

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #342 - Sides A & B

Subject: Alda Sampson - With Video

Place: Sampson Home - Crane, Oregon

Date: June 25, 1993

Interviewers: Dorothea Purdy & Barbara Lofgren

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy, along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we will be visiting with Alda Sampson at her home in Crane. The date is June the 25th, 1993. And the transcript number will be 342. We'll start by asking you your full name.

ALDA SAMPSON: Okay, well I was Alda, A L D A Male M A L E. That was a male that was a female. (Laughter) But, and then I married a young man back there in Stockton, Kansas by the name of Pete, or Raymond Lewis. And we lived back there until '48, and we came out to Oregon, out to Bend, Oregon to visit the Stevens. And I later found out they were shirttail relatives. But anyway we lived in Bend until his death in 1950.

Well I was down at the courthouse, and there was a nice little old gentleman, Chester Dalton, that was down there and we got to visiting. And I said, "Well now I have taught school, and I'm thinking about returning to teaching." "Oh," he said, "I have just the school for you, it's at Fields, Oregon. The teacher has left in the middle of the year and has not returned." And I thought, well that sounds interesting. "Well," he said, "now I want to let you know that you'll be out in the country." "Oh," I says, "I'm a little country girl at heart anyway." But country to me was sixteen miles from town. "Well," he said, "now I want you to be sure and be out in front of that mail carrier, the Currey's." And I thought my, you sure are a dear little old fellow, but you're sure a concerned little gentleman. "Well," he said, "now you remember, you be sure and call them now."

Well we --- I got out in front of them, and we started out, and when we left Crane, that was the end of the pavement. Of course it was pretty good roads until we got down there at Folly Farm, and then we bumped across a ditch and got down on a country road with a lot of mud, almost until I thought axle deep.

Well I had with me a little teacher that had been teaching at Andrews. Well Willie did not like the country, she was a Portland girl, and she couldn't see anything good, or say anything good about the country.

DOROTHEA: And what was her name?

ALDA: Willie.

DOROTHEA: Willie.

ALDA: And you know Doris Defenbaugh told me her last name here the other day, and I don't recall it right now.

DOROTHEA: Okay, okay.

ALDA: But we were, she went by our, in front of us, and she had a fit about that. Well I started loving the country because I was from Northwestern Colorado and Dad had had a cattle ranch, and I had grown up around sheep and cattle and out in the country.

So we journeyed on down the road and the mud got deeper and deeper, and I thought oh good Lord I don't dare go in the barrow pit, or ditch to me, it was a ditch. But I later found out they called them barrow pits.

DOROTHEA: Were you riding with someone or driving?

ALDA: Oh I was driving.

DOROTHEA: You were driving your own rig.

ALDA: And with my seven year old son and his Airedale dog, Rex. Well I thought oh my, I don't dare go in the ditch. They'll say that new Fields schoolteacher she run off in the ditch, and so and so had to pull her out. (Laughter)

Well we arrived in, at Andrews, and I dropped Willie off, and she says, "Now you just keep right straight on down this road, you'll be alright, you'll get there." Well I arrived in Fields and went to the store. And the Bates, Ralph Bates and his wife and two little boys were there, Chester and Lawrence, and Helen was his wife. And then I was greeted by Sonny Wilkes down at the schoolhouse. It was a new school, they had just recently built a new school there and it was quite modern from what the other one was, had been.

Well I, Sonny was a pretty nice old gentleman, but he had to come down and turn the light plant on. Well this was one of the things that he had gotten in a fuss with the other teacher, and he at times wouldn't turn the light plant on for her, so therefore she didn't have power, no lights.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

DOROTHEA: And that was at her home, or in the school and everything? At her home or in the school too?

ALDA: Well you had your little teacherage at the back. So --- poor old Sonny and I made it off just fine. He even came down in the middle of the day to turn the light plant on for me if I wanted to use my record player. And then I later made brownie ---

BARBARA: This is not something that they left on all the time?

ALDA: No, you didn't leave it on all the time. It was ---

BARBARA: Kind of a generator type thing was it?

ALDA: Well you turn a light out, turn all the lights out and it wouldn't turn them back on.

BARBARA: I see.

ALDA: So Sonny had been hired to regulate it, and turn it on and off at his --- so --- And I later made brownie points with poor old Sonny. Betty Penland and I were in Burns and it was snowy and icy and I threw a chain there. I got stuck, threw a chain and I went up to a

service station and I said, "I would like to have a length put in this." "Can't do it, have to sell you a new set." I said, "You don't sell me one?" "Oh no, we have to sell a full set." And I said, "Well you have some bailing wire don't you?" I said, "Wire it on. I know an old gentleman that can fix it." So I took it back down to Fields and told Sonny that --- "I told that young whipper snapper up there that you could fix it." Well of course that made him as proud as punch. (Laughter) And we still have that set of chains out there in the shop.

So anyway --- Well it seemed like everything just went real beautifully for me there. People seemed to greet me with open arms, and they were good to that widow woman. See I was what, thirty --- born in 1918, and this was in 1951, so ---

DOROTHEA: About 33.

ALDA: I was just in my early thirties.

BARBARA: Could we back up just a little bit and say when you were born, and where you were born? We didn't get that at the beginning.

ALDA: Oh, well you should have hollered.

BARBARA: That's all right. We go back and forth a lot, so it doesn't matter.

ALDA: Well to back up a little bit here and let you know where I was born. I was born in Colorado, at Grand Junction. Dad had had a ranch there at, near Yampa, one near Yampa and one near Oak Creek, Colorado. And the doctor had told Mom to get out of that high altitude, because it was over nine thousand feet. And so they went to Grand Junction to await the blessed event. So I was born then at Grand Junction, Colorado. And then the folks later went back to the ranch at, near Oak Creek.

BARBARA: In 1918, you said?

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: In 1918.

DOROTHEA: And what were your parent's names?

ALDA: Dad's was Joseph Benson Male, and Mom's was Emma Nora. And she, her maiden name was Hoyle. Emma Nora Hoyle.

DOROTHEA: And how do you spell that? How did you spell that?

ALDA: H O Y L E.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

ALDA: I guess according to Hoyle, the book of names. So ---

DOROTHEA: And then they went back to where you lived originally, and this was where?

ALDA: On a ranch there near Oak Creek, Colorado.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

BARBARA: And did you have your schooling, did you have your schooling there?

ALDA: Part of it. When the folks decided that they had better move to the upper place, because I was only just about a mile from school. And a lot of times I had to walk, or ride a horse. But I usually walked, and my first grade teacher Miss Little, Iva Little, and I would walk to school. And it was a little country one-room school. Definitely all the way, cross lighting, windows on either side. And you know I don't remember now, I think she had to go to the creek to get water for us to drink, which was just nearby, Oak Creek, or Trout Creek.

