

Donna Maxey Easter Oral History

Recorded October 12, 2024, at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon, during Homecoming / Reunion.

Interviewer: Jenny Johnson-Riley ("JJR"), Pacific University Class of 1998.

This transcription was made through AI with manual corrections, clarifications, and editing of some repetitions and filler words, March 2025.

[JJR] 0:02

This is Jenny Johnson Riley from the Alumni Board, and I am here at Pacific University's Homecoming in 2024 and we are interviewing Donna Maxey Easter. Donna, can you tell us when you graduated and then your program of study?

[Maxey] 0:23

My name is Donna Maxey Easter. I graduated in 1970 in May, and my field of study was Elementary Education.

[JJR] 0:35

Did you go on to become a teacher?

[Maxey] 0:40

I did, forever, it seems like. Yeah, I have vivid memories of Pacific. I especially have vivid memories of my freshman year. I remember it was warm, and all the freshmen were out in the quad. There was Mac [McCormick] Hall and Walter Hall, and I came down wearing -- what do you call it -- a dorm shirt! The dorm shirt was about this length, which was like right to your knees, and there was a slit like, to here, like mid thigh. But at that time, I was quite something! I had nothing on under it. I had my underclothes, but I didn't have on pants. I think I came down barefooted or something. And I think I caused quite a stir! Quite a stir. There was one guy, Woody Conic, was going here. We had gone to high school together. Woody was white. I'm African American. Woody was white. So, you know, we were like, [in an excited voice] 'Oh I didn't know you're were coming!' We were all excited to see each other and everything. That was the first day that I met Opal Chancler [Opal Chancler-Moore, another African American woman alumna of Pacific]. She thought, 'Hmm, who is this?' [Laughs.] Just like this.

[Maxey] 2:26

So, I mean, my whole freshman year was kind of like that. When I was in high school, I was very popular. I was highly hyper-active in social service stuff and student government and all of those things. When I came to Pacific, I became Freshman Class Secretary. I was just telling Patrice that we had a thing that OE Phi [Omega Epsilon Phi] was doing: OE Phi Sweetheart. We hadn't been in school even a month, and they expected each class and each sorority to have someone that they submit for this contest. And we're like, 'Who can we do to do this?' 'Who do we know?' It's a talent contest. So it's like, 'Well, what do we know what to do?' And I was like, 'Well, I just had a senior recital'. I had taken piano lessons since I was in third grade, and I was taking lessons here and being a music minor. And so I said, 'Well, I could play, you know, Clair de Lune or something,' you know, I just had a recital, I've got several I could pick from.

[Maxey] 3:28

So they listened to it. I said, 'But I don't have a dress!' Someone, I think her name was Diana Matsui, had a dress. She loaned me a dress, and somebody else loaned me some shoes, and they put makeup on me, because I didn't know how to do that, and somebody combed my hair, and off I went, and I won! It was a shock for a lot of reasons.

[Maxey] 3:46

Number one, because I was Black and everybody else was white. Gisele Nespickle was the Junior candidate, and Giselle did the hula, and she was big, tall, blonde, very curvaceous and everything. It's like, 'I'm not gonna win this one.' But I won -- Why? I don't know -- but the faculty voted. The faculty voted. So, you know, the guys were very polite. But after that, every court that there was then for whatever reason, OE Phi put my name up to be on the court and represent them.

[Maxey] 4:25

So, I mean, I don't think there were any courts my senior year, but I remember there was a Blue Key Court, and then I was also on Homecoming Court, and two or three other things. It got to the point people were like, 'Was OE Phi sponsoring you?' I'm like, [in a meek voice] 'I don't know anything.' Pretty soon somebody from OE Phi would say, 'Well, of course we're gonna sponsor you.' Like, [meekly] '...Oh, I don't know!' But for whatever reason, I was theirs. So anyway, yeah, that was kind of exciting.

