

ALTHEA PRATT-BROOME

TAPE 6, Side 1

November 1, 1995

M.O'R.: This is a continuation of the interview with Althea Pratt-Broome on November 1st, 1995.

So you were saying there was as golf course in that space there.

A.P-B.: Yes. And the islands where the restaurant is, that was the club house, and there was a restaurant. Then the driving course was up there, and then beyond the driving course was the rest of the golf course, and then it dropped down into the gulch on that south side, and where the railroad track goes through there was a tunnel down under so that you played the holes up there and then you drove your ball across to the next hole, which was across the tracks. Then you had to go down through the tunnel to get to where your ball was and play the last part of the game there - I think it was the last part of the game; I can't quite remember. And I think from there on you came back through the tunnel.

We used to play it quite a lot, and I just don't remember all of the details now. But it was amazing, I would play golf there and remember on that side all of the shanty towns.

M.O'R.: So the shanty town was on the Lloyd Center side of the gulch?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Okay. I was going to ask you that, whether it sprawled the whole thing or if it was just on that side.

A.P-B.: Not that I remember. At least the part I visited was all on this side. There may have been one on farther down on the other side; I don't know, but the one that I was exploring and learning about was that one.

M.O'R.: Maybe one other question that just falls in the category of kind of picking up a detail here that we haven't talked about. You said that your family knew the Lloyd family.

A.P-B.: My grandfather did.

M.O'R.: Oh, your grandfather did?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Oh, that's right. I guess we have talked about this.

A.P-B.: The rest of my family did not.

M.O'R.: So you didn't have any contact with the Lloyds?

A.P-B.: No, no. I had no contact with them.

M.O'R.: Okay.

A.P-B.: No, they were located down there in California, and I don't know where they lived even. No, it was my grandfather who was his friend.

M.O'R.: Okay.

A.P-B.: And they were the ones who bought up the property and were going to build the hotel, which they gave up. And of course by the time Lloyds - whoever; children, grandchildren, whoever ended up doing the development over there my grandfather had been long gone. It was in the 50's ...

M.O'R.: That's right. Yeah.

A.P-B.: ... that it was built. My grandfather died in the 30's.

M.O'R.: Now, did you meet Ralph Friedman as a result of his historical interest in this house? Was that the connection?

A.P-B.: Yes. In fact, before I knew him I was mad at him because he had written about this house. He had never come to visit me to find out the information firsthand. He had taken it from several other sources. They were calling it Meadowbrook instead of Willowbrook, which came from a DAR woman, Mrs. Lipshaw, who came here and interviewed me for a newspaper article and got the whole thing garbled up. She called it Meadowbrook instead of Willowbrook, which is what the pioneer people called it, and it's on the record in the county courthouse down at Hillsboro, and also she had big cedar trees as beams in the living room. She had been in the living room. I had told her there were cedar beams, in fact showed her, holding up the house underneath.

M.O'R.: But not in the living room?

A.P-B.: No.

M.O'R.: I don't see any cedar beams.

A.P-B.: No. So she had all kinds of things wrong in it. He had taken her article, without coming here, and he had at least the Meadowbrook, I don't remember what all, and he had it in the *Oregon for the Curious*.

M.O'R.: Right. In the first edition of that book, then?

A.P-B.: Yes, in the first edition. And so he came here right in the middle of the summer arts program one day, and I was teaching a bunch of little kids out here. I was doing some music with them. And he came and started wandering around and looking at things, which is fine. We have visitors all the time. And then when I stopped and turned the kids over to somebody else, why, then

I asked him what he wanted, and then he told me who he was. And I said, "Oh, you're the man who wrote those things all wrong in *Oregon for the Curious*."

And he said, "I did?"

And I said, "Yes. It would have been better if you had come out and talked to me."

"Well," he said, "now I am here."

And I said, "I'd like you to correct those things."

I don't think he ever did. Well, he certainly couldn't in that edition, but I don't think he did in any of the others. I think he just continued to run it the way it was.

M.O'R.: Well, he wrote a second volume, I guess. It may have had the same title. I can't remember.

A.P-B.: No, it wasn't *Oregon for the Curious*. I have them all over there. No, he came here not too long before he died.

But that was another thing about him that you never could really tell whether he was serious or not because he told you the darnedest things. He would call me up and he would say, "I'm going to have a heart attack. If I have a heart attack in the night, I'm going to call you, and you're going to come out here and get me and take me to the hospital." He lived down on 57th off of Sandy.

I said, "Ralph, I'm not coming over to your house. I'm not going to pick you up and take you to the hospital. You have neighbors. They take care of you. You have friends over there within a block or so of you."

"No, you have to come and get me."

He didn't have a heart attack. And one day he called me and he was talking to me and he said, "I have AIDS."

I said, "Come on, Ralph."

But he would say the darnedest things. And so when he came that last time I said something about, "Well, I understand that you've been ill."

"No, I'm not ill." And he would never tell me that the cancer - he had had prostate cancer; he had told me that, and that it was all better because he had told me Phoebe had cancer of the throat and that's how she had died, and how horrible it was. And he said, "And I've had cancer." And so then all these times he would tell me all these crazy things, and then to be dying and not tell me. But he didn't.

M.O'R.: Your friendship with him grew out of that first meeting, then, when he came out here?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And then I guess you got to know him a lot better after that?

A.P-B.: Well, he came all the time, and a lot of times he would bring people. He'd say, "Well, I told them they had to meet you." And he would just pop in. He never called ahead. And I'd say, "Ralph, will you please call me ahead of time?"

"Oh, yes. I will." But he never did. He'd just pop in.

M.O'R.: Did you ever have to turn him away because he just arrived at completely the wrong time?

A.P-B.: I wouldn't have had the heart to do that. He was so funny. And he'd have a friend with him, and he'd say, "Well, I just told them they had to see you." And so he'd say, "We can come in and have tea." So you had him in and you had tea, no matter

whether you were out in your dungarees out there digging in the yard or not. You came in and you had tea.

M.O'R.: Well, that's a great little footnote here to the history that I didn't expect you to talk about at all.

A.P-B.: All part of the education of Althea Pratt-Broome, people like him. There were other people along the way, but you learn from everybody, Michael O'Rourke.

M.O'R.: Yes, I know that's true. Well, I think now might be a good time to call it a day, and we'll continue for at least a few more times here and get your whole story. But thank you very much for the interview.

A.P-B.: Well, you are a very patient man; that's all I can say.

[end of tape]