And I do remember quite vividly that she loved to fish. And Trout Creek was just brimming with trout. So after school we'd go down to this favorite hole of hers and it just seemed like she would flip in the line and she'd have a fish. I'd take the fish off, and then she'd put it back in and out would come another fish, and we'd have fish fry then for supper.

And then the second year, another year, I had Mary Long for a teacher. I don't remember where Mary stayed, but Miss Little stayed with us, board and roomed at our

place. I think Miss Little, or Mary Long stayed at the Chapman's.

BARBARA: So did you have your first eight grades there?

ALDA: No. I, what was it, about three grades, and then the folks decided to move to the lower place, and then I had to ride a horse three and a half miles to a country school. And then we would turn the horse loose, the horses loose in the yard. Well that's the way we did up at the upper Trout Creek school. And there were two little girls up at the upper Trout Creek school that, Lucille and Mildred Woody, and they rode an old bay mare, and I had dad's retired cow pony. So I was really up in big stuff, so I thought. And I was helping with the cattle one day, and Trixie --- oh I was just doing beautifully. Trixie would see that calf break away, and away he'd go get it. Well I thought I was really buckarooing, but it was the horse that was doing the buckarooing.

(Laughter) Of course there in Northwestern Colorado you were cowboys, I came to southern Oregon and they were buckaroos.

BARBARA: It all depends on where you are, what they call them.

ALDA: But I attended that little lower Trout Creek school a couple of years. And then there were times that I rode Brownie, Dad's other horse, because Trixie was getting real old. And then the folks thought, well these small schools, she needs to be in town school. So they moved into town so I could go to a town school there at Oak Creek. That wasn't too good, because that was a country kid going to town, you know.

DOROTHEA: Did you have brothers and sisters?

ALDA: No, my little brother died when he was ---

DOROTHEA: So you were more or less an only ---

ALDA: So I was just alone, so --- the only child. But I do remember ---

BARBARA: So you had a hard time adjusting to the town school then?

ALDA: I seemed like it. I do know that there was a little colored boy that sat back behind

me, and I drew his name for a Valentine. Now I don't know whether it was because of his color, or the fact that it was a boy, but I went home and I was just a snorting and a blowing about buying a Valentine. Dad just says, "Well now you know I think you should buy a Valentine for that little boy. Here is a dime, you go get it." And here I had this whole dime to spend, and I marched very carefully by that penny candy counter. And no, no I don't dare spend any of this for candy, Dad said to buy a Valentine. So I bought the little fellow a Valentine.

And then there was a little girl that sat across from me, she was, her father was a Japanese, and her mother was an American lady. And her daddy later owned a grocery store there, and he was really a true American. I mean during the war he went all out for America.

But --- and then I had a cousin, or a second cousin that attended school there too, Forrest Van Wert. So, but it was just the fact I guess I, well Oak Creek was a cow town as well as a mining town, and I just thought well, I don't know, I kind of turned my nose up about it. And Mama, we were in Denver, and Mama overheard me tell someone when they asked where I was from I said Steamboat Springs, that was the county seat. And you know, it had prestige. And Mama later said, "You know you were taught not to lie, and you're not really from Steamboat, you're from Oak Creek." I said, "Well Steamboat is twenty miles." "Well," she says, "you still, get the mail at Oak Creek." So ---

BARBARA: You learned your lesson.

ALDA: Yeah, I think so. But oh, it was a rough town, Oak Creek was.

BARBARA: So then you finished; did you finish high school while you were there?

ALDA: No. Then we went back to Kansas and I went to, attended school there in Kansas, and then I finally graduated from high school there in Winston, Kansas.

BARBARA: And did you have college work then?

ALDA: And then I went to the Fort Hays State Teacher's College at Hays, Kansas.

DOROTHEA: And so did you teach after that, before you were married?

ALDA: Yes, I had my choice of a little country school, or there in town. And someone had said about this one young man, student, that he was a little outlaw. I thought, well I wonder if I can handle him. And then I thought, well I know I can take care of those in the grades, the lower grades, and upper grades too, because I'm used to a country school. I wasn't used --- I guess that Oak Creek still was sticking in my craw.

So I went out to this little country school and had nine little students. And they had had kind a discipline problem with their students, they were kind of naughty. But not too naughty, I think they just kind of ---

BARBARA: Some of them test the teacher and see what they can get away with.

ALDA: Test the teacher, yeah, testing the teacher. Because they said to me, the school board when they interviewed me, now he says, "There is a strap in that school, and we want you to use it." You will! And I said, "Well yes, of course, if necessary." But under my breath I said I'm going to see that it isn't necessary.

So when I walked into that little schoolroom, the desk was up in front, and then a little platform, you know, a raised platform. And the floor was all slivery, and I thought well, this is what I wanted, I guess. And of course the pump was outside for water. There was a water cooler that you filled with water for the students to get their drinks.

But there hung that strap up above the teacher's desk, above the blackboard in those days. Today it's a chalkboard. But there hung that strap. And I thought, I don't like to look at that, and I don't imagine the student's do either. So I took it down and hid it. Well the first thing they did, they came a roaring in there, where is the strap, where is the strap? And I said, "Well you know I took it down and I put it away. And I hope that I don't have to use it." Well we, I had other ways to discipline. They weren't bad though. But

that was kind of really something to have your school board to tell you to use the strap.

DOROTHEA: And this was your first year of teaching?

ALDA: Uh huh. Of course now they had students in school too, the school board did. So I taught there two years and then I was married, and then that's when we came out west and ---

BARBARA: So that gets us back to Bend, and then that gets us down to Fields again.

ALDA: There we go, now we're back down at Fields again. (Laughter) Well as I repeated a while ago, that everyone was so dear to me and nice, and invited me and Jim, my son Jim, out to dinner.

And we started having parties at the schoolhouse. And as I say, Betty Penland and I became good friends as well as her husband John Henry. Well there were other people that were good friends too, but Betty is the one that I was in town with when I threw the chain on my car. And of course Dorothy McDade, it is Voegtly now, we went to Winnemucca sometimes. I was quite amazed at the gambling. But ---

DOROTHEA: How many students did you have? Did you have the same amount all the time, or did they vary?

ALDA: No they varied, uh huh. Now the first school I had all the grades except the eighth grade. And Charles was a seventh grader, and then he was an eighth grader and graduated.

DOROTHEA: And Charles was?

ALDA: Buttermore. Then of course in those days they had to take these tests when you were in the seventh and eighth grade in order to pass, get your diploma from the eighth grade. And he wasn't studying, and I told him to study. I said, "You know Charles, there is a young boy here in this room that needs to get back and get to studying on those questions that I gave him." "Oh," he said, "if I flunk that test it will be me for it." I said, "No

Charles it won't be you for it, it will be that teacher that didn't teach him anything." "Oh," he says, "I had better get busy then hadn't I?" (Laughter) Well Charles went through the Battle of the Bulge with General Patton, and came home and he still lives back there now.

