

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #359 - Sides A/B

Subject: Reatha Dunn - With Video

Place: Dunn Home - Hines, Oregon

Date: April 6, 1994

Interviewers: Dorothea Purdy & Barbara Lofgren

Release Form: Yes

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy, along with Barbara Lofgren, and we're at the home of Reatha Dunn in Hines. The date is April 6th, 1994. And we will be talking to Reatha about when she came to Harney County and why. And we'll start out by asking you your name, Reatha. Can you tell us your full name?

REATHA DUNN: You want my maiden name, too?

DOROTHEA: And your maiden name.

REATHA: Well, Reatha Florence Hartell Dunn.

DOROTHEA: And when were you born?

REATHA: I was born March 2nd, 1909 in Emerson, North Dakota on Knife River, out in the country.

DOROTHEA: And what did your parents do?

REATHA: Well my dad was a farmer, and my mother was a housekeeper I guess you'd say.
(Parents met while both were hired help on a farm.)

DOROTHEA: Well, what was their names?

REATHA: Oh, my dad was Charles James Hartell, and my mother was Minnie Pauline Peterson Hartell.

BARBARA LOFGREN: Is that H A R T E L L ?

REATHA: Right.

BARBARA: Okay.

DOROTHEA: And do you have any brothers and sisters?

REATHA: I did have, they're all gone, I'm the last one in the family now.

BARBARA: What were their names?

REATHA: I had three brothers, Guy Raymond, Wilber Ardeen, Victor Quinton, and one sister Mildred Lavina Hamilton.

DOROTHEA: Where did you go to school?

REATHA: Well, I went to school in North Dakota a while. We traveled around an awful lot; it was first one place, then another. Seemed like about every three years, we were moving around. And oh, I went to school, let's see in North Dakota, in Montana, and then back to North Dakota, back to Montana, Wyoming, Washington, and then Oregon, Bend. And then Klamath Falls, and Keno, where I finished in high school.

DOROTHEA: And Keno is where?

REATHA: It's about twenty miles on the other, south of Klamath Falls.

DOROTHEA: Okay. Were any of these schools, country schools?

REATHA: Well, they were all country schools.

DOROTHEA: All country schools.

REATHA: Well, Bend wasn't, but neither was Klamath Falls. And, well, Keno was in a small town, about like in Hines; I guess when we were there.

DOROTHEA: How many students were in, probably your largest class, or group?

BARBARA: Hi Aeola.

REATHA: Boy, that's hard to say. I think the largest school I went to was in Bend, Oregon, the 7th and 8th grade.

DOROTHEA: Was that a country school also, or that was a ---

REATHA: No, that was right in town.

DOROTHEA: In town.

REATHA: Yeah, in town. Bend wasn't very big then. I suppose it was, well probably smaller than

what Burns is now. It was just a small place that was way back.

BARBARA: And what year did you graduate from high school?

REATHA: 1928.

BARBARA: And were you able to go on to college at that time?

REATHA: I did, I went to Southern Oregon College for a year straight. Started in, in the fall of '28, and then went through the summer of '29. And then I started teaching in the fall of '29.

DOROTHEA: Well, where was your first job teaching?

REATHA: Catlow Valley.

DOROTHEA: Okay, and this is one of the subjects that I wanted to get into. I want you to tell me about Catlow Valley, and what it was like when you first moved there, and what did you think about the country?

REATHA: Well, there was nothing but sagebrush and stuff then. There was a hotel, and there was two stores, and one post office. And I guess maybe they had a garage or something, or somebody did mechanical work there. As far as I can remember, there were only two resident houses there. And, well, I didn't think too much about the country because I knew I had to go teach, and I had to pay back what I had borrowed to go to school on.

And it was funny country, I guess. The weather would, the wind would blow most every day. But every week we had a windstorm, and I mean it was a windstorm. It would be foggy, like, you know, the sand would be just like you was going through fog. You couldn't see much of any place. One of those people up there, that lived there, they, after the windstorm, they would take a teaspoon out and scrape all of the sand off of their lawn that they were trying to have, so they could have a lawn. And they did, that's what they did.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

DOROTHEA: How did you get there? Did you drive, or how did you ---

REATHA: My dad and oldest brother took me over.

DOROTHEA: And in a vehicle, or a horse and wagon, or ---

REATHA: Uh-huh --- no in a vehicle, an old Model-T Ford.

DOROTHEA: Vehicle.

REATHA: And we came over Hart Mountain, and in that way.

DOROTHEA: Where did you live when you ---

REATHA: I boarded at the hotel.

DOROTHEA: The hotel. What was, what did it cost you to live when you first went there, approximately?

REATHA: Well, I suppose it was \$25 a month, right in there someplace.

DOROTHEA: And that included your hotel room and ---

REATHA: Uh-huh, and board, board, and room.

BARBARA: What kind of a salary did you start out with?

REATHA: About \$125, I think, it wasn't very much.

BARBARA: So you had about a, you were making about a hundred dollars a month, then by the time you paid your hotel.

REATHA: Uh-huh, something like that.

BARBARA: How many children were in that community that attended your school?

REATHA: I think I had five or six children. I had three grades, I know, it was the 3rd, 4th, and 5th.

BARBARA: Do you remember the families that were there at that time?

REATHA: Well, Bradeens had one boy, and Duval's had one boy, and Moore's had one boy, and then Gearharts --- let's see that's three, had either two or three children, I think it was two. And that would make five children altogether. Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Did they change their books? I mean, did you continue with the same books that they had? Or how had they been going to school? Had they, did they have another teacher there before you went?

REATHA: Oh, yes.

DOROTHEA: So this wasn't a new school?

REATHA: No, it wasn't a new school, no. And I don't remember who was there before I was.

DOROTHEA: How did you go about finding out that there was a job there?

REATHA: Well, when I finished college, why somehow or other, they knew different places, districts, and whatnot that needed teachers. And they give us the addresses, and I sent out a lot of applications. And I decided that I wanted to be in a small school, and in a rural place, and kind of out like that, because that's the kind of life I knew, anyway. Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Were you ever concerned with the budgeting and all of that for the schools? Like the way we have trouble passing budgets in order to get enough money to run the schools, then? Were you ever concerned with that, or connected with what we call school boards or things like that at that time?

