

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #475

Subject: Pauline Braymen

Place: Harney County Library, Burns, OR

Date: March 16, 2010

Interviewer: Debby Peckham

DEBBY: This is Debby Peckham and today is March 16, 2010. I have the privilege of speaking with Pauline Braymen in the Oral History Room here in the Harney County Library. She has been a wonderful stalwart of our community and has been very involved in music, and I'm excited to visit with her. Pauline—how exciting!

PAULINE: This is exciting. I'm really glad you're doing this project because as history gets lost...

DEBBY: It does. You know one thing I wanted to visit with you about before we actually got started on yours... was the comment that we had shared about the OPB presentation on Mary Dodge, and how music was very active before she actually arrived here. Would you talk about that?

PAULINE: What Mary Dodge did was outstanding...

DEBBY: Oh, it was wonderful.

PAULINE: ... and faced all the difficulties that they said she did. I'm not... but one of the reasons-- and this is my belief-- one of the reasons I believe she was so successful with these children in Harney County was that the people who had come to settle here were educated people.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: And they... who loved culture, and yeah, they were out here in the isolated area a long ways from where had been home to them. But...of course, what I know of it is from talking to people for the oral history... and you know, I was born in ... I wasn't born in Harney County. My dad and mom came here when I was five months old. But my dad was born in Harney County in 1909, and so I know the stories that he shared over the years, of the history. I got

interested in history at a very, very early age. I had the great fortune to get acquainted with Julian Byrd who was the editor of the Burns Times-Herald from about 1884 on.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: His family came here, I think in '83, and then they became involved with the newspaper. He was so very, very proud of the history. He liked to share things with me; he loved to have an ear for his stories so he told me of the efforts of this community-- the Burns community-- made, and he was very proud of the fact that he played the part of-- I hope I have it right--of Nanki-Poo in "The Mikado." I think he was a tenor. He played that part. But that wasn't the only musical they put on. They did this every year. And the only way, really... I haven't researched it, but going back in the old issue of the Burns Times-Herald, you will find evidence of culture. They brought in Chautauquas. They had a Burns City Band... oh, way back. I think it evolved maybe out of the fire department efforts. It was maybe combined... I'm not sure. I'm not sure about that.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: But you know, the people in the community were very community-minded, very proud of their community, and music was just a part of that. Some of the old timers told me about the dances they had. So people played music, I mean there were fiddlers in the... There were people who played music. One of the stories I really found fascinating was the lady that told me about, they would come to her house... they would come in and they would take all the furniture out in the yard.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: ...so that they had a dance floor because the houses weren't very big.

DEBBY: No. No.

PAULINE: Then the musicians would come in and they would dance. They would dance until—oh they had a midnight supper and then the party continued, then people, you know, they journeyed home in time to feed the cows in the morning. Then put in their full day of work.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: And so, there was always a Christmas program, and the children were taught to sing, and recite poetry, and all of this was a part of our culture. So, it's just my belief that one of the reasons that she was so successful here was that she had a really strong base of support. I think that what-- I think what Dale Eggleston shared in the documentary backs me up on that.

DEBBY: Yes, I would agree.

PAULINE: So, you know, that was my point. I just...

DEBBY: And it's a good one.

PAULINE: If you're going to do a history of music in Harney County, I guess what I want to say is that it didn't start with Mary Dodge. This community has been so proud of the Sagebrush Orchestra and what she did. Those men and women who were a generation ahead of me-- who taught me, who shared their history with me-- they were inordinately proud of the Sagebrush Orchestra.

DEBBY: That's wonderful.

PAULINE: They cherished that. Julian and Agness Brown and many, many others, you know, always shared their experiences with that.

DEBBY: ... any of those people play in the orchestra, Pauline?

PAULINE: You know, I don't know. I don't know. Dale is the one who has that history better than I. And I, you know, I just don't. I recorded people's stories on it, but I didn't ever really do research on the Sagebrush Orchestra. I do know that my dad learned to play the fiddle, and the story was that he was part of the Sagebrush Orchestra. He played very badly. My mother made him quit because, after they were married and he would get his fiddle out to play it... She said in later years... She told me, "Oh I wish I hadn't done it. It was wrong for me to do," but she said, "The sound just... it just sent me up the wall. I couldn't stand it." Oh, and like I said, he was born in 1909 so if he learned to play the fiddle he would have been six or older. So, I'm not sure that he was involved. I'm not sure of the date. I've never researched to see what the dates are on that.

DEBBY: Well, they went up to 1917, I believe.

PAULINE: Well, then he could... The he very well... It's very possible that he ... He always said that he was part of the Sagebrush Orchestra.

DEBBY: Oh, that's...

PAULINE: But the one story that my cousin tells-- and this just goes to show how much music is a part of the culture of Harney County, in my belief-- this is my take on it.

DEBBY: Yes, that's good.