BARBARA: So how many years did you teach then at Fields?

ALDA: Three.

BARBARA: Three years.

ALDA: And then we went back out --- Well then I met this fellow by the name of Sampson down there.

DOROTHEA: In Fields?

ALDA: At Fields. And he said something about being the fellow from Wyoming. And I said well if I was from Wyoming I wouldn't go around bragging about it. All I knew was that rough looking country in Wyoming, you know. And he says, "Well now if I could show you where I live there at Sheridan, you'd change your opinion of Oregon, or of Wyoming." Well he accused me of following him, and I said, "Just who followed who?" I lived in Kansas, or Colorado, you lived in Wyoming. I went to Kansas, and I said then you went to Missouri. Then I came out to Oregon, and then you came down here to Nevada, now who followed who?

Well then we moved back to, we moved up to Bend and then I decided to start teaching again. And Mr. Sergeant, I had been under him after Mr. Dalton had retired and ---

DOROTHEA: And what was Mr. Sergeant's first name? I can't remember either. W. W. it seems like, it was W. W.?

BARBARA: No that was Sutton.

DOROTHEA: Oh that was Sutton, okay.

BARBARA: Yeah.

ALDA: Did you think what it was? Isn't that terrible?

BARBARA: He was the county superintendent was he?

DOROTHEA: Superintendent, yeah.

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: And so he said there is an opening here at Crane.

BARBARA: This was while you were in Bend?

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: So we came down here to Crane and I had the first four grades, and Mrs. Beckley had the upper grades, 5 through 8. And that was when the school was all in one building, that was before the school burned and we rebuilt. The high school was upstairs. Of course now the science room was downstairs across the hall from my classroom.

BARBARA: So what year did you come back to Crane then?

ALDA: 1959.

BARBARA: '59.

ALDA: See I just couldn't stay away from this country. I tell people that come, I say it will grow, if you don't like it, it will grow on you.

BARBARA: So what was your husband --- you then married Sampson?

ALDA: To Don Sampson.

BARBARA: Don Sampson. And what did he do for a living?

ALDA: Well he worked on the roads, construction.

BARBARA: I see. With the ---

ALDA: Harney County.

BARBARA: Harney County Roads.

ALDA: And then he buckarood too, he worked for a lot of these ranches too. He was a buckaroo at heart, a cowboy at heart. But he worked on these county roads, a lot of them, under Mr. Fawcett.

BARBARA: Uh huh. So when you came back to Harney County, he was able to get on with the county again?

ALDA: Uh huh, uh huh.

BARBARA: I see.

ALDA: They hired him back.

BARBARA: So you started teaching in 1959 again?

ALDA: Here, uh huh.

BARBARA: And how many students were at the Crane Boarding School? You might tell maybe a little history about Crane as being the, isn't it Oregon's only boarding school, isn't that right?

ALDA: Yes. Well isn't it the only one now in the United States.

BARBARA: In the United States.

DOROTHEA: The United States I think, yeah.

ALDA: I think there was one in the east, but I'm not sure whether they still have it or not.

BARBARA: I don't think so; I think Crane is the last one.

ALDA: Well we had about 45 high school students, it would vary. And then Mrs. Beckley in her grade, classes, she'd maybe have 15, or I would have --- one time I had 18. And it got, came to the point then they had to have three teachers. And the Crane Community Club had built a little building for their meetings and all, and they hadn't finished it yet. Well the elementary school board decided that they would rent it, and then they would re-do, some remodeling and complete it so that it could be used as a third classroom,

because we only had the two elementary classrooms in the grade school. So then in '67 is when our, in January of '67 is when our school burned.

DOROTHEA: Now was that the second time it had burned? Hadn't it burned earlier in the '30's or '40's?

ALDA: There was, yes, the young Weittenhiller boy I think is the one that lost his life. And Mrs. Weittenhiller had taught here, and then she taught in Burns, and then she was County Superintendent for a number of years.

As a matter of fact the name of this street that goes north and south is Clyde Avenue, named after her husband, Clyde Weittenhiller.

DOROTHEA: Now she was also the County Nurse for a while too, wasn't she? Or just the County Superintendent?

ALDA: Well now she, well now this I don't know.

DOROTHEA: It seemed like she was a County Nurse, but I might be mistaken.

ALDA: Well now she could have been. Now Gladys would be able to tell us.

DOROTHEA: Okay, we can ask her about that, yeah.

ALDA: And then the house that is across from the hospital that Dr. White and Dr. ---

DOROTHEA: Campbell.

ALDA: --- Campbell had, their offices in when I first came here, that was her house. And it was moved to Burns, it was over here on this hillside.

DOROTHEA: Oh really.

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Huh.

ALDA: So --- And then of course now here a couple years ago we had almost a hundred elementary students.

BARBARA: Oh my.

ALDA: And there were over, about a 104 high school students. We had quite a hassle when the school burned. The state decided that, along with Burns, that we were going to Burns. Well the people down here decided that they weren't going to Burns. In fact one place where they were having a meeting why they were arguing about it, and the other fellow said, "You want to come outside and we'll settle it outdoors here." (Laughter)

BARBARA: Pretty strong convictions then.

ALDA: Yeah. But we finally won out, that we would have it. And it was decided that we would build it, separate buildings, so if one caught on fire and was damaged --- of course there is a lot of metal and steel in these buildings, that it all wouldn't go up in smoke like it did that night.

DOROTHEA: How was this paid for? Did the people chip in and pay for it or build it? How did the building get rebuilt?

ALDA: Well we had insurance, and according to the insurance why we had to rebuild it on the same area that the old school had been. There was some talk about building it out at the hot springs, you know, so the students would have a swimming pool in their school.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

ALDA: But then the insurance wouldn't pay for the school if we built it, it had to be rebuilt on the same location of the old original school. Well anyway that was the way our insurance read. DOROTHEA: So then is that when they got more than two teachers, is that, how did they come about getting more than two teachers?

ALDA: Well we had three teachers in the old building.

DOROTHEA: Okay, who was the other teacher?

ALDA: Well Mrs. Rutz taught for a while.

BARBARA: What was the name?

ALDA: Rutz.

BARBARA: Rutz?

ALDA: They lived in Burns for a time.

DOROTHEA: How do you spell that?

ALDA: R U T Z, I think.

DOROTHEA: R U T Z.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: And then for awhile, well before she taught well we had Mrs. Wright, and she had taught in Burns for a long time, and she had retired.

DOROTHEA: And that was Mrs. Claude Wright, and I can't remember her name either, and I went to school under her.

ALDA: Yeah. And then her son was principal here for a couple years, Quinton Wright.

DOROTHEA: Quinton, uh huh.

ALDA: So, but she was such a dear little lady, and the children just adored her. But her health wouldn't hold up, so she had to retire. And then Mrs. Rutz took over.

