

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #286 - Sides A/B

Subject: Inez NeVore Ausmus - With Video

Place: Ausmus Home - Burns, Oregon

Date: April 19, 1991

Interviewers: Dorothea Purdy & Barbara Lofgren

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy, along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we're talking with Inez NeVore Ausmus at her home in Burns, Oregon. Today's date is April 19th, 1991. Following our interview we will do a short video of Inez, and it will be stored at the Library along with the transcript and cassette tape, the number is 286.

INEZ AUSMUS: And when I was about three my father went to Oklahoma to work in the oil fields, and we soon joined him. And that was the end of the farming. I grew up in the oil fields. And it's a gypsy kind of life, and a lot different from anything that you'll ever run into in Harney County. Because we didn't have mobile homes, but we had --- Lucky people, had a two roomed house that --- they called them boxcar houses, because they were built that way, with a rounding roof, you know. And they were on skids, and they moved them from one place to the other, with a truck and a team.

And I can remember washdays when Mom would holler, "Let's get the clothes." And we'd all run out and pick the washing off of the line because the well was coming in over here, and it was spraying the whole neighborhood with oil.

BARBARA: Oh, yes.

INEZ: And sometimes we got them in, and sometimes we didn't.

BARBARA: Sometimes you had to do laundry over again, huh?

INEZ: Yeah, right. And I've seen Daddy come home a lot of times so wet with oil that it

would be dripping off of his ears, when they would bring in a well. So it's kind of a fantastic story.

DOROTHEA: Well let's go back and find out what your name is, maiden name included.

INEZ: Well my name is Inez Mary NeVore Ausmus.

DOROTHEA: And when were you born?

INEZ: May 14th, 1911.

DOROTHEA: And what were your parent's names?

INEZ: My mother's was Pauline, and I'm sandwiched, because I named my daughter Pauline. And my father's name was Isaac.

DOROTHEA: And what was your mother's maiden name?

INEZ: Nimz.

DOROTHEA: Nimz?

INEZ: Nimz. And she is a first generation transplant from Germany. Both of her parents were born in Germany. And she was born in a sod house in western Kansas.

DOROTHEA: Do you remember your grandparents?

INEZ: I remember my Grandfather Nimz. And I was so very frightened of him that I would just sit on the chair and shake whenever we went to visit him. He was a merchant, and well educated, and spoke very good English, but in his home English was never spoken. It was German, and I never heard a word of German any place else. So Mom would take us to visit, and we would sit on the chair, and Grandpa would talk to her in German. And she would answer him in English, and we would just shake in our boots, because we were so scared of him.

DOROTHEA: You didn't understand what he was talking about?

INEZ: Oh, no. And he was not a demonstrative man either, you know, and we were always greeted but, you know, he never made a fuss over us. And my father's parents,

we lived with them and went to school one year. And then Grandma, after she retired, she didn't want to live alone any longer, she lived with us. And so I remember her very well. And she had a lot to do with, well the way I feel, you know. It's just, we were just good friends.

DOROTHEA: Can you tell us something about your schooling? You said you went to school the one-year. Did you do a lot of changing in schools, or learn at home?

INEZ: Not really, because when the, when we should have started school when I was 6, we landed in a very over-crowded country school which was designed for about 15 kids, and there were probably 70 enrolled there. And the teacher was hired to teach the district children, and the oil field kids didn't count. So she called the roll every morning and that's the only time she ever spoke to us. We just sat there the rest of the time. Well I can't blame her, but that didn't last very long. Mom took us out of school right away, and she taught then, taught us at home until I was 9, and then we started to school. And I started in the third grade when I was 9 years old.

BARBARA: You talk about we; do you have brothers and sisters?

INEZ: My brother, yes, my brother Alton.

BARBARA: Alton.

INEZ: And he is two years younger than I am. And we stayed in Kingman, Kansas with Grandpa and Grandma NeVore, and went to school there that one-year. And then the next year we moved to Covington, Oklahoma and attended Sinclair private school, which was furnished by the Sinclair Company for their employees. And we were there three years. And as long as Daddy worked for Sinclair, why we went to school there. And then we ---

BARBARA: Was it a brand new school then that the Company made for the workers?

INEZ: The Company built it and hired the teachers, and I don't know the mechanics of it,

because I wasn't interested enough to find out. But it was a good school. It was a four-room schoolhouse, and there were two grades in each room. And it was, academically it was an excellent school.

DOROTHEA: Can you tell something about the school? I mean did you have, you said they hired the teachers, so you had more than one? You didn't all go to one class?

