

ALTHEA PRATT-BROOME

TAPE 8, Side 1

November 17, 1995

M.O'R.: This is a continuation of the oral history with Althea Pratt-Broome on November the 17th, 1995.

Anyhow, so that's how you got to the medical school. Okay. Let's see now. So you were - were you still working at the medical school, then, when you met Laurie and when ...

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: Yes. And when you purchased this house?

A.P-B.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: Okay. And I guess that ...

A.P-B.: Well, now wait. No. I had already stopped working because I had Melissa.

M.O'R.: Okay.

A.P-B.: Yes. Yes, Melissa had been born.

M.O'R.: Before you moved into this house, then; is that right?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: I see. Okay. Actually we could maybe back up a little bit there. And you had also mentioned that Laurie was the music master at the First Christian Church, right?

A.P-B.: Yes. When we got married that summer he had been asked to come to First Christian and become the minister of music. As I said the five downtown churches were the only ones who had ministers of music, and they were the only ones who - it wasn't

much of a salary, but at least they - you know, it was sort of liveable, and we did live on it for a while with the babies coming.

So we had - Melissa had been born, and the following year Rebecca had been born, and we moved in here then, so I had the two babies. And then Deborah was born here. So the three of them are only a year apart, and they've never known a home other than this one. This is it.

M.O'R.: So it's Melissa, Deborah - Deborah's the one that was born here?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Is that right? And Melissa and who ...

A.P-B.: Melissa and Rebecca.

M.O'R.: Rebecca, that's right. Okay.

A.P-B.: So Melissa never knew a time when she didn't have Rebecca because she was just a year old when Rebecca was born. So they just - they were very close.

[interruption]

A.P-B.: So did it record that?

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah. It recorded. We just weren't getting quite as much volume as is ideal, but it was enough.

A.P-B.: Enough so that they can hear it?

M.O'R.: Yeah. I just didn't want to do the whole tape that way necessarily.

Okay. And so then you moved in here, and it was during the moving in process, I guess you said, that you discovered that you and Laurie had this incompatibility at least in terms of the house, eh?

A.P-B.: Right. Not only that, but the thing that really brought it to an end - I don't know whether it's part of your era or not, but in ours people always looked at musicians as if, oh, they were out of this world sort of thing, you know, and that nobody really understood them, and these women were always trying to be the understanding ones for Laurie, and because when you are working with people in music - he gave piano lessons, he gave organ lessons, he gave - well, he helped them with their vocal things, because he is a wonderful accompanist, and everybody wanted him to be their accompanist if they were doing solo work and giving concerts. So these women would want to work with him, and it was this very close thing. You have to - he's very sensitive, and you build this understanding when you're working with somebody like that. And women then get this thing about the man, the musician.

M.O'R.: Sure. Well, I guess you're in a position where you can have a fairly intimate kind of sharing and so forth.

A.P-B.: Absolutely. Very intimate. And ...

M.O'R.: Obviously a situation that could be fraught with some dangers?

A.P-B.: Danger, yes. If the man isn't very careful about it. It's the same kind of thing that happens to ministers; it happens to doctors. Part of the training in medical school is about how to handle the female patient and not build this kind of thing. Ministers have to go through the same thing. Well, they ought to do it for musicians [laughing] and particularly church musicians, but any musician that - anyone who is an accompanist. And in choirs, you know, he had all these women working with him musically, and all the soloists. They have to spend hours going through the music

together, whether it's a male soloist or a female soloist. And of course when you're a minister of music you have your four top soloists, your soprano, your alto, your tenor and your bass, and the two are male and the two are female. Well, he also had a women's choir and a men's choir, but they were two separate and for concerts he'd bring them together.

At any rate, one of the church secretaries decided that she was madly in love with him. She would call me up and tell me all of her troubles: "Should I divorce my husband so I can marry Laurie? We have such an understanding with each other."

M.O'R.: But now you were already married to Laurie?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. And we were living here.

M.O'R.: And she talked to you about this?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. I'm very understanding. So these women would call me and pour out their problems to me, and I'd have a chat with Laurie about it and say, "You know, you're going to have to do something about this. You're going to have to put some controls on it. You're going to have to stop taking them places." Like the secretary, he would take her to see other organs, and they would sit beside each other and play the organ together. You know, it was this kind of thing going on all the time.

