

Gazette Project

Interview with

Ms. Linda Pine,
Little Rock, Arkansas,
29 February 2000

Interviewer: Jerol Garrison

Jerol Garrison: This is Jerol Garrison, and I am with Linda Pine, P-I-N-E, here in the UALR Library, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Library, and the date is February 29, the year 2000. The purpose of this interview is to record Mrs. Pine's . . . is it Dr. Pine?

Linda Pine: Ms.

JG: . . . Ms. Pine's memories of the *Arkansas Gazette* for the Arkansas Center for Oral and Visual History, which is preserving memories of the *Gazette* to have on file there at the archives of the Special Collections Division of the University of Arkansas Libraries. Linda, if you don't mind, we will start off by asking you to agree that this interview can be kept on file at the Special Collections Division of The University of Arkansas Libraries to be reviewed by historians and others who are interested in this product, and I have a form here that I will ask you to read. First of all, you can go ahead and read it and sign it. Linda, do you agree that this interview can be used in this oral history project and can be placed on file at the Special Collections Division?

LP: Yes, I agree.

JG: Good, you agree.

LP: Yes, yes.

JG: And you have signed the document that states that in writing?

LP: Yes, I have signed it.

JG: Thank you. Let the record show that this is, is it Ms. Linda Pine?

LP: Yes, yes.

HG: P-I-N-E. And your title here at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock?

LP: Head of the archives and special collections.

JG: When were you with the *Arkansas Gazette*?

LP: I began at the *Arkansas Gazette* in September of 1980, working in the news library, and I worked until September of 1983 when I then took the position here.

JG: Oh, you moved right from the *Gazette* to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock?

LP: Yes.

JG: What was your title when you started here at UALR.

LP: Actually, I started here as a library tech and then became a research assistant and then, ten years ago, became the department head.

JG: So you've had your present job for the last ten years?

LP: Yes, correct.

JG: Now let's go back to the *Gazette*. What was your job there at the *Gazette*?

LP: When I began at the *Gazette* in 1980, I was actually just a general library person. My job was to clip the paper after it had been marked to be filed. And marking was somebody, an individual, reading the paper and going through and marking in

ink, circling the name, a subject, a particular area, a committee name, something like that. Then a newspaper for each clipping was marked with that [index term]. So one clipping was marked David Pryor, for example, and the next clipping, same one, was marked U.S. Senate. And we'd go through and tear those clippings out and fold them and then file them. So that was actually my first job . . . known as ripping the paper, clipping the clippings, folding them, and filing them. And I actually worked night shift; I worked from three o'clock till one o'clock, three p.m. till one a.m. Over time I then also learned how to — we took care of the photographs for the collections. And we marked the photographs and would file those for future reference. And the whole purpose of both the clipping library and the photo library was when reporters would come in, need an article and need to look at a clipping, something like that, also look at a photograph, . . . then they would either talk to us or they would go pull the file. So that is what I did for probably the first six months. Then the head of the library at that time, Betty Turner, decided she did not want to mark the paper any more, be the chief marker and indexer is what it was called. So she kind of held a contest among all of us to see who could mark the paper most accurately and in the quickest amount of time, because the quicker you got it marked, then somebody else could mark it [i.e., the individual news clippings] and they could do the clippings and get it filed. So I, in fact, won that little position — no increase in money — but I won that position.

JG: Great prestige.

LP: Great prestige, chief marker and indexer. So I moved to days at that time, and also, because the *Gazette* was one of the few newspapers that got the clippings for that day's paper filed the same day that the paper was published. We were maybe one of the few newspapers in the country. Most newspapers were three to four weeks behind. I also had to work Saturdays and Sundays, so, actually, my days off were Tuesdays and Wednesdays — excuse me, Mondays and Tuesdays — because those were the lightest papers. Those somebody else got to do. So I got to do the Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday papers. And the Sunday paper would take me about five hours to mark. It would take me that long to go through and list all the subject headings. So I did that actually for the remainder of my two and half years there, was the chief marker and indexer for the paper.

JG: Did you have a title at that time?