INEZ: No, there were four teachers, and as I remember it, the principal who --- there was five of them, and they had the first and second, third and fourth, and fifth and sixth, and seventh and eighth grades. And it was a better than ordinary school. And I can't remember the playground equipment, but I know that it was a good modern school. And then when I was in the sixth grade we moved to Blackwell, and bought a place there. And Mom kept us in school in the wintertime, and then we gypsied with Daddy in the summer. And so I graduated from high school in Blackwell, Oklahoma.

DOROTHEA: Do you have any friends left that were your school friends at that time?

INEZ: Yes, I do. Henry --- and the first two years we were married, we'd get the yearbook out about every three months so that he could prove to me that we were in a class together.

BARBARA: Oh, is that right?

INEZ: He didn't remember either, but we had the same teacher, and so he ... his knowledge on that. But I never remembered seeing him then until --- And I still correspond with three of the girls that were in my graduating class. There were four of them, two sisters, and one of the sisters is dead, so that just leaves the three of them. But I still keep in touch with them. I got a Christmas letter from one of them, just a real nice one.

BARBARA: Do you remember some of the other activities that you did while you were in high school? Did you participate in plays, or programs, or in things like that?

INEZ: Well I, I played basketball. And I took four years of Latin, and I was editor of the column for the Latin Club, in the school newspaper.

BARBARA: So you must have liked English then?

INEZ: Oh yes, I liked English very much. And I was always active in the Latin Club. In fact I've got a medal around here some place. It's, I think its Caesar's 3000th birthday, or something, that I got for getting A's in Latin that year. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: You say you graduated from high school. Did you go on to college from there, or were you able?

INEZ: I went to Oklahoma College for Women for two years. And then I took a teaching job in Kansas, and went to summer school. But that was after I met Henry, and it didn't last very long. I taught two years in Kansas.

BARBARA: And what did you teach, elementary?

INEZ: I taught rural school. One year I had eight students in seven grades.

BARBARA: Oh, my.

INEZ: And the other year I had seventeen students, and all eight grades.

DOROTHEA: And where did you teach, there in Blackwell?

INEZ: No, no I did substitute teaching there for a while, but I went to Kansas and got a job out there for fifty dollars a month. And oh boy, was I ever glad to get it, that was 1933. And I got a raise the next year. But ---

DOROTHEA: You probably thought you was pretty flush, didn't you?

INEZ: Oh, I paid twelve dollars a month for room and board. So that left me a lot over to spend on foolish things.

BARBARA: It's hard to imagine, isn't it?

INEZ: Well when I try to tell my grandchildren that I went to Oklahoma College for Women one year with three hundred dollars cash. And I worked for my room and board; I

worked in the dormitory dining room. But it cost me three hundred dollars to go to school that one year.

DOROTHEA: Boy, you can't even get through the door now with three hundred dollars.

INEZ: Well it was not easy.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

INEZ: Roy, not Roy, but Rogers, Will Rogers came to speak at the college. And he wasn't a regular lyceum number. We got to see all of those things, you know. But he was there for the Red Cross, or something like that, and he charged a dollar. It was a dollar admission, and I couldn't go because I didn't have the dollar. But that's one time that I would have got to see him in person, and I missed it because I'd spent all my money on ice cream.

DOROTHEA: And then some time along in there came along Henry, and how did he come back to being there?

INEZ: Well Henry was a year ahead of me in high school, and then he was in the Marines three years. So it was about 1932 when we met. I graduated in 1930, and it was 1932 I guess, after I came home from my second year in school, maybe '33, I don't know how that comes out. But anyway, I'd been away at school two years when I came back. And we happened to meet up, and oh, one thing led to another and we were married in 1937.

DOROTHEA: Why did he come to where you were?

INEZ: Well he had family.

DOROTHEA: Oh, does he have family back there?

INEZ: He has family around Blackwell. And he had an aunt there, and of course other relatives too. And Dick was there working for a construction company while they were building streets and roads, while Henry was in high school, and so he worked with them. You know, did part time help with them. Then after he came back from the Marines, he

went there instead of coming back to Oregon.

BARBARA: So did you meet at a dance, or a social gathering or something?

INEZ: Not a dance!

BARBARA: Oh, you were not allowed?

INEZ: No, I wanted to teach school in Blackwell, and the contract forbade us from dancing, or smoking, or getting married.

DOROTHEA: Oh, you broke that rule.

INEZ: And so yes, it was at a rural school social is where we met. And so --- but I won't even admit now that we went to a dance.

BARBARA: Well, if you met around '32, or '33, and didn't get married until '37, that was a long courtship then.