REATHA: No, no, I was never connected with any, and it didn't bother me.

BARBARA: They just always had, had the facility there, and the money to get your supplies and things?

REATHA: Uh-huh. Well, most of the children bought their own supplies, you know, what they had to have. And of course, not the books, we used what books we had. And I used to send to the state library and get books for them to read and things like that. Because we didn't have a supply of books, storybooks in the school.

DOROTHEA: Well, how did you get your supplies? Did they have a stage come through, or ---

REATHA: Oh yes, there was a stage come out there three times a week, and that's the way we had them come.

BARBARA: Did they have a set curriculum for you to teach? I mean, what they wanted you to give the students?

REATHA: Oh yeah, we had a certain guideline to go by, and certain books that we had to teach out of.

DOROTHEA: How long did you teach there?

REATHA: I taught there one year.

DOROTHEA: And where did you go from there?

REATHA: I went to the Narrows.

DOROTHEA: The Narrows.

REATHA: And I taught there three years. Of course, a lot of this, see was '29 and '30 at Blitzen, and then I went to the Narrows after that. And that was the beginning of the depression, or into the depression.

DOROTHEA: What was the Narrows like? I understood it was quite a town at one time.

REATHA: Well, maybe I better go back to Blitzen first. In 19 --- or before 1918 Blitzen was, or Catlow Valley, I should say, was settled by homesteaders. And you could look at night, of course, I didn't see it, but this is what I was told, that there was homesteaders all over the valley, about four hundred of them. But when the First World War broke out, well then, they all left because they had to go to service.

BARBARA: Was there remains of the houses, or cabins, or whatever, that you could see when you went there?

REATHA: No, but there were old wells that you might fall in if you weren't careful.

BARBARA: It's hard to imagine that there were that many settlers there at one time, isn't it?

REATHA: And at one time, someplace there in the valley, they had Ragtown, what they called Ragtown.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: And I suppose they had a little school there. Maybe that's where it was where I taught, I don't know, I can't remember. That's a long time ago. (Laughter)

BARBARA: We have trouble with last week sometimes. (Laughter)

REATHA: Well, the Narrows was still a small town, smaller than what Blitzen was. There was one family there, and then there was a service station, and there was an old hall there that had been quite a store at one time. And there was a stone cellar, and a schoolhouse. And there was one, well I guess there was two families there in the Narrows, and one was down, oh half a mile out. And there was a little three-room shack, I guess you'd call it, next to one of these people --- and that's where I boarded myself.

BARBARA: What was the family's name that you stayed with?

REATHA: I didn't stay with anyone there in the Narrows, but, no. But Church's lived next to where I did, Harry Church and his family. And then McManus was the other family down a ways. And I can't remember who had the service station, at the first time, when I was there.

BARBARA: Was Charlie Haines there at that time? I bet he was gone then.

REATHA: No, this was, yeah he was gone. And of course, Elmer's folks lived out in the country about three miles. And then Kidwell's lived out about three miles. I had seventeen pupils there, and all eight grades when I was there.

BARBARA: You were really busy then.

REATHA: Yeah, I was busy.

DOROTHEA: And how many years did you teach there, you said three?

REATHA: Uh-huh, three years. And then I went back again and taught another year. But in the meantime, I got married, and the depression was on, and they wouldn't have married teachers at that time, so that left me out for a while.

DOROTHEA: Now, how did you meet your husband, and who was he?

REATHA: Well, you know I can't remember, but I met him, I guess, at his mother's place. Because he was going with somebody else when I first went there. And I don't know, I guess we got together at a dance or something, I don't remember.

AEOLA TILLER: You taught his brothers and sisters.

REATHA: Yeah, I taught his brothers and sisters.

DOROTHEA: And what were their names?

REATHA: The ones that I taught?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

REATHA: I taught Philip, Edith, and Tom. The others was older, so I didn't; they went to Crane.

DOROTHEA: And how many brothers and sisters did he have?

REATHA: He had two brothers, and let's see, there was Martha and Cloy, and Dawn and Frankie, and five sisters.

DOROTHEA: Five sisters. And what were their names?

REATHA: The oldest one was Martha, next was Cloy, Dawn, Frankie, and Edith.

DOROTHEA: And where did they live? You said ---

REATHA: Well, they lived out on what was called the old Charlie Haines place; I think is what they called it. It was, I suppose, three miles from the Narrows, around out towards Sodhouse.

BARBARA: Did they own this ranch or were they working it for someone?

REATHA: No, they owned it. Of course, Elmer's father passed away in '29, so it was up to him and the family to kind of run it.

BARBARA: I see.

REATHA: And they had meander land there too, from the lake.

DOROTHEA: Now you got married and lost your job as a schoolteacher, so did you move in with the family, or what did you do then?

REATHA: Oh, they had a bunkhouse there that we lived in. And then after the two boys, I had, were I suppose three, four, or five years, four or five, right in there someplace, why then I taught another year at the Narrows.

DOROTHEA: Okay, you mentioned the two boys, what are their names?

REATHA: Frank and Glenn, my sons.

DOROTHEA: And where were they born?

REATHA: In Burns.

DOROTHEA: In Burns. Did you have to come in for doctor's appointments, or did you just come in when you had the baby?

REATHA: No, I came in for doctor appointments, yeah.

DOROTHEA: And who was your doctor?

REATHA: Dr. Smith.

DOROTHEA: Smith?

REATHA: Bob Smith's father.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

BARBARA: Going back a little bit, you say that married teachers, teachers that were married were not allowed to teach. Did you ever hear the reason for this? Did they ever give you a reason why they did not think that a married woman could teach school?

REATHA: No, they really didn't. If I did know, I don't remember. And they either, they had a lot of morals that we had to live up by, too. We couldn't smoke or drink, and things like that. And there was something else, but I can't remember what it was now.

BARBARA: Well, we've heard a lot of people tell us that when they were married, then they couldn't teach any longer. And no one seems to remember or know exactly what the reason was. Why they decided that.

REATHA: I don't remember what the reason --- They even wouldn't let you teach if there was somebody on the school board that you were related to, too.

BARBARA: Huh, that's interesting.

DOROTHEA: So were women the majority of the teachers in this time, or were there a lot of men teachers?