BARBARA: When you first started teaching here there were the three of you, the first through four grades, and then Gladys had the upper grades, and then there was a high school teacher. The students were in a dorm?

ALDA: Right.

BARBARA: Who would --- would you have to be the counselors for the students while they were in the dorm, or was there someone there to kind of oversee things, or how did that work?

ALDA: Well we had --- Mrs. Beckley and I didn't have anything to do with the high school students, except if they would come down the stairs, you know, go into the gym. But they were all very obedient and never gave us any problems at all.

DOROTHEA: And who was their teacher, the high school teacher?

ALDA: Well we had Mr. and Mrs. Valentine.

DOROTHEA: Oh, right, right.

ALDA: And let's see, they were at --- I was trying to think, we had several keepers of the boys and girls, as I call them. Buster Catterson kept care of the boys some of the time, and Mona Fitchett. And Toots Arnold was cook for a long time, and Mona was cook. And then Mrs. Rosetta Miller, that was Francis Miller's wife, was matron. See we have a matron and a patron.

BARBARA: So people were hired just to look after the children outside of classroom time then?

ALDA: Right.

BARBARA: Okay. So the teachers had nothing to do with the students outside of the class time?

ALDA: No, unless ---

BARBARA: Okay, unless there was a special activity or something.

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay. I just didn't know how that worked, how the kids were looked after, whether you had to be a parent to them after hours, or how that worked. So you then lived in your own home out here, you didn't live at the school then either?

ALDA: Well we, Mrs. Beckley had the apartment, we lived in the duplex. Charlie and Mrs. Beckley --- and she would stay in a lot of the time instead of going back and forth to the ranch. And then of course Charlie got so he was pretty crippled up, so he'd be in here a lot of the time. And we lived in the duplex, and of course Charlie and Don both were kind of mischievous at times, and someone said, "Well where do you two couples live?" Well Don said, "We lived under the same roof, we've lived under it for years." And they went ohhh. And then Charlie would kind of grin and giggled, and he said, "Yeah, it is a

duplex though." (Laughter)

So --- But we've had some wonderful teachers here. And now, we had the Hanson's, and oh there, I can name if it is necessary a number of --- And then of course Mr. Ratslaff was here for a number of years, and then later why we had Mr. Thorne. So --  
- But, we need to have all the teachers?

BARBARA: Oh no, no, that's not necessary.

DOROTHEA: Tell us something about the dorms. Were they single rooms, or were they one big room with all the girls in it?

ALDA: Well the girls each, or there is usually about two girls to a room. And if there is more, it depends on the enrollment. The freshman and the sophomores are at one end, and then the juniors and the seniors are at the other end. And of course the girls are upstairs, and their present matron is Dot Opie Skinner. And the girls --- it varies. Sometimes there is two girls in a room, and sometimes there is three, it depends on the enrollment.

And then downstairs is the boys. And Mr. (Louie) Ash has been in charge of them for what, eleven years now I think it is. Of course he retired this year.

DOROTHEA: And where do the matrons and patrons live? Do they live right in the dorm, or do they have their own residence.

ALDA: Well they have their own private room and bathroom. And then of course they eat in the dining room with the students. And it seems like; they seem to do a good job with them. And of course you get about sixty, a hundred kids under one roof ---

BARBARA: What one doesn't think of the other one does, huh?

ALDA: But usually they are good. Especially if they have someone that is good in the, supervisor. And of course then they have their cook too. And they do have --- recently, well it's been quite more than just recently, but they put in a steam table, which helped a

lot for the cooks. Otherwise it was served, you know, family style, a bowl of each food, and the platter of meat.

DOROTHEA: Do they do this per table, or do they have several tables in the dining room?

ALDA: Oh they have a number of large, long tables in the dining room.

DOROTHEA: And they put a dish per table, is that what they would do, family style?

ALDA: Well they used to do that, and then now that they have their steam table why the students can take their plates by and fill up and then come back again if they need to.

DOROTHEA: Now the boys and girls eat together then, there is one dining room?

ALDA: Uh huh, right, yeah one big dining room. If you would like to go look at it --- would you?

DOROTHEA: Uh ---

BARBARA: It depends on whether we have time or not.

DOROTHEA: Right, yeah. We might film it on our video a little bit when we do that.

ALDA: I talked to Linda Miller, our deputy clerk, a few minutes ago, and I know she is up there. And then I know we have janitors around, see there is janitors to take care of the classrooms as well as the dormitory.

DOROTHEA: Now do they use this at all during the summer, or is it just like most other schools, they just do the outside work and kind of do the repair work and things like that during the summer?

ALDA: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Because the teachers do have to go to school, don't they?

ALDA: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: To refresh their school? In other words, go to college for another week or two, or five weeks.

ALDA: Or eight weeks, it depends on what the state requires you to take. And the ---

BARBARA: Tell us about some of your classes, what kind of things you taught, and how maybe the subject matter changed over the years, and what was required by the state.

ALDA: Oh yeah. Well when I was, you know, when we were in school we had geography, and history, and civics, and all this. And then when I was getting ready to teach, why they had started social studies, and I made the remark in the classroom to the instructor, I said, "Well will we have books?" "Oh no," she says, "you will not have any books. You will do all research from your library books and your encyclopedias." Well my encyclopedia in my classroom was a book of knowledge I think that dated back to about 1918 or something.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

ALDA: Well anyway we managed. But the primary, of course, was family, and then the other was like your upper grades was like your town living, your storekeepers and your dairies and such as that. And then later why we do have texts now, thank heavens. But I just knew that we should have one. But my instructor was very indignant about it, to think that I would even think of such a thing.

DOROTHEA: How did he teach you? Did you have books when you went to school, as social studies?

ALDA: No, as I --- when I went to school we had a class, a book for history, and a book for geography.

DOROTHEA: So in other words, you had to start social studies into your classrooms with no knowledge on, except what you could gather up?

ALDA: Uh huh, and from other books.

DOROTHEA: Out of the books.

ALDA: And they might happen to have --- but things were skimp. It was during the

depression and my first year, the second year the school board said, "Well now you know we, we're awful tight, and you know how it is. Now we can give you a raise, but if we give you a raise there won't be a new floor put in the school."

BARBARA: Putting the pressure on, huh?

ALDA: One of my little students, bless her heart, she had been down cleaning out her desk, and it was --- we did have moveable desks in that old school, but she had run a great big long sliver in her knee. And we had to send one of the Buttermore boys over to the closest phone, which was about a quarter of a mile, to call her parents so they could come and take her into the doctor. And I said, "Well after Verla's (Meyers) experience of it, a sliver in her knee, I think we had better have the new floor."

DOROTHEA: So you declined the raise?

