

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center  
for  
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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**Arkansas Memories Project**

Margaret Moore Whillock  
Interviewed by Scott Lunsford  
March 1, 2017  
Fayetteville, Arkansas

## Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

## Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 17th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
  - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing;
  - annotations for clarification and identification; and
  - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

### **Citation Information**

See the Citation Guide at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu/about.php>.

**Scott Lunsford interviewed Margaret Moore Whillock on March 1, 2017, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Margaret.

Margaret M. Whillock: Yes.

SL: Here we are at the Pryor Center.

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: Today's date is March the first, 2017.

MW: Right.

SL: And my name is Scott Lunsford.

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: You're Margaret Whillock.

MW: That's right.

SL: And I can't believe we're finally gettin' to do this . . .

MW: I know.

SL: . . . after all this time.

MW: It's taken a while. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, I wanted to—um—uh—in part of this intro, I'm . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . going to ask you if it's okay with you that we're recording this . . .

MW: Yes, of course.

SL: . . . and that eventually, we'll post it on our website, and we will preserve it forever.

MW: Right.

SL: Um—we'll give you a chance to redact anything that you don't want out there.

MW: Mmm.

SL: Um—we've had very few redactions. [*MW laughs*] They were usually something like . . .

MW: Oh.

SL: . . . that no-good, fat brother-in-law, or . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . somethin' that would cause . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . family warfare. [*MW laughs*] Um—we have had a few things embargoed.

MW: Mh-hmm.

[00:00:49] SL: Uh—Morris—uh—Arnold . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . kept some of the stuff out for a while.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Uh . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . 'cause he was working on something at the time he couldn't really release.

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh—but other than that . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . um—we're gonna put this out there, and if . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: . . . you're okay with that . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . you just need to tell me you're okay with it, and we'll . . .

MW: Sure.

SL: . . . keep goin'.

MW: Okay. Well . . .

SL: Okay, great.

MW: . . . start. [*Laughs*]

SL: Thank you.

MW: Good to go.

SL: This is your donation to the Pryor Center.

MW: There you—yes. I'm glad to do that.

[00:01:16] SL: Um—so—um—I usually start with when and where you were born.

MW: Well, I was born in Franklin County, in Altus, Arkansas, on April

Fools' Day [*SL laughs*], the first day of April, 1935.

SL: And—um—wa—were you born at home, or were you in a hospital?

MW: I was born . . .

SL: Home birth.

MW: . . . at home. My brother and sister were born in a hospital, but I was born at home.

[00:01:45] SL: And—um—what was your m—mother's name?

MW: My mother was Louise—well, Hattie Louise Burrow Moore. And my father was William Rudy Moore.

SL: Wow, now is that any relation to the Rudy Moore that . . .

MW: Yes, it . . .

SL: The attorney?

MW: Rudy is my brother. That was the . . .

SL: Oh.

MW: . . . judge here in Fayetteville.

SL: What a great guy.

MW: He was—uh—Rudy Moore Jr.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: Okay, well, I didn't—I never . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . knew that connection.

MW: Y—oh, you didn't? You didn't know he was my brother?

SL: No, I . . .

MW: Oh, yeah.

SL: . . . did not.

[00:02:13] MW: I—I've got pictures and things to say about him.

SL: Well, we'll get to that.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Now what about your father's . . .

MW: Um . . .

SL: . . . his fa—your father's name was . . .

MW: William Rudy Moore.

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: And they called him Rudy, too. And he eventually evolved, and he became a pharmacist, and he always had a drugstore, and we always had the family farm. He had inherited 986 acres in Franklin County.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And he loved it. He loved raising cattle. The cattle would lose money, and he'd buy another drugstore. [*Laughs*] And so as a child, I lived in Fort Smith and several other places. And he ended his career as a pharmacist. He bought a drugstore in



Springdale when I was a senior in high school.

[00:03:02] SL: So wha—when did you move to Fayetteville?

MW: Oh, I did not move to Fayetteville until—um—[19]51, I guess.

SL: Oh, okay.

MW: I was in high school . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . when we came here.

SL: All right.

MW: Yeah.

[00:03:14] SL: Um—so I'm a—so did you spend much time at all on  
the farm?

MW: Not—um—not a great deal. We lived there occa—some, yes.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: There was a house there, of course, but anyway.

SL: Franklin County. Now that . . .

MW: Ozark . . .

SL: And that has some . . .

MW: . . . Altus . . .

SL: . . . the Mulberry River . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . in Franklin . . .

MW: Yes, it . . .

SL: . . . County. Were . . .

MW: . . . does. Uh-huh.

SL: Did your property touch any of that . . .

MW: It . . .

SL: . . . water?

MW: No. It did not. Uh—in fact when my father finally sold the farm, he was well into his seventies. He asked each of us if we wanted it but—of his three children, but we all turned it down.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:03:49] MW: And he sold it to the—um—Wiederkehr winery people.

SL: Oh. Okay.

MW: It backed up to the Wiederkehr land.

SL: Okay.

MW: And so they were very happy to have it.

SL: Well, so the—the—I guess they grow grapes on them now.

MW: Yes. Yes, they [*SL laughs*] used to have an area they called the Moore Vineyards. Yeah.

SL: That's neat.

MW: Yeah. My . . .

SL: I love that.

MW: . . . mother came from a very interesting family.

[00:04:14] SL: Well, let's talk about her.

MW: Yeah. That's how they got to Altus. You know, in Altus you—there used to be the old Hiram and Lydia Burrow Methodist college.

SL: Okay.

[00:04:25] MW: And my grandfather was a Burrow. His name was Napoleon Bonaparte Burrow. [*SL laughs*] Don't you love that?

SL: I love that.

MW: And they called him N. B. or Nay. And as a young man—he was thirteen years old when the Civil War was over. My grandmother was born the last week of the Civil War. And my grandfather—uh—had taught school around in Tennessee around Shelbyville, that . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: . . . area. And he did not want to be a farmer. And so he—um—told his father when he was twenty-one that he wanted to leave home and go to Knoxville and go to the univers—to the college. And his father had turned that down until he was twenty-one, and he reached his majority, and he couldn't turn him down anymore. So finally his father gave him a horse and a saddle, and he went off to Knoxville, where he lived with an uncle, Landis, one of the Landises who'd been a hero in the

Confederate army. Although—and so he sold the horse and the saddle, and he went to the University of Tennessee. And he got a degree. I have his—we would call it a degree now. When he finished his studies at the university in 1881—and he made all As and Bs. He was a little older when he went because he was also working while he went to school. But I have some wonderful—uh—newspapers from the—s—fraternity he belonged to . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: . . . and the social things that were happening. And so he went to Altus because his cousin was putting in the Hiram and Lydia Burrow College, and he went there, and he built a home there. At one point, it was pretty thriving. And I have some newspapers that I gave to the university from the college, and they were delighted to have 'em because they said they'd seen s—nothing like that before, you know, it was so old.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:06:28] MW: And—um—but the college burned. And then it merged with Galloway, and it became—went to—moved to Hendrix and became what is Hendrix today.

SL: Wow.

MW: But they always kept the home in the Altus, and they made lots of trips to Tennessee. He came from an interesting family. He

was—my grandfather was the product of the second wife. The first wife had s—uh—seven children, and she died. And so my great-grandfather, whose name was Nimrod, remarried and sh—had eight more children. And my grandfather was the third child of the eight children. Isn't that interesting?

SL: So this is your grand—this is your mother's side . . .

MW: Father.

SL: . . . uh . . .

MW: Yeah. That d—N. B. Burrow, Nay. [00:07:17] And but I wanted to tell you about his grandfather, Nimrod, who stood with the Union in the Civil War and sent his—uh—three sons to fight in the Civil War for the Union. Then they called it the War between the States.

SL: That's right.

MW: And I have some interesting artifacts that came from him. Like I have the pass that a General Bland wrote for my grandfather's farm. And it's—it—what it says, in essence, is that Nimrod Burrow is a loyal citizen of the United States of America, and no one is to damage his farm or take his—his possessions in any way. And that was so the army wouldn't come through and plunder his farm.

[00:08:03] SL: Now is this farm in . . .

MW: This was in . . .

SL: . . . Tennessee?

MW: . . . Tennessee. Yeah. Sorry, it wasn't in Arkansas. It was in Tennessee.

SL: So . . .

[00:08:10] MW: And anyway, and then things happened during the War between the States like my—uh—Great-grandfather Nimrod went into town one day, and the—uh—um—Union Army picked him up. And they wanted—they took him to their camp, and they wanted him to go with them to guide them through the back roads of the county because he knew where all the places were the Confederates might be.

SL: All the hollers.

MW: Yes, and he said he was pressed. And he was not happy about it. And he told the colonel in charge—I have his name and everything—that he did not want to do that, that that—he need—that he was needed at home. And the colonel said, "No, you've got to go with us. We need you." And Nimrod said back to him, said—um—"You can take—you can do two things. You can take my life or—and you can put me in prison, but you cannot take my religion from me or my beliefs from me." And so finally the major said, "You go home, old man." [*Laughs*] And

they let him loose.

[00:09:16] SL: So do you think that—um—he was—uh—defending his friendships in the community—do—I mean . . .

MW: Oh, probably, yes.

SL: . . . he does not want . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . to betray . . .

MW: Well, his wife's people were all fighting for the Confederacy.

SL: I see.

MW: And he owned eight slaves, which people don't want to admit now.

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: I even have some interesting information about that.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: But he went against his own—I mean, he d—obviously, he did not believe in it because he stood with the Union. And . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . and even though he knew that they would all go—be gone. And they did leave after the war was over, and almost all of 'em came back. Some of 'em never left. They're—I'm y—met some when I was a child that their families had been there all those years, you know. And that—I met them when I was like—in the

early [19]40s and all. So . . .

[00:10:09] SL: Yeah, it's interesting. Uh—different—uh—families—  
uh—treated . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . um—their slaves . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . in different ways. And in many cases, they were very much  
a part of the family.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And . . .

MW: That's right.

SL: And so they had a home.

MW: Yes.

SL: Uh . . .

MW: They did. They did.

SL: Um . . .

[00:10:23] MW: Yeah. And then another thing I thought was  
interesting. I have a letter that he wrote to his brother-in-law  
because—uh—Nimrod, the great-grandfather, the one who was  
the adult during the Civil War, had to go get his Confederate  
brother-in-law out of prison in Murfreesboro. And he wrote him  
a letter afterwards, and he said, "Do not do this again. Do not



use my name again." [*Laughs*] He did not wanna have to go  
get him out of jail . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . another time.

SL: Right.

MW: Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is.

MW: And that was his wife's brother, you know.

[00:11:03] SL: So—um—still, the—the families—I mean, were both  
sides . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . your father's side . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . of the family, were they—did they know each other?

MW: Oh, yes. Yes, they all . . .

SL: I mean . . .

MW: . . . knew . . .

SL: . . . were they . . .

MW: Like after . . .

SL: . . . from the same place?

MW: Yes. Like my f—I think my grandfather was much closer to his  
mother than his father.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: Be—and—uh—when my grandfather went off to go to college in Knoxville, he lived with one of his—uh—I think he was an uncle. He lived with one of the Landises, his mother's friends . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: . . . there—I mean, his mother's family—and went to college. And so they were a split family you hear so much about.

SL: Right.

[00:11:47] MW: You know. And another really interesting thing that happened to my grandfather—when he was a young man, his father, Nimrod, expected them all to work very hard. And he could hardly get out of bed and go to the fields and work. And his gra—his father was awful, treated him terrible, and thought he was lazy, and all that.

SL: Yes.

MW: And his mother and his oldest sister, Josephine, Aunt Jose, he called her, would do his work for him, and they would have him go sit under a tree where he would sleep or something. And then he, you know, he—but he was able to teach school in those years, and he knew he didn't wanna farm. That's when he decided—I told you he got the horse and went off to go to college.

SL: Right.

[00:12:32] MW: But later, in the 1930s when he was close to eighty years old, he became ill. And x-rays had just come out. And they took an X-ray of my grandfather. And they—hi—told him that a—he had scar tissue that indicated when he was younger, he had had tuberculosis . . .

SL: Oh.

MW: . . . but had overcome it. Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is.

MW: So they—my mother always said Aunt Jose saved his life by doing his work for him. Isn't that interesting?

SL: That is.

MW: Yeah.

[00:13:03] SL: Well, now let's talk about your dad's side . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: . . . of the family.

MW: I tell you one last thing real quick 'cause it's . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . so unusual. I have—I thought I brought it, and it may be in that stuff out there. Um—when the Civil War was over, you know, anyone who lived in a Confederate state could not vote in a national election. But I have—Nimrod got a license to vote in a

national, presidential election in 1866 because he had stood with the Union. And at the library, Carolyn Allen and people told me they've never seen one before.

SL: Yeah, I've never heard of that before.

MW: I know. I—it's very rare, but I have the thing, so. [*Laughs*]  
[00:13:48] Okay, and then my father's side of the family. I do not know as much about them. I know they came to Arkansas at the end of the Civil War. They came from Tennessee, too, and they came up the river. And they knew they were going to Franklin County. They had friends there, and other family. And they came to the river and—and came on the river and walked to the farm, and there it was. [*Laughter*] I don't know how. I'm sure my grandfather—great-grandfather added to it over the years.

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: Yeah.

[00:14:25] SL: So—um—what—so did you know your grandfathers?

MW: Yes.

SL: On both sides?

MW: No.

SL: And your grandmother on both sides?

MW: The grandfather, Nay, or N. B. Burrow, Napoleon, died the—uh—

two or three years before I was born.

SL: Okay.

MW: And a—that's why I had such a nice childhood in part, I think, my grandmother and my Aunt Sallie, who had never married, really took an interest in their—I—my brother and sister and me.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And created a wonderful childhood for us. Along with my mother and dad, too, but they were big part of it, you know.

[00:15:01] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about—um—uh—the childhood.

MW: Oh.

SL: Can you describe the house?

MW: Oh, sure.

SL: That you were raised in?

MW: Yeah. Uh—uh—the house my grandmother lived in was much larger and had stained-glass windows and was really nicer. But we lived in a nice little house. You used to be able to see it from Highway 71. My father had a drugstore there on the square. There's a little square in Altus. I could show you where the drugstore was. It was right next door to a movie theater. So I got to go to the movie all the time for a dime. And of course, I knew of pee—the people. And for a nickel I bought popcorn.

And when the scary parts came, I would run out to the lady [*SL laughs*], who was part owner of it, and I would bury my head in her shoulder, and then she'd tell me when to go back in. [*SL laughs*] The scary part was over. [*Laughter*] I never did like mean things.

SL: Right. Right.

[00:15:58] MW: And what would she think of the movies today?

SL: Yeah.

MW: But you know, Altus wasn't—and my grandmother and Aunt Sallie lived there, too, and—uh—it was a very nice place to spend the first seven or eight years of my life. We lived there when I was in the second grade.

[00:16:14] SL: So your house was in the town of Altus.

MW: Yes . . .

SL: It wasn't out . . .

MW: . . . it was, and it, you know, it was a—had a—uh—living room and two bedrooms. My sister and I shared a bedroom. My brother was not born until the year we left Altus. Rudy.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And that was 1943. I'll never forget the first time I saw him. I thought he was gonna be a beautiful baby like those Lux Soap babies, you know. [*SL laughs*] He wasn't at all a beautiful new

baby. But he improved with time. [*Laughter*] We have wonderful pictures of him with strawberry blond curls . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: . . . walking along the street in Fort Smith eating popcorn, a big bag of popcorn. [00:16:55] But—uh—let's see, what else about al . . .

SL: Well, it's . . .

MW: Oh, the house. It was t . . .

SL: I—di—and so . . .

MW: . . . it had a kitchen and a—uh—they—dining room that was kind of a family room, too. And it had a—uh—we listened to the radio in there, you know.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And it had my parent's bedroom and a little bathroom and big, nice living room. I still have two chairs that were in that living room. [*Laughs*] And then . . .

SL: That's great.

MW: . . . my sister and I had a pink bedroom over on the other side. It was just very ordinary. It had a big screened-in porch across the front, and you know, no air conditioning, so when it was really hot, we would sleep . . .

SL: On the porch.

MW: . . . out there sometimes on the screened in porch and all.

SL: Sure.

[00:17:38] MW: And an interesting thing you don't hear much about now is when we lived there, you know, it was—I was a child at the tail end of the Depression.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And sometimes people would come through, men would come through—I don't an—I don't ever remember a family or a woman. And they would knock on the back door for something to eat. And my—you know, my mother and father would always feed 'em, give 'em a plate of food and all. And I remember there was a certain tree outside the dining room. The dining room had a side door.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And you would see them—I would see them sit out there and eat. And . . .

SL: And—and they would do . . .

MW: . . . that was so sad.

SL: . . . stuff around the house. I mean . . .

MW: Oh . . .

SL: . . . they would do . . .

MW: . . . they would if you wanted 'em . . .



SL: . . . they . . .

MW: . . . to, I think.

SL: . . . were looking for work in order to . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . eat and . . .

MW: Right. But—uh—I don't remember any of 'em ever working.  
They might have.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: I don't know. But . . .

[00:18:28] SL: And so did you have—uh—um—did your mother  
have a—a helper . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . an African American helper?

MW: Yes. Yeah. Not African American . . .

SL: No, not—no?

MW: . . . no. There—we had in Altus what we used to call the  
Catholic Hill, you know, St. Mary's church . . .

SL: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

MW: . . . and all of that.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And that was a big part of the people that traded at the  
drugstore. I knew a lot of those families—uh—Greg Leding's

family was a re—uh—he was further down the highway, you know, the con—the—uh—representative?

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:18:59] MW: But—uh—the Posts, the Weiderkehers, all those people. The—uh—there was a doctor that had a—uh—a office in the back of the drugstore. That was kinda common then, too.

SL: Yes. Mh-hmm.

MW: And sometimes we'd hear him back there talking to his patients. He would talk in a very loud voice trying to get them to do what he wanted them to do. And—uh—St. Mary's was such a beautiful, beautiful church up there. Oh my goodness. I remember when my—now we'd say—I guess—what would we call her now? We had a girl, a young girl from the—uh—Catholic hill.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: And she came and lived with us. And she got married when I was about six or seven years old. Her name was Ilahyde. And I remember how beautiful, beautiful the church was and the white dress and all that, you know. But it was a good life. And yes, my mother—the—always had a girl from the Catholic hill. Even when we moved to Fort Smith she—we took one with us. There was always someone—because my mother worked in the

drugstore all the time, too.

SL: Ah.

MW: Yeah. She was . . .

SL: So . . .

MW: . . . not a stay-at-home mother. [*Laughs*]

SL: I see. I see.

MW: Yeah.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:12] SL: Well, so did you make your own bed, and did you help around the house at all or . . .

MW: A little.

SL: A little?

MW: Not much. I—[*laughs*] we were required to pick up our room and things like that. I think we made our bed. I hadn't thought of that in a long time. Yeah.

[00:20:30] SL: And was the yard fenced?

MW: No, it was not. It was on a little hill. You had to walk up a little hill to get to the flat part where the house was, you know. And you could see the drugstore over there. It was across the highway. Oh, it's seventy—is it 71 now? That state highway that goes through there. And we could walk across there.

SL: No, I would think it would be . . .

[00:20:54] MW: I remember . . .

SL: . . . a different highway.

MW: . . . one time [*laughs*] my sister had on some kind of a hat that came off. And the gir—the woman taking care of us, the young girl, told her to pick it up, and she would not pick the hat up. And so we just ra—walked off and left it there in the middle of the highway. And it's one of the few times I've ever seen my moth—my mother was a wonderful, even-tempered, sweet, good woman. And she was so angry, though, that we left the hat in the middle of the highway 'cause a car came along and . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . ran over it and ruined it, you know.

SL: Well, sure. Sure.

MW: And she was—she said, "I didn't know who to be mad at, Pat"—my sister—"or the babysitter." So to speak.

[00:21:34] SL: So did the household help, did they prepare the meals, or did your mom prepare the meals?

MW: My mother cooked. She's a wonderful cook. And I'm sure they helped her. I know they did. I remember that—some of that that—yeah.

SL: So she was there—she provided breakfast and lunch and dinner and . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . close enough.

MW: My father thought he had you to sit at a table three times a day and put your feet under the table.

SL: There you go.

MW: And he thought that when he was living in Springdale and died about nineteen—when did he die? Nineteen eighty-nine, I think [*laughs*] it was. And she always cooked, yes. Yeah.

[00:22:13] SL: There is something—I think there is something sacred about putting your feet under a . . .

MW: Oh, the table.

SL: . . . dining table.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And being there. So was it pretty—you were expected to be at the table . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . at a certain hour in the morning.

MW: Well, not in the morning, in the afternoon. But we all ate together all the meals. And—yeah. And you know, my mother—my father always thought you should have bread with every meal.

SL: Yes.

MW: And she could make biscuits and corn bread and rolls. Ju—some things she could just make at the drop of a hat, you know. And she would even have fried corn bread, which you don't see that anymore.

SL: That's right.

MW: And all. But.

[00:22:55] SL: Well, so was grace always said at the table?

MW: Not always, but some, yeah.

SL: Well . . .

MW: Certainly on Sunday. Every Sunday after church, we'd go to my grandmother's for Sunday dinner, and a lot of times the preacher would come, you know, in a little town . . .

SL: Right. Sure.

MW: . . . the Methodist church. And my grandmother's table was beautiful. I still have her silver, her china, her crystal. And she always had a beautiful table and a delicious meal. And Aunt Sallie did most of the cooking. [*Laughs*] She was a good cook, too.

[00:23:29] SL: Well, so the—I was gonna ask about the table again. When you went to your grandparent's house, was the grandfather kind of the . . .

MW: No, he was deceased.

SL: Oh, he was already.

MW: He was deceased, yeah. He died before I was born.

SL: Oh, okay.

MW: I thought I said that.

SL: You probably did.

MW: I just think I knew him—I know so much about him. My grandmother talked about him so much, you know. And my grandmother lost three children, and she used to talk about them, too. And I—so therefore I felt like I knew—she lost a child that was a little girl named Jenny that was four years old, and I named one of my daughters Jenny. And she lost a son in—six weeks later who was two years old. And that was to a combination of sinus infection, we would call it now, and whooping cough.

SL: Yeah.

[00:24:31] MW: And then she lost her son that had grown to be an adult at thirty-two to tuberculosis. Fred. And he had come up here to the University of Arkansas, where he pledged Kappa Sig. I used to have his Kap Sig pin somewhere. And he found out when he was a student here and all the students, the Kappa Sigs, went down to join the army in World War I when it was announced, and that's when they discovered he had

tuberculosis. And he also, in the meantime, had been accepted—he got a letter after that—accepted at West Point, but he could not do that. And the tuberculosis eventually killed him. You know, it was a terrible disease, and people didn't understand it, and they were afraid of it and all. But he still had a good life in many, many ways. And he was the first person to have a radio in Franklin County. He had a Moon Racer car, which I had a picture of. And my mother used to talk about—he was nine years older than mother—and that they would get in the car, and he would go as fast as she could, and she'd sit in the rumble seat on her knees and look backwards [*SL laughs*] for the police to . . .

SL: Police. Of course.

MW: . . . come looking after him when he went down the Ozark hill. And forty miles an hour was a big deal.

SL: Big deal. [*MW laughs*] Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: So.

[00:26:02] SL: That's good stuff. The—so—I'm trying to—let's talk a little bit about the car that your parents had. Did they have a car?



MW: Oh yes, they always had a car. You know, I think they usually had a Dodge car. We had—they were kind of like navy blue, and they were hot, of course. There wasn't any air conditioning . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . when I was a real little girl. We used to go out to Cass and go swimming in the creek on Sunday after . . .

SL: Me, too.

MW: . . . church and take picnic lunch with other families. And it was—those were hot trips. And Fort Smith was our big city to go to to shop and all. And those—and we'd take Grandmother and Aunt Sallie, and those were hot cars. [00:26:53] But then when we moved to Fort Smith, my father got a car called a DeSoto.

SL: Sure.

MW: And it was—I would call it fuchsia colored. It was different. We loved that car. We all did. And my parents all their lives liked to go for rides on Sunday.

SL: Sure.

MW: You know, cars were new to them, so to speak, in their lifetime, and they loved to go riding around, and it helps you get acquainted with the countryside. That's how I got acquainted with Northwest Arkansas, you know. [*Laughs*]

[00:27:25] SL: So it's f—it's interesting that you mentioned Cass.

Was the . . .

MW: Oh.

SL: . . . Conservation Corps still active when you were . . .

MW: No, I don't . . .

SL: . . . going there and . . .

MW: . . . think it was.

SL: They had already kinda . . .

MW: Yes. I know . . .

SL: . . . shut that down.

MW: . . . that that's where—your mother's people came from that area, didn't they?

SL: That's right.

MW: I remember talking to your mother about that. And then Barbara—I've heard her talk about it, too.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: That's where they . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . met. Mom and Dad . . .

MW: They had the store.

SL: . . . met there.

MW: Didn't they have the old store?

SL: It—cousins . . .

MW: Or lived close to it.

SL: Uncle . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: Uncle Champ . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: . . . Turner.

MW: I got it. Yeah.

SL: Of Turner Bend and . . .

[00:27:58] MW: Yeah. I thought they ruined Cass when they put the new bridge in. [*Laughter*] But, hey, it's gone on to bigger and better things, so what did I know?

SL: Yeah.

MW: Look at how many people go there today and know about it, and of course then it was very different place.

SL: Right. It—I'm sure the road was dirt.

MW: Oh, I'm sure it was.

SL: For you to get there.

MW: I don't remember that, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . I'm sure it was. Yeah.

[00:28:21] SL: Yeah. Yeah, that's a magnificent . . .

MW: It was a good place . . .

SL: . . . river.

MW: . . . to go and swim. You know, it—it's changed courses, the river or the creek, whichever you call it. It's a river? Is it . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: Okay. And it's changed courses some over the years.

SL: Yes.

MW: You know.

SL: It has. I've even . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . seen some of that.

MW: Yeah.

[00:28:43] SL; All right, so what about church?

MW: Oh, I'm a Methodist Sunday school girl. It without a doubt has [laughs] affected my life for the better, you know. But, yes. In Altus—I have a picture of myself, a real small picture with my Sunday school class, and I remember so well my Sunday school teacher was named Miss Mabel. And my mother played the piano every day—every Sunday for church and Sunday school. She was very wonderful at playing, very talented, and could play anything. And my father was superintendent of Sunday school.

So I do remember that very well. And all my life I went to the Methodist church growing up. You know, the Methodist youth league. What'd we call it then? The . . .

SL: Well . . .

MW: I'll think of it . . .

SL: We call it—when—by the time I got there, it was MYF.

MW: Yeah. May . . .

SL: Methodist Youth Fellowship.

MW: Yeah. But it's something else now, isn't it, or is it st—I don't know. But anyway, we—yes. And the Methodist church was very important to my Aunt Sallie especially. And she was one of the most religious, true Christians I've ever known. She—and all.

[00:29:59] SL: So the routine on Sunday was you'd get up and put on your . . .

MW: Best clothes.

SL: . . . Sunday go-to-meetin' . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . clothes.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Go to the Sunday school.

MW: Yes.

SL: And then attend church. And then maybe have the pastor over for . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . lunch or dinner or that day.

MW: At Grandmother's house.

SL: At Grandmother's house.

MW: Or maybe go to Cass to go swimming, you know. It varied, of course, with everything. And you talk about putting on best clothes. Everyone dressed up then. [00:30:28] My grandmother had a dressmaker. And she would always, for certain holidays, have my sister and I new dresses made.

SL: Oh.

MW: And I remember going and being measured and the material. You know, I can tell you the dresses at—my favorite dress was blue silk with a Peter Pan collar in white lace and little white pearl buttons down the front, and that was a Christmas dress. And then Fourth of July we had dark blue dresses with sailboats on them. And at Easter we would have—one year we had a light yellow dresses with little lavender-and-yellow flowers covering it. I could go on and on about my wardrobe. But it was—that was my grandmother's pleasure in part was dressing us, my sister and I.

[00:31:17] SL: All right. So now was it your mother that played the piano . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . at church. And so you must've had a piano in the house.

MW: Oh yeah. We did. We did. Well, let's see, how old—I guess we didn't have—my—there was always a piano at Grandmother's. But Mother didn't—we didn't really have a piano in our house until we moved to Fort Smith.

SL: Fort Smith.

MW: And my daddy bought Mother a Steinway piano. It wasn't—it was an upright. In fact my granddaughter still has it. [*Laughs*] You know.

SL: I bet it's magnificent. I mean . . .

MW: Well, it—I don't—it's . . .

SL: . . . it sounds great.

MW: . . . it's old, you know, but it's—but if it was rebuilt, I thi—we've talked about she needs to—someday maybe she will have it rebuilt. I don't know.

