

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #322 - Sides A & B

Subject: Dorothy Voegtly; With Video

Place: Voegtly Home - Burns, Oregon

Date: May 13, 1992

Interviewers: Barbara Lofgren & Dorothea Purdy

Release Form: Yes

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy along with Barbara Lofgren and today we're talking with Dorothy Voegtly at her home in Burns, Oregon. Today's date is May 13th, 1992. Following our interview, we will be doing a short video of Dorothy and it will be stored at the library along with the transcript and the cassette tape, the number is 322. Would you please tell us your full name including your maiden name?

DOROTHY VOEGTLY: Okay, I'm Dorothy Anne Blinn McDade Voegtly.

DOROTHEA: And would you mind telling us when and where you were born?

DOROTHY: I was born in Nampa, Idaho, July 8th, 1921.

DOROTHEA: And what were your parent's names?

DOROTHY: Gordon Blinn and Mayme Schwartz, and they resided in Prairie City, Oregon.

BARBARA LOFGREN: And can you tell us how to spell Blinn?

DOROTHY: B L I N N.

BARBARA: Okay.

DOROTHY: There were four brothers that came across, they were victims of the French Revolution, and they fled from Blinn, France to England. And Peter Blinn was a ship builder. And he built a ship and went over to Connecticut and landed and built, he has an Episcopal pulpit that is a national monument.

BARBARA: That's interesting.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. My brother has researched the Blinn family way back to the fourth century.

DOROTHEA: Oh, wow. You have a brother then; do you have sisters?

DOROTHY: No sisters. Three brothers.

DOROTHEA: Three brothers. And what were their names?

DOROTHY: Herbert, and Raymond and Dick.

DOROTHEA: And how did you come about coming to Harney County?

DOROTHY: The round way. (Laughter) I was in nurses training in Boise, and I went to Winnemucca as my first job. And I met Jim McDade in, when he was getting his tonsils out over in St. Alphonsus. And when I went to Winnemucca, he said that was a town close to where he lived, and we went together for over a year and a half before we were married. Got married in San Francisco and then came back in the spring of '43 to the ranch at Fields.

DOROTHEA: And where did you live in Fields?

DOROTHY: Up a canyon, between Pueblo and Steens Mountain.

BARBARA: And what was it like up there?

DOROTHY: Isolated, desolate, and no electricity, no phone, no car.

BARBARA: So, it was a real cultural shock for you to go from a city basically, Boise ---

DOROTHY: Yes.

BARBARA: --- to a remote area like that.

DOROTHY: There was absolutely nothing but an old stove that came over in the last century.

BARBARA: It was a real experience for you.

DOROTHY: Kerosene lights, and lots of cooking to do for hired help.

DOROTHEA: How about plumbing, did you have indoor plumbing?

DOROTHY: We had a spring that put water out on the back porch, and then ultimately, we got plumbing in 1949 into the kitchen sink.

DOROTHEA: So, you had cold water.

DOROTHY: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: But you heated water on the stove.

DOROTHY: Well, we had a hot water in a room; it was fed by a spring. But you had to go to the next room to get it. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Oh, goodness. You say you studied your nursing in Boise?

DOROTHY: Boise, uh huh.

BARBARA: That's --- did you go to school in Nyssa then, your grade school and high school?

DOROTHY: No, I went to Boise school system.

BARBARA: I see.

DOROTHY: And graduated from Boise High School. Went from there to St. Alphonsus, and then graduated in 1942, and then went to Winnemucca.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: And we did everything, we were short of nurses during the war, so we worked on the floor, and worked in surgery, and we lived in the second floor of the hospital. And it was like a family affair; I mean we ate at the hospital. They furnished our board and room and laundry, which was nice.

BARBARA: Right.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: So then after you were married and were on the ranch, did you continue to practice nursing?

DOROTHY: Well, being out there with no medical services --- my first experience with what was going on was by a teacher in Denio, and she had spotted pink eye in her students, and she was putting dilute Lysol in the children's eyes.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

DOROTHY: And I just about had a fit. You can imagine.

BARBARA: Oh my, it was a wonder it didn't blind them all.

DOROTHY: Yes. And there was one lady that had, one of her hired help had a toothache, and she had a kitchen towel, that you see in the funny papers, wrapped around the jaw with a knot on it.

(Laughter)

BARBARA: I wonder what that was supposed to do for the toothache?

DOROTHY: So then as --- everybody that got sick came to me, and pretty soon my kitchen was like a first aid station, or an emergency room. It got --- when the children were born, I'd have children there and we would have kerosene poisonings, bullet wounds, coronaries, diarrhea, infectious diseases, and they'd all be in my kitchen. And so ---

DOROTHEA: So, you were like a hospital in itself out in that area.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. Especially during hunting season, there was a lot of people had coronaries.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh. You mentioned your children, how many children do you have?

DOROTHY: Five. Michael, and Patrick, and Kathy, and Anne, and Colleen.

DOROTHEA: How many of them live here?

DOROTHY: One.

DOROTHEA: Just one.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Can you tell us what the other children do?

DOROTHY: Mike has his own business in Los Angeles. He works for Los Angeles Power and Light as a computer --- and personnel management. And he does extra work in the evenings and weekends with MGM, Turner Broadcasting. He gives seminars for bank management, the missile program, the United States missile program at McGee Air Force (Missile) Base there. He does a lot of things, very expert. He was an efficiency expert at two and a half. (Laughter)

BARBARA: You mean he was a perfectionist?

DOROTHY: I would sit him on the table, and looked out over the barn, and he'd see the buckaroos get up on their horses, and he'd say, "I finally figured out how they ride those horses. You put your foot on one brake, and the other foot goes on the other brake, and the horse takes off." (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: He was, he was, figured things out at young ages.

DOROTHY: He is an efficiency expert; he really was born to do that.

BARBARA: Oh, that's great.

DOROTHEA: Did the children work on the ranch any, or what --- and where did they go to

school?

DOROTHY: Pat and Mike both went to Fields, and they came through the Burns school system. And they worked on the ranch until about '58. But the ranch was not made for family. It was one of those bizarre situations. And they were, gotten up at five o'clock and worked till midnight.

BARBARA: Way too long.

DOROTHY: And weren't treated very well.

DOROTHEA: That seems like that's the old school of ranching. I think a lot of us grew up like that. But it's not good for children. How did you come about coming into Burns?

DOROTHY: Well, he drove the stage; the mail stage for a while, and that was kind of an opening for me to get out. So, I walked out with five children.

DOROTHEA: And came to Burns?

DOROTHY: Uh huh, and got a job at the hospital.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Did it take a lot to get back into the nursing, or you ---

DOROTHY: No, not at that point, because I hadn't been away from it that long.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: But also Dr. John [Weare] and Mary Kay Neil, she was a public --- no Mrs. Griffith was the first public health nurse, and I had contact with her because we used to give tick shots before there was a cure. And Mary Kay Neil followed Mrs. Griffith, and she used to come out and do exams with the school children. And then we gave tick shots still.

And she started a public health council with Dr. John and the county representatives, and we met at the courthouse. And Dr. John gave me a lot of things from the hospital to work with out there, because he realized what was going on. And that was a beginning of public health here, and home health.

BARBARA: So then when you came back into town, did you work at the clinic, or did you go into the hospital?

DOROTHY: I went into the hospital, and I worked weekend relief plus OB call throughout the

week from eleven to seven, and on the weekends. Anytime I wasn't working I was on OB call.

BARBARA: And how old were your children at this time?

DOROTHY: Nine to down to, about two and a half.

BARBARA: I see. So, you had a full load at home besides.

DOROTHY: Yeah. The two boys, Pat liked the outside work, Mike liked to --- he was very responsible, and he did the cooking. And each one of the girls did the cleaning, part of the house.

And Colleen was on KP; she would wash the counters and things like that.

BARBARA: Well, good to get them so that they knew they had responsibilities.

DOROTHY: Yes, and they have continued that.

BARBARA: Uh huh, that's great.

DOROTHY: They used to manage my whole house entirely.