INEZ: Well yes, but it took a long time in those days. I had college money to pay back, and this and that, and so it took a while. But I belonged to a rebel class in high school. We weren't allowed to have proms, you know. We had our school banquet, and then the commencement exercises. And after that of course, we were graduated, and the schools had no authority over us. And so we all chipped in and hired a band and a hall, and we had a dance after commencement.

BARBARA: I love it. (Laughter)

INEZ: I don't know whether they still continue the tradition to this day or not, but we did that. And in 1980 we had our 50th class reunion. And of the 103 that graduated in 1930, there was 65 at the 50th graduation reunion.

BARBARA: Isn't that marvelous.

DOROTHEA: That's great.

BARBARA: That's great.

INEZ: So we kind of stuck together.

DOROTHEA: Well you have been mentioning Henry's name, we'd better ask you who this Henry is.

INEZ: Well Henry is the son of a Harney County pioneer, Benjamin Ausmus.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

INEZ: And he had three brothers and a sister. Izola O'Keefe was his sister, and Ormand, and Standley, and Dick Ausmus were his brothers. And Gladys Ausmus, Ormand's wife, is the only one of them that is still alive, besides Henry.

DOROTHEA: And she's now a Denstedt? No, no, she's Ausmus.

INEZ: No, she is an Ausmus, but she was a Denstedt.

DOROTHEA: Okay, she was a Denstedt. Okay, I got the names mixed up. She was a Denstedt, but she is now an Ausmus. Can you tell us something about your courtship?

INEZ: Oh, that was a long time ago. We had a lot of fun. We ---

BARBARA: Did you go for drives, or movies?

INEZ: We went for drives, we went to parties, we went to movies. All the usual things, and we just managed to have a good time. We liked each other, and we had the same friends, and so ---

BARBARA: It was just easy.

INEZ: Yes.

DOROTHEA: Did you play cards, and things then? Or what was your games like?

INEZ: We played party games.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

INEZ: That --- the kids will turn up their nose at them now.

BARBARA: Charades?

INEZ: Oh yes, we played charades. We had in high school, we had what we called a Hobo Day, and everybody dressed up in funny clothes and went to school that day. And

we had church parties. And there were 12 girls that clicked together, and we formed a club, and I guess that lasted for about 3 years. And we called it the Belvamis Club, which was the first letter of the name of each one of the girls.

DOROTHEA: Belvamis.

INEZ: Belvamis.

DOROTHEA: Belvamis, okay.

INEZ: We had an awful time making a word out of all those letters, but we did. And ---

BARBARA: So where were you married? Were you married in a church, or your family's home?

INEZ: We were married in the parsonage, in the manse. I had promised my 8th graders that I would stay with them until they finished their county examinations, which they had to take before they could enter high school. And I didn't know how long that would be, and so we said we would get married the first of May, meaning a period of time. But I got home on the 27th of April, and we got to talking about when we were going to get married. And Henry says, "Well you said the first." And so we did!

DOROTHEA: That was the day Ronda got married.

BARBARA: That was quick.

DOROTHEA: What was your wedding like? Can you remember the ---

INEZ: Henry's mother was there from Oregon, and that was the main reason why we picked the quick date, was because she had intended to go back, come back to Oregon on the 28th of, you know, and then when I got home why she decided she'd stay for the wedding. And so that's what she did. And she and my mother were the attendants at the wedding, they signed the marriage certificates. And my dad was there at the ceremony. And then we went home and had a wedding supper cooked by my sister-in-law, and that was it. And we couldn't, we didn't take a wedding trip or anything like that. But Henry

says, "Now where do you want to go on your honeymoon?" And I said, "Well I want to go to Mangum, Oklahoma." "Alright, that's where we'll go." But by the time 1950 rolled around, my roommate that I wanted to visit in Mangum lived in El Paso, Texas. So we took the four kids and we went to El Paso on our honeymoon.

DOROTHEA: With your four kids. Okay, how did you get back to Harney County then?

INEZ: Well we both wanted to leave Blackwell. Neither one of us wanted to stay there, it wasn't home to me any longer. And he'd been painting, house painting, and he thought the paint bothered him, and he kind of wanted to get out of it. So Ormand said he'd give Henry a job if we came out. And we decided that a year would be a reasonable time, and if I didn't like it then after a year, why we'd go someplace else. I'm going to make up my mind some day whether I want to stay or not.

DOROTHEA: Oh, you haven't decided yet?

INEZ: No, I haven't decided yet.

DOROTHEA: Well that's nice.