SL: Well, as long as that sound board isn't cracked.

MW: Yeah. I don't think it is.

SL: It . . .

MW: I don't think—yeah.

SL: That—it'll be great. Yeah.

MW: But anyway, isn't that interesting?

SL: It is interesting.

MW: Yeah.

[00:32:10] SL: So do you remember ever gathering around the piano . . .

MW: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . at your grandmother's house? And . . .

MW: Yes. My mother—we sang—all of the years growing up, we would gather around the piano and sing. And she played all the—now she was born in 1905, so she pay—played all the songs. I know all the songs from World War I. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

MW: And World War II for that matter, but those were the songs of her youth, you know. Like, oh, what're some of 'em. Why can't I . . .

SL: Over here, over there.

MW: Yes, Over here, over there. And about—the “Indian Love Call” song.

SL: Oh yeah.

MW: Remember that song?

SL: I remember that.



MW: My mother [*SL laughs*] could play and sing that. She had a beautiful voice. I've met people over the years that commented on her talent. And my mother used to say privately—she'd say, "It's 90 percent hard work and 10 percent talent." [*Laughter*]  
So you've heard . . .

SL: Well, and . . .

MW: . . . that.

SL: . . . that's probably true.

MW: Yeah.

[00:32:10] SL: Yeah. So what about—since she played at the church . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I would assume hymns . . .

MW: Oh yeah. All the hymns.

SL: . . . hymns were sung . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . at the house, too.

MW: Yes. All the Methodist hymns. "The Church's One Foundation," "Sweet Hour of Prayer," all of those. And of course, all the Christmas carols.

SL: Yes.

MW: Sometimes we played the Christmas carols all year long in the

summer, too. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . they're beautiful.

[00:33:34] MW: Yeah. The last time I saw my mother before she died, when I drove up to the house, I could hear her playing piano. And she was eighty. Isn't that interesting?

SL: That's great.

MW: Yeah. It stayed with her all those years.

SL: That strength . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: Gave her strength, I'm sure. [00:33:50] So were there any other musical instruments that were . . .

MW: No.

SL: . . . involved with the family?

MW: No.

SL: Just the piano.

MW: No. And I'm 'fraid—my nephew, Jason Moore, Rudy's son, is the only one who inherited any of that. He always played the piano from the age of six on. You know, he's the Broadway producer today.

SL: No.

MW: He's the—Rudy's son produced *Pitch Perfect*.

SL: Oh.

MW: And he's—for the movies. He did that movie *Sisters* recently.

He did, on Broadway, he did *Avenue Q*. He did *Hulk*?. He's had a nice career for a boy from Fayetteville.

SL: Well, my gosh.

MW: Now he grew up here. You know.

SL: Oh, I . . .

MW: But he inherited . . .

SL: . . . surely I've met him before.

MW: . . . that musical ability. He can play the piano. When he was about twelve or—twelve years old probably, my parents bought him a really good piano. And he had it for years. He m—I—he may have it in New York, I don't—still.

[00:34:50] SL: So he's in New York now.

MW: Well, yeah, that's his primary home. He did have a house in California, but he just sold it. And he's had a place in New York for, oh, at least the last ten years. I think that's—he likes Broadway a lot.

SL: Well, and . . .

MW: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . why wouldn't he?

MW: Well, working there, you know.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Doing things.

SL: Yeah, yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But anyway. So.

[00:35:11] SL: So, well, why don't we talk about radio, then, in the home.

MW: Oh, yes, we . . .

SL: I mean, radio was . . .

MW: . . . listened . . .

SL: . . . the—really the . . .

MW: Radio was important, and there were certain shows we listened to every day in the summer like *Queen for a Day*. You may have heard of that one. *The Green Hornet*.

SL: Absolutely.

MW: Nay—oh, s—what was that man's name? Can't think of it right now. I can remember the show. But yes. It wa—we listened to radio like my children listen—looked at TV.

SL: TV, of course.

MW: Yeah.

SL: So . . .

MW: It was the same principle.

SL: . . . *The Shadow* . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . out of Chicago.

MW: Oh yeah, that was one. And *Lorenzo Jones*. Do you know that one—who that was. And . . .

SL: And what about *Lum and Abner*?

MW: You know, I n—it—we didn't listen to it much, but I did he—you know, hear it some.

SL: Well, so . . .

MW: And of course, the children were li—and the babysitter, the helper in the house were listening to it more than anyone.

[Laughs]

[00:36:06] SL: Well, sure. So big-band stuff, maybe?

MW: Yes. Oh, sure. Yeah.

SL: Do—were there—so when a program came on, say *The Green Hornet* . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . did the whole family gather around the radio and . . .

MW: Yes. We have at times except you know, my father—the drugstore stayed open late in those days, and my father was

probably working late, you know. [00:36:29] We used to all work in the drugstore. I can make a good—I am a good soda jerk, and I've always said when all else failed, I would go back to that life, you know.

[00:36:39] SL: So he had a little soda fountain.

MW: Oh, gosh, we had a big soda fountain in the drugstore in Altus.

The one in Springdale, too. And the drugstore in Altus, or Springdale, any of 'em, Fort Smith—we could always have anything we wanted. No one—my father or mother never said, "Don't do that. Don't have that." We could eat the ice cream. We could have a candy bar, anything we wanted. And therefore I don't think it was a big deal, so we didn't eat a lot of—I mean, we ate it, but maybe we didn't overeat's what I'm trying to say. Isn't that interesting?

SL: Yeah, if they'd . . .

MW: I've always thought it was . . .

SL: . . . said, "You can't do this" . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you may have been driven to . . .

MW: To—yeah—but . . .

SL: . . . to get more than you should.

MW: . . . no. It was there, and it was ours to take as we wanted to.

And that's probably a good way to do with people, you know, with children. But . . .

[00:37:30] SL: So what about segregation?

MW: Well, of course in Altus and the drugstore there, there were no African American people. There were just very few in Ozark. I've seen—I would see a few in Ozark growing up. But not—there just weren't many. And there weren't any in Altus. And then in Fort Smith, I do—we just did not come into contact with them much, let's face it. And then when we moved to Fayetteville was about the time of integration, I guess, or close to it. And there were a few more up here than we had encountered in the other places, although I imagine there were a lot in Fort Smith. But where the drugstore was located and all, it just . . .

SL: They just didn't cater to . . .

MW: No.

SL: . . . that population.

MW: Well, we did not—they didn't—I mean, my father . . .

SL: There wasn't one there.

MW: Yeah. My father would've waited on 'em. He was not, you know—he was very fair-minded person. Very. He wanted people to do the right thing and all. He gave away a lot. I had a

doctor tell me once he gave away a lot of medicine at the drugstore. You know, Medicare or Medicaid did not come in until LBJ came along.

SL: Right.

[00:38:50] MW: And in Springdale, they had all those migrant workers.

SL: Yes.

MW: And I can remember so well in the drugstore, both my parents worked there, and you would see that migrant person come in the front door, and they were holding the prescription, and they were—you could tell they were very hesitant, very uneasy. And my father would always go out behind the counter and speak to them and ask them if he could help them. And then he would take the prescription and usually gave them—you know, he just gave it to them. They could not pay. And he thought nothing about that. [00:39:27] And I had a doctor tell me once that he gave away—my father gave away more medicine than anyone he'd ever seen, that he was willing to do that.

SL: Had a great heart.

MW: My mother always said the work meant more to him than the money. [*Laughter*] Isn't that interesting?

SL: That is.



MW: Yeah. And that's why—someone asked me once why I wanted—went into fund-raising. And what—why I was inclined to give or that kind of thing. I thought about that a long time, and I remembered my parents. I can remember them going around hustling mattresses for the migrant people coming through Springdale and stuff like that. [*Laughs*]

SL: So you come by it honest.

MW: Yeah. That's what I said. Yeah.

SL: Well, that's a wonderful thing.

MW: Well, it is. It's a . . .

SL: To carry on.

MW: . . . a nice thing to remember about your dad. [00:40:15] My dad was also very strict. My mother always said the army missed a good general. He wouldn't last long today because one time in the drugstore in Springdale three men came in. And he could tell, I guess, they'd been drinking too much, and they hit that double door, and they were loud and obnoxious up front. And he came walking out there. He was aggravated. You could tell. He was walking fast. And he pointed out, and he said, "You fellows get out of here. You don't belong in here. This is not the place for you." And they left. [*Laughs*] Nowadays there'd be a lawsuit over that.

SL: Well, probably, but . . .

MW: Probably.

SL: . . . if they're . . .

MW: You know.

SL: . . . intoxicated, I mean . . .

MW: Yeah. But anyway. It's a . . .

SL: He . . .

MW: . . . interesting . . .

SL: . . . got 'em out. That's the right thing to do.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And I'm sure they—there was probably [*MW laughs*] a part of them that was shamed for being . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . the way they were.

MW: Maybe.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But he didn't know them, I don't imagine.

[00:41:08] SL: Yeah. So let me ask you this. What is your earliest memory of your mother?

MW: Oh, that is being a child in Altus, a baby or a very young child, maybe two or three years old. I had a—I remember I had a baby bed and—of course, and we had it for years, you know,

Rudy was so much older—younger. [*Laughs*] And then I remember her getting me out of the baby bed one morning, and I had a little white nightgown like little girls still . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . wear sometimes with lace on it. And she had on the same kind of white nightgown, and I remember I liked that very much. And her smile. Yeah. I remember my mother very well. She was always very good to us and always wanted good things for us and helped us. She did not have a mean bone in her body, nor did she have a bad temper. [*Laughs*] You know, that kind of thing. She could get provoked sometimes, but not a great deal. She was a Girl Scout leader for my Girl Scout troop.

SL: Okay.

[00:42:18] MW: And I loved the Girl Scouts. That was lots of fun. You know, we were in Fort Smith by then. And she would always—she was always the homeroom mother, making the cookies and besides always working in the drugstore. My mother worked hard. She used to work in the drugstore till seven, eight-thirty at night and go home and cook supper, a late supper. Nowadays, everybody would have carryout food, wouldn't they?

SL: That—sure.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. But they're weren't that many places to go eat then, either. There wasn't any carryout food, you know.

[00:42:52] SL: So in Altus did you have an icebox?

MW: Oh, sure. We had a refrigerator. I know what—an icebox was the kind that you had a block of ice . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . up above. Now my grandmother had one of those for a long time 'cause I remember, you know, chipping the ice and stuff. That was dangerous work.

SL: It was. [*Laughter*]

MW: With an ice pick.

SL: It was.

MW: And I re—yes. But yes, we had an—a refrigerator, really. I don't remember an icebox. Maybe we had one at one . . .

SL: But your grandmother had the icebox.

MW: Yes.

MW: And so I guess they were still delivering ice back at that time.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: And probably milk?

MW: Uh-huh. Yes.

SL: Too.

MW: Yeah. Yes.

SL: And cheese and . . .

MW: They used to . . .

SL: . . . dairy products . . .

MW: . . . leave milk on the doorstep at the house in Fort Smith. I do not remember them delivering milk in Altus.

SL: Yeah.

MW: You know. That was too small. [*Laughs*]

[00:43:43] SL: Probably so. Did—was there ever—did your parents ever have a garden?

MW: Oh, yes, they did at times. My father did. And then bear in mind, we used to go to my other grand—the Moore side of the family, my father's parents, lived outside of Ozark on a farm, and my Grandmother Moore had a beautiful garden. I remember how pretty it was. It wa—her rows would be so straight, and it would always—the—everything, the weeds pulled and all that. And she had a lot of good tomatoes and things. She was a farmer. She was good at it.

SL: Do you member much about that house?

MW: Yes, I do remember that house on the farm. It was—you walked up about three or four steps, and it had a nice, wide front porch

you walked across. And at one time I guess it'd been one of those houses—what do you call 'em that have the . . .

SL: Dog trot?

MW: Dog-trot house because you—and it had been closed in, you know, and you went in, and you were in that big room in the front, and there weren't any windows in it. But to your right was a bedroom, and to your left was another living room. Eventually that all became one long living room across the front, and you'd walk back through it to a dining room and a kitchen. [*Coughs*]  
'Scuse me.

SL: That's all right.

MW: There were two bedrooms in that house and a bath, eventually.

[00:45:14] SL: So they had electricity there. Or was it kerosene?

MW: They had electricity as long as I can remember, yes.

SL: And did they have running water? Was it a well that . . .

MW: They had a well that—they had a pump, and then that turned into a bathroom eventually.

SL: So . . .

MW: My Grandfather Moore did teach school in that area. He was a rather stern man, rather serious man, but he was a schoolteacher in—around in Franklin County all of his life off and on. But he farmed primarily. He ran cattle.

[00:45:59] SL: So he would also teach.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: And so I'm assuming these are small . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . schoolhouses, country . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . one and two room . . .

MW: Yes, I'm trying to . . .

SL: . . . schoolhouse . . .

MW: . . . think of the names of some of them. I can't remember the name of that area between Altus and Ozark. Something creek. But anyway, I know he taught there at one time and different places.

SL: I'm tryin' to think of the name of that creek.

MW: They were not as affluent as my mother's people were, you know.

[00:46:28] SL: So do you know how your mom and dad met?

MW: I think just around in Franklin County. My mother had gone—when she was in high school, she went to boarding school at the colle—what we now call the University of the Ozarks. It had a boarding school. And then she went off the univ—UCA. And then she graduated from there, and she did some graduate work

at—in Colorado . . .

SL: Wow.

MW: . . . in the summer at the University of Colorado. And she taught music in El Dorado for several years. And then you know, she'd come home on vacations and all. And my father had gone to high school and gotten out of high school in Ozark, and then he had gone to a—what they called—two years of Draughon's Business College, and he was going to be, you know, an accountant. He was always good with books all his life, neat and tidy. And he—they met, I think, in the summers through just mutual friends and all. They used to go out with groups of people and take pictures. That was a big thing, then, you know, Kodak . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . pictures were just coming in. And they used to go for rides in cars and things like that.

SL: Yeah, it seems like to m . . .

[00:47:51] MW: Movies. Movies were big coming in. I remember hearing 'em talk about Rudolph Valentino, you know, what a star he was and . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . the silent movies. And then the talking movies came. That



was a big part of their life, I think.

SL: Yeah, you know. . .

MW: Lives.

SL: . . . we have an upright piano that was a theater grand.

MW: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: It's got the . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . harpsichord pedals . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . on it and . . .

MW: I remember that. Yeah.

SL: So they actually played along with the . . .

MW: Yeah. They played the background music for . . .

SL: Yeah. Yes.

MW: . . . what you were seeing . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . and reading on the screen.

SL: Yes. Yes.

[00:48:25] MW: Yes. Yeah. I remember the first colored movie I

ever saw. My—course bear in mind my grandmother grew up in

Tennessee during Reconstruction.

SL: Okay.

MW: And she had read *Gone with the Wind*. Everybody in my family had read *Gone with the Wind*, of course. And when the movie came out in about 1935, or it came out—or something. But when I was about five or six years old, it came in color. It was the first Technicolor movie I—one of the first, I think, I ever saw. And I think the first one was *Snow White*.

SL: Yes.

[00:49:02] MW: Re—what—yes. And anyway, we went to Clarksville to see the movie *Gone with the Wind*. And my grandmother never went to the movies, but she went to see that.

SL: Now she . . .

MW: Of course, they loved it. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, of course.

MW: Of course.

SL: Why wouldn't you?

MW: We all did.

SL: What a great film.

MW: It is a great film.

SL: It is.

MW: It is. You know.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But—she had—my grandmother used to have wonderful stories

to tell about growing up in that time.

SL: Well, tell me one of them.

[00:49:29] MW: I wanna tell you on that was really—has struck with me. You asked about religion and all. Okay. My grandmother—she didnt' talk about it often, but I've heard Aunt Sallie and mother talk about it, too. My grandmother was a young mother. She had three young children in living—in Tennessee, and they had gone to her mother's house to see her mother, and the children were like, I think, four, six, and two, something like that. And they looked out the window, and they realized a storm was coming. You know, that's before you had the weather report all the time. And they realized a storm was coming, and the leaves were beginning to blow, and the clouds were very, very dark. And she went out to get the children in. And as she was calling to the children to come in, she looked up into the sky, looking at the storm, and the clouds opened, and she saw a beautiful cross with angels around it. And she heard a voice—not a loud voice speaking, but something in her said, "I am with you always." And within the next—lemme think about how long it was. I guess within the next six weeks, next eight weeks, two of those children had died that I told you about.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And she always—that—she wrote about it. I have something she wrote about it. She wrote poems when her children died and had them published in the paper. You know, people used to do things like that.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And but she always felt like that was God preparing her . . .

SL: Absolutely . . .

MW: . . . or speaking to her.

SL: . . . it was.

MW: Isn't that interesting?

SL: That is.

MW: And she would—you know, she could—she believed that very much. I heard her tell it once. [00:51:23] And then the other thing they used to tell—Aunt Sallie told this and my mother, you know, would—if you'd ask her, she'd—yes. My grandfather was very ill. I don't know what was wrong with him, but he was very ill. And he was at h—at the house, as people didn't go to the hospital much back then. This was like in the [19]20s or something. And they thought he was going to die. And he said later that when he was so ill and he could hear people talk about him dying that a dream came to him. And in this dream he was in a boat, and it was on a, like, a lake. And he was being pulled

across the boat. It wasn't being a rowboat, you know. And when they got—almost got to the shore and to get out of the boat, he saw people, and he saw a figure of Jesus. And that figure came walking toward the boat and put out his hand and said, "No. It is not your time yet."

SL: So he was . . .

MW: And my grandfather recovered.

SL: That's amazing.

MW: He—and I don't—now I don't hear about people having those kind of experiences much now. But I've thought about it, haven't you?

SL: Oh yeah.

MW: You know.

[00:52:46] SL: One of the things that came up when we were interviewing Ray Thornton—he had a near death experience.

MW: Did he.

SL: And he was really upset to be brought back.

MW: Was he? Yeah.

SL: He . . .

MW: He died . . .

SL: He felt like he was in a great place and loved it but they—he was drowning.

MW: Yeah.

SL: But they pulled him out and saved him, and he was . . .

MW: Wow.

SL: . . . initially very upset that they had saved his life.

MW: Yeah.

SL: He felt like it was a really good place.

MW: It was his time to go, he thought. Well.

SL: Well.

MW: Yeah. That's interesting isn't it?

SL: It is.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, I—and my sister Barbara had a . . .

MW: Did she.

SL: . . . near death experience, too.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[00:53:26] MW: Yeah. Anyway, so . . .

SL: And there's common . . .

MW: Threads.

SL: . . . elements . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . about all of that.

MW: Wow. There are.

SL: So yeah, that . . .

MW: When my nephew died—you know, my son Rudy's son was killed in a car wreck.

SL: I do remember that.

MW: Tha—I don't wanna tell that on camera. [*Laughs*] I'll let that one go. Okay.

SL: Okay.

MW: Okay. I'll tell you later. [*Laughs*]

SL: Okay. All right.

MW: 'Cause Rudy's still got a lot of friends around and . . .

[00:53:55] SL: Yes. All right, so let's talk a little bit more about the other social activities.

MW: Oh.

SL: When you were grow—and I wanna start in Altus.

MW: Okay. Well . . .

SL: Now how—when did you leave Altus? How old were you when you . . .

MW: I was seven when I left Altus . . .

SL: So you really hadn't start . . .

MW: . . . in the second grade.

SL: . . . started . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . much of a social . . .

MW: Well, we did things like—I—there were a lot of—picnics were big, you know, in Altus. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

MW: We did a lot of picnicking it seemed, with a lot of different people. And a lot of the social was—were things centered around the Methodist church and, of course, around the school. Back then there was a Halloween carnival, there was—we'd call it a May festival now. There was always a May program. Those were big social events. And what—in Altus, my sister and I played a lot of dolls and paper dolls. We were very much the girly little girls. And we had—let's see, what was I gonna tell you? We had dolls and paper dolls, and I lost my train of thought. But anyway.

SL: Well . . .

[00:55:04] MW: I'll pick it up. [*Laughs*]

SL: Is . . .

MW: It was a good place to be. It wa—oh, we rode bicycles. We roller skated. You know, those were the kind of things that we did.

SL: So there were sidewalks.



MW: Ye—well, yeah, some. And you could roller skate on that screened-in porch. [*Laughter*]

SL: Didn't have to go far.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. And that was enough.

MW: Oh, I was gonna tell you.

SL: For five to seven years old.

MW: An interesting thing you don't see anymore at that little square in Altus, if you've ever been there. It looks pretty good now. It you—they used to have carnivals that came through town, small carnivals. And they would come to the square and set up Ferris wheels and merry-go-rounds. And you know, my father's drugstore was right there across the street. So that was interesting. [*Laughs*]

[00:55:50] SL: What about revivals? You ever remember . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . a revival . . .

MW: I do remember at . . .

SL: . . . coming to town?

MW: . . . the Methodist church. And then when—we used to walk to my grandmother's house from—the drugstore was down around the highway, you know. But grandmother's house was up where

the old school campus had been. So we, you—they were building houses. There were a number of large homes around there at one time. But—people teaching at this college. But anyway, we would walk by another church of another, more fundamental leaning than the Methodists were. And in—we would watch—my sister and I used to stand and watch them have their revivals and—because they were—the Methodists weren't waving their hands in the air and [*laughs*] shouting like these . . .

SL: Speaking in tongues and . . .

MW: . . . people were, so we were very interested . . .

SL: Well, of course.

MW: . . . you know.

SL: Yeah.

[00:56:39] MW: We were kinda creeping around looking in the door and standing out in the road looking in the door. It was hot weather, and they'd have the doors open and the windows open. And so we could hear them. And their—it was so much more exuberant [*laughs*] than the Methodists were. Yes, I remember their revivals better than my own.

[00:56:59] SL: What about—were there ever any traveling minstrels, musicians, bands?

MW: No, I don't remember that. I—after we got to Fort Smith they—  
we did a wonderful thing there, if you wanna switch up there.

SL: The—we can . . .

MW: They have . . .

SL: There's no rules here.

MW: Okay.

SL: We can go back and forth.

MW: They had something in those public schools called the Clare Tree  
Major plays. And they—you bought like a season ticket, we  
would call it now, and they would come during the school year  
and give three or four performances in the auditorium at the  
high school in Fort Smith—or I think it was the junior high.  
Curtis Shipley can tell you which school.

SL: Okay.

[00:57:42] MW: And they used to have plays like *Cinderella* and *Little  
Red Riding Hood*, the classic stories. And I loved that. That was  
so much fun. We would all be so excited when they were  
coming.

SL: So the whole school—all the classes in the school would be let  
out to attend.

MW: It—we would all go to . . .

SL: The show?

MW: We'd all go in a school bus to the . . .

SL: Ah.

MW: They'd take us to . . .

SL: I see.

MW: . . . the school. I mean, we went as a class. And yes, there were—it—the thing was packed full of people. I don't know if every grade went or if maybe every fourth grade in Fort Smith was going or if the whole school I went to went. I don't remember. But it was full of people [*laughs*], you know.

SL: Big doin's.

[00:58:21] MW: And—yes. And then my mother, being a musician so to speak, always was interested in taking us to concerts and plays and things like that. Like I remember we went to Little Rock to see *Oklahoma* when the traveling play came through. And that was quite wonderful. I'd never seen a live musical before. I'd seen them on the screen.

SL: Sure.

MW: But anyway, that was interesting, too. But you asked what else we did. The Girl Scouts were a big part of my life. I was very much into . . .

SL: Once you got to Fort Smith.

MW: Yes. And what I—I know what I was leaving out in Altus and

Fort Smith were books. We read all the time. Books were a wonderful, wonderful thing in my life. Even before I could read, everyone read to me. I had books. I still have some of my childhood books. And I loved them all. It was just—you know, we didn't have all that other entertainment, those other distractions now. Aunt Sallie and Grandmother's house had a library in it upstairs. I kinda left that out. 'Cause it was really never finished. But they had started a library, and they had all these bookshelves, and they just had hundreds of books up there. I always laughed and said my grandfathers and—loved books more than they did making money. I wish they'd paid more attention to making money. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, my mother . . .

MW: You know.

SL: . . . used to always say that books are your best friends.

MW: Yeah, she's right. She's right. They are. And so reading was a big part of my life. [00:59:56] When I went to grade school in Fort Smith—I'm gonna tell you something so interesting, which I don't know how they did it because they can't seem to do it nowadays. But we had, every day, forty-five minutes of music, forty-five minutes of art, forty-five minutes of PE, and forty-five minutes in the library. And I loved going to the library, I loved

the music, the art, all that stuff. And then in the afternoon or the morning, depend on which year, you know, is—if you did all those things in the morning, then in the afternoon you did the English and the . . .

SL: Math and . . .

MW: All that, math and those kind of things. But now they don't seem to be able to do music more than one time a week, art one time a week. Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is interesting. And I'm not sure how that [*MW laughs*] came about.

[01:00:47] MW: I don't know, either. But we—and people are amazed. They har—younger generation does not—sometimes I think they don't believe that I really went to a music class five days a week. And sometimes we sang. And sometimes we—you know, she—we'd talk about instruments or demonstrations or things. Or sometimes we would learn about famous composers like Beethoven or something like that. So it was . . .

SL: So they didn't . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . inscript you into a band or s . . .

MW: No.

SL: Any performance . . .

MW: No, huh-uh.

SL: It was really looking at music as a subject.

MW: Yeah. Yeah. It was. It was. And we did some of that . . .

SL: What a great . . .

MW: . . . playing of . . .

SL: . . . program.

MW: You know, we had cymbals, and we had stuff like that. We had the—what do you call that thing you blow it—recorder type thing you blow into.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But no. No, it was not a band. [*Laughs*]

[01:01:41] SL: Now at Washington Elementary we had—one of our things that we would do would be square dancing.

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: They would have a turntable and . . .

MW: And you'd all—when . . .

SL: And the teacher would . . .

MW: Fun. Yeah, call . . .

SL: . . . call—make the call.

MW: Oh, good. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. So you don't remember the—you . . .

MW: We did that a few times. I remember that a few times, but I

don't know if it was in school or the Girl Scouts.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But yeah. I remember square dancing several times in my life. When we lived back in Ozark for a couple of years at one time when Daddy was between drugstores, you know. And I remember there was a lot of square dancing around there and all. So that was fun.

[01:02:25] SL: Okay, I wanna take us back to Altus.

MW: Okay.

SL: So you know, you mentioned the Wiederkehr family. And . . .

MW: The Post family . . .

SL: And the Post family . . .

MW: All of those families are . . .

SL: So they . . .

MW: . . . still there.

SL: So there was an Italian community.

MW: Yes.

SL: Back when you were there. Was there ever any s—racial or . . .

MW: No, I don't think so. I don't think so. You know, a lot of those people, my parents used to say, were from Switzerland. A lot of them were Swiss-German. And like I said, a lot of them were from Switzerland. And my parents used to talk about what hard



workers they were.

SL: Yes.

MW: And what big families [*laughs*] they had, you know. They had a lot of children. In fact the woman that does my hair here in Fayetteville today grew up in Altus with one of those families, so we have a lot to talk about, [*SL laughs*] you know. And it was—it just—no, there was a—it was a good thing. [01:03:23] My mother had gone to the school—they had a school at the Catholic church on Catholic hill, and my mother had gone there two years to grade school, and she had learned to speak German there.

SL: Wow.

MW: Which I think they gave up when World War I came along then. See my mother was a—when she was eight years old, it was about 1913. So but no. I never remember anything like that. I don't think they had that. I'd be sur—I'd have to talk to someone who'd know the history of . . .

SL: Right, Right.

MW: . . . Franklin County better, but it certainly didn't cross my path.

[01:04:02] SL: So it was really more German descent as far as the wineries . . .

MW: I thought it was . . .

SL: . . . go.

MW: . . . yes. But now, I don't—I wa—I'll have to ask Sandra. She might tell me differently [*laughs*], you know.

SL: Right.

MW: Yeah.

[01:04:17] SL: So tell me about the move. So you moved from Altus to Fort Smith.

MW: Yes.

SL: And so you were about seven . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . years old.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Then.

MW: And Daddy—you know, he'd bought a drugstore up there. And my mother always wanted us to leave Altus for better educational opportunities. She thought. So.

SL: And do you feel that's true, that . . .

MW: Oh, yes. I'm sure it was. I don't really know. But . . .

SL: Well, it would seem like, you know . . .

MW: And my mother . . .

SL: . . . in some ways . . .

MW: . . . was dead s—she was the one that—we must all go to

college. The girls were going to college, you know. They're—I don't know that my father ever objected very much or anything, but it was—you know, it wasn't "Are you going to college?" it's "There's the college, and here's the door. [*Laughs*] And you're"—you know.

SL: Yeah. Get it done.