In fact, when my mother died and we had the memorial service and she was playing the organ for it, and afterward she came up - and this was many, many years after Laurie and I were no longer married. I was married to Jack then. She came up to me afterwards and she said, "Do you remember me?" Well, it didn't dawn on me who she was. She'd gained a lot of weight and everything. And I said, "Well -."

"Well, I'm Carol," she said. And I said, "Oh, of course I remember you."

And she said, "I want to tell you how sorry I am that I did the things that I did to you."

And I said, "What did you do to me?"

She said, "Well, my relationship with Laurie." And she said, "You didn't know it."

And I said, "Of course I knew all about it." And I said, "You used to call me." But you know, she didn't tell me everything that was going on; she just would tell me that she was in love with him. And she said, "I'm a born again Christian now," and so she said, "I feel very badly about what I did, and I want you to forgive me."

And I said, "Well, I guess I forgave you a long time ago."

"Well," she said, "It must have caused the divorce."

And I said, "No, it was another Carol that caused the divorce."

And she said, "Well, I didn't know about her."

And I said, "Well, he was doing the same thing with both of you."

At any rate ...

M.O'R.: So things got out of hand with the second Carol?

A.P-B.: Yes, things totally got out of hand. The janitor, the custodian at the church finally called me one night at midnight and he said, "Do you know where your husband is?"

And I said, "I assume that he's down there practicing."

"Well, he's down here all right, but do you know about this Carol Stewart?"

And I said, "Yes, I know."

And he said, "Well, I think you're the most wonderful person, and I just love you." And he said, "I just think it's horrible what they're doing." And he just poured it all out to me. He said, "I see them night after night down here."

I said, "Yes, I know."

Well, that was when I was pregnant with Deborah. And he said, "I don't know why you stay with him."

And I said, "Because I have two babies and the third baby is coming."

So anyway, this kind of thing went on for several years. And so finally he was going to spend his summer vacation with her, and I was going to go down to USC to do some of my graduate work. And I said, "Just don't come back. I've put up with this stuff for years. I'm just not doing it anymore. Just don't come back."

Well, of course he did, begging. And I said, "No. Forget it. I've lived with it long enough. I'm not going to live with it anymore."

And then he said, "Well, do you want a divorce?"

I said, "I don't care if I have a divorce or not. I'm not going to go out with anybody, and I'm not going to remarry. So if you want to remarry, you get a divorce. You pay for it. I'm not going to."

So that's how it ended.

M.O'R.: And so he moved out?

A.P-B.: Well, no. He didn't.

M.O'R.: Oh, he didn't?

A.P-B.: He said, "I will continue to live here."

M.O'R.: But he didn't even like the place.

A.P-B.: He didn't even like it. That's what I told him. "You don't even like it, and you're not here hardly ever anyway. So why? Because you're here."

So I bought a little place down in Canby where I had my alternative school in the public school district. I went to the school board, and I said, "If I have my children here, they can go to school here." I had done this just before.

So anyway, I had this little house down there. So we stayed down there, and he stayed here, until I found that he - because I said, "If you're going to stay here, if you lived anyplace else you'd have to pay rent, so you can make the payment. I've always made them, but you can make them."

So he supposedly was, but again this intuitive thing said to me, "Something's wrong." And I called the attorney who was handling Dr. Harding's estate, and I said, "Is there something wrong?" He said, "Yes, there certainly is." He said, "We're going to repossess the place. He not only has not paid the taxes, but he's not made any payments for six months."

Well, I had had to pick up all of the payments on the car. We had bought the car - we only had one car - we had bought the car through the teacher's credit union, and so when we broke up I was left with all the payments; he had the car. So I had all the payments. Plus we had other bills, and I had always been the one to take care of all the finances because it was like the story, when the minister - one day - I kept telling Laurie, "You got a raise," and he would say, "No, I didn't get a raise." And I'd say, "Well, the check says that you got a raise."

"No."

And I'd already put it in the bank, and so I said to the minister, I said, "You gave Laurie a raise, didn't you?"

And he said, "Well, yes. A couple months ago. Didn't he even know?" And then he said, "It must be wonderful to be a musician and be going around on cloud nine all the time having somebody else take care of everything for you."

And I said, "Yeah, I think it is."