INEZ: I'd have starved to death if it hadn't of been for Gladys when we first came out here. She fed me bread and butter sandwiches with the kids. We crossed the Oregon line and I have been hungry ever since. So I guess it was a good move.

DOROTHEA: So what did, you did live here your year, and then what did you do after that year?

INEZ: Well by that time we had grasped a little piece of land. So we just stayed and enlarged our holdings, and stayed and stayed. And I guess it was a good move.

DOROTHEA: Became a farmer, rancher type person. And in this time you had your four children. Were they all born in Harney County?

INEZ: Pauline was five months when we came to Oregon. She was born in Blackwell. And we loaded our worldly possessions in a two-wheeled trailer, and the back seat of the

car. And we put her bassinet up on top of all the quilts and everything that we had in the back seat, and we came to Oregon.

BARBARA: And what year was this?

INEZ: 1938, she was five months old; it was in September of 1938. And John was born in 1940, at Dot Denstedt's maternity home. And Dr. Homan was the doctor. And David was born in 1943, in the old hospital, and Dr. John (Weare) was his doctor. And Jim was born in 1944, in the old hospital, and Dr. John was his doctor.

DOROTHEA: And do you remember your kids' pets? Did they have lots of pets? I know Pauline is allergic to cats, but she still has one.

INEZ: Oh yes, well it seems like she's allergic to Siamese cats.

DOROTHEA: Oh, is that what it is?

INEZ: Yeah, so she gets along all right with Violet. But ---

DOROTHEA: She had an old black cat that she got along pretty good with too. So ---

INEZ: She had a Siamese cat for a long time, but he was her cat, and if he wanted any attention he came to me. But David was his person. If there were 50 people in the room, why he'd go to David. So it really, she didn't have too much to do with him. Except that he lived in the house there with us. And John never saw a puppy in his life that he didn't bring home. So we had dogs and cats.

BARBARA: So you were out on a ranch at that time, and so you had a lot of room for animals.

INEZ: We had room for them, and I like cats. And oh, we had birds at one time, and I don't know, I guess we had a little bit of everything. I raised geese one year, and I raised turkeys one year. And I got a hold of a pair of muscovy ducks, and they'd go out and swim on the pond, and then all the tourists would stop in at the house and wanted to know what kind of ducks those were. Finally somebody didn't stop in and ask, I guess they just

shot them and took them home. Anyway, I lost my ducks.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

BARBARA: Now is this the place where Pauline (Braymen) now lives?

INEZ: Yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay. What are some of the things that you did with your children as they were growing up? Were there special times that you had?

INEZ: Well we picnicked a lot. And Pauline says that she spent half of her life sitting in the back seat of the car, you know, going on a picnic, or coming home. But they seemed to enjoy it at the time. Henry would go with us if he had time, and if he didn't have time why we'd go by ourselves. We'd go to Idlewild, or Snow Mountain, or some place like that, you know.

DOROTHEA: I kind of relate with Pauline. It seems like I've said this a time or two, too. We always went on picnics every weekend, I think.

INEZ: And we'd come home in the evenings so tired, and so hot, and we'd all lay down on the lawn under those big poplar trees and say, "Why did we ever leave home?"

BARBARA: Did you swim in the rivers?

INEZ: No, we swam at the swimming pool, and the kids all went swimming.

BARBARA: I see.

INEZ: They were in Scouts, and 4-H, and we were very involved with the 4-H program for a good many years.

DOROTHEA: Now did you teach school after you came out here at all? You never?

INEZ: No, I never had time. I was one of these people, I didn't work, and so I had time for all of the committee meetings and everything else that went on, you know, because I didn't work.

DOROTHEA: And is that when you became active in your church and, or was that later?

INEZ: We, I started to church when we came out here. I mean that's part of my routine. And the kids were raised up in the Presbyterian Church. And we all became members in 1949. Henry has been honored the last two years. We have, in October, we have an Octogenarian Sunday.

DOROTHEA: What is that?

INEZ: Somebody that is eighty years old.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

INEZ: And so he's been there two years, but they've got to pin a rose on me this summer, because I'm going to make it.

BARBARA: I remember a couple of years ago there was a picture in the newspaper of, with people, I remember Marcus was in there, the picture, and ---

INEZ: Lela Sitz, and Trilby Bennett, and I don't know, Marjorie Shull was the last time. I don't know if she was in this one not. But we've got some good old boys in that church, I'll tell you.

BARBARA: And what other organizations have you belonged to then in the community?

INEZ: Well of course I went into the Rebekahs immediately. I transferred from Blackwell. And that was my night out, we met twice a month. Henry always stayed with the kids, and I went to lodge. Really, that was, until the kids started school, that was the only place that I ever went without them.