[01:05:06] MW: We all know. But I think that's because—just think, her father was a college graduate in 1881. She was . . .

SL: Very rare.

MW: . . . she was born when he was, I believe, fifty years old. He was fourteen years older than my grandmother. Maybe he was fifty-four 'cause my grandmother was forty when she was born. So see, we skipped a generation in there. That's why I know so much about my family during the War between the States. I know a lot more of that I haven't even told you. [*Laughs*] But back then . . .

SL: Well, you can tell me . . .

MW: Oh. Well. There's so much.

SL: Go ahead.

[01:05:39] MW: Well, I don't know. Let me think. I told you the pressing story. I told you—I love this. My grandmother that had the eight children, my gra—great-grandmother, you know,

the second wife that had the eight children. When she was dying, they were all very fond of her, and they—and this is written in the paper. I have her obituary. And they all gathered around her bed, and they, you know, were saying—talking to her or whatever. And she looked at all of 'em, and she said, "I love you. I have done the best I could by you," and she closed her eyes and died.

SL: Wow.

MW: [*Laughs*] I just love . . .

SL: She was done.

MW: Yeah, she was [*SL laughs*—I'm done my time. [*Laughter*] I tell my children, "I'm going to say to you, 'I've done the best'" . . .

SL: Best I could—you . . .

MW: . . . "I could by you' and close my eyes and die," you know.

Yeah.

SL: That's really good.

[01:06:34] MW: I know. I thought that was good, too. And so it's—I would have to refer to my notes a moment if I—I told you the pressing story. I told you the story about he had three sons in the Confederate army. I thought that was—I mean, in the Union Army. Getting the son-in-l—brother-in-law out of the thing. Let's see. What else?

[01:07:02] SL: Do you—did they ever relate any battle stories to you?

MW: No. There were some battles around there. The uncle, the Landis uncle of my grandfathers, had participated in an—and I've seen—I've got the clippings out later that were written after the war about his—he fought not only in—he fought in Tennessee—oh, I know another good story tell about that family.

[01:07:31] That—okay. My grandfather was Napoleon. My great-grandfather was Nimrod. And then his father behind that was Hiram. And Hiram left Tennessee—I used to know the exact date—and went to fight in the Battle of New Orleans . . .

SL: Wow.

MW: . . . with Andrew Jackson. And when he came back, he was awarded farmland in Tennessee. And that's one reason he went. Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is. [MW laughs] That's a great . . .

MW: And . . .

SL: That's . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: And of course, back then the country was . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: You know, the population was expanding.

MW: Well, from . . .

SL: . . . westward and . . .

[01:08:11] MW: Yes. And I have a—there's another great story, but we have to tell it off camera.

SL: Okay.

MW: I would not want you to put it out.

SL: All right. All right.

MW: People would not like it now. In—I believe it was 1808 when Nimrod was a little boy. And he had several siblings. And of course, they lived out in the woo—wilderness, so to speak, out in the country on a farm. And his daddy did an overnight trip into the town. He'd gone to take some cotton or something in to sell, corn, whatever. And this is all written in a newspaper article back in the early 1900s I have. And so they were all there alone, and while they were there, his mother noticed this African American man came into the yard, and he came and asked her for something to eat, and she thought maybe he needed it, so she gave him something to eat outside the house. And he ate the food, and then he came in, and he attacked her and hit her in the head.

SL: Oh.

MW: And when she fell—and course the—Nimrod was about eight

years old, so he was old enough to remember all this, and he was also hit. All of his life he carried a scar on his forehead where he was hit. And there was a baby in the family and another little girl. And the African American took some valuables. And the mother was still knocked out, and he set the house on fire. And her feet were close to the fire, and she was about to burn up, and the little girl, who was younger, about six or seven, became conscious, and she dragged the mother out of the—helped to drag her out the door. And Nimrod helped. He woke up. But the baby was killed in the fire.

SL: Oh my God.

[01:10:11] MW: I know. And course that—then the very next day, here came his father. And what a shock that was. And they immediately found the perpetrator and hung him on the spot. No . . .

SL: Well, that's the way it was done.

MW: Yeah. That's the way life was led then. And there—that is all written out in a newspaper article that was doing, you know, I guess the history of that county. But I don't want you to put that on TV. On the [*SL laughs*] thing. People would not like that now.

SL: Well, I . . .

MW: And . . .

SL: . . . you know, Margaret, I—I'm in—I'm very involved in the  
Delta with . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . the—around Helena and the Elaine . . .

MW: Sure.

SL: . . . Massacre. And people don't like to talk about that, either,  
and they don't like to hear about it.

[01:11:05] MW: Yeah.

SL: But I'm neck deep in it.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And researching all that stuff. And so it is interesting how  
people don't like to talk about those . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . sorts of things that were common. I mean, the . . .

MW: They were common.

SL: . . . lynching . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the Delta just follows the railroad.

MW: I [*laughs*] bet it does. Yeah.

SL: Line. I mean, there's . . .

MW: Yeah.



SL: . . . all these lynchings are up and down the railroad line.

MW: Yeah. And their mother could never walk as well. I—she never walked. She never—she walked, but she could not walk with—she walked with difficulty the rest of her life is what I was trying to say. You know. And they write about that, too. But you're right. People don't want to admit things. I mean, it is—when I—did I tell you I did a video of my family history?

SL: No.

[01:11:54] MW: I did. I brought you all a . . .

SL: Where is that?

MW: . . . copy. I . . .

SL: It's here?

MW: . . . brought you a . . .

SL: Okay. Great.

MW: . . . copy of it. And it's surprisingly well done because I had this really great kid [*laughs*] out at UALR that helped me with it, you know. He was really an adult, not a kid. But anyway. And in it, I did all these Burrow family papers, all these things I've told you about and some more. And we tried to include a lot of those pictures that I didn't even bring to you all. So I think you will enjoy looking at it. I did not make it very long. I only made it about twenty-five minutes 'cause . . .

SL: That's huge.

MW: . . . I made it for my children. I wanted my grandchildren to look at it. Do you know what I mean? And I thought . . .

SL: Absolutely. I mean . . .

MW: They . . .

SL: . . . it's . . .

MW: With their mentality of a twenty-minute TV program that—you know, so I made it twenty—we made it about—well, I think it's twenty-three minutes to tell you the truth. And . . .

SL: That's a big project.

[01:12:46] MW: It was a big project. And so—it was fun, though.

And so when I showed it to them, you know, I—one Thanksgiving when we were all together at my daughter Jenny's in Oklahoma, and I showed it to them, and I said, "Okay, thi—I want you to have this"—I do an introduction—"so you will know about your family and what you come from." You know. And so I told the st—that Nimrod had had the eight slaves. But in spite of that, he stood with the Union, he believed in what they were doing, and although he knew some of his income or whatever was going to be lost, I guess, and that he liked—well, they were horrified when the video came to the part where I said, "And I do ha"—I had a copy of the—one of the slave receipts. They

could not believe it. They just thought that was awful.

[01:13:42] And I said, "But that's the way life was lived back then."

SL: That's right.

MW: I said, "That does not—he was awful in that respect, but there were other very good things about him. And people in that day and time did not view it as we do today." Don't you agree?

SL: Absolutely.

[01:14:01] MW: And you know, they're trying—poor old Jefferson and Washington and all those guys are just on the bad list now.

*[Laughs]*

SL: Well, they all had slaves.

MW: I know. And so I thought that . . .

SL: And children.

MW: . . . was inter—yes. I thought that—yeah. I thought that was interesting how my grandchildren reacted. They couldn't believe they'd had a relative who'd had, you know, slaves.

SL: And seeing a receipt. I mean, that's—the ownership papers are . . .

MW: Yeah. Yeah, that really . . .

SL: Those can tell a story.

MW: . . . brings it home. Yeah.

SL: It does.

MW: It does.

SL: It really does.

MW: Yes. It does.

[01:14:34] SL: You know, we've interviewed a few other people that had those.

MW: Yeah. And but anyway, and I used to have more, and I know it's a long story, but two other—two or three others got lost. You know how life happens . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . sometimes.

SL: Yes.

MW: That's one reason—I had all that stuff—one time I was moving, and a mover dumped all that in a square box, you know, all those documents. There were wills and all this stuff. And I s—asking the kids if they wanted any of it, you know, any of the interesting letters. I even knew—I didn't know about a lot of it. And they said, "No." My son Larry said, "I'll do exactly what you've done with it, Mom: Move the box around for fifty years." [Laughs] And so it was disintegrating, so I decided to give it to the university. They'll take care of it.

SL: That's good.

MW: And I took—I've documented it all, though. I took it all and did it for each person's name, and it's all there if they're ever . . .

SL: That's a beautiful gift.

MW: . . . interested enough to look at it. Yeah.

SL: That's a really good thing.

MW: I was looking to see if I had anything else. I guess we oughta let them go and move on to my family more than my grandparent's families.

Sarah Moore: Scott, we're—just so you know, we're at an hour and fifteen minutes in, if you'd like to take a break now.

SL: Why don't we take a break?

[Recording stopped]

[01:15:47] SL: All right, so, Margaret.

MW: Yes.

SL: We're—we've just had our first break, and we've been doing a lot of talking about your family history.

MW: Yes.

SL: Both sides on your mom and dad's side. And we've talked a little bit about your childhood growing up in Altus and a little bit in Fort Smith but—and I do want to know about schooling . . .

MW: Yes. Sure.

SL: . . . about your education. Now in Altus, if you left Altus when

you were seven, you probably did maybe first grade?

MW: Second grade.

SL: Second grade.

MW: Yeah.

[01:16:21] SL: And so tell me about that school.

MW: Well, it was a large brick school, and all the twelve grades were together. And it was on a big campus because it was built where the Hiram and Lydia Burrow College had burned. And so my grandmother's house was across the street, too. But the campus was so big it wasn't really close. And her house sat on seven acres, and so it was kind of off the s—the house was off the street.

SL: Right.

MW: But we walked to school every day, you know. We did not—but I don't remember my parents ever taking me to school except one time when it snowed a lot. [*Laughs*] And you know, but we walked every day to school, and we walked home together. Sometimes we'd go to my grandmother's house if we were supposed to or something. I told you my parents both worked, so we spent lots of time with Grandmother and Aunt Sallie. And Aunt Sallie was a schoolteacher. She taught—was a wonderful teacher, I know. And some winters she would be gone teaching.

[01:17:21] But anyway, the—I remember my first-grade teacher so well. She was young and pretty, and her name was Mrs. Kob—Knob. *K-N-O-B*. And I always wondered what happened to her. She was there because her husband was stationed at Fort Chaffee. And see, it was about 1941 or [194]2. How old—s—when I was six years old, what would've been—thir—anyway, I was born in [19]35.

SL; Right.

MW: And she—her husband was in the military, and that's why she was living—she was living down at Denning and coming to Altus and teaching school every day and then seeing him on the weekends. And sometimes when he was not coming home, she would invite me to go home with her, and I would go home with her and a few times even spent the night with her, which would be unheard of now, I guess.

SL: Well, yeah.

[01:18:15] MW: But and she taught me to read. I was so ec—pleased to be able to read for myself. I remember that. That was a big time in my life.

SL: So you weren't really reading until you went to school.

MW: No, I did not read until I went to school like some people do.

SL: Right.

MW: But all that missed me.

SL: Right.

[01:18:35] MW: I was so excited about going to school I can even tell you the blue dress I wore, you know, and how the sleeves were and the belt and everything. And I had on a pair of sandals. And when I got home that day, I realized that I had put them on the wrong feet [*SL laughs*] and just wore 'em all day and didn't even mind, you know. [*Laughter*] My . . .

SL: You were too happy . . .

MW: . . . first day at school.

SL: . . . to bother.

MW: Yes.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yes.

SL: Yes.

MW: And so that was a big occasion. It was a nice place to go to school. We had those things, I remember I told you about, like the equivalent of a Halloween carnival now and a May program every year at the end of the year, that kind of thing. We had spelling bees, which I never liked. I could never spell. I have an article from *Newsweek* that tells you are not dumb if you can't spell. [*Laughter*]



SL: You embrace that.

MW: Yes. Yes. I sent it to one of my daughters that can't spell, either. But anyway. And then we went to Altus, and the drugstore that my daddy bought was on Calson Avenue then, and there was an old hospital across the street which has long vanished called the Colonial Hospital, and across the street in the other direction was the old Point School, where I went to grade school in Fort Smith.

SL: So . . .

MW: That was a two-story red brick building.

[01:19:57] SL: Now how many siblings do you have?

MW: I have an older sister named Pat, Patricia Ann, who's very talented and quite beautiful and won lots of beauty contests, and I have a younger brother, Rudy, who grew up and did everything perfect as far as school went. You know, he won all the prizes, he got elected to everything, had a great career in high school, grade school, went off to SMU, big man on campus, did everything right. Studied in Cairo at the American University. He had a fellowship there. And then he went Rotary, you know. And then he went to law school here at Arkansas. So. Yeah.

SL: You were lucky to have him.

[01:20:43] MW: Yeah, I was. We were good friends. We thought the

same way. We had a lot in common. My sister married when I was in college. And you know, she was three years older, and she moved to Miami, Florida, which was like another world . . .

SL: Absolutely.

MW: . . . in those days.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And so we did not see as much of her over the years. It's different when—and then Rudy and I had so much in common. You know, we enjoyed politics together, and he was big supporter of Bill Clinton. He was his first—Rudy was Bill Clinton's campaign manager for governor and his chief of staff. And my husband was David Pryor's campaign for governor and David Pryor's chief of staff. So I had a brother and a husband that had those two jobs. Isn't that interesting? And Rudy—you know, we went to a lot of democratic meetings together—conventions. And when I married Carl, of course, is when it really accelerated . . .

SL: Ramped up.

MW: . . . 'cause he and Carl had so much in common.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

[01:21:48] SL: So when you would get—I'm assuming that you ate

lunch at school.

MW: You . . .

SL: In Altus.

MW: I think at Altus—I think we did because I remember looking at those posters on the wall that said "The children in China want your food. Eat it all," or something . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . like that, you know. And I always thought, "I wish they could come and have mine. [*Laughs*] I'd gladly give them this," 'cause I never cared for the school lunch program . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . too much. Sometimes you took your lunch, but mostly I remember eating lunch at school or taking it.

SL: We always had an outdoor recess after lunch.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Until lunch hour was . . .

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . finished up, and [*MW laughs*] then it was back to class.

[01:22:30] So what about homework? Did your parents . . .

MW: Yes, we had homework, but I don't remember it being such a big deal as it is for my grandchildren. I don't even think it was such a big deal for my children. My goodness. The kids now get—

have a lot of homework. I hope that phase will pass eventually.

[01:22:51] Carl and I had a granddaughter who lived with us for nine years.

SL: Wow.

MW: Eight years, nine years. But anyway, she came when she was two. And Caroline had so much homework in the second grade I think it turned her against school. She used to have big tears telling me how much homework she had.

SL: Well, it is—if you—if you're not on top of it . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . it can be traumatic.

MW: Well, and she—even when we tried to stay on top of it, I never seen so much. I even went up and talked to the teachers. They didn't care. [*Laughs*] They didn't listen. That was in DC.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Mmm.

SL: Well, I know that sometimes parents would . . .

MW: We probably shouldn't tell that on the lin—on the video.

SL: Oh.

MW: But anyway.

SL: Parents wouldn't—or parents would—a parent would kind of shepherd the studying at home.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: I mean, was there ever a time block—did you have to get your homework . . .

MW: Oh, we did it . . .

SL: . . . done before you . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . did anything else?

MW: Oh, no, we di—well, we usually did our homework after dinner. After we ate dinner, we did our homework. So that shows we didn't have that much. And you know, both of my parents would help us with our homework. Whatever we needed. I don't—homework just wasn't a big deal in my life like it is now.

[01:24:12] SL: Okay, so compare your Altus school to your Fort Smith school.

MW: Yes.

SL: Or maybe even the Ozark school.

MW: Yeah.

SL: But—I'm looking at how . . .

MW: Well, I went to Altus and then Fort Smith. And comparing the two of them—there were a lot more opportunities at the school in Fort Smith, of course, like having music every day. And they had the equipment in the music room that—like the record

player or the instruments that we'd—you know, just the cymbals  
and . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . bells and that kind of thing. And then they had the  
advantages of if you could pay for it. And I guess—I don't know  
if they took everyone or not. But you had the advantages of  
going to programs and field trips and things like that, so.

[01:25:00] SL: Was the school an elementary school in Fort Smith?

MW: Yes. By the drugstore. And then I went to junior high in Fort  
Smith, too. And there I met s—a number of young girls that  
have been—some of 'em I've known all my life. And like Curtis  
Shipley's sister. I know you know Curtis.

SL: Yes.

MW: He—his younger sister was my age and my friend at—in junior  
high.

SL: Now what was her name?

MW: Her name is Sally.

SL: Sally.

MW: She still lives in Fort Smith. Sally Powell.

SL: Okay.

[01:25:29] MW: And let's see. Who else would—well, did you ever  
know Breckinridge Speed—do you know—in Little Rock? Breck

Speed??

SL: Hm-mm.

MW: His—Marilyn—okay, you know the Young family in Fort Smith?  
Have done real well in trucking and coal mining before that?

SL: No.

MW: Okay.

SL: Course, I was friends with the Young family up here . . .

MW: Well, anyway.

SL: . . . but I don't think there's . . .

MW: There . . .

SL: . . . a relation there.

MW: There's one of them that lives in Rogers, and their mother was  
my friend as a girl. But I could name you several people that  
still live in Fort Smith that I knew back then. Missy  
Armstrong . . .

SL: I know that name.

MW: . . . Roebuck. Does—Roebuck was a pres—a Methodist preacher,  
big preacher. And her father-in-law. And several. [01:26:14]  
So that was a good time in my life. And they actually had a  
swimming pool in the junior high at Fort Smith. And that was  
very, very unusual. And I think we only went swimming once or  
twice a week. But I didn't like it. I didn't like all that regimen

[*laughs*] that went with it. It wasn't that much fun, you know.

But at least they had the swimming pool, didn't they?

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I dated a girl that was on the swim team for—and her hair was always a little bit green.

MW: [*Laughs*] I bet it was, too.

SL: From the . . .

MW: I bet it was.

SL: . . . chlorine . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I think. Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. So . . .

[01:26:56] MW: I remember a lot of my teachers. Did you ever know Paul Eddy here at the university, *E-D-D-Y?*

SL: No, I . . .

MW: He taught in education.

SL: No, but did he have a daughter that taught at Fayetteville High?

MW: Yes. Tell me her name if you know her given name. I can't . . .

SL: I just knew her as Miss Eddy.

MW: Yeah. What was—there was Judy was one of his daughters.



SL: That's not it.

MW: I taught his daughter in the training school.

SL: She was a very young teacher.

MW: Yeah.

SL: When I was there.

MW: Yeah. There—he had several daughters. I think they all taught.

But anyway, he was my principal in Fort Smith . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . at the junior high, and then I don't know how he evolved up here and teaching in the faculty at the education college.

[01:27:44] SL: Well, so did you have problem areas to begin with in elementary school as far as subject matters or . . .

MW: Oh.

SL: . . . that you couldn't . . .

MW: Well, yeah . . .

SL: . . . get around?

MW: . . . I don't—I was not the world's strongest student. That award went to my brother, Rudy. But you know, I didn't flunk anything. I made good grades, but not just brilliant. And yes, math was always hard for me. Numbers, like, you know, were hard for me. I think math is very hard to teach. When I have taught school, I really worked at it to try to make it so the kids

could understand it, you know.

[01:28:23] SL: And your father probably helped you with the math homework.

MW: Oh yeah, he could. Sure.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He knew all that.

SL: Yeah.

MW: My parents for their day and time were well educated. And so were my grandparents. I didn't even tell you my grandmother went to a female academy for two years. And—from when she was seventeen, eighteen years old. So . . .

SL: Now this is your grandmother . . .

MW: That—in Altus, the one that I had so much to do with. But and we have her diploma. My sister got off with that. So.

[01:28:57] SL: So the education just kinda runs a little bit through the family . . .

MW: Yes. Yes.

SL: . . . and the influence.

MW: I always thought . . .

SL: And the belief in . . .

MW: . . . one of my children might pick it up, but they didn't really.

[*Laughter*] I have one that's taught a cup—some, you know.

But anyway.

[01:29:12] SL: So tell me about the—where you lived in Fort Smith.

Tell me about that house.

MW: Oh. Well, we lived fairly close to the drugstore. You know, Fort Smith is divided on a plan. Like it's 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th Street. And we lived on 18th Street, about two and a half to three blocks from the drugstore. And the busses ran then in Fort Smith, and that was a good way to get around. My parents thought nothing—and this is in World War II. I remember lots of soldiers trading at the drugstore and soldiers being around and all. And my—we would—I would ride on the bus with my brother or sister, the three children or two children. I would go to music lessons across town and change busses. And I never thought anything about it. We would ride downtown to the movie. Never thought anything about it. Never encountered any kind of problem. And nowadays I wouldn't—none of us would put our child on . . .

SL: Children there.

MW: . . . the bus, would we?

SL: No.

MW: It was a different world.

SL: It was a different world.

MW: For sure.

SL: I mean, the cars were unlocked and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . most of the time the keys were in the . . .

MW: And the house.

SL: . . . car and . . .

MW: Yeah, and the house was unlocked, too.

SL: Was unlocked. Yeah.

[01:30:24] MW: But I re—I loved going to the library on the bus

because I'd go by myself a lot and have my books to take back.

And I'd change busses. I know right where—I can show you the

corner on Towson Avenue in Fort Smith. You set and you waited

for the bus, then, that took you on to the library. And you could

stay there for hours. They had an old Carnegie Library, which

was a beautiful building. I think there's—there are only two left

in Arkansas. One is in Eureka.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Did you know that?

SL: Yeah.

MW: And the other . . .

SL: I've been there.

MW: . . . is I believe in Helena. I'm not sure where the other one is.

SL: It could . . .

MW: We need to work on that.

SL: . . . be. [*MW laughs*] Now let me think about . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . the Helena thing.

MW: And my father . . .

SL: 'Cause I've probably been in it if it's there.

[01:31:13] MW: My father used to sponsor a radio show, you know, as part of his advertising we would say now. And so we would get free tickets to go to this radio show at noon on Saturday where they played country music. So I would go to the radio show and take my little brother with me, and we would ride the bus to the radio show. And then a lot of times we would go to the movie after the radio show downtown in Fort Smith. And then we'd ride the bus home. And it stopped right at the door of the drugstore. So we knew all the bus drivers, and all we had to do was, you know, pop out. [01:31:48] Well, I took Rudy to the movie with me. And I was about twelve, and he was about four. We went to the radio show. We went to the movie. And then it was time to go home. And he threw a fit, that four-year-old child did, who usually gave no trouble. And he threw a fit and wanted popcorn so badly. And I didn't have much money

left. So I bought him the popcorn so—I was embarrassed—so he'd quit crying, which he did. Ate the popcorn. And then I didn't have any money for the bus fare home.

SL: Uh-oh.

MW: So we had to go sit out on the bench and wait until a bus driver came along that I knew . . .

SL: That knew you.

MW: . . . would let [*laugh*] take me home free. Take us home free. But anyway. That was funny. But those were happy days.

[01:32:35] SL: Yeah. So the house . . .

MW: Oh, the house was not a big house. It had a front porch, and you walked in, and on your right was a—it had a long hallway down the front, you know. Probably been built in early 1900s. And on the right was a living room and what had been a parlor, but they were put together, one long room, and a small dining room, and behind that was the kitchen. And then on the left there were three bedrooms—well, two bedrooms, and a bathroom, and then it skipped to a sun porch that'd been enclosed that made a third bedroom. So and it had just one bathroom.

SL: And there still wasn't air conditioning yet.

MW: What'd you say?

SL: There still wasn't air conditioning yet.

MW: No.

SL: When you moved here.

MW: No. Air conditioning, I think, was just beginning to come in. I can't remember. There were a lot of fans, you know. A lot of people had those big ha—attic fans. We did not have one of those. But we had other fans and all.

[01:33:43] SL: So . . .

MW: The kitchen was very small.

SL: It was.

MW: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: Was there di—I—you know, in the—my grandparents' house in the country the dining room was actually a table with two benches on either side of it . . .

MW: Oh, really?

SL: . . . long benches that . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: So was it a formal dining room in each of . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . the houses . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . that you lived in?

MW: We, you know, it was more like a formal dining room with a table and like—I think it had six chairs, and there was a—what wa—na—a chest in there, we'd call it. I don't know what we'd call it now. Buffet, probably. But anyway. It was not that big, but—yeah. Had a light fixture over it. I don't know that it had a chandelier. I don't remember that.

[01:34:31] SL: Right. So you're there at the start of—or i—during World War II.

MW: Yeah. Yes.

SL: So do you member . . .

MW: The war had started.

SL: . . . the trailers whenever you'd go to the theater . . .

MW: Oh, sure.

SL: . . . to the movie theater.

MW: Sure, I do. And I remember the serials. You know, you'd go one week, and you'd see about the Lone Ranger and Tonto, and then they'd be jumping off a cliff on their horses, and you had to go the next week to . . .

SL: To see what happened.

MW: . . . see how—what happened. Did they make it?

SL: Yeah.

MW: Did they live through that ex—did the horse live through that



experience? But anyway. And yeah—and there were a lot of soldiers around Fort Smith. You can imagine.

SL: Yeah, sure.

[01:35:12] MW: And I remember very well when World War II was over because people were so excited, and my parents took us downtown to see how all the people were acting, you know. People were drinking. They were just excited. They were shouting. They were hollering. I remember we saw one of our neighbors in the back of a pickup truck. And he had an old-fashioned washtub and something that he was beating on the washtub with to—like a drum [*laughter*], you know. I—we—and I remember my father saying he'd had too much to drink.

SL: Well.

MW: So you know. But yeah, it was a joyful occasion when the war was over. Of course I remember that. I remember when they dropped the—when Truman had the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Is that what . . .

SL: Where were you?

MW: I—well, we heard it on the radio. And then walking to school that day with some other children from the neighborhood, we talked about it. I remember walking through the neighborhood and talking to those children about that big bomb. That was

kind of a scary time.

SL: Yes. It was.

MW: Yeah. See, I was ten when the war was over.

[01:36:30] SL: So did you know any families that lost . . .

MW: Yes, I did.

SL: . . . men or women in the war.

MW: One of our neighbors had lost a s—not a son. Maybe a nephew during the war. I really did not know many that actu—I knew a lot of people—like the family we knew pretty well from Ozark called Melton, and their father had gone off to the war, but he survived the war and came home, you know. And I knew people like that. The Ford family, I believe, down at Ozark, too. Their—they had a son that had gone. But I was not—I remember doing things like we would have scrap drives. You know, that was very popular. I especially remember that in Altus where you would go around and ask people for their old scrap. Like you might get an old baby-bed springs or . . .

SL: Metal scrap.

MW: Metal scraps, yeah. And they would take those, and you pile 'em all up in one place, and they'd take 'em all off for the war effort.

SL: Go make . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . tanks and shells . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . out of 'em.

[01:37:35] MW: Yeah. And we did that a lot. And then we had those stamps, those war stamps we bought and pasted in books. They were a quarter apiece, I believe. And you bought one every week. And then when you filled it up, it was worth so much money in so many years. It was a government thing. And we had those. I remember cashing them in, then, later in life.

SL: For—I mean, didn't you spend—you spent that on flour and sugar and . . .

MW: Oh . . .

SL: . . . gasoline.

MW: Well, no, now these stamps were helping the war effort. This was money you gave . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . that went to the war . . .

SL: War . . .

MW: . . . effort. [01:38:11] Now stamps I remember. We had the stamps for sugar and, I believe, butter and things like that that my mother—you know, she was in charge of most of that. But you had to tear off so many stamps if you wanted five pounds of

sugar or . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . two pounds or what—however you were buying it. Yeah, I remember that.

[01:38:32] SL: So these other stamps were—you were ah—the family was actually—it wasn't really war bonds, was it? It wa—but the . . .

MW: Those stamps that I told you we bought to s—those were war bonds.

SL: Okay.

MW: Yeah. They were. They became war bonds eventually. Yes.

SL: And . . .

MW: When I cashed it in, I had one as long as Sallie was born. I still had some that Aunt Sallie and Grandmother had bought for us. I remember when I cashed those in.

SL: So do those accumulate in value at all or . . .

MW: Yes, they did. They were worth—like if you'd bought one it was—accumulated value was twenty-five, but maybe you'd paid eighteen or twenty for it.

SL: I see. Yeah.

MW: But you had to wait so many years as I . . .

SL: Of course.

MW: . . . recall.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

[01:39:24] SL: I'm tryin' to think if there's any other technology that's developing around World War II. I guess telephones probably got better.