ALDA: Well I think they did give me a five-dollar a month raise, but not any more. But in those days we only had about five dollars allowed us on the budget for art materials. And I thought, oh good grief, what will I do. And I went in and talked to our dear little old druggist, and he said, "I'll sell you at a cut rate, just what it costs me, some typing paper, big reams of it." So I bought that, and we used that a lot of the time. But these students nowadays, they don't realize what they have.

DOROTHEA: Right. What --- let's first turn this tape over, because our red light is blinking to tell us that we are running out of tape, and then we'll get back to more questions.

SIDE B

DOROTHEA: What kind of a wage were we talking about when you first started teaching out at Fields?

ALDA: Oh let's see, it was about \$350 a month.

DOROTHEA: And did this supply groceries for you, or did you buy your own groceries?

ALDA: I bought my own groceries, but they did supply the fuel for the house, or the living quarters, and of course the power, the power plant. So then that was it, your wage was -- - and you did have social security taken out and also retirement.

BARBARA: And what did you get when you started at Crane, do you recall?

ALDA: Four hundred I think it was.

BARBARA: And did you teach music, and art, and everything here at Crane?

ALDA: No. We had a music teacher, it was a high school music teacher, he taught the grade school, it was Mr. Hawkins. And then Mr. Witherspoon were the first two that I remember teaching music. And then we did the art ourselves, Mrs. Beckley and I did. But the music was definitely taught by the high school instructor. And then of course we had our own P.E. instruction ourselves. We did the P.E. work.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Tell us about some of the changes that took place from the time you first started teaching until the time you retired.

ALDA: Well when I first started teaching you had all --- of course this was a country school, and sometimes you had all eight grades, and you had all the classes yourself. And you had your own playground duty, and you were supposed to be out on the playground supervising. And it seemed like in those days, the kids and everyone expected the teacher to play games too. (Laughter) Because our teachers, our grade school teachers, one of the best that I ever had, two of them, Miss Cochell, she was right out there with us playing whatever we were playing.

DOROTHEA: Jump rope, or anti over.

ALDA: Dare base --- dare base, or anti over, or whatever it happened to be. And then of course you were your own janitor, you did, cleaned and you --- And as I say, you come to

school and it could have been a cold enough night to have froze water if you had water in the building. So I always saw that the water was dumped out of the cooler, because it could have been frozen the next morning, and no cooler.

And as I repeat, we did our own janitor work. And the schools weren't modern, no bathroom. The boys was on one side, and the girl's outhouses were on the other side. And no electric --- oh if we had any programs or anything, someone would always bring in a gaslight, lantern, and that was our lights for the evening's entertainment of plays or box suppers. And box suppers were quite popular then in the early '30's, late '30's.

BARBARA: Of course when you started teaching here at Crane, you didn't have to do any of that kind of thing. It was pretty ---

ALDA: Oh no. Clara and Jimmy Oard were the janitors, and then as I say we had our music teachers.

BARBARA: Did the Crane students put on programs and have plays and that sort of thing too?

ALDA: Oh yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: And did some of the younger students, were they very homesick when they first started out with school? Did you have problems with them being, you know, the little ones being away from home to begin with?

ALDA: Well you see the little ones were transported from home, always. The district gave up the school buses because one family would live maybe twenty miles this way, and another family thirty, and another ten in another direction, just like the spokes on a wagon wheel. So the district had been paying, when I came here, for years, transportation to the parents to bring their students to school in the morning, and then come and get them in the evening.

BARBARA: Oh, so when you first started here, they didn't sleep over then?

ALDA: The little guys didn't.

BARBARA: Oh, they didn't. I see.

ALDA: They never had.

BARBARA: Oh, is that right, I didn't know that.

DOROTHEA: Oh, so it is just high school?

ALDA: Just the high school students.

BARBARA: I see.

ALDA: Because some of the high school students, if you came from the Whitehorse you'd be a hundred and sixty miles from school.

BARBARA: Well what about the little ones, if they live at the Whitehorse, do they go back and forth everyday?

ALDA: Well they had a school there.

BARBARA: I see. Oh, so I'm getting the picture now then. The grade school here, kids came and went everyday. But just the high school students would stay over in the dorm.

ALDA: Right.

BARBARA: Oh, okay.

ALDA: And then you see there was a school at Andrews for the children that lived in the Andrews district, down like at the Alvord Ranch, and those ranches, and down there. And then there was a school at Fields.

BARBARA: So you didn't have the numbers then for the grades that you did for the high school because of these other little country schools in the area?

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Just those that ---

ALDA: And Doris Defenbaugh taught for years, students that came from the Whitehorse Ranch. And there was a little school up there for them.

BARBARA: I see. So it was just within close enough driving range for a trip back and forth that the kids came to Crane then, that you taught?

ALDA: Yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: Because you see we had a school at Lawen too at that time.

BARBARA: I see, okay.

ALDA: And then also a school down here at Virginia Valley, which is, well I think Mrs. Beckley taught at Virginia Valley, so she can tell you more about that. No, it's just the students within our district.

BARBARA: I see, okay.

DOROTHEA: So the only schools that you really taught to here has been in Fields and at Crane then?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Did you teach school in Bend?

ALDA: I did some substitute work for a Christian Day School.

BARBARA: So what is the radius of area that the grade school students would come to here?

ALDA: Well now if you lived down at Riverside, you're forty miles from school.

BARBARA: So that would be about the farthest that they would drive daily?

ALDA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: And then of course the Horseshoe T, I think they're --- I had better not take off with that, had I (microphone)?

DOROTHEA: No, you're okay.

ALDA: Well we had one 16.7 miles from school, and Andy Dunbar's little boy comes 27.

Now you see that was the Sod House School District, and we got to the point where his little boy was the only one that was a student in that district. And we do have the Sod House School up here now, it was moved up here to Crane. And here a couple years, I don't know, I think --- here is a 19, here is one that is 30. Now they're up at the Horseshoe T. I guess the people have moved that was down there at, that was forty miles from here from school.

DOROTHEA: Well when did you retire?

ALDA: '69.

DOROTHEA: In '69. But you still, do you sub now?

ALDA: Huh uh. I just kind of keep tabs on people. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Can you tell us maybe some of the students that you had, that maybe we would know, that maybe live in Burns now or around in the ranching area?

ALDA: Well let's see I had Benny Cordova, you know Benny Cordova? Well his dad was section foreman down here at Crane for a long time. And Esther, his mother, they moved to Burns. Well I can't think of any right now that you might know.

BARBARA: Have most of the students remained on the ranches around here? Or do you think most of them have moved out of the county, would you say, would you know?

ALDA: Well now like the Miller boys, Evan Miller he was a student, he's gone. And Ada is gone, she is in Hawaii. And ---

DOROTHEA: Well then tell us what some of your students have done. I mean, you know, have they gone into teaching, are they coming back here? Have they become doctors, or can you tell us something about your students?

