I didn't even know this existed. *[both laugh]*

SB: Well that was our terminology for it because all the rest of the buses they had seats.

LR: Yeah I've never seen a bus like that, ever.

SB: That was junior high.

LR: Do you remember Pearl Harbor?

SB: Oh yes. We were going to church on Sunday morning. I thought about this afterwards because when we came out of church they were talking about the Japanese having bombed Pearl Harbor. So then I remembered that dad was walking around. He was in his 40s—was he going to be called up. And of course he never was coz he was a farmer and they needed.

LR: Yeah they needed the agriculture.

SB: They needed that. And that was interesting too because then hay hands became very hard because all the young people were off fighting. And so I can remember that at one point—he also has favorites you know. They would have a team of horse maybe. If you came and pitched hay or on the wheat you set had bundles. The ones that brought the horses of course got more and then dad boarded the horses and then fed them that week. And so it was very, very odd. And the minister who's always in a shirt and tie on Sunday, out there in his work clothes pitching hay.

LR: During the week, that's interesting.

SB: During the week.

LR: So it was mostly locals that he hired?

SB: Oh yes it was all—.

LR: He didn't hire any immigrant Braceros for example.

SB: This was all local.

LR: While we're on the subject of your father—was farming his only occupation? He just did that his whole life?

SB: Yes.

LR: Can you describe a little bit about his physical personality traits about your dad?

SB: He was six feet. He was a head taller than his four brothers and sisters. He was a reader also. He read books in the summer time. And of course he liked working outdoors and so there just was a whole lot of outdoor work to do. And as you mentioned there he was also in politics because he served two terms when Mary and I

were growing up. I can remember the first term that we drove across Washington because the legislature met for 60 days from January to March.

And so we were little for the first term and halfway across the State—we had a four door car and my sister I guess decided that she was tired of driving and she opened the back door which scared them all to death. And he eventually bought a car which we rode from then on through the war that had front doors but no rear doors.

LR: Just open in the back?

SB: No, no, this was a sedan.

LR: Oh it was just a small.

SB: And then the other story they tell about me in Olympia for January, February, March that the first morning I heard all this clatter and I wanted to know what it was and ran to the window and mother says, "Oh it's the milk bottles." And I ran to the window and I said, "But where's the milk cow?"

LR: Wondering how it got there? You didn't realize there was any way to actually bottle milk.

SB: It worked out that—this is when we were going to Oren grade school that his sessions where he was serving two terms and so I was in the second and the fourth grade. And then we went to school in Olympia. And that was from a country school where you had the six grades and everybody played together and all of a sudden I was in a room with a whole classroom of just my age and that was different.

LR: Took a little while to get used to.

SB: Well I can remember in the second grade that Mrs. Newboyce told us—you had the Palmer handwriting up there on the wall on how you made the letters but they were printing them. I thought, *Oh well I can write.*

And then in the fourth grade—well of course we brought our lunches and Mrs. Newboyce had a hot plate and if you had a jar of soup or something you could warm it up and then sandwiches the rest of the time. I hadn't been in a cafeteria so it was a whole new experience. And then the other really new experience was that dad had Page and actually this Page—they're probably seniors in high school—was the son of the friend of the family. And I can remember that they took us over to the high school and I saw my first play. But the Page came and then walked me over to the capital building so I could go home with dad. But I remember getting picked up by the Page.

LR: Do you remember how long he worked for your dad?

SB: One session. But he was in construction. He ended up on [inaudible] Island in

construction and was picked up by the Japanese and spent the war in prison camp.

LR: Tell us about your experiences being a Rodeo Queen *[both laugh]*. You didn't even write that on your pre-interview form.

For the sake of the recording, Sally is showing me a book called *Coleville Rodeo Souvenir Program for 1949 Centennial Convention*.

SB: Well this was after the war and I think this was the second rodeo that the American Legion put on after the war. This is really, really local.

LR: Look at you.

SB: My dad of course belonged to the American Legion and my mother was an American Auxiliary and they were the ones that chose the queen. Coleville was a county seat and so the princesses came from the other small towns. But the challenge was that we had one horse that old and getting a little weak in the *[inaudible]* legs and the other horse—she was lame and then sold and we got a brand new horse that wouldn't be safe. It was too young to do this.