BARBARA: And so, what was nursing like when you came into Burns, as compared to maybe Boise when you took your training?

DOROTHY: Well, we worked eight-hour shifts instead of twelve. And when we were in Boise, the nuns had the hospital and we used to have to do some of the housekeeping part, which we didn't have to do after that.

I know in Winnemucca, my first job, I worked with a girl that had been a year ahead of me in Boise, and when I took care of all the patients and got through, I said, "What else is there to do?" And they said, "Well, you go get the ladder and we'll wash windows," and I believed her.

(Laughter) Because that is what the nuns would have said, and she knew I would believe her. But anyway, we didn't do any housekeeping.

But here in Burns it was, we had a lot of patients. One RN, there were two or three on days, but just one RN on three to eleven and nights. And two aides on three to eleven, and one on nights. So, you had forty patients to take care of.

BARBARA: That's a big responsibility.

DOROTHY: And you had emergency room, and X-ray, and OB's. And of course, you had somebody to call for OB's, but sometimes you didn't always have them when you needed them

either. But we all, there was always people that would come in if you called, that lived close to the hospital, to help you get through a crisis. Now they have more people and staffing. And ---

BARBARA: And so how many LPN's were there working here at that time, in the early '50's?

DOROTHY: I don't think there were any LPN's. They were all nurses or aides.

BARBARA: I see.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. I think that was a program that was developed after ---

BARBARA: I see.

DOROTHY: --- or shortly after. Maybe the '60's.

BARBARA: And how many of you RN's were there in the community?

DOROTHY: I think there was around twenty. Not all of them worked. But the Oregon Nurse's Association started their chapter here in '55, and there was around twenty, I think.

BARBARA: That's a lot for a small community.

DOROTHY: Eighteen or twenty.

BARBARA: Really, uh huh. All following maybe government people, teachers, and that sort of thing?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. The BLM and the Forest Service always seemed to marry nurses. And I think they still do. Yes, Stoney, Ella Stoneman was the superintendent of nurses here when I started, and she worked in surgery. And Janet Mosley, and Mrs. Hougen, and Ruby Mundy was a main --- and Evelyn Pearson of course. And Lillian McKelvey, have you seen ---

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: She has been one of the older ones. And Florance Thornton, and Bethel Asmussen, and I can't think of any others right now.

DOROTHEA: Did you say McKelvey?

DOROTHY: Lillian McKelvey, she worked at the hospital as assistant supervisor, and then went to the clinic later on.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh. I was trying to think of some of the nurses that I had when I was up there, several times it seems like. I can't --- you named most of them.

BARBARA: Who were some of the doctors that were practicing here at that time?

DOROTHY: Dr. John Weare, and Dr. Cliff was in Africa for a while. Dr. White, and I believe that was all when I first moved to town. And then Dr. Cliff came back from Africa, and then Dr. John, I don't know how in the sequence, but Dr. John was here and he went to Portland on a Christmas vacation and broke his back in a car wreck. And then Dr. White, I think that ultimately, they had gotten Dr. (Don) Sinkey from Prairie City to come over. And Dr. White was here, and Dr. Sinkey was in Salt Lake at a Christmas vacation, and Dr. White held it for six weeks without any help at all.

BARBARA: My goodness. He must have been exhausted.

DOROTHY: He was, he was going night and day for six weeks.

BARBARA: My goodness. And what are some of the changes that you have seen at the hospital from the time that you started, up until today?

DOROTHY: Well, we didn't have an ICU until around '68 I believe, '67, '68. We had a Ped. Ward and we had OB. We didn't have the monitors; the space age program has brought all these monitors in. Emergency room was not as busy as it is now. Everything seems to be emergency room work here now.

And we had an ambulance service that Avel Diaz started. I think he was originally the starter of it. And we had good ambulance service. But we didn't have any so-called EMT's; I mean the trainings came later, where they got first aid equipment when the ambulance arrived on the scene. That's a big change.

And then we have more lab people, more help, more administration, more rules and regulations since Medicare went in. And that's been good and bad because the regulations are hard to follow, and a lot of paperwork. On the other hand, when Medicare went in it threw a lot of unlicensed people out that shouldn't have been there in the first place. Everybody had to prove credentials. And that had been abused over the years quite a bit.

DOROTHEA: How could you get into the medical business without credentials?

DOROTHY: People took your word for it.

DOROTHEA: And you just pretended like you knew what ---

DOROTHY: There was a lady that had been head of the hospital up here that had, was a truly, an imposter. She never graduated. She had taken nurses training, but had not finished.

DOROTHEA: How did they find out about it?

DOROTHY: With Medicare.

DOROTHEA: With Medicare.

DOROTHY: You had to prove, you had to prove your licensing and your --- now there is not only licenses, there is credits you have to earn to keep your license. So, every year you have to prove how many hours you work, and what school you have been to, or what seminars to upgrade and keep up with the changes. So that was good and bad.

DOROTHEA: I can't imagine a nurse working and not being a nurse, I can't. That just doesn't sound reasonable.

DOROTHY: We had one nurse that came in, she was, had applied from the east coast because she had become a widow, and she wanted to prove to herself she could be a nurse. Well anyway, she was a nurse, and she was very much a stereotype, perfect uniform, perfect image, perfect stereotype nurse. She didn't know how to do anything she'd been out of it so long. And she used to ring the bell constantly for the aides to come. And Dr. White finally paid her two weeks in advance, or a month in advance and got rid of her. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Oh my.

DOROTHEA: But she had been a nurse at one time, or she just ---

DOROTHY: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Oh. So, she did know the ---

DOROTHY: She had been. This was before Medicare.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: So, all she did was come in and said, "Yes, I am a nurse."

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And she hadn't graduated.

BARBARA: So, what is required to maintained your RN standing then today?

DOROTHY: You have to get licensed by the Oregon State Board, or a State Board of Nursing. And you have to prove where you graduated, you have to have references, you have to have your, where you've worked, and what times you've worked, and what you did. And that's renewed every, it used to be every year, now it's every two years. And I can't say for the RN's now, because my qualifications as an anesthetist, you have to get twenty credits a year, or forty every two years, and have so many hours in.

DOROTHEA: Now in order to receive these credits, do you have to go back to school you mean?

DOROTHY: Yes, uh huh. We're given, we have doctors from different medical schools give us lectures, and they're paid for. We have, the state conventions have them. And there is a lot of businesses that, as a side thing they have independent seminars so that they can put the best of the teachers together and meet in a place where you can kind of vacation.

Like I went to Las Vegas this last time, it was the closest, rather than going to Florida. To have the doctors from Denver, Baltimore, Maryland, and Michigan to come here, or to Las Vegas to give us our best teaching.

BARBARA: And so what time frame are we talking about? Is it a two- or three-day type thing, or is it a week, or two weeks?

DOROTHY: It's a week; it's a week usually, five to seven days.

BARBARA: And that will give you your twenty credits?

DOROTHY: Twenty credits usually.

BARBARA: I see.

DOROTHY: You can do it in a week. And that's from --- like twelve-hour days.

BARBARA: But it's not like going to a summer school for three months then?

DOROTHY: No, no. That way you can --- on your vacations --- and that's where I kept --- maintained --- I didn't get much time off so my two weeks, or four weeks vacation, two weeks went to education every year, to keep my license.

BARBARA: And was, paying for this come out of your pocket?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. It's about a hundred dollars a day tuition plus your hotel and meals.

BARBARA: So, it's not an inexpensive thing to have to maintain every year.

DOROTHY: No, no.

DOROTHEA: Just like going through a quarter of college in other words?

DOROTHY: Yes. And then the hospital, I know on my last budget, Mr. Harman came and he allowed a, \$500 of education on the budget towards whoever used it. I got to use it for one state convention. But it's now for everybody else to use, thank goodness.

BARBARA: So, at your state conventions then they will also put on these seminars for people going to ---

DOROTHY: Yes, we will go from Friday until Sunday on those. And it is paid for out of your dues, a little bit, so your tuition is a \$150 instead of a \$100 a day. So, the association picks up most of it, on that one.