REATHA: Well, I think they were mostly women teachers that I know of. And see, this was during the depression and that might be why they let some of us, the married women, go back to teaching. And --- I forgot what I was going to say.

BARBARA: Did you know any of the other teachers in the other communities around the area during the time that you taught? Do you remember some of the others?

REATHA: Oh, yeah.

BARBARA: Did you ever get together and discuss how things were going?

REATHA: Well, no, we were too far apart.

BARBARA: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

REATHA: It took too long to ever go any place, you know. When they had the Model-T Fords, the fastest you could go was forty miles an hour, and they thought they were really going some.

BARBARA: Really flying, huh?

REATHA: Yeah.

BARBARA: But you were able to visit with them maybe at socials, dances, and that sort of thing. So you knew maybe who they were?

REATHA: Well, if they happened to go to the dances, you could. And of course, I took a lot of those. I don't know, it wasn't correspondence courses; it was a test that we had to take, and I'd talk with the teachers then. Because we'd go up there and talk with them.

BARBARA: And so, you say that you taught three years, and then you got married. So maybe, we better get down who you got married to, and when? And maybe how your courting went, what you did when you courted.

REATHA: Well, we used to go to the neighbors and we'd play cards and things like that. And if they had dances, we'd go to a dance.

BARBARA: Did you ever come into town to go to a movie or anything like that? Crane or ---

REATHA: No, I don't think so, not that I can remember now.

BARBARA: And so, you did marry Elmer ---

REATHA: I married Elmer Dunn.

BARBARA: And when did you get married?

REATHA: June 17th, 1933.

BARBARA: And were you married in a home or in a church?

REATHA: No, I went to Boise, Idaho, and was married in the parish of the church.

BARBARA: I see, okay.

DOROTHEA: Who was your witnesses, and who stood up for you? And did you have more than just you and Elmer there?

REATHA: His mother stood up with me, and his uncle stood up for him. And his oldest sister was there, and his uncle's wife, and that was all there was.

DOROTHEA: Did you go on a honeymoon?

REATHA: No. (Laughter) We come back to the ranch.

DOROTHEA: Just turned back around and come back home, huh?

REATHA: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: What was it like to, did you have a lot of brandings to cook for, did you have to learn to cook, or did you help your mother-in-law cook, or how did you start out your married life?

REATHA: Well, we stayed with his mother for, oh, I don't know, probably a month first, and I'd help with the cooking and everything. And then, we got our little bunkhouse furnished; I guess you'd say, because it was just a one room with a lean-to for a kitchen. And it was right there, close. And I learned quite a bit of cooking when I was home, but I wasn't a fancy cook like they have. And Elmer didn't care for fancy cooking anyway. He'd go to these places and eat it, but when he'd come, or anything, he'd say, "Why do people want to mix food up like that?"

DOROTHEA: Did you make your own bread and things like that?

REATHA: Oh yeah, we made our own bread, our own cakes, cookies.

DOROTHEA: Have your own garden?

REATHA: Well, we didn't have a garden out there because they didn't have no good way for water. But after I come to Hines, I sure had a garden.

DOROTHEA: What was the weather like? Was it quite a lot like it is now, or was it more --- colder, more snow, what was the weather like, and how did you contend with it?

REATHA: Well, we dressed for it, that's how we contend with it. If you want to go clear back to North Dakota, I can start out there. First, the winters were really tough back there, and we had blizzards, and snowdrifts, and lots of snow. It was cold! We had to walk to school.

DOROTHEA: Well, I know I often think about how I grew up, and how our homes were, and wondered how we ever stayed warm. I mean, we must have dressed; I know we dressed because I wore those black or long brown socks. But we must have dressed warmer. But, you know, the houses seemed like they were so breezy. How did you keep the heat in?

REATHA: Well, I think the houses were quite well built.

DOROTHEA: Were they?

REATHA: Yeah. And of course, you had your wood stove, and wood heat is better than any heat I know of. And we used to take flat irons to bed with us at night, or heat stones or whatever we had that we could, you know. And we wore clothes; we wore long johns, or whatever you want to call

them, underwear, and stockings over them.

DOROTHEA: You couldn't get a kid to wear that kind of clothes any more.

REATHA: Well, I could if I had to, yeah. But they don't make some of those clothes now.

(Laughter)

DOROTHEA: No, my grandson doesn't hardly wear a coat to school because, you know, that's not the way they do it.

REATHA: I know. Well, when my kids were growing up, as kids, you know, their blood circulates better than ours do, and they're warmer, and they're more active. And they used to go to school without a coat when you'd think they should have a coat on. But as they got older, they said the first thing they grab is their coat before they go out now. Because they're not that young and active anymore.

But the weather there at the Narrows was, it was cold. It would go down to forty-five below in the wintertime and stay there for a week at a time, and then it would warm up again. And one year it was so cold I guess a lot of the, that was probably the winter of '29, before I was there at the Narrows, that cattle froze standing up on the feed ground because it was so cold.

BARBARA: Did you have to build the fire when you came to school?

REATHA: Oh yeah.

BARBARA: And haul water in, and ---

REATHA: Well, we had a well right there at the school, yeah.

BARBARA: Did students stay afterwards and help you with wood, or clean the backboards, or things like that?

REATHA: Not unless I asked them to.

DOROTHEA: Did you have school? Now, like say in the winters it gets so dark, did you close before dark, or ---

REATHA: Oh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So that they could have a chance to get home. Did they ride horses, or how did they get to school?

REATHA: Well, out there at Blitzen they had a school bus. One of the families come and got all the kids and took them home. And I rode with them for a time or two, and then I walked some, and then my boyfriend let me use his car, I drove myself. Because I didn't want to have to pack all my books home to study them for the next day, I did what I could at school before I come home, as long as there was daylight.

And I don't know, the snow wasn't so deep out there at the Narrows, or Blitzen either one at that time. Because it would do like it used to do here, not last winter, but like the winter before, just come and go off. And you'd just have drifts and things like that. But on this side of Wright's Point it was always ten degrees colder than on the other side. And they always had more snow this way. And I know the snow was, out there on Hanley Lane was at the top of the fence posts, and then besides drifts after that.