So we borrowed a neighbor's horse and so I practiced riding him. That worked out all right except he had a really bad habit of putting his head up and down. And so in the actual parade you started at the north end of town. We lived south of town and so we'd ridden in parades before, and since mother grew up with horses she knew all about how the whole protocol with parades. And the ones we had been in before you did not want to get up too close to the horse in front because you wanted people to see the horse that you were riding. Of course the Rodeo Queen is out in front.

Well you went from north to south on Main Street and I got down at the end of Main Street and we were going to turn left and go back on the neighboring street. Well horse was not ready to go home. But he was okay. And so I got him around but they also had riders that made that nothing was going to go wrong. He came running up but by the then I had him turned.

Then the other part is then you did the arena entrance. The most exciting thing about that was that you had your grandstand, you had the rodeo grounds where all the action was taking place and then the queen and princesses we were up on a walk above the corrals where the *[inaudible]*.

LR: Looking over?

SB: Yeah, looking right down on. And this is where the announcer who did all the jokes with the clown. And the clown's purpose was really with the bull riding to make sure when the cowboy came off the horse that there was distraction so the cowboy could get off the field. But at one point—this was a Saturday afternoon, Sunday afternoon deal. I don't remember which day it was. So right underneath us they were

saddling the horses or putting the straps on the bulls and one of those bulls got loose and you could feel this whole frame shaking. But they got it back in and the thing didn't come down but we could really feel the shaking.

LR: I would be moving at that point. I wouldn't be anywhere near at that point. This book is so neat. It's got such amazing—just the pictures and even the first page. "Howdy." Is this you also?

SB: No this is somebody from [inaudible].

LR: Just advertising that stable. That's a neat book. What a great thing that you saved.

SB: Advertisement. Then there's another picture on the back.

LR: [inaudible] Lithographing Company. There're the rodeo clowns too. Do you want to tell me about the trip east that your father took—after the war was over you mentioned. Was that kind of a celebration of the war being over?

SB: This was the fact dad hadn't been able to go anyplace. He always liked to look around at the country. In grade school, the fifth grade we had Geography which meant that we studied the Rocky Mountains, the Great Plains, the [inaudible] Hogville, the south and the southwest. And besides we had an uncle and his family living in Chicago and my aunt whose music teacher in [inaudible] Michigan. And then we had relatives in Ohio, great grandpa's relatives. This was like my geography class. We crossed the mountains going to the Hogville.

LR: Did you drive in the car?

SB: Oh yes. Actually the family history was we came from Scotland to North Ireland to South Carolina and then on to Ohio and so he wanted to see the part coming over the Smoky Mountains. And so we drove over the Smoky Mountains. I have metal pictures—you didn't take pictures like you do now. I've got this metal picture of this little house on the hillside. The farming patch wasn't any bigger than our garden. There were quilts hanging. This is like October and the quilts were hanging on the fence. So then you got down to Georgia and you were hearing the southern accents. Then got down to—.

LR: Feeling the humidity by then.

SB: The only time dad could do this was like October, November.

LR: So it was closer to winter, that's right.

SB: Then at St. Augustine there was a teeny, tiny original Catholic church. And then we were going to go down to the Keyes because dad wanted to see that but he decided we were running out of time. So then we went around the Gulf and this was just after a

hurricane. It was fascinating because the concrete wall had been damaged and in one place there was a house where it was just like a knife had been cut through it and you could look in at the bedrooms.

LR: Just like cut in half.

SB: Just like cut in half. And then you saw the African Americans going to town and their wagons. They had meals? in wagons. In my mind that was like dad going down the railroad track when he took the oats to be ground for the horses.

LR: At the mill.

SB: Because we didn't have truck at that point. We had the wheat ground in town and then come back, Then New Orleans. He liked museums so we saw a museum and a church. We were Protestants and he liked the Catholic church picture windows.

LR: The stained glass.

SB: The stained glass. And then across Texas, the whole new [inaudible].

LR: An entirely new world.

SB: New Mexico and almost ran out of gas before—hill, down across, hill, down across.

LR: And then there was no gas stations every ten miles.

SB: And then the Navaho Indians in the towns. Across the Grand Canyon and then up through the Utah Parks and Idaho.

LR: Did your father have anything to do with local Indians around here?