DOROTHEA: Now do the aides have to have this kind of training too?

DOROTHY: They have in-service training, yes, that are given by the directors of nurses, or whoever they designate to teach. And they have, here they have what they call, I don't believe it's EdNet, but it's similar to EdNet. They have a televised screen, and the different universities, they'll hook up a tape recorder and the doctors at a medical school will sit down and there will be a group in our hospital and they will have two way conversation, and questions answered with different types of cases with --- They will have movies on the TV screen, and yet --- on one on one question and answer on tape that are interjected over the telephone. So, they have credits for that too. They apply to the RN's crediting, and I think the aides also. And that's only happened in the last two years.

BARBARA: That's marvelous isn't it, what they can do now?

DOROTHY: Uh huh, yeah. And EdNet that has, that Colleen has in charge out there, that is hooked up to medical schools and colleges. And they can take a patient out there, or have them televise so the people at the medical school, the specialist can see them and help the doctors consult or diagnose, or whatever the purpose of the interview is.

DOROTHEA: So, some of the RN's now can take their schooling through this EdNet stuff, and

right here in Burns?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. Yes. And I think there is a new program that you can take your nurses training through some of it, get their college courses through with, through EdNet. So, Burns is one of the original EdNet faculties. And I know Washington came down, and their opening broadcast, to show what can be done. So, we're way ahead of things in here.

BARBARA: Well, I think it's a marvelous thing for small communities, or remote communities now that the people have the opportunity to continue and further their education in this way.

DOROTHY: Yes, well the same standards exist in Burns, Oregon, or in the small areas, as they are in the big cities, you have to do this. There is a standard of care that's totally acceptable, and whether you are in a rural part doesn't matter, you are still held responsible for those standards of care.

BARBARA: Uh huh, right. At least the people don't have to leave their families and go elsewhere for their training.

DOROTHY: That's right.

BARBARA: They can remain at home and get this, that's marvelous.

DOROTHY: That's right.

DOROTHEA: What all kinds of jobs have you done at the Harney County Hospital, or the Harney District Hospital as we call it now?

DOROTHY: Well, I did floor nursing which was medical, surgical, OB, and pediatric, geriatric. Since the nursing home opened, where geriatric patients are taken over to the nursing home, but I did OB call, then I went into surgery as an OR supervisor in '61 and took surgery call until --- we had trouble keeping anesthetists here, and I decided, in fact Jim Brinton who was the anesthetist said, "Why don't you go into it?" And I said, "Well, who will take care of my children?" And Michael Crane was the assistant administrator under Lloyd Hill, and he happened to come into surgery that day, he never did before or after, but he happened to be behind me, and he says, "I'll take care of your kids." And he did, he was guardianship of my children.

BARBARA: Oh, for heavens sakes.

DOROTHY: All the time I went back to school. And it was a miracle, because I sold my house within a week and got the cash for it, got accepted into the school, and left all within a total of two weeks. And that was meant to be, or you wouldn't have had things like that just happen.

DOROTHEA: How old were your children at this time?

DOROTHY: Let's see, Colleen was a sixth grader, she must have been twelve, twelve. And then Anne was a freshman in high school, Kathy was a sophomore in high school, and Pat was a freshman in college, and Mike was a sophomore in college.

DOROTHEA: So, they were old enough to really help themselves.

DOROTHY: And they voted me to go. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Let's get a break from Mom for a while, huh?

DOROTHY: Yeah. And they took care of themselves pretty good. But Michael Crane was guardianship, and he took Colleen with him, and they moved to Idaho, Nampa, in the meantime and took her over there. And I put Kathy and Anne in a Nuns School up in Winlock, Washington, and for \$63 a month I got board and room and tuition for each of them. And the boys took care of themselves at the college. And that was a year and a half all by themselves.

BARBARA: Well, it must have been hard on you to leave them.

DOROTHY: Oh, it was. I cried a lot.

DOROTHEA: And how long did you have to go to school for that?

DOROTHY: A year and a half.

DOROTHEA: A year and a half.

DOROTHY: But we worked a hundred and ten hours a week.

BARBARA: Oh boy. And this was where?

DOROTHY: At Albany, New York, at the Albany Medical School, which was a real experience. Because easterners are different than the westerners. And they went by government time, which was a total. When everything is new, and you're a number, you don't know anything. They give you a test the first day to prove that you don't know anything. (Laughter) They give you a test that you've never had before. I think I got a ten on it, and that was one of the high scores.

BARBARA: That was to get your attention in a hurry, that you had a lot to learn.

DOROTHY: It humbles one. So, anything that you learn about that was pretty good. And then the government was, they went by government time rather than clock time. The post office --- everything was so different that --- And you know being a student and a number is a lot different than being an OR supervisor and a mother with five kids.

BARBARA: From being in charge to being a low man on the totem pole.

DOROTHY: Terrible.

BARBARA: But I suspect that you got into the swing of things fairly ---

DOROTHY: It took me thirty days. But we all cried a lot too. We all had the feelings, but until you shared those feelings, you thought you were the only one. And they all felt the same way, so it didn't make you feel so bad.

BARBARA: Right.

DOROTHEA: How many others were there with you learning this?

DOROTHY: There were twelve, twelve students. And she said, "Half of you won't be here," and that made us feel ---

DOROTHEA: Oh, that's great encouragement.

DOROTHY: That was the first day too. So, we all looked at one another, and this was the first class that hadn't been decimated by half. We all stuck together, and we all graduated.

BARBARA: Wonderful.

DOROTHY: We wanted to prove her wrong. (Laughter)

BARBARA: And so, then after you completed your studies in New York, you returned to Burns then?

DOROTHY: Yes, they still needed an anesthetist.

BARBARA: Thank goodness.

DOROTHY: So, I came back. And Lloyd Hill and a Bill Garner, who was head of the electric company here called me up, he was chairman, and said if I wanted the job I could have it. And then Dr. John got on the line and said, "Have you killed anybody?" (Laughter) And that was my only

interview. You can look back and laugh, but ---

BARBARA: A pretty tricky thing to do though, I mean that job isn't it?

DOROTHY: It is, it is all art and skill, and you play it by the seat of your pants. It is, there is a way of saying it, it's ---many hours of boredom intermittently interrupted by chaos, and that's about true. Sometimes you don't know what's going on, but you have to figure it out all in seconds. And you do enough cases that you get used to it, and you love it once you get onto it. But it's hard to get onto. Because they don't teach you, it's a feeling you get about people.

DOROTHEA: Are you nervous with every person that comes in, or do you ---

DOROTHY: Uh huh. If you're not nervous, you're too --- not ready for it. If you're not nervous you have --- your heart, I'm sure beats, in fact they've proven it, your heart goes up about twice, and your blood pressure goes way up every time you start a case, because you never know. And the first few seconds of a case, it tells everything, the first few seconds, or the last few seconds. That's when your problems are. And the first few seconds you can tell everything that has been, happened, or hasn't been told to you, to how you evaluated that patient, whether you did right or wrong. Because a lot of people deny drug use, alcohol use, or forget to tell you something. But you'll know, once you start a case, you know what's wrong and you have to figure it out and what to do about it.

DOROTHEA: That brings us to a question of telling us some of the traumatic experiences you've had. Would you like to share some of this with us?

DOROTHY: Well one of them was at the South End. This little boy, it was, he is living and he works for the Forest Service I believe. He is a relative of Jennie that works out at Margaret's.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: Was an uncle. And he had swallowed kerosene, and we watched him for twelve hours, because you can get pneumonia. He got blue, but they didn't come to town. And he ultimately had a congenital heart defect that was corrected. But we got him; we got him to upchuck his kerosene anyway.

DOROTHEA: Do you often wonder why did they --- why did he drink, or how did he get

kerosene?

DOROTHY: Well you know, people left things around, which is carelessness, leave things under the sink, the poisons and so forth. And gasoline and kerosene was one of them out there when you had kerosene lamps. You don't see it too often anymore. But you get pills, ingestion of pills now more than anything.