My mother used to say, "Does he know how to do anything?" Because he was always saying, "Althea, what do I do about this?" "Althea, how do I do this?"

The girls and I - I would be painting the woodwork, putting up sheetrock, scraping floors down, doing all these things, and the little girls wanted to paint. So in the kitchen the wainscoting comes up three feet, and I would teach them how to paint because they wanted to help. I'm of the theory that children want to work when they're little, and that's when they learn how, and that's when they develop the habits for work. These three girls are marvelous workers. They're hard workers.

But he would come home and they'd say, "Daddy, don't you want to help us?"

He'd say, "Oh, I don't know how to paint."

And they'd say, "Well, we know how to paint. Mama will teach you." [laughs]

So he had never done any of the finances. So any and all of the bills and everything that were left I was responsible for them. It was just the way things were. And then I never asked him for any support for the girls, because I knew I'd never get it anyway, because the money that came into the bank from his salary went out



as fast as it came in, and I usually didn't have enough to pay for the bills if I wasn't working. So those first few years when I wasn't working it was pretty hard. But when Deborah was born I was teaching kindergarten half a day out here, and then I was writing for a couple newspapers, writing articles for them, and so then I started teaching full time.

So anyway, so I carried the load anyway.

M.O'R.: So you and Laurie, I take it, sorted out these various problems regarding the payment on the house and so forth and so on?

A.P-B.: There wasn't any sorting it out.

M.O'R.: You just took the situation in hand yourself, then?

A.P-B.: That's right. I had to. I went to the teacher's credit union and got a loan to pay all of the taxes and pay all of the back payments, and the girls and I were very poor for a long, long time.

M.O'R.: Now, did he then at that point, when you discovered that he was six months in arrears, was that ...

A.P-B.: I never talked to him about it even.

M.O'R.: Did he continue to live here after that?

A.P-B.: The girls and I came back in. I said, "If you're staying here, fine. You stay in one end of the house, and we stay in the other."

And he moved because he kept these very late hours, and he would come in like 3:00 in the morning, and of course the girls were older by then and very aware of what was happening. And one day they forgot and locked - put the bolt on on the kitchen door, which is the one he always came in with his key, and he had to

pound on the door. And Rebecca, Melissa and Deborah - Deborah and I were down in this bedroom. Melissa's bedroom is this one up above here, and he was staying in the north bedroom, which had been our bedroom, and Rebecca was in the nursery above the kitchen. And so she had to come down at 3:00 in the morning to let him in, and she stood there, and she said, "And where do you think you've been?" And he decided after a few times - because then she told me, "I'm just going to keep locking that bolt and let him pound on the door, and we'll find out what he does with his time."

I said, "Don't do it." Well, she did it anyway. And so he decided that they were becoming much too aware of what his lifestyle was, and so he moved.

M.O'R.: And what was it like between the two of you when you were living in this house together but in this separated condition?

A.P-B.: As I said, he wasn't here till maybe 3:00 in the morning, anyway. So - and the place was a horrible mess because he had never bothered to clean. The newspapers were stacked in the pantry almost to the ceiling, almost nine feet, and a rat had taken residence in the back there, and there were rat things all over here.

The kitchen was absolutely awful, and the pantry was, and it was just - the girls and I just cleaned and cleaned and cleaned to make it habitable again. And he had never kept up outside. The blackberry bushes were growing. You couldn't come up the front steps. It was like Sleeping Beauty's castle. It was pretty awful. So we had a lot of work to do. And we were also very poor, had very little money. But we still, once we got it in hand we still

took people in and cared for them when they were having problems. We still donated to the charities and things, and we made it.

M.O'R.: This must have been a difficult time for you?

A.P-B.: It was extremely difficult. There were times when the girls would say, "There isn't any food left, Mother. What are we going to do?"

And I'd say, "God said, 'If I take care of the lilies, I'll take care of you.' Something will happen." And the phone would ring and somebody would say, "Would you come and lecture and we'll pay you thus-and-such?" Or a friend would call. We never told people what we were going through. And somebody would call and say, "Look, we haven't seen you for a long time. Why don't you come to dinner?"

And I'd say to the girls, "Yep."

I know Deborah was talking to me a few years ago, and each one of them have said this to me, that we really learned what faith was when we went through that. And I would say to them sometimes, "Do you think that we should keep the place or should we sell it?"

