

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #355 - Sides A/B/C

Subject: Florence Scharff - With Video

Place: Scharff Home - Hines, Oregon

Date: March 14, 1994

Interviewers: Barbara Lofgren & Dorothea Purdy

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we are going to be visiting with Florence Scharff at her home in Hines, Oregon. The transcript, along with the video, which we will be taking after the interview, will be stored in the Harney County Library. This tape is #355. Okay, can you please tell us your name?

FLORENCE SCHARFF: Well I'm Florence Donaldson Scharff.

DOROTHEA: And where were you born?

FLORENCE: In Canyon City, Oregon.

DOROTHEA: When, may we ask that?

FLORENCE: Well I knew you'd ask that. I was born in 1904, September the 26th.

DOROTHEA: Can you tell us, were you delivered at home? Or did they have a hospital at that time?

FLORENCE: No, they did not have a hospital, I was delivered at home.

DOROTHEA: And can you remember the doctor's name?

FLORENCE: Yes, Dr. Chilton.

DOROTHEA: Got to find out what's going on here, I've got a red light that I don't recognize (tape recorder). And did he come right to your home and deliver you, or ---

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: So you had the doctor rather than a, what do they call them a ---

BARBARA LOFGREN: Midwife, or neighbor.

DOROTHEA: Midwife.

FLORENCE: No, no, no.

DOROTHEA: What were your parent's names?

FLORENCE: Well my parent's names were, Myrtle --- Lucas was her maiden name, Donaldson.

DOROTHEA: And what was your father's name?

FLORENCE: William T. Donaldson.

DOROTHEA: And what did they do for a living?

FLORENCE: They were ranchers.

DOROTHEA: Ranchers.

FLORENCE: Uh huh. They had two ranches, one, they were fifteen miles apart, the ranches were.

BARBARA: Fifteen?

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

BARBARA: And did they have cattle, did they have cattle and raise hay and that sort of thing?

FLORENCE: They had sheep.

BARBARA: Sheep, I see.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: Were there a lot of sheep around Canyon City and John Day at that time?

FLORENCE: Yes, all through, Grant County had lots of sheep, lots of sheep. And they had some cattle, and of course a few, there was a rancher or two that had quite a few horses. And of course they sold horses, and they were saddle stock of course. And I don't know of any, I can't remember of anyone that had Percherons or, what's the, there is

another breed that is about as big as Percherons, I can't think of it now, it doesn't come to me. But there weren't any people over there that had the big stock horses. Of course they did lots of haying, and that's what they used the horses for.

BARBARA: Did you help your folks at all with the sheep? Did you help feed bumper lambs, or whatever they called them?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, we raised bumper lambs, yes we did. Uh huh. And so ---

BARBARA: Did they have many people to come in and help with the sheep camps; did you have any Basco working at that time?

FLORENCE: No Bascos, no Bascos at that time over there at all. And lots of Irish and Scotch people. And that's what the population was, mostly Scotch and Irish people.

DOROTHEA: Did you have your own milk cow and things so that you had plenty of milk?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, yes we had milk cows, and chickens, and turkeys, and all that sort of thing. Because that was part of your livelihood on a ranch.

DOROTHEA: Did you help with, you did haying I imagine, and things like this. Did you help in the hay fields, or did you help your mother cook, or ---

FLORENCE: Well I drove derrick, you know what a derrick is, what they pull the hay up on the stacks with? I drove that a lot of times.

DOROTHEA: Is that called the Jim-wagon? I'm not too sure which one ---

FLORENCE: No, no, this was a --- I was going to tell you now what the name of it, and it just went out the window. It will probably come back. And they always had some hired help. And with the sheep, why of course during lambing they had more than they did any other time of the year. And then they would take them into, there was always a shearing crew that would come through the country at that time, and they would come right to the ranches and shear the sheep. And you always had extra help at that time.

DOROTHEA: You've got somebody coming to the door. ...

FLORENCE: You had a horse, a single horse that was harnessed, and it was the pull-up horse, and he would pull the hay up onto the stacks. And then the, it was the Jackson fork was the thing that had the hay loaded into it, you know. And then the fellow that was stacking would pull the deal over and put it on the edge of the stacks, or wherever you wanted it, you know, to make the proper size stack and so on and so forth. And I drove the derrick horse a lot of times. And so then of course my younger brother, he was seven years younger, so he couldn't get out and do things like that so then he would help my mother with the cooking in the house, you know, peel the potatoes and all this kind of stuff.

BARBARA: You mentioned a brother; we might ask you how many brothers and sisters that you have?

FLORENCE: Oh I had, I have two brothers, and there were just three of us, and I was the only girl.

BARBARA: I see. And what are their names?

FLORENCE: Well one's name, my mother remarried after my father died, and she married a man who had a building supply house in Canyon City. And so I really knew him better than I did my own father because I was older at that time. And so --- and my grandfather was a civil war veteran, and I have one of his lamps in my collection up here.

BARBARA: So what was your older brother's name?

FLORENCE: William Thomas Donaldson.

BARBARA: And your younger brother?

FLORENCE: Harlan Benjamin Dexter.

BARBARA: Okay. So your younger brother was from the second marriage.

FLORENCE: He was a half brother, yes, second marriage, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: I see, okay. And you say that he is still living?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, he lives in Salem.

BARBARA: Okay.

FLORENCE: And he had, he and his wife had two children. And their son died with cancer of the esophagus, the same thing that Kathreen Woyak had, but she had surgery and survived. And they did surgery for Dennis, and it didn't do any good, and he died at forty, age forty which is pretty young. And he had never married.

BARBARA: Did you go to school in Canyon City, get your schooling there?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, yes, and ---

BARBARA: John Day High School was it?

FLORENCE: No, my folks, their two ranches were on the south fork of the John Day River, which runs through Dayville. And I went to the Dayville High School for most of my training. And then there was a little rural school where my folks boarded us out, and that was between John Day and Mount Vernon. And I see some family is living in that school, old schoolhouse now. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: It is kind of nostalgic to go through there and see things like they used to be. Even when Clinton and I first got married, his family lived, part of his family --- Well you probably knew Purdy Pope.

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well that is Clint's sister.

FLORENCE: Oh, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And we spent a lot of time running back and forth to Mount Vernon.

FLORENCE: Well yes.

DOROTHEA: It's changed a lot.

FLORENCE: Oh it certainly, hasn't it changed though?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: We always stop and see Mary and Sally Fine when we're over that way. And then I still have one cousin living in John Day. And we go over to see them, and they come over to see us, and they always go up to the Steens every summer and --- because they think that's pretty beautiful country, which it is.

DOROTHEA: Well didn't you go on to college then?

FLORENCE: Yes, I went to Oregon State University.

DOROTHEA: And what was your major, or what did you take?

FLORENCE: I majored in education.

DOROTHEA: Did you get a teaching degree then?

FLORENCE: Well, I married John and he didn't believe in his wife working.

DOROTHEA: Okay. That sounds like a good idea.

BARBARA: Did you go the four years to Oregon State?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, yeah, uh huh.

BARBARA: Did you live in dorms, or did you join a sorority?

FLORENCE: Well I joined a sorority, uh huh. And it was --- I still hear from a lot of the girls that I was in college with, and that was in my sorority. I was an Alpha Xi Delta.

BARBARA: And you are --- the reason I brought that up was because, so am I.

FLORENCE: Oh, are you?

BARBARA: Yes, I am.

FLORENCE: Oh, for goodness sakes.

BARBARA: And I joined at Oregon State too.

FLORENCE: Oh did you?

BARBARA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: Well now what year was that?

BARBARA: I went to school in '53, '54, '55, and then I got married so I didn't finish.

FLORENCE: Uh huh. Well of course I had planned on teaching, but John, he said, "Not on your life," he said. I just, "My wife is not going to teach." And we had no children, and so ---

But I'll tell you a funny little incident about rush at Oregon State. And I was rushed by several sororities, and so there was one sorority that was not a national yet. And I still hear from a lot of those girls to this day. And so my mother said, "Now, you know, it's costing us a lot of money to send you to college." I think I paid, we paid, they paid \$39 a month for room and board, and that was a lot of money that day and age. And so my mother said now, I told her that I was real interested in this sorority that was, they were petitioning, Alpha Phi, and so she said, "Well you find out how much more money you're going to have to pay, I just don't think we can afford that." And so when I went back why I --- this was during the Christmas holiday. And I talked to these girls and they said, "Well it's going to cost you more than living in the dormitory." And of course at that time you had to live in the dormitory a year before you could move into a sorority, if you pledged a sorority. And so she said, my mother said, "Now you let me know because," she said, "it's really costing us a lot to send you to college. We want to do it, but we don't want you to have to cost us some more money that we think you could do without."

And so I went back and I asked them, and I talked to this local sorority and they found out how much more it was going to cost to live in sorority over living in the dormitory. And so I called my mother on the telephone and told her, and she said, "Well, I don't think you'd better do that." And so I said, "Well gee I like all of those girls." And I said, "I really think that I would like to join that local sorority instead of joining one that was already a national." And so we talked several times about it. And so finally I went to these girls and I said, "Well my family thinks it is going to cost me too much money, because it's going to cost a lot of extra money for you to become a national." And they

said, "Yes it is." And so then this is when I chose to become an Alpha Xi Delta. And it did cost more money than the dormitory cost, but I still go back occasionally and visit the chapter.

There is not very many of the same group of girls that I was in the chapter with that are living. And it just seems strange, and I was older than some of them, you know, quite a lot older. But it is nice to go back, and I still hear from some of those girls that are still living that were in my class. But it's strange.

BARBARA: It's good training.

FLORENCE: Oh it's wonderful; it's a wonderful experience for girls, just a wonderful experience.

BARBARA: Well I had happened to see your name in, I don't remember whether it was the "Quill" or some other information, the Panhellenic that I got out of Portland that had mentioned your name, so I knew that you were a member too, so that's why I brought that up.

FLORENCE: Well I'm glad you did, because I didn't know that.

BARBARA: There aren't very many of us over on this side of the mountain.

FLORENCE: No, that's right, that's right. Now Fran Smith from, she married Vern Gooley, and his aunt had that wonderful dress shop in Portland, and Fran Smith married her nephew, Vern Gooley. And Fran just recently died. Uh huh. And she is the --- and then she had a, let's see, she was a Miler girl, what was --- the one I'm trying to think about was an Alpha Xi Delta down there. Her name doesn't come to me either, but she has passed on. And so she --- and she never did come back to this part of the world to live.

BARBARA: Well when did you finish college and come back to this part of the world?

FLORENCE: Oh, I'd have to do some figuring on that.

BARBARA: What year did you graduate from college?

FLORENCE: It was 1929.

BARBARA: Okay. And then when you did graduate I assume you came back home, did you?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, yes.

BARBARA: Had you met John prior to the time that you went off to school?