ALDA: Well now, let's see, Danny Cronin became a lawyer. And Chuck Cronin, now these are grandsons of Mrs. Beckley's, he is a computer specialist there in Nevada. Some of my students that I had there in that little country school, there in Kansas have

become teachers. And oh, most of these have just been ranchers and housewives. Except like Danny and Chuck, they've gone kind of specialized in education and all.

DOROTHEA: Now did you teach Renee, she is Maupin now?

ALDA: No, she was in a different district when I was down at the Sound End.

DOROTHEA: Okay. But did she come to Crane too?

ALDA: High school, she graduated from high school.

DOROTHEA: Okay. Let's see, Opies, Opies, how about some of the Opies?

ALDA: Oh well, I had Nancy in school. Now this is the younger generation. Nancy and Julie, you know she works there in the courthouse; I had Julie in grade school. And then Nancy and Susan Opie, and them, but I didn't have any of Donald's children in school because they went to Lawen to school.

DOROTHEA: Oh, uh huh.

ALDA: Under Mary Wilkes.

DOROTHEA: Mary Wilkes?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And that was Sonny's wife?

ALDA: Uh huh, right.

DOROTHEA: And she taught there for quite a long time.

ALDA: Oh yeah, it was years that she taught there.

DOROTHEA: Yeah. In fact she might have been teaching when they closed it down, I'm not sure.

ALDA: I seems like there was someone else there that was teaching, because she had had to retire. But when she retired it was just a couple, a few years that they had different teachers there.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, uh huh. Yeah, it seems like, didn't Sonny become ill and have to

move, or they had to move?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Or she became ill and they had to move. I think Nita, now did she become a teacher?

ALDA: I seems like she did.

DOROTHEA: And I think they moved to California or someplace, Nevada.

ALDA: Well I thought that Nita was in California. And then for a while I thought they were living over around Roseburg or someplace over in there.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I remember they moved back to Oregon, and I can't remember then --- but I think she went into a different business at this time.

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: But I think Sonny and Mary both passed away here in Burns, didn't they?

ALDA: Well Sonny did.

DOROTHEA: Or Crane.

ALDA: Sonny did I think, but I think Mary is still alive.

DOROTHEA: Is she?

ALDA: I'm not sure. It seems like --- I haven't heard if she passed away.

DOROTHEA: I haven't talked to anybody, so I don't know. So, I can't remember, in fact. But Hank, now do you know where he is?

ALDA: Well the last I heard he was in California.

DOROTHEA: So --- but you don't know what he does?

ALDA: Huh uh.

DOROTHEA: Okay, somebody else. Did you teach the Bamberry girl?

ALDA: No, she was a Lawen girl.

DOROTHEA: She was a Lawen girl.

ALDA: But she was in high school here. And of course she has done well in her education.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh. McLean's?

ALDA: No, I didn't have any McLean's at the South End.

DOROTHEA: Didn't have any McLean's.

ALDA: Well they were around the South End, but they ---

DOROTHEA: So they all came after, into high school?

ALDA: They were in high school. Ronald was in high school, the one that has (Ronald) McLean, for foster home. He was in high school; no he was out of high school. It was Keith and Kenneth that were in high school here at Crane when I was down at the South End.

DOROTHEA: Okay. Gee, I can't remember any of the Crane families anymore; I'm drawing a blank.

BARBARA: Well tell us a little bit about the community while you've lived here. How has it changed since the time that you came here in the late '50's?

ALDA: Oh, we lost our little grocery store down here, it burned. Of course the school burned. Pretty much the same, except we've always had our teachers living, you know, in teacherages here. And then a number of retired people, they're slowly going one by one. Mrs. Black, Alta Black, that would be Mina Opie's mother, passed away just recently. And she was ---

And then of course Jay (John) Rossberg, his wife passed away, and now he has remarried again. And I think that big beautiful motor home that went by, he's on his way to Canada or Alaska, they are. He remarried again, which is real wonderful. He told me here awhile back that he was going to Alaska and Canada, and then they were going down into Texas, that's where he is from. And I said, "Well wonderful Jay." I said, "Live it

up." And he said, "I intend to." (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Now he had two boys, didn't he?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Harold and Kenneth.

ALDA: Kenneth --- uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And Kenneth lives here now?

ALDA: Yes, uh huh, he married Beulah Smith. And they have a son David. And then they are ---

DOROTHEA: Just one child?

ALDA: Yes. Well then they have, well they have Tammy too, their adopted daughter. But she is just the same as a daughter, and she is the sweetest thing. She is over at --- I heard from her at Christmas time, she is over around Salem. She always sends me a Christmas card every Christmas, and Eva Retherford a Christmas card. She was just a little neighbor girl that grew up by you.

BARBARA: So how many families are in Crane now, would you guess?

ALDA: Well let's see, there is Fowlers down here. And then of course, the teachers, there is Rod Bennett, that's --- her father is Judge White's daughter. She is Judge White's daughter.

DOROTHEA: Now that is Linda? Is her name Linda?

ALDA: Uh huh. Linda.

DOROTHEA: Does she teach school also?

ALDA: Uh huh, she teaches, she is a wonderful music teacher. And then she teaches business courses. And then of course our --- there is Jim Kelley and Bonnie Kelley, they live over on the hillside here, the old Thompson house. And our star lady, or post office lady, Mrs. Spiers, Susan Spiers, they live off of Buchanan Road. And then we have

George Hoffman down here. And then we have a new family that has moved in the trailer house that belongs to Sue Opie, Skip Nyman. And then the Goff's live up here, and the Hutchinson's next-door, and then the Skinners, Paul Skinner. Well there is not too many of us, is there?

BARBARA: Not very many.

DOROTHEA: Let's see, Paula and Ken Thomas?

ALDA: Oh yes, Paula Howard.

DOROTHEA: Did they live --- Howard, uh huh.

ALDA: They lived there, and then of course Dot Skinner lives in town when she is not visiting her grandchildren. And then of course Renee Pollock bought a nice trailer home and she has it moved here, but she lives in it just during the winter, the school year. She is down at the ranch in the summertime.

DOROTHEA: She teaches school at Crane?

ALDA: Uh huh she teaches in the elementary. And then of course we have Thews, they live here in Crane. Of course he teaches, and so does Ann. And then we have the Elliott's, Rosie and Ken Elliott that live here in Crane, and Eva Retherford. And then of course Donald Opie and Betty Opie's place is on the left as you come in, that nice trailer house.

DOROTHEA: Big place.

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: With lots of trailers and things sitting out. Horse trailers and cars.

ALDA: Oh yes. As Eva says, you know that Donald can park more things in a small place than anybody. And I said well he has a system, everything is ---

DOROTHEA: Lined up. (Laughter) And let's see, they moved in from somewhere else, because they flooded out, right?

ALDA: Uh huh. Yeah, that water flooded them out, and then of course it flooded Ralph and Mina Opie out. And they moved back to the ranch up here on the, back of Crane Mountain, back up in here.