I was being offered hundreds of thousands of dollars, up to a million dollars for the place, so that these people, these businesses - you see, this three-and-a-half acres sits with 140 acres around it that all belonged to this pioneer place, but they finally sold off all of it. I have an old record book in the desk there of the things that they did. They formed an investment company, the boys did, after the father died, and sold off all of it, and this 140 acres belonged to the railroad. And the railroad kept trying to sell it to these big businesses, but here sat this piece of pie in the middle of it. And so these people used everything they

could to try to get it away from me, offering me fabulous money. So I would say to the girls, "Shall we keep it?" We knew that it would be torn down and all the trees would be bulldozed down. And they'd say, "Yes. We're willing to live the way we're living in order to keep it." So we did.

That's why when Jack and I got married and he wanted to become owner, too, and I said, "No. The girls and I have gone through all of this together. We have saved this place. And one can never be sure of marriages these days, and I don't know what would happen, but I know that I'll never go through that again. And so I will keep it in my name because it will go to the girls."

So every once in a while he's not happy about this arrangement, but he understands.

M.O'R.: Now, what was your relationship with Laurie like, then, after he finally moved out and you established this new life?

A.P-B.: I tried to hold things ...

[train whistle]

M.O'R.: Guess we'd better wait for a minute.

A.P-B.: Oh, the moaning and the groaning of the train.

When I came here this was one of the things I kind of worried about buying the place because of the train and the fact that the pioneers had so welcomed the railroads and let them take a little piece of the land to put the railroad track on, and that it was a wonderful way to get the crops into Portland and to go in and shop and things like this. So I investigated, and there was only an old slow freight that went through in the morning early, and another old slow freight at night. So I thought, "I can live with that.

Keep my girls off the tracks." So anyway, it has increased greatly since those days.

M.O'R.: So it's not just two trains a day anymore?

A.P-B.: Oh, I was working out in the garden about a month or so ago, and I finally decided to count how many trains went by in that amount of time. I was out there working for about three hours; there were five trains during that three hours. It isn't always that way. They don't have a particular schedule, obviously. They come at various times, and many times you can go for a number of hours with no train, and other times you're dealing with that. The joy of living in the country! It is no longer the country.

M.O'R.: But you were saying that then after he moved out you tried not to harbor any bad feelings about that?

A.P-B.: Yeah. So we have remained friends, and he has asked many times in between his numerous marriages since if I would think of coming back to him, and obviously the answer has always been no. He's gone through a number of marriages since then. I think he's been married about five times now.

M.O'R.: And what kind of relationship do your daughters have with their father?

A.P-B.: Well, I tried always to see that they would continue to have a good relationship with him. Deborah has a very good relationship with him and doesn't carry a lot of resentments. It's been harder for the other two girls, but they all have kept very closely in touch with him and love him and care about him, worry about him. He has become very, very heavy. He's a very tall person. He was six-foot-two, but he was always very slim. And he's gained a tremendous amount of weight. He has a hard time

walking; he has trouble with his feet. Rebecca just discovered that he has not told them that he has diabetes. He has had loss of vision. He has a very difficult time with his music. He's still minister of music at First Christian. He's been there for - my goodness - since 1952.

M.O'R.: I was going to say, over 40 years?

A.P-B.: Yes, over 40 years. And he mentioned something to Rebecca about having difficulty feeling the pedals of the organ with his feet. And she said, "Why are you having that?"

"Well, it's my diabetes."

And she said, "You never told me." So she's really worried about him now. He's had surgery; he has very little vision in one eye. He had surgery on his eyes and has a lot of problems. A lot of high blood pressure. So we all are very concerned about what happens to him.

So the girls love their father. He's a very nice person. He has his problems, like we all do. We all have our funny quirks. But I'm very glad that I didn't stay with him. I would never have been able to do all the things that I've done since then.

M.O'R.: Well, I think we've filled in most of the gaps now up until your moving into this house, and a little beyond.

One question I had - this is backtracking a little on the theme of the house. One question I had was when you would take these drives in the countryside, surely there must have been a number of grand old country houses ...

A.P-B.: Oh, there were.

M.O'R.: ... that you would visit and see?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Why was it this house and not one of the other ones that you passed that ...