FLORENCE: Well yes, because he was a Grant County chap. And he had gone ---

BARBARA: Did you know him during the time that you were in high school, or ---

FLORENCE: Yes, that's where I met him. He, my folks ran sheep and they were looking for a shepherd. And so my brother, my older brother went to high school, he was quite an athlete; Bill was just a great athlete. And so John Day High School came down and talked my family into the notion of letting him come to John Day because he was such an athlete, and they knew it. And so that's why he graduated from the John Day High School. And John graduated from the John Day High School. But I graduated from the high school in Dayville. And so that was kind of different, you know, to have the family split up like that. And then my younger brother, my folks sent him to LaGrande because we had relatives living there and they wanted him to come to LaGrande to go to school, and he graduated at LaGrande. So ---

BARBARA: Three different places.

FLORENCE: Three different places.

BARBARA: What kind of things did you and John do, I mean when did you start, maybe I should say dating or ---

FLORENCE: Well I didn't finish; I didn't finish that story how I happened to meet him. And my brother Bill brought him down to the ranch and he was looking for a job. Because his father had died when he was eight years of age, John's father. And so he was looking

for a job, and so my brother said, "Well I'm sure that my folks are looking for a sheep herder." And so that's when I met John. Bill brought him down to the ranch, to our home, and that's how I met him. And that's where the romance started, so ---

BARBARA: Was this during the time that you were still in high school, or was it after you had gone to college?

FLORENCE: Oh, it was after I had gone to college, yeah.

BARBARA: So this was after you came back home?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: So what did you do when you came back from college, and you didn't start teaching, what did you do?

FLORENCE: Well I did quite a lot of substitute teaching.

BARBARA: Oh, you did?

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: In the Grant County area?

FLORENCE: In Grant County area, uh huh, yeah. And then when John and I were married why that came to a halt. That came to a sudden stop.

BARBARA: Did you like that, were you a grade school educator, or high school, or what?

FLORENCE: High school, high school, uh huh.

BARBARA: And what subjects did you teach?

FLORENCE: Well at that time you taught a lot of subjects. It isn't like it is now. And I don't remember just what all I taught. It's been so long since I've even thought about that. I can't answer that question correctly for you.

DOROTHEA: Well when did you and John get married then?

FLORENCE: We got married in 1929.

BARBARA: So it must have been a whirlwind romance if you came back from college,

and you met.

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh.

BARBARA: Did you start really dating right away then?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, yeah.

BARBARA: What kind of things did you do on dates?

FLORENCE: Oh well we went to dances, and we had lots of dances in that locality, in Grant County. And we --- and of course I played basketball when I was in high school, and I also played when I was in college for two years, my freshman and sophomore year. And then after that why I got so involved in other things that I dropped out of athletics in college. And so I just played for two years.

But it's, I can't think of anything that might be interesting to you to tell about. I can't recall just what all I taught, but I did a lot of substitute teaching.

BARBARA: Well that's good. Well at least you got to put your education to use for a little while then.

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh, that's right. But after I got married it came to a sudden halt.
(Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Well what did you and John do then after you got married? Did you live there in Grant County?

FLORENCE: Well Johnny, John was with the Forest Service, he was ten years with the Forest Service. And then one day a chap walked into, or he was ushered into his office, and this chap said, introduced himself, and he said, "We have purchased all the land in Harney County," that was all the "P" Ranch property, you know, that came clear down to the edge of the lake, on this side of the lake. And he said, "We have picked you to go and turn that from a cattle ranch into a refuge. And we hope you will be interested in accepting this job." John said, "Well, I'd have to go home and talk it over with my wife and

think about it awhile." And so they said that's okay with us. And so said, "Just let us know what your decision is." And so that's when we came here to this county, and that was in 1935 we came here.

BARBARA: So you basically, after you were married in '29, what month was it?

FLORENCE: September.

BARBARA: September 1929.

FLORENCE: 21st.

BARBARA: 21st of 1929, John had been working for the Forest Service for how long prior to this time?

FLORENCE: Ten years.

BARBARA: Ten years.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

BARBARA: When you got married he'd already been working ten years.

FLORENCE: For ten years, uh huh.

BARBARA: So you said that you met him when he was looking for a job herding sheep?

FLORENCE: During the summertime, that was when he was in high school.

BARBARA: Oh when he was --- so you met him prior, you met him earlier then?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: I see, okay. I was confused a little bit.

FLORENCE: Well, I'm good at confusing people.

BARBARA: So you had met him during high school and before you went off to college.

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh, yes.

BARBARA: When you came back from college then you got married.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, then we got married.

BARBARA: And he had already gone from herding sheep in the summertime to working

for the Forest Service.

FLORENCE: To working from the Forest Service, uh huh.

BARBARA: And he worked over on the coast, and in the south, and other places during this time that you were away at school then?

FLORENCE: Yes, that's right, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: Okay, so we'll kind of bring us up to date a little bit.

FLORENCE: Yes.

BARBARA: And at the time that he was working for the Forest Service, out of the John Day area, is when you got married?

FLORENCE: Yes.

BARBARA: Okay. And then you were there six years before you came to here?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh.

BARBARA: Okay. And did you live in John Day there?

FLORENCE: Well yes we did, we lived there in the summer --- in the wintertime. And then in the summertime we were out on the Prairie City Ranger District. And ---

BARBARA: Did you camp out in the summer?

FLORENCE: No, they had log houses. Well some of them were lumber houses, and that's where we lived in the summertime's. And then in the wintertime we lived in Prairie City because that was the headquarters for the Prairie City District, Ranger District.

BARBARA: And did you like kind of roaming around the country in the summertime with him?

FLORENCE: Oh yes.

BARBARA: Were you out on horseback?

FLORENCE: Yes, it was all; everything was done by horseback that day and age, that far back. And you furnished your own vehicle even. And they didn't give you any money for

gasoline; you paid for your own gasoline.

BARBARA: They expected you to get to work.

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh, yeah. And then we did lots of horseback riding, and had packhorses on the district. Then we'd go out, and then we'd camp out at certain times, you know, when John was working certain areas.

DOROTHEA: So did you go with John then, or ---

FLORENCE: Quite a lot I did, uh huh, yes. And John had an Airedale dog, and so he'd always go along too. He didn't like me very well. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Tolerate you?

FLORENCE: Well he thought I wasn't very nice I guess, or something, I never could figure it out. But then in the wintertime then, then John was made Assistant Forest Supervisor, and we moved from Prairie City to John Day, and we lived in John Day then. And then this is when we were transferred from John Day to Lakeview. And we went to Lakeview; I've forgotten what year it was. And then from Lakeview why then we moved to Burns.

DOROTHEA: So you weren't surprised about what the country was like then?

FLORENCE: Oh no, no, no.

DOROTHEA: Growing up in the same type of area.

FLORENCE: Uh huh. John was from the Monument country, and I was from the Dayville country, of course, and had lived in the Prairie City area. And so I wasn't, the desert didn't bother me a bit.

DOROTHEA: Was the weather different in that locality than it was here, like it is now? I know lots of times they'll get snow over there and we won't have any here.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Or we'll have foots of snow over here, and they don't have any.

FLORENCE: We'll have a lot of snow and they'll have none. No, they're a lot lower elevation than we are here. I think they're only, I think around John Day I think it's around something over 2,000 feet. They're a lot lower than we are here. And their climate is much more mild than it is here, and you can grow more things over there than you can in Burns, or in this county.

DOROTHEA: Yeah. But it was that way when you were growing up also?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, oh yes, uh huh, I should say so.

BARBARA: Well you mentioned running around with John in the summertime's, camping on occasion, and with your pack trains and all, what did you do in the wintertime to keep yourself busy during the day while he was at work? Did you become involved in activities, or what did you do?

FLORENCE: I was always involved in activities. (Laughter) I always did a lot of things for the church. And of course I belong to St. Thomas Church, which is an old, old Episcopal Church. You perhaps have seen it; it's a beautiful old building. And that's where the three of us went to Sunday school, and where we went to church.

And Bill Farrell, who is now a retired extension agent, he was in Grant County for years, you know, he and Jean and their family. And I saw Jean down at Corvallis just recently when we were down there to a Jackman committee meeting. And at the same time John and I and fourteen others were initiated into the, what they call the Jackman Fellow organization. It's a new setup, and there were just three of us that weren't either deans or professors at Oregon State University that were initiated into this Jackman Fellow. And, which was a surprise to us, and I still don't know why, or how we were picked. And I suppose some day we will find out. But it was a nice event, and much to our surprise. And of course John was one of the persons who helped start the Jackman Foundation, you know. And so --- but it was quite an event. They had a lovely dinner that

night, and then we were presented with a couple of pins, and so on and so forth. And it was a nice affair.

DOROTHEA: Well then let's go on to where you came to Harney County and went to work at the refuge.

FLORENCE: Okay. There were no houses out there at all, and where the house is now, and the buildings, that was just a greasewood knoll when we came there. And they said, "Well Florence we'll have a house for you to move into in six months." Twenty-two months later they had a house for us to move into.

BARBARA: So what did you live in until it was ready?

FLORENCE: Well we rented an old ranch house, which belonged to a local rancher. It was a two-story and a half house. And of course no one had lived in it for years, and it was in bad disrepair. And we had to buy a wood range to put in the kitchen because there was no electricity at all out there. And we had to buy gasoline lanterns for light, because there was no electricity. And so in the wintertime I remember on the, oh shoot, I can't think here, anyway there was, it was in October, it was Halloween, and the kids out there had never, in the school district, had never gone out on Halloween. And we came to town and bought candy and stuff for them, you know, so that we could treat them when they came over to visit us. We had ten inches of snow that had fallen the day before, and it was ten below zero. And I said, "John, that teacher," and it was Mrs. Hughet from the Double O area was the teacher, and I said, "she'll never bring those kids out on a night like this." John said, "Do you want to bet?" And I said, "Yeah, I'll bet you a dollar that they don't come." Well I lost my dollar because they came. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Oh. The ten below didn't bother them a bit.

FLORENCE: Yes, not a bit. And of course we had to buy a circulating heater for the heat in the other part of the house. And the dining room part, when it was so cold in the

wintertime, we just closed that off and then we'd run from the kitchen area into the living room area. And there was a bedroom, our bedroom was off the living room area, and it just had an archway between that and the living room. And, but we bought a circulating heater and that heated that part of the house. And it was kind of rough, and there was a pitcher pump on the back porch, and I had one modern convenience in that old house, there was a sink in the kitchen and you could pour the dish water in the sink and it would run out into an old, into this old well. And that was the one modern convenience that that house had. And this day and age, you know, a girl wouldn't go to a place like that.

BARBARA: No. I was going to say what did you think of John bringing you to such a place?

FLORENCE: Well I knew we were going to have a house eventually.

BARBARA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: And so that didn't bother me too much. And it was fun because we'd have to go to the "P" Ranch to do something, and they had an old house up there. And then they, during the days of the CCC's, you know, they built some houses. And so we had one of those houses at the "P" --- no, the first thing they had at the old, was the old "P" Ranch house itself, the old original house. And it caught fire and burned down, and so then, this is when they began getting houses from the old CC program, which had folded, it was no longer working. And so a lot of those houses they moved in from other areas. And so then they had modern facilities. But it was, it was a nice experience.