SB: Grandpa was the flour miller. When he came across the country he—.

LR: And that's your grandfather on your father's side? McMillan? C.R. McMillan?

SB: C.R. McMillan. His first job was this flour miller which was about three miles south of us and worked for Marcus Oppenheimer. He'd gotten the job when he finished his circuit across the United States and that was when he found out there was probably an opening up there. And he joined the flour milling trade and so all the clientele were Indians. And so he learned the jargon and one of the stories I remember that he offered one Indian to stay overnight because it was getting really late and the Indian's response was, "???" That means no sleep till long way off. And he thought that he had a wife and family.

LR: So he just wanted to get home.

SB: And I remember when I was probably six years old that somebody came in the house and said there're a couple of Indian women on horseback. They wanted to know if the old gentleman still lived there. And I can remember going out and he standing under the Maple tree and these two Indians [inaudible] Huckleberry, this was August.

LR: What were they dressed like?

SB: They were riding straddle but—.

LR: But they had on dresses.

SB: Can't really remember but it was Indian type clothing. And they offered to take me riding. You know it was the sort of thing—I was too shy to do it but always wished that I had. So he had a good relationship with the Indians.

LR: Maybe [you can] go on a little bit about your mother. Did she have an occupation or was she just a housewife.

SB: Yes, she graduated from high school in Colorado and then she went and stayed with a cousin in Cheney that taught at the Cheney Normal school. So she got a teaching certificate and she taught in Coleville.

LR: While you were growing up?

SB: Yes. And she also played girls basketball in high school and Cheney. She was captain at Cheney for one year—well this was a two year program. And so then when she taught in Coleville she taught fifth grade and was the basketball coach.

LR: So she carried it on from her childhood. What kind of a mother—can you describe her?

SB: She was short, excellent, excellent horse woman. She was a good cook at the farm and she belonged to a bridge group in Coleville and so there was entertaining back and forth.

LR: So even though you were a rural family you weren't isolated.

SB: No, we were not isolated and it was the sort of thing—well both grandpa was in the legislature. He was in the last territorial legislature for Washington and voted for women to vote.

LR: He was progressive.

SB: Yeah. He also served 1915 and 1917 in the State Legislature. And then with my

dad obviously they were out circulating the community because he belonged to the Legion. That's where he'd grown up. So there was sort of a distinction between town and country but they were part of both.

LR: I have a specific question for you. I don't know if you saw it on your questions or not. Online I found a record of your parents between October 27th and November 3rd of 1937 they're listed on the passenger manifest to Honolulu and then they only stayed like a week and then they came back. So I just wanted to ask you if you remember what that trip was all about and if you went with them?

SB: Oh no. We stayed home with grandpa. This was their—.

LR: Like their vacation together.

SB: This was their vacation together. And what I remember about that was that the boat going one way or the other there'd been a couple of ladies on the ship that had been related I think in some way to the English royalty. Then in Honolulu there's a picture of them with one of the natives in Honolulu and they brought back a fan for each one of us and a skirt.

LR: Like a hula skirt, a grass skirt.

SB: No it had material.

LR: Like a sarong, wrap-around?

SB: No you just pulled it on, like an elastic skirt.

LR: So those were like your souvenir mementos from your parents.

SB: From when they went.

LR: I just saw the record and I thought that's neat, I'm going to ask her about that. So let's talk a little bit about Whitman College. What did you take there?

SB: Okay. The other thing about Whitman is I guess I mentioned that grandpa sent his two daughters there.

LR: So you just kind of followed in their footsteps.

SB: Followed in their footsteps. I was supposed to major in something about which I could learn and earn an living if I needed to.

LR: As long as you can earn a living right?

SB: Like he said it was fascinating from the standpoint we had Spokane, Seattle, Portland, California students and then Whitman gave \$100 scholarship tuition for your first semester if you were valedictorian. So you had an interesting mix of both small town and big town. And this was also at the tail end of World War II so that there was still a few veterans left. And then the system was that you had your sciences, you had the social sciences, art, music and PE [Physical Education] and science and math. You were supposed to take a class in each one of those. You majored in one but you had to have at least one class in each one of those divisions.

LR: To try it out. That's what they make you do at PSU [Portland State University] too.