A.P-B.: Because this thing said to me, "That's your house." It's like the thing that said, "Go down to the library." I mean, you don't argue with it. You can argue with it, but it isn't going to do you much good. You can dismiss it. I mean, the same thing happened with Jack. He was - it was his firm, which is one of the - well, it's the second largest architectural firm in Oregon, and they do work all over the country, but his firm was the one doing the planning for the urban renewal. So the first night that urban renewal met, one of the principals from the architectural office - there were four of them, partners - has to be at the beginning of a new thing, and then the associates take it over. So the associate and Jack were there, and Jack came up to me afterwards, and he said, "You own that old house over there, don't you?"

And I said, "Yes."

And he said, "Would you ever let people come in there?"

[end of side one]

ALTHEA PRATT-BROOME

TAPE 8, Side 2

November 17, 1995

M.O'R.: Okay. Now tell me again about that. You say you were - just back up a couple of sentences, because I don't think we got it.

So you were on your way down to the alternative school and ...

A.P-B.: And this thing said, "You're going to marry that man." And I said, "No, I'm not." So it was eight months before I let him come to the house to see the house, and it was just before I was ready to leave to go down to USC to teach all summer, and so I thought I was pretty safe. Well, he had bought this wonderful old house in Northwest Portland for the architectural office. It's a beautiful old place. And so he said, "Well, you're interested in old places; I think you'd like to see this. So before you leave for USC why don't you come down and see it?"

But when we were going through the place I wanted to make sure that there would be no relationship here, so I brought all the kids from the school up here that day that he was going to be here, and I did a lot of science things, major environmental things with the kids from my school. I brought them up here frequently. And so that day that he was going to be here I made sure that I brought all the kids up here, and I had my aides with me and everything so I was perfectly safe.

So I took him through the house, and when we came downstairs he said, "Well, I'd like to walk around outside, too." So we did.



And then we got to the driveway, and he said, "Well, it's lunch-time, so," he said, "I'm going to take you to lunch."

I said, "Oh, no. I have all these kids here."

And he said, "Well, they brought their lunches, didn't they?"

And I said, "Yes."

And he said, "And you have an aide here, don't you?"

I had two. And I said, "Yes."

And he said, "You're going to lunch with me." And he took my elbow, and we walked across the street and had lunch. And that's how it began.

So then I was down at USC all summer, and he wrote to me down there. And then when I came back it all began. And it was four years before we got married.

M.O'R.: Now, when you heard the voice that said, "This is the man you're going to marry," and you say you tried to resist that idea for a while, was there something in the air already at that point that you could detect coming from him?

A.P-B.: No, other than the fact that he asked me to see the house, but a lot of people did that, but you know, it - he was attractive, and he obviously thought I was or something. And so it just - it was something that I was a little wary about. The girls were grown by then, and they were all married, and I could go out again, and so I obviously was in a position that I could become involved, where anybody before that I had kept at a distance and didn't go out with them.

M.O'R.: And why were you wary?

A.P-B.: Because this thing had said that, and I - and besides it was obvious from the meetings that Jack had a temper and was a

man of the world, and not that I would be that interested, and yet here I was supposed to marry him? It looked like there were going to be a lot of things that would have to be worked out. He's a very good-looking person, very personable, and he has a wonderfully charming side as well as a temper. But I didn't know if I wanted to deal with the temper.

M.O'R.: But you felt a certain attraction ...

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: ... at that point, though?

A.P-B.: Yeah, but I had been attracted to others and kept them at a distance and didn't want to get married again, but then Jack didn't really, either. I told him within a few times of his coming here - like on a Saturday he would call me. Well, I did a lot of seminars and workshops here on the weekends with my graduate students at Portland State, and I would bring kids here so that the students, the university students, could get used to this is what happens in the arts with children, and get them involved with it, also. So Jack would call, and he'd say, "Well, I'm" - and he had this way of speaking, he said, "I'm out jazzing around. I thought I'd stop by."

And I'd say, "Well, yeah, that's fine." And there would be all these people here. And so one day he said to me, "Aren't you ever alone?"

I said, "Rarely."

But anyway, we found time to be alone. One time he called me and he said, "Will you have dinner with me?"

And I said, "Yes, that would be nice."

And he said, "Do you have any dresses?" Which is the funniest thing I'd ever been asked. He's a very direct person. And he said, "Well, you always wear pants. I just wondered if you had a dress, and would you wear a dress?"