[Maxey] 5:13

Coming into the library here was funny, because I got... Oh, I'll start with classes first. Dr. Steven Prince was my English professor. He was just amazing. He had such elan. He had such class and grace. I remember the first class that we had. I was so intimidated because having come from Portland and going to Jefferson High School, which is primarily the African American high school, you hear all these things. That you have a lesser education and you're not going to be qualified, and you're only an affirmative action recruit, and blah, blah, blah.

[Maxey] 5:57

And so I get in this class, and I'm like, 'Aah!' I'm just terrified. 'Am I going to be able to keep up?' I mean, I know I'm not stupid, but you know, if you come from a school that is -- I was on college track in high school. But if you come, as opposed to kids who come from higher income families... And the summer before -- was it the summer? Yeah, I think it was a summer before I came here, I had done an internship with Catlin Gable, which is a private school in Portland -- *the* private school in Portland -- So they were trying... No, it was after my junior year [at Jefferson High School]. They wanted me to go to Catlin Gable. It's like, 'No. I might be Rose Festival princess or something.' Because we're going to have court, and I don't want to miss out on that opportunity. So I didn't want to go to Catlin Gable. But they were trying to integrate and it's like, 'Nah, I'm not doing it.'

[Maxey] 7:02

But anyway, so I kept up with the Catlin Gable kids pretty good. But it was still a little intimidating, because they were older than I was, and they were more sophisticated. They had more sophistication. You know, having traveled more places in the world and stuff. I mean, everything that there was to offer in Portland: plays and different ballets, all that stuff; I got to go to those things. But as far as traveling places, I didn't have that kind of experience. So anyway, we were in our class. Everybody had to read this book. I think it was the 'Something of the Cave Bear,' or something?

[JJR] 7:52

'Clan of the Cave Bear' maybe?

[Maxey]

'Clan of the Cave Bear,' yeah, I think it was. She had just... what's her [the author's] name?

[JJR] 7:57

I can't think of her name, but she's here from Oregon. Jean Auel, maybe?

[Maxey] 8:01

Yes, I think that was it. I think she might have gone to Pacific?

[JJR]

Maybe? [Editor's note: Auel went to University of Portland. She published Clan of the Cave Bear in 1980, so the book Donna remembers from circa 1970 may have been a different title.]

[Maxey]

I think so. But just so everybody had to buy the book. They were trying to help her sales, you know. [Laughter.] So, we get to class. On the first day of class, I'm asking... I'm reading the book, and there's this word, and I don't know what it means. I asked my parents; I looked in the dictionary; asked my brothers and sisters; and nobody knew what this word meant. And so he says, 'Let me see, what is it?' I said, 'Oh, I circled it up here.' So I looked and I found it, and I go, Oh, here it is: 'Frigging. What does that mean?' Dr. Prince looks very distinguished and says, 'Frigging means fucking.' [Laughter]

[Maxey] 8:51

I was so embarrassed. I mean, I just dropped my head on the table. Like, 'Oh my God.' I couldn't. First of all, I don't think I'd heard an adult say that word, and especially not a distinguished adult. I was like, 'Oh my gosh, okay, all right, okay. What else is coming?'

[Maxey] 9:15

I mean, and so we're talking about... I mean, I was very naive, very protected, very sheltered, very naive. They talk about 'kids who come from the inner city...' No. A lot are very sheltered. And in fact, Brian said something last night to me about his relationship. I thought that he was quite the Lothario, yeah, and works out, he's just a lot of swag, you know. Not having experience, not doing any of the things that you thought. But you know, there's the persona. And then there was me, who came in. Every class, you know, we're studying the Greeks and the Romans, and they're all about sex. I knew nothing about sex, and not from a practical point of view.