DOROTHEA: So when you moved into your house after waiting all this time, was it modern?

FLORENCE: Yes, it was a modern house. We had a, there was a spring there, you know. And they had a, they put a pump in that spring and they pumped it up to the house. And that probably wasn't as sanitary as it should have been, but anyway we didn't

think that much about it. And so then in later years why we got electricity, even before we left out there. Because we were out there from 1937 to '71. So we were there quite awhile. That's why I say we met people from all over the world.

BARBARA: So the first house that you were in still did not have electricity?

FLORENCE: Oh no, it had no electricity at all. That's what I said, we bought these gas lanterns, that was our electricity, was gas lanterns. And then we, and the only modern convenience we had was that kitchen sink.

DOROTHEA: Sink. So where did you get your water?

FLORENCE: Pitcher pump on the back porch.

DOROTHEA: Oh, that's right, you said that. That's right, I forgot.

FLORENCE: And there was no indoor toilet or anything like that.

DOROTHEA: Did your pitcher pump ever freeze up?

FLORENCE: Well we drained it, you could drain those things. You lifted the handle up and punched a button or something and you could drain those.

DOROTHEA: It had a leather flap and you lifted the flap.

FLORENCE: Uh huh. And so it wasn't too bad, but of course we had lived in town quite a little while, and it was kind of different, you know, going back to having no modern conveniences. But we knew it wasn't going to be that way forever.

DOROTHEA: Because I remember sometimes my folks would forget to drain that pump, and it would freeze.

FLORENCE: Oh it would, yes.

DOROTHEA: Man we would use every bit of water and snow and everything else trying to thaw it out.

FLORENCE: To thaw it out.

DOROTHEA: Thaw it out.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: By heating it on the stove and take it out, and run it out real fast and pump, hope that you could get that water.

FLORENCE: That's right, I should say so. Now whereabouts in this county did you live?

DOROTHEA: I lived out in Rye Grass.

FLORENCE: Out in Rye Grass, oh, uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well now you moved into this new house, did you have furniture, or did they supply anything like that?

FLORENCE: Oh no, we had our own furniture.

DOROTHEA: You had your own.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, we had our own furniture, uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: But there was no landscaping done, you did this all?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh. Oh yeah, we did everything. There was nothing there.

DOROTHEA: How did you go about getting your plants and things, did you order from seed catalogs?

FLORENCE: You had to buy --- most of the things that are out there we purchased, and it came out of our pocket. They didn't give you any money for plants, or shrubs, or trees. And quite a few of those trees, my folks of course had these two ranches over on the south fork of the John Day at Dayville, and so I went over there and got a lot of things out of my mother's and dad's yard. And, well actually it was my stepfather, but I still call him Dad. And so that's where, even a lot of the trees that are out on the refuge grounds came from my family's ranch over at Dayville. And so that's how we got started. Because now, of course no one lives out there, and that's the way it looked when we lived there.

BARBARA: And this particular house was finished in what year?

FLORENCE: Oh, gee ---

DOROTHEA: It must have been about twenty-two months, must have been about '37?

FLORENCE: Yeah, must have been '37, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: And you say, what year was it then that you got electricity into this?

FLORENCE: I don't remember when ---

BARBARA: It was a few years after you initially moved in?

FLORENCE: It was quite a few years. We had a, we had a power plant, they built a building and they put a power plant in there. And it would run all night, and people that came to stay with us, and everybody stayed out there, they didn't stay in town like they do now. And relatives and friends that came, this power plant, they had to go down and start it at night to build up the batteries so that we could have electricity. And that thing running all night would keep ---

DOROTHEA: Everybody awake.

FLORENCE: --- everybody awake except us. But we had grown accustomed to it, and we could sleep. My relatives and friends that came they just said, "Oh, I don't see how you can stand it." Well we have to stand it because there isn't any other thing for us to do. And if you want electricity why this is the way we had it then. And I can't remember, it was during Ray Novotney's time here, that they brought power through the country.

DOROTHEA: I think it was in the late '40's it seems like that the country, Burns had it before then.

FLORENCE: Oh yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: But I mean, because my folks got it in '50, '49 or '50. And I think you got it out there shortly, thereabouts or right after.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, well that's perhaps correct. And so, but I know it was wonderful. Because that was one of the first things that I said, well we're going to have when we get power out here, I'm going to have a refrigerator. And that was the first thing that we

bought. And I'll tell you who run the shop and where we bought it downtown here, if I can just think of their names. Oh, I can't think of their names. But anyway, we bought a lot of electrical appliances from ---

DOROTHEA: Frank Hirsch?

FLORENCE: No, it wasn't Hirsch, huh uh, no. Isn't that funny, I can see the couple but I can't think of their name. Well I guess that's what old age does to you.

DOROTHEA: I was trying to think; Firestone was in here about that time.

FLORENCE: Well it wasn't a Firestone. Oh, it may come to me before we get through here.

BARBARA: You say you had four bedrooms in this ---

FLORENCE: Yes, there were four bedrooms in that house. And of course, and they have it full of employees now. They had, this really sounds catty, but it's a fact, they have five biologists now, and John was lucky all the time we were there, just to have one. So --

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BARBARA: I understand what you're saying.

FLORENCE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: So, when --- I'm looking at this picture that you have over on your fireplace, settee there, who did the walk and --- did you do that?

FLORENCE: Well those were done by the CCC's. And so that's --- and then on the other side of that I had concrete, and they were three steps down because that's quite a slope. And so then I put annuals on the other side, and these were all perennials here except there were some annuals that were border plants here in this flowerbed. And then there were roses in the flowerbed out this way. And then I had, I convinced them that I wanted some pots along the top of the stone walls here, and then across to the left of the house and in the back, and I had, I think, about forty peonies all told, that were in this bed, and

the flower beds at the back of the house.

Well I'm a flower fiend, but --- I dug up some of the, I wanted to dig all of the peonies up and bring them in when we moved, when we retired. John wouldn't let me, he said, "No, let's not dig up any of the perennials and bring them in." So I said, "Well there is one or two there that I am going to bring in whether you want me to or not." So I did, and I have them in my yard here. But I wanted to bring some of the starts of all the perennials that were in that flowerbed there. And he said, "No," he says, "let's, if we leave it this way maybe they'll take care of it and keep it that way." Well that was wishful thinking.

But this little couple that are over at the Double O, the O'Connor's, Laurie comes over here real frequently and always asking me about flowers. And so she is trying to do that flower, that perennial border over there. But she says, "It will never look like that Florence, it will never look like that." And I said, "Now you're not buying those out of your own pocket are you?" She said, "Oh no, they're giving me some money every year to put flowers in over there." Because I don't think there is anyone living out there now, because I think the last person that lived there they were transferred, he took a transfer to Kauai, which is one of my favorite islands in, over there.

And so --- but, and every time she gets a problem --- and then the couple that had lived out at the Double O, they retired and moved to Walla Walla, that's where they were from originally. And Jack died after they retired, and he --- but his wife is still living and we, I call her on the telephone and the next time she calls me, and we keep in touch. And so -- and we haven't been over to Walla Walla for several years. I used to go over quite frequently, but now that we have to get someone to drive for us, why we don't get around like we used to.

DOROTHEA: Well my first experience was in school that we went out to the refuge. I

don't know if they still do that or not. But, and it's a lot of difference. Let's pause for a while while we turn this tape over.

SIDE B

DOROTHEA: Well how long did it take you to put in most of these flowers, and the lawn, and the trees?

FLORENCE: Well we had three CC Camps, you know, and so John and I did most of the planting and we of course did all the buying of the trees. Like the tall trees that you can see in that picture there, and we call that Norb's Forest, he was a caretaker there, and mowed the lawn. Well we mowed it for several years, then we said well we just, you know, with all the company we have we just can't do all this mowing. And so they let us, they let John hire someone to mow the lawns and that sort of thing. And they didn't do any of the planting of the flowers. But the CCC's, and I had them put a concrete border around the flowerbed there, as you can see, that was all done with CCC's. And that was the best government program that they've ever had was the CCC's.

DOROTHEA: Now John worked for the CCC's for a while also, didn't he?

FLORENCE: Oh yes he did, uh huh, yes.

DOROTHEA: And was that with this refuge program?

FLORENCE: Well yes, and no. Probably in the interview you had with him he told you about going horseback, so we won't get into that. But I hate to say that I go out there, and we don't go out there at all unless --- now we think Forrest Cameron is one of the best fellows that has followed John.

The fellow that followed John was, had worked with John for about seven or eight years. John had them stationed over at the Double O. So, but when John left, and then they made him refuge manager, and then they moved to town. And they didn't want to

send their kids to a rural school. And when John was there we had the best rural schoolteachers in the county. Because that was one thing that we were very, very interested in, is that we would have good teachers for the kids on the refuge. And of course the ones that were in high school went to Crane to high school.

But the --- I've forgotten now what point I was going to bring up here, what was I talking about anyway; I lost my trend of thought?

BARBARA: The next manager.

FLORENCE: Oh the next manager, yeah, well that was Joe Mazzoni. And of course they lived in town --- and it just made us sick when they didn't live on the job.

But anyway, the buildings were built with, during the CCC programs. And this looks so different, I wish we'd taken pictures of what that knoll there, where the house is, looked like when ---

DOROTHEA: Before.

FLORENCE: --- before we put the, started building there. And I'm sure that we had some photographs in the office. But Marcus Haines came in one day, that was after he stopped working for John, and said, "I took our garbage to the town dump." And he said, "I found a lot of papers which were historical things that John had kept on file, and Joe had hauled them all up to the dump." Fortunately he hadn't set them afire, so well they didn't all burn, but some of them burned. And so we were able to, Marcus retrieved some of them. And so we did get some of those back.

But, and Joe always pretended to be such a historian himself, and then he'd do a trick like that, I couldn't understand because

--- but then I think that's pretty true this day and age. I've talked to some of the government agencies here today, and they say well, you know, when we came here there wasn't anything left in the files, they had all been destroyed. So I guess they're still doing

that.

BARBARA: I hadn't heard that.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

BARBARA: So what, now that you're living on the refuge, you're in your new house, what are some of the things that you became involved with, and how did you become involved in all your flowers, your gardening. I understand that you belong to the garden club.

FLORENCE: Oh yes, I belong to that.

BARBARA: And PEO, and the Cancer Society, maybe you can tell us about some of those things, and how you became involved in gardening.

FLORENCE: Well of course I became, I had gardened all my life because my mother was such a gardener, and her yard was just beautiful on the ranch, just beautiful. And so ever since I can remember I'd worked with plants and had helped my mother plant, you know, in the spring of the year and plant the annuals and so on and so forth. And so that wasn't anything new to me.