PAULINE: People may dispute this and say, oh, she is just full of it. But this is my interpretation of what I have learned over the years. One of the stories that my cousin tells me about my dad-- I

was younger-- she was one of the older cousins, and I was younger so I don't remember this. I was just a baby. But she said that they were all at my folks' house: my grandmother, my grandfather-- her mom and dad—and brothers and sisters and, of course, us kids. Maybe some of the others of the family, I don't know who all. But at least Grandma and Grandpa were there. And she—and I could go on: Uncle Ben and my cousin were there. My dad got out his fiddle and he was playing "Turkey in the Straw." It was one of the things that he could play. But he was playing—and "Redwing," he liked to play "Redwing"—he was playing and my dad-- my granddad-- was dancing a jig. And she said, my grandmother was sitting in a chair and just laughing, you know. Just laughing, and laughing, and laughing. So, you know, it was... my mother who grew up in Oklahoma—she grew up in the oil fields of Oklahoma. She was born in Kansas. My grandmother was born in a sod house in Kansas and grew up on a farm. Her dad had a general store. Then she married this French Irishman who went to work in the oil fields, so they lived in tent houses and the oil fields, and that is how she grew up.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: But by the time she got to high school and college she... Mom never played anything. She said she tried to play the clarinet once in the band, and it just didn't... She loves music, but she is not a musician. And so... But she studied music history and art history in college in her work to become a teacher. From the time that I can remember, you know, we had music in our home in some way or another.

DEBBY: That's wonderful.

PAULINE: But I hope in the process of your doing research for this history deal, kind of get back in the old archives and see... Dale would be a wonderful resource. I think that Dick Jenkins would be a good resource. And some of the others. You know Turen Duntten and his family? Katy Sargeant out at...?

DEBBY: Yes, for a long time I did not know that she was...

PAULINE: She is from that family. And that family in the Drewsey area was able to... the whole family was wonderful musicians. So, I think those things are important.

DEBBY: Yes, very important.

PAULINE: But to get, you know, what my involvement in music in Harney County was, was not as an accomplished musician or a... but more of a kid going through school.

DEBBY: Sure.

PAULINE: I heard my cousin play the piano when I was five. When I was six, my mom signed me up to take piano lessons from Miss Haibach.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: I think that is spelled H-I-B-A-C-H. but I couldn't find anything in my scrapbook that indicated that. She was a German lady. She... You know where Judge Bill Cramer lives now?

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: That was his, the house. Dr. Meyer, I think was his name, owned the house and she was his sister [in-law]. She and her brother--it might have even been two brothers-- but they all lived there. He ran his physician's practice from the house. As you come in the front door, if you went to the left, that was the doctor's office and the examination rooms, then if you went to the left, [right?] you stepped into the big dining room where the grand piano was.

DEBBY: Oh my gosh. A grand piano?

PAULINE: I'm thinking that she had two grand pianos, but I'd have to check with some of my friends that took piano lessons too, to see if I'm remembering that right or not. But she had the one grand piano at the far end of the room where we took our lessons. I think she had her special grand piano at the near end. I kind of have some recollection of doing two pianos, but I may be wrong about it. I mean I just... I've just... You don't think you will forget things, but... to me. But you would come in, and she had a comfortable little chair and this little table with neat little books on it, so that you could sit and entertain yourself while she finished the lesson of the person that was ahead of you.

DEBBY: Oh, that's nice.

PAULINE: So I would walk down from the Burns Grade School, down this E Street, to Miss Haibach's and take piano lessons every week.

DEBBY: Every week? Wow.

PAULINE: It was a dollar a week.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. That was a lot of money then, wasn't it?

PAULINE: It was a lot of money. I didn't have a piano at first, so then I... But my grandmother worked at the mill, and so I walked down to my Aunt Gladys' house on South Egan and practiced the piano until she got off work. That was the plan anyway.

DEBBY: Oh my gosh. Yes.

PAULINE: Then she would pick me up and take me home. So that's how I started. And then after a year or two, then I had my own piano at home.

DEBBY: Do you remember the books that you played in? What they were? Or anything about them?

PAULINE: Oh, you know, I should have looked to see—yeah, it's that tan one with the brown lettering on the front, and the first song in it is “Loudly Sings the Donkey.”

DEBBY: Is that Swan's?

PAULINE: It might be.

DEBBY: Or John Thompson?

PAULINE: No, it wasn't John Thompson. I'll have to get the book—look that up for you. I still have that book.

DEBBY: That would be great.

PAULINE: I still have that book.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. How wonderful.

PAULINE: But that—the first song that I learned how to play was [sings] “*How they... donkey on his way to hay. If you do not feed him, he will blow away.*” That's my first musical effort.

DEBBY: Oh, that's wonderful. Did she have you play in recitals, or anything like that?

PAULINE: She had recitals. She had quite a number of students and she did do recitals. One Christmas she had a tape recorder and she recorded... She played “Silent Night” and had me sing. I had this little tiny redbird(?), and I was eight or nine or ten, something like that.

DEBBY: Oh, how sweet.

PAULINE: She was a wonderful person. And a very dedicated musician. A story-- I laugh about it myself because, you know, people assume that people, or children understand—so she had a great steno book with a green lined paper, and so that... I carried that back and forth from my music lessons every week... And in it... She would open it up and she would write, you know, the date...

DEBBY: Yeah.

PAULINE: ... I was playing, and all this stuff on here. And then she would sit it up on the piano and I would... make me do my lesson. Never paid any attention to it. She would fold it up and hand it to me and I would take it home. The next week I would bring it back and she would open it – it had never been opened. I mean I went home and practiced, and practiced my song, had my

music. Every week I took... I thought this was for her. I didn't realize--I took lessons from her from the time I was six until... It must have been seventh grade that she got ill, I think, with cancer.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness

PAULINE: I think she died in Ontario-- in Holy Rosary Hospital. My mom took me over there to see her once in about seventh grade.