DOROTHEA: Well, what did Elmer do, did he work with his folks, or did he work for somebody else? I know he buckarood a lot. Can you tell us some of the jobs that he did?

REATHA: Well, he fed the cattle that his mother had there for, I don't know how long. But he worked out too, and he helped with the haying that they had to do, and like that. And then during the depression, he and a couple other fellows went out every day and would shoot rabbits, because rabbits was five cents an ear, a bounty on them. And they wouldn't, if they ever, let's see, I don't know how you would say it. But anyhow, they'd take a box of ammunition for their 22, and they would shoot a rabbit with each one of those bullets, however many it held, in the box. And they never missed more than one. And they made about forty dollars a month, and that's what we lived off of during the depression, besides eating a lot of beans, and wild meat when we had it, and like that.

BARBARA: So when did you move away from your little place, bunkhouse?

REATHA: Well, let's see, his mother sold out to the government, or whatever it was, because that meander land, they took that over for the bird refuge down there. And she went to Eugene, and so that's when he started working for other people. And I don't know, he worked for Joe Fine up there, and we were up there at Roaring Springs, and we was there at Frenchglen, and places like that.

And then finally, he went to work at the mill for a while when we come to Hines. And then he didn't like that work, and after, I don't know, I guess, he worked there for twelve years and then he decided to go back to buckarooing. He worked out there at the Sodhouse for Emanuel Clark. And then he worked out there for McEwen, I can't think of his first name right now.

AEOLA: Walt.

DOROTHEA: Walt.

REATHA: Walt, yeah. And out at Swamp Creek.

AEOLA: Marcus Haines.

REATHA: Who?

AEOLA: Marcus Haines.

REATHA: And Marcus Haines. And ---

BARBARA: So, he never really purchased a ranch for himself?

REATHA: Oh no, no.

BARBARA: He always just worked for somebody else.

REATHA: Somebody else, yeah.

BARBARA: Uh-huh. And you mentioned that you had two sons, do you have other children?

REATHA: Yeah, I have two daughters, Aeola and Arvetta.

BARBARA: Uh-huh. And were they born after you moved into town, or while you were still ---

REATHA: Aeola and Arvetta were born here in town. And ---

DOROTHEA: With the same doctor, or ---

REATHA: No, Dr. Homan delivered Aeola, and I think then Dr. Smith delivered Arvetta. And he also delivered the other two boys.

BARBARA: Was it Homan, or Holman? H O L M A N, or H O M A N ?

(Correct spelling was found to be Homan, Waldo G.)

REATHA: No, it was Holman.

BARBARA: H O L ?

REATHA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: We heard someone recently say it was H O M A N, and I had always heard that it had the L in there.

REATHA: Yeah, it had the L in it.

BARBARA: Okay.

REATHA: I can't think of his first name.

DOROTHEA: We, none of us can.

REATHA: Well, surely somebody knows.

DOROTHEA: He doctored in Portland for a while. Perhaps we could get an old phone book and find it.

REATHA: Might be.

DOROTHEA: We can't remember his name.

AEOLA: Would it be on a birth certificate?

DOROTHEA: It might be.

REATHA: It might be, I don't know. We could look and see, I guess.

DOROTHEA: Well, you have four children; how many grandchildren do you have?

REATHA: I have ten grandchildren, five granddaughters, and five grandsons. And of course, they're all married but one of them now, I think. And then I have one, two, three, four great-granddaughters, and I now have two great-grandsons. Well, I guess you'd say three, because I count the adopted ones as grandsons too, because they're just like your own after you're around them awhile.

AEOLA: The last one was born this morning.

REATHA: Yeah, I told them, yeah.

BARBARA: That's pretty neat.

REATHA: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well, Alice Shepard asked me to ask you something about the trip you took over Hart Mountain where you had to stop and let the other people cross by you. Tell us something about that, when and where it was, and why you were crossing.

REATHA: Oh boy, I don't remember when it was. It was before I started teaching or anything like that, because --- Let's see, after we come back from Canada, we were in Washington awhile, and then we were in Bend awhile, and then for some reason we came out here to Crane. And my dad herded sheep for somebody, and I went to school there, one year at Crane. Well, when we left there, then that's the way we went to Klamath Falls, I guess, from there, and we went over Hart Mountain. We had, I guess, we had a team, and we also had a Model-T Ford. And the road was so narrow coming up and down that mountain there, Hart Mountain, that if you met anyone then you'd have to stop and --- I don't remember whether we unhitched the horses or what we did, but I know they had to ease the wagon around whatever was there. Because the road wasn't wide enough that you could get clear out of the road, probably you'd get one crack and then, you know, you'd have to ease the rest of it around the other one.

DOROTHEA: Well, not ever being over Hart Mountain, I'm really great about traveling around this area. But is it a high; was it a high, like ravines on both sides?

REATHA: Have you been over Wright's Point?

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: Well, from this side when you come up the mountain, as near as I can remember, it's been years since I was over there, that you don't come down or anything, it's like you're level with the ground or something. Probably not completely, but almost anyway. But the other side going down is quite steep; it's worse than Wright's Point out here. And of course, it was narrow; it just had a wagon trail, or you might say, it wasn't graveled or anything like that. It was just ---

AEOLA: Wright's Point is nothing now.

REATHA: Pardon.

AEOLA: Wright's Point isn't anything to go over now, but the old road was.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: Yeah.

AEOLA: It was really ---

BARBARA: It went up farther in, Marcus (Haines) was telling us about that.

REATHA: Yeah.

AEOLA: Yeah, it was very narrow.

REATHA: And I don't think I've been over that road since, and that was years and years ago.

BARBARA: Once was enough, huh?

REATHA: Well, I never had any occasion to go over it, I guess.

DOROTHEA: Well, that seemed to impress Alice real much. And she said, "Now you ask her about that, because that would be a point of interest," which it was. I mean, you know, it is.

Because I've never been over that road, so I don't know what it's like. And of course, it probably now isn't like it was then either.

REATHA: Oh, no.

DOROTHEA: So, it's kind of like Wright's Point, not as scary.

REATHA: Well, only it was worse than Wright's Point. But as near as I can tell that that's what I can --- and I can't remember whether it went slanting straight down or whether it would go so far and then turn and make a crook or not. But I think that it probably went straight down, and maybe off a little bit around, or something. Wherever they could make it easy to go, because it was fairly rocky.