And so, and I was just trying to think how I became involved in the Cancer Society. I was at a meeting some place with John, and I met a lady who was involved with the Cancer Society in Portland. And so, and she said, "Do you have a Cancer Society in your county?" And I said, "No." But I said, "I think it would be a good idea if we got one started." And she said, "Well would you start it for me?" And I said, "Sure, I'll start it." And of course we were living out of town then, you know, and so I had the whole county. So then I said, "This is not going to work because I can't be away from home all the time doing this." Because all the inspectors stayed with us when they came, and you never knew when they were coming. And so I got several people, and Zoe Morgan who just passed, was one of the first persons that I got interested in doing the Cancer Society. And she was one of the first ones, and I can't remember some of the others, and Zoe just

passed away. And so that's how I got started in the Cancer Society. And then the people from, then they started having quite a number of people in Bend that were in that county, what county is Bend in now?

DOROTHEA: I think that is Deschutes.

FLORENCE: Deschutes, isn't it?

DOROTHEA: I think so.

FLORENCE: Yeah. And so I had a lot of people over there, and then the people out of the Portland office would come and they'd come there, and then they'd come over here, and then we'd have a meeting here in town. And so that's how I got involved in the Cancer Society. And I'm one of the charter members of the PEO.

DOROTHEA: What does PEO stand for?

FLORENCE: Well I'm sorry I can't tell you. That's a deep dark secret.

DOROTHEA: Okay, okay.

FLORENCE: And so, and I've been very active in that. And that's a wonderful organization. And we do lots of scholarships, just lots of scholarships, and it's a wonderful organization. I just can't remember now, I haven't been very active in this past year.

DOROTHEA: How do they make their money for their scholarships? Do they have ---

FLORENCE: Well have you ever gone, have you ever gone to our style show?

BARBARA: Style show.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: Well that's where we make our money for our scholarships. I got that silly thing started too. I met Harriet Langmas who is --- oh, I'm sorry I knocked that off (microphone)

--- I met Harriet Langmas someplace, and I don't remember where it was. It was something that we were to in Bend; some of the, always went with John to all the

meetings that he had to go to. And I don't remember what meeting that he had over there that he had to attend. And anyway I met Harriet Langmas at that time, and so that's how we got started with PEO here. And a girl that I grew up with over in the John Day, her folks had a ranch, five miles up the main John Day River from where we lived at Dayville. And she went to the University of Oregon and I went to Oregon State. And my folks would always take us down in the fall, and then we'd come home to Arlington on the train at Christmas time, and my folks would meet us there. And we'd come home to Dayville that way, and spend the holidays with our families. And their home is still --- living, and my folks sold their ranch and moved to Klamath Falls, and I can't remember what year that was. But it was during the Second World War, but I don't remember what month of the year it was.

And so we, that's how we got, I got involved with PEO, was I met Harriet and I found out that she went around, you know, putting on style shows, and they're still doing that here. And I didn't get to it this year because that's when we had to be down in Corvallis for this Jackman Fellow thing we had to attend, so I didn't make it. The only one I've ever missed.

BARBARA: Oh. Well I want to get in here that just last year, this month in fact, that you were honored as a Lifetime Member of the American Cancer Society.

FLORENCE: That's right.

BARBARA: And only two honorary memberships have been bestowed.

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh.

BARBARA: We congratulate you for all your many years of service.

FLORENCE: Well I was happy to do it. But I had to drop out because ---

BARBARA: Well someone else has to ---

FLORENCE: --- especially after I had this heart attack I just had to drop out of a lot of

things.

BARBARA: So what are some of the other things that you did during the years that you lived out on the refuge?

FLORENCE: On the refuge.

BARBARA: You say that you had a lot of people drop in and visit. Tell us some, about some of the experiences you had with drop-ins.

FLORENCE: Well this one chap that he and his girlfriend came, see it was summer before last, and stayed a week with us. And they're just living together, they aren't married. Of course a lot of people are doing that.

DOROTHEA: I think they call that insignificant others now.

FLORENCE: Do they? (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: Well that's a good name for it. And so, but he is just a delight, and I don't know how many times that he has come back to see us since he came out to the refuge, it was when he first came. And he did a, quite a story, I don't think we even have a copy of it, but he did a story on John and I and our time that we had spent out at the refuge. And it was real interesting, but I don't know whatever happened to the copy, but we don't have it anymore. So that's not of much interest to you I don't think, when you don't have something that we can show you.

DOROTHEA: Was that in a magazine, or book?

FLORENCE: No, he just had it typed up and sent us a copy.

DOROTHEA: Oh, I see.

FLORENCE: I don't know whatever happened to our copy, but we don't have it anymore.

BARBARA: So what kind of people would stop by out there? Bird watchers, or government people.

FLORENCE: Oh hundreds ---

BARBARA: Did they expect to be boarded and roomed there when they came out?

FLORENCE: Well some of them did, and some of them didn't. Now like the people who were with the, now they call it Fish and Wildlife Service, and back then they called it Biological Survey, and they would come out and just --- well we had a four bedroom house, of course one of the bedrooms was ours, and they just expected to stay there with us. And they didn't give us, they didn't pay us anything, or we didn't expect them to pay us anything, that was part of your job. And so once in awhile they might bring us a box of candy. (Laughter)

BARBARA: You must have really had to keep a lot of supplies on hand because you never knew whether you were going to have someone for dinner, or breakfast or whatever.

FLORENCE: Well you never knew, you never knew. And no, I had a, there was a pantry there and it was well stocked. I did lots of canning, still do for that matter, and we still have lots of company. Like this gal that just left this morning, this priest, she is a --- well I think I told you about her. And so, but we still have lots of company, and we like it that way, we love it that way.

DOROTHEA: Did you have your own garden?

FLORENCE: Oh yes we had a garden. They, after we retired they paved that and made a parking lot out of it, so they park their cars behind the office there. No, we had a garden, and we grew corn, we grew everything just like we do here. And in fact we grew more things there than you can grow here, because the climate is a little better out there.

And we, my folks always said that they were scared to death that that house would catch on fire because it was a four bedroom house and there were only two outside doors where you could get out, you know. They always said if that house ever catches on fire

you're going to burn alive. (Laughter) Well, it never did. But no one lives out there now so that it doesn't bother them. They made it over into an office.

DOROTHEA: Well what enticed them to make a four-bedroom home? Did they think that you were always going to have company?

FLORENCE: Well sure, all of the inspectors that came, that was the policy that day and age. They came right out to the refuge, and not only the refuge that we were on, but Hart Mountain, and Tulle Lake, and all of those. They all had big homes, and all of the inspectors stayed with the family that lived there, lived in these houses. Well that was the policy that day and age.

But after John retired, why that policy changed, and Joe Mazzone and his family they moved in town, they wouldn't live out there. They lived out there while John, while he worked under John, and they lived also at the Double O. But they moved to town, and so that's how that got started.

DOROTHEA: And then they made the bedrooms into offices and ---

FLORENCE: Every, and they have somebody in every office out there. They have a lot more personnel than we had while we were there.

DOROTHEA: Well did you join the Sunrise Garden Club while you were out there?

FLORENCE: Yes, I did. Let's see now, I hope I can think of the name of the girls who first started the Sunrise Garden Club. There was Mrs. Bill Marsh, her name was Una. Mrs. McCleary, she and her husband had the, were out in charge of the Indian Village out here, can't think of her first name now. And Mrs. Leonard Locher, and her husband was with the Hines Lumber Company. And there is two more --- Una Marsh, Locher, and McCleary, oh Mrs. Myra Weittenhiller, she was school superintendent here for years, you know. And there is one more --- gee, that name doesn't come. I'll probably think of it before you leave, but it doesn't come to me now.

And they asked me to, they had gotten acquainted with me because they were always bringing people out that came in to the Hines Mill, you know, to show them the country, and to show them the refuge and so on and so forth, and all the birds. They had a lot more birds then than they have now.

DOROTHEA: That's for sure.

FLORENCE: So, but I, it just sounds like I'm real catty, but it's a fact. And we just don't understand it. But anyway, to get back to what I was saying here if I can think of what I want to say, they ---

DOROTHEA: We were talking about the ---

FLORENCE: About the garden club, and gosh I can't think of that

--- but anyway they asked me to be a charter member because they'd all been out there to the refuge many times. And so I said, "Well I just can't do it because I never know when I'm going to have a house full of these people. And I have to cook for them and everything, and so I can't do it."

But then, did you remember Frances Houston that used to be here? Well one of those lamps was her first --- Mr. Houston's first wife died, you know, they had a boy, and she died. And then when Frances came in here a horseback to teach school when she graduated, and rode a horseback in here and then she met Mr. Houston and they married. And before Frances died she gave me, this little I'll show you the lamp, gave me that lamp, because that was a wedding gift to Mr. Houston and his first wife. And so I said, "You don't want to give that to me Frances." She said, "I want you to have it, you've been so good to me, and I want you to have that." And so before she died she gave me that little lamp. And so that's what --- and I have a lamp there that was, when it was given to me it was two hundred and fifty years old.

DOROTHEA: I see you have one there that has really got a picture on the bottom of it.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh. And they made very few of those, and that's an old, old lamp. Well they're all old, everyone that I have up there. I better get up here and show you a few of these things because I need to stand up. I've lost so much weight and I won't buy any clothes until I can gain some of it back. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: I've got to unhook you (microphone).

FLORENCE: Oh, that's right, I'm sorry.

DOROTHEA: That's okay.

FLORENCE: Did I break something there?

DOROTHEA: No, I just unhooked you.

FLORENCE: (Shows lamp collection) This was my grandfather's (old lamps). And these will turn purple; you don't have to put them out in the sun.

BARBARA: Just with age, huh?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, the chemicals that they're made from. And this was Mr. Houston's; it was a wedding gift to he and his first wife. And Frances gave this to me just before she died, which I just love. And then they made very few of these. I have a book on lamps. But, looks like it needs to be dusted. And then this is the one that when it was given to me it was two hundred and fifty years old. And we have a friend who is a Baptist minister, he was a schoolteacher at Madras for years, and we always knew he'd go into the ministry. And I'd seen this in their house because we used to visit him there, he used to come down, he used to come down to the, he and his wife came down to the refuge every year and spent six weeks down there. And he was a fine photographer, and still is a fine photographer, and they live at Lincoln City now. And so one time they came down there and they came in with a box, started unpacking, and they unpacked this lamp. And I said, "What are you doing with that lamp here?" "Well we're giving it to you." And I said, "You're not giving it to us." I said, "That's been in your family ever since we have ever

known you, and I don't know how long before." And he said, "Yes, this lamp is two hundred and fifty years of age, it's been," he knew that as a fact. And I said, "You're not going to leave that lamp here." And they said, "Oh yes we are." Said, "You know if we died and some of my relatives would get it, you know what they'd do with the money, they'd go down town and buy liquor and get drunk. And we know you people don't drink, so we want you to have this lamp." (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Now why hasn't it turned purple?

FLORENCE: Well it's just, it wasn't made of the same chemical as that, never will turn, and neither will that one over there.

DOROTHEA: Nor this one.