DEBBY: What year would that be?

PAULINE: That would have been in 1951.

DEBBY: Uh-huh

PAULINE: She evidently wasn't buried here because I couldn't find her name in the obituaries or in the cemetery records, but... because I was looking to see what her first name was. I don't even remember that. But, at any rate, I took this back and forth and years later-- I mean many, many years later-- I mean my kids were grown... I'm going through old music things and sorting it, and looking at it and I got to looking at those books—and my goodness—the music theory, and scales and all kinds of stuff that she wanted me to learn. I learned it because she went through it with me. One on one. But she had written all this in the book. And I never, I mean I just thought this book was for her to keep track of... So it was—I laugh-- you can't explain too much when you're dealing with people, exactly what you intend.

DEBBY: Exactly.

PAULINE: But she did have recitals. At Easter time she always colored Easter eggs and gave them to us. I always... You know, she was German and had just a little bit of an accent, you know. They were fresh over from Germany. And, it's my impression... so these Easter eggs that she colored were really unusual. And I... I would just... I always wondered how she did it because I never saw anyone else do Easter eggs like that. Then years later I found out this method where you wrapped the eggs in onion skins.

DEBBY: Oh, for heaven's sake.

PAULINE: The eggs take up the color of the skins that you have wrapped them in so they are soft beiges, and yellows and reds.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: They were just beautiful. And you write on them-- decorate on them with a wax crayon and then do this—so they were really pretty and they were really unusual.

DEBBY: How wonderful.

PAULINE: But a lot... oh you know, most of my friends took piano lessons, I can remember-- kids older than I, younger than I-- and it was... She was a very important part of music in Harney County.

DEBBY: Yeah, sounds like it.

PAULINE: So, when she was no longer able to give lessons, I went for a couple of years without taking lessons. But I still was playing a lot. I was trying to learn on my own. I remember—I wrote this down so I wouldn't forget-- in 1951, we didn't have music in grade school other than what the teachers...

DEBBY: Your classroom teachers?

PAULINE: ...did in the classroom. I don't remember that we ever did a lot. But what I do remember is that we had programs, and teachers prepared certain kids to do certain things and some of that involved music. I learned to recite a poem for the one thing that I did, that I remember.

DEBBY: How wonderful.

PAULINE: My best friend from school—still my best friend today-- I always will remember her and I think it was Dee Dickenson, maybe it was Wayne Manning, I can't remember for sure now. But they had them dressed up in the old-fashioned clothes, and they had a tricycle built for two.

DEBBY: Oh, how...

PAULINE: Or a tricycle, one of those big tricycles and...

DEBBY: Yes

PAULINE: And they did that bicycle built for two thing.

DEBBY: Oh, how fun.

PAULINE: You know, you just remember those things.

DEBBY: You do.

PAULINE: There was also music festival where they brought all of the schools from all over the county together in the high school gym.

DEBBY: Really?

PAULINE: I don't know what the time period for that was. I don't remember a lot about it except going and ... Every school and every class got up and did some kind of a performance.

But there is somebody that probably remembers better than I do. At any rate, according to a program I found, we did have a vocal teacher, a chorus teacher in grade school in 1951.

DEBBY: Wow,

PAULINE: And her name was L—Miss L. Rudolph. And I don't know what her first name was. And Harold Buhman was in charge of the band at that point in time. So I know those things. I think that he came before that but I... Because I think he was here when I was in fifth grade, and that would have been...

DEBBY: Was that when you started...?

PAULINE: '49. I didn't do band.

DEBBY: Oh, you didn't do band?

PAULINE: At that time. So... But at that point in time Miss Rudolph was doing the girls' chorus. And she was doing classroom teaching too, because I remember leaving the fifth grade and going to music class. It was a big deal, because we never had... We had never had music before. It was really a big deal.

DEBBY: Very special.

PAULINE: A very big deal. I remember asking her to help me with some things that I wanted to do. And I did play for my eighth grade graduation.

DEBBY: Wow.

PAULINE: But Mr. Slater always did a program, and had kids do things. I went to him and said I want to play the piano. So he let us play on the piano-- a solo piece--which I did very badly because I didn't have a teacher.

DEBBY: Well, that makes a big difference.

PAULINE: And I...

DEBBY: But how wonderful that you played.

PAULINE: Yeah, it was. Yeah, I can but I can't say it. I can't remember. I remember the song but I can't remember the... So... But Mr. Buhman was, I think, there when I was in fifth grade. Because I remember in fifth grade, and that would have been—let's see, four, forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven, forty-eight, and forty-nine. That would be '49. All of my friends were joining band and my mother said, "Piano is enough. You can't do both. You can do band or piano, but you can't do both." I'm sure she did not want to buy me an instrument.

DEBBY: Yes, yes.

PAULINE: So I didn't start in band but all my friends did, and I was very jealous of them. Mr. Buhman was an outstanding music instructor and you'll hear lots about him. He... I mean he accomplished this, and he had someone learning to play the bagpipe at one point in time. He had... that going at that point in time. Gosh. This is me right here.

DEBBY: Oh, so you did get in the band?