And I said, "Well, when I go out, yes, I usually wear dresses, and I have a closet full."

And I told the girls about it, and they laughed and they said, "He probably wanted to know if you had legs."

So we developed this very nice friendship and love. I told him that I had this intuitive thing that was always telling me things, and that I had best warn him that this thing said that I was going to marry him. So I said, "If you don't want to get married, and I don't want to get married, we don't have to, even if this thing said."

And so he said, "Well, I don't believe in that kind of thing."

And I said, "Be careful, okay?"

He didn't take the warning. And four years later my father died, and I was going to go to Ireland and walk all over. So I took a month off at the end of the school year and I went. And when I left Jack said, "You call me on Sunday." I left on a Friday after school. "Wherever you are, call me." So I did, and he was crying. And he said, "I don't know where you are. I don't know what's happening to you. You could be dead. I'm coming over."

So that was the Sunday that Mount St. Helens blew up, and he made arrangements to come the - not - because I had to call him the next Sunday to see when he was coming and when I would meet him and where, and he ended up having to - because of all the ash that was still in the air and everything, the planes were not flying up to

Seattle from Portland. They were - they had to - he had to fly down to L.A., and then fly from L.A. to Seattle, and then over the pole.

I was supposed to meet him at 8 o'clock in the morning at the airport just out of Dublin. So I was there before 8:00 in case it was early and he would panic, because he was crying again the next Sunday when I called him. And their plane was hours late getting into Heathrow, and from Heathrow to Dublin, so that the last plane was coming in - I think it was around 7 o'clock in the evening. I stayed there the whole day, and I would go upstairs to find out if any messages had come. He had sent messages, but somewhere along the line they hadn't gotten there.

So that I went up before the last plane from Heathrow came in, and when I started down the stairs it was ten minutes before the plane was supposed to arrive, but it had already arrived. He was standing there with one of the guards waving his arms, just looking frantic. I walked down there. He didn't see me. I had to touch his arm, I was standing right next to him, before he realized I was there, and he just grabbed me. We sat for 45 minutes before he'd calmed down enough to get into that car. He was sure he was never, ever going to see me again, and in all of Ireland he wasn't going to be able to find me. So we got married in Ireland.

M.O'R.: In Ireland?

A.P-B.: Yes. And he said, "Well, I always thought we'd be married in your house." And he said, "And I don't think this is going to be legal enough for America." He said, "I think we'd better get married again." So we got married twice.

M.O'R.: And the second time was here?

A.P-B.: We got married after we got back here, yeah. So - in the living room, right there. One of his friends, a Presbyterian minister, married us again.

M.O'R.: Well, it sounds like he missed you quite a bit when you left for that trip.

A.P-B.: Yes. And we have had lots of ups and downs, and there have been plenty of times when he has said, "I'm going to divorce you," and I've said, "Well, the door's open."

"And I don't like being married."

And I'd say, "Well, that's okay."

So we've made it through 15 years, and he's still here, and he hasn't said, "I'm going to divorce you" for quite some time now. Every time he would get mad about something, which is quite frequently, then he would pop off that way. And I never took it very seriously, so he's still here.

M.O'R.: Now, when you had gone to Ireland, you had anticipated doing the whole trip yourself?

A.P-B.: At least those first two weeks. Well, we ended up going from Ireland to Switzerland. We had a wonderful honeymoon. And then to England, and then we flew home from England.

And we got home, and because all these kids had been using this place with me all these years, my bedroom up there - you know the couch that's at the end of the bed is an old fainting couch, but I'd come home from work, from teaching, and one of the college kids would be sitting there studying in my room. Everybody used my room as an upstairs sitting room. We had gatherings there all the time. It had a fireplace, and we'd have a fire going, and everybody would be singing, and somebody would be playing the guitar,

and my daughters would be playing on the recorders, and we just had a wonderful time. Nobody ever locked my door. They'd come and go.

And so we got home from our honeymoon, and Jack went in and took a shower and he got into bed, and all of a sudden the door flew open and all these kids came in, mine and others. "You're back!" you know, and everybody was all excited, and Jack sat there with the blankets held up against him like this. And he didn't say anything for a while because everybody was so excited and they were all talking at once, and all of a sudden he said, "I feel like the king of England, entertaining in my closet."