SB: Yeah and so I thought that was very interesting experience so ended up as an Education Psychology major but took a lot of history because I really did like history. But the two professors were really, really excellent and I was scared off a little bit.

LR: Do you feel like that and then of course your father liking museums, for example, did that kind of build your wanting to get involved with Washington County for example and other museums?

SB: Well actually Mrs. Newboyce, my teacher at grade school, she had us come up with questions about what we wanted to know about early times then and so grandpa talked about the Indians in the Coleville Valley. And another girl, the relative of the people that owned the mill asked questions there and so that triggered an interest in history. Plus the fact for some reason I just really liked the idea of somebody like—I can remember the French names I thought those sounded fascinating of the early explorers.

LR: All those French Canadian trappers that came through and intermarried with the Indians?

SB: Yeah. It was just something it was like learning what went on in the past and then after dad's trip following some of the history. That trip was my fifth grade Geography class.

LR: It just basically taught you everything you needed to know about the country side.

SB: And all the differences around the country.

LR: I took that same trip but that was only three years ago. *[both laugh]* I wanted to find out about your experiences at the Oregon Historical Society.

SB: The Oregon Historical Society? At first I was a docent while the boys were in school and I really liked that because—.

LR: And that's just giving tours to the public?

SB: Giving tours as an Education major, giving tours to grade levels, to the different grade levels. And one of the things I think children are missing now just tremendously--.

LR: Which is great because that's my next question, about how public education has changed over the years, so go head?

SB: This was such that we had a table set up and the curators. We had Indian things that Indians had made and things that pioneers had made. And then we had the exhibits we could take them to. In fact we had an excellent Indian exhibit at that time because they had done a dig-down on the coast and they had a shelter after that. And they had some Indians volunteer to have Plaster of Paris so you could get their physical shape. And so they made these—.

LR: And when was this? Like '70s?

Rod Bunnell: Yeah around 1970s.

SB: Yeah 1970s.

LR: Around that era when the boys were young. Just so I can get a time frame of what we're talking about.

SB: Yeah 1970s. So they had a corner of Coast House and they had these figures there. Then they had a canoe from on the Columbia and then they had a sweat house.

LR: Is that the same one they still have?

SB: I don't know. Well not this exhibit.

LR: They have that exhibit, My Oregon exhibit which is like permanent with the canoe in it.

SB: And then they had a sweat house that you [inaudible] particularly and we used to [inaudible] washroom in Oregon. I can remember this one little sixth grader and fortunately his mother loved plants and had this book on plants which I had glanced through so I included some of the Indians [inaudible] that used this for plants. And so there was this sweat house, described what that was. This little first grader had wearing glasses looked up at me and said, "What did the Indians use for toilet paper?"

Fortunately in that book there was something that said they used big leaves. She saved me. And I thought this little kid came from Beaverton School district and I thought I hope I come across somebody and ask them about this little kid. I was sure he would have made [inaudible]. And sure enough I finally met a teacher from that school and I said, "Do you know that there was this little boy?" "Oh", she said, "that was —." I don't even remember the name.

But the other part was that I can remember the Indians saying that some of them used rawhide and some of it was basket, various things that they made and once in awhile a kid would say, "Well you know I've got a relative, a grandparent or an aunt or uncle?" And this one little boy looked at me and he said, "You know I'm an Indian."

And then when we went upstairs to see the exhibits he held my hand. And then they had some pioneer things with lamps. And one little girl said, "Well you know my grandmother has a lamp like that." So this was an opportunity to see two cultures and see what things were like, the different time period. And my other favorite story was with junior high kids. This age group is really more interested in boys and girls and reverse.

LR: In each other yeah.

SB: There was an excellent exhibit on the Oregon Trail. And so we got into the exhibit and these boys were saying something about Mountain [inaudible] and alcohol and what am I going to get out of this one. Then I remembered about the Aurora colony. And the story there was when they left Missouri the leader had said had promised his son that he was going to come to Oregon. Well he was ill and he died.

So he put him in an iron casket and poured alcohol all over him. Well the news got out and going across the plains—to the Indians this was huge, huge medicine so on the far hills they would watch the wagon train go by. They didn't have no problems. First they went to Pacific County where his grandparents grew up and one contingent stayed in Pacific County then the rest of them came to Aurora.