BARBARA: When you, when Elmer was working for these different ranches, or companies --- and did you live on these ranches too at that time when he was working? Or where did you live, and what did you do with your time during the day that he was working?

REATHA: Well, when he went to Frenchglen and worked for Joe Fine, I went up there and lived in a tent with the boys. And I lived there in Frenchglen in Taft Miller's house one winter and fall, summer, one winter and summer, I guess you'd say. And then, we had a cabin there, too that we lived in. And so, I stayed there while he --- and when we were there in Frenchglen he worked for Joe Fine and out there at, they'd come down to the "P" Ranch and whatnot to feed, and that Brenton Cabin down there. And I stayed there in Frenchglen and I boarded the teacher one winter, and I did work over there at the store part time.

AEOLA: Where did you make all the biscuits?

REATHA: Huh?

AEOLA: Where did you make all the biscuits?

REATHA: Where did I make all the biscuits? Oh, that was, I don't know, we come back and we lived in the big house there at the Narrows where his mother had lived. And I don't know how come we were there, but we were for a while, I guess. And then I would go out, we'd go out to the sheep camp and he'd work in the shearing, and I would cook for the men. That's where I made all the biscuits. I made 101 sourdough biscuits every morning. I'd make them at night; they weren't really the sourdough, yet they were, because it was called salt rising bread, it was what the Bascos used. It really made good bread. One of the fellows said, "Make three biscuits for me." And so that's where I got that many, I made three for each one.

DOROTHEA: You must have had quite a crew; you must have had thirty people to feed then.

REATHA: I had thirty-five besides the cook and my boys, and I had a helper.

AEOLA: Who was the helper?

REATHA: Who was the helper? Well, one year it was Madeline Dunn, William Dunn's wife. And one year it was Mavis Oard, before she was, I guess, yeah, before she was married.

AEOLA: Mavis Dunn.

REATHA: Uh-huh, Dunn.

DOROTHEA: Dunn.

AEOLA: And then you had Geraldine Schillinger, too.

REATHA: Oh, that's right. Well, that year that I had Geraldine Schillinger, she was a young girl, and I went out there. But my girls had had the whooping cough that spring. They were over it and they wouldn't give anyone the whooping cough, but at night, you know, they had that awful cough. And there was one fellow out there that had a small child and he was scared to death that she would get whooping cough. And I told him that it was over that stage, that they wouldn't get it. But they said either you leave, or I leave. Well, I left because that was the main shearer and I couldn't stay, you know, so I came back. And I was living in Hines then at that time. Let's see, Elmer didn't go out there that year; he was working for Joe Fine, I think, I'm not sure where he was working.

AEOLA: J. K. Gills.

REATHA: Huh?

AEOLA: J. K. Gills.

REATHA: Oh, could have been.

BARBARA: And were these people that were herding the sheep, were they mostly Basque, or were they just buckaroos that had run out of jobs with cattle and were working sheep? Who were some of these people?

REATHA: Well, let's see, first I cooked for Frank Kueny, he had a big shearing outfit. And when we got through there we went over and cooked for Pete and, Pete Garay and Laucirica. And they had Basque herders, or whatever, and a lot of them would get their foreigners to come in, you know, and do their herding for them and whatnot. And Roy Dixon was there too, I think. I think that was his name. And Elmer went out there and he worked with the sheep then during that shearing.

BARBARA: Did he like working with sheep better than cows?

REATHA: No, no, he'd rather sit on a horse and buckaroo.

BARBARA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: He didn't like to walk or anything like that.

BARBARA: You mentioned feeding these sheep herders, and what kind of meals would you prepare for them?

REATHA: Well, you always had some meat, either a roast or sometimes we'd fry it. And we had eggs, and we had, I suppose dressing, and beans. And we always had dessert of some kind. But you never made macaroni and cheese, or rice, or anything like that.

AEOLA: Potatoes, lots of potatoes.

BARBARA: Potatoes and beans were pretty much your staple?

REATHA: Yeah, we had potatoes, yeah.

DOROTHEA: What, did you get the foods furnished to you, and you just cook it?

REATHA: Uh-huh, it was furnished; all I did was cook it.

DOROTHEA: So who furnished it, the people that owned the sheep?

REATHA: Yeah, Frank Kueny.

DOROTHEA: Frank Kueny.

REATHA: He did for his outfit. And then Pete Garay and Laucirica, Joe Laucirica did for theirs.

BARBARA: Did you use Dutch ovens?

REATHA: Well, it was all on top of a stove, though. The bread pan I had was a great big one that would hold that many biscuits in it. It was like that great big one at the lodge, you know.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: Those we had up there.

DOROTHEA: We talked to, was it Diaz or Marcus or one of them that was telling us that the cooks used to fix the meal and then they would take it out, somebody would take it out to their herders. Did you ever have to do that?

REATHA: No, no, I didn't do that. They did that in the hay field too a lot, I know.

DOROTHEA: Did they?

REATHA: Uh-huh. But I don't think I ever. I might have helped with some of it, but I didn't have to prepare it.

DOROTHEA: So most of your meals were served right where you were living or fixing it, in a tent or a house or whatever?

REATHA: Right. Well, it was a house. Frank Kueny had a stone house; it was just one great big room. And we had a long table in there that would seat 30, 35 of them at one time.

BARBARA: Did they come in for lunch, too?

REATHA: Oh, yeah.

BARBARA: Or did you have to pack sandwiches then or something?

REATHA: No, no, they all came in.

BARBARA: They came for the three meals a day then?

REATHA: Right, right.

BARBARA: So by the time you finished cleaning up for breakfast, it was time to start the lunch.

REATHA: Oh, yes.

BARBARA: And the same thing after lunch you had to prepare for dinner again probably.

REATHA: That's right, that's right. Then after supper you had to make all these biscuits ready for breakfast, you know.

DOROTHEA: Well, if it was anything like even when I was cooking, you never got through cooking one meal till you were busy preparing another one.

REATHA: That's right, that's right.

DOROTHEA: We've got to stop here for a moment and turn our tape over. So ---

SIDE B

DOROTHEA: Tell us something about what it was like to serve 30 people at one table.