I think one of the funniest things, this little mother brought a four-year-old, and said she had ingested a whole bunch of aspirin. The little girl says, "I didn't do it, I didn't do it, I didn't do it Mama, I didn't." So, Dr. Sinkey took her down, and we wrapped her up and gave her stuff to upchuck and wash her stomach out. Didn't find a thing. And she says, "I told you I didn't do it."

(Laughter)

DOROTHEA: What made the mother think that she had?

DOROTHY: I don't know.

BARBARA: Maybe she had just dumped them out and had not taken them instead.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: But you never know whether to believe them or not when they are that little.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. It is hard to evaluate traumatic things, really.

BARBARA: Sometimes the parents really go way out, you know.

DOROTHY: Yeah. Accidents I think are the worst. You don't recognize people, you know. Like this man next door in that, you know, the Forest Service road, it was a head-on. I think his name was Pearson. And I knew him as a neighbor, but I didn't recognize him when he came in at all.

You know it's sad.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: And I cry a lot.

BARBARA: Well, it means you still care then.

DOROTHY: There isn't a baby that goes --- you know when the Air Flight comes in, and you send somebody out that you know --- Thank goodness for Air Flight.

BARBARA: Uh huh. It certainly helped a lot in these remote areas.

DOROTHY: That's another change, and they do so good. They are just wonderful people.

BARBARA: And of course, our ambulance transporting people have done a marvelous thing.

DOROTHY: Oh yeah. They are all very, very --- that Don Geisler is just amazing. And then you have the neo-natal for the babies that are in trouble. And those obstetricians and those pediatric doctors come over on the Air Flights and take care of them and monitor them and just do so well.

DOROTHEA: Medical science is a miraculous thing.

DOROTHY: Yes, it is, uh huh.

BARBARA: And what do you see happening to our hospital here?

DOROTHY: Nothing but good.

BARBARA: Do you see more people coming, do you think? More doctors to our community, or do you think we're pretty stable with what we have right now?

DOROTHY: Well I think there is going to be --- ultimately because I think the medical program has expanded to where they're going to have externs come to learn the rural hospital areas. And I think that's one of the programs for the medical school in Oregon is to send these interns and these doctors out to get this experience. Because like we had one that came in with Dr. Cliff and he says, "It's amazing in Burns you don't have to take histories, because everybody knows your history."

(Laughter)

BARBARA: Good or bad, huh?

DOROTHY: Good or bad. But you know you get to know the people so well, and it's good. But they are, they're going to rotate these people out here, and so we're going to have more help that way.

BARBARA: Well, that will give our doctors a little break then too?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And physicians assistant, that Tom White that was here last year --- And as far as --- you know a lot of doctors are being, with Medicare being what it is, a lot of doctors are getting, you know, deluded about being a doctor in the first place because it's so hard. With the regulations there is more paperwork than taking care of the patients. I don't think the west would have ever been settled if they had paperwork like it is now. You couldn't do it!

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

BARBARA: And of course, with malpractice it doesn't encourage a lot of doctors either.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And you know that's another thing, I know, now I'm speaking only of what I know, but if it is happening in our end, insurance, it's happening in other insurances, and they told us it was. That we bought St. Paul's Malpractice Insurance as in the --- the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, and when they bought it for three million dollars with our dues, they opened up the books and found out all this was a lie on this malpractice insurance, all the claims.

BARBARA: All the claims were a lie?

DOROTHY: The amounts. And they said they had to raise it from, like it was two hundred and fifty, and they went to five thousand, and sixteen thousand.

BARBARA: So, the insurance companies were doing well for themselves?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And when they opened up the books that was all a fallacy. There were a few little four hundred dollar claims and stuff like that, but nothing in the thousands like they claimed.

And they said this was happening in the fire insurance, house insurance and that, malpractice. But we were the only ones that bought a private insurance policy because we couldn't afford the fifteen, sixteen thousand dollars a piece to work. Now the hospital pays ours, and I don't know what it is now, but it was around two hundred and sixty dollars a month.

BARBARA: So, to cover you in case something happens, they could sue you?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And we'd be covered by the hospital policy. And that has made the doctors think twice before you go into it, or work for a corporation, Humana, or Hospital Management Company. It has changed a lot.

BARBARA: So, it would be difficult for doctors really starting out on their own, to buy their own malpractice insurance?

DOROTHY: Oh, it is --- especially OB and bone work is very high. Anesthesia is high. The OB I think is because your liability is to that baby until they are twenty-one.

DOROTHEA: You're kidding me.

DOROTHY: No, that's why ---

BARBARA: Why would that be?

DOROTHY: The way it's set up.

BARBARA: That is hard to figure.

DOROTHY: It's awful, really, when you think about it.

BARBARA: Lawyers are doing well aren't they? Maybe that is not a good thing to say.

DOROTHY: The lawyers ---

BARBARA: Some lawyers I should say.

DOROTHY: I know we had one case, one lady sued. She had said she had been in this car wreck, and she hadn't been able to work as an LPN or something. And they had a follow-up, investigator, and she'd claimed she couldn't work, and she couldn't do this, and she was in a wheel chair all the time. Well they followed her twenty-four hours a day for a long time and found her playing tennis and a few other things.

DOROTHEA: Things that people couldn't do if they had been in a car wreck.

DOROTHY: And who would have thought you'd have to put an investigator on some of that. And that all adds to it.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: But it got out of paying the full liability by having an investigator.

BARBARA: So, you have then worked at the Burns Hospital from ---

DOROTHY: 1955.

BARBARA: '55, and you retired?

DOROTHY: A year ago May 1st, and I'm still working part time. I go to work Saturday morning and I work Sunday and Monday this week, which I like.

BARBARA: Just a little bit to keep your fingers in it just a little, huh?

DOROTHY: I worked so hard to get where I was that ---

BARBARA: Hard to give it up.

DOROTHY: I can't give it up. And Mrs. Nelson told me if you're not ready to jump that fine line

between being active, and being retired, don't retire. So, I've kind of --- every time I think about it, I think of what she told me. And that's a good thing to think about.

BARBARA: Now I know that you're living part time in Burns, and part time in Washington now.

Do you have any hopes or aspirations of working a little bit in Washington while you're there?

DOROTHY: I've been asked that, and I haven't had time to go down and talk to them.

BARBARA: I know you're busy fixing up your new home.

DOROTHY: Fixing up a house, uh huh. And I don't do epidurals and spinals. We weren't allowed to be taught that. And I went to an epidural workshop, but I don't feel comfortable doing it yet, and I debated whether I could go to St. Vincent's and work for a week and get clinical expertise, but I am not ready to go and really work until I get the house fixed up.

And we are landscaping now more than the house, and getting that --- And Allen still hasn't sold his business here, and so he is working. I'm content to do it just part time here.

BARBARA: And so, then when you do come back to Burns, you work just a few days a week, or when somebody needs a break, or emergency or whatever.

DOROTHY: Yeah. He is going to go to get his credits in San Diego, and that's why I am working this week. And then I'm going to go to the state convention because he doesn't want to go. And I'm going to do that in June.

BARBARA: And where will that be this year?

DOROTHY: Well it's going to be at Salishan, but I can't get into it, because I didn't make reservations early enough. I'll probably be in a motel twenty miles down the road. (Laughter) But I like --- we have a good state association. There is about a hundred and eight, but about seventy-five show up at the state conventions.

BARBARA: Well that's a good representation.

DOROTHY: Uh huh, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Have any of your children followed in your footsteps in the medical field?

DOROTHY: Anne, my middle daughter, is an RN at Mountain Home and does about what I do here. She started in anesthesia, but she quit and got married instead. And she does OR and does

floor nursing. And Kathy in Boise, she is going to Boise State taking medical record. I don't know, medical record technician I think is what they call it.

DOROTHEA: You were telling us earlier something about your grandfather, can you repeat that story to us?

DOROTHY: Well, my great uncle was a family practice doctor in the days of 1890 on. And in 1910 he did a radical mastectomy on my grandmother in their kitchen, with my grandfather doing the chloroform anesthetic.