MW: Yeah, they probably did. We . . .

SL: You probably had a s—did you . . .

MW: Oh, I reme . . .

SL: . . . even have a switchboard in Altus?

MW: Oh, yes. Yes. I knew the ladies that ran it. [*SL laughs*] I remember going there to see them, you know. They were sit—it wasn't this large, probably—sticking in the numbers and all. But our phone number was one-one. [*Laughter*] So I don't. . .

SL: We always had . . .

MW: . . . know if that meant it was the . . .

SL: . . . four digits in ours so . . .

MW: . . . eleventh phone in town or what, but sure. And then my grandmother house had one of those old phones that was on the wall . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . you know.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That kind. Yeah.

SL: You mean where earpiece was kinda . . .

MW: Where the earp . . .

SL: . . . bell shaped and . . .

MW: There was the phone on the wall, and on your right was a hook  
with the earpiece . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . so you had to, you know, pick it up here, and then there was  
a . . .

SL: Crank.

MW: . . . handle you cranked to get the operator . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . to answer you.

SL: That sent a . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: That sends an electrical pulse . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . down—that's . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . amazing technology.

MW: Yeah. What other—there must have been other technology

but . . .

[01:40:33] SL: Well, TV's still a few years off . . .

MW: I remember the . . .

SL: . . . from this.

MW: . . . first TV I saw was here in Fayetteville.

SL: Is that right?

MW: Yes. In a window about 1950, I guess that was or so. They were displaying it down on Dickson Street in some store window.

And . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: I guess they wanted us to come in and buy one. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. I member the first one I saw was actually in our house.

MW: Yeah, you all bought one.

SL: Black and white TV and . . .

MW: Yeah. Sure.

SL: It was a little thing like this.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Ed Sullivan.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Lawrence Welk.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: The important things. Yeah.

SL: [*Laughs*] The important things. Yes.

MW: The happy things. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. Yeah. So let's see . . .

[01:41:14] MW: You know, I've often thought of my grandparents lived from the time of nothing but the horse and buggy . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . to the automobile. From kerosene lights and candles to electric lights. That and other things I can't—you know, that was tremendous strides in a short—in a lifetime. And then in my own lifetime, my goodness, the technology with cell phones and cooking, microwave ovens. Remember when they came out . . .

SL: Absolutely.

MW: . . . that was a big thing. And . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . you know. I never had to catch onto microwaves very well. I still haven't. [*SL laughs*] Mine is used mostly for warming popcorn.

SL: Yeah. [*MW laughs*] Well, some—I'll warm up a cup of coffee in mine, that . . .

MW: Yeah.

[01:42:02] SL: So you know, the—trains early on were a big



part . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . of life.

MW: Yes.

SL: And that kinda got surplanted by the automobile. I mean, the train . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . kinda lost its dominance . . .

MW: Yes, it did.

SL: . . . as the main transportation 'cause Arkansas roads early on were not . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . very great. And so people . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: There was a lot of train traffic.

MW: Yeah. My—I can remember my mother and Aunt Sallie talking about riding the train. You know, Mother would ride the train—I told you she went to boarding school in Clarksville. And she would ride the train back and forth, and Aunt Sallie would talk about riding the trains to Tennessee. Aunt Sallie was well educated herself. She'd gone to Columbia University.

SL: Wow.

MW: She'd traveled to Europe before World War I. And so they traveled on trains. And I remember as they got older they always said how wonderful the trains were, and then they just deteriorated so.

[01:43:09] SL: I was—always heard it was the rubber industry . . .

MW: That . . .

SL: . . . that caused that decline.

MW: I don't know.

SL: The tires.

MW: I—maybe so. I don't know. I don't know.

SL: Yeah, I mean, the . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . automobile gave unprecedented amount of freedom . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . to go wherever you wanted to go whenever . . .

MW: Whenever, yeah.

SL: . . . you wanted to go.

MW: Yeah, it did.

SL: Yeah, and so the automobile industry—you probably . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . witnessed it maturing and getting . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . faster and . . .

[01:43:34] MW: My grandfather, I did not tell you, was a big Republican when there weren't any Republicans in Arkansas that—N. B. And he went to a lot of Republican party conventions. I have some of his medals and things from there. And when Roosevelt tur—set up the Bull Moose party . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . he came through Arkansas on a train, and he came through Altus and Ozark and all. So my—and he did a stop. And my grandfather went down wherever he was stopping to hear him speak. And Roosevelt saw my grandfather and hailed him down and said, "Hey, Burrow, do they raise everyone as tall as you here?" [*SL laughs*] 'Cause he was a tall man. So that was—that's the only train story I have to tell you, 'cept they liked traveling on trains. Now we wouldn't think about it. We're too busy. [*Laughs*]

[01:44:29] SL: Well, and there were so many passenger trains.

MW: Yeah.

SL: When it was . . .

MW: And I rode train a little bit as a child, but not a lot.

SL: Yeah. I missed that entire . . .

MW: Yeah. Thing, yeah.

SL: . . . thing. Yeah. [01:44:42] So what else was different when you moved to Fort Smith? I would assume just the size of the town.

MW: Well, of course it was larger.

SL: And so there was probably some more diversity, a little more diversity in the population.

MW: Right. That's true.

SL: And then what about organized sports?

MW: Oh.

SL: Did Altus have a football team?

MW: No, not then. No. But of course they—yes, Fort Smith did, and we went to all the ball games in high school and the basketball games and those sort of things, yes.

[01:45:18] SL: Did they have Northside and Southside yet or . . .

MW: I don't believe they did. Huh-uh. I think they . . .

SL: It was just Fort Smith High.

MW: . . . just had the one high school. I did not go to high school there. You know, used to junior high was seventh, eighth, and ninth.

SL: Yes.

MW: And we left then and went back and spent a few years in Ozark before we came here. So I went a few years to high school in

Ozark in the ninth and tenth, I guess it was. I have to think that over. But anyway. And that, you know, that was a good experience, too. But Fayetteville was really the good experience. You know, and when I moved up here, course I thought that it was terrible to move, and I didn't much want to move. It was—I was going to be a junior—I mean, a senior in high school. And I loved it. Fayetteville was a wonderful place to come to. It was full of people who were full of ideas. It was—you know, the university then, and even today, had such a big impact on the city. And you had a lot of people living here who were interested in the schools and interested in education.

[01:46:27] You had Miss Bell over at Fayetteville High. I know you remember her. I remember a lot of my teachers from those days at the high school. And my class was the first class to graduate from the new Fayetteville High. You know, it used to be . . .

SL: Used to be in the . . .

MW: . . . down there . . .

SL: . . . Hillcrest building.

MW: It used to be down there where the . . .

SL: Senior center is.

MW: Yeah. Is now.

SL: Senior apartments are.

MW: And—yes. And so—and then they moved to their present location, and my class was the first class to graduate from the present location. And it was fun. It wa—I think I learned something, too. But we had fraternities and sororities in high school. Do you remember that?

SL; Yes.

[01:47:07] MW: And I was with a wonderful group of girls like Emile Sonneman and Clavina DuVall and Carolyn Stevenson. I don't know if you know any of those names or not.

SL: I do.

MW: But—and there are more I could name, but I know—don't feel like you'd know those at all. Their families are long gone. Sandra Knoll . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . was a good friend. She was a year younger. She had those two younger sisters, and they lived in that Ed Stone house up on mount—the mountain. And we used to have a lot of slumber parties up there. Emile Sonneman's house is still standing on College Avenue. And it's between—I believe it's a Papa John Pizza and where they're building those new buildings.

SL: Oh, where . . .

MW: At the corner of Maple . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . and College.

SL: Where what's his name . . .

MW: And . . .

SL: . . . the lawyer had his . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . office there for a while.

[01:47:55] MW: And if you look, there's one house left. You know, Fayetteville—College used to be beautiful. I used to love all those big old houses.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I've always loved big old houses. And there's one house left there, and that was the Sonneman's house. And Emile—I spent many a night in that house. [*Laughs*]

SL: You did. I see that house from my back window and . . .

MW: Oh, do you? Well . . .

SL: It . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, I'm on Washington Avenue . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . and I can . . .

MW: Emile. . .

SL: . . . look out my backyard.

MW: . . . and her mother were a lot of fun. You know. Yeah.

[01:48:25] SL: The Appleby House where Niblock Law Firm is—that's  
one of . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . the original houses . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . too.

MW: It—uh-huh. There a number of them that're still left, but  
nothing like it was then . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . of course. They're . . .

SL: It was a tree-covered . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . and . . .

MW: So beautiful. But the high school had a good—it was new, and it  
was light, and the halls were wide, and it just had a good  
atmosphere for learning. I really believe that. There was  
something about it that was good. And then of course, the  
social life was good. The *[laughs]*—every other month that little  
sorority belong—I belonged to had a dance. We would put on a



dance, and Buddy Hayes—do you know—the African American—  
oh my gosh, we loved Buddy Hayes—would come and play and  
play and play. And we would have wonderful times.

SL: I actually have a . . .

[01:49:18] MW: I went to high school . . .

SL: . . . recording of Buddy Hayes playing.

MW: . . . with David Newbern . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . and Hugh Kin—well, Hugh was really a year older, but Hugh  
Kincaid, Bass Trumbo, lot of names you would still recognize.

SL: What about Blair?

MW: Who?

SL: Jim Blair.

MW: Oh, yeah, yeah. He was in my class. Like I said, we've had  
different personalities since then.

SL: He was much younger, though, wasn't he? I mean . . .

MW: No.

SL: I mean . . .

MW: No, he liked . . .

SL: . . . he graduated in that class, but . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I think sh—he was . . .

MW: Is he younger? I don't know.

SL: Maybe he just really accelerated in . . .

MW: Maybe he was . . .

SL: . . . college.

MW: . . . younger. I truly don't know . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . about the age.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He's probably a year—maybe—I want to his eightieth birthday party. Maybe he's a year [*laughs*] younger.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But . . .

SL: Well, I know that he

MW: . . . he was in my class.

SL: . . . always been a few years at going through . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . undergraduate—he . . .

[01:50:02] MW: Yes. Jim was bri—a—brilliant. He has a brilliant mind. He was real—and in high school he was very, very smart. He—I don't remember him participating in so much of the social life. Maybe he did. I don't—don't put that in your thing.

[*Laughs*]

SL: So let me think, was—what year did you graduate Fayetteville High?

MW: [Nineteen] fifty-three.

SL: [Nineteen] fifty-three.

[01:50:24] MW: Yes. But Jim Blair's always been good to me. He's been a wonderful friend over the years.

SL: He's . . .

MW: I appreciate that.

SL: Yeah.

MW: You know.

SL; He's always . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . been very generous with . . .

MW: And he is—I think he loves Fayetteville, too.

SL: He does.

MW: You know.

SL; He does.

MW: Yeah.

SL: He was one of my earlier interviews.

MW: Was he.

SL: He was very, very gracious.

MW: Yeah.

SL: To . . .

MW: I thought it was marvelous he did the library. What a wonderful gift . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . to people of Fayetteville, you know.

SL: Well, you know, he talks about books quite a bit in his interview.

MW: Did he. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, I mean . . .

MW: And how they influenced him.

SL: The library was—used to be where the Fayetteville Administration Building is now.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: And he would check out—he would read books. He'd do a wagonload of books a week.

MW: Yeah. That . . .

SL: Yeah. So . . .

[01:51:08] MW: That—well, books—I think books were important to our generation. Like I said, we didn't have so much distraction, and I still remember the books I read. I've tried to pan some of 'em off on my children and grandchildren. And you know, some of 'em hold up over the years, but some of 'em don't. [*Laughs*]

SL: I guess you probably missed my brother Porter. He . . .

MW: No, Porter was a year younger. I should've said that.

SL: Is that right?

MW: And then Barbara was—I knew her a little bit. But she was like  
in the—maybe the eighth, ninth . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . grade?

SL: Mh-hmm.

MW: Maybe? When I was a senior.

SL: Yeah, there was three or four . . .

MW: I don't know.

SL: . . . years difference, yeah.

MW: She was younger. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

[01:51:44] MW: No. I remember Porter was lots of fun. He was—my  
friend Clavina and Porter were great friends. They had, you  
know, fun together. We would all jump in somebody's car like  
David Stubblefield's . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . car and Doug Douglas, you know . . .

SL: Doug. Yes.

MW: . . . or someone—that's who I rode to school with every day. I

lived over there on Park Avenue. House is still there. And David Stubblefield come and picked me up every day and take me to school. Wasn't that nice?

[01:52:16] SL: What about Hawkins? Ronnie Hawkins?

MW: Well, yeah. He was in my class. And you know, that was so different to have someone that did country music. We thought it was country music he was doing then.

SL: Rockabilly.

MW: I remember when he fir—he used to go out to the—what was the old club?

SL: Rockwood.

MW: Yeah, the Rockwood Club and play and all that. I didn't do much of that till I got to college. *[Laughs]* But . . .

[01:52:41] SL: You know, there is that. What—how—was your father strict . . .

MW: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . by the time you got to public schools, high school . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . junior high and high school.

MW: My father was very strict. You had to be home at a certain time and you know, that kind of thing. And—yeah. One time—I will n—you know, I was horrified. He—this boy came to pick me up,

and my father, as we were getting ready to leave, my father was reading the paper, and he put down the paper, and he looked at him, and he said, "I have seen you drive. I have spent a lot of years raising Margaret, and I want you to improve your driving."  
[Laughs] And we left. On that note. And you know, I was horrified that he would say that, but it—I know where he was coming from. [Laughs]

SL: Well, you know, I had . . .

MW: And notice I did not tell you the boy 'cause he's still around here.

[01:53:38] SL: Well, you can. [MW laughs] Jim Blair . . .

MW: No.

SL: I had Jim do the first interview with Ronnie Hawkins. We did a couple of interviews with him. And Ronnie said that everyone was terrified of my father.

MW: Oh.

SL: And . . .

MW: Oh, yeah, I remember your father. He was a large man. But I wasn't terrified of him. He was real nice.

SL: Well, the m—the boys were.

MW: Oh, the boy—yeah, whe—I'll bet they were. I bet . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . they were. Yeah.

SL: I mean, Ronnie said Barbara was kinda hands off.

MW: Yeah.

SL: You know, you didn't . . .

MW: Yeah. He was takin' care of her. [01:54:11] I think ba—I  
guess fathers were more like that then they—than . . .

SL: Well, sure they were.

MW: . . . they are now. Yeah. I think boys and girls have—in some  
ways have better relationships now. They're more casual with  
one another. They seem able to talk to one another well. And I  
see that in my grandsons.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That are . . .

SL: I see that in my . . .

MW: . . . here in the high school.

SL: Yes.

MW: You know.

SL: I see that, too.

MW: Yeah. And they don't just have one boyfriend, a girl doesn't.  
She has a lot of friends that are boys.

SL: Yes.

MW: Or men. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. And . . .



MW: And used to you had a boy friend. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's right.

MW: Yeah.

SL: A boyfriend. Yeah.

MW: [*Laughs*] So.

SL: There was always the matchmaking going on and . . .

[01:54:55] MW: Yeah. Oh, yes. I have the funniest letter. I should find that note and read it to you that someone wrote me at— from Fayetteville High that I said the big difference in girls in high school now and my age, one of the big difference is then you didn't have to worry about pantyhose. You know, pantyhose were not available, so you didn't have to worry about a runner in your pantyhose. [*SL laughs*] And . . .

SL: Which became . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . a big deal.

MW: Yeah. Now they're a lot more available and they last better. But also you didn't have to worry about eye makeup. People—girls just didn't wear eye makeup. We didn't wear any hose to school. We wore white socks . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . to school. That was the fashion then. But I have—let's

see—the funniest letter this girl wrote me. Okay.

SL: All right.

[01:55:43] MW: When we got out of high school—and you know how people wrote in your yearbook then?

SL: Absolutely.

MW: And one of my friends wrote . . .

SL: I—are you gonna give us her name?

MW: I—well, her name's Clavina.

SL: Okay.

MW: She lives in Nebraska, so I guess that's okay.

SL; And so is she had a . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: She and Porter were good friends.

MW: Yeah, they were.

SL: Okay.

MW: And then—and so she wrote in my yearbook a long letter, and at the end of it, she said, "Thank you for all the times you have comforted and advised me and stood by me through Bass, Marian, Gilbert, Hugh, Joe, and Doyle. [*SL laughs*] I really don't know how you have stood me this long." Don't you love it?

SL: I love that.

MW: So that was Porter's good friend. But yes, it was a good time to

be young in Fayetteville.

[01:56:40] SL: Well, I mean even then, the university was a big influence to the community. I mean, I think I can remember when the university population was maybe 4,000, and they'd line up the homecoming parade on Washington Avenue.

MW: Yes. Yes.

SL: Go down . . .

MW: Wasn't that fun?

SL: . . . Dickson and then up Arkansas. So . . .

[01:57:05] MW: I brought you a picture of the homecoming parade. Did you see that . . .

SL: No, I haven't looked at that yet.

MW: . . . out there? Of the Pi Phi float, and that was in about [19]55.

*[Laughs]*

SL: Well, I was born in [19]52, so I was probably down there on Washington Avenue with . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . with my older brother . . .

MW: Yeah, probably.

SL: . . . looking at that. Yeah.

MW: Yeah. Porter was around then, and all . . .

SL: And Gary. Of course . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . Gary was . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . is—there's ten years difference, but he was—Porter . . .

[01:57:32] MW: I didn't know Gary v—as—Porter is the one I knew better 'cause he was in my age group.

SL: Right.

MW: And we used to go every day at noon from Fayetteville High, every day, to Jug Wheeler's and buy a cheeseburger for lunch.

[*Laughs*]

SL: What a great spot.

MW: I know. We—I—every . . .

SL: And they'd deliver beer, too.

MW: Yeah. Well, didn't do that. But anyway. [*SL laughs*] I was a good Methodist Sunday school girl.

SL: Okay.

MW: As I [*laughs*] told you.

SL: All right.

MW: The Methodist church was always an important part of my life.

SL: Central Methodist?

MW: Yes.

SL: When you got here?

MW: Yes, I went here to Central. Still do.

[01:58:06] SL: I'm tryin' to—I think the first preacher I remember  
may have been Eggensperger or . . .

MW: Who?

SL: Eggensperger?

MW: Yes. Yes, he was here . . .

SL: There—who was the one before him?

MW: Well, Bearden.

SL: Bearden.

MW: Bearden is the one that was when I was in high school and  
college that I remember so well. He was a wonderful man. You  
know, he was Steve Clark's uncle.

SL: Nah.

MW: Did you not know that?

SL: What a small world.

MW: It's a small world. It is. It is. But he was just a marvelous  
preacher and a good influence for all of us, I think. But anyway.  
Back to Fayetteville High.

[01:58:44] SL: Yeah. So what other . . .

MW: Oh, Jon Larry Starr was big in my high school class, too. You  
know Jon Larry, don't you?

SL: Yeah. Well . . .

MW: Joe Fred's . . .

SL: Joe Fred . . .

MW: . . . brother.

SL: I . . .

MW: Younger brother.

SL: I don't guess I know him.

MW: Do you not? He's come back here. He was away a long time.

[01:59:02] SL: Now—oh, I was thinking of another name. John  
Tolleson.

MW: Oh, yeah, John—I don't think John went to high school here.

SL: He didn't?

MW: Gail did.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Gail is younger. She may've been Barbara's age or so. I didn't  
really know her . . .

SL: So John didn't . . .

MW: . . . very much but . . .

SL: . . . step in until a little bit later.

MW: Until high s . . .

SL: 'Cause he and . . .

MW: Till college.

SL: . . . Hawkins . . .

[01:59:25] MW: Now I remember . . .

SL: . . . competed . . .

MW: John colle—Tolleson from college when—I don't remember him  
from Fayetteville High.

SL: That's probably the deal.

MW: But I could be—you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: That could be me.

SL; Well, no, I . . .

MW: I think he was from Paris, Arkansas.

SL: I think that sounds right.

MW: He was a Sigma Nu.

[01:59:42] SL: Well, he was—he and Hawkins were competitors.

MW: Oh [*laughs*], yeah.

SL: For the . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: For the band stuff.

MW: Yeah.

SL: For playing at the college.

MW: Yeah, they—he played for a lot of—gosh, they had tons of  
dances. I had a wonderful wardrobe. All my life I've had a nice  
wardrobe. I guess I'm so fortunate. But you know, you had to

have a lot of evening clothes to keep up with that, so . . .

SL: Right.

MW: Yeah. [*SL laughs*] It was fun.

[02:00:10] SL: So Jug Wheeler's was the big hang out . . .

MW: In high school.

SL: . . . in high school.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I member Gary taking me there.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And . . .

[02:00:18] MW: Tha—and then Sug Cate lived in a house down here

on Block and Spring that we used to go to a lot. It was her house. She was an only child, and her house was very popular.

SL: So that—did she end having a liquor store across from the Springdale golf course?

MW: Course—no . . .

SL: Shooks.

MW: It . . .

SL: Wasn't there a Shooks?

MW: I don't know if Sug did or not. She married and went to Little Rock and sh—I kinda lost track of her after that. I don't believe she ever came back to Fayetteville. So.



[02:00:53] SL: So you know, one of my favorite friends of my older brothers was Doug Douglas.

MW: Oh, yeah. Sure. Yes.

SL: And . . .

MW: I remember Doug.

SL: You know, Doug and Ronnie both talked to me about their act that they used to have [*MW laughs*] in diving. Did you ever see that?

MW: No, I don't remember that. [*Laughter*]

SL: It was kind of . . .

MW: I missed that.

SL: . . . a Mutt and Jeff show . . .

MW: Oh, what . . .

SL: . . . you know.

MW: . . . diving in the swimming pool?

SL: Yes.

[02:01:22] MW: Yeah, we used to all go. Now that was on my list of things we used to all do is we went to the park, to the Wilson Park to the swimming pool. That was a big deal. That was fun. That and all those hayrides we went on. I don't hear of hayrides so much anymore, do you?

SL: I don't either, much anymore.

MW: I heard of one a couple of years ago with one of my grandsons, but I think that's unusual nowadays. I don't know. They've lost popularity. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, they don't—doesn't move fast enough, I guess.

MW: Yeah, that's right.

SL: Or something.

MW: That's right. That's probably it. That's probably it.

SM: Hey, Scott, our—excuse me, our lunch is here, so if you wanna go a little longer, or if you wanna break now, let me know.

SL: Let me think—we can break now. We can . . .

MW: What?

SL: . . . pick up where we've left off.

MW: Are we gonna go have lunch or something?

SL: Yeah, let's go have lunch.

MW: I don't know.

SL: Are you hungry?

MW: We can have lunch. I—not particularly, but that's okay. We can have lunch now or later. I'm always—I'm game for stayin' to get here.

[02:02:17] SL: Well, hey, Sarah, let us—let me—let's talk a little bit about the swimming pool here.

MW: Okay.

SL: The local scene at the swimming pool. That's where I learned to swim.

MW: Wow.

SL: As a child.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And now, I thought Ronnie Hawkins was a lifeguard at that swimming pool.

MW: He—you know, that seems vaguely I've heard of that. I vaguely remember that and all.

SL: And he was very popular, wasn't he?

MW: Yes. He was well liked. He was real outgoing and friendly.

SL: And kind of a Greek god physique [*MW laughs*], is that—is what I've heard.

MW: Well, okay. Good. That's probably true, you know. [*SL laughs*]  
Let's see. I'm looking here at my notes to see if I see anything I've left out about the high school.

[02:03:06] SL: So who was the principal at the high school at the time?

MW: Ms. Bell.

SL: She was principal.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Okay.

MW: Yeah. She was important. Yeah.

SL: Well, I know that. . .

MW: And she was . . .

SL: . . . Barbara and Porter had . . .

MW: Did you know her?

SL: I never . . .

MW: Never.

SL: . . . knew her.

[02:03:17] MW: Yeah. She was so lovely. She was so pretty and attractive and smart and capable. And she ran that school. Man, it went like clockwork. She knew how to handle kids in that day and age. That's before TV taught 'em all to talk back, you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right. Right.

MW: And she was a wonderful role model in person. Billie Jo Starr and I talked have about her. Billie was quite fond of her, too. And I had a—you know, we had a lot of teachers. I remember especially a Mrs. Newland that was my math teacher. I mean, my English teacher. And she was teaching while her husband was finishing law school. And we used to get a lot of those at the high school, too.

SL: So the teachers'd be related to the . . .

MW: Yeah. Young.

SL: The student at the college.

MW: Right. Right. That kind of thing.

[02:04:14] SL: So I'm tryin' to think. [*Papers shuffling*] You me—you rattled off a lot of names earlier. Was there one or two families that you were particularly close to?

MW: Here in . . .

SL: In Fayetteville?

MW: In high school? Well, I would say probably the older Sonnemans wouldn't remember it, but—not the ones that are here, but the Sonneman—Mrs. Sonneman, Emile Sonneman and her mother—I was very close to them, and I knew her younger sisters, of course. And then her father was here, but—yes, I remember them. I was very fond of Mrs. Trumbo. Did you ever know her? Bass's mother.

SL: No.

MW: I don't know—I was—but I was very fond of her. I was trying to think of—then there was Carolyn Stevenson's family, and I knew all them. They lived over there on Park Avenue, you know.

SL: Yes.

MW: And . . .

SL: I went to high school with one of their children, I believe.

MW: Who is it?

SL: Mary . . .

MW: Gretchen was her sister.

SL: Married the Emhoff girl. Karen Emhoff. Was it Brian s—that doesn't sound right.

MW: Kare . . .

SL: Stevensons still . . .

[02:05:37] MW: Yeah. Well, he—her daddy ran the TV—I mean, the radio station here then, and did other things, too, but he had the radio station. Isn't that interesting?

SL: That is interesting.

MW: I always wonder if he ever went into television. I don't know. But anyway. I'm trying to think of any of—a lot of the people I've stayed close to, like Jim Blair and Emile and all, but not—I can't think of any family that I was just real close to. Now when I went to college, I guess that's when I became acquainted with Mrs. Trumbo. And do you remember Mrs. Gregory? Do you know who she was?

SL: I don't remember her, but I knew Mr. Gregory.

MW: Yeah, probably did. Very . . .

SL: Up on Mount Sequoyah with the . . .

MW: Yes. Very dignified . . .

SL: . . . old civil . . .

MW: gentleman.

SL: Yes.

MW: Always dressed to a tee . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . and all.

SL: Yes.

[02:06:28] MW: And they were really good to me. And there was—  
there were some older kids, like a woman, a girl, named  
Suzanna. Can't think of her last name. And they lived up on  
Mount Sequoia, too. And she and her mother and father were  
real nice to me. So.

SL: Yeah. I'm tryin' to think of who—I should know that name.  
That's—Suzanna was kind of an unusual name.

MW: Suzanna.

SL: Yeah.

MW: We need Kay Trumbo here. She could tell us.

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

MW: She'd remember it. [*Laughs*] Bass would, probably.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Get him. But.

[02:07:07] SL: Okay, so you're graduating in f . . .

MW: [Nineteen] fifty-three from high school.

SL: [Nineteen] fifty-three.

MW: And my parents . . .

SL: I'm trying to think what's going on . . .

MW: . . . bought a drugstore in Springdale in that spring of [19]53, but we lived here in Fayetteville until I graduated. I graduated in May, and in June we moved to Springdale. And they—you know, were—and my brother was only eight years old, nine years old then when they moved up there. So he really grew up in Springdale. That's where he was an Eagle Scout and, you know, captain of the football team and did everything you're supposed to do. [*Laughs*] [02:07:45] And by then my sister had gotten out of college and had gone to live in Miami, Florida. She was an airline stewardess for a number of years. That's when being an airline stewardess was glamorous and . . .

SL: Well, sure.

MW: . . . you know, and they wore those great uniforms and all that.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I used to go see her in the summer. I loved it. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, you know, at that time . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you were either a teacher or . . .



MW: A nurse.

SL: . . . a secretary, a nurse, or at home.

MW: Yes. Or an air . . .

SL: Or a stewardess.

MW: That's right.

SL: And a stewardess was a . . .

MW: Stewardess were . . .

SL: . . . new thing.

MW: . . . one of the first breakthroughs I guess, in a way. But yeah.

Yes. [02:08:28] I loved the University of Arkansas. I went there the first time when I was about fourteen or fifteen. I went to a football game with my sister and her friends, you know. And I had a date. And that was the old stadium, and you walked in and you set on the student side, the same side today, and you looked to your left, and it was all open, and there was the most beautiful view of the mountains.

SL: That's right.

MW: You—it was just—I'm sorry they closed it up. [*Laughs*] But anyway.

SL: I was one of those kids sliding down on pieces of cardboard . . .

MW: Yeah, yeah. You were . . .

SL: . . . in the other end zone.