REATHA: Oh dear, well they all sat down, and you usually had two dishes of everything so that --- and you could start one at the end and one in the middle so it would get around to them. And you had to be sure they were always filled up for them, and see that they had their coffee, or water, or whatever they wanted to drink.

DOROTHEA: How long did it take you to get them down to the table? Did they, how long did it take them from the time they came in, washed, and sat at the table?

REATHA: Well you know, I don't know. I don't suppose, I imagine they were through eating in an hour's time.

DOROTHEA: Did they rest afterwards, or did they just jump up from the meal and go right out?

REATHA: They'd get up from the meal and go right out and do their talking or sit down wherever they were, if they wanted to, whatever they did, yeah. They didn't stay around the cookhouse to do their talking.

DOROTHEA: We were just talking about, like say with our riding crew; we had to do it in shifts because we had not enough room for more than about ten to sit. So we'd feed ten, and then we'd feed another ten, and then we'd feed another ten. And while the first ten was done eating, the last ten was eating; the first ten was taking naps. So I was wondering how they worked that.

REATHA: Well, you know, I don't know how they worked that, because they didn't stay around the cook shack. Because they all come in at one time, because the table was as long as the, the house was long or wide, I can't remember which now. And they all sat down and ate.

DOROTHEA: And your cook stove and everything was right in that same room, or did you have a kitchen off from there?

REATHA: Oh yeah, oh no, it was all in the same room.

DOROTHEA: How did you keep your vegetables, or I don't suppose you had much vegetables, but like meat? Did you have an icebox, or how did you? Did you have to bring it out of the cellar, or out of the haystack? Can you vaguely remember some of that? Or did somebody do that for you?

REATHA: Somebody did it for me; it was one of the men. If Elmer didn't do it, somebody else did it. And I don't know really where they kept it. I suppose they kept it under tarps in hay or something. I know they did for the hay men, they'd always put it under a shock of hay in the daytime and wrap it up, and it would stay cool. And then at night they'd hang it up to really cool out, and they could sure keep it a long time that way. Because we didn't have refrigerators, or iceboxes, or anything like that. No, and that's why you had to cook fresh every day. Very seldom had anything left over even after a meal. You tried to have enough so that they wouldn't run out, and yet there wouldn't be an awful lot left over.

DOROTHEA: How about breakfast? Did you have bacon, or did you have steak and some kind of other meat, or ham? Or, did you have eggs?

REATHA: Well, we had eggs. Well, I had biscuits with gravy, and eggs, and I'm sure we had either bacon or steak.

BARBARA: Hot cakes, did you make hot cakes?

REATHA: No, I never made hot cakes, no, it was always biscuits and gravy, something like that. Hot cakes would have taken too long, I think, to make them.

BARBARA: So what kind of a salary did you get for cooking? Was it very much?

REATHA: It wasn't very much. Probably, I suppose \$2 a day, if it was that much. I can't remember, but I know it wasn't very much. But at that time, it was big wages, you know.

DOROTHEA: And probably they just added it into Elmer's anyway, so you might not have realized.

REATHA: No, I don't think they did. I can't remember, but I don't think so.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Well, you mentioned after doing all these, this cooking and going from different places, that you moved to Hines. What was the reason that you decided to move into Hines?

REATHA: Well, there was no more work out there. Elmer, I don't know, didn't want to buckaroo or couldn't find a job that he liked, or something, so he decided he'd try the sawmill for a while. And I think he worked here for twelve years, and he didn't like it. So he went back out. And, well, in the meantime, while he was still working at the mill, in the spring and summertime, he'd go out here at Mud Lake where his cousin lived and they'd put in grain. And my dad was here with us then, too, and they put in grain. And then they got flooded out there, so I guess after that, he went out to buckaroo again, too.

BARBARA: Is this the home that you moved to? Or did you live elsewhere?

REATHA: We lived down here on North Quincy, just right down here in a brown house for oh, I don't know, I guess, I don't know how long I did live down there. Let's see, three, probably four or five years, and then we moved up here, we bought this place, and moved up here.

DOROTHEA: And when did you start teaching at the Hines School then?

REATHA: I started in '47.

DOROTHEA: Now, did you always teach at Hines, or did you teach in Burns?

REATHA: No, I always taught in Hines.

DOROTHEA: What grade?

REATHA: Well, I started out with the fifth and sixth grade, and I kept working backwards until I got down to the first grade. That's where I had most of my work, and I liked the little folks. At that time, why, they were innocent little fellows, and they just loved to learn, and they'd listen and whatnot. And it is different from what it is now.

BARBARA: When you came back to teaching again, after being off for a while, did you have to go

back to school for a period of time in order to start teaching again?

REATHA: Oh yeah. I ---

AEOLA: We all went to school again.

REATHA: I went to summer school. I didn't take any year's training or anything like that, but I went to summer school. And every three years I'd go back and take something, until finally I got my degree. And then I didn't go back after that because I was near retirement age.

BARBARA: You started in what year?

REATHA: 1947.

BARBARA: '47. And how long did you teach then?

REATHA: I taught, retired in the spring of 1974.

DOROTHEA: Do you have any students that still come and visit you, or still live around here?

REATHA: There is quite a few students around here. But I don't have any that come and visit me, but I receive letters from several of them, yeah, that correspond.

DOROTHEA: Thank you.

REATHA: I think Dorothy likes tea, don't you?

DOROTHEA: Yes, I do.

AEOLA: Yeah, it's water.

REATHA: Oh, that's water. I'm sorry.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, they all know me; I'm a tea drinker.

AEOLA: Do you want coffee, Mom?

REATHA: No, I don't think I do, thank you.

BARBARA: I was going to ask you when you were teaching out at Catlow and the Narrows, did you put on programs like at Christmas, or any other time during the year? Did you have your students do a program or anything?

REATHA: We had Halloween and Christmas programs, yeah.

DOROTHEA: How about Valentine's Day, did you do a lot of Valentine exchanging or ---

REATHA: Well, not out in the country, I don't think we did, but we made our own Valentines too

then. But when we come to Hines, well, we had Valentines. And then they always, I don't think at first, but they finally, before I finished teaching, they'd have a, take a half a day every month I believe it was and they'd celebrate so many birthdays for the children. And then the next month, and they had a room mother to go with it, to do that part of the work.