[Maxey] 10:08

I mean, I knew how babies were born when I was four years old. I mean, I could take you through the birth cycle and all that stuff. But in terms of practical advice, I had none. And so, every time they bring up something [like] 'This is a...' What do you call it? '...a phallic symbol,' or this or that-- I'm asking questions all the time. Then, years later, I invited Dr. Prince -- I got remarried when I was 40 -- and I invited him to my wedding. He wasn't able to make it, but we did meet up, and he gave me this beautiful Pendleton blanket as a gift. He made the comment to me, he goes, 'I remember you were quite promiscuous when you were in college.' I go, 'Noooo, I was not, not at all.' 'Well, you know, I remember you talked a lot about sex.' I said, 'That's because I didn't know anything!' [Laughter]

[Maxey] 11:13

I remember a guy who was in our class: Bill... what was Bill's last name? Bill something. He was a grown man. He was 22. [Laughter.] He might have been 24, really grown. And so Bill would try and take me after class and explain things to me [Laughter]. Like he goes, 'God, you don't know anything, do you?' I was like, 'Well, yeah, I know this, this and this.' He was like, 'No, you don't quite understand.' So freshman year, it was like that. Sophomore year, it was like that. Junior year, it was like that. [Laughter]

[Maxey] 11:54

Finally, my senior year, I remember this girl named Sue Short said, 'You know, you used to talk about sex all the time in the classes. You did it freshman year, sophomore year, junior year. And it finally dawned on me: you didn't know anything.' I said, 'You're right, I didn't.' 'How could you be so stupid?' I'm like, 'I didn't have any of that kind of experience, and boys were not coming at me like that,' because, as I was saying to you, Patrice, my Dad: You didn't mess with Mr. Maxey's daughters! So no, nobody was going to try anything. [Laughter]

[Maxey] 12:27

As the boys used to tease me, 'If I take on a date, are you going to shake my hand at the door?' I said, 'Well, I might give you a hug. I might give you a hug, but don't count on nothing else.'

[Maxey] 12:43

College was eye-opening into the world. That there was just this whole -- I don't know. I just didn't know. I just was so sheltered and inexperienced. I had a lot of understanding of people, because I had worked in the public since I was 10 years old. But I didn't have real life experience like that. I grew up in a grocery store working, and so I had a lot of... I was outgoing and friendly and all of that. Coming into the library was quite the experience, because I got fired from working in the library.

[JJR] 13:34

Whaaat...?

[Maxey] 13:36

I got fired. [Laughter.] Because I was too friendly, and I talked to too many people, and then they come to the desk, and then we'd start laughing, and then we were making noise. And, you know, they couldn't say that I didn't do my job, because I was really good at doing my job. Everything that was supposed to be

done. I did it on time. But I was, you know, I was, like, 'Oooh! [makes excited noises]' ...Lots of this kind of stuff.

[Maxey] 14:02

So I got fired. It was my senior year that I took a class from the head librarian. It was Elementary Education -- Elementary Children's Literature for Elementary Ed majors. So I took the class. And after about a month of being in the class, the professor came up to me. He was sweating. And I thought, 'What in the world is he getting ready to say?' He apologized to me. He said, 'I want to apologize to you, because I thought that you were just kind of a ditzy blonde, because you're always laughing and talking to all the people and so social,' and blah, blah, blah, 'But you're really intelligent, and you have deep insights into the literature and your writing is beautiful.' You know, all these kinds of things. I'm like, 'Thank you?' [Laughter.] But he says, 'I want to apologize, because I learned a lesson from this, that I should not judge people before I really know them.'

[Maxey] 15:23

It's like: yeah, I was doing all those things. But I'm still studying too. But: studying was also my freshman year. I had not really studied in high school. I did a lot of studying outside the door. I wrote my papers, read the books, all that kind of stuff. We were in Walter Hall. If you're looking at Walter Hall, we were on the right side of the front door on the second floor. There were five rooms over there, and we did most of the dating of the freshman class! I mean, we were comparing notes. 'Well, who'd you go to breakfast with?' 'Well, I went to breakfast with so and so, then I went to lunch with such and such, and then I went to dinner with so and so.' And, I mean, we were all just dating. We're all kind of cute girls and smart and doing our thing, you know. So we were just very social. Then it came midterms, and I was taking five classes.