MW: My kids did that, too.

SL: Yeah.

[02:09:05] MW: All my kids used to—when we lived close to the campus, hey, they thought Old Main was their front yard along with the stadium. Yeah. [SL laughs] They—we did that. I'll tell you those stories . . .

SL: They were great times.

MW: . . . when we get there. But no—in my husband's obituary, they wrote that when he came back from World War II and went to the University of Arkansas, he began a life—a romance that lasted his whole life [laughs] with the university. Isn't that . . .

SL: Yeah. That's good.

MW: And I feel that's kind of true . . .

SL: It is very true.

MW: . . . of me, too. Yeah. It is . . .

SL: There's no . . .

MW: . . . for a lot of us.

SL: . . . measuring his influence on that.

[02:09:40] MW: Yeah. My freshman year in college, the girls did not go through rush. I bet this was true with Barbara, too. And I lived in Holcombe [pronounced 'hō-kəm] Hall, or Holcombe ['häk-əm] Hall, whatever they're call—the pronunciation is now.

But anyway, it was a great to live there because you met so many people.

SL: That's right.

MW: You know, you met—I made friends that went on and pledged other houses like Kappa or Tri Delta or Zeta, but we were still best of friends, and many of those friends I have today, like my friend Phyllis Brandon. I remember so well being with her in the girl's dorm, you know. And then I pledged Pi Phi, and she pledged Kappa, but we've still been friends all these years. And I could name you tons of girls like that. Mary Lou Craven fo—Bill and Mary Lou from Hot Springs—I mean, from Little Rock. Gosh. I met here. And . . .

[02:10:34] SL: Now Cravens had a drugstore, too, here in Fayetteville.

MW: Yeah, I . . .

SL: Didn't . . .

MW: Not here.

SL: Oh.

MW: They're from—Mary Lou grew up in Little Rock . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . and he grew up in Paris. But I met them here. I mean, there are just a lot of people like that I met. And living in that

dorm where you had all the girls together was fun. It was such an awakening. You met people with different values from you and different ways of life. Like, I thought this was amazing. One [*Laughs*]*—*right after school had started, this girl—one weekend came—or one Friday or something came down to my dorm room. And she was in tears. And she was having to pack a suitcase to go home to Joplin, Missouri, and she couldn't get it packed. And so she ne*—*was an [*laughs*] only child. And so I went down and showed her how to pack a suitcase. I mean, that was just so elementary to me.

SL: That's right.

MW: You know. And we became good friends, and I was in her wedding, and she was in mine. Isn't that nice? So.

SL: That's really good.

[02:11:42] MW: Yeah. And Phyllis was always around and always lots of fun. And there were just a lot of people like that. One of the most interesting things that happened living in that dorm that year—that was the fall of [19]53 and the spring of [19]54. I think it was in the spring. You know, we had a house mother, and you had date call. Remember? You had to be . . .

SL: Well, sure.

MW: . . . in by a certain time and all.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And you had to have nice manners to eat in the dining room, and they showed you what nice manners were when you got to the sorority house if you didn't know. But anyway. [02:12:19] So Eleanor Roosevelt came to campus. Has anyone told you about that?

SL: No.

MW: I tell you, it was astounding that they got her here. I think Bill Fulbright did. But [*laughs*] anyway, she came to campus to speak. At that time, as I recall, she was the ambassador to the UN. Does that sound right? Something . . .

SL: Something like that.

MW: . . . like that. But—and so it was a big deal to have her come. And we had this big meeting that all the girls in dorm—because we had a guest apartment, and she was staying in our dormitory and spending one or two—one night with us, I guess. Maybe two. I don't remember. But the point I'm getting to is that she was eating a meal with us, an evening meal. And we had—you could just eat between, say, five thirty and seven or whatever. And she was eating an evening meal with us, and we'd all sit down and eat together at the same time. Well, they hand picked the people to be at her table. And then they hand picked the

people to be at the tables in front of her that she would see them eating. And I know—I remember so well because I thought it was so funny. The house mother said, "Now Margaret, I want you to sit at this table, and every girl I'm putting at this table has good manners." [*SL laughs*] "So Mrs. Roosevelt will see you know how to eat right." Isn't that funny?

SL: That's so good.

MW: I know it.

SL: That's some pride.

[02:13:40] MW: So that was my interaction with Ms. Roosevelt, in a way. And but she did meet with the girls in the dorm. I remember that. We all went in, and some of us sat on the floor, and she talked to us, you know. And also I remember when she arrived. And I was lucky. I had a—I was on the top floor. There are three floors of that dormitory, and I was on the top floor, and there's sort of a little balcony. And I was—the window that you could see down and see people coming up the sidewalk. I was the one window off the front door. And so we were all hanging out my window when she came. And there was Phyllis Brandon with a box camera taking her picture. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's so great.

MW: Don't you love it? I know.

SL: I love that.

MW: I know. Isn't that wonderful? But it was a, you know, it was a nice experience and something I've always remembered that she came.

SL: I wonder if . . .

MW: I wish I knew—we should look up and see who she was—why she was here. I mean, she was giving a lecture one night or something, but I don't know. She didn't come to see us. But anyway.

[02:14:45] SL: That's so interesting, you know, that I wonder if that was Phyllis's first brush with great history.

MW: We have talked about it, and I have—they gave Phyllis a big award in Little Rock. And they asked me to be on her video, you know, they asked two or three of her friends.

SL: Sure.

MW: And they asked me to talk about when she was here at—when we were classmates together. And I told the Eleanor Roosevelt story. And Phyllis and I talked about it. I said, "Help me remember this," you know. And so. [*Laughs*]

SL: What a gal.

MW: I know. I know. I know she is. [02:15:22] I told her I was coming here. She was very pleased. And so—another thing that

happened while I was in the university to show you how times have changed. My—I was offered a scholarship, and my father turned it down because he said, "No. Scholarships are for people who can't afford to go to school, and I can pay your way. So that should go to someone who needs it."

SL: That's really big.

MW: I mean, that was his mentality, you know.

SL: How magnanimous.

MW: I know it, and that would not—certainly not today.

SL: No.

[02:15:57] MW: But of course, it wasn't as expensive then, either. I do know that.

SL: Well, it was kinda relative, but you're right, it was not as expensive, even . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . relatively speaking. I think . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . tuition when I was going was maybe \$125 a semester or something.

MW: Yeah, I don't—yeah, you didn't pay by the hours you took, you just, I think, paid by the semester.

SL: Yeah.



MW: But that—I always thought that was kinda inte—'cause I kinda wanted the scholarship. You know, other people were getting them. But he—that was—and . . .

SL: There's some . . .

MW: . . . I understood that. I—if you knew him, you would've understood that, too. [*Laughs*] So.

SL: Okay. Let's go eat.

MW: Okay.

[Recording stopped]

[02:16:34] SL: We've had our lunch. Now did you have enough to eat? That looked . . .

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . like an awfully . . .

MW: No, that's my . . .

SL: . . . small, pitiful . . .

MW: No. That's . . .

SL: . . . portion of a salad.

MW: [*Laughs*] No, that's what I wanted, thank you. That was fine.

SL: Okay.

MW: Good.

SL: Okay. Well, I wolfed down my pizza, so.

MW: Good.

SL: That's—you know, we—growing up there were—we had a lazy Susan that we'd put all the food on . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . and we all converged at the table. And it was really who ate the fastest [*laughter*] that got to eat . . .

MW: That's right.

SL: . . . what they wanted to eat.

MW: That—yeah.

SL: You know.

MW: That's good.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That's good. Yeah.

[02:17:06] SL: Okay, so, so far we've been mostly talking about Altus and some about Fort Smith. And we started to get you into high school and freshman year of college . . .

MW: University.

SL: . . . here in Fayetteville. And th—I know that there was a difference between Altus and Fort Smith.

MW: Oh, sure.

SL: And it sounds like to me your teenage years were mostly in Fort Smith and . . .

MW: Well, I was in Ozark some of that time and . . .

SL: Well, maybe . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . we oughta talk about Ozark.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Now why was this . . .

MW: Well, my father's . . .

SL: . . . so y—Altus to Fort Smith and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . then back to Ozark and then back to Fort Smith?

[02:17:45] MW: Well, my father's farm was outside—it was between

Altus and Ozark. So when we came back from Ozark, his  
parents had moved off the farm and into town, and they were  
older and needed help.

SL: I see.

MW: We moved right by them. So that took us to Ozark for ju—we  
were there two years, and then we came up here.

SL: So did the grandparents pass, is that . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: That's—again, that speaks well of your daddy, doesn't it?

MW: Yeah, well, it does. It does.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He had a sister that was there, too, and helped, but they needed

a lot of help. And you know, there weren't so many facilities for older people in those days, so.

SL: Well, any medical facilities in the small towns and stuff . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . was . . .

MW: Yeah. And of course, there was a huge difference in Ozark and Fayetteville. [*Laughs*]

[02:18:36] SL: Yeah. Now you know, I haven't asked you what your earliest memory of your father is.

MW: My earliest memory of my father would be when we had the drugstore in Altus when I was a child. And he would be at the drugstore working. You know, he worked on the soda fountain. He did it all. And yeah, I remember him working at the soda fountain and giving out ice cream cones. [*Laughs*] He used to say it took a lot of times to dip into an ice cream can to make a dollar because, you know, an—they were a nickel apiece then.

SL: Wow.

MW: For, you know, a . . .

SL: A scoop.

MW: . . . roll of ice cream, a ball of ice cream on a cone.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

[02:19:27] SL: I bet that drugstore was kind of a central gathering place.

MW: Well, it was.

SL: In Altus.

MW: A lot of people came, and you know, they had ma—a magazine rack and magazines to look at. And of course, I loved that. I still love magazines to this day.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And I know that's part of the reason why I'm a big magazine person. But that was another way I—there were all kinds of magazines, and they never wanted me to read the movie magazines, though. Don't you love that? My father said, "You should be better than to read those kind of magazines."

[Laughs]

SL: Well, you had—I guess the two biggest ones were maybe *LOOK* and *LIFE*?

MW: Oh yeah. Well, *LIFE* was—that wasn't a movie magazine then . . .

SL: I know.

MW: No.

SL: But I mean . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I'm just saying . . .

MW: Oh yeah, we had *LOOK* . . .

SL: . . . of the magazine rack . . .

MW: . . . and *LIFE*, and you had *Collier's* and . . .

SL: *Collier's*.

MW: . . . and *Good Housekeeping* was there . . .

SL: *Good Housekeeping*.

MW: . . . and *Better Homes and Gardens* was there. And then I took a magazine every month through the mail called *Children's Activities*. And it's still in existence today, only it's called *Highlights* . . .

SL: Yes. I . . .

MW: . . . *for Children*. And I buy it for my great-grandchildren, even. And they still have some of the same features that they had when I was a child. [*Laughs*]

SL: I remember . . .

MW: And my children . . .

SL: . . . taking *Highlights*.

MW: . . . took it. Yeah.

[02:20:43] SL: I got a . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . subscription to *Highlights*.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I looked forward to it.

MW: Oh, I know. I know.

SL: Every time it came.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And looked forward to *LIFE* magazine. That was . . .

SL: Oh my gosh.

MW: . . . just—that opened the world.

SL: It did.

MW: Yeah.

[02:20:54] SL: And really it was the photography, wasn't it?

MW: Yes, it was, more than the . . .

SL: It was more of a coffee-table . . .

MW: Well, you—it's kinda like *People* today, I guess, with . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: But it did stories of . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . national things happening or, you know, if there was an improvement, a car, or whatever.

SL: Yeah. But I just remember the large photographs.

MW: Yes.

SL: In both *LIFE* and *LOOK*.

MW: Yes. You're right.

SL: In . . .

MW: You're right.

SL: . . . very attractive as a kid.

[02:21:24] MW: I still have some real old magazines from the 1915, [19]16, and [19]20s that my grandparents took.

SL: You still have those.

MW: Yes, I . . .

SL: Oh my God.

MW: . . . need to give those to the university, I guess. I don't know what else to do with 'em. Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is, and it's priceless.

MW: It's kinda fascinating to go back and read 'em. And you get hooked on 'em.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And then you've wasted three hours. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, I don't know if you've wasted it.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: You—we always do feel like we need to be doing something, don't we?

MW: Yeah. Constructive. Yeah.



SL: Yes. Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

[02:22:54] SL: Okay, so that's really heartwarming about your move  
back to Ozark.

MW: Yes.

SL: Take care of the grandparents.

MW: Yeah. Yeah, well, my father did. You know. I was—saw my  
grandparents, of course, on kind of a daily basis.

SL: Right.

MW: But they were much older.

SL: Yeah. What a guy.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I'm sorry I never got to meet him.

MW: Oh, well, that's nice. Thank you.

[02:22:20] SL: So Springdale, Arkansas. You—did you ever really  
live in Springdale?

MW: Well, see, I was—I had finished high school by the time we  
moved up there, so I was eighteen. And I did not really live  
there. But I would work in the—my daddy never heard child  
labor laws, so we all worked in the drugstore, you know.

SL: Well, of course.

MW: And I worked in the drugstore on the soda fountain, and we

didn't make sandwiches. Just soda things. And of course I met a lot of people in Springdale. All kinds of people, you know. The mayor. People like that. Businessmen, teenager—other teenagers, that kind of thing. And then when I was early—an early married woman, we lived in a rent house my father had once while we were remodeling the house for a few months. But—and I taught school there a couple of times. But I never really lived there for any length of time.

[02:23:16] SL: Well, course fayettev—or Springdale has the unfortunate label as a sundown town.

MW: Yes, I know about that.

SL: And . . .

MW: It was . . .

SL: . . . for a long time . . .

MW: . . . when I moved there.

SL: . . . there was a sign—yeah.

MW: Yeah. That's what I remember my parents talking about that when we moved up there. And then I don't think it was the stigmatism it is today.

SL: Yeah, it's interesting. That culture continued into the [19]60s.

MW: I know.

SL: Up there.

MW: It must have. Yeah.

SL: He . . .

MW: See, we moved there in the [19]50s.

[02:23:54] SL: Well, anyway, there's a . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . very interesting story that—next time you're at the Pryor Center website—Martin Steele. I don't know if you . . .

MW: Yes, I . . .

SL: . . . ever knew Marty Steele.

MW: . . . know who he is.

SL: He tells . . .

MW: The military guy.

SL: . . . almost a play-by-play description of the last few minutes of a Springdale/Fayetteville game.

MW: Oh, really.

SL: In the Springdale, and it's pretty terrifying. It's . . .

MW: Yeah, but with the African American involvement. Uh-huh.

Yeah, I—see, I did not see that, of course. But I think all that was just starting then so—I mean, Central High hadn't even happened. When did integration take place?

SL: Well, *Brown v. Board* . . .

MW: When did Harry . . .

SL: . . . was in [19]54, Central High was . . .

MW: Harry . . .

SL: . . . in [19]57.

MW: . . . Vandergriff—people here integrated first in Arkansas, didn't they?

SL: Yeah, there's . . .

MW: But that was after my time.

SL: Dale Bumpers would say it was . . .

MW: Charleston. He . . .

SL: . . . Charleston.

MW: Yes.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He would. He wa—I've heard . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . him say . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

MW: . . . that, too. [02:24:49] But anyway, back then—so, no, I missed that part of Springdale.

SL: Well, that's good.

MW: Yeah . . .

SL: That's good.

MW: . . . that is good. And . . .

SL: 'Cause it's . . .

MW: . . . I don't know that Rudy ever did either 'cause I never heard him mention it.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And he really grew up there. When you move someplace when you're eight or nine and stay until you go off to college, I think, you know, you know a lot about the town and all.

[02:25:11] SL: Well, of course, I think all the African American population was here in Fayetteville.

MW: It was. Yeah.

SL: And so and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . Springdale's culture back then was to not allow that kind of population at all.

MW: Yeah. I don't think Rogers had any either, did they?

SL: They—I think you're right about that.

MW: See, I taught school up there right out of the university, and I don't believe they did.

SL: Now, I can remember . . .

MW: There was like one or two black families in Bentonville.

SL: That's right.

MW: And but none in Rogers, none in Springdale, and then there was

a small population here.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Which we knew a lot of because, you know, I knew the Currs  
and—I mean the Carrs and . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: Oh, what was . . .

SL: I went to school . . .

MW: . . . the guy's name who was the taxi driver so long? For—I  
mean, the driver for Colliers?

SL: Yes.

MW: And his son was the state policeman?

SL: Yes.

MW: And I knew all of them.

SL: And his wife is . . .

MW: Yeah. I knew a bunch of them.

SL: . . . Cora Carr.

[02:26:11] MW: That was before they started going to Washington  
school any. And I—when Rudy ran for the state legislature, he  
was just about twenty-seven. And he lived in Springdale. He'd  
always been a Springdale person. So I took him—he came  
down, and I took him down to meet the people in the African  
American community. We did door to door down there.

SL: I bet that was great.

MW: 'Cause he didn't know any of 'em.

SL: Yeah.

MW: You know. He'd had no interaction. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, my brother Porter preferred Sherman's over any of the other bars.

MW: Yeah.

SL: That he used to go there quite a bit.

MW: Yeah. Yeah. I remember him.

SL: So—well, I just wanted to touch that a little bit about . . .

MW: Springdale.

SL: . . . Springdale and—knowing that you probably didn't spend a whole lot of time there 'cause you were . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . in college.

MW: Yeah.

[02:27:06]SL: Yeah. So you did mention your first marriage.

Now . . .

MW: Oh yes.

SL: . . . do you even wanna talk about . . .

MW: Oh, well, I married my childhood s—well, not childhood. I married my college sweetheart. And he was a very good man.

He was a very talented man in a lot of ways. He was the father of my children. We had three girls and then we had three boys together. And then we divorced. And it was a big scandal, of course. Who divorce—who gets divorced with six children?

SL: Right.

[02:27:40] MW: And I don't mind telling—saying that to you. One of Hillary Clinton and Diane Blair's favorite stories about me [*SL laughs*] is—I had met Carl at a political rally when I was campaigning for my brother, Rudy. I spoke of that before. And Bill Fulbright had come. It was up in the Springdale High School gym. And Carl was there with Bill Fulbright. And that is where I met Carl, which is very appropriate. And we decided that we were getting married, and the day before the wedding, I ha—we just—then you just had real—second weddings were, you know, nothing.

SL: Kinda low key.

MW: It—yeah. Low. And so I had two—my two youngest sons with me at the grocery store. And I saw one of the local judge's wives. And she said, "Is it really true, Margaret? Are you really gonna marry that Carl Whillock?" And I said, "Yes, it's really true." [*SL laughs*] And she said, "He is so cute." Well, Carl was handsome, intelligent, warm, friendly, but he was never cute.



[*SL laughs*] But anyway, she said, "He is so cute." And she said, "I'm telling you, Margaret, everybody in this town thought you were done for with those six kids." And this is the only time in my life I've had a comeback. And without thinking, I said, "Louise, I've got a lot more going for me than you think."

[*Laughter*] And so, you know—and we did. [02:29:12] Then I married Carl. We had a small wedding. We had friends there that you would—we each asked three good friends. And he had asked, among others, di—Hugh Kincaid and Diane, then, and I had asked Curtis Shipley and his wife, then, Ellen.

SL: Ellen.

MW: And it was a wonderful wedding. I brought pictures of it. I hope they put some of them out with the six children, you know, there.

SL: Well, sure.

MW: And then of course, Carl was nine years older, and he had a family that he had basically raised. His youngest child was approximately the age of my oldest child. So his were either—one was out of college and married, two were in college, and one was finishing up—was in high school.

SL: So he had four children?

MW: Yes, he had four children, too.

SL: So between the two . . .

MW: Yeah, I know.

SL: Ten kids.

MW: And people just always say, "Oh, my goodness, how's it going? How do the children like Carl?" And I would always say, "They like him better than me." [*Laughter*] You know. And they did. So he was . . .

SL: So . . .

MW: . . . an interesting man. That's what I miss the most about him is having someone intelligent and interesting to talk to. You know.

[02:30:29] SL: Well, I guess—was Lee Williams . . .

MW: Lee Williams was a friend of Carl's, yes, that worked for Bill Fulbright. Yeah. Carl had worked for Congressman Jim Trimble from . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . this district, who served twenty-four years. And he—Carl worked for him for about—I think maybe eight years. And back in those days, when Congress recessed, you went home and you got in the car and traveled the district. So he drove mister—he called him Mr. Trimble, all over these mountains. And he knew someone from—there—aren't there ten mountain counties up

here? You know, Mountain Home, Alpena, Green Forest, Harrison—I even know some of 'em today. So he had a wonderful group of people he knew through his political ties and interests.

SL: Great Rolex.

MW: Huh?

SL: A great Rolex.

MW: Yeah. Oh gosh, yes, he did. He did. [02:31:29] And then also he—when he came back from World War II—he went to the Navy when he was seventeen years old 'cause he knew he was gonna be drafted, so he signed up for the Navy V-12 program, and if you passed the test you could go to college for two years, and then you became an ensign, an officer in the navy, and he did that. So by the time he was twenty, he was an ensign in the navy about the time the war was coming to a . . .

SL: Winding up.

MW: . . . close, you know.

SL: Yeah.

[02:32:00] MW: Fact, he was on a ship headed for Japan when the war was over, and they turned his ship around and sent him to China.

SL: Wow.

MW: Instead. And that's a whole lotta interesting stories. But that just—I mean, I'm te—saying that Carl had such a wide base of friends. When he first got out of the navy, he thought he was gonna be a Methodist preacher. And he did get a license, and he did preach some. And I s—he had a church at Farmington, and he had one—after you go past out by Durham and all that there's a church on the side of the road. I can take you to it. And it was a Methodist church then, and he preached there. He had three preaches—preacher—what do you call 'em? Parishes . . .

SL: Congregations.

[02:32:45] MW: Congregations. Got it. And [*SL laughs*] anyway, he knew so many people from that and then from his political years, too. There's a couple out at Farmington that I still see occasionally. They're still living—that Carl had married years ago. And they've never forgotten it. [*Laughs*] So, anyway. But that gave him a wonderful group of people he knew and was acquainted with. And then part of his job at the University of Arkansas—it was much smaller, bear that in mind—was working with the congressional and not just the national, but the state government for the University of Arkansas.

SL: So . . .

MW: We left off Pi Phi house and all those young kids. But anyway, go ahead.

SL: Well, no, we can keep . . .

MW: We're . . .

SL: We can go back.

MW: Oh, I think we're through with the Pi Phis.

SL: Are you sure?

MW: That's enough about them. Yeah. Just I was—just made so many lifelong friends at the university. Then I talk about the university was so small then it gave me a—someone to know in each little town in Arkansas. [*Laughs*] You know . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . really.

SL: Yeah.

MW: You know. So. It was amazing how many people I used to know around the state like over at Lepanto, down in Hazen, places like that that you would be surprised because they'd either been in the dormitory with me when I spoke of living there, or somehow I'd known 'em here at the university.

[02:34:09] SL: It was a great—well, it was a school up in the hills, I mean . . .

MW: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I think then—it was about the only school of

choice for people from Arkansas. And I think peop—I mean, there weren't many other colleges that were really in the forefront at that time, I believe.

SL: Maybe Batesville.

MW: May . . .

SL: They had a pretty good . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . private . . .

MW: Maybe.

SL: . . . college there.

[02:34:33] MW: Well, that—some of 'em had some good ones. I think UCA was, and . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . where my mother—my mother was supposed to come to school up here, but she had a boyfriend in high school, and he was coming up here, and at the last minute my grandmother would not let them both go to the same school. [*SL laughs*] So she sent her to UCA to escape that boy. [*Laughs*]

SL: I can understand that.

MW: Yeah. But any . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: And that's when you told your children what to do, I think.

SL: That's right.

MW: Yeah.

SL: That's right. And they still listened.

MW: And they did it. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, they still listened. [02:35:07] Okay. So how—where were you in college when you met Carl?

MW: Oh, I was out of college. I'm . . .

SL: You were out of college.

MW: Yeah, I married the children's father . . .

SL: Oh, that's right. Yeah.

MW: And we had the children. And then I was thirty-six when we got married, and he was forty-five. Almost forty-six. So that—and that was a happy time. Oh my gosh, we had so much fun, you know. It was—I met all of his friends. Dale Bumpers was just elected governor. And we bought that big yellow house across from the campus they tore down this summer. You know that house?

SL: Yes.

MW: We lived there, and that was a great house for the kids. My brother, Rudy, taught in the law school some.

SL: Yep.

MW: And he would come by the house and get something to eat, you

know, and all the kids loved living on campus. They thought Old Main and—was their front yard. Larry used to [*laughs*] go—I found this out later—and ride his bicycle down those steps at Old Main, you know, that bottom floor.

SL: Yeah.

MW: There're about three steps

SL: Yeah.

MW: He'd ride his steps down the three steps and—while class was on, and he'd pedal down the hall and ride up the three steps at the other end. And he used to do things like he made—he was very good with his hands. Can do anything he sets his mind to, and he would make little tiny piece—sofas and chairs for models for the kids in the architecture, and he'd take 'em up and sell 'em to them. [02:36:42] He made friends with a couple that were going to architecture school, and they got him into that business. He'd charge a . . .

SL: So he knew how to scale things.

MW: . . . you know, a quarter for a little sofa or something.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And then—and he learned to play pool with the boys at Old Main. I mean, at the Student Union. And I laugh and say now they would probably have me up for being a bad mother for letting



that child learn to play pool at the university's union. They probably wouldn't let a kid hang around that much either, now.

SL: Not now.

MW: Not now. But those were different times. He used to ride his bicycle all over Fayetteville. And he had a—he loved that bicycle. He still rides every day almost. And he had a watch, and I would tell him when to come home, and he'd come home. So it was a different time, wasn't it? [*Laughs*]

SL: It was a great—and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, in a lot of ways it's still a great place.

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: But it's different.

MW: Yeah, it's different.

SL: You're right, it's different.

MW: It's different, things have just happened and all. [02:37:35]

But we loved living that close to campus. It was fun. Ben used to go to the nursery school on campus. I think it was up in the agri . . .

SL: Peabody.

MW: . . . build—well, no.

SL: Oh.

MW: This one was in agri. They'd closed Peabody school . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . by then, I think. And this was up at the agri thing . . .

SL: I had some friends that . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . went to Peabody.

MW: And every year at Christmas time, instead of giving the Christmas—the schoolteachers a present, we would have a party for them after school. And we did that till Sallie was a s—in Fayetteville high, a senior. And we'd have teachers from all the different parts of the schools, you know, come to our house after school, and we'd have a party for 'em. And usually the kids would've made 'em some small gift. So that was one of the things that we always did. [02:38:25] And we did a lot of things. Every year, I loved Eureka. I used to think Eureka was so much fun, going up and down those mountains. We went over there for Methodist church . . .

SL: Camp.

MW: . . . young people's meetings in high school, you know. And every year I'd take my children, and we'd go over there for a back-to-school picnic. That was a big thing. And every year we had cookie-decorating parties. It was just—and go to the

football games. We would—the parents would go to the football game. [02:39:54] I remember one year in the rain, Carl and I went to a football game with Mary Ellen and Brad Jesson from Fort Smith. That's Mary Ellen Brooks parents. And we're sitting there in the ballgame, and the stadium is still open on that end . . .

SL; Yeah.

MW: . . . you were talking about. And all of a sudden, coming up through the crowd in the rain, I see this figure. I thought, that looks familiar. And it stopped at our row, and it was Larry. And his sisters had gotten him all dressed up. He was about six years old. And they wanted rid of him. So they sent him to the ballgame [*laughter*] to find his parents.

SL: Find his . . .

MW: And he found us. He found us.

SL: That—oh boy, you couldn't do that now.

MW: It's—boy, you could not do that . . .

SL: No.

MW: . . . now.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I will never forget that 'cause it was just like that child to find us.

SL: That's fun.

MW: And you know, my son Brennan and my nephew Jason were in a lot of plays over at the university. They used to do children's theater here. And Brennan loved that. And of course, Jason did, too.

[02:39:55] SL: So getting back to you and your education, did you finish with a degree . . .

MW: Yes. Yes.

SL: . . . from the univer—what'd you get it in?

MW: I got a degree in education.

SL: In education.

MW: A bachelor of science in education. And I taught school. I—right after I got my degree, I taught in Rogers the first year. It was hard to get a job in schools then. There were so many people like me looking for a job to put a husband through school. When Sallie was a baby I taught in Rogers I believe three years. And then over a period of fifteen years, I taught in Rogers, and then I taught in Springdale one time, and I taught here in Fayetteville at the old Bates School.

SL: Yeah.

MW: In Fayetteville.

SL: Sure.

MW: Taught down there.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Below Fayetteville High.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

[02:40:42] SL: So did you have—what about any favorite teachers in college?