DOROTHEA: I'm sorry, did I say grandfather, I meant your great uncle.

DOROTHY: And I have cousins that were, a dentist in Payette, and an OB/GYN man in Ontario, Dr. Roderick Belknap. And Dr. Virgil Belknap in Payette. And then my other cousin was married to an OB/GYN man, Dr. Johnson. And she is still living in Ontario, but he is dead.

DOROTHEA: So, you have quite a few in the medical field.

DOROTHY: Uh huh, yes. My dad's family were quite a few. And some of his brothers and nephews are in Portland too, Dr. Belknap. My mother's family were all teachers, and I have --- Mike taught science at Crane, you know, my oldest boy taught science for two years at Crane. And Pat teaches fourth grade in Portland, and he is army reserve, career army reserve. And he was in EMT's until the day of the Gulf War. And he got transferred to security and stayed here instead of going over.

## SIDE B

BARBARA: What are some of the other things that you have become involved in while living in Burns, some of your outside activities? I know you belong to PEO, and Eastern Star, and the Chamber Music Society, and were on the planning commission. Can you tell us about some of those things and the people you worked with?

DOROTHY: Well one thing, when I first moved, we had this Oregon Nurses Association, District 22, and they, when I was president, that was in around '58, we won bargaining rights. We were making \$1.67 an hour, which was far, low, really low wages for what nurses were getting other

places. And we won bargaining rights in the state legislature.

And I think I was mainly involved with family and ONA at first. And then I came back, and Allan was a Mason, and we joined Daughters of the Nile, which is, we help with the crippled children prosthesis.

DOROTHEA: Okay, we have to ask who Allan is.

DOROTHY: Oh, Allan is my husband, and he ---

DOROTHEA: His name is?

DOROTHY: Allan Voegtly. And he was born and raised in Burns.

BARBARA: And when did you meet him, and how?

DOROTHY: He was a neighbor in '67.

BARBARA: 1967.

DOROTHY: And we got together around about '69. But he used to, when I was building a house, he used to wave, and that was all. (Laughter) And then he asked me out for a date on New Year's Day in '68 and I think --- no '69, and then we were married in September of '70, 1970.

And he was a Mason, and had been in Shrine. So, he is still busy in those organizations. And I became a Daughters of the Nile and an Eastern Star, and he is a member of Eastern Star too. And the Daughters of the Nile furnish the birthday parties and Christmas parties, and do sewing for the hospital, and we buy the prosthesis for different children. And Eastern Star helps cancer and heart relief. And it's just an organization that does charitable works. They don't brag about them, they just do it.

BARBARA: Just do it.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: And I understand you were on the planning commission at one time?

DOROTHY: Yeah, Adele Oliver was on there, and Jon Allison was Mayor, and he wanted me to come on the planning commission. And I'm happy, I learned a lot about LCDC, and all the environmental impact statements.

DOROTHEA: And at one time you got the laws changed to help our rural hospitals. Can you tell

us something about that?

DOROTHY: Well, there is more help from the state level for that. And to get relief, like the physicians that come here, they give them a tax break if they work in the rural areas, and nurse practitioners. And I don't know, but the anesthetists finally got it this last year, tax relief, state tax relief if they work in rural hospitals.

DOROTHEA: That brings me to a question, who took your place?

DOROTHY: Oh, Rick Thein from New Jersey, Toms River, New Jersey. And he is doing very well, he likes it here, loves it here. They are raising a family. He got married last year, and he is starting a family.

BARBARA: Fine did you say?

DOROTHY: Thein, T H E I N. And his wife is Becky who works in the laboratory.

DOROTHEA: She is also in the nursing?

DOROTHY: Uh huh, or lab technician.

DOROTHEA: Lab tech. You were also Woman of the Year, can you tell us, was that a surprise, or

---

DOROTHY: Yes, definitely.

DOROTHEA: How did you get to be there? Were you, did your daughter say let's go to dinner, or

---

DOROTHY: Well, we always went to the Chamber dinner with Florence and John Scharff. And I didn't know it, but nothing was any different. I had visited with Colleen in the morning, and nothing was different. She said I kind of hurried you along out the door, but I didn't know it, because my family was all coming in. (Laughter) And I was busy getting ready to go, and getting groceries, I didn't think too much about it. Because sometimes, she is in a hurry all the time. But anyway, it was a, very much of a surprise, and all of my children had come up for it, which we haven't had many reunions over the years.

DOROTHEA: That was a nice surprise, and a nice reunion.

DOROTHY: Yes, it was, yes it was. It was quite an honor. No, Burns people, there is something

about Burns. You keep wanting to come back to the people, you know.

BARBARA: Whenever you leave town you always see somebody from Burns, don't you?

DOROTHY: Yes. You know I was so surprised, I couldn't believe it.

BARBARA: We'll have to say on tape that we saw each other in Washington a couple weeks ago.

DOROTHY: Centralia. I had to take a double take, I saw just the profile, and it looked so much like you I had to get out of the car and look.

DOROTHEA: Well that's what makes it so nice to leave town, is you don't feel like you've left town, you feel like you're still at home.

DOROTHY: Yes. And it's nice to talk to everybody and keep up with all the things that go on.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: I understand you like to help people. And you go out and I understand that you help John and Florence Scharff and maybe help people to take their shots or whatever.

DOROTHY: Yeah.

BARBARA: You just kind of like to get out and work with people, even though you're not working at the hospital.

DOROTHY: Yeah. It's nice to be able to go when you want to go. I've always had to stay, because I was always on call. And I should have done other things, but when you have a job that keeps you on call, you just can't do that. And that makes it nice when you can.

Like when Joyce, Don got sick, it was so nice to be able to go help somebody other than just doing your job so to speak. And that was a miracle again too.

BARBARA: I know Joyce said she would never have made it had you not been with her.

DOROTHY: Well we did a lot of --- that was, that could have been so tragic, and we cried a lot, really.

DOROTHEA: And this is Joyce and Don Corcoran.

DOROTHY: Don Corcoran. He was diagnosed a massive tumor, and that he wouldn't live through the surgery, and that was five doctors, four to five ultimate decision. And were told that he wasn't going to live through the surgery because it was so massive. And telling him good-bye, and him

telling you, you watch over Joyce. What a tearjerker.

BARBARA: But fortunately, it all turned out ---

DOROTHY: Turned out, it was a miracle, it really was. It was just a blood vessel that had broken. And yet they denied that could have been it. All the time we thought maybe a blood vessel was showing all this. No.

BARBARA: So, people do make mistakes from time to time.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: And fortunately, this was, this worked out okay.

DOROTHY: And those are the miracles that you look back on and think there is somebody up there watching over people.

BARBARA: There are enough sad things so you always have to remember that there are some good things that come out of it too.

DOROTHY: Uh huh, that's right.

BARBARA: And what are some of the other community interests, or personal interests that you have to fill your time?

DOROTHY: I like to read, I like to walk, I like exercises, I like people, and I like children. And there is a part of history of Harney County that I would like to write a book about, it's so different. And I'm still going to do it.

DOROTHEA: Talking about that, we understand that your mom has a book in the library. Can you tell us something about that?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. It's her life going into John Day country, and Prairie City. And my brother helped write it, and he investigated all the old gold mines that were there, and all the families that were there, and what took place. I have it if you would like to look at it.

DOROTHEA: They say it's at the --- we might put that on the video, and put that in there.

BARBARA: And the name of the book is?

DOROTHY: John Day Country, John Day River.

BARBARA: And by?

DOROTHY: By Mayme Blinn and Richard Blinn. My brother, the priest, is a very interesting person in that he has gone to school the first fifty-three years of his life. And he's got three doctorates. And one in music, but he never got a doctorate in it, he didn't do his thesis. He composes music, plays the organ, piano and cello. And he is a doctor of theology, school administration and education. And he travels the world, and he is a priest, and his stress level --- he probably, may not want this on tape, but his stress level, he has to have a month's vacation every six months. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Too many things going, huh?