LP: No, someone would say, "What do you do?" And I would say that I work in the news library. And they would say, "What do you do in the news library?" And I would say that I am the chief marker and indexer for the paper. I don't think I ever had a formal title. I was referred to as the chief marker and indexer, but it was not a title that was written. I am sure I had a title, like library technical assistant, but I do not remember now what, in any way, shape, or form, that title was.

JG: Do you remember reporters coming in the library and getting information?

LP: Yes. Actually, one of the important things about us getting the paper filed every

day was that most clippings are used within three weeks of the clipping originally being printed in the newspaper and then it drops by about eighty percent that they'll be used. The problem, of course, is — with anything is — when you work in a library, whether it is here at UALR or at the *Gazette*, what is someone going to want? And so what you do is mark everything. So we would have reporters come in who would be trying to search that the legislature had been in session and they were looking for an act that had been dealt with and they would expect to be able to come into the library and say, "I am looking for Act 222, and all the clippings that have been on Act 222 in the last three months." And they would expect that there would be a file on Act 222. So that is part of what I had to do was try to guess what the reporters were going to be looking for. And I did, actually, I think, a pretty good job of guessing. So the reporters would come in and look for that. They might be doing an article, say, on the prisons, and they would want to look at the historical files. So they would want to see the kind of clippings that appeared in the 60's or the 50's. And you need to understand that the *Gazette* was not indexed before 1964 in those days, and, after, it was indexed from 1819 to, like, 1889. So between 1889 and 1963 there was no index to the *Gazette*.

JG: No way to go to an alphabetical file to look something up?

LP: Right. And there was no book you could go look something up in. Now, the bulk of our clippings, in fact, only went back to about '77 or '78, when Betty Turner, who was head of the *Gazette* library, had taken over. She really did — a lot of

people may not want to give her the credit, but she really is the one that . . . got the clipping files going [and] convinced the reporters that they did not have to keep clippings. I mean that is what a lot of reporters did; if they covered the city beat, they kept their own clippings, because at one time you couldn't go to the news library and find anything. If you were a general reporter covering this and that, there was no way to get any context. Now if you were a beat reporter, like if you covered the federal courthouse when you began, you kept your clippings. So a case might be on appeal two years later; if you had been the beat reporter originally, you could go back to your clippings and see what was in there. If you were not the beat reporter at that time, you were just out of luck unless you could come into the library and discover that, and if you were looking for a case before about 1978, there was no material. There just was just no material.

JG: Well, now . . . you weren't using computers, were you?

LP: No, not at that time. We were not using computers. Computers came in several years after I left. One of the problems with the technology was that you could only mark a clipping for three things. So we had to pick three areas. Well, if it's an article on the legislative session and there were ten legislative acts mentioned, there's no way that you can know the future needs of reporters. . . . A reporter can come in two minutes later [and say], "which act are you going to pick tomorrow?"* When we did it on the hard copy, I would go in and . . . there might

*Comment by Linda Pine: "I think what I was trying to state here was how difficult — if not impossible — for the indexers to guess what might be used two years (or even two weeks) later. 'Which act are you going to pick tomorrow?' would really be the librarian/indexer asking 'Which act will you (the

be fifteen sheets of that particular page of the newspaper, Act 123, Act 222, Act 455, Act 6, and there would be a clipping done for each one of those acts.

JG: And before the bill became an act, it went by a bill number.

LP: Exactly, and it can be very confusing. And quite often there would be particular hot topic ones, for example, like a usury law or something like that. There would be ones that you know would be contentious and that you would need to be able to mark. Now there were other ones that you might mark, but, once again, it was a judgment call that we would have to make. So reporters would come in; they would also come in to check ready references, check the dictionary. They might come in and say, "Who was president in 1848?" "What is the capitol of this state?"

JG: Did you have certain hot stories that you can remember that the reporters were researching? Can you remember any of those?

LP: Well, the major one that I really do remember is, of course, the Alice McArthur murder, which I was working during that time.

JG: How do you spell McArthur?

LP: I think it was M-C-A-R-T-H-U-R. The Alice McArthur murder because that really went on for --- that may have happened in '81 --- that went on for months and months.

The one I really remember is there had been a reference on the prisons and there had been a press release from the Department of Corrections on the number of people on death row. And the reporter who was covering it --- and the prisons were not his standard beat;

reporter) need tomorrow or two years from now?"