FLORENCE: Nor this one, Mr. Houston's first --- Then I'll show you --- And for our fiftieth wedding anniversary, I've forgotten where, oh we were, we had gone over to Ontario, not Ontario, to Caldwell to pick up a shipment of "Steens Mountain" books, and ---

BARBARA: It's beautiful.

FLORENCE: And this little antique shop at, I was going to say Juntura, but it's a little town out here, I can't think of the name of it. Anyway I went into this little antique shop looking around and here was this lamp, they wanted fifty dollars for it. And so I said, "Gee I'd like to have that lamp, but I don't want to pay that kind of money for it." So I didn't buy it. So my birthday is the 26th of September, and so I think this was the first part of September we were there, as I remember. So on my birthday John gave me a package and it was this lamp.

DOROTHEA: Oh, goodness.

FLORENCE: It was for our fiftieth anniversary. Then someplace, I can't remember where, I found this --- oh and here is a little one here, I found the little one. And it's ---

BARBARA: It's the same.

DOROTHEA: Oh, it matches.

FLORENCE: Uh huh. And so that's a Greek design on it they say.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: So, I'll set these things down, because I've got another one or two up here I'd like to show you. Sounds like I'm bragging.

Are either one of you Presbyterians?

DOROTHEA: Well I used to go, I've never joined the church, but I used go ---

FLORENCE: These came out of the old Presbyterian, the old, old Presbyterian Church when they got a power plant here so that they could have electricity.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: And a little boy and his grandmother, Kerry Kidwell had a homestead out on the edge of Malheur Lake, and they were putting the electricity in the church. They had just thrown all of these out, and this little boy came along, her grandson, and he said, "What are you going to do with those old lamps out there?" "Oh, just haul them to the dump." And he said, "My grandma lives out at Malheur Lake, and I think she'd like to have some of them." So that's, and they had come out of the Presbyterian Church. I haven't told very many people about this because I don't want to get it scattered around, because they'll think I should give it to them, and I'm not going to. But that's the story of those. And then this lamp belonged to Kerry Kidwell, and you see it has a yellow cast to it.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: And this isn't so terribly old, but since --- it has a lot of memories as far as I'm concerned. And when she sold out, why she gave me this lamp, so that's how I got this lamp. And so --- then John found this one, he was out riding across the desert. And of course there was a lot of old homestead cabins still standing when we came here, you

know, and here was this lamp he found in that old cabin.

BARBARA: That's beautiful too.

FLORENCE: Isn't that pretty? But it's the chemicals that causes them to turn purple. And you could set that one out forever and it would never turn. But anyway I was glad John found this instead of somebody else.

Then John's brother, John is the youngest one of his family, these two were in his possession. He's still alive, but we've had him in a nursing home down at Grants Pass for, oh going on four years now. And he doesn't know us, he doesn't know anyone. So he said one word in all the time he has been in there. He mumbles but you can't understand a word he says. And he said, "John," they told us this one time when we were down to see him. And that's the only word they ever could understand that he has said. And he's, well his sister, my dining room table is stacked full of stuff, I was going to get it cleaned off this morning and I didn't make it. And I rather suspect that maybe one of these lamps here might be --- I think this is kind of a cute little one. Might have been one of his sisters, but I don't know for sure. But we had to put him in a nursing home after he had this horrible stroke. But he is ambulatory now, but they say he will never be any better, and they said he might live to be a hundred years old.

BARBARA: It happens.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, yes it does.

BARBARA: Unfortunately.

FLORENCE: And it must, well I don't know how badly damaged his brain is, and doctors don't even know. And ---

DOROTHEA: Let's hook you back up here (microphone).

BARBARA: Can you tell us some of the things that you have done and been involved with since you've moved into Burns from the refuge in the '70's? What do you do to keep

busy? I know you have lots of company, and you travel a lot. What has held your interest over these last years?

FLORENCE: Well I'm a charter member of the PEO, and I've been quite involved in that, and in scholarships. And then I didn't drop out of the Cancer Society until just a few years back. Well it has been more than a few years. But I still do some work for the Cancer Society, not as much as I used to, of course.

BARBARA: Someone else's turn.

FLORENCE: Yes, that's right, uh huh. So then I've had to drop out of a few more things that I'm interested in since I've had this heart attack. But I'm not going to sit down and not do anything. I just can't do it, because I'm not that kind of a person. Let's see, now what else do I do?

DOROTHEA: Well now I heard you talking to Larry a while ago about the cemetery trees. Now how did you get those started?

FLORENCE: Oh, well I started that. And I don't, I can't, well I won't tell you how much money we have in the bank, its all come voluntarily. Like Ron McGowan, who is Burns McGowan's son, who lives in California --- I guess there has been a couple little squibs in the newspaper is all. And the telephone rang and this voice said, "Are you Florence?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "You don't know me, or you don't remember me probably," but he said, "I'm Burns McGowan's son." And he said, "I read in the Burns," he takes the Burns Times-Herald, "what had started for the cemetery here, those trees for the cemetery." He said, "I think that's the grandest thing I've ever heard of, and I'm going to send you" --- they're thirty dollars a piece, and Sue Lowe up here isn't making a nickel off of them, and she even has to go down and bring them up and that's costing her money.

And so he said, "And I'm going to send you a check." He said, "How much are the

trees?" I said, "They're thirty dollars a piece." And I said, "The girl who has the nursery here is giving us these trees at her cost." Well he said, "Isn't that wonderful of her." And I said, "It certainly is." And so he said, "I'm going to send you ninety dollars and that's for Archie McGowan, Mark McGowan," and there is another uncle, his name doesn't come to me at the moment either. I never did know him. And so he said, "And I want trees for them." I'm surprised he didn't get one for his dad, but he didn't, that's all right.

So I think before long, I just had a couple, two checks come in the other day, one of them, for two different people. And so he said, "I'm going to try to get something started down here like that, because I think that's the grandest thing I ever heard of." And he said, "How did you happen to think of this?" And I said, "Well, I never, we never send flowers to a funeral, we always give to some charity or something that we're interested in." And I said, "The chap that lives catty-corner across the street from me, from us, is the caretaker down there, and it has the best care it has ever had." And I said, "I went over and talked to him one day," I said, "Jack what would you think if I could get it started, if we could have deciduous trees completely around the perimeter of that cemetery." He said, "Florence that's great, people are always asking me what they can do for the cemetery." I said, "Well we never send flowers anymore to funerals because they just don't last." And I tried to find out something that the family of the deceased is interested in, and then we give to that charity whatever it happens to be. And so that's how it got started.

BARBARA: Are you going to have a memorial plaque with people's names that donate, or just not?

FLORENCE: Well I don't think that we can afford to do that. I'll see how much money comes in, and if we have more trees --- well I even bought trees for John's, or John and I bought, we have twenty-five that we put in, you know. And I thought well gee, we will never even get twenty-five trees. And so we bought trees for John's, as a memorial to

John's parents and to my parents both. And they're not buried there.

And so, and I've had names that I have never even heard of the people, never heard of them. And I've asked, you know, people that are, older people here than me, have you ever heard of these people? No. Well like one lady, I can't think of her name now, I'd have to go and check on it, but she sent thirty dollars for a tree, and they have a baby boy buried out there. He died when he was real, real young. I think he was more than a few months old, but I think he was under a year old. And things like this have happened, and it has really been interesting. And these people have written me, and they have called me, and they have all said this is the greatest idea I've ever heard of.

BARBARA: Well I was just wondering if there was going to be some record some place of contributions.

FLORENCE: Well I'm trying to figure out, you know, the only place I know of where you can put a permanent record is down at the Oregon Historical Society. You know libraries, I don't know about this library, but libraries away from here, every five years they throw everything out.

BARBARA: Well we can probably keep a copy in the Oral History Project down here, and files down at the library and they'll never be thrown away.

FLORENCE: Well that's a good idea, because I hate to go, you know, out of town.

BARBARA: Sure.

FLORENCE: Because I've talked to myself and to John, and to other people about it.

BARBARA: It would be interesting just to know ---

FLORENCE: Because I have to keep a record, yes, uh huh, yeah.

BARBARA: --- who has contributed.

FLORENCE: I'm going to have a, Sue has, I don't have a computer, and I'm going to have Sue put these on her computer so that we'll have a list of everything. And I know as

long as Peggy is up here at this library, that she won't throw anything out. But then she's going to retire one of these days probably, and you know you get younger people in and their thoughts and their ideas are much different than ours.

BARBARA: Well of course we have this grant that we work on that keeps these records going. It will just keep going, and going, and going. So, I'm not worried about it ever disappearing up there.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, well that would be great, that would be great. But, because I've talked about this and I said I'm not going to be here forever, and neither is John.

BARBARA: None of us are.

FLORENCE: No, we are all born to die, we know that.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, and we should have some sort of a record of who has donated and for who.

FLORENCE: Oh that's, definitely, definitely, I should say so.

DOROTHEA: So that there is something that somebody will know.

FLORENCE: Well you've sent in a --- so you know what you, the little dealy that you signed and sent in. And so --- but I've just been amazed.

Now the first person that ever gave me any money, and she gave me thirty-five dollars, and that was probably five years ago, and that's the, huh --- Florence, what's the matter with you today --- her mother was a charter member of our garden club, and I can't think of her name. I gave it to you earlier too, but it's just escaped me here. Well anyway she gave me thirty-five dollars, and she comes about every two or three years to check the tombstones up at the cemetery and see if everything is in order, and so on and so forth. And her dad owns some property on Harney Lake out here, on this side of Harney Lake, and I think she is still holding that property. She says, "I don't know whatever I'm ever going to do with it." And I said, "Well if I were you I think I'd sell it if I could find

somebody that would like to buy it." And she said, "No, I don't think I want to sell it, Florence." And she probably never will sell it. And she has never married, and she taught school, home ec. down at Bakersfield, California for years, and is retired and lives at her mother's and dad's apartments up at Everett, Washington now.

And so it's just kind of strange about these things. So then I put this thirty-five dollar check of hers in the bank, and I put it under an account called, the cemetery tree project, and that was quite a few years ago. And so that was how I first got started, because she said, "Now I want you to do something with this money for the cemetery." So that's how I thought well it would be a nice thing to have.

BARBARA: Well it looks like it's really a good go now, so you've got to be proud of that.

FLORENCE: Well it really is, it really is. If you won't tell anybody, well I don't want it on here, I have over ...

DOROTHEA: We're just about to the end of the tape though.

FLORENCE: And I just think I'll just get busy on this thing.

DOROTHEA: Well now can people, say if you donated to the cause, can you somehow or other buy a little plate or a plaque for a tree?

FLORENCE: Well it will just depend on how much money we have.

DOROTHEA: Well I mean the individual themselves.

FLORENCE: I know you mean the --- well yes, if the individuals wanted to do that that would be great. But I'm not going to spend any of this money until I know for sure that we have enough to completely go around the perimeter of the cemetery. And we already have the twenty-five in there, and I'll tell you girls something, and I don't want that on. ...