DOROTHY: So right now, he is a chaplain for the University of California at Davis. And he is going to Russia in June with my other brother. And Christmas vacation they went to the Mayan ruins. And they are going to Russia --- they went to Turkey last June. They are going to Russia this June.

BARBARA: My, they have traveled around the world then, haven't they?

DOROTHY: And he went around South America the Christmas before that. And he has traveled the world. He's gone to Europe several times, and he's investigated the Blinn family over in France. And he and my brother travel. He keeps my other brother broke. (Laughter) But they have a lot of fun.

BARBARA: Well that's marvelous that they have such a good relationship.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And my brother is a retired teacher, so he has taken thousands and thousands of pictures of all his travels, and he narrates them. And he gives it to different organizations. He was a teacher of the year, National Teacher of the Year one year. And he is in the Congressional Record. But he spent all of his life, and all of his money on his students. And that's --- he's a bachelor, but he has never wanted anything but to be a good teacher.

BARBARA: It's too bad we don't have more around.

DOROTHEA: Are any of your children musically --- or did they have a chance to have music?

DOROTHY: Mike wanted to, but we didn't have the money, and he has never pursued it yet.

DOROTHEA: How about your grandchildren?

DOROTHY: Josie has taken piano, and loves it. She has quit taking it since she has been in college, but she still plays. And Andrea is taking it too.

DOROTHEA: That comes to the subject of grandchildren. How many grandchildren do you have?

DOROTHY: Nine, and lost one, from drowning. One is married with children, two children. And the other one is in ballet; she takes ballet in, and plays sports in high school. The other one is in college, a junior, at the University of Oregon. And Josie is a sophomore at Corvallis, Oregon State. And the other one is in high school and has this scholarship for her baseball and volleyball, and scholastic. First trumpet in the Portland high school band. And who else --- there is Nathan who is a sophomore at Burns High School, and Andrea who is a 6th grader at Hines.

DOROTHEA: They are the two Smerski's that are here at home?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. Pat doesn't have any children.

BARBARA: And do you like to travel?

DOROTHY: Love it. Shopping! Allan gave me a sign, born to shop. But anyway, I think women are born to shop, I really do. (Laughter) Even Andrea who at eight and nine months old couldn't pass a shopping center. She'd yell until she got to go in. That's being innate, born into.

BARBARA: I know. I know my granddaughter when we go, she says, "Grandma, have we shopped till we dropped yet?" (Laughter)

DOROTHY: Oh yes.

BARBARA: They like it.

DOROTHY: Anne has two children and one is, well he is an eighth grader, seventh grader, and the other one is a second grader in Mountain Home.

BARBARA: Now do they live in Mountain Home, or at the base?

DOROTHY: No, they live in Mountain Home.

BARBARA: In Mountain Home.

DOROTHY: He is retired, he joined the service when he was sixteen in the Air Force, and retired at thirty-six.

BARBARA: My son is just recently gone to Mountain Home.

DOROTHY: Has he?

BARBARA: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHY: That's a nice ---

BARBARA: He is with the new composite wing there. He is helping get that set up.

DOROTHY: Oh, it's a nice --- I see.

BARBARA: He is an F-16 pilot, so I was wondering if maybe your daughter worked at the new hospital at the base or in town.

DOROTHY: No, in town. Elmore, uh huh. She has been there for a long, long time now. She was head of nursing education for a while, I don't know if that is true now. But that Mountain Home is a lovely town. It was just a wide spot in the road when I went through it, until ---

BARBARA: It has certainly grown.

DOROTHY: Oh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: I haven't been there since it was a wide spot in the road.

DOROTHY: Do you remember that?

DOROTHEA: Because I was going to say I can't remember it being very big.

DOROTHY: No. It is now, and it is a lovely town. There is more half million-dollar houses there than you would ever imagine.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

BARBARA: Yeah, it is amazing driving around in the areas there; we were looking for houses over there, before they decided to live on base, and some lovely homes.

DOROTHY: Oh yes.

BARBARA: Yes. It is surprising.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. I think one is around three million dollars. It's a whole block, and it has brick on the driveway, and the driveway comes in, in a great big horseshoe. And they are realtors who ---

BARBARA: I missed that one.

DOROTHY: It is right, it's between the north part of town and town, and it's just --- I can't imagine

making that big a home right in the middle --- the whole block, the whole city block. But one of them is a realtor, and the other one is a broker. They are both high paid.

BARBARA: Do you have any interests in politics?

DOROTHY: Not anymore. (Laughter) I was for a while in the planning commission, and I think we just need integrity into the political system. I think Gene Timms has done a wonderful job. I think he is one of the honest ones, and Norma Paulus, and Bob Smith. But I see the others not doing so well.

BARBARA: And if you were involved, what would you be stirring up?

DOROTHY: Changes in the health care system. That's why the doctors don't want to go in. Why can't they just pay what the doctor charges? Why discount it? The doctors are more honest, and they have more ethics and professionalism than the politicians. Why should they take orders from Medicare people that are not even educated? I just don't think it's right.

And the paperwork, they are paying high salaries to auditors to read all the charts. And they are costing millions of dollars instead of just paying the doctors that are taking care of them. And I think they should let the doctors take care of them. Don't put the --- you can't let somebody stay overnight. How do they know that patient? How do they know?

DOROTHEA: That eighteen-hour business?

DOROTHY: Yes. And you've had a hernia; it's time for you to go home. It's five o'clock now. That's unnecessary.

BARBARA: Well, I don't quite understand. I see in the paper, eighteen-hour observation, what is that?

DOROTHY: Well a patient is allowed by the government to stay in eighteen hours for the doctors to find out what is wrong with them.

DOROTHEA: Now is this only Medicare patients, or is this getting to be all patients?

DOROTHY: The --- it was Medicare. It's all patients. Because the insurance companies followed Medicare guidelines.

DOROTHEA: Oh. So, no matter what you have, you have eighteen hours?

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And it's just --- some things, cases, it takes you longer to diagnose. And it is ridiculous, and I know a lot of old people have been sent home and they shouldn't have. There is no one to take care of them. And it's hard under drugs to take care of yourself, or perceive what you need.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: And how they can tell you from a government office somewhere that they are allowed to go home --- and I know they have, I know one patient that did die at home because of being discharged too soon. And I know a lot of people should have stayed when they shouldn't have been allowed to go home.

DOROTHEA: Well that was like once when my father broke his hip, and they were going to send him home in eighteen months, or eighteen hours, and us kids decided that we would pay the hospital bill rather than have him go home, because he had no one to take care of him.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. But do they allow this even if they offer to pay the bill; they won't let you stay sometimes.

DOROTHEA: Well, we got allowed that time. We were allowed to keep him in there for another, for a week is all, and then he came home with me. But they were sending him home with a broken hip, which I couldn't take care of, because I would have to lift him, and I couldn't do it.

DOROTHY: But they are just paying the Medicare. The money isn't going for care; it's going for paperwork and auditors. And that's ridiculous.

BARBARA: And the insurance companies set what is a standard fee for a shot, or a test, or whatever. But if your doctor charges more, then they disallow that.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: So, you know, they set what is reasonable, and whatever, you know.

DOROTHY: It doesn't make sense that they can go, be so nitty gritty about things. It doesn't make sense to me. And people in medicine are logical. I mean there is maybe a bad one once in awhile, but certainly they ought to be able to pick that one out.

BARBARA: If they would leave them alone the system would get them out of there.

DOROTHY: Yes, that's right. It's too bad, because they should be doing it to maybe the politicians more than they are the medical profession.

DOROTHEA: I think the politicians are the ones that should have their apples upset.

DOROTHY: That's what I feel too. I mean why should our politicians give the rules for themselves? They don't have to live by the rules they put on everyone else. I think that's another change, should be. They have to live under the same laws that they put out for the other people.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, uh huh.

DOROTHY: I didn't know they were exempt, all these rules and regulations, did you?

BARBARA: I'm sure a lot of people didn't know all the perks that they receive.

DOROTHY: But they also don't have to obey any laws that they make.

DOROTHEA: Like writing checks.