I think eventually he was assigned it --- came in and said, "Can you get me the names?" Well, we could find all but two names of people on death row. It took us forever. We had to check and check and check and check. It turned out that two of these individuals had been sentenced to death row, and it had never had made the paper. It had never ever, ever made the paper. And after that, because that was in the early 80's, with Ronald Reagan being elected and Frank White being elected, and Ed Bethune, . . . the number of death sentences just went up. One day there were like three people on death row, and a year and a half later there were eighteen people on death row. It was amazing, the culture that changed. And so we began, actually, having to keep a running list. But that was one example of --- it had not made it into the papers; these two kind of obscure cases over in western Arkansas, I think is where it was from, had not made it into the papers. And the reporters came to us and said, "We can't figure out who all these people are. Can you see if you can trace any of the information?"

JG: So the beginning of the running list of people on death row began with you?

LP: Right. I am not sure if it continued after we left, but it took such a long time to compile and come up with the list, and it increasingly began to be asked for.

JG: Obviously, you didn't want to lose track of it, or you would have to spend hours doing the same thing all over again.

LP: Exactly, and so . . . we had a list typed up that we put up on the bulletin board is what we did. That was one example of a situation in which the reporters came to us for assistance and we did end up . . . and, rightfully so, they passed it off to us to try to figure out the situation. And as a result of that, the reporter ended up

doing a list, and what he also wanted I guess was what they were sentenced to death for, what the crime was. So it ended up appearing in the paper, a list of every individual. Now, he had augmented what we had done on it, but used that basic list. So that is one I remember. I am trying to think if there were any other situations in which a reporter would come back and say, "I need help looking for this. Can you help me compile this?" Quite often, of course, what they would do is they would turn to a state agency, the state or whatever they were dealing with, and say, "You need to have a list."

JG: Was the paper clipped in the 60's and 70's?

LP: It was, but it was not really clipped to help the reporters. A couple of the older employees who that had been there a little longer mentioned that the reporters kept their own clippings and so, in the news library, you would have broad ones. For example, you had news clippings for the state prisons going back to '36. Now they were sketchy, like there might be two clippings for 1936 and you knew there were more on the prisons than those two clippings. Entergy, AP&L was another that went back a number of years. They clearly were not complete. They would clip like stories about brides. They were not really stories necessarily that the reporters could use. Now a reporter would leave evidently --- for example, a reporter would leave the city beat, and his clippings file then was taken, quite often consisting of just folded up newspapers and bits and pieces of all his articles, and was actually put in an envelope and put in the photographic files, where there were these giant lectrievers. They were these electrical shelving that

kind of ran in a circle. So that was a big space saver because the estimate was always about 250,000 photos. I don't know truly if that was correct. I would be willing to guess that there might be that many.

JG: So you had the photo files there that were taken by the *Gazette* photographers over the years. They went into the library.

LP: They went into the library. They also [had] AP and UPI images. AP, UPI, Knight-Ridder, I think the *Gazette* availed itself of almost all the wire services. So there would be a UPI image in there. For example, the Little Rock school crisis images, there would be a *Gazette* photographer's images there, but there would also be AP and UPI photographs.

JG: What about the negatives?

LP: The negatives were with the photographers; [that] is where the negatives were. We never received the negatives.

JG: Did you also have outsiders coming in to use the library?

LP: We did, yes. One funny, and it did not happen to me so I am not a direct primary source, but I worked with — I don't know where he is now — a young man who . . . had been there a year or so longer than I had. He always told the story about one night he was working and we were open. There was no security guard downstairs. Anybody could wander in up to the newsroom. He was working, and some two men showed up at the counter and said they wanted to see what the *Gazette* had written on a guy name John Moore. I think it was a common last name, like Smith or something. — And what we would do if we had multiple

individuals with the same name, the envelope we would keep the clipping in would have a little distinguishing sentence. So it might say, “John Moore, judge” or “John Moore, Mayor of Sheridan,” or “John Moore, Police Chief of Forrest City.” So Joey goes back and is looking through all these envelopes, and he says, “[John Moore] convicted of two murder charges,” and the guy says, “That’s me!” And it was about 10:30 at night, and he is thinking, “Oh, my lord.” Now, by the time I had come there, they actually had a night security guard. I think a reporter who, like the third day she had started, had been mugged when she had walked out of that loading dock area to the east. Okay, so I think when I came there was security at night, but I don’t think security had been there that long. We would have — we were closed to the public, but we would occasionally have people who somehow would get through the gauntlet and get to library.