DOROTHEA: Did you belong to Grange?

INEZ: We belonged to the Grange for a good many years. And I belonged to the Mother's Club, to the Sagebrush Club, not the Mother's Club, the Sagebrush Club. And the Soroptimist Club, and I can't think of anything else right now. But if it was going on I probably had my finger in there sometime or another.

DOROTHEA: Well I know you were a real active person. You also worked a little bit in

the hospital. What did you do that --- not volunteering?

INEZ: No, that was just volunteer work, that was all.

DOROTHEA: Volunteering.

INEZ: Just volunteer that I did at the hospital. It was something that I could do, and it helped out.

DOROTHEA: And what was that?

INEZ: Well I baby-sat for the mothers with sick children. So the mothers could go home for a rest, or to eat or something like that.

DOROTHEA: Well I know your mother worked at the hospital. She was a nurse's aide, or something.

INEZ: Well she was a practical nurse. They don't have them now, I guess. But it would have been an LPN, I suppose. Because she had --- But when we lived in the oil fields, we lived between towns, and it was before paved roads. And so when it rained, it was muddy, or in the wintertime the roads were bad. And we were five miles from Covington, and six miles from Garber. And there was a telephone at the little store on the corner from where we lived. And the doctor would call the store and say, "Mrs. Smiths going into labor, will you go to stay with her until I can get there," and so Mom would go. And she did that a lot while we were in oil fields.

DOROTHEA: I remember she was with me when I had my son, and some reason or other I couldn't see my kids after they were born, you know, there was something the matter. But she snuck him in so we could see him, and so ---

BARBARA: You say your mother came here? When did she come to Oregon then to be with you?

INEZ: She came here in 1941, after Daddy died.

BARBARA: I see.

INEZ: And she came for a visit and just stayed. Because, because of my kids.

BARBARA: Uh huh. Your family was here, so she just ---

INEZ: Yeah, uh huh. And my brother was in Oklahoma City, and she visited them for a couple of months every year, but she lived here.

BARBARA: That made it very special for you then, to have your mother around.

INEZ: Oh yes, very much.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And that probably helped you to decide, well it wasn't so bad in Harney County. I'll make up my mind to stay one of these days.

INEZ: I don't know, by the time she got here, I knew Ida Cross, and Ida Whiting, and Edith Varien, and they all did a pretty good job of mothering me. So I was never lonesome.

BARBARA: Oh, that's super.

INEZ: Agness Brown was Noble Grand when I joined the Rebekahs here. And of course her family and my family are the same age, and they grew up together. And so she has always been a special person in my life.

DOROTHEA: And you also belonged to, well the Library Board, I should say. You were on that as a big executive person or some-thing. Can you tell us something about your term in that?

INEZ: I was on the School Board too, for a while, by accident. But I enjoyed that. I was on the School Board when they built the Filmore and Washington schools. We needed to expand and the question was just how we should accomplish that. And this is the thing that we decided on, and I always have thought it was a good idea. But Grace Smyth appointed me to the Library Board. That must have been about 1959. And we built up a good functioning Library Board. She wasn't satisfied with the Board that was there. They

weren't doing very much and she wanted something done about the library.

BARBARA: Where was the library at that time?

INEZ: Well the library was in the old City Hall, on the ground floor there. And the jail was in the basement, and the judge's offices were upstairs.

DOROTHEA: Which is now the offices of Cramer and whatever his name is, Monroe or something. What's upstairs now, do you know?

INEZ: I think its just storage.

BARBARA: Hoyts have offices up there.

DOROTHEA: Oh, do they?

INEZ: Who?

BARBARA: Hoyt's, I think, have offices up there.

INEZ: Oh, well that may be.

BARBARA: They are scattered in several places around town.

INEZ: We got \$300 a month, no, we got \$300 a year for books from the Harney County Court. And we got, we were supposed to get money from the Hines City Council, but we were lucky, you know, if we got \$50 from them. It took a little bit of digging, but we got it. And of course the City Council paid both the librarian and the expenses for keeping the library open. But that's a very small space.

DOROTHEA: Yes. Was Gen Slater the librarian then?

INEZ: Gen Slater, Gen was librarian. Yes, I think she was librarian then. And I can't remember the lady's name that was before her. Can you?

DOROTHEA: No.

INEZ: She was a lovely, lovely person. And of course I used the library a lot. And we were well acquainted, but she wasn't ---

DOROTHEA: It seemed like, was she a little gray haired lady?

INEZ: Yeah, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: I can see her, but I can't remember her name.