[Maxey] 16:33

I had three D's and two F's. I thought my parents are going to kill me. I'm on financial aid. 'My parents are gonna kill me!' So I went to these two girls. I remember: it was Elizabeth and Nancy, who lived down the hall, and they had straight A's. They were obnoxious. Opal was smart like that too, but Elizabeth and Nancy lived close to me, and Opal lived in another wing of the building. Like, 'Okay, you guys, we're all taking the same classes...' Opal was a Secondary Ed major. They [Elizabeth and Nancy] were elementary ed majors too. So I was like, 'Okay, I need help. I need to learn how to study. So whatever you do, I'm going to do it.' I hung out with them and then took the notes and came back and learned how to study afterwards, and all of these things: taking the notes and how you studied for the test. By the end of the semester, I brought it up to three B's and two C's. So yeah, in a month and a half, I had done some work. But Biology was still kicking my butt.

[Maxey] 17:54

So we get to Biology. We had Doc Roberts... I think they named something after Doc Roberts down there at the biology building or something. Anyway, he was great. And he was terrifying. I was like [in a wavery voice], 'Dr. Roberts, I'm flunking! Can I come...?' He would let me come to class early and talk to him, and he'd help me. I was trying to understand stuff. There was this guy named Bill -- I can't remember Bill's last name -- but Bill was very bright too, and Opal was in the class. So we had the frogs [dissection lab] the first quarter, and I took the frog. I was throwing everything away. I'd never cut anything before. 'Look at this! This looks like junk in here.' I threw all the eggs away and something else. I mean, I was just truly an F, truly an F.

[Maxey] 18:44

So, the second half of first semester was the rats [dissection lab]. I was determined I was going to do this. And so Bill and I were working together. He got a rat, I got a rat. I'm looking at Bill's rat, and I'm looking at my rat, and I'm like, 'These rats aren't the same.' So I said, 'I got to get a new rat. I don't have the same kind of rat Bill has.' I'm getting ready to go get a rat, and Bill is looking at Opal. 'Ooopaaa! Come here, Opal.' So Opal comes over and looks at the rat, and I tell her, 'I'm going to get a new rat.' She goes, 'Donna, don't go get a new rat.' I was like, 'This rat is not the same as Bill's!' She was just like, 'That's because Bill has a male rat and you have a female rat.' I had no clue. [Laughter.] I was just like... 'What?!' So anyway, Bill was about as red as that exit sign.

[Maxey] 19:00

'But what is this thing back here?' [Laughter.] I just had no clue, no clue! But we made it through. We made it through, and I did good. By the beginning of sophomore year, I made it into the Honor Society. I was a Boxerette. That was my goal. So, Opal was the only Black Boxerette and I said, 'we need at least one more!'

[JJR]

What was a Boxerette?

[Maxey] 20:20

That was the underclass Women's Honor Society. I thought it was too much for me to try to go for the regular Honor Society. [Laughter.] You know, by that time, I had a boyfriend, and I was still doing the social thing, and I had three or four jobs every semester. So I was like, 'That's too much.' I couldn't do it -- I could have done it, but I didn't.

[Maxey] 20:48

But anyway, it was all very interesting. I mean, life was just a total exploration into things that I knew nothing about. I was determined that my daughter would not be that stupid. Or, as my older sister said to me, 'How did you get so dumb? How come you don't know anything?' I was like, 'I don't know.' She goes, 'You know, if I have a daughter and she's as dumb as you I'm gonna kill her.' [Laughter.] 'It's not my fault, you know, 'I'm doing the best I can!'

[Maxey] 21:29

It was just a growing-up, and a maturing, and learning about things. I heard one of the men last night speak about Dr. McVicker, who was very sharp. He was the head of the Education Department. A very slightly built man, and he held his pencil [demonstrates], and it was just the way... It was very classy. He always dressed impeccably, just impeccably dressed, and very proper English and everything. I mean, I had some great professors. And it was an amazing time. I thought I got an okay education at Pacific. When I left and started teaching, I realized I got an excellent education. I was much more prepared for teaching than a lot of my colleagues were. I started teaching in California, and I was kind of intimidated by that, because, you know, California was supposed to be 'the' educational place at the time. I got down there, I thought, 'Well, I know more than I think I do!'