JG: This incident of the man that was convicted of murder occurred in roughly what year?

LP: Actually, it probably would have been about 1980, a year or so before . . .

JG: You came . . .

LP: Yes, yes. ‘79, ’80, before I came in September. Actually, this worker said he was a really, really nice guy. But he said, “I am over there behind these monster shelves with these envelopes, and I am reading them off. When I read that one off, I never really believed he would say, ‘That’s me.’”

JG: What was that librarian’s name?

LP: Joey Bentley.

JG: Is that J-O-E-Y?

LP: Yes, and I have no idea where Joey is now.

JG: That's George Bentley's son?

LP: Yes.

JG: George Bentley, a long time *Gazette* courthouse reporter.

LP: Yes, oh, yes. Actually, I suspect that George is the one that probably got Joey the job in the news library. Joey was attending school out here at UALR part-time, and Joey actually may have been the marker and indexer, too. So he was also a marker and indexer. Quite often who we had come in from the outside were, in fact, the friends of reporters. Occasionally, we had attorneys wander in and want clipping files. We would also get phone calls, from individuals who'd seen — and I do think it may happen to all newspapers, and because it was my first job in that kind of environment, I am not sure, but it was almost that they believed that the *Gazette* was a state agency and that this information was available to them under the Freedom of Information Act. I mean, it was a public institution. So we would get calls from someone who would say, "I need to know, I need you to look for an obituary. I think my uncle died in 1964." And we would say, "We can't do that, and we don't have a list of this. It's not indexed." And they'd say, "Well, you can't tell me that you're not going to do it. This is a public institution; you can't deny me this information." And we would have to explain, "Well, we're not denying you the information; what we're saying is that (A) we don't have the time, and (B) you can't get it in that particular form." But I did, over time, come

to realize that the view really was that the *Gazette* was almost like calling Washington or calling your congressman. . . . If you said, “No, you can’t see all the news clippings related to the Public Service Commission because you are doing a paper,” their view was that “I have a legal right to it.”

JG: So how did you handle those then?

LP: Well, we just said, “We are really, really sorry, but you need to contact your public library, and we’re not able to help.” Now, once or twice, I had individuals come in who were friends of the upper echelon. And when we said, “It’s closed,” basically, they twisted our arm is what they did, and we ended up helping them. Now, in one particular instance, we did have an attorney come in who wanted something extraordinary from us; I cannot actually remember now what it was. It was going to be a monster research project. And we said we were closed. And he proceeded to just tear us up, threaten us, tell us he was a friend of Carrick Patterson. He was just gonna — we were going to lose our jobs. And he really was flexing his muscles and to our amazement, because not six months before another individual in upper-management had come in then and backed a friend up. Carrick Patterson came down and said that if this guy ever showed up again and threatened his employees, he would be booted out and never permitted to come in the building again. Carrick, in fact, backed us up and said, “Don’t you ever use my name. Don’t you use my name to come in and get this work done.” We really did expect we were gonna, somebody was going to lose their job over that, that what was going to happen was that Carrick would turn and say, “What do you

mean you're not helping him?" And he turned on the attorney and said, "Get out of here; don't ever think you're gonna get this." So we would get those kind of things occasionally.

JG: Now, when a reporter would come in and need some clippings, you would give him the clippings, and would they sign for it and take it back to their desk?

LP: Actually, no, they could sign for it; they could sign it out. Many of them would. What we discovered was then they'd take the envelopes and disappear. So what we really instituted then was we had a copier in there, and they could look through and photocopy what they wanted. They could check them out if it was a really big one and the --- I do remember vaguely they would then swear on their mother's grave that they would take care of it. They would all have mailboxes in a little kind of big opening off the city/state side. So they would put the clipping envelope back in their mail slot, and we would pull it out that way. So if it was a big one — now, on occasion reporters repeatedly would not take care of the clippings, and they would be told that they could not check out the clippings anymore. Our view really came to be, much like my view is here, when I say that the materials don't circulate, we reserve the right not to photocopy materials here in the archives to preserve them. My job is the custodian. My job is to protect the materials so that they are there for the next individual. I learned it at the *Gazette*, and I continue to find it here with many individuals is "Well, I want to use it. If I ended up destroying it, I am the one that used it." There is no sense of somebody, five minutes from now, someone twenty years from now, someone fifty years

from now --- if you take care of this item, somebody else then can come in and be able to use it. Well, if a reporter checked an envelope out, removed the clippings, put them in his desk, or they just got lost or whatever, the envelope came back in .