BARBARA: What kind of games did the children play at recess? I assume you had recess or a break for them.

REATHA: You mean out in the country?

BARBARA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: Oh, we played tag, and we played blind man's bluff, and run sheep run. And what's that other one, three deep, something like that, I think. And last couple out, just those old, old games.

DOROTHEA: Did you have baseball?

REATHA: Uh, well, I didn't have enough children for baseball. There was too difference between the ages. We might have played catch or something like that, but not baseball. And then there at the Narrows, after a while, they got a slide, and of course, the kids liked to go down the slide.

DOROTHEA: How about in the wintertime, what did you do, did you stay in the rooms and play games, or rest, or ---

REATHA: There was a little ante off of the room there at the Narrows, and we'd go in there and play in that. And usually blind man's bluff, and get tired of that, we'd quit and do something else that we could do that was in there.

DOROTHEA: How long did you take for recesses, and how many hours would you go before you had a recess?

REATHA: Well, we'd start school at 9 o'clock, and then at 10:30 we had 15 minutes. And then we had our hour at noon, and then at 2:30 we had 15 minutes, and then we were out at 4 o'clock.

BARBARA: When you were in Hines teaching, did you ever have your children in school?

REATHA: I had them in the 3rd grade.

BARBARA: In 3rd grade.

REATHA: There was hardly any way that I could get out of it, I guess. So I did have them in the

third grade.

DOROTHEA: All of them, or just ---

REATHA: No, just the girls.

DOROTHEA: Just the girls.

REATHA: Yeah, the boys were older than that.

BARBARA: Was it hard to have your own child in the class?

REATHA: Well, yes, it was hard, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Were you ever, did you ever feel like they felt you were playing favoritism?

REATHA: Well, I don't know if they did, they didn't say anything, because I tried awfully hard not to. And I think that's one of the qualifications that they liked about me; I didn't play favoritism with anybody.

BARBARA: Did you really enjoy teaching when you were in Hines?

REATHA: I sure did. I had one rough year that I, I think I cried every night I come home. But I got over that; I knew I had to, because we couldn't live off of Elmer's wages that he was making. And I had four kids, I had to, so I toughed it out.

DOROTHEA: What was the difference in the teaching? New books, of course, but did the kids seem to want to learn more? Or did you have more trouble with the kids here than you did in the country?

REATHA: Well, I think when you get a group of kids together like we had here, you had to have separate levels, classes, you had to group as many as you could. Because there would be somebody way back here that needed a lot of help, and well the others was way at the top and you couldn't keep them in the same group, you know, because there was too much difference in their levels.

DOROTHEA: How did you handle that? If you have somebody that is so much more advanced than another one of the same age, how do you handle that? Now, I know you have aides probably, but at that time ---

REATHA: Well, you would give the advanced ones something harder to do, and something to do that they could do while you were teaching the slower group. And maybe they would get a

storybook to read, or they could color a picture. They liked to do a lot of coloring at that time.

Which now, I don't think the children do so much coloring anymore, like they used to.

DOROTHEA: Did you teach penmanship in the country schools as well as here?

REATHA: Yeah, that's what's wrong with my writing now. I had four different types of penmanship over the length of time I was in school. Because they'd say, well we're going to have to; we got to do the Palmer Method. Then we had to do the Rice System, and then we had to do another system.

DOROTHEA: Okay, explain the difference of these. I know, I don't know; say if, when I went to school, you went circles.

REATHA: Uh-huh, that was Palmer.

DOROTHEA: That's Palmer. Okay, what's Rice?

REATHA: I don't know what you'd call it now, because it has been so long ago. But I know in the, I suppose that part of that, I don't know which one it was though, but they wouldn't make loops in their H's or L's or T's, or whatever. They had to make them straight without any loops in them, you know.

DOROTHEA: So that's why my kids can't write?

REATHA: Well, I don't know that. Maybe they didn't have that many different things to go through that I did. But, and --- I don't know. Probably they didn't practice enough; maybe the teacher didn't see that they did. I had one boy that was left handed and actually when he come to school he made straight lines, just like that, and you could not read it. I had to work like a son-of-a-gun to get him to, so you could read his writing. I guessed at a lot of the words that he wrote, because you get used to it, you know.

DOROTHEA: Well my youngest daughter has never written, she prints.

REATHA: Well, they taught manuscript to the first grade, printing, manuscript --- what's manuscript, that's not printing is it?

DOROTHEA: Huh-uh.

REATHA: No. Well, the first half of the year, I guess, they printed in the first grade, and then they

started the manuscript.

BARBARA: Cursive.

DOROTHEA: Cursive, what they call it.

REATHA: Cursive, yeah, cursive, yeah. But some of them printed all year. And those that print can print as fast as you can write.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

REATHA: And I was amazed at those people, because I couldn't do that.

DOROTHEA: That's what Kelly does, she prints everything. You very seldom ever see her write anything. And when it is, it's not readable. Rhonda has a good hand, but Tim and Kelly have terrible hands. They must take after their dad, because you can't read his writing either.

REATHA: Some of them just don't learn to write, that's all.

DOROTHEA: But she has never, Kelly has never written; it's always been printed. And she can print just as fast as I can write.

REATHA: Oh yeah, that's right. I watch those girls in college, some would take their notes, and they'd be printing. And they could just, almost like typing, just as fast as they could go. I don't know how they did it, but they did.

DOROTHEA: First time I heard cursive, my grandson come up to me and he says, I said, "Well, Nick, why don't you write that?" And he says, "I don't know what you mean." And I says, "Well, here, do like this." And he says, "Well, Grandma that's called cursive." Okay, you know. I didn't know what it was, that was how I, I thought gee, I'm really behind times.

BARBARA: When you had, you mentioned the students that were, well, shall we say gifted students that you had in class, and then you had your slow learners, do you feel that the gifted always maybe got a little on the short end because you had to make sure that the slow learners at least got up to the middle of the group, let's say. And that the other ones, you just kind of let them go on their own, you would give them things to keep busy. Do you feel that that happened a lot in the early years of your teaching?

REATHA: Well, I feel that I slighted them, yes. Because ---

BARBARA: You didn't have the time.