TAPE 2 - SIDE C

DOROTHEA: Okay, we're back now, and we're talking about planting flowers around in

the yard. Back to the trees, approximately how many trees do you think it's going to take to go around the cemetery? Do you have a slight idea?

FLORENCE: Well it depends upon how far you're going to put them apart, of course. And I don't want them too far apart, because I think you're going to use the effect that I want to see up there.

BARBARA: If you could get them almost touching, each one of them, it would really be magnificent.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, oh it would be wonderful. Because they have a beautiful blossom on them, you know, it's an umbel blossom about so big, and then all the little individual florets make the solid blossom. And they're beautiful, they're just beautiful. And so I thought I wanted to do that type of a tree rather than evergreens, and of course evergreens are a lot more expensive.

BARBARA: Right.

FLORENCE: And I think that a deciduous tree is more colorful, they turn beautiful color in the fall. And I almost decided to go with a, we have two of them out here in front of the house that--- we bought this house from Rudy Reinertson, you know. And he was renting it out, no, he sold it to Ruth and, Ruth Winn's husband's first name --- huh, can't think of that today. I'm sorry about that. And so I almost decided to go with these. And Rudy Reinertson had planted those trees, and he hadn't had them in a year, and he got up one morning and they were both cut down. You can see they don't have any trunk on them. And people said, "Well I've never seen trees like this that don't have any trunks." And so I said, "Well there is a story connected with this." And then I tell them about he got up this morning and somebody had cut them off. And there was no nursery here at this time, and you had to go out of town someplace, and so he just left them there. And they came out, set out shoots, and that's why they haven't any trunks.

DOROTHEA: They're bushy.

FLORENCE: They're bushy, uh huh. And so I almost decided that I thought maybe I'd put those, because those turn beautifully red in the fall. And then they have those red berries on them. And then I thought no, I think I had better go with some other kind of a tree. So that's why I decided not to, I don't know why I decided not to, but I did. But you can't imagine the berries on those trees. Some years they frost, the blossoms will freeze in the spring and we don't have any berries on them at all. This year they had lots of berries, and for the longest time the birds didn't come in to eat them. And then when they did, they just flocked in here, the robins and birds of that nature.

And so, and the same way we have two flowering crab apple trees out in the backyard, and they were on the grounds, Rudy had planted those when he owned this property. And some years they blossom and then they freeze, because they blossom early. This year they were so heavily laden that we had to go out and pick some of the apples off of them because we were afraid they were going to break too many limbs off. And the quail love them. We feed a lot of quail here in the wintertime. Four hundred I think is the most we have ever counted.

BARBARA: Oh gosh.

FLORENCE: And they take a lot of food.

BARBARA: Yeah, they do. They're real little beggars, aren't they?

FLORENCE: Oh, they certainly know who puts the food out for them.

DOROTHEA: I run out of food the other day, and I've got to get some because I don't have anything to feed them.

FLORENCE: We feed them, John feeds them wheat, I don't know what you feed them.

DOROTHEA: I just feed birdseed and corn.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yeah, they're both good. But we have always fed them wheat.

And this last two sacks of wheat that John got, he got them when we were down in Ontario recently, and it has a lot of chaff in it, so we didn't get a very good bargain there. But they still come on the porch. And when this lady priest was here today, she was, you know, she said, "Oh I think this is the greatest thing," she said, "of course you people are always doing great things." And I said, "Well I don't know about that, but it's just a lot of fun to have things like that around." And I said, "That's the thing we've missed so much since we had to retire because of our ages, because John reached retirement age." However they did let him work four years over the age limit.

BARBARA: Of course they don't have a limit anymore, but years ago they did.

FLORENCE: No, yes, uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: That was one of the questions I wanted to ask, and you answered one of my questions, was, how long did you and John live there? And I think I've just about figured it out, it was like 36 years.

FLORENCE: Well we came in '35, and we retired in '71.

DOROTHEA: Thirty-six years.

FLORENCE: Yeah, uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: And was it hard to leave there and know that you're leaving all the things that you had started from the very ground up, in other words?

FLORENCE: Yes, it was. But discussed this a lot before, you know, when it got close to retirement time for us. And we said, "Now, maybe we just better leave here." John said, "I don't want to live in the Willamette Valley." Of course his sister was alive, and his younger brother who never married lived in Grants Pass too with his sister and her husband. And then her husband died and then she passed away. That's what most of my stuff on my dining room table is, I'm trying to --- well I have everything now, unless I get something back from the Josephine County Court, I think I have everything taken care

of now. I was going to clean that table off this morning, and I just didn't feel too well when I got up and so I just didn't want to bother.

And so, that's what I told Larry when he was here today, I said, "I hate to have you see this dining room table." And he said, "It looks just like mine, Florence." (Laughter) And so, but we --- well now what was the last question you asked me here?

DOROTHEA: If you missed the wonderful things that you had planted and everything. You more or less built that from the ground up.

FLORENCE: There was nothing there; it was just a greasewood knoll.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

BARBARA: So it was hard to go off and leave it, and start all over again?

FLORENCE: It was really hard, it was really hard. And I wanted to bring a lot of the perennial, you know, dig up a lot of the starts of perennials, and especially the peonies. And John said, "No, we're going to leave everything just as it is, and maybe they'll take care of it." Well that hasn't been the case I'm sorry to say. But this little Laurie O'Connor over here, she is a honey. And she is trying to get this perennial border. She says, "It will never look like the way it looked when you were there Florence." And then I had roses along on the left hand side of the house there, and they didn't take care of them. And a lot of the trees and the shrubs they even let die, because they didn't water them. And when you have things growing, they have to have water.

BARBARA: That's right.

FLORENCE: But they didn't do it that way. And when you don't live on the job, you don't have the interest.

DOROTHEA: Not living there, they don't have the time either.

FLORENCE: No, they don't.

DOROTHEA: Because I imagine their day starts at like nine or eight, and they're off at

five.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, that's right.

DOROTHEA: And that doesn't give you a lot of time to work the extra time that it takes to take care of that.

FLORENCE: No, that's right, uh huh. But I know they, I don't understand why they don't live out there.

DOROTHEA: Well you do a lot of traveling also, are these mostly people that you have met while you were living out at the refuge?

FLORENCE: A lot of them are, yes, just a lot of them are. And so we met them when they were at the refuge, or they were in some kind of business. And Hines Lumber Company, they were always sending all their officials. They sent all of those people out to the refuge, and John would take time out, maybe he was busy at the office as could be, but he'd take time out to give them a tour of the refuge so they could see the birds and things, you know. And explain about when they bought it, and how they bought it, and so on and so forth, you know. And, but it isn't that way anymore.

DOROTHEA: What do you really think happened to the birds and things? Was it the habitat, is that ---

FLORENCE: That has a lot to do with it, a lot to do with it. And of course they are allowing some grazing out there now, and they thought that having grazing out there was the thing that cut the

DOROTHEA: Killed the birds off.

FLORENCE: Killed the birds off. Well that isn't the case, that isn't the case at all. But every place in the country, there are fewer birds than there used to be; not only on this refuge but in every section of the country that we visit they have less birds than they

formerly had.

DOROTHEA: I know in the spring of the year, and the fall of the year, we used to have a lot more water than we do now.

FLORENCE: That's right.

DOROTHEA: But, and I don't know what happened to that either. But we had birds, swan, and pelicans, and geese and ducks of every description.

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: You don't see that anymore.

FLORENCE: You know this Sitz Reservoir out here as you're going towards Ontario?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: I don't know how many swan we saw out there when we were over there just recently, Ellis (Mason) was driving us. And there were all kinds of ducks. There used to be thousands of white, what's the white goose, snow goose come in here.

DOROTHEA: Snow goose.

FLORENCE: Just thousands of them. And there are very few come in here anymore.

DOROTHEA: Well we got a few white snow geese, and a few specklers, and a few of the old honkers.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: But nothing like we used to have.

FLORENCE: Like we used to have, no. But I think this spring we are seeing more honkers than we've had for several springs.

DOROTHEA: And another thing that I've noticed that has disappeared is the sandhill crane. We have two that come out on our place.

FLORENCE: Oh, is that all?

DOROTHEA: That's about all.

FLORENCE: Well they don't have as many ---

DOROTHEA: We used to have fields full of them.

FLORENCE: I know, there used to be flocks of them. We don't, and I can't answer that question, I don't know why we don't have them. And they don't have nearly as many nesting on the refuge as they had when we were there. Now the ranchers over in Diamond have more of the sandhill cranes than they have on the refuge. And we've tried to figure that one out. Oh I think one thing, they don't know how to --- I shouldn't say this, but they do not know how to manage water.

DOROTHEA: This is part of it.

FLORENCE: That's part of it, I know.

DOROTHEA: Then the other part is, like I just said, we don't have the water that we used to get.

FLORENCE: No, we don't, huh uh.

DOROTHEA: And I don't know what's happened there, whether it's just like winters like this, that has caused so lack of moisture, because every bit of moisture that you get goes straight down.

FLORENCE: It goes right down into the ground. And we're dry, drier than dry here.

BARBARA: Perhaps the flyways have changed because of the water, the droughts over the years and things, and the birds have had to change their flyways perhaps.

FLORENCE: Oh, I'm sure of that, I'm sure they have, I'm sure they have. Like down here on the golf course, we see a lot of honker geese down here on the course down here now. And you know they're going to, you probably don't want this on the tape ...

BARBARA: Can we, we've been talking about birds and such. Can we talk a little bit about the Migratory Waterfowl Festival that we have here? I think, what is it the twelfth or thirteen year now?

FLORENCE: Yes, it is, uh huh, yes. I was just, I don't know what my sweatshirt says in there, but I think it will be the eleventh, I believe it's the twelfth year. And John tried to get that started before he ever retired. And he was on the board of, on the Chamber of Commerce Board for, off and on for years. And he couldn't get them interested. And he said you know, he said, "That's one thing that you can do that doesn't disturb the birds." And anyway, he said, "If you have the water, you have the birds. And you can take buses and take these people out to show them the birds, and then you can go out to the sage grouse strutting grounds." We had a lot of them then, and I'll tell you a little story about that too after awhile.

So he tried and tried to get them, and the Bennett's had the garage here then, the Chevrolet Garage. And they said, "Well that wouldn't make us any money." John said, he said, "It might not make you any money, but it would bring people into town, and those people would probably spend some money with you." And he tried for several years to get that started. And they would vote him down every time, so he just let it drop.

So then I don't remember just what year, well it would be about eleven years ago, why John talked to the Chamber and to the Rotary Club, John is a Rotarian, and so the Rotary said, "Well I don't know whether we're interested in that or not." So then the next week at the Rotary why they said, "You know, we have been discussing this, several of us, and we think that would be a real good idea, so we'll do it." So that's how it got started.

BARBARA: It brings a lot of people into town now.

FLORENCE: It brings a lot of people into town.