..

JG: Without the clips.

LP: Without the clips.

JG: And you had to go find them.

LP: Then the next time someone used it — actually, what would happen invariably is they would turn to us and say, “Well, you didn’t mark them to be clipped.” Or, my other favorite was “You people didn’t file these in order. You’ve gotten these all out of order.” Well, we were very careful to file to the back. So the most recent ones . . . so if it was out of order, it was because the reporter had gotten it out of order, not because we had gotten it out of order.

JG: Now, you referred to the archives here at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and I wonder if you could tell us what you have here from the J. N. Heiskell collection and any other collections that came from the *Arkansas Gazette*?

LP: What came here in 1984 was what we call the J.N. Heiskell Historical Collection. The *Gazette*, it was considered part of the *Arkansas Gazette* Foundation, and it was the area up on the third floor of the *Gazette* building that Margaret Ross worked out of. And it was, basically, J.N.’s, Mr. J.N.’s, collection of Arkansiana. Now that included books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, architectural drawings, newspapers, broadsides, ephemera in some instances . . .

JG: A what?

LP: Ephemera, like a ticket to a play would be ephemera.

JG: How do you spell that?

LP: E-P-H-E-M-E-R-A, ephemera. Scrapbooks. There was just a little bit of everything. He had — it was his personal collection. Once again, of course, the *Gazette* was his personal business. So there were, for example, photographs that had appeared in the newspaper that had then worked their way into the photo collection, Mr. J.N.'s photo collection. There was a column in the 30's called "Glimpses of Yesteryear" that was kind of an Arkansas pioneers' who's who, the first founders, and there was always a photograph with it. Usually, it was a photograph of an older daguerreotype or tintype or something like that. So the images that appear in the newspaper, those, then, actually became part of the historical collections. So when those items were transferred and donated to UALR, they did consist of the book collection that was up there on the third floor in Margaret Ross' areas, about forty-five manuscript collections, substantive manuscript collections; there were probably another two hundred single file manuscript collections, the photographs, the maps, music, scrapbooks, that kind of thing. We did not get the news library okay. None of the news library was transferred. We did not transfer anything from the news library when we packed up the collection on the third floor of the *Gazette*, so it was just what had been up in Margaret Ross' office.

JG: And that is formally known as the . . .

LP: J. N. Heiskell Historical Collection.

JG: And that's still what you call it here?

LP: Right. Now, they just actually called it the *Arkansas Gazette* Foundation Papers because it was part of the *Gazette* Foundation. The foundation had been created in the mid-fifties, and I think, actually, that is when Margaret Ross was hired to take care of the collection, and she did a column in the newspaper. So none of the news library came with us at the time.

JG: None of the library where you worked?

LP: Right, none of the library. Now, I wished it had. On occasion, and I did not do this, but I thought to myself, "I wonder if I could go remove some of those files." But I was a good person. There was discussion when the *Gazette* was finally sold to the *Democrat* about donating the library here, Gannett not making that part of the purchase price, but it was just too valuable an asset.

TAPE INTERRUPTION

JG: I am here with Linda Pine and we were talking about the *Arkansas Gazette* library. Would you finish that?

LP: The news library was considered too valuable an asset not to be included in the purchase price when the *Democrat* purchased the *Gazette*. So from there, my understanding was that it did go into storage. People have, over the years, contacted the *Democrat* about accessing the news library. An example would be [when] the Central High Museum, downtown across from Central High, contacted and made arrangements with the *Democrat* to access the photographs, both that

the *Democrat* had from the period and the *Gazette* had. So they had access to those images. I can't think of some other examples, although over the years I have referred people to the *Democrat* because they ask about the news library. And they quite often get it mixed up, and they presume that the one that we have and the news library are one and the same.