DOROTHY: Like labor laws. Well labor laws; they don't have to recognize your minorities, or anything. They also --- the businessmen are having to recognize and deal with.

BARBARA: Percentages.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Well, in your free time you say you like to read, and you like to exercise, what do you and Allan like to do?

DOROTHY: Go to plays, and just travel. He would --- we like to fish. We've never done it very much, but we like to go fishing. We haven't on the ocean, because we haven't got an ocean-going vessel. But he has a little boat. And we both like movies, and we've gone to plays in the big cities. We saw Phantom at the Opera, and we've seen Shakespeare, and stuff like that.

BARBARA: And you might tell what Allan does, what is his business?

DOROTHY: He has a plumbing business here. He is wanting to retire.

BARBARA: Does he have helpers that ---

DOROTHY: He has one, John Leach, uh huh. And he brought up an apprentice, Doug Cawlfild, and Doug's a business --- for his own right now.

BARBARA: And so, he is looking to retire real soon too, then if he can find a buyer for his

business?

DOROTHY: Yeah, uh huh, yes.

BARBARA: It's kind of hard to do sometimes to find people to come in and take over your business, isn't it?

DOROTHY: Oh, it is, really. And we need a plumber, we need electricians in town, and they need plumbers. Because Allan is busy, Doug is busier than he wants to be. And I don't know about Arnold, but I know that he seems to be busy too.

BARBARA: And so, do you spend about fifty percent of your time in Washington now, or is it ---

DOROTHY: About that. We kind of yo yo. (Laughter) That is what Allan says. It's kind of a true statement. But it's nice to get away and just do something.

Washington is interesting because they do have a lot of world jazz festivals, music festivals, a lot of plays, especially in the summer. And they have the fiddler's contests there, and they have world named musicians that come to Port Townsend, even though it's a small town.

And they have Ft. Worden, an old army base where General Cushing was there. And they have the old theater, and the old meeting halls for their plays. They have I think twenty houses that were built for \$58,000 in 1906 or '08, something like that. Anyway, all those houses, they are five-bedroom homes, and they can be rented for \$100 a month for family reunions. And there is a park between the rows of houses. And there is dormitories for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts to meet, and things like that. Very interesting.

BARBARA: What a neat community.

DOROTHY: Yes, it is. And a lot of artists and interesting people.

DOROTHEA: Is there anything that you would like to share with us about some of your experiences within the nursing career, or just working around the community as an RN anesthetist?

DOROTHY: Offhand I can't think of anything. Everything has been interesting to me from the patient standpoint. I think our administration is better than it has ever been. We have good doctors, we have a good administration, who not only has a good working --- he has a good healthy work force. And a good healthy way of administrating for everybody to grow. And that has never been

allowed before. There was always little prejudices and things that --- they either didn't like women, or they didn't want anybody to grow in their professions. They wanted to be it. Lloyd Hill was a good administrator, he was a rancher, but he was just a good person. He knew what the patients liked, and he always saw to the patients. It was funny when Lloyd Hill was administrator, he used to come to work at six o'clock and pass the newspapers around to the patients, and there was a lot of people thought he was a newsboy. (Laughter)

Because he --- and he would visit all the patients by the time the doctors got --- he knew who was doing good or what. And he made sure the doctors got to know what he thought about the patient. You know, just an old way of putting, but they cared. And I think that was interesting.

Because the administration takes more time now than it did then. But he did put a personal touch into it. And that was Patti Doan's uncle by marriage, Lloyd Hill. She was married to Harold Hill for a while. But he was a great administrator. And he would buy it out of his own pocket if the hospital couldn't afford it. And that was something that nobody ever knew either. And there is a lot of people that did a lot of good. I'm going to mention their names, because I know Pearl Smyth did a lot of things for a lot of people that --- paid the bills for people. Nobody ever knew unless you were a part of that hospital. And Ray Weeks has done the same thing.

BARBARA: I was going to ask you, maybe some of the people in town that have been very generous in their estates, or through the years that have given to the hospital.

DOROTHY: How public --- this lady across the street, Goldie Racine, has done a lot that nobody knows. And I know other people, but I don't know if I'm allowed to ---

BARBARA: I know the Hotchkiss family have donated a lot of things.

DOROTHY: Yeah. I didn't know if that --- I've known that for a long time that most of their estate will be going to the hospital, and that's good. A lot of people have always done this in secret. It's amazing how good people are.

BARBARA: And what about some of the other, not say clubs, but organizations, auxiliary or whatever that do, do things for the hospital gift shop or whatever.

DOROTHY: Oh, auxiliary has done a lot. I can't remember --- I'm sorry to see the gift shop gone.

I can't even think of her name, but she did many, you know, sewing linens, and the layettes, and things. And I think that there is a few people that might continue that, I don't know. Mary Ann Bailey would know more who is doing that now. But they used to, the auxiliary did an awful lot for the women that needed help for their children.

DOROTHEA: It seemed to me that there was a lady by the name of Toots, I don't know what her other, last name was, but that was all my mother ever called her was Toots. And she embroidered, and crocheted, and knitted for the hospital a lot.

DOROTHY: I think for layettes and things, yeah. Oh, she used to upholster out there at Hines. I can't think of her name. She was in the Service, and she was married to someone. She lived right across from Florence. She --- I can't think of her name, but she did an awful lot. She was an RN in the Service and married well, and didn't have to work anymore. She did a lot of upholstering and making drapes and things like that. But the hospital has had a lot of help from different ones to keep going.

BARBARA: And what about the Hospital Foundation that's in existence right now?

DOROTHY: I think there has been a lot of pledges. I think it's a good thing, because most hospitals have foundations. And that seems like that's the connecting line to get some of the big equipment when there is nothing on the budget to do it with. And hopefully they will continue to get pledges.

BARBARA: And the budgets now, compared to when you started ---

DOROTHY: I think they are three million dollars now. And I don't know, I know the budgets --- it is unreal compared to what it used to be.

BARBARA: Well, you say when you started out you got a \$1.67 an hour, or whatever it was, compared to what you get now.

DOROTHY: \$28.00 is what they ---

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHY: So that's, of course I changed profession, but I think the nurses get from, I think, from \$15.00 to \$22.00, it all depends, \$26.00. I think some of them are making \$28.00.

DOROTHEA: Is this an hour?

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

BARBARA: All the work you do stressed into one hour.

DOROTHY: Yeah, it is. There is very different ways of being paid too. I mean if you are doing something, you get so much an hour, and if you do something else, you get so much, and you have to break your eight hour shift down to whatever your ---

DOROTHEA: Whatever your job is.

DOROTHY: At that time, point of time. So, your time cards are showing where you put that many hours, and where you put the emergency room, whether it was surgery, or whether it was recovery room, whether it was floor work, and everything has a different price on it.

And we have state inspections that are more complete than they used to be. We had inspectors that came in and wanted to know what the oxygen room was for. (Laughter) We've had state inspectors say, "I couldn't pass my nurses exam so I was hired by the state for an inspector." And you wonder why they were sent in.

BARBARA: Oh my.

DOROTHY: Things have changed. You wonder. But things are getting better in some ways, and too much regulations in other ways. But I think it's safer now. Because I know one, the insurance company said that one place they were still using ether. Ether has been outlawed in Oregon for, oh for twenty-two years, I think, at least. And one hospital in Northern California was using ether to wash down the walls. Can you imagine the fumes of ether, if somebody came in and lit a match?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Good heavens.

DOROTHY: And I didn't know ether came in gallons, but they were using gallons of ether. And this was a report in about 1976. And nobody had ever heard of ether coming in gallon cans. It was always a four-ounce can. And they were still using ether in Northern California for washing the walls down every morning before surgery to kill the germs.

DOROTHEA: Good thing nobody smoked.

DOROTHY: I mean there are things that would just blow your mind.

BARBARA: And how do you feel about the goals that you have set throughout your life, or career? When you were in nursing school, what were your goals for your life?

DOROTHY: To be good to the poor people that didn't have a chance. I remember in training, now this was the nuns running St. Alphonsus, but there was a baby that was left there for thirty days because the parents couldn't pay the bill. Can you imagine?