PAULINE: When I was in high school my best friend was in band, and she wanted me to be in the band, and I said I don't know how to play anything. She said well they have this glockenspiel and they need somebody to play the glockenspiel.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh, Pauline. That glockenspiel is still in the high school.

PAULINE: Well, I tell you I carried that many, many miles. So I went to Mr. Buhmn and asked him if I could play the glockenspiel because Alice said, "You can do it, it's just like a piano keyboard, and you just hit, hit, hit, you know." So that spring that we were sophomores he gave me the glockenspiel to take home over the summer to practice.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: And I had my little red hammer that I used.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: Then you have this harness that you wore.

DEBBY: That thing is heavy.

PAULINE: You put the end of the glockenspiel in this little holster and then held it, so you were holding it with your arm. And it *is* heavy. Then you played with the other.

DEBBY: Do you march with that too?

PAULINE: Yes. Oh, my gosh. Oh yes. Oh yes... I think I'm right out in front there someplace.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: So I really didn't know what I was getting into, and I was just thinking I would be sitting in the back row. Well he was so delighted that when we marched in the fair parade that fall, guess who was right out in front?

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: This was my first band experience-- I mean I hadn't even started music-- playing in the band, you know.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh, Pauline, That's wonderful.

PAULINE: Because I practiced over the summer and then we started marching. And so, yes. And ... Alice Gross, what you did for me [laughter]. Well, anyway, then he decided that if I was doing the glockenspiel I could do the timpani too.

DEBBY: Oh boy!

PAULINE: So, he got me started on the timpani. Well, I'm tone deaf. I really... If I have music in front of me I can play. I don't play by ear. And my kids tell me this because I never try. But I don't...

DEBBY: It's not easy to do that, Pauline.

PAULINE: Both the girls do it. I can't do it. And Janet says... You know, she worked at learning to do it. She really taught herself to do it but I don't think it came all that naturally to her. But at any rate... So, of course, she had to tune the timpani to the notes you're going to play. And this is just hysterical-- because here is this kid that has never been in a band before, and just joined up to play the glockenspiel so that she could be in band with her girlfriend who moved to Idaho that fall, and we didn't even get to play together after all.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: So he would... he would... me, and I would tell this guy right here. I'd tell this guy right here--this was Jim Meek-- the note I needed and he would blow it very softly on the ... and I would tune the timpani until I got it, until I thought it was right [laughter]. Away we go. What power. What power [laughter]. But it was fun and...

DEBBY: Oh, that is awesome.

PAULINE: I really benefitted from the experience of playing in a group. I had always played by myself, and I have one speed, and that's fast.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: Yes, full speed ahead. I never knew the name slow, even slow went fast. And I still get chastised by my girls who tell me I can't keep time, and I ... I don't keep a good tempo and all of this and that but...

DEBBY: Well, it sounds like a wonderful experience.

PAULINE: Well, it really was a good experience. And we played... Mr. Buhman really understood kids, I think, in much the same way that Ken obviously has. Because this... would do anything for him. And we played very, very heavy classical stuff.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness, yes. Yes.

PAULINE: But he subscribed to a service that sent out the hit songs.

DEBBY: Oh yes

PAULINE: And I don't know how often they came, maybe once a month. I don't know. But every so often we would get new music like "Sha Boom, Sha Boom" and that kind of thing, and we'd do that.

DEBBY: Oh, how neat.

PAULINE: And all of these kids read music. I mean he'd give us music, put it on and we'd play it.

DEBBY: How wonderful.

PAULINE: But all these kids read music.

DEBBY: So you had a real variety?

PAULINE: Oh yeah—and everything. And then, at the same time I went to high school, I got... then I was open to the choir. This was Alice Pettys, was her name. P-E-T-T-Y-S. She was a single mother with two children. Her husband had died some years before and she had a girl that was just younger than I, and then a boy that was younger than that. They lived... oh, gosh, I can't even ... You know where the Central Pastime is now? Well it used to be the bowling alley. There used to be an upstairs-- used to be a building with an upstairs and the bowling alley was downstairs. She lived upstairs over the bowling alley. Well, in the later years that's all been remodeled and it's not like that anymore, but that's where she lived.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: Now, if you think that all of these men voluntarily joined the chorus-- the choir-- you are... I mean, let's be realistic.

DEBBY: Oh, yeah, okay. That's quite a bunch of them.

PAULINE: High school. I'm thinking we had three hundred students, but I could be wrong about that. I have never been good with numbers, and I can kind of ... Sixty-five people graduated from the senior class in 1956 so we could probably have been... we could... I think that the... I don't know what the auditorium holds. It was full and people...

DEBBY: The teachers should...

PAULINE: ...where Lincoln Junior High School was.

DEBBY: ... and that was Burns High School?

PAULINE: So the classrooms were... I mean they had more kids than they had classrooms... they had more kids... And they had teachers and we were... They took the library and divided it into a library and two classrooms.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: The library was all of... That whole end was library at one point in time. They made two classrooms and then the library. I don't know how it is divided up now. But at any rate, this was the double class, so in order to get everybody into a class this period... and here she had all this... and some of these guys were pretty jokesterish.

DEBBY: Yeah? Gave her a tough time?