[Maxey] 22:41

Although, it was a little disconcerting because I taught at Harvey Scott [elementary school in Forest Grove] for student teaching. I think there were four kids who were not reading at grade level at third grade, out of like, three or four classrooms maybe. So when I got to the rural community of Oroville that I was teaching in that had 7,000 people in the town, I was the most educated black woman in town. I married my college sweetheart, who was Steve Pomerantz, who was white and Jewish. So we were quite scandalous, needless to say, in that community. We were kind of scandalous here at Pacific too. There were people who were not prepared for that. A lot of black guys who were dating black white women, white girls secretly -- a lot of it. But Steve and I were real sweethearts, and so that was kind of disconcerting to a lot of people. You know, it's like, 'It's okay if you're just slumming. But if this is for real, this is serious.' I mean, the faculty was in an uproar about it too. Steve had a cousin, Dr. Al Friedman, who was in the Music Department. So we got to hear the scuttlebutt through the [grape]vine about it. But we got married anyway, and our relationship lasted 10 years. And now he's Dr. Pomeranz.

[Maxey] 24:26

So, what else happened? Yeah, I found that I was very prepared for it, to be a teacher. I mean, I didn't know how to deal with having so many children. At that time, you had 30 kids in a classroom. I was teaching second grade, and I had all of these kids that were below grade level. I think there was one or two that were on grade level. It's like, 'Oh, my gosh, what do I do? How do I do this?'

[Maxey] 25:05

So I went to the principal after I'd been teaching about a month, and said, 'I think you made a mistake hiring me.' He goes, 'What?' I said, 'I'm not prepared to do this. I think you made a mistake and I'm not doing a good job.' He goes, 'You just started. You shouldn't expect to do a good job till you've been here five years. It'll take you some time, but we're going to get you some help.' So he got the first grade teacher to show me. And I mean, it was a whole new learning experience of how to work with remedial students. Plus,

we were in a very poor school district, too. So yeah, I learned so many things in teaching, but Pacific gave me a great foundation for being out there in the work world.

[Maxey] 26:02

Let's see, what else can I say? Dr. King was killed my junior year. That was a big scuttlebutt. That was the year the BSU [Black Student Union] was started [in 1968]. It was about the time it was started. The question was, 'Who was supposed to be in the BSU?' Steve and I were clearly a couple. We'd been together, you know, a year and a half by this time. He and I -- in my zeal and such and naivete -- I thought that he should be part of the BSU also. So, I didn't really join the BSU. I mean, I kind of did, but not really. I would go to the meetings, but it was like, a half-hearted kind of thing, you know. We were looking at the world to be integrated, as opposed to here. This was doing what white folks were doing, which is being segregated. Now that I've had some life experience, I see it a different way. I think you need to have allies. They call them 'allies.' I don't like the word ally; I like 'co-conspirator.' That says more of a commitment to the cause.

[Maxey] 27:27

Allies are kind of over on the side, and, you know, they're not really involved. 'No, I want you all the way in the conspiracy so that we can work through this.' But it was really difficult. It was really a heartbreaking time. Plus, we had the Vietnam War, and Reagan had been voted in [as governor of California], and all these crazy things going on at the same time. My senior year, we had a Vietnam War protest, and all the students protested and marched and everything. I was the only student of the student teachers who didn't go to class that day. So I had to tell my students, according to my professor, that 'I was abandoning my post.' And I'm like, 'Well, what am I? Am I a student, or am I a teacher? Because if I'm a teacher, I need to be getting paid. I'm not getting paid for this.' But I was told that none of the students would be reprimanded for being a part of the march. So I said, bump it: I'm going anyway. So I participated, but it was written in my professional file, that I did not come to work that day. I was the only student at the college that got punished for being in the in the protest. I took it to the President [of Pacific], and he's like, 'Well, I'm really sorry, I can't do anything about it.' But it's like, 'No, this isn't right. It was said that nothing was up.' 'Well, I can't stop your people, the professors and stuff.' And it's like, really?