BARBARA: Motels, and restaurants, and ---

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh, I should say so. It's just been a wonderful thing for the merchants, and people, and so on and so forth. And I know like Alice, The Vogue down

here, we have friends that come off and on every year. And every year they go into Alice's and say well we see clothes in there that we can't even see in the city where we live.

BARBARA: Right.

FLORENCE: And they buy clothes.

BARBARA: Uh huh, sure.

FLORENCE: And so it has been a fine thing, it really has. So I kind of pat John on the back every so often.

BARBARA: Absolutely.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, you bet.

FLORENCE: So ---

BARBARA: It certainly has grown. I wanted to ask you a little bit about your cabin up on the Steens. Where is it located, and when did you get that, and how much time were you able to spend up there?

FLORENCE: Well we, when we, we own 4,000 acres that we have purchased from homesteaders. And most all of them were unmarried gentlemen. And then we decided we had better have a cabin up there. So we, you know, talked about that for a while, and finally built a cabin. And it's a two-bedroom cabin, and John wanted it built up on top of the hill where you can look out all over the Blitzen Valley. And I said, "John, I don't want a house up on top of the hill." And there are a lot of springs on this property that we have, and I said, "If we build down under the hill we can put in a bathroom in the cabin. And that's a lot better than going outside to the ---"

BARBARA: A lot more convenient.

FLORENCE: And a lot more convenient. And besides, you can have a bath. And so anyway we discussed that for awhile, and so finally he said, "Well okay," he said, "we'll

build down under the hill, and then we'll pipe one of those springs down in, and we can have a complete bathroom." And the first bath, he said, "Oh gosh I'm glad you made me build down here instead of up on top." Because we couldn't have put a bathroom in up on top.

BARBARA: You can always hike up and look down.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, that's right. And I said, and this is what we do, we hike up. And so it's worked out real well. And I can't remember the year we built that cabin, probably have to call John in here and have him fill you in on some of these things. And I have relatives that come every year, and this one family have triplets. They had a single boy and then they decided to have another child because he was getting so spoiled with all the doting relatives, and they had triplets. And they are two girls and a boy, so they have two boys and two girls in that family. They come every year, and last year they could only stay, they couldn't stay the ten days that they always stay up there because Michael, the oldest boy, is quite an athlete and he had to get back because he had some games coming up. And so they said, "Aunt Florence, next year we'll just leave him home and stay longer." (Laughter) Oh, they're all the cutest kids. So then ---

BARBARA: So do you have a road down into your cabin?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, oh yeah, uh huh. We keep the gate locked; we lock the gate because ---

BARBARA: Have to keep the vandals out.

FLORENCE: Yeah, well they'd go down and vandalize if they wanted to. But we've been fortunate, we have never had any problems to date.

BARBARA: Oh wonderful.

FLORENCE: And it's a, we have two bedrooms, and then we have a beautiful fireplace that heats the whole place. And of course we have the running water, so we have a hot

water tank.

DOROTHEA: What do you have gas up there, propane? Or how do you heat?

FLORENCE: Yeah, propane, we have propane. And we have a propane refrigerator, and so we're pretty well fixed. I had thought when we were going to build the cabin that I was going to really, I was going to have wainscoting, and then paper above the wainscoting, you know, and indoor/outdoor carpeting. Then I got to thinking, well Florence all you will be doing when you're up here is cleaning house.

DOROTHEA: Cleaning.

FLORENCE: So ---

BARBARA: You go up there to get away, huh?

FLORENCE: That's right, uh huh. So we have the things that are necessary, like we have a propane stove, and a propane refrigerator, and a propane hot water heater. And a complete bathroom, and a wonderful fireplace and that heats the house when we are there, need heat. A lot of mornings we need heat up there.

DOROTHEA: Oh, you bet.

FLORENCE: So we have a fireplace.

BARBARA: So who built this for you? Did you contract someone to build it for you?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, we had, gee was it Foster that we had to go up there --- Yeah, it was Foster, and Allan Voegtly did all the plumbing. And he was a good plumber. And it was, I think it was Foster that built that house up there. And so we're pretty well situated.

BARBARA: Do you ever have trouble with it in the wintertime with snow?

FLORENCE: Well we drain everything.

BARBARA: I mean with snow piling up on the roof?

FLORENCE: No, it pushed the fireplace chimney off one time, so we had to have a new fireplace built. But anyway, we had that fixed so that we never had any trouble with the

snow, pushing it off. And we get deep snow up there, ten feet is average. But the last few years we just haven't had hardly any snow up there. And there is not much up there this year either.

BARBARA: So would, while you were still working out at the refuge, would you take weekends to go up there, or would you spend a vacation up there, or how much time were you able to spend?

FLORENCE: Well when we were working, we weren't up there very much. We would go up on maybe a few weekends. But there was always somebody up there, relatives or friends. So there was always somebody at our cabin during the summertime. And like, you know what Outward Bound is, don't you? That's a philanthropic organization. And they come every year, and there is about forty of those people. And they bring their tents, because they can't sleep that many in the house.

And Tony Diaz, well last year they didn't ask him to go up, and I never have found out why, but I'm going to find out. Because I have to talk to the girl who is in charge of the trip up there this year. And we don't charge them, we never charge anybody for going up there. But this past year the Outward Bound, or year before last, they gave us one of their blankets, they have a purple blanket. And so, and then this last year they sent us a bouquet of flowers from the flower shop down here, which was nice of them. And so, but they're a nice group of people, they're just a wonderful group of people. And then we have some other organizations that go up, and just a lot of friends that go up there.

BARBARA: Did you ever run sheep or anything up on the mountain, or cattle?

FLORENCE: Well we lease the, we lease the range to the Norman Ranches, you know, they're the people that own all this property the other side of Malheur Caves. Wonderful people. Mr. Norman is a very devout Catholic. And he comes up frequently, and sometimes when he comes he calls us and has us after church on a Sunday, he always

comes in to church, to the Catholic Church, and we're Episcopalians. And he takes us out to breakfast, and he is just a wonderful gentleman. But he is a nurseryman down in California, and he bought this property over here. And the Nyman's, who work for him, and they are the managers, are real close friends of ours. And they're a wonderful couple. And we see them quite frequently, and we go down, and they stop by here occasionally. And so, but we lease it, and they take their sheep up there, take one band of their sheep up there off of that ranch.

DOROTHEA: You say you have 4,000 acres up there?

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh, yeah. And so --- and I don't think you, and I can't remember the names of all of the old chaps that we bought the property from. Well when one would come up for sale, why we would go and talk to them and see if we could buy it. Or if somebody else didn't get there before we did, why we were just out of luck.

DOROTHEA: Is it all in one area, I mean or is it pretty well spread?

FLORENCE: It's pretty well blocked now, it's pretty well blocked now.

DOROTHEA: Well that's neat.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

BARBARA: What do you think about them wanting to make a national park out of Steens?

FLORENCE: Oh, we're bitterly opposed to it, bitterly opposed. We've had a lot to do with the, a lot of these agencies over the years. And we would hate to see it go that way. But we think we have them stopped, but we don't know for how long. And we really worked on that to get it stopped, and had a lot of very influential people throughout the state on our side. They didn't want to see that happen to it either.

DOROTHEA: No, I don't think anybody does except ---

FLORENCE: So ---

BARBARA: You mentioned about --- we're kind of skipping around a little bit now, but about cooking and canning, what have been some of your hobbies? Do you consider your gardening, and canning, and cooking, do you like to try new recipes and things like that?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, yes, I'm always trying new recipes.

BARBARA: Writing a new cookbook, or whatever.

FLORENCE: No, I'm not going to get into writing a new cookbook. (Laughter) I told you this story about the dilly-beans too, didn't I? Well this friend had this recipe for dilly-beans, and every time we were there why, oh they are the best dilly-beans that you have ever tasted. I only got about, I usually do sixty quarts, because I give my, the kids down in the valley, they're crazy about them, and always give them to the neighbors and friends and what not. And so I finally got this friend to give me her recipe. And she said, "I'll give it to you on once condition, that you're not to give this recipe to anyone else." I said, "Not even to my friends, or my relatives?" She said, "Positively not, or you won't get it." And I've never given it to anybody. And I always take a lot of them to our Episcopal bazaar. Last year though, the funniest thing happened to our beans, they blossomed and they set on, and we grow both pole and bush beans, and the beans would get about that long and then they'd drop off. And I talked to this chap who comes in from Hood River down here about it, and because --- and I'm not very high on our county agents here now. And so I've talked to them and they don't know anything about gardening, and so they couldn't help me. So I went to see this chap from Hood River when he came in the next time. And I said, "I've had a problem, and I wonder if you could help me?" And I told him, and he said, "Well we have the same problem in Hood River." And he said, "I can't help you because I don't know what it is." And he said, "I've had a lot of experts come in looking and they don't know what the problem is." So I did twenty quarts of dilly-beans, that's all I

got last year out of two rows of bush beans, and a row of pole beans.

BARBARA: You say dilly-beans, is that D I L L Y, or what?

FLORENCE: No, well you put dill in them and you call them dilly-beans.

BARBARA: Oh, I see.

FLORENCE: You put dill in them, several, you put about three sprigs of dill, fresh dill from the garden, and I grow it. And then you put in a, some garlic, and then vinegar and water, and you pour that, you pack your jars and then you pour this hot solution over the top of them and seal them, and then you can't touch them for six weeks.

BARBARA: I thought you were speaking of a different variety of beans, but I understand that you add the dill to the beans.

FLORENCE: No, no. Yeah, you add the dill to the beans, and it's fresh dill out of your garden. And it's much better; the fresh dill if you can buy it from somebody that grows it in their garden, than to buy it out of the grocery store, it's more potent. They taste more like dill that way.

DOROTHEA: Well when you decide to give your cookbook away, well you holler at me. Because you collect lamps, I collect cookbooks.

FLORENCE: Oh you do? Well you ought to see my cookbooks out here. When we added on to this house, I'll take you out and show you through there, and I said, "Now I've got to have" --- I've always had cookbooks. And I said, when we added on, why I said, "I want some shelves for my cookbooks." And I thought I had them put in enough shelves. That isn't the case!

DOROTHEA: Well I'm glad you're more than I. My kids give me so much trouble, because Mom you've got drawers, and drawers, and drawers. And look at that, shelves, and shelves. And I said, "Yeah, I like them all."

FLORENCE: Absolutely, you couldn't part with any of them.

DOROTHEA: But yours are going to have some special recipes in them. (Laughter) Well Barbara, I'm about running out of questions.

BARBARA: I was going to ask, did you ever have any pets while you were out at the refuge, or did you have bumper type animals that you nursed back to health, or whatever.

FLORENCE: I should say. We had antelope, and deer, and wait, we had another one, what was it? Gosh, I haven't thought of this in so long. But we, there was a pasture, I think it's still enclosed in a pasture, but there isn't anything in it, which is just right down under the tower out there. And that's where we had antelope, and we had the game commission pick up a little old kid antelope, and so we had several antelope in that pasture. And I raised them on a bottle, you know, just like you do any young animal, or a baby or anything. And then we had deer, and the state boys picked up the deer for us, the little young ones.