PAULINE: They weren't bad boys. They were all good boys, but I can look at a few of those boys and say that being in a chorus was not really what they would have chosen to do. Some of the... Yeah, some of the... Yeah, there is one of the basketball stars, right there.

DEBBY: Oh, uh-huh. Do you remember....?

PAULINE: I think that's... Larson, and--only he didn't like to be called... he goes by his right name now, which I don't know what it is.

DEBBY: Uh-huh.

PAULINE: But you just go down here in order: Harold Sawyer and Bill Tiller. Vern Cady and – I think that's my brother. I didn't realize he was in that class too, but that sure looks like him. Phil Olson. I mean all these guys and... Spencer McMurray is right there. Anyway, Mrs. Pettys was, she was formerly a very, very fine musician. She was a... one of these women who can be very authoritative and get away with it. You know, some can and some can't.

DEBBY: Exactly.

PAULINE: When she got up in front of the class and told you to do something, you just did it. There just was never any question of whether you behaved or not.

DEBBY: Wonderful.

PAULINE: My daughter is teaching music in the middle school... junior high in Tennessee.

DEBBY: Oh goodness. Really?

PAULINE: And the story she tells me... and the behavior problem she has with kids today would not... I mean these people all behaved. Not because they really wanted to, but because you knew if you didn't you were going to die [laughter]. She never... But you just knew that she was not going to put up with anything.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. What kind of songs did you sing in your choir, do you remember?

PAULINE: Oh, I can't... you know. Carol Sawyer would be one to talk to about that. I sang my sophomore and junior year, probably. I just took two or three years but I played the piano the last year that I was... It was my senior year I played the piano. We played like... is one of the ones that I remember.

DEBBY: Yes. Beautiful.

PAULINE: A lot of beautiful, beautiful music, and some fun music.

DEBBY: Sure.

PAULINE: "The Happy Wanderer," I think I remember doing that but I ... Hill will probably remember better than I. I thought maybe I had some programs in my scrapbook but I didn't seem to have. Maybe—I don't think they had programs.

DEBBY: They might not have...

PAULINE: You know...

DEBBY: Might have just talked about it and...

PAULINE: Yeah. Yeah.

DEBBY: So, this picture is taken, then, in the auditorium?

PAULINE: This is in the auditorium.

DEBBY: Well, you guys really have a back stage. My gosh.

PAULINE: This is... This looks like... Yeah, this is in the auditorium too.

DEBBY: Yeah.

PAULINE: And the light came down there. Yeah, it was a tight fit in there.

DEBBY: Boy, I bet.

PAULINE: But that's where we had our recitals and concerts. And...

DEBBY: So I can imagine you did fill up that auditorium, then?

PAULINE: But my—like I said, my music was... For instance, you know, I was the pianist for the chorus. I was expected to do a solo so I did a solo. I memorized, I think it was a sonata—a Hayden-- Haydn.

DEBBY: Haydn sonata? Oh my gosh, Pauline.

PAULINE: It was pages and pages.

DEBBY: Yes. Yes.

PAULINE: I memorized it. And I played it.

DEBBY: Wow, how wonderful.

PAULINE: And a week later I couldn't have played it if my life depended on it.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. Wonderful though.

PAULINE: But you know, I just didn't have the ... I don't have the memory, I don't have the...

DEBBY: Well, it's a difficult thing, to memorize music.

PAULINE: You know, I was not... And you know I played for the church, Sunday school...
And played for church off and on over the years.

DEBBY: Write down which church you....

PAULINE: Pioneer Presbyterian.

DEBBY: Oh, the Pioneer Presbyterian? Wonderful.

PAULINE: But, you know, that was kind of my interest in music. The churches, too, I think have
been very supportive of music in this community.

DEBBY: They have had wonderful music programs.

PAULINE: ... have music programs. And of course I was mostly playing at the Pioneer
Presbyterian. Before the new church was built, which is now very old, but...

DEBBY: Oh, I didn't realize that wasn't the...

PAULINE: The original church was a little white church, we called it. It was a white board, a
wood-constructed church with a spire and a steeple.

DEBBY: Oh really? Oh, gosh.

PAULINE: Sat right where the parking is right now, is about where it sat.

DEBBY: Oh.

PAULINE: You walk in these big doors and they had a piano and the choir loft. This is as small
child-- I mean I was always so thrilled when the choir would come in from outside, and through
the doors and march up the aisle... every Sunday, and singing the anthem, you know. And that
was... Yes, music was very much a part of our lives in our community.

DEBBY: Yes, very much so.

PAULINE: In later years when we moved into the new church, Mary Graven was the choir
director.

DEBBY: Oh, is that right?

PAULINE: She was a great inspiration to Carol Sawyer. Carol can tell you more about Mary and what an important part of music she was because she really mentored Carol. When I go to church on Sunday, and Carol is there...

DEBBY: ... the choir like Mary did on Sunday?

PAULINE: I think that was such a nice flow of the history of...

DEBBY: Well it was such a legacy when a teacher can inspire someone to continue on and make it that way.

PAULINE: Yeah.

DEBBY: That's marvelous.

PAULINE: The other music people that I was involved with after Miss Haibach died and I hadn't taken piano lessons for a couple three years, and I really, really missed it. So Mr. [Carol] Robe, who taught math in high school was also a pianist, and he gave me piano lessons. He was very, very good. He taught me a lot.

DEBBY: Oh, how wonderful.