JG: Now, if anyone wants to come in and use the J. N. Heiskell Collection, is it available to the public?

LP: Yes, it is available to everybody. We are open to the public.

JG: Now, if somebody wants to come in off the street and wants to look at parts of the collection, they sit down at a table right here in the archives?

LP: They come in and sign the register. They fill out a user form, show us an I.D. that proves that their I.D. and user form name are the same, look through the finding aides, and from there select the files or photographs they want to look at. And then we pull them and they can look at them. If the materials are in good enough shape, we will photocopy them, but if they are too fragile, we reserve the right to not photocopy materials. They have to take notes or something else.

Photocopying is not an inalienable right.

JG: So photocopying an old fragile document damages it?

LP: Exactly. Yes, it does. And we have books that if you lay it open to do the binding, will break the binding. You know, it doesn't hurt to photocopy this pamphlet that I am holding in my hand. That doesn't hurt, but that green volume up there on the shelf, if you open it up and flatten it to photocopy it, you're going

to break the binding. So that is something we reserve the right [to do]; they are going to have to take notes or something like that.

JG: Let me go back just a little bit to find out where your place of birth is and where you went to school and what you did before you went to work for the *Arkansas Gazette*.

LP: I was born in Boulder, Colorado, in 1955. My parents were John and Shirley Pine. My father was finishing up his Ph.D. in history, and we moved to Fayetteville in 1957, when he took a job in the History Department in the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He died in 1964, and my mother started going to school at Fayetteville and got her Masters in audiology and speech pathology. And then we moved to Florida where she got her Ph.D. And her first teaching job was in Tennessee. And then, actually, in 1974, the graduate program in Audiology and Speech Pathology opened up here at UALR, and so she took the job here. I attended Hendrix College. I had taken a couple of years off between high school and college, and I attended Hendrix and graduated in 1978 with a BA in history. I did a lot of temporary jobs. With a BA in history, that is what you do. I worked for the Census Bureau, and I found out a lot of things that I didn't want to do. And I, actually, in 1980 — when Betty Turner hired me at the *Gazette*, it was my first quote real unquote kind of full-time job. So I had worked in other temporary jobs and that kind of thing. And I enjoyed the special libraries work. I enjoyed the somewhat historical nature of it. I enjoyed helping the reporters as they came in, the patrons as they came in, that kind of thing.

JG: The reporters were always good to you?

LP: Most of the time they were. Usually 95% of the people that you deal with are very, very good people, and the other 5% can give you trouble. But all in all, I personally did not have that much trouble from reporters, mostly because of my tolerance level. My view was that I am here to help you and if you want to get mad at me, you just can't get mad at me. That's just . . . no job has ever meant enough to be cussed at.

JG: Did Mr. Heiskell himself, no he was deceased.

LP: He had died. He had died in '72. The upper management did really not ever have too much to do with the library. Betty Turner had filed a discrimination suit against the newspaper; I, for the life of me, do not remember when. Betty probably left in '82. . . . I worked for Alfred Thomas, who was head of the news library; I worked for Alfred probably for seven or eight months, maybe nine months, maybe even a year. In 1981, I began attending graduate school here at UALR in Public History. I actually had finished up my course work by '83, that kind of thing. So I was kind of ready for a move.

JG: So you have a Master's Degree?

LP: In Public History.

JG: And you received that in what year?

LP: Actually, I finally got the thesis finished in --- '86 was, I think, the year. It took me three years, between working full time and writing my thesis, to get the degree finished.

JG: Do you have any other degrees?

LP: No, I have archival certification. They now offer a certification test, so I have archival certification, but, no, that one Master's is enough at this point in time.

JG: Is there anything you would like to add?

LP: I am trying to think. I enjoyed it. It was an interesting atmosphere. The folks were interesting. It was very lively. Also, in effect, you started every day new. The paper "went to bed." So there was this sense of . . . at the end of that day when the paper went in, or when we got the paper filed and shelved in the envelopes, filed away, the next day it was kind of something brand new. I kind of liked that. It did remind me, because I worked election night twice, of some other times --- one of my part-time jobs had actually been an amendment's clerk at the constitutional convention. That kind of political adrenaline that gets going, the feeling that you're in the know, that you know before anyone else knows and [are] kind of watching the power structure. In a sense, the *Gazette* could kind of have that [adrenaline] . . . particularly on the political nights or when some big story was breaking. That you get this sense, now in my cynical older age I'm not sure that's true, but you get this sense that you are in the inside and that you could impact events and that you knew things before anyone else did. I don't know that was really true, but you had that feeling. I think it is actually what attracts people to journalism, to be reporters.