[Maxey] 29:18

I was concerned that I was going to be blackballed from getting a job. But I did interview, and when I interviewed with people, I said, 'This is what's in my professional file. Before you look, I want you to know that this is what's going to be in there.' So they were like, 'Hey, not a [big] deal. Not a deal at all.' So that was some of what went on.

[Maxey] 29:57

Pacific was interesting. Brian mentioned last night about all the jobs he had. I mentioned I had started working at 10. I had a half-time job. My folks had a mom, pop and kids grocery store. Working wasn't that hard for me, having the discipline to do the work and do all that kind of stuff. But I had 99 jobs. I worked in the kitchen. They could always tell when I was working on the line serving food. We had two lines that everybody walked by. And it's not like it is now, like a restaurant. You went down the two lines and you got your food, and everybody got the same thing. We'd be out there, and the cooks would come out and go, 'I can always tell when you're working, Donna, because everybody's making noise and laughing!' They had Hawaiian drums, and so we'd be beating spoons on the pans. [Makes drumming noises with her hands.] It's like, 'Cut it out!' It's like, 'Hey, there's hardly anybody in here anymore!' Edna, you know Mama Edna [also known as Auntie Edna, who later became Pacific's Hawaiian Club advisor], was there; and she scared the hell out of all of us, right? She was scary even as a student. We were in the same class. She would take the tickets and check off that you had eaten and everything. But yeah, Edna was... if you could get her away from that job, she was fun. But on the job, she was 99% business.

[Maxey] 31:41

So, I worked in the kitchen. I'd help put the food together. I watched the tables. I worked on the dorm on the phone. I was a proctor. I was a secretary for some departments. I had worked in the library. Pick a number, I was doing it, whatever was necessary to get that work study money. I finally worked off -- I think it took me five years that I had to work at a Title One school, that I got my, what's the word for that? Not extinguished, but...

[JJR] 32:18

Forgiven? Student loan forgiveness?

[Maxey] 32:20

Yeah, student loan forgiveness. I still had maybe three or four payments we had to make. But it was quite the experience. Now, what was the real experience was after we after got married and graduated: He was in graduate school. We were driving a Volvo station wagon, a brand new 1970 Volvo station wagon, and living in a shack. [Laughter.] I mean, literally, it was a shack. It was like the seven plagues of the Bible. You know, there was horse flies and roaches and ants and rats and water coming through the ceiling, just all kinds of stuff.

[Maxey] 33:12

College to young adult life, it was just all an eye-opening experience for me. Like, 'Wow, there's a whole 'nother life out here that I know nothing about.' It was a very maturing experience. All of it together. I mean, it's real hard to separate college from early married [life], in terms of the growth that I made. So I don't know. Anything else you want to ask?

[JJR and another unidentified speaker] 33:53

That a lot! That was wonderful. So glad you stopped by!

[Unidentified Speaker; possibly Marissa Williams, Pacific University Class of 2019?] 33:57

How much did you pay for college?

[Maxey] 33:59

Oh, now that's an interesting question! [Laughter.] So, the first semester, I think the first year, it was like, either \$1500 or \$2000.

[Unidentified Speaker]

For the whole year?

[Maxey] 24:17

For the whole year. [Gasps from the other speakers.] I think that first semester I had to pay \$50, then the second semester I had to pay, I remember, \$150. I got a lot of financial aid. I couldn't understand why. My parents owned a ma-pop-and-kids grocery store and a barber shop. I said, 'How come I'm getting so much financial aid?' I said, 'My parents aren't poor, they've got money.' Yeah, but my dad had just had a massive heart attack, when I was a sophomore, 14, in high school. And I had a younger brother. So the answer was 'Your dad's heart is really bad,' and they hadn't expected him to leave the hospital. They figured he might go at any moment. They didn't want to saddle me with financial expenses that I wasn't gonna be able to handle. So, as I like to say, I went to college when it was popular to be Black, and I got my education. I'm really thrilled about that.