PAULINE: He had a few students. It wasn't a big part of his life, but it was a part. And then, of course, Ethel Johnson.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: I don't think Ethel has ever been given ... I think she has been given credit and the recognition from those of us who know music but I don't think the community ever really quite realized what a treasure they had in her.

DEBBY: What a treasure, yes. Yes.

PAULINE: She taught my girls piano lessons, and my son piano lessons until I... and by the third one you just sort of give up.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: And he would practice... He is sorry that I took that attitude, now today. But she was the church organist at the Pioneer Presbyterian church.

DEBBY: Oh, really? Oh, I didn't know that.

PAULINE: ...where she taught music, and she taught piano lessons all the time when our kids were growing up, and then later she taught music in the grade school. She eventually taught band.

DEBBY: Wow. Now, this was at Slater School?

PAULINE: Yeah, you know, she was the one who started my kids in band. I'll have to tell you this story too, because it is just cute. But my daughter, Janet, came home from school and she said, "I know what I'm going to play in the band, and you're not going to like it." And I said, "Well, it's either the tuba or the drums." She said, "I'm going to be a percussionist."

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: So I went helter-skelter to Ethel's house and said, "Ethel, when Janet comes for your lesson this week, you've got to talk her out of it." Ethel said, "Pauline, you leave Janet alone. She will be a very fine percussionist."

DEBBY: And she is. She is.

PAULINE: And you know the rest of the story.

DEBBY: Yes, she is.

PAULINE: She went on to all four years in college in the orchestra there. She was one of the percussionists who, when the director needed somebody to fill in on the spur of the moment or in one of his groups, he called Janet to come in and fill in.

DEBBY: Oh, yes. I'll bet.

PAULINE: And so... then she had, of course, taught herself to play the dulcimer.

DEBBY: I know, and I just love that.

PAULINE: Just... Yes, music has been a very important part in this community.

DEBBY: Yes, it has been, Pauline. I guess maybe it is time to get this all down, because eventually it will be lost if we don't.

PAULINE: Well, a lot of students from the Burns school system have gone on to have careers in music, in one way or another. They'd either used it as an avocation or they have used it as a vocation. Chris Raymond, the last I knew, had a band—he plays with.... They moved to Portland years ago but he was... I think he played the saxophone. Everybody knew who Chris Raymond was because he was so good. You know Thad Geer? Thad Geer is a wonderful musician. Tom Creekmore, who moved away but... A great musician. Those are just some of them I can think of off the top of my head. And there was this group, older than I, there were some people who did music professionally and wrote music professionally, but... Some of it is in the oral history, but I just can't remember off the top of my head.

DEBBY: Well, Pauline, this is wonderful.

PAULINE: I would just kind of bring you up on a couple of other things before Ken came here, and then...

DEBBY: Yes, please do. Please do.

PAULINE: At the time, after Mr. Buhman left--and there may have been someone else after Mr. Buhman. I can't remember. But at some point in time, about the time that Karen was in tenth grade, Ethel had the grade school band. She started my kids. And then some time... Well, let's see... '77... about '73. 1973 about, or '72 they hired a man named Ron House.

DEBBY: Oh, yeah.

PAULINE: His philosophy of music was different than mine. I don't... I'm not going to be critical of what he did, because he took the stage band to Hawaii two years in a row. But he was pretty much focused on one style of music and it is just my opinion that he totally mishandled the music program in Harney County.

DEBBY: I hear you.

PAULINE: But others think he was the most wonderful thing that ever came to Harney County because their kids were on the stage band that got to go to Hawaii. And they would be... Highly praise him. And in my old age I know there is no right or wrong.

DEBBY: Exactly.

PAULINE: This was his way. He wasn't what I would have wanted in the way of music for my kids. But... and they suffered for it. The years that they were in high school, they suffered... as the result of changes that he made. After he left, I think I saw a miracle came in and he tried to put it back together. And he did a good job. Here is a young teacher, and it was a struggle, and he didn't have a lot of support from key people, let's put it that way. So... But he took the kids to music festivals or solo contests.

DEBBY: Wonderful. Wonderful.

PAULINE: He took them to Eugene for some kind of musical thing that they did. He was really big on music theory, and he taught a lot of music theory. My daughter Karen, especially, benefitted from that.

DEBBY: Wonderful.

PAULINE: And that's also the period of time when the theater got started. The high school theater... got started again. And Lauren Brown's parents... I've been trying to think of their

names, and I just can't. But Lauren Brown's parents... And he actually... [Bill] Howry was their name--he actually wrote some musicals. The first one was "How Now John Hancock."

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: He wrote the play with music.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: And then they did... They went on to do other musicals. They did "Music Man." They did "Wizard of Oz." They did... They did several. But he wrote the first two or three plays or musicals that they did.

DEBBY: Oh, that is wonderful.

PAULINE: So, that's a little piece that needs to be documented.

DEBBY: It does. It does. You know I remember that when we first moved here we played in the pit orchestra... down in Eugene.

PAULINE: Yeah.

DEBBY: And Mary Lemos, I believe, was a Julie Andrews character.

PAULINE: Yeah. That was kind of a hard time for the arts in Burns. Those of us that supported it worked really, really hard to keep the kids going. And those that didn't support it were very rude, indeed.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: So it was... It was not a... I have always regretted that my kids did not have the good music experience that I had when they were in high school. But you know, Karen now has... I mean she went on to get her degree in music and she is now teaching.