MW: It—at the university?

SL: Any of the professors?

MW: Well, there was a woman teacher I really admired named Mrs. Henbest. And I believe she taught in the history department or something. She was around here a long time. She was a wonderful role model. And I took Greek mythology from her.

SL: Wow.

MW: And then there was another woman named Mrs. Byrd. Her daughter is still here. Her daughter is Gretchen Gearhart. And they lived up there at the end of Park Avenue in that red brick house on your right right before you get to North Street.

SL: *B-Y-R-D.*

MW: Well, they painted the house. It's not red brick anymore.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

MW: And behind a brick wall. And Mrs. Byrd—I really admired her. And she was ver—they were all nice to me. And then some of

the others—did you—well, your grade-school principal, Ms. Wilson.

SL: Sure.

MW: You know, she taught at the university before she went to Washington School. And she was an excellent teacher. I really enjoyed her. She, you know, she said something once—it stuck with me for years. And that was—it was for children when you were teaching kindergarten. You should do a whole week at the first of school on good manners or doing the kindest thing in the kindest way. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's good.

MW: Yeah.

SL: That's really good.

MW: And . . .

SL: Course . . .

MW: . . . anyway.

SL: I . . .

[02:42:17] MW: So yes. And then I remember there was Dr. Moore who taught biology. Remember him?

SL: I do kinda remember him.

MW: Oh my gosh. That was hard for me. And then there was Dr. Orton, who . . .

SL: Marion . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . Orton's husband.

MW: So yes. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I remember a number of—and Dr. Hudson. Did you ever have him? He . . .

SL: Hudson was the . . .

MW: Was it Hudson or Hudspeth? He taught history. He was a wonderful teacher.

SL: Hudspeth sounds right. Hudson may be some—I'd have to—I did not have him.

MW: Yeah. He could make it come alive.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He was really good. So, yes.

[02:42:54] SL: Well, I guess what I was looking for and expecting and got was that University of Arkansas was a really good place to . . .

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . to go to college.

MW: Yes. And to get an . . .

SL: It was small enough and large . . .

MW: . . . education.

SL: . . . enough to get . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . the whole spectrum of . . .

MW: And I think you saw—they led you to see the bigger world. I think. The college education made you realize what—how much was out there in the world, and I think they also helped you to see people's point of view from another standpoint besides your own. They—in those days, they made you aware of—now we'd call it free speech and things like that.

SL: Right.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. I would say we were very fortunate to have the university here.

MW: Yes. Yes.

SL: I think it shaped Fayetteville in many ways early, early on.

MW: And the people who lived here. Especially early on.

[02:43:51] SL: Yeah. So di—I'm tryin' to thi—you know, I think that Doug Douglas, John Lewis, and Hayden McIlroy all went to the marines with my brother Gary.

MW: They probably did. Now they were a year or two younger than I. And that may have been—was that the beginning of Vietnam?



SL: No.

MW: No.

SL: It was bef—it was pre . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: Let's see. He—well, Gary graduated in 1960.

MW: Okay. Well, that . . .

SL: So he probably went in [19]60.

MW: Yeah.

SL: So [19]61, maybe.

[02:44:22] MW: Rudy, my brother, got out of colle—got out of SMU at the beginning—well, right in the middle of Vietnam. And he got out—[19]43, [19]50—about [19]65, [19]66. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, so it was probably just—hadn't quite escalated yet when . . .

MW: Did they all go to Vietnam?

SL: No.

MW: No. Some of 'em were . . .

SL: None—I don't think any of 'em . . .

MW: . . . kept in the st . . .

SL: . . . went to Vietnam that I'm aware of.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I mean, that really kinda escalated under Kennedy.

MW: Yes.

SL: Which would be [19]60—early [19]60s but . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . more notably [19]62 and . . .

MW: I think [19]68 . . .

SL: . . . [19]63.

MW: . . . I read somewhere that stuck with me that [19]68 was the year so many American boys . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . were killed. I think Vietnam had a profound effect on our country.

SL: I do, too.

[02:45:14] MW: A lot of people. One of my grandsons some years ago was asked to review—interview his grandmother, you know. And one question was, "What do you think has made the greatest difference in the US since—in your lifetime?" And I gave an answer that he laughed and said no one el—everyone else gave computer. And I said Vietnam.

SL: Well.

MW: And they both did.

SL: They're both . . .

MW: But in different ways.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And morality kinda came back in . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . Vietnam and the immorality of war and . . .

MW: It . . .

SL: . . . why be doing it and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . all that.

MW: It's . . .

SL: Came into question. Before that we went into wars to win.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: And feel good about winning and . . .

MW: That's right.

SL: . . . putting down the oppressors . . .

MW: Excuse me.

SL: . . . but this one was . . .

MW: But . . .

SL: . . . more complicated.

MW: Yeah. But anyway—I—it was a difficult time in this country.

[02:46:12] SL: Okay. So I wanna try to paint the picture again of  
how you and Carl met.

MW: Okay.

SL: He was traveling with Fulbright. Now he'd already . . .

MW: Well, he was here working, and you know, Fulbright was coming to town, and probably Lee Williams or somebody with Fulbright called him up and asked him to come and help work the event with them. [02:46:36] I'll tell you something, that event—and we'll have to think what year that was—was the first time I ever saw anyone booed. And Fulbright was booed at that rally in Springdale. And you remember he was against the Vietnam war.

SL: Yes.

MW: He made the speech about the Bay of Tonkin. That had all happened. And I was so taken back that they would boo him.

SL: He was on such high . . .

MW: It's changed.

SL: . . . ground.

MW: Huh?

SL: He was on such high ground.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: And that kinda—don't you think . . .

MW: And there wasn't . . .

SL: . . . that eventually . . .

MW: . . . it wasn't really big, but there was enough that you noticed.  
That I noticed it at the beginning or when he said something. I  
can't remember exactly.

[02:47:20] SL: Well, he and McClelland and Mills were all so  
powerful.

MW: Yeah.

SL: During their time, and but I do think that somehow or another,  
Senator Fulbright somehow another lost touch with the folks in  
Arkansas.

MW: Yeah. He was . . .

SL: I mean, it was . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . no question he was so . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . such a great mind . . .

MW: Yes. Yes.

SL: . . . and a great voice of reason . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . that it was kind of hard to watch him fall.

MW: Well, it was. It was.

SL: You know.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And it . . .

MW: Yep.

SL: It . . .

MW: Although Bumpers whe—had been a good friend to us and was a friend. Carl went with Fulbright in that race, and a lot of people were surprised.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But he's said he'd stick with him.

SL: Well, that's loyal.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Loyal.

MW: Yeah.

[02:48:16] SL: Now he also—this was who—your husband was who Bill Clinton turned to.

MW: A lot, yes. Yes.

SL: Especially on that third congressional race, right?

MW: Yes. Well, and later on, too. We met Bill Clinton at the univ—when he came to teach at the law school that first year. And my brother, Rudy, had told us about him and said, "You need to meet him." And he turned up at our doorstep one day, and we did. You know, we lived so close to campus.

SL: Right.

MW: We had a ton of company all the time. We had all those kids going in and out. Every year in the fall we'd have a big party in our back yard, and the year it got to three hundred people, I thought, "This has gotta stop. [*Laughter*] This is ridiculous." But anyway.

SL: You don't know any of these people!

MW: Yeah. Yeah. Well, anyway. And then—well, we'd tell people they could bring their out of town company. But it was lots of fun. But Bill Clinton turned up. And Bill Clinton has written in his book, his first book—they modified the second edition of his book, so it was taken out of some, but he writes about going to eat at—what was the name of the cafeteria at the mall? You know, it was . . .

SL: Bowen's or . . .

MW: Yeah, I think that was it.

SL: Yeah.

[02:49:36] MW: I was gonna say Franke's, but that's Little Rock.

SL: That's Little Rock.

MW: And he went with a group of law professors, and there was this new man he'd met who was named Carl Whillock, and he was very—had on his suit and his tie, his, you know, white shirt, very buttoned up, very quiet. And at the dinner table, they were all

talking about how awful Nixon was. And Bill Clinton says in his book, "I looked at this guy, and I think, 'Boy, he's probably bil—he isn't likin' this, he's a Nixon fan.'" And someone asked Carl what he thought. And he said something to the effect of "I think Nixon would kill his mother to get ahead," and just kept right on eating. And Bill Clinton said, "I knew I'd found [*laughter*] a kindred spirit."

SL: Dyed . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the wool Democrat.

[02:50:21] MW: And for a—and then Carl did help him in that first race, and I have a great story about that. But I will tell you this: all—when he was governor, he would always tell the story about Carl taking him to campaign, and he would say, "This is the person who believed in me besides my mother. When nobody else besides my mother thought I should run for office, Carl Whillock did." And so he never—Bill Clinton is—remember that to this day. He would tell you about it if he was here. But . . .

SL: That's really close to his heart.

[02:50:54] MW: He di—when we left the White House, you know, he sent Carl a book, and he said—it says something to the effect of "I'm so glad I could dance with the one who brung me to this



wonderful journey."

SL: Oh.

MW: Isn't that nice?

SL: That's great.

MW: Isn't that wonderful?

SL: It is.

[02:51:12] MW: But anyway, okay. So Bill Clinton comes to the house, and it's one—and Hillary had not come. I hadn't met her. It was one . . .

SL: She may not have been here yet.

MW: Yeah. No, she wasn't.

SL: Yeah.

MW: She came that fall.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I think it was that fall.

SL: Yeah.

MW: But anyway. And so he comes to the house. It's real cold, January—that big yellow house. And he comes in, sits down, and we are having something to eat and drink and all. And he tells Carl he's gonna run for Congress. And to my amazement, Carl Whillock got—jumped right up. He said, "I'll be right back." He went to—ran upstairs, came back downstairs, and he had a

little square box you used to put the white cards in . . .

SL: Sure.

MW: . . . you know. And I'd never see—noticed or never seen that box before. And he begin to go through it, and he said, "You need to meet Bo Forney. You need to meet Hilary Jones. You need to meet this one and that one." And it was it was his card file from his days with Jim Trimble.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And a lot of other—not a lot, but several other people had come to the house and said, "I'm running for office, will you help me? Can you help me?" And Carl would always back off and say, "Oh, I don't know anybody anymore. Everybody's died. You know, I'm real—I'm—I've been away from it too long," that kind of thing. But he did not with Bill Clinton. And that was a nice friendship for both of them. And a lot of people used to say that Bill Clinton turned to Carl to cry on his shoulder. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, he probably did.

MW: Bill Clinton might not agree with that now.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I don't know. [02:52:42] But they published that in the paper one time, even. And they published the twenty-five people closest to Bill Clinton when he became governor, you know, and

told a little bit about each one. And Carl was, I think, the ninth one, and my brother, Rudy, was twenty-two. [*SL laughs*] And he came by the house. He was walking over at the law school, and he said, "Don't believe that. I'm number two on that list."  
[*Laughter*] But . . .

SL: That's good.

MW: . . . anyway. And those were—you know, that was a happy time. And of course, the night that Bill Clinton lost to Hammerschmidt, he did not lose by much.

SL: I know.

MW: Only five—less than five . . .

SL: It's only serious . . .

MW: . . . thousand.

SL: . . . race that . . .

MW: Or five thousand votes. But he called Carl and said, you know, "What can we do about this vote count in one box, one precinct," that night. But anyway, that's a long time ago.

[02:53:39] SL: Yeah, that's back when there were shenanigans going on in different precincts.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: More than now, certainly.

SL: More than now. I hope.

MW: Yeah, we hope. We hope.

SL: Yeah. I'm not sure about that.

MW: Well, the Russians weren't here. [*Laughs*]

SL: Really.

MW: But anyway.

SL: I'm so f—I'm so happy to blame everything on the Russians these days.

MW: I know. Isn't that good? [*SL laughs*] We've got someone.

SL: Yeah, we've got someone we can . . .

MW: We've got a bad guy, haven't we?

SL: Yeah.

MW: But . . .

[02:54:04] SL: So . . .

MW: Yeah. Go ahead.

SL: What about Al Witte?

MW: Oh yeah, we knew Al. Not real well, but . . .

SL: You didn't?

MW: . . . sure, we knew him. Yes. And he was a friend back—I talked to him shortly before he died, even. And but not close close. Gosh, there were a lot of people we knew then. Course, Carl worked with . . .

SL: Carl lef . . .

MW: . . . Dr. Mullins. He was president of the university then. And he was very—he was a true scholar. And he was very dignified gentleman, very reserved gentleman. And he depended, I think, on Carl quite a bit for bringing other people to the university, you know, for the—charming the legislature and helping with that kind of thing. Going to Washington and getting grants for that—what is still the Student Union. That kind of thing.

SL: Yeah.

MW: So.

SL: I member going in and out of the Mullins house. Gary . . .

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . their son . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . you know . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . we all grew up on Mount Seqouyah there, and so we were always playing army or something.

MW: Yeah.

SL: All up and down the hill. It was . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . a lot more woods back then.

[02:55:16] MW: And he's had a very successful life. When we were in Washington, I've forgotten what the occasion was, but he came—maybe it was Carl's retirement party. He made an effort to come to something with Carl, which was so nice of him to do, you know. I think—do you ever hear from him?

SL: No.

MW: No.

SL: I have not . . .

MW: Not anymore.

SL: . . . heard from him since he moved.

MW: Yeah.

SL: But . . .

MW: But . . .

SL: He was the neighborhood . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know.

MW: Yeah, that's right.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That's right. [02:55:42] Well, in those days, you know, when I first met Carl, as I said, Bumpers was governor, so we met a lot of people who became good friends, and then when Carl went to work for David Pryor, we met a whole nother group of people

that became good friends. You know, with Bumpers there was Archie Schaffer and Mary Ellen and Brad Jesson and Bob Dawson and a lot of those people from Fort Smith. And then when David Pryor became governor, we met people like Bill Wilson, Bill Overton. There were three of 'em that turned into judges. Who was the third one? Federal judges. Let's see.

SL: Well, the Arnold—did you mean . . .

MW: What'd you say?

SL: Arnold. Richard Arnold?

MW: I guess it was Richard. I don't know. But Bill Wilson and Bill Overton stand out in my mind 'cause they were all good friends. And P.K. Holmes was . . .

SL: P.K. Holmes.

MW: . . . the driver . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . for Bill Clinton. I mean, David . . .

SL: For David.

MW: . . . Pryor.

SL: I remember when . . .

[02:56:45] MW: And you know . . .

SL: . . . P. K. was a young driver.

MW: . . . that campaign that Carl ran—and Susan Overton and Jo

Luck Wilson came for thr—free and ran the office. And they looked after Carl 'cause I was up here. So they'd take his shirts to the laundry and, you know, take good care of him and all. And see that everything came off. [02:57:04] And then this also is the time when I met Diane Blair and became better acquainted with her. I knew Ann Henry from Springdale. You know, that's her home town. And her mother worked for my daddy at the book—at the drugstore some.

SL: What a world.

MW: And so—and I knew her parents. And she was younger. Ann's about five years younger, I think, four or five. And so I knew her. But I hadn't known her as an adult so much, you know. And her and Morris. They had—they were married by this time, and they were big supporters of Bumpers as well as Pryor's. Those were kinda golden days.

SL: It was unbelievable.

[02:57:48] MW: You know, when Rudy was in the legislature and Bumpers was governor—and I think Pryor was governor the second—Rudy was still there. But you had people in the legislator—legislature like Hugh Kincaid. You had Worth Gibson from down at El Dorado. You had Mack McLarty, you had the—Proctor was his last name. I remember counting. I could, if I



saw the list, I could count nine people I'd gone to the University of Arkansas that were in the legislature then. But you had some very high-caliber people like Mack and Hugh and Morris Henry and all those people.

[02:58:29] SL: You know, back then public service was a great thing to be involved with.

MW: Yeah.

SL: It was an honorable . . .

MW: Yes, it was.

SL: . . . profession. And . . .

MW: And I wish it'd come back to that.

SL: It's amazing what . . .

MW: It is.

SL: . . . it's evolved to.

MW: It is sad, is what it is. But you did get a good caliber of people in office. And you still do, I know. But anyway, that was just a good time to be around, wasn't it?

SL: It was.

[02:58:58] MW: And we used to go—Carl went to Little Rock all the time, and I went with him a lot. And then the legislature came up here. Then you could have the [*laughs*] legislature come up for legislative weekend . . .

SL: That's right.

MW: . . . and give 'em a football ticket and a meal . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . and you didn't get in trouble.

SL: Now we can't do that.

MW: No, you can't do that anymore, either.

SL: Buying influence . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . if we do that.

[02:59:16] MW: But anyway—but in those years, I was very involved in the Fayetteville community. I think like the Junior Civic League wa—I loved it. It was a big part of my life. We had more fun, and we did a lot of good, I like to think. And I held every office until I worked my way [*laughter*] up to president, you know. [02:59:34] And then we also—let's see. We—yeah, we're still here. Okay, we s—I worked for the North Arkansas Symphony during those years. I took a job eventually with them. And that was a fun job. We had a good time. We set up a women's guild group, and we did things like we had the very first children's concert anyone had ever heard of in Fayetteville. That was kind of new experience, you know. And we put on the first park concerts down in Wilson Park. Remember that?

SL: Yeah. The early director was . . .

MW: That guy was . . .

SL: . . . Carlton . . .

MW: . . . Campbell—well, he was—Carlton was there, but the one I knew the best the next one. I think he came next—was Campbell Johnson.

SL: Okay.

MW: Was either—I don't know which one was first. But anyway, and Billie Starr came and worked with me as a volunteer every other day. We—she'd come—you know, Billie and I were great friends, and she'd come two or three times a week. And we would have such a good time. And it was just—and oh, Morris Collier was so active in it.

SL: Yep.

MW: Remember him?

SL: Yes, of course.

[03:00:49] MW: He was president of the board. When I took the job, the first thing they did was tell me how many thousands of dollars they were in debt and that I needed to pay off the debt and raise enough money for my salary. [*Laughter*] So I did.

SL: Well, thank you very much.

MW: Yeah, I did. I d . . .

SL: That's so . . .

MW: We got that done. And anyway. So that, you know, that was a good time. We did a lot of fun things with the symphony. If I'd kept that long in—job long enough, I could've written a book.

[03:01:20] Funny things would happen. Like one time we had to go and bail one of the musicians out of jail. I sent my brother, Rudy, to get one of 'em out of jail in time for the concert in the park. [*Laughter*] He'd had a little too much to drink.

SL: Well, of course.

MW: Yes, and one time we had a musician once that required—before he would come to Fayetteville, he had to know what size bed he was gonna have to sleep in. And so I went out—we had a—friends that had an apartment that we kept our visiting artists in. Very lovely. And I went out and measured the bed, and sent that information off, and then, yes, he said he'd come. And he was bringing his girlfriend with him.

SL: Ah.

[03:02:03] MW: So I always thought that was kind of an interesting requirement . . .

SL: It is.

MW: . . . don't you?

SL: Well, sleep is important.

MW: Well, yeah. [*SL laughs*] He wanted to have enough room for both of 'em. But anyway. So those, you know, those were fun years. [03:02:14] And during that time I also taught in the very first Head Start in Arkansas.

SL: Wow.

MW: That was way back, I think, in . . .

SL: I remember . . .

MW: . . . [19]63. Kennedy was president. And I went to Little Rock and did the training. They had training. And I came back and taught in Head Start. And that—I enjoyed that. That was so interesting. And you—do you know the story that at that time—and Harry Vandergriff was superintendent. The—not that summer, but the second or third summer, the federal government sent someone down to Fayetteville to find out why we had not registered more diversity in our kindergar—Head Start program. They thought we sh—were in the South, and we should have more African Americans. And we said, "Come right down. We have beat the bushes. We've got all we can find. [*Laughs*] If you can"—you know. Well, there just weren't that many here. And that relates back to your story asking about the different—you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . in Fayetteville and the African American community and all.

SL: Yeah, no, that's interesting. That was . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . probably a Southern stereotype that they were basing those . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . expectations.

[03:03:26] MW: I remember it aggravated Harry Vandergriff. He didn't—you know, because that's what it was. But they came.

SL: Yeah.

MW: They couldn't find any more, either. [*Laughs*] We were not refusing them that opportunity. But that was an interesting time. And that's before public-school kindergartens, even. And because we did not have a public-school kindergarten, when it came time for Jenny to go—Sallie'd gone to the university kindergarten. And it's a long story, but Jenny could not go there. Couldn't get in. And so my second daughter needed to go to kindergarten. And there was a kindergarten here that I thought was too crowded and not well run. And so did several other people. And we got together and started the first kinde—real kindergarten here in Fayetteville that became licensed, and

it turned into the Fayetteville Creative School. It's up at the Presbyterian church to this day. In fact, it split into two kindergartens. It became a kindergarten out at the—oh my gosh, what's the name of it? Out at—you know, by Colt Square? Fayetteville.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Don't put this on counter, and I'll tell you—on the camera, and I'll tell you why in a minute. But anyway, they still have a nursery-type situation up at the Presbyterian church that was an offshoot of that kindergarten. And what is the name of it? Mmm, mmm, mmm. [*Paper shuffling*] Fayetteville Creative Schools.

SL: Okay.

MW: I got it. I got it.

SL: Okay.

[03:05:07] MW: And that's what it became. And they've got a whole building and a lot of acreage out by Colt Square. I—yeah, kinda by Colt Square. It's back in that area. And they celebrated their fiftieth anniversary two summers ago, and they asked me to come back and talk to them about the early days.

SL: Good.

MW: I was so amazed they remembered. But there were a lot of—we

had a small board. We kept it small so we could do what we wanted—of Louis Jones and Hugh Brewer and . . .

SL: Hugh Brewer.

MW: . . . Ann Sugg and myself, and I'll think of the fifth one. But I was president of that for about three or—years or more. And Louis said they always made me president because I could get the meeting started and over with the shortest [*laughter*] length of time.

SL: You were a taskmaster.

[03:05:56] MW: Yeah. But there were a lot of—you know, a lot of decisions to be made. We had to incorporate and everything, and we s—it was set up like a real kindergarten, and we did get accredited. And then, of course, when public-school kindergartens came along later, then that changed it all. But Jenny went there. Meli—my daughter Melissa. Larry went there. And then I think by the time Brennan got to school, they had the public school, which you may have—I bet you some of your siblings may have gone there. I don't know.

SL: Most of—well, siblings—let's see. Maybe so. By the time I was in kindergarten, it was pretty much St. Joseph.

MW: Yeah. Yes. They had one, too. Yes. I remember that.

Probably that's the one you went to. But the Fayetteville



Creative Kindergarten is what it was called back then. But I was amazed that it's still open. Hugh Brewer is the one that remembers a lot about it, and so does Ann Sugg. But Martha Brewer recently built—wrote a book about the Presbyterian church in Fayetteville. And she put that in it 'cause we did several lunches to talk about the kindergarten.

SL: That's so great.

MW: Yeah. It lasted so long. I'm so glad it did. I would never have thought that. That's what I told 'em. And . . .

[03:07:19] SL: So it's still going now.

MW: Yeah. Yeah. Today you could of—if you got any—your children are all grown. Are any of 'em married? [*Laughs*]

SL: They are, but they're in DC.

MW: Oh, okay. Well, you could get them—you know, you could enroll their children out there.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And I know a lot of people like—oh, what's—what is his name that ran for congress? His children are out there. He ran against John Boozman. Ran for the Senate. We're gonna think of his name in just a minute.

SL: Oh gosh.

MW: Don't put all these on camera where I can't think of their name.

SL: Oh, that's all right. [03:07:56] But you know, as far as the stuff that's on camera and not on camera . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . we don't really do a whole lot of editing on these interviews. Now, we'll . . .

MW: Good.

SL: We'll post the highlights. What you see on the—our website . . .

MW: Well . . .

SL: . . . are highlights . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: . . . from the interviews.

MW: Good, good. Okay.

SL: So we won't have any of us stammering or . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: . . . around trying to . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . remember things.

[03:08:19] MW: But that was a lo—that was an interesting time, and that was a lot of work. That was like having a job 'cause we had to get the equipment and all. We had kind of a hard time finding a place to have it, and I will always remember—did you ever know Clay Bell, the Presbyterian preacher here . . .

SL: Hm-mm.

MW: . . . for many years. And he opened the Presbyterian church to us when one other very prominent church locally said to us, "Oh, but—they—if you had kindergarten every day of the week, they would mess the building up. They would mess up the Sunday school furniture." So. And that's true.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That's true. [*Laughs*] You know. But we had to get all the equipment and hire the teachers who were qualified and . . .

SL: You know, that . . .

MW: . . . that kind of thing.

SL: . . . Presbyterian church has always been socially conscious, I think.

MW: I think you're right. I think you're right. And he was a very fine person. But anyway. [03:09:18] Back to Bill Clinton coming to Fayetteville. Gosh, there're so many things to be told about those days. Like one time I ca—well, more than once I came home, and he and Rudy were in the kitchen looking for something to eat at my house, you know. [*Laughter*] They were both on their way to the law school. And Bill Clinton used to come over. The kids just loved him in those days. They thought he was the greatest. And one time he was helping us

move some furniture, a big piece, and took his shoes off. And I re—or Melissa said, "I thought those were the biggest shoes I'd ever seen in my life," [*laughter*] you know. Oh. But I did not tell you the story about Carl taking him to campaign.

[03:10:03] Okay. He came and he—Carl got out the Rolodex and said, "You need to go to these mountain towns. You need to meet these people, you know, if you're gonna run in this district." And Bill Clinton said, "Well, I don't know how to do that." He said, "I've never met any of those people." And so Carl said, "Well, we're gonna take a day off. I'll take a day off, and you take a day off from work, and we're gonna go." And they did. They went early. They left at six, early one morning, and they drove all the way to Salem. And they got home about midnight. And he took him to meet people like Vic Nixon over at Berryville.

SL: Oh, sure. Vic.

MW: Who—Vic and Freddie. You know, and he gave the inaugural prayer, I believe, for Bill Clinton.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And then there were those people I've mentioned before like Bo Forney and all of those. And Bill—and Cabe—what was Cabe's last name? But anyway, Bill Clinton tells about all those people

Carl took him to meet. Vada Sheid, who was a female legislature from Mount—legislator from Mountain Home. And those people stayed with Bill Clinton all the way to the White House and beyond, some of them. And it—they had had a wonderful time. And when they got home that night, as he said, "Every light in the house was on because we had a lot of excitement going on." Out in front of the house—the university was having a lot of streakers. [*Laughter*] And it was midnight, so you couldn't see very well. But we all knew they were there, and there were kids there. There were police cars there. And we recognized one of the local streakers. [*Laughter*] You know. We were . . .

[03:11:43] SL: It wasn't a campaign . . .

MW: That was Hammerschmidt's . . .

SL: . . . committee member, wa . . .

MW: . . . campaign.

SL: Oh.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That very first one. So. Anyway. That was sort of part of their bonding time, you might say. But that was fun. And what else about Bill Clinton being here in Fayetteville in those days?

[03:12:01] Well, Hillary came to town then, you know, the next fall. And he was so excited she was coming. He was so happy she was coming. He had talked about her a lot with us. But, man, when it got closer to the time, he would talk about her, and he'd say, "Now, I want her to like it here. I really want her to like it here." [SL laughs] And he said, "You gotta promise me, Margaret, you're gonna call her. I know you're gonna call her. I know you're gonna like her. I know she'll like you. I really want her to like it here." And he kept saying, "Are you gonna call her?" I s—"I'll call her. I promise. I'll call her. I'll call"—you know. And so—and he was—he really wanted her to be happy. And so she came, and the second day she taught at the law school, I called and invited her to walk down to lunch at the yellow house, and she did. And we got—hit it off. And sh—at that—December—now that was—I guess sep—early September. Whenever school started then, in September not in the middle of the summer.

[03:13:01] SL: Right.

MW: And she wrote me a wonderful letter that year at New Year's.

And I brought you a copy of it.

SL: Oh, good. Thank you.

MW: I'm surprised I kept it, but I did. And—to put on your website.

And we've been friends since. And of course, I was amazed when she offered me a job later. That kind of thing. But anyway. Let's see.

SL: So the job was—it's—at the White House, and it had to do with reservations or . . .

[03:13:34] MW: It was out of—I worked for the President and First Lady, but I wor—I was attached to the Visitors Office. And I was a part of Hillaryland, too. And what I did a lot of—I took Carolyn Huber's place. Carolyn Huber had been their friend from Little Rock that—and anyway. I took Caroline Huber's place. And I—my office did all the tours through the White House. Some mornings, we'd have six to seven thousand people before lunch. If you got in line—and at Christmas they did—before seven thirty—they cut it at seven thirty—and you got in line, you were guaranteed you could get a walking tour of the White House. Not a spoken guide, you know, not a guided, but . . .