And everybody just stopped, and they all looked at me, and they said, "I guess things are going to be different now, aren't they?"

So I don't know how long it was that we tried sleeping together in the same room, which was very difficult because he's so high-strung, and so much more noise comes into that room because it faces both sides. And he'd wake up and he'd take off and go down and sleep in the library, which was his domain. And finally I said, "Look, Jack, it would be much nicer for you to sleep in a bed. You can sleep in the room next to me. But peace and quiet, please." So he sleeps in Melissa's old bedroom, and I sleep in my room. So anyway, we worked out that problem.

M.O'R.: That's great. Well, maybe we could take just the last few minutes of our session today to talk to you a little bit about your education career, and then we'll ...

A.P-B.: That was another thing, I always knew from the time I was five that I was supposed to be a teacher.

M.O'R.: You told me that already.

A.P-B.: I did, yes.

M.O'R.: So now, you went to Portland State?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And you were an education major there?

A.P-B.: Yes. And then I minored in music and psychology and history and philosophy. And then I went on to do my graduate work and majored in giftedness, creativity and human potential.

M.O'R.: And where did you do the graduate work?

A.P-B.: Portland State.

M.O'R.: Oh, also Portland State?

A.P-B.: Mm-hmm. And then I did part of it at University of Southern California - that was when I went down there that summer that Laurie and broke up - and did my music down there.

M.O'R.: This would have been what year?

A.P-B.: 1964, 1963 - '62? What was it? Must have been '64. '63 or '64, something like that.

And they had a children's program for art. It - they had an art person, a music person, a drama person, a dance person and a nature person. And while I was taking classes the girls could be in that, and they had a wonderful time, but they were very frustrated because it was very structured, and they had to - they would spend - I think it was like 40 minutes or 45 minutes in one, and they would go in a little group and they would go to music for that time, and they'd be right in the middle of something and they'd have to leave and go to art. So it was all cut and dried.

And they had been used to being at home here, and that whole back room off the kitchen was full of all art supplies and all kinds of stuff, and then they had been in my choirs for years. And

they - we did a lot of singing together, and they were used to spending time at whatever they were doing, like an art project. As I told you, Deborah and Rebecca are artists and both have a degree in art. Rebecca has a degree in science as well and an interdisciplinary degree also. But they were used to spending time at their art, and it was very frustrating for them.

So at any rate, at the end of my session, our last session was at Max and Bea Krohn's house. They were the ones who started the summer arts program for USC. This was their big dream. And so they had this separate campus for it, up in the mountains above Palm Springs in the San Jacinto mountains, and it was three miles out of the village of Idlewilde, 375 acres of this wonderful mountain place.

So we had this wonderful summer there, and at the end, when we had our last session at Max and Bea's place, I was just leaving and Bea came and said, "Max wants to talk to you." So I went back, and he said, "The staff has all been watching you, and they want you to come back and teach."

And I said, "Max, you've got to be kidding me." And he said, "No, we want you back." So that was when I started teaching.

M.O'R.: So that's when your career as a teacher at the ...

A.P-B.: Down there at USC. I had had my alternative school for a year.

M.O'R.: That was the one in Canby?

A.P-B.: Yes. And I had started that in 1964. So it ...

M.O'R.: So I guess it was the summer of '64, then?

A.P-B.: It was about the time, yeah. And so ...



M.O'R.: So your first visit, then, to USC was to complete your own degree requirements in music to get your graduate degree?

A.P-B.: Yes. Right.

M.O'R.: I see. And you were able to bring your daughters down with you on that trip, then?

A.P-B.: Yes. And that was the summer that Laurie was going to spend with his girlfriend.

M.O'R.: Oh, I see. That was the summer of the separation, too?

A.P-B.: Yes. And so we - at any rate, it was a wonderful summer. And the next year we were down there; I was teaching down there, and I kept wanting to expand that program and let the children make choices and not be all scheduled in like that. So when finally I became the director of it, then I could do what I wanted to do. So I added all kinds of things, because they had only had creative drama games, so I added performances. I had a stage built, a big one, and I opened it up to all the children making choices, moving around freely, taking as long as they wanted. They could spend all day in the art department if they wanted to. I added reading and basketry and photography one year. Cello and violin. Theater production, as I said.

M.O'R.: Now, let's see. You were there, though, as a graduate student?