And I thought we had one Docent that retired teacher she had taught kindergarten. She taught speech correction. She had taught English as a second language and at some point along the way she said, "Well are these kids, take them seriously. And I could be part way through this tour, this line up of boys at the back of the group and they were listening. I thought, *I did just what Dorothy said. I took them seriously. I hooked them.*

LR: Just got to find the right thing to hook them in and then they'll just absorb it all. Anything else about Oregon Historical Society that you want to talk about maybe at all?

SB: We'd meet with the Docents on Monday once a month and the curators would come and talk about the exhibits.

LR: And then you'd learn what you needed to learn. Now that's where you were Education Director. So did you start as the Docent and then you eventually?

SB: Yes. The person who started the whole program moved away and I did that for a couple of years.

LR: How many years were you actually working there?

SB: I think two years because then I got put on the school board.

LR: In Washington County? Let's talk about the school board. Tell me about your relationship with them, your role and the naming of the school is what we wanted to talk about.

SB: Basically it all started—initially when the boys started school they consolidated all these small districts in 1960 and so they were still working—.

LR: You're talking about ^{Tuality} Towalade?? district for example. All those little and then it all became one big county.

SB: All those little districts in Washington County. I think there were over hundred one room and two room schools. And then they consolidated them with the high schools they were going to. Of course there were people that were not totally enamored of the idea.

LR: They preferred the smaller rural settings?

SB: They liked the way—then the county had county superintendents. And then for a long time the county superintendents were responsible for and had things to do with like making sure the teachers were qualified and they were overseers of the [inaudible].

LR: Like supplies.

SB: Smaller districts. In the spring they would bring teachers together for catch-ups and things like that. But then they decided it was time they really needed to do something and population is growing so legislature said about 1960 you had to [inaudible] was the goal when the school needed to be consolidated. And then there were votes.

So they were all consolidated except for the seven districts in the Hillsboro district in 1960. And also at that particular time the school districts ran their own levy elections. And so the boys were going to grade school at Bonny Slope and so they decided on the elections that each school was going to run the election. And then they decided that I was going to be the one that would have an election board there. Fortunately I had taken Political Parties and Pressure Groups at Whitman and this professor--.

LR: Was that a certain course—Political Parties and Pressure Groups?

SB: The smartest class I ever took. Excellent professor but he had sent us to a precinct to observe how this was done. And I thought, boy you know there's a lot to this. And so

they told me that there was one lady whose son had been at Bonny Slope and that she'd worked on the election board. So I called her up and she came and walked us through this. And then I ended up on the election board.

And at that particular time because of the consolidation they set up a system where you would have—they'd have representatives elected at each school—there were three at each school. And they would have, I don't know if you'd really call it overseeing but you would meet and talk about all the things that were going on. And you did have something about somebody wanted to use the school then was it a good idea or not a good idea.

LR: You mean like a public meeting or an event?

SB: For school use. You okay who could use the school. And so I was on the local school committee at Cedar Park. So also then in the 1970s when the Special Ed Act, it was installed and so the Education Director at our church was on the school board and wanted to know if I wanted to be on the committee for the Special Education Committee. So I thought about it and said, "Okay, yes." So I did that. And so I was on that committee and we went around and visited all the programs in [inaudible].

LR: For Special Education? Were there many programs in Portland at that time?

SB: You're looking at blind, deaf, physical—.

LR: Like autistic?

SB: You're looking at a variety of programs.

LR: So were they all consolidated into one—for example, one school would take care of all these different kinds of conditions or was it different schools for each kind of condition?

SB: No, you'd be responsible for the Special Ed [Education] in that district. And then the other part was that you had as a result of no longer having people elected to a county education board then you had ESDs [Education Service District] all provided some special education programs for the schools in the county. You had a county Education Service District. I was chosen to sit on the Budget Committee for the [inaudible]. So what I did was to sign up and fill out a vacancy. I was on those two committees and so I thought, *Oh well just to sign up until the vacancy on board*. Nancy Rowles had been elected to the legislature and so she couldn't fill out the last six months on the term so I thought, *Okay, I'll do that*.