JG: You were at the cutting edge.

LP: That's right. Even in the library. But, you know, on election night they would

come in, and they would have gotten the early returns. A reporter would come in to check something out, and we would find out what the early polls were. And I realize in hindsight that they were probably getting them from the TV. They probably actually were calling the precincts though. We did — with most of the reporters, many of them would come back just to visit. They enjoyed us. We were a lively lot. There were your occasional arrogant individuals. We did have one reporter who came back and actually asked us how to spell apropos. And we told her, A-P-R-O-P-O-S. And they didn't believe us. And when they went and checked it in the dictionary and turned around and said, "I can't believe you stupid people would know how to spell." They were one in a hundred that we ran into with those individuals. Almost invariably, reporters come in and we had a good time and we had a nice visit and they liked us and we liked them.

JG: Did the reporters ever eat their lunch back there?

LP: No, they didn't. No, they didn't. I guess they had the lounge, and, of course, most of them probably went out to eat. I guess the only other thing was the Christmas parties. Now in the heyday [of the *Gazette*], the stories that I heard about the Christmas parties, exchanging spouses and that kind of thing; I mean, you would hear those stories. I don't know how true they really are. The Christmas parties for which, actually, Betty Turner as library director would cook up this twenty or thirty pound ham. So the library kind of sponsored those things. You could pay three dollars and kind of eat all you wanted, and she would do that or you could bring something. So there would be this monster spread. That was the two . . . '80

and '81, must have been the two Christmases because she must have gone by '82. And I remember Jerry Dean's rum balls. He would make these balls that were just unbelievable. And then people would make salads and that kind of thing. So we would have a big Christmas buffet. I remember it up on the reference desk where you came in there would be this monster, monster ham.

JG: So the food would be piled up on the reference desk?

LP: Yes, the food would just be piled up everywhere. So, actually, I do remember that. Probably upper management did a Christmas party, and I just didn't attend, and I, frankly, just don't really remember. In my later years, '82 and '83, I originally had Mondays and Tuesdays off. And then as I got deeper into graduate school, I took Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday off. I actually tried to take Thursdays off, but they said, "No, the paper's too big; you need to do [it]." So my last year there, I actually worked Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. So I really was, for all intents and purposes, a part-time . . . I mean I was there four days a week, but two of those days were Saturday and Sunday, and the reporters really weren't in. So I was gone three days of the workweek.

JG: So the clippings were piling up from the Saturday and Sunday paper?

LP: No, actually there was a night-shift person who came in. The clippings were . . . Betty Turner was insistent on . . . the paper was published on the 12th. It was marked on the 12th; it was clipped on the 12th; it was folded on the 12th; and it was filed before you went home at one o'clock.

JG: And you were done?

LP: And that was it. And the next day it started over again. There was no backlog. There occasionally might be, but you just made it up. If someone got sick and had to go home and it was left over from the night before, that was the first thing you did. And then the expectation was that you would make up, you would get all the other work done for that day. And if you were talking about a Sunday paper that couldn't get filed, the truth is the Monday paper was so small that you could catch up on the Sunday paper. I think the Sunday paper was probably about six to seven hundred newspaper clippings, individual news clippings. And the weekday ones probably ran anywhere from eighty on a Monday to a couple hundred on Friday.

JG: A lot of information.

LP: Yes, it is a lot of information, a lot of it duplicated. I don't know what they are doing now. I am sure they've got some; I know they've got some computer mechanism to do it.

JG: It is my understanding that it's all computerized now.

LP: Yes, I think actually it is. I had heard, and I am not sure, that they were worried that the index that had operated in the mid-eighties, that they couldn't transfer it then to a new indexing system, but I think they got that taken care of.

JG: Well, thank you very much.

LP: Okay. Anything else?

JG: I appreciate this interview very much.

LP: Yes.

End of Interview