A.P-B.: By that time I had my graduate degree.

M.O'R.: Right. But when you first came, though ...

A.P-B.: When I first went there taking courses I didn't have it.

M.O'R.: But you're referring to the students in later years once you were a teacher there as children. So did it span a wide age group?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. Yes. It went all the way through adults. The camp is for everybody. So they had the children's program, which was age three through 12, and then the junior high program, age 13 through 15, and then the high school program, then the college program and the adult program. And so the girls were in the children's center, then the junior high, then the high school.

M.O'R.: Oh, your girls came down with you every summer, too?

A.P-B.: Every summer, yeah. And then they became assistants. In fact, Melissa was the youngest assistant they had ever hired. After the first year that I was down there teaching - it was either the first or second year - second year - he wrote to me and said, "We would like to have Melissa as an assistant."

And I wrote back to him and I said, "You don't take assistants till they're 18, have graduated from high school. This girl is 14." And he wrote back and he said, "We know that, but we watched her with you." Because she had taken orchestra. You see, their are junior high and high school and college and adult programs only ran for maybe two-week sessions, three-week sessions at the most. Children's center ran all summer. And so Melissa had taken orchestra. She played the flute, and she had done choir. And then she had free time. So then she just followed me around and helped me and worked with me. She's a born teacher. She was excellent with them, and she worked with teenagers, the older kids, the 12-year-olds, and we had some 13-year-olds who hadn't gone into the junior high program yet, and she worked like an old pro with them. And so

that's what Max had been watching and the rest of the staff. So she was the youngest assistant.

So she became an assistant, and then she was still taking sessions there during the summer, but she was teaching the rest of the time. And then Rebecca started doing it, because her love was always anthropology and archeology and nature and science, as well as art. So I joined the Archeological Society of Southern California. I took them with me down to those things, and we would go around up in the mountains and check out all these archeological sites, and so she was getting to do these, so she started assisting in nature. Then when Deborah was old enough she started assisting with the three- and four-year-olds. And so they were doing all of this, and eventually they ended up teaching. So it became a family thing.

M.O'R.: Well, let me back you up just a little bit to - you said that when you went to USC the first time as a student yourself that you had already been teaching your alternative school at Canby for a year?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: So can you tell me how that came about?

A.P-B.: Because I knew I couldn't teach the way people were being taught, children were being taught, because I look at them as people, not children, and all as very much individuals.

M.O'R.: And of course this was at a time when you were just starting out?

A.P-B.: That's right.

M.O'R.: You had your teacher's degree, your undergraduate degree from Portland State ...

A.P-B.: Right.

M.O'R.: ... and were working on your graduate degree still?

A.P-B.: Right.

M.O'R.: And so it was the very beginning of your career, but you knew ...

A.P-B.: I wasn't going to teach the other way. For me they were all individuals, they all should be learning in different ways, which we all do. Interested in different things.

So I went around from district to - well, first of all, Portland State didn't know whether to let me do my practice teaching or not, because you had this oral thing you had to go through before you did your practice teaching, and they lined up these different professors from different departments, particularly those departments where you were doing your minors, and then they had one from the education department for you. So there was a psychology and a history and a music and all these people, and they were all males except the one from the education department.

Well, they had several things they questioned me on, whether I would make a good teacher. One was, and it sounds pretty silly, I only had three daughters, no boys. So I said, "Well, I had two brothers, and I was the worst tomboy in the neighborhood, always, wherever we lived. So I played football with the boys. I played baseball with the boys. They always fought over which team was going to have me on their side, because I was good these things." So I said, "I don't think I'm going to have any trouble."

The psychology professor leaned forward and he said, "I don't think she'd have trouble getting along with males of any age." Everybody laughed.

And the second thing was, "You've been a scholar and an honor student. You wouldn't be able to understand kids of lower intelligence."

I said, "Well, since everybody's an individual, I don't think I'll have any trouble that way. For one thing, I purposely studied everything I could find on slow learners and on retarded children, because again, you can't get inside the brain of a child and know what they really can learn. And I'm going to individualize everything."

And the education person leaned forward and said, "That is impossible."

M.O'R.: This is the woman, too?

A.P-B.: This was the woman.

M.O'R.: Hold on for just a minute. We'll grab another tape here.

[end of tape]