INEZ: She didn't feel confined for space there, but Gen felt a little bit hemmed in.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

INEZ: So she went into the toilet that was under the stairway, but opened into the library, and she put an apple box over the toilet seat and made a desk out of the lavatory and put her typewriter in there so she could have an office. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Oh my.

INEZ: There was no room for anybody else, but she did get herself and her typewriter in there.

BARBARA: So how did you come about then, thinking about building a new library?

INEZ: Well we began talking about improvements, and the Library Board, in a couple of years was Chester Felt, and Berneace Shelton, and --- well I'll have to write them down here as I think of them and then I'll tell you who the Board was. But it was a good Board. Roger Tiller.

DOROTHEA: Do you want a piece of paper?

INEZ: And they all worked, they all worked real hard. And I don't remember what the first amount of money, it was a bequest, and I think it was from Claire Luce. And we began building on that. Helen Jenkins was on the Board. And she knew Jim Fellows when he lived in Burns. And Jim made a donation, I think, to the Mother's Club, and Historical Society, and the Library. And he was going to give ten thousand dollars to the Historical Society and to the Mother's Club, and five thousand dollars to the Library. And we started writing to him, keeping him informed about our plans for the Library. And I guess every one of us wrote to him, because I know I wrote a lot of letters to him. And he finally changed his program, and he was going to give the Library twenty thousand dollars. And

as it turned out, we were in his will when he died, and that is where a good part of the building money came.

This lady that was over here by Princeton, her picture is in the Library, she gave money. And several others did, that I can't remember. But we finally built up a sum, and we hit a year when the federal government was giving matching funds for building. And we got some money from the state. And with these bequests that we had built up, the Library building didn't cost the people of Harney County a penny. That was paid for out of other sources. And then we talked the County Court into making it a County Library, which makes sense, because everybody in the county uses it.

BARBARA: Right.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

INEZ: And so they have maintained it. And there is still quite a bit of finances from the Luce stock, that the Library is using the interest. But of course that's tied up, so it can't be used for operating expenses. But this historical project is based on the money that Claire Luce gave. And that's about all I know about the Library.

DOROTHEA: Well now what kind of hobbies do you have, now that you're more or less not raising children anymore, and ---

INEZ: Well I always had too many hobbies, to ever specialize in anything. I always had too many things going.

BARBARA: That keeps a person interesting though.

INEZ: Well Carol (Ausmus Waterman) explained to somebody that was at our house for dinner, she says, "This is the only place that you'll go where you can get a lecture from the encyclopedia while you're eating."

DOROTHEA: And Carol is your ex-daughter-in-law?

INEZ: Yes, she was Carol Miller from Crane. And we'd get to talking about something,

and would want more information about it, so I'd get the encyclopedia and I'd read it to them while they were eating their meal. But it was fun.

BARBARA: Sure, it never hurts to learn a little more, does it?

INEZ: Whatever we did, and whoever was there, we always managed to have a good time.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah. We're going to turn this tape over; it's blinking its little red light at me.

SIDE B

BARBARA: ... to go next. Shall we talk about your flowers? Or do you have ---

INEZ: I always had flowers; I always had flowers in the garden. And of course I sewed, and I led 4-H Club, and I did this and I did that. I never could have done any of it without Henry. But then he was always right there to back me up, so that's what counted. He never talked much, but he was always there to help when I needed him.

BARBARA: The strong silent type, huh?

INEZ: Yes. And I started making this collections of slides when, oh it must have been about 1950, '58, '57, '58. Pauline was in Girl Scouts, and they wanted to do a badge on wild flowers. And so I said I would help them, which I had to do a lot of studying before that I could help them. But by the time they got their badges, I was to far into wild flowers to quit.

BARBARA: You were hooked, huh?

INEZ: And so I limited my slides to Harney County flowers. I've got a few from other places, but they don't count. You've got to draw a line some place. I've got about a 125 different flowers, and maybe 500 slides.

BARBARA: Oh, my.

INEZ: And I've showed them and talked about them all over the state.

DOROTHEA: Now is this the collection that you have at the library?

INEZ: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: I saw a bunch of slides up there.

INEZ: Yes, and of course I have the picture of the flower, and then the picture of the plant. Or maybe the picture of the seedpod or something like that. And so there's a 140 slides up there. But I've only got about 125 different flowers. And there's about 25 more that I know of, that I would like to get. But I can't see well enough to focus anymore. Henry got me a new camera along about the time I started in, and if I'd have been smart, I'd of got a telescope. You know, an enlarging lens, and taken better pictures than I had, but I'm strictly an amateur on that.

