

ARKANSAS EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS COUNCIL

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Official transcript of:

Janice Bell

Member Oak Prairie Extension Homemakers Club in Prairie County

Original recording made 16 December 2011

at Lonoke, Arkansas

Recorded, transcribed and edited by:

Alves Bonner

Member Busy Hands Extension Homemakers Club in Prairie County





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Oral History Program

Alves Bonner, Member of Busy Hands Extension Homemakers Club in Prairie County

December 16, 2011

This is an audio recording of Janice Bell, member of the Oak Prairie Extension Homemakers Club in Prairie County. This interview is part of an Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program, and Janice is answering questions asked by Busy Hands Extension Homemakers Club in Prairie County Member, Alves Bonner.

Questions and comments by Alves are in boldface type; Janice's responses and comments are in lightface type.

**I am Alves Bonner, and I'm interviewing Janice Bell. This interview is being held at the Lonoke County Extension Office in Lonoke, Arkansas, County Lonoke, on December 16, 2011.**

**The audio recordings and transcript of this interview will be donated to the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas.**

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**Would you please state your name and spell your name and indicate that you are willing to give the Pryor Center permission to make the audio file and transcript available to others?**

I am Janice Bell, J-A-N-I-C E, B-E-L-L, from Prairie County Extension Homemakers.

**Thank you. Will you give your permission to make the audio and for it to be filed and transcript available to others?**

I do give my per—permission, yes, to have it on—on file.

**What has been your association with the Extension Homemakers Program been like?**

It has been very good for me. I have done a lot of things that I'm sure I would not have been able to do if I had not been a member of Extension Homemakers all these years.

**How did you learn about the Extension Homemakers Program?**

My mother was member of the Extension Homemakers Program, and I went to the meetings with her when I was small. So I have been it for a long time.

**How did you become associated with the program? When did you join? How old were you?**

I was 20 when I joined. I married in 1950 and I joined the Extension Homemakers Program in 1950, in January 1951 and I have been a member ever since.

**What was the first club that you were associated with and, of course, you've already told me what year, but what was the name of the club?**

It was the Oak Prairie Extension Homemakers Club and I still belong to the same club.

**OK. And, of course, this is in Prairie County.**

Yes, ma'am.

**OK. And do you have any special remembrances of that first meeting or that first club? Oak Prairie.**

No, ma'am, I don't remember the first one I went to because it's been a long time so I just don't remember. But I just always enjoyed being with the Homemakers Club.

**Right. Well, do you have any special remembrances about why you may have joined Extension Homemakers?**

Mainly because I like to learn new things and wanted to learn some different things, and I thought they were gonna help me learn some new things.

**Right, and that is why you continued in Extension Homemakers? Right?**

Yes, ma'am. I've just enjoyed it every year that I have been in it.

**While you've been a member, share with us the, maybe the offices, and committee chairmanships and some of the special responsibilities that you held?**

As the county officer, I have been president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. And, then in my local club—club, I have been all these officers, too, as time has gone by.

**Tell me about attending state Council meetings. How many years have you been and do you have any special remembrances that you could share with us?**

When I first started going to the state meetings, I was, of course, very young and my husband would drive a car load of women. And he would stay in the motel and we would stay at the campus of whatever college we were going to. And we just enjoyed visiting with all the different people and listening to programs that they had for us. There was a lot of things we learned over the years.

**Have you got any special remembrances of how Homemakers has touched your life? Of course, it was with your mother that you first started going. That would be a very good remembrance.**

Yes, I—I started going with my mother and then she and I would go to the same club after I became a member.

**Yes.**

So we belonged to the same club for a number of years.

**Do you have a favorite event or activity about Extension Homemakers?**

Not, not really. Except I enjoy the county Council meetings that we have twice a year in our county. And seeing the other women of the county and renewing friendships each time we would have a meeting.

**Do you have any—noticed changes that you've experienced over these many years as Extension Homemaker?**

There has been a lot of changes as equipment and things have gotten better. Of course, it's gotten easier in some ways for the clubs and other ways it's gotten harder because they have to fill out more forms and questionnaires and so on. But, it's just—it's been a fun time for me.

**Is there anything particular that Extension Homemakers has taught you about people and other homemakers?**

Yes, I have learned there's a lot of different people—or personalities, I guess, but—and you have to—you can't treat everyone alike because each one has a different personality so you have to kinda [kind of] learn their personalities and know what to expect from them and how to treat them.

**Is there anything in particular that you'd like to share about Extension Homemakers at this time? How about the future of Homemakers? Do you think we might try to welcome more people—young people into Extension Homemakers as you were a young homemaker when you started out?**

I do wish we could get more young people into Extension. I know that most of the mothers nowadays have to work for—to support the family. They did not work near as much when I first started. I was a stay-at-home mother and so that meant I could go to the club meetings. But a lot of them can't now, go to the meetings. So I—but I sure wish there were more younger people coming in because we're not getting to the younger mothers coming into the EH Clubs.

**Well, Janice, we certainly do thank you for all your contributions to Extension Homemakers and for you sharing your memories of them with**

**us. Have you got anything else that you would particularly like to say at this time?**

The only thing I can say I have certainly enjoyed every year that I have been in the Extension Club. And like I said before, there's a lot of things that I have learned and had contact with that I am sure I would not have if I had not been an Extension Homemaker Club member.

**Well, we appreciate all that you have done with your sharing of your time and your talents with everybody and Extension Homemakers. And, thank you for today.**

You're welcome.

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