SL: Right.

MW: And so people would really line up for that thing. And then they were—everybody—the house had to be cleared by noon in those days. And so we had a tremendous amount of people. We . . .

SL: That's a lot of people.

MW: . . . had over a million people a year. At Christmas, we would—

all the people who came through the White House on the West Gate—I mean, the East Gate came through our office, so to speak. And they all had to be cleared. We had to have their phone number, their Social Security number. They had to have an okay by the Secret Service to get in.

SL: Yes.

[03:15:00] MW: We worked very closely with the Secret Service every day. I loved the Secret Service. They were so good in—at that time, and such high-caliber people. And most people don't know this, but the regular guides in the White House that have on the khaki pants and the navy-blue blazers were Secret Service officers.

SL; No, I didn't know that.

MW: Yeah. And that's how I learned to give the tours. And I used to do a lot of personal tours for the Clinton's friend.

SL: Sure.

MW: You know, all kinds of people from Arkansas, world-famous people, movie stars, ambassadors, a princess or two thrown in, you know, for good luck, I guess. And just all kinds of people like that.

[03:15:44] SL: You enjoyed it.

MW: Oh, yeah, it was—who would not have—I had the best job up



there. Carl and—Carl went—he retired from the co-op, and he went to Washington to be Bill Clinton's liaison between the White House and the Department of Agriculture, and he had an office at the old Executive Office Building and also one over at agri. And that was his job. And I was gonna stay home and take care of—we had a granddaughter, as I spoke of earlier, that came to live with us . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . when she was two, and she was seven when we went. And so I was gonna stay home with Caroline and read books and go to museums and have a good time. [*SL laughs*] And in the meantime, I—we were invited to Hillary's October birthday party, all three of us. And so we went, and I saw Hillary, and I said, "Well, you know, I'm here, and I'm gonna—I'm coming over to volunteer a little bit at the White House. And if I can do anything for you, call me." And I was doing a little volunteer work. I did things like help with—get—unpack stuff, the Christmas decorations or whatever they needed. [03:16:57] One time I was there, and they asked me if I'd go with the Secret Service man, and they had to have another person besides the Secret Service man in the East Room when Robb—oh—Linden Johnson's daughter.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Remember?

SL: Yes.

MW: Lady—not . . .

SL: Lady . . .

MW: Did . . .

SL: No, Lynda. Lynda Bird.

MW: Lynda. Married to Chuck Robb.

SL: Yes.

MW: They came to celebrate their twentieth anniversary 'cause they'd been married in that room. So—and they—and the—one of the butlers came in and brought them a tray with two glasses and a bottle of champagne, and they had that over in front of the fireplace where they were married while the Secret Service guy stood in one corner, and I stood in the other corner and tried to look real small. [*Laughter*] Don't you love that?

SL: I do love that.

MW: So do you wanna talk about Washington before we talk about Little Rock?

SL: I . . .

MW: We're skipping Little Rock.

SM: Scott, excuse me. I just wanted to let you know. We're an hour

into this, and before you get started on a new topic, I just wanted to give you a heads up in case you want a break.

SL: Okay.

[Recording stopped]

[03:18:02] SL: So I can't remember if this is our third seg—is this our third segment or fourth? It's pra . . .

SM: The fourth.

SL: Is tha . . .

MW: Oh.

SL: It's our fourth segment.

MW: Oh, good. Good.

SL: Mm-kay.

MW: Okay. Yeah.

[03:18:11] SL: So we've . . .

MW: Hillary's come to town.

SL: Hillary's come to town, and Bill is just adamant about you getting ahold of her and . . .

MW: Yes. He's . . .

SL: . . . befriending her . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . because he wants Hillary to just love this place.

MW: Yes. He does.

SL: And so you do, and she does.

MW: Well. A lot of other people were getting ahold of her, too . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . I don't . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . kid myself . . .

SL: Right. Right.

MW: . . . you know. And she wa—Hillary was re—is brilliant.

SL: Yes.

MW: And she was a brilliant woman for that day and age. And she was very progressive in her thinking, which was fine with me because I guess I was coming from strong women. I guess I was more progressive than I thought I was. And she was just so interesting. [03:18:57] You know, she started the rape crisis center.

SL: Yep.

MW: And that's when you didn't even say the word out loud. And she started the—what'd they call it? The poverty law—whatever. Where they—lawyers took cases pro bono . . .

SL: Pro bono.

MW: . . . for indigenous pee—not indigenous. Poor people. And she had so many ideas like that. And she was so eager to help

people, and she moved so fast. And he was the same way.

[03:19:29] SL: So you know, they were also real people. I mean,  
they . . .

MW: Oh, gosh, yes. Yeah.

SL: I mean, I—the few times that I spent any time with them . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you really felt like you were with them.

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: And they . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . they really paid attention and like you were the only . . .

MW: And they cared about you.

SL: And they took an interest. And you . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . there was a sincerity about it.

MW: That's right.

SL: That was undeniable.

MW: Yeah.

[03:19:59] SL: Did—were there any—you know, I've heard a lot of  
stories from Bill Clinton. He's . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . a storyteller. But I haven't heard that many stories from

Hillary. Did she have any—bu—when she first came to Fayetteville and therefore Arkansas, did she have any, like, great family stories or did she share any . . .

MW: Well . . .

SL: . . . of those . . .

MW: You know, she came here from a background of Chicago and Wellesley and Washington, DC . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . where she'd lived previously. So I think it was a big change for her. And she did talk about her family quite a bit. She was very, very close to her family. Her mother was an important player in her life. Her mother was a fascinating woman in her own right, Dorothy Rodham.

SL: Yeah.

[03:20:54] MW: And Hillary used to talk a—and then one time, I remember one football game, her brothers and her parents came to Fayetteville for a football game 'cause we were having a party, as we always did living on campus [*laughs*], right after the game, and they came. That's the first time I met her mom. And her brothers were in high school then. Of course, they were rollin' their eyes. They were bored to death. [*SL laughs*] They didn't wanna be there. [*Laughter*] You know. But her mother

and dad were very gracious and very lovely. And I remember them walking—looking at the pictures in my living room and the things I had hanging on the wall. You know, the—oh, paintings or the little prints or something. And they were very interested in living in that older house. They liked the house. And they were just very nice people. But the brothers—they were like all teenagers. [*Laughter*] They wanted to escape and do their own thing.

SL: That's right.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Go exploring and look for the next adventure.

[03:21:57] MW: Yeah. Yeah, we had a turret in that house, and for some reason I remember them sitting there in that turret.

[*Laughs*]

SL: Well . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . they probably hadn't sat in many turrets.

MW: Well, that could be true. That could . . .

SL: Especially an old . . .

MW: . . . be true.

SL: . . . turret.

[03:22:09] MW: That's right. That's right. So but what else about

Hillary did you say, now?

SL: Well, I know that she—I'd always—I'd heard people say that she was actually more brilliant than Bill was.

MW: Oh, yes. My mother always said that. My *[laughs]* m—my parents knew both of 'em. And people—some people were surprised when they got married. My mother always said they had a meeting of the minds, that she was so brilliant. And he was, too, for that—you know, he was, too. But that she was the more—the smarter one of the two. And he was lucky to get her.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. He was.

SL; Well, I think he knew that, too.

MW: I think he did.

SL: And knows that to this day.

MW: Yeah. He did.

[03:21:58] SL: Yeah. Okay, so you know, Bill came knockin' at your door.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Early on.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Is there any conversation that you had with Bill that—at that time that kind of let you know that you guys were going to



become fast friends and . . .

MW: Well, I think just because we were all—at that point in our lives, and this included Diane Blair, too, was a big part of that—we were all so interested in politics and what was happening in the country, in the world—and in books. Books was a real bonding for all of us. You know, the Clintons had more books than I had. And that's [*laughs*] pretty—that was amazing at one time. And they—and that was one of the things that sort of brought us all together. And we believed in the same kind of things. We liked the same causes. [03:23:54] My mother was an early supporter of Planned Parenthood. And nash—and that's very astounding. But she'd seen too many women have too many children too young at the drugstore and die too young. And she used to talk about it. She could tell you stories about it, even. And so she was a big believer in Planned Parenthood. And you know, Planned Parenthood just—contraceptions just came out when she was a young woman, or older, even. And so—and of course, Hillary believed in all of those things. And sh—Hillary was very liberal, let's face it. She probably got more conservative as time went on. [03:24:37] But it—she would—they were fun to be with. And Diane Blair was a big part of that.

SL: Now was it Blair when they first got here?

MW: Oh, pardon me.

SL: It was kin . . .

MW: It was Diane Kincaid.

SL: Kincaid.

MW: Yeah.

SL; Yeah.

MW: They weren't married till after he was governor.

SL: Right.

MW: I'm not sure what year they married.

SL; Yeah.

MW: Yeah. I say that out of habit.

SL: [*Laughs*] Well . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . we all do.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: So . . .

[03:25:05] MW: And Hugh was a part of that, too. He—do—I should not leave him out. You know, he liked the politics. He was a progressive thinker. He wanted good things for people. Like they believed in better educational opportunities and all those things.

SL: Hugh Kincaid is who brought me that Buddy Hayes recording we

were . . .

MW: Oh! Was it? Good.

SL: . . . listening to at lunch.

MW: I meant to comment on that. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: That's great. Yeah. Hugh's a wonderful person, isn't he? I see he and Brenda a lot. So. Yeah. They're good friends.

SL: Well, and course, Bill, his son . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . is great guy, too, and . . .

MW: Yeah. They were . . .

SL: Lucky to have Missy and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, it's just small world.

MW: It is a small world, and we're all kind of—I think the Clintons brought a lot of people around them. We're all kind of bound around that . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . that Clinton thing. [*Laughs*]

SL: The Clinton thing.

MW: Yeah, I don't know. What would we call that?

SL: I think The Clinton . . .

MW: The Clinton friendship.

SL: . . . thing is perfect. Clinton friendship.

MW: Clinton friendship. Yeah.

SL: Clinton circle, maybe.

MW: Yeah. Right.

[03:26:09] SL: Okay, so how long after you graduated from college did you stay in Fayetteville?

MW: Oh, gosh, I stayed—graduated from college at twenty-two. I lived here until I was forty-three.

SL: Oh my gosh.

MW: So you know, those were those years I was raising children and being the homeroom mother and doing that kind of thing. So.

SL: So the next place you lived was . . .

[03:26:35] MW: And then from Fayetteville, after I marry—you know, I married Carl. Divorced, married Carl in those years. Met Bill Clinton in those years. And then moved to Jonesboro in [19]78 when Carl was selected as president of ASU, Arkansas State . . .

SL: State.

MW: . . . University. And that was an exciting time. And that was also during the time that—before we went to ASU, Carl was David Pryor's campaign manager for governor. This was the first time David Pryor ever ran for governor. And he asked Carl to

come to Little Rock and run the campaign for him, which he did.

Now have I told you about this?

SL: That's 1974, right?

MW: Yeah. Yes. I think so.

SL: No, you haven't told me this.

MW: Oh, okay. I didn't tell you about making friends with the Overtons and all those people?

SL: Well, you listed . . .

MW: Who—yeah.

SL: . . . a number of . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . folks in that circle and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . how the two circles . . .

MW: Yeah, that's right.

SL: And you got . . .

MW: Well . . .

SL: . . . involved in those circles.

[03:27:34] MW: Anyway, so Carl moved off to Little Rock, so to speak, and I went down a lot, and he came home a lot, of course, when he could. And he ran that campaign, and that was very exciting time. David was without a doubt the most popular

man in the state. And they—he had people falling all over themselves to help him. People would even calling—call him—were calling me wanting to know how to get to Carl so they could offer to help David Pryor. [*SL laughs*] You know. I think—did Faubus run against him? Who ran against him?

SL: Faubus . . .

MW: Faubus did.

SL: . . . did and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: There's a story about that, too, but . . .

[03:28:09] MW: Yes, there is. And then Carl used to go out and speak for David sometimes, you know. And I remember especially—this is so funny. He went to speak in his home county of Van Buren County down on the square in Clinton, Arkansas.

SL: Okay.

MW: And he was standing in—all the—a lot of politicians were speaking. It was a rally. And a lot—and the governor's man was to speak last. That was Carl. Hometown boy. And they were standing on the back of a truck, a big truck. Not too big.

Was really a pickup. And a rainstorm came up, a thunder town came up when Carl was speaking for David. So he just kept right on talking 'cause all the crowd had gotten under—in the stores and under the awnings [*laughs*] on the square. And they put his picture in the paper standing in the rain.

SL: Rain.

MW: And it said something funny about "Loyal to David Pryor to the End" or something funny like that, you know. And we did—it was an exciting campaign. And of course, David won by a large margin, if . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . I remember. And there—people were so happy that he was coming back in office, and they were so glad Barbara was coming back and everything was going along. And they were interested in the three boys. And you know, they were boys, then.

SL: That's right.

MW: They were—I guess they were in grade school, high—junior high. Maybe? I . . .

[03:29:32] SL: Well, they spread—you know, there was three of 'em, and they each had two or three years between each other.

MW: Yeah.

SL: So . . .

MW: But anyway.

SL: Dee was in—I think Dee was in high school and Mark probably was in junior high.

MW: Right.

SL: And Scott was . . .

[03:29:49] MW: And that was the funny, other funny—another funny thing that happened during that campaign. We used to have a little airlines between Fayetteville and Springdale. What was the nam—Skyways, I believe was the name of it.

SL: Skyways or Frontiers.

MW: And Carl would ride that thing back and forth to Little Rock a lot. You know, it was very small plane.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And I remember one time, he got stuck in Little Rock because it was bad weather or something. And so he needed some shirts, some clean shirts. So I called up the airline, and they took his laundry down for me free. [*Laughter*] Isn't that nice?

SL: That's nice.

[03:30:29] MW: And he can—went and sent somebody to the airport, or he went out and picked it up. But during that campaign, also, the see—the state police were very—after he was elected



governor, I became acquainted with a number of people in the state police. And it—they were a high class organization . . .

SL: Yep.

MW: . . . then. A man named Major Tudor, *T-U-D-O-R*, ran it. And he was really good at what he did and all. And I think they were—all of the people who worked for David Pryor like that were devoted to him. He had the ability to draw people to him, and they stayed loyal. Most of 'em. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, he was a great listener.

MW: Yeah. He—that—it—still is. Probably . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . still is.

SL: Yeah.

[03:31:17] MW: You know, and Barbara was fun and added to it. So it was a good time.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And she and Susan Overton are such good friends.

SL: Yes.

MW: Yeah. And . . .

SL: In fact, she was just up here not long ago.

MW: Yeah. And then . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . Susan and I became friends during that time, too.

[03:31:34] SL: Wow.

MW: Yeah. We did not do—and Carl didn't stay but a yee—about a year because he wanted to come back to academia.

SL: So I guess Don Harrell took that spot after . . .

MW: Who did?

SL: Don Harrell, maybe?

MW: Yes, I think he did. Wasn't Don har—is Don Harrell still around?

SL: Yes.

MW: What happened to . . .

SL: Or—yes, I think he's . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . still alive.

MW: Is he?

SL: He lives in New York.

MW: Yeah. He got a wonderful job with TIAA-CREF or someone like that. Yeah. He was a great person, though. [03:32:12] That's another good friend that we made during those years. He was just a wonder . . .

SL: He's always been a great guy.

MW: He was from Camden, wasn't he?

SL: Yes.

MW: And David had such strong ties to Camden . . .

SL: Oh.

MW: . . . for a very, very long time . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . too. [03:32:25] You know, and Elinor—when Elinor, his sister, came home, she—from the East Coast, she went to work—she worked for Carl.

SL: Oh.

MW: She worked at the Coop for many, many years.

SL: Oh. That's so . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . nice.

MW: I think she's still in Little Rock, isn't . . .

SL: She is.

MW: She—yeah.

SL: She is. And actually she is getting to—she and David are spending more time together right now.

MW: Oh, well . . .

SL: Helping Barbara and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know.

MW: Well, good.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah, she's just a lovely person, too.

[03:32:49] SL: She is a good person.

MW: And I remember his mother. We used to go down to Camden. I remember your mother very well. Your mother was very popular with all the high school girls, you know. She was always real nice to everyone and interested in 'em . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . and that kind of thing, so yeah.

[03:33:07] SL: I can remember growing up on Assembly Drive that—I think it was maybe every Tuesday or something. Every Tuesday morning. What—mothers, women would come to our front door. And some of them would still be in their gowns.

MW: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: You know, it'd be early morning.

MW: Yeah.

SL: And they'd sit around, and they'd take turns doing each other's hair.

MW: Oh. [*Laughter*]

SL: Giving each other . . .

MW: Well, that's nice.

SL: . . . permanents.

MW: They were ready for the . . .

SL: And then . . .

MW: . . . new day.

SL: Yeah, and they were gossiping . . .

MW: I love that.

SL: . . . you know, and . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . catching up with everything that was going on. Anyway.

[03:33:39] MW: And during that time, you know, there were also a lot of things going on at the law school. We used to see some of those people. And it was also during this time that Bill and Hillary got married, and they had that wedding reception you've heard about over at the Henry's. And we participated in that. We were there for that. And of course, the Rodhams came and the brothers and all that. And those were fun days. [03:34:03] And then shortly after that—seems like they got married in the early fall, maybe. I can't remember exactly. But Bill Clinton decided to run for the—attorney general. And by this time, Carl had decide—had—was—had been offered the job at ASU, and went over in seven—late [19]78. And Bill Clinton got elected—I guess Bill Clinton went first. He moved to Little Rock about the same time we moved to Jonesboro, I thought. I'm not sure of

the exact dates on that. But anyway, that was an interesting time, too.

[03:34:41] SL: So from Fayetteville, y'all went to Little Rock and this—was thi . . .

MW: No, we went to Jonesboro.

SL; Oh.

MW: And . . .

SL: So when did the Arkansas Electric Cooperative come in?

MW: That came after Jonesboro.

SL: After Jonesboro.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Okay.

[03:34:53] MW: And then Jonesboro was a good situation. It's a good school. It—I made a lot of friends there, like Mel French, who later . . .

SL: I . . .

MW: . . . became . . .

SL: . . . know that name.

MW: Yeah, she became Bill Clinton's ambassador of protocol. You met her? And then you know Harry Truman Moore and Linda Lou were over there, and he's a big Bill Clinton lawyer in that part of the state, and the Robert E. Lee Wilson family down at

Osceola. And the Watkins, Grady and Danette Watkins. I'd gone to school with her and known her up here. And so I m—and Kay and Jim Spencer at Newport, Kaneaster Hodges, all of these people. A lot of those people we connected with again through David Pryor. Like Kay Spencer and Jim Spencer in . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . Newport. Da—were friends of David's and helping him with the campaign. And Carl spoke up there and David—and Kaneaster Hodges was living there then. So you know, all these people—a lot of the same people were involved in campaigns [*laughs*] for Bumpers, Pryor, and Clinton. I re—I think that was the golden years in Arkansas . . .

SL: I don't think there's any . . .

MW: . . . politics.

SL: . . . question about that.

MW: Yeah. Really. And . . .

SL: Really stars.

[03:36:06] MW: And a lot of those people were friends, and so it was a natural thing for them to be together and to work together for the same causes and all. So that was . . .

SL: You know, it's also . . .

MW: . . . an exciting time.

SL: . . . it's also interesting to note that our third congressional congressman, John Paul Hammerschmidt—everyone got along with him.

MW: Yes, he did.

SL: Even . . .

MW: He did.

SL: . . . though sometimes they couldn't count on a vote from him, but . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . there was none of this animosity. There was . . .

MW: No, there . . .

SL: . . . some real honor.

MW: . . . was not. There was not.

SL: Across the aisle.

MW: Yeah.

SL; There was still—you still felt . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . responsible to your folks, you know.

[03:36:42] MW: He beat Carl's old boss, but Carl had left Congressman Trimble by then and was working at the university. He'd gone home and practiced law in Clinton a few years. He didn't like practicing law after he got that law degree at night in



DC.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And so he had gone to work here at the university for Dr.

Mullins. But John Paul ran against his old boss and beat him.

Everyone thought he was sick, and sorr—Carl laughed—used to laugh and say he'd really been sick four years before.

[*Laughter*] Wasn't—he'd gotten over it, you know.

SL: Right. Right.

MW: I'm gonna sneeze, I think.

SL: That's all right.

MW: Hang on. [*Sneezes*] Excuse me. And so anyway.

SL: Well, you know, it . . .

MW: But yeah, John Paul did—he had the ability to get along with all of 'em. Here, what did I do with my Kleenex? I've lost it.

SL: I put it right here. [*Unclear words*]

MW: And . . .

SL: Here, we'll just set it right here.

[03:37:37] MW: Yeah. And they did all get along and do very well together. Yeah. Those—that was a good time. But when we went to Jonesboro, one of the—besides meeting a whole new group of people and interesting people, they had a big investiture for Carl. They wanted to do—kinda spotlight the

school a little more. So we did some different things. We set up a week of scholars, and we brought different speakers in, some from around Arkansas. Like Miller Williams came over. He was a graduate of ASU, and he came and did some classes and read and all that. And then the big highlight—and then Steve Clark came. That's when he was attorney general, you know. And he spoke and maybe did some classes and all. And then—I ge—was it the day of? I guess the day before the investiture may—and we were having parties every night. We had all—Arkansas at that time had only had eight Rhodes scholars. And that included Bill Fulbright. And they were all living, and we asked each one to come, and seven of the eight came. And Gaston Williamson from Little Rock was so funny. He said, "Nobody's paid a bit of attention to me being a Rhodes scholar since I came home [*laughter*] from England and started setting up my own law practice." He was so pleased. And Bill Fulbright came. And that was, of course, a highlight. And he spoke at Carl's investiture, and he did the dinner, the party, all the things. And then—there's some pictures out there of it. [03:39:22] And Bill Clinton was governor, and he spoke too, of course. And Bill Alexander was a congressman from that area. And he was there. And I can't even remem—and Bumpers came. I can't

remember all of 'em now. But it was quite a wonderful gathering. But getting all the Rhodes scholars together was a big deal, and that was fun. It was wonderful to have Bill Fulbright there. [03:39:45] I have a number of letters from him. And when he came back home from arkans—from ASU, he wrote Carl a thank-you letter. And during the course of his talk at the investiture, he had spoken about knowing Carl's grandfather and how proud his grandfather would be of him. And in this letter I brought you, he spoke again about Uncle Tolly. That's Tolliver Whillock, Carl's grandfather. And how proud he would be of his grandson being president of a university, you know, which was so nice. [03:40:19] And the backup story behind that is, what else, a political story. Okay. All the Whillocks, and there used to be a lot of 'em in that—Van Buren County, in those mountains, and they were all kin to one another. Over in Marshall, too. And they were all dem—good Democrats. And so it was in the Depression and Carl's da—grandfather had a job with the Highway Department, and those were hard jobs to get then and welcome jobs to get. You know, they paid well for that day and time. And Carl Bailey was governor, and he announced he was running for I believe it was congress. And so was Bill Fulbright. Well, Carl's grandfather

had already known Bill Fulbright and had committed to him and said he—the Whillocks would back Bill Fulbright. And I've—I hope I'm saying it was Carl Bailey and not Homer Adkins, whoever was governor when Fulbright ran. [03:41:21] And they—the boss came around and told Carl's grandfather, "If you do not change to Carl Bailey, you will lose your job with the Highway Department." And Carl's grandfather said, "I have given my word, and I'm for Bill Fulbright, and I will remain that way." And he got a pink slip his next paycheck.

SL: Golly!

MW: They fired him over it. So I—and Bill Fulbright had never forgotten that, either. Isn't that interesting? [*Laughs*] That doesn't happen anymore either, we hope. Except then they were more blatant about it. They would tell you about it then.

SL: Well, sure.

MW: You know. Say either you be for bi—for Bailey or you . . .

SL: Lose your job.

MW: . . . can't be—yeah. [03:42:04] And then another thing that happened that was so interesting later with Bill Fulbright was when he came to the dedication of Old Main I brought you the picture of. He had—Betty had died, his wife.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And he had remarried to Harriet. And he—it was her first trip to Arkansas or at least to Fayetteville, I'm pretty sure. And so everybody was so pleased to meet her and all. And he—we saw Senator Fulbright, and he was greeting us and saying, "Oh, it's Carl. I'm so glad to see you," all that. "It's been so long." And he turned around. He says, "Harriet, Harriet." She was a few paces away. "Come over here. Come over here. You've got to meet Carl's—Carl Whillock." Said, "His grandfather was for me back when it was hard to be for me." [*Laughter*] And s—and Carl always laughed and said—they never forget that.

SL: That's right.

MW: You know, they—he never forgot that all those years later—just think, this is in the [19]80s. That was in the [19]30s when Fulbright was a young man that his grandfather was for him. So that's interesting.

SL: It is interesting.

[03:43:16] MW: Carl always said all politicians could tell you every precinct they lost and by how many votes. [*Laughs*] I tell you, it's . . .

SL: Yeah. I believe that.

MW: Yeah. But anyway.

SL: I do.

[03:43:27] MW: So but back to Jonesboro. So having Bill Fulbright come for the investiture was really wonderful. Mike Beebe was head of the board at—he was president of the board at Arkansas State then. And we went to Mike and Ginger Beebe's wedding in those days. Isn't that something? *[SL laughs]* And let's see, what else, now. We had a good time in Jonesboro. They had a wonderful house for their president. It'd been in the paper a lot because the last president had spent too much money on it, you know. And so it was a wonderful place to live. And the children had some interesting experiences there. Like one time Larry, my oldest son, who was a big basketball person and all—Eddie Sutton was in his heyday here in Fayetteville, and he used to do a basketball show every Sunday night.

SL: Yes.

MW: And one Sunday or—I for—yeah, it was Sunday or Saturday. They'd taped the show ahead of time. And the phone rang, and it was Eddie Sutton, the basketball coach from Fayetteville. And he said, "Be sure and get my show tonight and have Larry look at it because I'm gonna read the letter he wrote me." And *[laughs]* Eddie Sutton had this huge, gigantic thing full of letters people had written him, you know, and they would spin 'em around, and he'd spread 'em out on the table, and they'd pick

one out. And they really just did it, I think. And by golly if he didn't pick out Larry Carter's phone—letter, and Larry asked him some question about basketball. And down at the bottom of it, he'd written, "Carl Whillock is my dad." [*Laughter*] And so that was kind of a fun time. And Ben was a little boy then and big in Cub Scouts. And Sallie was sti—in Fayetteville. She was married by then in architecture school. And Jenny and Melissa were in Fayetteville in school.

[03:45:23] SL: So Sallie married one of the Starrs, didn't she?

MW: Yes, her . . .

SL: David.

MW: . . . first husband was David Starr.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He's a musician.

SL: He is.

MW: He had a band.

SL: And he's . . .

MW: He still does. Yeah.

SL: . . . doing fairly well right now.

MW: Yeah, he is. He's out in Colorado, you know. He is the father of my oldest grandchild, Rachel.

SL: And—who rented from me.

MW: Yeah, that's right. [*Laughter*] She was your tenant.

SL: That's . . .

MW: That's right. That's right.

[03:45:47] SL: And she was great.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Well, good. She has two little boys. Did Sallie tell you?

SL: Yes. She did.

MW: They are darling. They are so cute. You know, we love—it's wonderful having them around.

SL: I think she was still in architecture school when she was renting.

MW: Rachel?

SL: Uh-huh.

MW: Now, she went to interior design. She did not . . .

SL: Oh.

MW: . . . go to architecture. But.

SL: Oh. Well, maybe . . .

MW: Yeah. She—I—yeah . . .

SL: . . . I'm gettin' that confused . . .

MW: . . . she was in school. I'm . . .

SL: . . . with—yeah.

MW: . . . pretty sure.



SL: Yeah.

[03:46:13] MW: I remember that house when she rented over there and all. They were fixing it up one time when I was there, she and some friends were. That is the funniest story about living in Fayetteville I forgot to tell you. Okay. When we lived in Fayetteville, we lived in this big old house over on Prospect Street the first year we were married. And the girls—Sallie was always in—had an inclination for architecture, decorating, that kind of thing. And Melissa, the youngest daughter, went off to camp. She went to—I've forgotten what ca—kind of camp. Down at Hot Springs. And she was gonna be gone two weeks. Well, she had wanted her room fixed up, so Jenny and Melissa and Larry decided they'd fix up her room. And I—they asked me the—I—they could decorate it, and I said sure. I mean, it was an old house, you know. And I wasn't that picky about the upstairs anyway for sure. It needed a lot done to it. And so they decided they would wallpaper her room and fix it up. New wallpaper. They went to the store, and they bought wallpaper. Her favorite color was lavender. It had lavender flowers in it, and a trellis. You know, trellises supposed to go up and down?

SL: Right.