DEBBY: That is so wonderful.

PAULINE: She gave piano lessons while she was raising her kids. She gave piano lessons...

DEBBY: To the what? Is she a vocal teacher? Did she teach choir?

PAULINE: She teaches choir.

DL Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: She actually filled in for the band leader when she was on maternity leave. So she had the high school band for several months during... up to the point of playing for graduation. Did very well.

DEBBY: That's wonderful.

PAULINE: But the discipline thing is the real challenge. And of course, Janet has remained active in the Chamber Music Society and with her High Desert Fiddlers and her own little sagebrush...

DEBBY: ... I love that.

PAULINE: And she plays for the church when they ask. She played for Arlie Oster's funeral. And so she... you know. She's just... and leads the charge to do the Country... put country western--it's *country* music, it is *not* country *western* music--Country Music Jamboree.

DEBBY: Right.

PAULINE: She, you know, does that. So, you know, it is still a big part of her life. My son played the French horn in the high school band. And all through college he played in the band. But now he is a member of a church choir in Baker City. He had been part of, I think, what they call the Oregon Trail Singers, but I'm not sure of the name either. But the group did folk songs--Oregon Trail type songs--and sang at the interpretive center.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: And he has been a key player in the theatrical group, and the music... So the fact that they were exposed to music as kids, and the school system, and of course in the home—we had lots of music in our home--has stayed with them all their lives. I think that all of us that are musicians say no matter what you learn to do you can still sing and play your instrument and enjoy music when you're 92 years old, but you can't go play football.

DEBBY: That is so true. That is *so* true [laughter].

PAULINE: It is such a... Mr. Robe who was a math teacher... He was very analytical about the whole thing. He said, "Pauline, you know, music is math." Because I was a very poor math student. So... And he would explain to me that there was no reason for me to be a poor math student, because music was all mathematics-- it was all a mathematical equation.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: And so... I don't know why... I guess is about... One other thing I did know in music, and I'm really quite proud of it, and I have to brag about it a little bit...

DEBBY: You do. You do.

PAULINE: We had this 4-H club when my kids were that age, and we had three or four mothers who took turns doing different things. Rose Fisher did the sewing, and ... Oh, I can't remember now... Somebody else did knitting and crocheting-- I guess that was Kayla Skeleton(?). And

then somebody had to do cooking so... I hate to cook, but guess who had to do cooking? So, I was the cooking... and we called this group the Triple Threats.

DEBBY: The Triple Threats?

PAULINE: The Triple Threats. So... My cooking skills are about as good as my musical skills because I can remember one time, after 4-H, a little girl was telling her mama, and she said... her mom said, "Well, what did you learn today?" And she said, "We learned different ways to scramble eggs."

DEBBY: Oh! [laughter]

PAULINE: One of the ways was supposed to be successful, but it wasn't. But at any rate, when these kids... and they started like fifth grade in 4-H, or fourth grade. So, by the time they got to be junior high age, they wanted to do their sewing project, they wanted to do their cooking project, they wanted to do their knitting project, but they didn't want to do that at their meetings. They wanted to do something fun. So we had a band.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. How cool.

PAULINE: The kids had guitars. Some of them had guitars, and they could all sing, and one of the little girls had an accordion, and Janet, of course, was the percussionist.

DEBBY: Yes. Yes.

PAULINE: So we proceeded to do "Your Cheating Heart" and I don't know, all these easy things that I could handle. It was the time that things like "Blue Denim" was the music of the days. And they very much wanted... oh, "Time in a Bottle" was one of the things they wanted... and I said you're just going to have to do that on your own because I've got... Like my daughters say, I have no sense of rhythm at all. No timing. So, at any rate, we would have our meetings and we would play our guitars and we would sing, and we put together a program and we recorded to try out, to go to Arizona to play for the National 4-H Conference.

DEBBY: Wow!

PAULINE: Well, they chose a pair of sisters that sang to go. Because it's a lot easier to send two little girls than it is to send twelve with instruments and all. But we were up to doing it. But they invited us to go to State Fair to play. So, that fall we went to State Fair and performed several times on the stage. And the mother of the two little girls came to me and said, "You know, I don't know why they picked my two little girls to go." I'm sure the logistics was what kept us from going, because they were really good.

DEBBY: But how wonderful!

PAULINE: They really were good and they had lots and lots of fun. But some of them didn't sing very well. In fact, to my very great... Again I just feel bad about it today, but somebody was singing off-key and I thought it was Janet horsing around. I mean, you know the drummers, of course...

DEBBY: Yes, they were famous for that.

PAULINE: They are famous for that.

DEBBY: They are.

PAULINE: So, one day when they were out at my house and all, you know, in the living room where all, you know... and I kicked her out of the band. I said, "Janet, you just sing right or you don't sing." So she got up and left. When... Years later... And the thing went okay after that. But years later, one of the other girls in the club said, "You know Mrs. Braymen that was Renee." And she said we all tried to cover her up, but she just sang so terrible.

DEBBY: Oh.

PAULINE: And so they would all try to cover for her.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: Well, then Renee shut up after I kicked Janet out, and so things sounded okay then.

DEBBY: Yeah.