The board was going to select the person that was going to fill in those last six months so I thought, *Well that's easy*. So I filled out the form which includes your education and took it over to the superintendent's office and the secretary looked at that and she said, "Did you come from Coleville? Nobody comes from Coleville." Well I said, "How

did you know that?" It turned out that her father worked for the Border Patrol and they lived in North [inaudible] and did a lot of shopping at Coleville.

LR: So she knew about the area.

SB: So she knew about the area and so I was selected to fill in the vacancy and then after that I ran. Should I tell about Jason?

LR: Tell us.

SB: I filled in the last six terms and then I was elected to serve on the board and I was still doing some work down at the historical society. And they had this person sign up to run, Jason and he came and visited every school board member. I was not thrilled with this. This was a person that was not very tall, square build. So he interviewed all the current board members. He also went around to the buildings and interviewing principals no matter what they were doing, whether it was dealing with a child, parents, whatever they had to stop and tour this person through the building. Just macho Bill. And so he gets elected and at the first school board meeting in July he's a no-show. And he had missed nothing. He had been to all the board meetings and missed nothing.

LR: And all that time interviewing every single principal.

SB: so the next morning in the paper he's been picked up by the police. He's got a pistol strapped to his leg. He had three weapons. I don't remember all of them but at least included a knife in his belt buckle. So it turned out he was charged with blowing up a tavern and a house in Mutnomah County. And of course he would not resign.

LR: That was my next question is did they kick him off?

SB: Well you couldn't kick him off, he'd been elected. So until December when we finally got a resignation because he'd been convicted and spent five years in a federal pen in Midwest. And legislature back to January and what came out of the legislature if you missed four meetings then you could be asked to resign.

But anyway I ended up being elected to two terms in the Beaverton district. And that gets into the school names because Dr. Applegarth?? was a history major and since this area right after World War II had been one of those areas where they did all the building and [inaudible] and people were moving here. And the other thing that was happening was that the people in eastern part of the county where all the hills and those areas they were empty nesters and you were getting a whole lot of students out on the west side so they needed to do a lot of school building.

Because after the war they started a lot of house building around here and the builders were coming up with the names for the school. And Dr. Applegarth was a history major.

LR: And of course he's going to say we need better names.

SB: We need better names. He had done some original work to come up with some names that were historical or related to [inaudible].

LR: Like Aloha High School.

SB: Well actually Aloha was an old one. The person that sent in to name the Post Office had sent in the name for the place that he came from in Wisconsin and it came back misspelled. Aloha. But you see it absolutely fit.

LR: Really? I thought that the history of that name had to do with the Hawaiians that had worked with Hudson Bay Company in this whole area.

SB: It was a misspelling--this is in Oregon geographic names.

LR: I have to look that one up. I haven't looked in that book in a long time.

SB: That's where that came from. And Dr. Applegarth was also wanted to get it started to look at local

LR: The way you're talking about it, it seems like he was sort of the head of the decision making process at that point in time.

SB: Oh yes.

LR: So was he the head of the board?

SB: That's a good question. The school board is responsible for providing direction to the district and the superintendent is responsible for implementing. But the school board also has to carry out whatever comes out of the legislature. And so you had the financial area, instruction area.

LR: The political, everything.

SB: Yes and you end up with this notebook and you cite federal laws, state laws and judicial decisions. And so that's one of the purposes of the school board. The State school board association is the one that does the lobbying and keeps you all alerted as to—okay they've passed these bills and we're going to need to do this.

LR: This is what we need to change.

SB: This is what we need to change and the school board can feed back to the State school board association. You pay dues based upon student population and the school board can say Okay, we need to have this done and this done. So basically

they're the lobbying part for the school system.

LR: That's a large project to take care of.

SB: I think that class I took at Whitman— Political Parties and Pressure Groups.

LR: That must have helped you so much.

SB: That was a tremendous.

LR: It's a really neat thing that both of you have had a chance to be such an integral part of the creation of this county but also the entire area's history. I think that's just a really neat thing.

RB: You might ask her how her grandfather got into the U.S. Supreme Court.

LR: There we go.

SB: I guess he ended up in the Supreme Court because---

LR: Which grandfather was this?

SB: Colorado.

LR: This was Buchanan, Gene Buchanan.

SB: Gene Buchanan.

LR: Who was a Supreme Court?