[03:47:25] MW: When they got . . .

SL: Oh, no.

MW: . . . all of the wallpaper on, the trellis went this way [*laughs*]  
instead. It was so funny. And then there were sort of green,  
lime green leaves in the . . .

SL: Foliage.

MW: . . . design of the lavender flowers. And so they bought lavender  
curtains and painted the windows all lime green. [*Laughter*]  
And—to surprise Melissa when she came home. And she loved  
it. [*SL laughs*] And they all loved it, too. Isn't . . .

SL: That's funny.

MW: . . . that funny? We knew we were selling that house soon. I  
bet people rolled their eyes at those lime green things. But  
anyway.

SL: Sideways wallpaper.

MW: Yeah. We got off the track, there.

SL: No, that was fun.

MW: Where were we? We were . . .

SL: Well, we've . . .

MW: . . . right at . . .

SL: We've been talking.

[03:48:06] MW: Oh, we're in Jonesboro.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: We've gotten to Jonesboro.

MW: Yes. Yes. Yeah.

SL: So let's see.

[03:48:15] MW: And it—you know, I haven't listed much about my six children for you. But we'll do that at some point, I'm sure.

SL: Yeah. I mean, we can talk about 'em any time. I usually make sure we get that in so . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: Ordinarily—historically the kids don't come in until toward the end of the interview.

MW: Okay.

SL: But . . .

MW: Good. We'll put that off till then.

SL: Well, we can put that in any time you want to.

MW: Yeah. Well, we'll put that . . .

SL: In fact . . .

MW: . . . in later.

SL: . . . it might not be—it might be a good idea to start—di—now were all the kids born in Fayetteville?

MW: All my children were born here in Fayetteville, yes.

SL: Okay.

[03:48:54] MW: They were all delivered by Dr. Jim Mashburn. I'm  
sure you remember . . .

SL: Jim Mashburn. Of course.

MW: You probably went to school with . . .

SL: Barbara Mashburn and . . .

MW: . . . some of the Mashburn boys.

SL: Yes.

MW: Yeah.

SL: What was his son's name—he was a year older than me.

MW: Mike . . .

SL: Mike.

MW: . . . was one of 'em. Maybe.

SL: No. Who was the other one? There was another . . .

MW: I don't know.

SL: . . . Mashburn.

MW: There are several of 'em . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . around. Yeah.

[03:49:15] SL: Yeah. Jim Mashburn. He didn't deliver me, but  
Jim—Dr. Patrick did.

MW: Oh yeah.

SL: Jim Patrick did, but . . .

MW: Okay.

SL: The old city hospital.

MW: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Yeah. [03:49:31] So which house on Prospect was it?  
Was it the big, white one?

MW: Yes, with the columns . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . out front.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. It's still there.

SL: Yeah. Carla Tyson bought that house at one point.

MW: It had belonged to the Woodruffs at one time . . .

SL: I think that sounds right.

MW: Who else did you say bought it?

SL: Carla Tyson bought it . . .

MW: Oh, did she?

SL: . . . at one point.

MW: I didn't—I did not know that of course.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah. But . . .

[03:49:52] SL: Did you ever drive by it when they had the big  
Russian pig that . . .

MW: No, I missed that.

SL: There was a pig that sat out on the—laid out on the front porch all the time.

MW: You know, I may have seen that. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I may have. But not much. I didn't ev—you know, that's kinda off the beaten path . . .

SL: It is.

MW: . . . you know. But my children all went to Washington School, which they loved. So.

SL: Me, too.

MW: Yeah. And Melissa's still got a ton of friends here, my third daughter, Melissa. There's still people like Karen Cunningham and Carla Carl and just a whole lot of her friends are still around. Isn't that interesting?

SL: It is.

[03:50:33] MW: Yeah. It is. And Jenny has, too, but really Melissa does. We've—maybe we should get to the children after we do the rest of it.

SL: Okay. All right.

MW: Yeah.

SL: We'll do that. [03:50:42] All right, so how long were you all in Jonesboro?

MW: Not long at all. We only stayed about two and a half years to tell you the truth. Yeah. But it was a good time. And then Carl had this chance for an advancement. And you know, he was looking at putting all my children through school. [*SL laughs*] And it was a big raise in pay. So we went to Little Rock, where he managed the electric co-ops for sixteen years. And you know, the co-ops were—are big in Arkansas. I think they're the—they used to be the third largest utility. I'm sure they still are. The co-ops started out rural, but like, for instance the mall here is on the electric co-op lines.

SL: Is that right?

MW: Yeah. And that's happened all over the state as it has grown. And the co-ops are in forty-seven states, and Arkansas had one of the largest in the country.

[03:51:36] SL: So are all the elective—electric co-ops in Arkansas—do they all—are they all part of Arkansas Electric Co-op?

MW: Yes. Or at least they used to be. I'm sure . . .

SL: 'Cause there's the Ozark . . .

MW: . . . they still are.

SL: Ozark was a . . .

MW: Like there's Ozarks Electric, there's . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . First Electric, there's—I can't think of all of 'em now. They had a—I hate to say how many offices statewide. But one up at Salem, for example. And the one here. The wu—they have one out at Jacksonville. One down in southern arkans—East Arkansas—what—no. Is that east? El Dorado, that area.

SL: It's so interesting that the mall is on that.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Meter.

MW: Well, it used to be out in the country.

SL: Well, of course it did.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[03:52:24] MW: See, the major utilities like the AP&Ls and the Southwest Electrics would not go to the country. They didn't wanna run their m—lines out in the country because they could not make a profit. They said it was t—the telepho—the electric poles were too far apart. So that's why FDR set up the electric co-ops, to bring the electricity to people who lived in those rural areas where it cost a lot of money to run the line.



SL: So it provided a subsidy.

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: To them.

MW: Yeah. Yeah. And course that changed over the years. But when the co-ops were fifty years old, Carl was head of their national group. And so they were having a celebration. And they—he t—they went to Warren Springs, Georgia, where FDR had spent so much of his time and had signed one of the co-op bills or whatever, and they had David Roosevelt, who—did you ever know David Roosevelt, FDR's son that lived in Little Rock?

SL: Huh-uh.

MW: For a while? Well, Carl got him to come and speak on his grandfather's behalf. So that was kinda nice . . .

SL: Well, that was nice.

MW: . . . wasn't it?

SL: Yeah.

MW: That was. That was. Yeah.

SL: It was really nice. [03:53:38] So FDR had—what—did he have spinal problems and . . .

MW: FDR could not walk.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He had polio as . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . a child.

SL: And so he went to the . . .

MW: Or not a child. Wait. He was like thirty-some-odd years old.

SL; When that . . .

MW: You know.

SL: . . . struck him.

MW: And no, he could not walk at all . . .

SL: So . . .

MW: . . . without help. But you know, that was such a different world. Do you know they kept that from the rest of the country. [03:54:03] I know a man in Little Rock. He's passed away recently, but when he was nineteen years old, the president came to San Antonio, Texas. And he was in the National Guard. And they had the National Guard go to the train station where the president's train was coming in. And he was coming to speak off the back of the train. And my friend said as a nineteen-year-old, he was utterly shocked when he realized the president had to have someone on each side of him to walk. They never did show him walking with a cane or walking in any other way, but his sons used to do it a lot for him. But he said it was so shocking. He said, "I realized that there was something

wrong that he could not walk." But he said, "Nobody had ever said that. It'd never been in the paper." And he'd been president a number of years.

[03:54:59] SL: Well, I guess they felt like he would be considered weaker or somehow or nother . . .

MW: Or it affected his mind or something.

SL: Right.

MW: I don't know. I don't know.

SL: Right. Yeah.

MW: Interesting.

SL: Yeah, they were so—you know, that's a—yeah, the view back then, I think, was that if you were disabled in any way . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . you really weren't a candidate.

MW: You couldn't do a job.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I think so, too.

SL: Yeah. There was something wrong.

MW: Yeah. That's right.

SL: You wouldn't fit, you know. [03:55:35] Well, so two years or so

in Jonesboro and the . . .

MW: Yes.

SL: . . . Arkansas Electric Cooperative . . .

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . raises its head and . . .

MW: Yeah. And that was when—that was the summer that we moved to Little Rock. When Bill Clinton ran for governor and lost. And I worked in that first campaign. I brought you a picture of my— with the campaign people. Mack McLarty was in it. Dick Herget ran it. And they would not—you know, my brother, Rudy, had run his campaign for governor and then run the r—governor's office. And I—you know how people get these things in their mind. So they did—someone said, "We cannot have a cross between the governor's office and the campaign," so they would not let Rudy come to the campaign to work on it until the last week of the campaign when he lost. And Rudy saw it comin'. He told me he was gonna lose. He's the only person I knew that saw it coming. But I'm sure there were others, but I didn't talk to any of 'em. Anyway.

SL: You think that was . . .

[03:56:42] MW: Frank White just, you know—go ahead.

SL: Do you think that was because Bill was not sensitive enough with

the legislature?

MW: I think a . . .

SL: That they . . .

MW: . . . number of things entered into it. You remember that's the summer the missile blew up, so to speak down . . .

SL: Damascus.

MW: It's the time when—I also did a lot of volunteer work in the governor's office that—before that. And it's the time when Jimmy Carter sent the Cubans to Fort Chaffee.

SL: Oh yeah.

MW: And oh my gosh, people were upset about that. They were upset aba—everybody was scared to death the missile thing. I remember well when that happened and Rudy calling us.

[03:57:27] And then—okay, and then Bill Clinton had raised the car tags, the price on car tags. I'm tellin' you, everyone was furious . . .

SL: They were fuming . . .

MW: . . . about it.

SL: . . . about that. Yeah.

MW: And then Hillary had not taken his name. Do you remember that?

SL: Hillary Rodham. Yeah.

MW: That was a big consternation.

SL; Yeah.

MW: Oh my gosh. People cared about that. And [*SL laughs*] I can't think of what the fifth thing was. [03:57:55] But I personally—I knew da—we knew Frank White. He was a good friend because he was in David Pryor's cabinet. Do you remember that?

SL: I think I do remember that.

MW: Frank White was David Pryor's economic development person, I believe. You ask David Pryor. And that's where we met him. And he was just going out with Gay then. And they got married while Carl worked in the governor's office. And we were—went to their wedding, and we were all great friends and—you know, then. And when they had their twentieth wedding anniversary, we went and all. And Frank was a great guy in many ways, you know. He just got off the track. [*Laughs*]

[03:58:39] SL: Well, but he kinda . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . helped put Bill Clinton back on it.

MW: Yeah, he did. He did. He did. And I remember I said to someone very close to the governor that Frank White was very competitive, and he always wanted to win, no matter if you're just playin' go fishin', he wanted to win. And he won.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And he did a good campaign.

SL: Yeah.

MW: You know. So anyway. That was an interesting time.

[03:59:10] SL: So were you all involved at all with Bill on that campaign?

MW: Well, Bill was attorney—you mean Bill . . .

SL: I mean . . .

MW: . . . Clinton?

SL: Well . . .

MW: And . . .

SL: Bill got elected.

MW: Was—yeah.

SL: And then he lost . . .

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: . . . the reelection and then he got reelected, right?

MW: Yeah. Yes. And we were . . .

SL: So . . .

MW: . . . involved in his comeback, I call it, sure.

SL: In the comeback.

MW: Yeah. [03:59:33] But not as much as the one where he's losing for me. 'Cause I actually worked on the staff and had my

picture in the paper as being part of his staff and all in an ad. But that was all right. It was an interesting time. And we met people all over the state. Oh my gosh. You know. A lot of people from West Memphis gave a lot of support to Bill Clinton. You don't hear much about West Memphis up here.

SL: We don't, but like I say, I am spending a lot of time over in the Delta.

MW: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: So I'm a little bit more aware of . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . of that world over there.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Not so much West Memphis. More south of Memphis.

MW: Right.

SL: But . . .

MW: Yeah.

[04:00:17] SL: Anyway, so what happened with Arkansas Electric Cooperative? I mean, did—under Carl's leadership, did it . . .

MW: It thrived.

SL: It thrived. [*MW laughs*]

MW: A lot of people did not know they were really having a little trouble there, and he put them on the track, and he—also he



saw that they built a lot of—not a lot, but a number of hydro dams where they were doing—needed. And he did leverage leasing projects with big companies out of New York that saved the people money. And his invest—his, you know, what—people on his co-op lines money and—anyway, you'll have to get Bob—you know Bob Liffert? He can give you all those stories [*laughs*] about what he did . . .

SL: I don't . . .

MW: . . . for the co-op.

SL: . . . know him, but I'll—that would be an interesting story to get.

MW: Well, it is. It is. The things they did in all those years. But anyway. And it—living in Little Rock—we liked it. People—we lived there thirty-seven years, really.

SL: Wow.

MW: That's a—except—well, thirty-three. Four years were spent in Washington . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . of that time. But you know, I did a lot of things in those days. I did a lot with the art center. I was Tabriz chairman. Carl—we did a lot of civic work. We were involved in several things the Clintons were doing like trying to get a "I Have A Dream" Foundation started here, which we never really got off

the ground like it should've been. But anyway. [04:02:01] I was on the Vo-Tech board with Mack McLarty. I was on the Martin Luther King commission. All these things—Bill Clinton would call up and get—talk me into doing. [Laughter] We did a lot of—you know, we'd do a lot of parties and fund-raisers 'cause we enjoyed cam—people having people in. And then I took a job with Betty Bumpers, you know, during those years. And I had not been—I'd been out of the work force for quite a while. And I took a job with Betty Bumpers. Ben was—what was he? I guess he was a freshman at Catholic High, and he was the youngest. And Brennan was at Cole High, a junior. And the other kids were all in college or out. And so I became the statewide director of Betty Bumpers Peace Links. Do you remember that?

SL: Absolutely.

MW: Oh my gosh, what—that was pure entertainment. I love that woman. She is fabulous. If she had lived in a different day and age, she would've run her own Fortune 500 company [laughs], you know. She was a product of her generation and her upbringing. She's the one that used to say she was the Methodist Sunday school girl. Betty was so smart and capable. She could get things done. She could talk sense to people, and you could just see them coming to her side, you know.

[04:03:32] And she was against nuclear war. I never say that word right. Say it for me, Scott.

SL: Nuclear?

MW: Say it.

SL: Nuclear?

MW: Nuclear war. She was against nuclear war. And—did I say it right?

SL: I don't know.

MW: I never quite get it.

SL: [*Laughs*] It's all right.

MW: But anyway. And I used to laugh and say I never knew there were so many people for war until I joined Peace Links. You would be amazed back then. Now this was in the early [19]80s—how many people just thought it was terrible to be working for peace organization. My children all thought I was gonna get mugged. [*SL laughs*] I used to go campaign with Gloria Cabe down in parts of Little Rock that weren't as affluent, maybe, as ours, and my daughter Jenny and my daughter Melissa always say, "Mom, you are gonna get mugged down there. You are gonna get [*laughs*] mugged down there, you know." And we were both for world peace. And I—like I said, I never knew so many people were against world peace. You'd

just be amazed at that. [04:04:31] And one time we got a grant from the—was it—it was from the Murphy family foundation. I've forgotten the name of it then. And we were putting on a play about world peace for children. It was a children's play. It'd been written with that in mind down at the Arkansas Art Center. And we were also doing it in four other schools across the state, these plays, and we were having—we had lessons plans for the teachers about conflict resolution and that kind of thing. I want you to know when the—we—the night the play opened at the Art Center, it was to run four or five nights. We had a—we had people came—they came out, they picketed, they said we were Communists. I mean, it just was amazing. They had all this church group there talking about all these Communists putting on a play for world peace. I was just amazed by the whole thing. I had to talk to the TV cameras and explain, "This is a children's play. This"—you know. [Laughs] Isn't that interesting?

[04:05:36] SL: It is. You know, do you think it was a backlash against the peace movement at all and . . .

MW: Probably.

SL: . . . the images of . . .

MW: I don't know. Yeah.

SL: . . . of peace was basically not just a passivist, but it was more of a hippy . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . thing, you know. And . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I can see how, you know, an older generation or two . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . would look down upon that.

MW: May—yeah.

SL: I would think that you'd probably run into more flak in the affluent neighborhoods or the middle-class neighborhoods, not so much the lower . . .

MW: Well, I think we had it there, too.

SL: Yeah.

MW: I know we did, but they didn't get out and picket. [*Laughs*]

SL: Right.

MW: You know, they weren't so active . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . or so vocal. [04:06:17] And I re—know there was a funny story about Dale Bumpers was speaking at some little town, I don't know, down around Chariton or someplace, and someone shouted out from the back of the crowd and said, "Well, with

your wife bein' with that Peace Links, how do you think that's gonna affect your chance to get reelected?" And Dale Bumpers, always the best with the quick wit, popped back and said, "Well," he said, "I think people that are for war and for whooping cough will not vote for me." [*SL laughs*] Because you member Betty did the . . .

SL: Did the s . . .

MW: . . . immunization . . .

SL: Absolutely.

MW: . . . program?

SL: Yes.

MW: And she was so well known for her immunization program and her work with Peace Links. And on the East Coast in Pennsylvania, Washington, New York, she had a great following of women who supported her and helped her. And she certainly did in Arkansas, too. And we used to do a lot of activities across Arkansas. And I loved being with her. It—she was lots of fun. Like I said, she was smart and capable and didn't suffer fools gladly. And we'd drive around the state. And then one time I helped the national Peace Links office out of DC put on an event up there, and she brought thirty-six women from the Soviet Union to Washington. Have you heard of—this was . . .

SL: Yes.

MW: . . . a big deal.

SL: Big deal.

MW: People were . . .

[04:07:43] SL: Jocelyn Carter was also . . .

MW: Yes. Yeah.

SL: . . . involved.

MW: That—she got—yeah. That she got people to do—let that happen, so to speak. And we had all these activities for this—these women. And it was really touching. It was touching. Like we took these women—they wanted to see an American grocery store. Which you know—we took 'em to like a Safeway, you know.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And they—some of them actually cried they were so overcome at seeing so much food and such a selection of fresh fruit in the winter.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And we don't know that. [04:08:21] And then when I was a little girl in Fort Smith at the end of the war, every year in our art class close to Christmas, we would get cigar boxes and fill up the cigar box with things to send to children in war-torn

countries, you know . . .

SL: I remember that.

MW: . . . toothpaste, toothbrushes, little toys, a book, that kind of thing.

SL: Yeah.

MW: And I remem—I used to always think, "I wonder if the kids ever got these. I wonder if the kids ever got these." And this woman from Leningrad, which is St. Petersburg now, got up and spoke and told about how they were surrounded by the Germans for over a year and a half and no one could get in or out of St. Petersburg and that her father, her mother, her sister starved to death.

SL: Oh!

MW: And she did not know how she survived. She was the younger one. And she did. And she was in an orphanage in St. Petersburg. And this little box came full, and it had candy in it, you know, chocolate. And it had all these little things in it, and she was so moved.

SL: Well.

MW: And you always wonder what—you know. So I was always glad she spoke. It was very moving, and I was always glad to know that those items did get to the right people. But . . .



SL: And it meant as much to all of them, probably.

[04:09:49] MW: Yeah. I know. But anyway. And so working for Betty was a wonderful, wonderful . . .

SL: You know . . .

MW: . . . time.

SL: . . . did she have any funny stories or good stories?

MW: Oh, yes, she had a million of 'em about her family. You know, she was very close to Bequita and Archie's mother was—what was ar—was Archie's mother Margaret?

SL: That sounds right.

MW: Yeah. Yeah, or was that da—Dale's sister was named Margaret, I think. The one up in Ohio. But anyway, and I can't think of Archie's mother's name. I used to know her. Any—she would laugh and talk about her sisters and growing up in Charleston and about running the nursing home and her dad. She was very close to her father and all. And you know the story, of course, the senator's family, Dale Bumpers fam—parents were killed in a car wreck. Both of 'em were when he was—I think they were just married. I'm not sure. And . . .

SL: It was . . .

MW: . . . of course that was . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . a very . . .

SL: That sounds right.

MW: . . . moving moment for him, too. [04:10:58] And they were sweethearts in high school, and then he went to Northwestern for a while. And why can I not remember right now where Betty went to school? I'm drawing a blank.

SL: Me, too.

MW: But then when he came home from the war, they married after that. So it was that typical story that I think you hear and all. I think it was a few years—it wasn't right away. But, anyway. And we met a lot of wonderful people through them, too, like the Jessons that I've spoken of earlier. What else can I tell you about Betty Bumpers.

SL: Well . . .

MW: Gosh.

SL: There w . . .

[04:11:41] MW: Oh, and someone—one of the senators on the floor of the US Senate condemned Betty Bumpers. Did you ever know that?

SL: I think I . . .

MW: I oughta call up Brooke and ask her who that was. [*Laughs*]

SL: I think I did hear that. See that.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: That's been a . . .

MW: Yeah. Very.

SL: That's been quite a while . . .

MW: While ago.

SL: . . . back, but I'm kinda . . .

MW: A long time ago.

SL: Yeah, I kinda remember that.

MW: But I enjoyed my time with her very much. Very much.

[04:12:12] I met people there like—oh, I met Pamela Harriman.

Do you know who she is?

SL: Pam Harriman?

MW: Through Betty Bumpers, you know.

SL: Yeah.

MW: She was Winston Churchill's daughter-in-law. When she was young . . .

SL: Oh.

MW: . . . she married his son. And life played on, and she was Averell Harriman's wife at the—you know, when he died. And Bill Clinton appointed her ambassador to France. And she died in that position very unexpectedly.

SL: Oh.

MW: And anyway, I met—but she was fascinating to meet. I've read a lot of books about her since I met her. She was a beautiful woman and impeccably groomed and all. [04:12:50] And then Betty had people like Pamela Harriman, Theresa Heinz, who is Heinz Ketchup, you know. And now married to John Kerry . . .

SL: Yeah.

MW: . . . was one of her big supporters, too. And so I met—I was around some interesting women and met interesting people with her.

SL: Well, birds of a feather.

MW: Oh, well, I don't know about that but . . .

SL: No, I mean, I—there's no question that all these folks that we've been talking about—all the women are very strong women and . . .

MW: Oh yeah. Oh, that's true.

SL: . . . hold their own.

MW: Yeah. That's right.

[04:13:27] SL: So what do you think—here's a question about Carl. What do you think he enjoyed most as far as his career goes? I mean, I'm not really asking . . .

MW: Yeah. Oh . . .

SL: . . . to—for . . .

MW: Well, I think he enjoyed . . .

SL: . . . a favorite pers . . .

MW: . . . academia the most. Yeah.

SL: You do?

MW: Yeah. I do. He really enjoyed it. He enjoyed the people he encountered and that kind of thing. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, the consequences weren't so . . .

MW: But he ah—he had a great ability to be—he said—Sallie, my daughter, said something about him the other day—said, "Carl always said you could make up your mind to be happy, and you will be happy." He had a great ability to be happy or content wherever life placed him.

SL: That's a great gift.

MW: That is . . .

SL: To have.

MW: . . . a gift.

SL: Yeah.

MW: Isn't it?

SL: Yeah.

MW: Yeah.

SL: It is.

MW: And try not to have—you know, don't have many regrets or loo—

you can't look back too much.

SL: Well . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's kind of a take-charge . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . attitude, too. You're—of your life.

MW: That's right.

SL: It is yours.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[04:14:35] MW: And of course he—you know, all the political things were fun for him. He'd grown up in a political family, so that was . . .

SL: Well, I know that [*MW laughs*], you know, part of the reason why we're even here is how Barbara and David, and this is true of all those candidates at that time—they loved doing what they were doing.

MW: They did.

SL: And it really involved going around the state and listening . . .

MW: To people.

SL: . . . to the stories . . .

MW: Yeah. Yeah. It did.

SL: . . . to understand what it is that these folks need or what . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . interests them, or what would make it better for them. And so yeah, there is something—and you know, in some ways the Pryor Center is kinda like that in that we . . .

MW: Yeah. You get . . .

SL: . . . are gathering . . .

MW: You—and . . .

SL: . . . stories . . .

MW: That's right.

SL: . . . and starting to see the importance . . .

MW: Right.

SL: . . . of those stories.

MW: Right.

SL: And what they teach us. So . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . I can understand the life or the attraction of public service back then.

MW: Sure.

SL: 'Cause that's kinda . . .

MW: Yeah.

SL: . . . what it was about. And it doesn't seem to be that way

anymore. I'm not . . .

MW: No, it doesn't.

SL: . . . sure what it's about anymore.

[04:15:48] MW: And you know, you asked who Carl—the job he liked the most, and the person—he dearly loved his congressman, Jim Trimble. He thought he was one of the finest men he'd ever known. And just very upstanding character. Carl always said he was gonna write a book about him. And he had the title picked out. The title was to be “The Last Congressman to Die Poor.”  
[*Laughter*] Don't you love that? And . . .

SL: I do love that.

MW: . . . you know, he was from over at Berryville, and he came from a family of sharecroppers. And he's another person that decided he wanted to go to the university in Fayetteville. And he told his father that, also. And his father said, well, they would try to manage without him for one season, you know, without him working on the farm.

SL: Right.

MW: And he got on a train in Carroll County and rode the train to Missouri, traded trains, and got another train and rode down to Fayetteville. And he told Carl when he got off of the train at—in Fayetteville, the station still there today, that everything he



owned he had in a pillowcase he was carryin'.

SL: Oh.

[04:17:10] MW: And he started walking up the hill to Old Main, and he could not believe it. He thought it was the largest building in the world. *[Laughter]*

SL: It does sit proudly on that hill, doesn't it?

MW: I know it. Don't you love that?

SL: I do. I do love that.

MW: And when—and he went up, and he talked to the president of the university. I used to know who it was—who gave him a job as a janitor. And he worked as a janitor for many years. And— or not many, you know. He worked for janitor a number of years and lived in Old Main. Then you lived in Old Main. And . . .

SL: Wow.

MW: . . . got a degree. And ended up in congress. I think that's a great American . . .

SL: It's a great . . .

MW: . . . story.

SL: . . . story.

MW: Yeah. It is.

[04:17:55] SL: It is. Now where was he from?

MW: Berryville.

SL: Berryville.

MW: Yeah.

SL: Wow. Now did he have the eyepatch?

MW: He had a bad eye.

SL: Yeah.

MW: He'd had an eye shot with a BB gun when he was . . .

SL: Right.

MW: . . . a boy.

SL: Right.

MW: Yeah.

SL: I member that.

MW: He did. But I could tell you stories all day that Carl used to tell me Mr. Trimble told him about different people [*laughs*] across the mountains, you know, the funny things that would . . .

SL: Well, let's hear a few of 'em.

MW: . . . happen.

SL: If you can . . .

MW: Oh . . .

SL: . . . conjure them up.

[04:18:25] MW: Lemme think. Okay.

SL: 'Cause I don't think we have anything about Congressman Trimble.

MW: Oh, isn't that—it's too bad. He—Arkansas Tech had asked for his papers. I think it was Arkansas Tech. And Carl was so sorry. He—you know, he'd left him by then.

SL: Right.

MW: And he did end up giving, I think it was all of his papers to Arkansas Tech when he'd gone to school here. Someone did a paper on him some years back or a booklet, a dissertation for a Ph.D., and they did interview Carl about him. Ellen Shipley would know who to tell us that was . . .

SL: Okay.

MW: . . . and all. But the—one of the big stories is, you know, there used to be a big feud in Searcy County. Do you know about the big feud that went on there?

SL: Hm-mm.

[04:19:17] MW: Oh, it was a really big one. And I—it took—it was still going on in recent [*laughs*]*—*in the last twenty-five years ago at least. What were the name of the two families? I can't remember right now. I know someone that could tell us. But Mr. Trimble used to talk about that feud and how they just never could come together and how they would kill one another off and quit for a generation or two, and they'd take it back up again.

SL: Oh my God.

MW: Isn't that awful? I know. Mmm.

SL: A real feud.

MW: Yeah, a real feud.

SL: Not a . . .

MW: Not a fussing one.

SL: In word only.

MW: Not a fussing one, no.

SL: Right. Right.

MW: No. No.

SL: Wow.

[04:20:01] MW: And Carl's mother could—grew up in Searcy County, and she could remember as a child going to town and having her parents to tell her to get down in the wagon, that the feud was going on, they thought. [*Laughs*] That's . . .

SL: Hillbilly mob . . .

MW: . . . pretty amazing.

SL: . . . I guess, or something.

MW: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: That's funny.

MW: Yeah. But anyway.

SL: Not funny, but it's . . .

MW: It's interesting.

SL: It's kinda strange, isn't it?

MW: Yeah.

SM: Hey, Scott, I just wanted to let you know we're over an hour now.

SL: Okay. Well, we'll take—we'll stand up and walk around a little bit.

[End of interview 04:20:36]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]