[Maxey] 35:29

In terms of Affirmative Action [Editor's note: this probably refers to a program which provided financial support for more African American students to attend college]: all the kids who came here were very intelligent. There were some kids that were in the writing class that we took, that didn't know how to write. In fact, I had asked Dr. Prince, I had gone and worried, 'Can I write? Do I need remedial help?' 'No, you're one of the better writers in the class'. 'Really? Oh, okay.' It was edifying to know that my education all these years... I had heard so many negative things about Jefferson High School, that it was edifying to know that I had a good education and a good background.

[Maxey] 36:20

So, back to the money issue. The next year, I had to bring more money. So I got a summer job. And then brought more money. But every year your share was more, that you had to pay. It was the same old dance with the FAFSA and all those other things. I do remember there was a Dean Reece, who was in charge of the financial aid and such, and I remember I really had a problem with him because he was from the South, first of all. But it was very clear that he was prejudiced. It was just the way that he talked to me, it was clear that I was not a person, that I was Black. He would call me in, and he would ask me about all the other

black students. I said, 'Well, you never ask me about any of the white students, do you?' He wanted to know what they were doing and this, that and the other, and I finally realized what he was doing. And I said, 'You know, you probably should ask them. I don't know that I can help you.'

[Unidentified Speaker] 37:46

You speak for yourself. You don't speak for everybody.

[Maxey] 37:49

He would call us in and try and put pressure on people. I didn't care for him or his tactics. My parents had been to college. My Dad had been a teacher in the south and he hadn't been able to get a job when he came North. Because: 'I worry about white women, I have to tell you, because they're so -- the white males are so afraid they are going to be attacked all the time by black men.' 'I don't know what it is you guys got, but you better protect it.' You know? I'm being facetious, of course. But, he didn't get hired. There was this 'big black buck,' he couldn't get a job teaching. My dad weighed 175 pounds soaking wet. That was the most he ever weighed and he was 6 feet tall. You're afraid he's gonna attack all these little girls? He got hired in Portland Public Schools, but when they saw him, he didn't get the job. So he became a barber.

[Maxey] 39:05

Then we got the grocery store years later. Finances were, working was a big part of it. I can see where -- well Brian was saying, he had to go get to all these jobs. That for someone who had not worked, that it was quite a shock to have to do all these different kinds of jobs, and hustle and everything. I'd been doing it since I was 10, so it was like, 'Hey, this is less work than I normally do!' So I was excited to be here. You went and got a job during the summer and you worked during the school year, and you just did what you had to do.

[Unidentified Speaker] 39:50

And you worked while you were in school, too?

[Maxey] 39:52

Oh, yeah. Yeah, everyday.

[Unidentified Speaker] 39:56

Yeah, I'm at the same part.

[Maxey] 39:57

Everyday. There were meals being served... you'll love this story. So, I worked in the kitchen. I found out -- probably about my junior year -- I found out that you could go afterwards and help prepare the meals. You know, fix the salad. They had big trays of those big silver things with the trays slid in them.

[Unidentified Speaker]

Oh yeah, like the baker's racks?

[Maxey] 40:23

Yeah, yeah. Baker's racks. Well, that's what I'm gonna talk about is the baker. So we got this baker and he was so good. Oh, you know, don't eat it cold. If it was hot, it was great. But once it was cold it was like kind of a rock. But this guy, he was back there in the kitchen and he was kind of cross-eyed, you know, an old white guy. He always had a cigarette hanging out of his mouth, and there was always the ash on it. He'd hold it there and it'd be ash. I never saw him flick the ash. But it would be gone. I would try and catch it to see, was it going into the frosting? I never saw anything. The frosting looked pretty, you know. I never did see it, but we'd be back there helping him with the pastries and stuff and we'd also be making salads, or serving up fruit or whatever. It was constant work, but hey, it was all good. So, I think that's it.

[Unidentified Speaker] 41:37

All right, thank you for your time!