BARBARA: Fawns, uh huh.

FLORENCE: And so, and then we had something else, can't think now what that was. But we didn't have any luck with that, I know, so it was mostly --- and then we raised lots of geese. We hatched out, we'd take the eggs from them, and we'd hatch them out, we had chickens and we'd hatch them out under hens, you know. And we had all kinds of geese. And we had a sandhill crane that Disney even came up and took it and got it from us. And let's see, what else did we have. Well everything that we could raise that would be attractive to tourists, we had.

DOROTHEA: Did you have owls, and ---

FLORENCE: Yes, we had an owl. Oh yeah, we had ducks, and we had lots of little goslings.

BARBARA: Peacocks?

FLORENCE: No, we didn't have any peacocks, no, huh uh. Because they're not a

native.

BARBARA: Too cold for them perhaps.

FLORENCE: And I don't think that we could have raised them anyway, because of the weather. But the --- and I don't know, if the ranchers ever had a goose that was nesting on a haystack they'd call us and we'd go and get the eggs, and then I'd hatch them out under hens, chicken hens. And so I was always going around to the ranchers trying to find chickens, chicken hens, you know, because we ran out ever so often.

And oh, that' John's hearing aide, I can hear it in here. He can't hear that, and I don't know why he can't. He's completely lost the hearing in one ear, and he hardly has any left in the other ear.

BARBARA: That sure makes it hard, doesn't it?

FLORENCE: Oh, it's just dreadfully hard, and there is going to come a time when we'll just, I'll just have to write him notes. And that's sad, and it's pathetic, and he's always been so active in everything. And I just can't get him to go anyplace because he can't hear.

BARBARA: Well its got to be frustrating for them to not know what is going on around you.

FLORENCE: That's right, it is. We just can't appreciate it when you can hear; you just can't appreciate how difficult it is. So, but ---

BARBARA: I was going to ask you; did you ever have trouble with hunters around out there?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, oh yes, uh huh, yeah. But you know, they finally got, John, you know, got so he visited with people and he has such a personality that finally we just didn't have any trouble with hunters.

DOROTHEA: Well was there ever allowed hunting, like special seasons?

FLORENCE: Yes, they used to, they, before we left John talked them into having some special hunts out there, and they did it. Now whether they still have it, we don't know.

DOROTHEA: I don't know either.

FLORENCE: I just don't know. So ---

BARBARA: Did you ever have any bad fires while you were out there?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, I should say. Lightning fires, I remember on the 10th of October, that was Noel Cagle's birthday, we had a lightning fire. And it looked like it was going to even get, you know --- and John got all the ranchers, of course he had wonderful luck with all of the ranchers. And they, all the ranchers from all over, and people from out of town, and a lot of the other government agencies came out. And if it hadn't of been for that, all of Diamond Valley would have burned. And we had, yes we had quite a few fires.

And another fire we had, it was a lightning fire, it was on Malheur Lake, on the edge of Malheur Lake, and we thought it was going to --- we had to, you know, call for everybody to come in, not only all the personnel we had on the refuge, which we didn't have nearly as many personnel as they have now even. And anyway, they still got more work done I think than they do now. And so, but it hit up in the upper valley, up in the "P" Ranch area part. And that was a terrible fire, and they were, they put it out, and that's peat soil up in that area. And they'd flood it, and leave it flooded for days and then they'd take the water off, and first thing you know the next time you went up here was a little spear of smoke going up. And then they'd have to do the same thing all over again. They were, they did that for a whole year off and on, that thing broke out. It was in that peat soil, and it, you know ---

BARBARA: It just smoldered.

FLORENCE: It just smoldered away. And so, and that was a bad fire because, you know, you could lose all the refuge buildings around the "P" Ranch. And then of course

finally the old original house burned down, caught fire and burned down, you know. And that was a sad thing. I can still almost shed tears about that, because it was such a historical old building.

BARBARA: Did you ever have, become invaded with rabbits, have rabbits up there?

FLORENCE: Oh yes, oh yes.

BARBARA: Did any of the animals ever come in and eat your flowers?

FLORENCE: Oh did they ever, I should say so. They were terrible. And we'd have rabbit drives. And I know the first rabbit drive I ever went on, I really got sick. I got sick at my stomach because we were out there clubbing the rabbits.

BARBARA: Kind of a bloody mess, wasn't it?

FLORENCE: Oh, terrible. And ---

DOROTHEA: Well not only that, there is an odor.

FLORENCE: Oh yes there is, it was terrible. Like, I've forgotten who the chap was that came from some foreign country and they all stayed with us, you know. I've forgotten what foreign country he was from, he wasn't from England. And so John was talking about how bad the rabbits were, and of course you wouldn't see very many of them in the daytime, you know. And John said, "I'll bet I could go out here and kill two hundred rabbits tonight." And this fellow says, "Oh, you couldn't do that." So John said, "Well I'll just show you, we'll have two hundred dead rabbits on the lawn in the morning." Well of course at that time then we got so that we were putting poison grain out for them. And I think, I don't think he got quite two hundred that night, but it was pretty close to two hundred. And this fellow just couldn't believe it, you know.

And there was always, I don't know whether there isn't now or not, because I haven't been up through there for a long time, but over where the Sod House Dam is, why they grew grain over there. And they'd just eat that off right down into the roots. And it

just looked like the whole earth was moving; there were that many rabbits.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: And I hope we never see that again.

BARBARA: When you kill them like that, did you have to bury them to get rid of them?

FLORENCE: Oh yeah, we had to bury them because of the odor. That was ---

BARBARA: That was a real chore, wasn't it?

FLORENCE: That was a job, I should say so. Yes indeed.

DOROTHEA: To me it was kind of a sweet odor, that's what made me sick.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: The smell. Of course we didn't club them, we shot them mostly. But we used to get 50, 60, 75, a 100 a night.

FLORENCE: Yeah, I know, they were terrible, they were just awful things. But I hope we never see that again. And we probably won't in my time. Probably in you girl's time you might see them.

DOROTHEA: I don't know. I think that the people are keeping them down a little bit unless, you know, something comes about that we can't shoot them anymore.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: But just don't have it anymore.

FLORENCE: No, I know we don't.

DOROTHEA: Since that, I think it was tularemia that went through and killed so many ---

FLORENCE: Yes, it was, uh huh, killed a lot of them.

DOROTHEA: We just haven't got that population back.

FLORENCE: No. And I hope we never do.

DOROTHEA: Which is fine.

FLORENCE: Yes it is, I should say so. Yes, indeed.

DOROTHEA: This is what the kids don't understand, is when you say well we had so many rabbits, you know. And they had a bounty on the ears in order to encourage more of it.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And oh, what are you talking about? I very seldom see a rabbit. They think we're talking about cottontails, because there is a lot of cottontails.

FLORENCE: Yes, you see a lot more cottontails than you do of the, oh what do they call the others?

DOROTHEA: Jackrabbits.

FLORENCE: Jackrabbits. Yeah, uh huh. And so ---

BARBARA: Is there any one thing, or a couple things that really stand out in your memory of events that happened while you were on the refuge that really is a good memory for you?

FLORENCE: Well, I can't think of any particular one. We just had so many good memories from out there. And I can't think of any that were really, what I would call outstanding.

DOROTHEA: Do you think that something that you did out there that maybe still carried on? Did you have young kids come out and study under you?

FLORENCE: Oh, well we had lots of college; we always had a college group, or several college groups that came out. Like the college group that Ellis Mason was with --- I'll tell you a funny little thing about him. He and John were eating, this was when he was a senior, or a sophomore, or a junior at Oregon State University, and they always came out and they brought thirty or forty students. So John would show them through the refuge, and then he'd take them up on the mountain. And they were sitting up on the mountain someplace and eating their lunch. And so John said, "What do you think of this country,

Ellis?" And he said, "Well it is beautiful country, but I certainly wouldn't like to live here." And so John didn't say anything. And then his first assignment when he graduated from college was to Burns, and he has been here ever since. (Laughter)

BARBARA: It kind of has that effect on a lot of people, doesn't it?

FLORENCE: Yes, it does, I should say so. Well there are more and more California people coming here all the time.

BARBARA: A lot of people are retiring over here now, really.

FLORENCE: Yes, they really are.

BARBARA: Get away from the cities.

FLORENCE: Uh huh, yeah. And I can understand that, I can understand that.

BARBARA: So what are your plans for the years ahead? Take each day as it comes?

FLORENCE: Well, just take each day as it comes. And we'll still garden, and we'll still grow flowers. And we'll still go to the Steens and show everybody those five beautiful glacial cut gorges up there. And each gorge is so different. And we've hiked down into most of them. I know John has been down in all of them. But I think there is one that I haven't hiked down into. But it's beautiful to hike down into those gorges, and then look up, you know.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

FLORENCE: Two or three thousand feet.

DOROTHEA: Well we're about to the end of this side of this tape. Do we want to turn it over?

BARBARA: I think we've probably imposed long enough.

DOROTHEA: Or shall we --- we don't usually stay this long.

FLORENCE: Oh, don't you?

DOROTHEA: But we would like to say thank you, because we would like to do a little

short video.

FLORENCE: You're very, very welcome.

DOROTHEA: And thank you for the wonderful afternoon.

FLORENCE: Oh, you're very, very welcome. You're very welcome.

BARBARA: We've really enjoyed visiting with you. One of my sorority sisters, huh?

FLORENCE: Yes, I should say so, I'm glad to know that. Now I can go down and see my other sorority sisters down in the valley and say why I have one in Burns that I didn't know about.

DOROTHEA: Right in Burns.

FLORENCE: Of course they're always asking me, you know, "Why don't you send some young gals down here that we can pledge?"

BARBARA: I'm always getting, every fall, to get recommendations for the girls.

FLORENCE: Yes, uh huh. And, but they never have been fortunate enough in getting any of the kids that I recommend from here.

BARBARA: I try to write glowing recommendations.

FLORENCE: So do I.

BARBARA: Someday.

FLORENCE: Oh, I'm sure someday that we'll get somebody from here. But of course, we live in a different house than when I was there.

BARBARA: Uh huh, it's changed several times.

FLORENCE: Yes, several times, uh huh, yes it has.

BARBARA: I had my wedding reception at the house on 23rd Street.

FLORENCE: Oh, uh huh, well --- Well that was real nice.

DOROTHEA: Before we click off, I think we better say our last thank you, and we've enjoyed our afternoon.

FLORENCE: Well you're very welcome. I hope I gave you something that you could use.

BARBARA: Absolutely.

DOROTHEA: Oh yes, absolutely.

FLORENCE: And I'll probably think of a lot of things after you leave.

BARBARA: That always happens.

DOROTHEA: That always happens, and we always think we're going to come back, but we never seem to make that.

FLORENCE: Well if you ever want to come back, why feel free to just give me a call.

DOROTHEA: Well we would like to come back and do a short video of John.

FLORENCE: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: I could leave a questionnaire ---

(END OF TAPE)

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