PAULINE: But... Anyway, so Janet does not sing. I ruined her singing career... was ended right there. She refuses to sing now.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: So, they had a good time and they still remember that today. We did that... Like three years we did that.

DEBBY: That is wonderful. That is wonderful.

PAULINE: So, that's kind of... Oh, and I didn't even get to the community concerts.

DEBBY: Oh, well, let's just...

PAULINE: Maybe we should just touch briefly on that.

DEBBY: Let's do.

PAULINE: I know that...

DEBBY: I don't know what your time is like but I would be delighted to hear about it. Because I've been looking in the newspapers online—I mean on the...

PAULINE: Evidently in about 1950-- because in my programs the earliest one is 1950-- the community got together and formed a community concert association and sold memberships to bring in these concerts.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: I don't know... You know, none of these people are familiar to me. But today I have no idea of the St. Louis... Sounds like it must have been something pretty special but I don't know. I think maybe the name was just... This guy was a bass baritone but none of these names are familiar as people who... you know, from listening to the radio and stuff.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: But, at any rate, they... they brought in—I don't remember how many—concerts a year. It seems to me like it was at least three, maybe four. Everybody subscribed for a certain fee for the year, for the membership to go to the concerts and of course, you had to be a member in order to attend. So, there was a big community fund drive to get everybody signed up. Some people bought tickets, or used them... bought a membership but used their tickets to give to kids from the school, so that the school kids could go.

DEBBY: Oh, how neat!

PAULINE: So all of these I went to because I received a ticket to go.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh.

PAULINE: ...from some benefactor.

DEBBY: Oh, that is wonderful!

PAULINE: So, you know... And I wasn't the only one.

DEBBY: Where did they have these concerts?

PAULINE: In the Lincoln Junior... in the high school. Junior high school. Which is now Lincoln Junior High. In the auditorium... I don't know how long it went, but it had... I was married in '57 and about that time they asked me to be secretary for that group. I was secretary for, I think, two years. But with starting a family and all, which is why I dropped out... sometime after that. So that was '50 to '57, so seven or eight years that we did this.

DEBBY: Wow.

PAULINE: Then it stopped for a while and then along some time in the very, very late '60s or early '70s there was an effort to get it started again. We had community concerts for... I just... I don't remember. Two or three years? Three or four years? A couple of years. I don't remember. I

know that we bought a membership and went with the kids. It was important; they remember those times. The only group that I remember came in, and probably made the biggest impact on my own children and their musical careers was... Really, of all the concerts... I mean I remember going and remember people performing, but I will never forget those two Indian men. They grew up in the jungles of Brazil. They found a guitar when they were kids. They strung it up somehow or other, and taught themselves to play it.

DEBBY: Wow!

PAULINE: It wasn't a traditional way to play a guitar, but they found this old guitar. Then they went on to become world-known guitarists. They came to Burns. The first part of their program they did in their Indian dress and regalia, and played in the manner in which they had taught themselves, which was wonderful.

DEBBY: I bet it was.

PAULINE: But very... not traditional. Then the last part of their concert they were in tuxedos.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: And played classical guitar.

DEBBY: Oh, my goodness.

PAULINE: Just absolutely fabulous. Really made a big impression on my kids. It didn't last very long. People just didn't ... TV does take away from...

DEBBY: Yes, it sure does. And think of kids now, with all of the electronics that is ... Oh, my goodness. It's a real...

PAULINE: Well, I run around with my...

DEBBY: Do you have you... in to you?

PAULINE: Yeah.

DEBBY: Would you mind if we copy this program?

PAULINE: No, I will leave this with you. I do want all this stuff back, of course.

DEBBY: Oh, yes. Absolutely, Pauline.

PAULINE: This I think, was probably taken in '56.

DEBBY: Oh, that's... We need to make a copy of that as well.

PAULINE: And of course, the Burns Memorial Field down here is where we played games.

DEBBY: Oh, that's where this...?

PAULINE: Yeah, down here, over the hill.

DEBBY: Yes.

PAULINE: We'd get out of school and walk down over the hill to the grandstands.

DEBBY: Now, they don't have that there now? I was looking...

PAULINE: The grandstand is gone. The field is still there. They use it to play baseball.

DEBBY: Oh, my gosh. You had twirlers, too, didn't you?

PAULINE: Oh, yeah. And a drum major.

DEBBY: Yes, I see. Oh, my goodness. Pauline, that is so wonderful.

PAULINE: And then this, and I really do treasure this because I was... but this tells here, information about the... things that we did. And like I said, I've always said sixty—there were ninety kids in that choir.

DEBBY: My goodness.

PAULINE: And they were... piano. She matched our voices.

DEBBY: Oh, yes. Wow.

PAULINE: I mean she matched our voices, and that's one reason I became... My voice didn't match very well with...

DEBBY: Did you ever have recordings of these groups? Or was that before such a thing was available?

PAULINE: I don't... I don't... I don't think so.

DEBBY: Okay.

PAULINE: And I did write that down too, so...

DEBBY: Karen might be able to scan these right now if you want to wait.

PAULINE: Well, that would be good.

DEBBY: We could ask her-- I'll ask her. Pauline, thank you so much.

PAULINE: You're sure welcome.

DEBBY: I can't tell you how much I appreciate this.

End of recording