DOROTHEA: Do you develop any of your own pictures? Did you ever?

INEZ: No, I never did any developing.

DOROTHEA: You left that all up to Pauline, huh?

INEZ: Well she got into that. David got into it, but they never tried to develop the slides.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

BARBARA: So how did you gather all of these pictures? Did you, more of your picnics? Going out and going around and looking?

INEZ: More picnics, yes. And then, you know, after the boys left home why I started going fishing with Henry. There was never room in the boat for me before. Could you shut that door, honey? So I started going with him, and when we went fishing, we went fishing. And when we went flower hunting, we went flower hunting.

DOROTHEA: How about the front door?

INEZ: Well that's all right unless you're cold. But if I saw some-thing that I just absolutely had to have, why he'd stop.

BARBARA: But you always took your camera with you just in case?

INEZ: I always took my camera with me, just in case.

DOROTHEA: It seems like we went on a couple of, or so, lodge trips and you had your camera along and you took pictures of flowers and things at that time.

INEZ: I've got a picture of a bouquet that I picked on the way home from Delintment Lake one Fourth of July. And I've got 23 different flowers in it.

BARBARA: Oh, mercy.

INEZ: Now people say, you know, Harney County is barren, there isn't anything here. But you just have to know where to look is all.

BARBARA: And so where are some of the favorite places that you would go to collect flowers, or to take pictures?

INEZ: Well Steens Mountain, of course. And then into the timber, and I always go up on the hill here. I think that is maybe Pine Springs road now, but it goes up past, from the old Foley place there, and it used to be the Lone Pine Road.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I don't know what it's called now.

BARBARA: Up past Bob Smith's house, up on that road?

INEZ: Yes, and up on the flat up there.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

INEZ: And when the snow is melted off pretty good, I start going up there for wild pansies, they're up there every year. And then there's different places, Sagehen out here is, has mountain lilies. And there was a man that wrote about flowers for the Oregonian, and he wrote about those mountain lilies one time. And he said he knew of five places in Oregon where they grew. But he didn't name Sagehen, so I'm one up on him. I know six places where they grow.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, Clint, in the spring of the year, when they ride and move cows, he

always brings me home one.

INEZ: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: They don't last very long.

INEZ: Well you have to just really take the root if they are going to last.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, yeah.

INEZ: Because they are very much like a crocus. They are a lily, and they are very much like a crocus.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, the minute you pick them, they are just about gone.

INEZ: And the evening primrose that grow out here on the other side of Wright's Point, between Wright's Point and The Narrows, there's a lot of them out there. So I go out there every year and the ---

BARBARA: What, you start in about May sometime usually to take pictures then?

INEZ: Well yes, uh huh. And of course I got involved with the extension classes in flower arranging, and dried flower arranging. And I guess I taught that class for about six years. And I'd start out in the spring gathering material for the dry arrangements.

DOROTHEA: How do you dry your flowers?

INEZ: I usually just hang them upside down, or put them in a vase. DOROTHEA: Just let them dry by themselves natural?

INEZ: Let them dry naturally, yes. But that's just one of the other things that I was interested in.

DOROTHEA: You said you did sewing. Did you sew for all of your kids?

INEZ: My boys would go to the yardage counter and pick out material when we went in the fall to get school shirts. They wouldn't go over and pick out shirts; they'd go and pick out material so that I could make their shirts.

BARBARA: Oh that's great, that's great. Of course a lot of kids, by the time they get to

high school, they don't want Mother to be making anything. You want to pause a minute?

(Telephone rings.)

DOROTHEA: I know you have some grandchildren. Can you tell us how many, and some of their names?

INEZ: Well I have the greatest bunch of grandchildren that you'll ever find anyplace. I don't know where they all came from, but they're super. Pauline has three children. And Karen, her oldest daughter, has Kate and Jeremy, which are great grandchildren, and then better than ever. And John is also Grandpa. Hank has a boy. And then I've lost somebody. Jim has the three girls. And David had a boy and a girl. We lost David's boy the first of the year. And we're still getting over that. But Toni lives in St. Helens.

BARBARA: Okay, can maybe we back up a minute here and get names. Pauline has Karen, and Janet, and Mike. Okay.

INEZ: Janet and Mike, Michael.

BARBARA: Michael.

INEZ: And John has Henry Dallas, who is Hank. And he has a little boy named Dallas Leonard.

DOROTHEA: Hank does.

INEZ: Yes. And David has Dan, who died the first of the year. And Toni, who is his daughter, and she's 23. And Jim has the three girls, Glenda, Brenda, and Amanda. And I got them straight that time.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, you did. You're doing good.