DOROTHEA: Okay. So there is still really quite a few of the older families still living here?

ALDA: Uh huh, oh yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: So the town actually was not very big when you moved here either?

ALDA: Not like it is now.

BARBARA: It had pretty much gone down hill after the ...

ALDA: Just about like it is now.

BARBARA: Uh huh, okay.

ALDA: There is not really, just a few different people, and a few of the same. But ---

BARBARA: Do you think that the Crane Boarding School will continue for a long time, or do you think that it's going to go by the wayside too, with all the budget cuts and everything in our school system in the State of Oregon?

ALDA: Well, it's difficult to say, but I think as long as our ranchers can support us, because that is what --- it's tax, ranch tax money that helps support it. I think as long as they can stand behind us, why we'll be all right.

DOROTHEA: Do you remember when the school burned? Where did the students go, or did they just close school for a while?

ALDA: Well we, the students lived with different families. I had a girl living with me. And the Potters at that time had that big two-story house, and they had students in that. And then other people throughout the area took students, and we used the old theater building down here, they fixed it up for classrooms for the high school. Well as it happened the community building, as we called it, that had been turned into a classroom, it didn't burn

that night. And so we had the upper grades in that, and then we made this --- there is three apartments in a row up here, and the one on the west we made into classrooms for the ... classrooms. And we fixed up the --- made our bulletin boards and chalkboards. And the men went to Hines and got some old desks that they had discontinued using, but they were still good desks. And we had them fixed up.

And we had a Mr. Leulellen (sp.?) that came out of Salem to inspect things that particular day, and he --- we'd worked until about three-thirty in the morning, or somewhere along there, to get everything fixed up. Our shop teacher had made us a table and some little benches so we had that. And here, our Mr. Leulellen out of Salem, inspector came in. Oh he said, "Yes you've made your own chalk boards. Oh yeah, you have your bulletin boards, and your little desks." And oh, I turned the kitchen into a little library, and he said, "Oh, and you've got your library set up." And I said, "Well we just have the one bathroom for the students." And he said, "Well that is alright, that's fine." And he looked up, he said, "No florescent lights?" And I said, "They're on order," which they were, you know. "Oh," he said, "this is fine, this is as nice as some places that are supposed to be standard."

BARBARA: How long did it take to get the school rebuilt?

ALDA: It burned in '67, January of '67, and we were moving in, if I remember, it was March of '68.

BARBARA: So over a year that it took them?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: How much did you, were you able to save? Were you able to save any books or ---

ALDA: Nothing. I think they went up the back way and got some of the school records. And then my husband and several other people, men, were upstairs trying to save some

things, and the smoke got so bad that they had to get out.

DOROTHEA: Well do you remember --- tell us something about how the fire started. Did you ever find out?

ALDA: Well they finally traced it to a scoreboard, malfunction of a scoreboard.

DOROTHEA: In the gym, in other words?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And who first noticed it?

ALDA: Well now Mrs. Beckley has a story for that.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

ALDA: But she might repeat it. We had this old yellow Tuffy cat, longhaired Tuffy cat, and he never did realize that he was a cat; he always thought he was a dog. But anyway he never in his, anytime in his life had he ever wanted out that front door, it was always the back door that he went out. And this particular evening he wanted out that front door. He just pranced and snorted around until he got out that front door. And I told Clarence, I said, "You better go get that silly old yellow cat of yours, because he is out in the front yard instead of the back yard."

DOROTHEA: And this was Clarence who?

ALDA: My son Clarence?

DOROTHEA: Oh, your son.

ALDA: And Clarence came back in, he said, "Mom, the schools on fire." He could see the smoke bellowing out under the eaves there by the shower room, as he was coming in, you know, from the scoreboard.

And so Mrs. Beckley says that Tuffy alerted everyone. Well now it could be very true, because this was the time, the only time in all of the years that he lived there that he wanted out that front door. So maybe he was trying to tell us something. Anyway we

think he was, we always feel that he was.

And then of course Mrs. Beckley and I went over there, and she started running up and down the halls hollering, "You kids get up and get out, get out, the school is on fire." And I stood down by the door to see that no one went back in after we got them out.

DOROTHEA: Did they grab any of their clothes or anything?

ALDA: Oh, they got a few things, you know. That is, oh their clothes on, just they had on, and some I guess grabbed some things when they were in the shower.

DOROTHEA: About what time was this?

ALDA: About ten o'clock.

DOROTHEA: At night?

ALDA: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And apparently during the week.

ALDA: At night. Yeah, you know I don't remember what night it was, day of the week. But it was a school night. It might have been around nine o'clock. Anyway, but no, someone said to me in Burns, "Well I understand you didn't let them go back in and get their record players." And I said, "Go back in after a record player? You can buy a new record player, but you can't buy a new child."

BARBARA: Yes.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

BARBARA: You were fortunate that no one lost their life during this fire.

ALDA: We are, very fortunate. And ---

DOROTHEA: Because at that time, where they are upstairs and downstairs dorms, I mean that's where --- so they ---

ALDA: And if it had --- well the things might have been different if it had been during the night. But I'm sure that if it had been during the night why Mr. Austin, who was our, well I

think Mrs. (Elaine) Austin too, Laurence Austin, they were keeper of the students, and they were helping to get the kids rounded out and scooted out. I'm sure if it had happened during the night, late night, they would probably gotten them out.

DOROTHEA: Well probably during that time too, they had those terrible firebomb things, and that might have caused some problems too, you know, later. Because they were very poisonous.

We better go back a little ways, and you have mentioned two boys. You said Jim, do you have --- how many children do you have?

ALDA: I have just the two boys.

DOROTHEA: And their names are Jim and Clarence, is that what you've ---

ALDA: Uh huh. Jim lives in Eugene. He worked for the, as he called him, Uncle Eddie, Edward Hines, for four years. And then he said, "You know, I'm going to move to Eugene." He said, "I can go on and finish school." Well he said, "And I think I can get a job in a mill, but I don't intend to stay working in a lumber mill." So he went over there and he got a job with the City of Eugene, the water purification department. And he was there seventeen years, and he had had surgery, a number of different surgeries on his leg and his back. And he fell at work one time after he had returned to work for light duty. And then he had to retire, because he just never did get over that injury of falling after so many surgeries. So he is retired, and he lives in Eugene. Has a nice home there, and he did have rentals, but they got to be such a headache, that he had to give them up. Because he got so he couldn't take care of them, and people that he rented to sometimes didn't take care of things.

BARBARA: Is he a Sampson?

ALDA: So he is --- he did keep the one close by, but they haven't been renting it. Then he had --- I have a grandson and a granddaughter. No, there is three now, three

grandchildren, great grandchildren. And then I have a granddaughter twenty-five, and she is still single and lives there in Eugene.