SB: This was an area that was not suited for farming. The settlers were coming in and farming anyway. And so the cattlemen were trying to save their water holes and so this was a situation where he had these cowboys sign up, he was basically signing up for the waterholes that he was using. One of the cowboys had signed up, got killed at some fight over the winter, whatever. But the hut was my grandfather's.

And so the parents of the boy insisted that because the cowboy had signed up to settle on the place that now it was theirs. And my grandfather said no, that that building was his and [inaudible] to pull it away. This was a settler ranch situation and then the cowboy that had signed up ended up getting killed. And so my grandfather came and pulled the shack away that belonged to him and the parents were tumbling around inside. So I'm not sure about the process but it ends up in federal court and he wins the case but he becomes bankrupt.

LR: Victory but defeat at the same time. Before we finish up I was thinking about a couple of the last things you mentioned, the flooding of Kettle Falls.

SB: Before they built Grand Coulee Dam the Kettle Falls was a major fishing spot for the Indians. They came from western Montana and the Kootneys for the fishing.

LR: Just like Celilo.

SB: It was just like Celilo. This happened when I was in grade school and I can remember that they were going to flood the flats where Coleville had been and my dad drove us across the flats before it was flooded.

LR: Because he wanted you to come and see it and enjoy the territory before it was gone.

SB: The other part was, there was a town of Kettle Falls down where the base of the falls happened to be and I can remember—the Columbia River was a lot lower than the Coleville Valley. The river ran through and then it came down, came down to the river. And I can remember following a house being on a flat bed being towed up from Kettle Falls up to Meyers Falls. Meyers Falls was changed to Kettle Falls and Meyers Falls people were not happy. And so they moved all the houses.

LR: On barges along the river?

SB: No, on land. The Indians didn't like it. The settlers didn't like it but it was a done deal.

LR: The government comes in and you have no choice.

SB: So there's not much of Myers Falls left but it was one of the major fishing spots on the Columbia.

LR: So sad to hear about those things happening. One thing I didn't ask Rod was about the Mount St. Helens eruption and then we can end on that—just what you remember about it.

SB: Well we're coming up from Eugene and I can see this thing and everybody was talking.

LR: Like smoke you mean?

SB: The ash.

LR: Which way was it going? It came up and then didn't it go north east?

SB: It went east and a lot of the people out there are in the Columbian Basin, they got caught. You had cousins that were going across the Basin and the ash gets into the motor.

LR: Oh yeah and clogs everything up.

SB: And it was amazing how it stuck. You could wash down your driveway
And it wouldn't be gone. And David, our younger son was in the Sunset High School
band.

LR: Was Portland covered in ash or because it went east, did Portland get saved?

SB: It went east but there was still ash that fell in Portland. It was just like little ash
coming down and it would stick to the shrubs. There was the first eruption but there
were subsequent eruptions and so the Sunset band was due for a contest at
Memorial? Stadium. So there was some discussion as to whether breathing the ash
was—there was a discussion. And the other part was that they went out and practiced
and it was in rain and you came back and I put those jeans in the washer all by
themselves. And I had the good sense—fortunately a dasher? pulled the thing up,
looked inside and the inside was coated.

LR: So you had to clean it out before you could do more laundry.

SB: But they did the band contest all on the stadium. It rained during that I think. At any
rate that helped settle the ash. Do we do the parade or not? They did the parade.

LR: Did you all help out with any of the clean up after?

SB: Well basically it was just washing down your own place.

LR: Was there any fear?

SB: I don't think so. Paul Kane came out in the 1840s when it last erupted and it was
interesting because he painted Indians and took a little leverage on—he did one
painting of St. Helens and it showed lava coming down but there was never any lava.
So you can't always depend upon—.

LR: Yeah exaggeration.

SB: We've got these wonderful pictures of what it was like when this person came
through in the 1840s but a little fudging of--.

LR: They take their artistic license and kind of play with it sometimes. I was only a year
old when that happened so I don't remember it. My mom said I was there but--.

SB: Where were you?

LR: We lived in Salem at the time when I was just only a year old but of course I don't
remember anything. I think that's about it. Do you have anything else you want to add,

any stories that we've kind of forgot, any impressions? I think we pretty much covered most of what was on the questions.

SB: Can you think of anything else?

RB: No.

LR: Thank you so much.

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