INEZ: Glenda is in the Navy, she's in nurse's training and is toying with the idea of going into Officer's Training School.

DOROTHEA: She's decided maybe nursing school wasn't what she was

--- her forte?

INEZ: No, that's what she wants. Yeah, that's what she wants. But she can ---

BARBARA: She can get it in the service that way.

INEZ: She's getting it in the service, and if she goes into Officer's Training, she'll have better advantages.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

INEZ: And Brenda is in college. And Amanda is our baby. She is the only one we have left around here now.

DOROTHEA: That makes it kind of lonesome, doesn't it?

INEZ: Well, not with Amanda around.

DOROTHEA: Well that's right. Yes, I forgot about Amanda. (Telephone rings) There goes your telephone again; shall we close this off then?

INEZ: All right.

DOROTHEA: I'll let you go answer your telephone. Okay, let's kind of finish this off Inez, before we get too many more interruptions. Is there anything else that you can think of that maybe we want to add on to this? Or any stories that you would like to tell that has happened in your years, growing up with your children, or past?

INEZ: Oh, I'd ought to write a book sometime, but I never will, I'm too lazy. But we had a blockbuster of a 50th wedding anniversary a few years ago here, in 1987. It was the only party I ever went to that lasted two weeks.

BARBARA: Oh, mercy!

INEZ: But we had fun. And that's about the only thing. We've lived in town here now, a little over ten years.

BARBARA: That's what I was going to ask you when Henry retired from the ranch, and you moved into town then? How that came about?

INEZ: Well we lived in Pauline's backyard for a long time. And I wanted more

elbowroom, and so we decided to move to town. And we've been here a little over ten years. We're comfortable here, we like it here. So ---

BARBARA: You do your own thing.

INEZ: Yeah, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well, and it gives you a little bit of space to where you can get out and plant your flowers, and do your yard work, or whatever you want to do.

INEZ: I'm not even going to go out in the yard this year. It's depressing, I can't do anything, so I'm just going to let it grow.

BARBARA: Well we may not have any water to water our flowers anyway.

INEZ: But we have lots of company.

DOROTHEA: Well that keeps a person busy.

INEZ: Well we enjoy it. There never has been any other way. I mean, our house was always where everybody met, and so they still do.

BARBARA: Then you must be pretty special, or people wouldn't keep coming back all the time. You can be proud of that fact.

INEZ: I can cook. (Whispers)

BARBARA: You can cook. Well tell us about your cooking then. That will always bring people back, if you're a good cook.

INEZ: Always, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well I know she was a favorite person of my mother's, so I know that she has to be a special person.

BARBARA: Do you enjoy cooking?

INEZ: Oh yes, I love to cook. And I remember one meal that we had; it was when Ralph Christensen, Ralph Jr., came back from the army. And it was the first day he was home. It was a Sunday, we had dinner at noon, and we were going to snack for supper. And by

5 o'clock there were 17 people there, and they were all hungry. He got home the night before, and he had to come out to the ranch before he could do anything else. And they were there, and I don't know who else. I didn't have anything cooked. I didn't have anything in the refrigerator. And we had canned salmon, and fried potatoes, and I don't know, whatever cake and pie that we had around. And everybody ate, and nobody went away hungry because I had lots of peanut butter. And that was one meal that I really worked on.

DOROTHEA: This is something that I have to put up with all the time at home. That's how Mom Purdy was, you know. Just go to her house and she wasn't happy unless you ate. And she was always cooking. She loved to cook, so she was always cooking. And so you had to do, I mean, you know, you had to eat. And she always put on the biggest meal you ever saw. Clinton says, "Why can't you be like that, why aren't you like that? Mom never had any problem cooking." Well I like to cook, but I don't like to be forced into it.

INEZ: Well, you know, you like to plan a little bit. You haven't got that thing turned on have you?

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

BARBARA: Yes.

INEZ: Oh.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, we were --- But, yeah, this is the old time ladies. They liked to cook, and they liked to prepare for a lot of people. Is there anything else that you can think of?

INEZ: Oh, I can't think of anything else. I think you've got me pretty well taped, so why don't we just turn this off?

DOROTHEA: Okay, and we'll close off and go get a little short video of you.

BARBARA: And we really appreciate your taking time to visit with us this afternoon. It's

been fun.

INEZ: Well its --- There's no use to do anything if you can't have fun doing it.

BARBARA: That's right.

DOROTHEA: That's right.

INEZ: And that's my motto.

DOROTHEA: Okay, Inez, thank you.

(END OF TAPE)

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