BARBARA: No.

DOROTHY: And I have never forgot that. That's awful to say, but I've never forgot that, you know. And people didn't have money to pay for their hospital bill.

DOROTHEA: And they left the baby.

DOROTHY: Kind of in lieu of. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: How much did that baby cost though, you know, to keep while they couldn't pay their bill?

DOROTHY: Things have changed, things like that. And then I went to Winnemucca where I had the most interesting boss that I've ever seen in my life. She was, had danced her way at the Palace Theater, she was a beautiful, she had a beautiful figure. A face that was cute, personality plus, freckle face, wasn't pretty, but she had personality that you didn't even notice that she wasn't beautiful, because she had such a beautiful personality. She danced her way through training at the Palace Theater in San Francisco. Went through nurses training, came up, and had been a native of Winnemucca. Had been a blood sister to the Chief Winnemucca. Slashing the wrists, mixing the blood, all that. She had been superintendent of Washoe County before she went to Winnemucca.

But before she went to Winnemucca she'd married a Russian Count, went to Russia, and had to walk twenty paces behind her Russian Count husband. And she was a native Nevadan that swore. (Laughter) And she taught the Russians a few choice words. And when she came to New York she was going to divorce him, but he decided to go around the world, so she felt she could go around the world with him one more trip. (Laughter) She did that; she came back and divorced him in Reno.

But anyway, she was a person that had known nursing. She knew diathermy, she knew the physical therapy, she knew the X-ray, she knew the lab, she knew the anesthesia, she knew the surgery. You don't see somebody with all that education. And she also cooked, if the cook didn't show up.

And she took care of the nursing home in the hospital. And she always served wine to the patients on holidays. She always had homemade pies for holidays. They all got treated like they were family on holidays. And she had a heart as big as she was. She spent all her money on her patients. And I learned more under her than I ever did anyone.

And her heart was so --- she was so good. But she understood human nature. I've never seen anybody understand human nature like she did. She wasn't afraid of anybody, whether it was somebody coming, robbing the hospital of drugs. She always had a blackjack with her. She could read kids, she could, nobody put anything, wool over her eyes.

She, we had three girls that came off of a train, and one was in a coma and she took them in the office and she said, "That girl is going to die if you don't tell me the truth." And she said, "I'm not going to do a thing to help her until you tell me the truth." And the girl broke down that they were runaways from Hollywood. And this girl was, the one in the coma was a daughter of a director in Hollywood. And she called their parents and they'd been looking for her.

I mean those are the things that she, she was, she made you stand and do --- but she'd back you up a hundred percent if you were doing right. And she didn't let you take a lot of guff from anybody. If you had to work with the circumstances you were working with, boy she stuck up for you. She'd do anything in the world for people that needed it. But she was also hard to work with if you did something wrong. You knew where you stood.

BARBARA: Well sometimes that's good.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. But she was a wonderful boss, and I learned a lot from her. And then I worked in the, I went to San Francisco and worked for the San Francisco Laboratories. I did more X-ray work there than anything.

And then when we spent a winter in Portland, and I worked for Industrial Hospital for the --

- you know when the Russian boats came into Portland to be renovated under the lend lease bill during World War II. And they were also, if they needed, if the ships needed repairs or lend lease equipment, was loaded, while they were loading. And we ran a first aide station for the shipyard workers, and that was interesting. And all ---

BARBARA: How did you fall into that kind of thing?

DOROTHY: Well, Industrial Hospital was like our workman's compensation --- let's see, what would be under, Industrial Hospital was the same as workman's compensation. I mean you work for them to keep accidents down. It was an insurance type of thing I think. That used to be Industrial Hospital, was an insurance company. And they were furnishing the first aide stations at the shipyards.

And you weren't allowed to specialize during the, World War II. They needed nursing for the general public more than hospitals. And you had to work for either a hospital or for someplace for the public health type of thing.

BARBARA: Well that's interesting, I didn't know that.

DOROTHY: Uh huh. And so, it was a high priority job, is what, I guess it really came down to. And the boats, I remember all the boats were very stark, very clean. And every room there was a picture of Molotov and Lenin and Stalin. And they treated them like their God. They would bow, every room they would go in, from one room to the other, and they would bow to these three pictures.

BARBARA: Oh, my goodness.

DOROTHY: Which is unusual.

BARBARA: Yeah.

DOROTHY: And then I went back to the ranch, and that's --- But I've done industrial nursing, and I've done office nursing, and I worked for Dr. White too when I was on surgery call. I'd worked for, on Saturday mornings, or weekday afternoons if there was no surgery or something, to help supplement my income. And the doctors were good to me, and the hospital was good to me.

BARBARA: So, you've had to work hard for a long time?

DOROTHY: I have. You know I worked around the clock for so many years that I maybe got two to four hours a night, and that's all I ever slept. That's how come I got so much done. (Laughter) I never slept, never. I didn't know what it was to have an eight-hour night. But it ---

BARBARA: And what did your children think during their growing up time with their mother really having to work so much?

DOROTHY: Well, I used to feel guilty. Well, they thought I was crazy not to get a divorce before I did. (Laughter) How come you didn't do it a long time ago?

BARBARA: And when did you get your divorce?

DOROTHY: 1970. I didn't believe, I was Catholic, I didn't believe in divorce. It's funny how your, things change. And everybody that told me I shouldn't get divorced got, quit their Catholic Church and got married themselves, the nuns and the priests. So, I figured if they can do it, so can I. And -  
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BARBARA: So, during the time that you came in the '50's, and your divorce then, you had no support then from your husband?

DOROTHY: No, no, he was a multi-millionaire, and he hid on the Nevada side so he didn't have to be served papers. And that's why the courts --- it was a kangaroo court. It makes you sick when you think; none of the federal people go after them, or the state people. But then he bragged how he was the wealthiest man in the State of Oregon, and he is.

BARBARA: Well, that's one of the bad sides, but we will concentrate on the good sides.

DOROTHY: Colleen said I did the right thing, so it makes me feel good. My kids always felt that I did the right thing.

BARBARA: Well that's important.

DOROTHY: They supported me so much, and it was just wonderful to have that support from the kids.

DOROTHEA: That's when you feel like you're doing something right.

DOROTHY: Yeah, and they never gave me a bad time. In fact, they helped me do things. And I felt guilty, and Colleen said we wouldn't have grown up if they hadn't had that kind of --- way of

being raised, because we knew how to keep house. My boys could freeze, they could sew, they could cook, they could do anything. It didn't make any difference. Mike liked to sew, he used to go get the altar boy cassocks and bring them home and mend them, because he liked to sew.

BARBARA: Well see its good training for children these days, because so many of the wives work and they have to share in the responsibilities of a household, so they need to know these things. So, they are better off for it really.

DOROTHY: Yeah. I think they are too. And I think we are missing it if they don't make them learn it before they leave home.

BARBARA: Have chores to do. Uh huh, right.

DOROTHEA: My grandkids are being raised that way. They can sew and cook and garden and that.

DOROTHY: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Our little red light is blinking again, and so before we get cut off, we don't want to cut off our conversation. But we do want to thank you for sharing your life with us, and spending some time with us this afternoon. And we've really enjoyed this interview. And after this we will do a little short video, so unless we can do another tape, and if you would like to do another tape, we're willing to do that.

DOROTHY: I don't know what else there is to say.

BARBARA: Well, we certainly thank you for the visit this afternoon Dorothy.

DOROTHY: Well, thank you. I wish I'd had tape recorders, because I know --- of all of the interesting things, I wish I could remember them. I remember them interestingly, but I can't remember the details to make them authentic, you know.

But Dr. Belknap was one of my people that wanted me to get them --- he was such a kind good man that I always wanted to be a nurse after I met him, you know. As I remembered him, I think I was four when I remember him, my first memory of him, and I wanted to be a nurse ever since.

And I know in high school I didn't know they were called RN's, so I put in my yearbook to

be a nurse was my goal in life. (Laughter) And ---

(END OF TAPE)

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