BARBARA: Is Jim a Sampson, is his last name Sampson?

ALDA: Yes, he goes by Sampson. He was the little nine year old, little boy that went to Fields with his Airedale dog.

BARBARA: Oh, okay. And then Clarence is ---

ALDA: Is Don and my boy.

BARBARA: Okay.

ALDA: And I, I guess you know my son Clarence got in, mixed up with dope. I guess you heard all that.

DOROTHEA: No, I haven't so we won't get into that.

ALDA: Well, he is up at Baker going --- he is going to be out soon.

DOROTHEA: Well tell us more about, you know, the building of the school. How, you say you went to the school board, or how did they get --- so that the two schools had decided that they should go to Burns, and they decided no, we won't go to Burns. How did that become a major issue?

ALDA: Well I really am not too sure about that, except that we, I guess they said something in Burns --- Well you know there has always been kind of a friction between Crane and Burns. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Yeah, this is why I was curious, I was kind of curious about how, why in the world they ever decided that they should go to Burns.

ALDA: Well I think it wasn't any, only about one or two people in Crane, around the area that thought they should go to Burns. And the rest of them, it was a no, no.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

ALDA: We will fight to the end. Oh yes. Well when the ladies were working over the

theater building down here, it had been a store too at one time. Mr. Kelley had had a store, no relation to Jim Kelley, but another Kelley. The inspector, the sewage inspector from Bend came roaring down here, and he went down there and told those women to stop painting, they couldn't have school in that building. And I am surprised that a couple of the women that were in there, that they didn't dump a pail of paint over his head. But he came a prancing over there, and Mr. Ratslaff flew there, where the Goff's live, and he caught Mrs. Beckley and me over there, and he says, "Now I want to inform you dear ladies that you cannot have school in that one apartment, classroom." And I said, "And just why not?" "Well there is, the sewage, there is not any manholes." And I said, "Well now you've been up there enough times to know that there is some manholes up there, that street." Because we had put in a new sewage system. "Well --- no, no, no." And I said, "Well Mrs. Beckley and I will show you." Well he didn't need to go look.

Well Gladys and I was about ready, each of us grab an arm and drag him over there. Here came Ralph Opie, and looked up, and his face was just as red, as red as a beet. I said to Gladys, I said, "We've got help on the way." Well Ralph jumped out and Mr. Squires was just a little pip-squeak of a fellow, and Ralph was a big guy, and he looked down at Mr. --- should I say this profane language that Ralph used?

BARBARA: Doesn't matter.

ALDA: Well he said, "Are you that so and so of a turd inspector that stopped work down there at that building?" And he said, "Ah, ah, ah, I think there has been a slight mistake." And Ralph said, "You're blankity blank right there has been a sad, bad mistake." And I said, "To add to it Ralph, he doesn't know after all these years that there is some manholes up there in that street. Would you take him up there and show him, because he refused to go for Mrs. Beckley and me?"

DOROTHEA: And so he allowed the school to be taught up there?

ALDA: So then that cleared. Well we had a big meeting the next day up there, and they said, "Now Mr. Squire, is there any one little thing that they can't have school in that apartment?" "Oh, no, no, none whatsoever if they put a safety valve on that hot water tank, that's all it needs." (Laughter) So you see we did have ---

DOROTHEA: Well how long, how many days probably were the students out of school before you were able to resume class work?

ALDA: Oh, probably not more than a week. I really don't remember for sure, but I know it wasn't very long. Because we started work on that --- because there wasn't anyone living in this end apartment. And Mrs. Beckley's room was ready to go. So they started in on this pink building, as the kids called it. And it wasn't too long. And then Mr. Potter was in charge of basketball, and they went down to the refuge and used that facilities down there.

DOROTHEA: For sports and activities?

ALDA: Uh huh. And I think they went over to Drewsey a couple of times, but it was easier to go down here to the refuge.

DOROTHEA: Crane has quite an active sports system. Do most of the students participate in this?

ALDA: Most of them, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Are there any that don't?

ALDA: Well a few, but very, very few.

DOROTHEA: Well what do they do while everybody else is doing their sport work? What ---

ALDA: Well some of them, you know, like one boy he is kind of heavy and he is the manager of the team. And of course we have different sports, now like if they don't take basketball, well then they start having tennis. They have wrestling. So you see they

participate in different --- during the wintertime when there is basketball, well they are either playing basketball, or else they are wrestling.

BARBARA: I understand the Crane students are going into Burns now to have baseball with the Burns team this year for the first time.

ALDA: Yes, uh huh. Yes. I haven't found out how that works.

BARBARA: I didn't hear how the season, how it worked out with both of the schools, putting them together.

ALDA: Well I didn't either. I know we tried having our basketball, or baseball, but it just didn't --- just wasn't ---

DOROTHEA: Well I think baseball takes too many kids. What is a, nine as a rule, but you have to have like at least twelve or you can't really have a good team.

ALDA: Yeah. And then another thing too, at the same time there is a lot of them out for track.

DOROTHEA: Out for track.

ALDA: So --- and of course there was a smaller enrollment at that time. So that might have some effect on it too.

DOROTHEA: Do most of the outlying kids come to Crane? Or are some of them going to Burns?

ALDA: Well very few, as far as I know, go to Burns.

DOROTHEA: Is it usually the parent's choice, or the kid's choice to come to Crane?

ALDA: Well most of the kids, students, want to come to Crane. In fact we have people that want their kids down here at Crane. And we finally had to come to the point that if you didn't live in the district, and didn't have anyone to sponsor you, you paid tuition. Because it was getting to the point that too many people were wanting to take advantage of the education, and I jokingly said of the free beef steak.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh. So mostly it's Drewsey, and Princeton, and Lawen. Are there any students coming from Lawen now? Or are there any families in Lawen?

ALDA: Well let's see, who do we have from Lawen? We have a number of grade school students from Lawen.

DOROTHEA: Do you?

ALDA: Several anyway. Of course the Dunbar's are from down there at Sod House. Catterson, Frank Catterson, he has high school student, and also grade school student.

DOROTHEA: Now do they stay in the dorm?

ALDA: The boy does, Tony does, but the little boy is transported. See we don't have any elementary students at all in the grade, or in the dormitory, it's just high school students.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah, yeah. But the little boy is not old enough to ---

ALDA: Well no, what is he, he's about what, he'll be a fifth grader. So it will be a few years before he gets to stay in the dorm. (Laughter) And then we have the Ott's; they live down at the old Spurlock Ranch, that's twenty-seven miles from here. They don't have any students in high school, but they do in the elementary. And the Arnolds don't have any place to live up at Lawen anymore, so they live out here off the Buchanan Road. But I think there are ---

BARBARA: So what have you done since you retired?

ALDA: It doesn't seem like I've accomplished much, but I have made some scrapbooks. And I started going through boxes of ...

(END OF TAPE)

bl