REATHA: I didn't have the, well, I didn't have the time, and I didn't have the material either. And the little ones back here that was average, or below average, you had to work awfully hard to get them through school.

DOROTHEA: Did you ever feel like the ones that were gifted were bored?

REATHA: No, I don't think they were. They always found something to do on their own, you know. Because I had a lot of games and things like that.

DOROTHEA: Well, this is the thing that I have heard that sometimes these ones that are a little bit more advanced are bored, and they get to the point where they get a little bit naughty because they are bored.

REATHA: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: And this is what I was wondering, because you used to have bigger classes than they have now. So this probably presented part of a problem, too.

BARBARA: What size classes did you have in your Hines years?

REATHA: I think one time, probably I had 15, was the least I ever had. And then the most I had was like 28 or 30, and that's just too many for the lower grades. And what I didn't like about some of it, they always said, well, the upper grades is where you need your teacher aides. I couldn't see that, and I'd tell them so. I said down in the first grade, or the lower grades, is where you need it because that's where they start.

BARBARA: That's where they get their basics.

REATHA: Yeah. But I couldn't get it across.

BARBARA: You mentioned having to go back to summer school in order to get your college degree. Because when you first started you probably go to a Normal School and get your one-year, so that you're able to teach. But then later on the rules and regulations changed so you had to have a four year equivalent college degree, is that right?

REATHA: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: And where did you go summers to school then? Did you go to Oregon State, or did

you go to Ashland, or where did you go?

REATHA: I went to LaGrande a couple summers, and I went to Eugene one summer, and I went back to Ashland several summers. And I took correspondence courses up here at high school when they gave them.

DOROTHEA: What did you do with your kids during this time? Did they go to school with you?

REATHA: My kids? The girls went to school with me. The boys did to start with, because they were small, too small. But then, after I started back again, why, they were older and they could stay home with their dad.

BARBARA: Did he like having you teach?

REATHA: Well, he never did say anything against it, other than I was always busy all the time, you know. But I had to work; there was no getting around it.

AEOLA: You might tell when, about the boy that got hurt so bad that you tutored.

REATHA: Well, I don't know, remember how he got ---

AEOLA: He got burned in a fire in a garage.

REATHA: Oh, I guess some kids was playing with matches or something.

AEOLA: With gas.

REATHA: One little boy got burnt pretty bad, you probably know him. He was ---

AEOLA: Terry Presley.

REATHA: Gerald Presley's ---

AEOLA: Terry.

REATHA: Yeah, brother Terry. And I tutored him, tutored him at home besides teaching school.

AEOLA: She taught school all day, and then after supper she would go to his home and teach him, what the kids had that day at school, to keep him with his class.

BARBARA: Oh, my.

AEOLA: She did that one winter.

BARBARA: Above and beyond the call of duty, huh?

REATHA: Yeah. Well, it wasn't as easy as some of the teachers have now. When they wanted

something done, they get a day off. Seems like they've got more days off than they ever had. We never had the days off to fix report cards, or grade papers, or nothing else.

BARBARA: You didn't have a work period that they have now?

REATHA: No, no.

BARBARA: And you didn't have in-service days where you prepared things?

REATHA: Well, we had in-service days, but not like they do.

BARBARA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: No. About once or twice a year, we'd have our in-service day, yeah.

AEOLA: And then the little boy that was catching the bus stop that you taught to read that winter.

REATHA: Well, that was here several years ago. There was a little boy come to the door, and it was cold that morning. And I don't know why the mother sent them so early to catch the bus up here; it was way early. So he come to the door and he said he was cold, and I know he was, because the tears was coming down his eyes. And I said, "Well, do you want to come in?" And he did. I couldn't say no, because it was too cold, and I wouldn't keep him out in the cold. So I thought, well, and I'd watch for the bus, and I got him out there on the bus. And I thought, well, that would be the end of it. Well, the next morning was the same thing. So, I decided, well, he wanted to know if he could watch TV. I said, "No, we don't watch TV." And I said, if it's going to be like this, we'll learn to read, or whatever. So I got out my ABCs and I taught him the ABCs, and before winter was over, I taught him to read, and put him into the first of his class in one of the, junior first grade up town.

BARBARA: Well, good for you.

REATHA: Well, I certainly wasn't going to let him sit here and watch TV, no way. And he was too smart to not be in the first grade. But he needed a little push, and he didn't have anyone to push him, so I gave him that push.

BARBARA: What were the, what did you see happening over the years from the time that you started here in Hines in 1947, until you retired in '74, what were the major changes in education that you saw happening?

REATHA: Oh, dear.

BARBARA: I'm sure that during that period, there have been a lot of changes.

REATHA: Oh, there have been a lot of changes. We could discipline our own children, and boy you don't dare touch them nowadays. And I don't know, the children were more willing to learn then than what they are now. It seemed like when they come to school, they wanted to learn, and you didn't have to discipline them before you could start teaching. But now you have to get them in order before you can even start to teach them.

BARBARA: Do you find that the children don't have much respect for adults anymore?

REATHA: Yeah, they don't. That's true.

DOROTHEA: Well, what did you do in your way of discipline? Did you set them in the corner, did you make them do lots of writing, or how did you discipline a child? Say if he was late for school, or he played hooky, how did you make him make up for this?

REATHA: Well, I guess if he was late for school, he'd probably stay afterwards to make up that class.

DOROTHEA: Unless he had a great excuse, or something, I mean, you know.

REATHA: And a lot of times, if they were too naughty, you'd send them up to the principal, and he would take care of it. I never had a lot of trouble.

DOROTHEA: Who were some of the teachers that you worked with?

REATHA: Well, when I first started here there was Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, of course he was the principal. And then there was Geneva York, and Sylvia Larson, and Portia Westenskow.

DOROTHEA: Who?

REATHA: Portia Westenskow.

DOROTHEA: Do you want to spell that name?

REATHA: W E S T E N S K O W.

DOROTHEA: Okay. And Portia is P O ---

REATHA: R T I A.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

AEOLA: A new one?

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh, I never heard of it.

REATHA: Never heard of it?

DOROTHEA: How many principals did you teach under, or superintendents, or whatever they're called now?

REATHA: Well, you might say three, because when Mr. Anderson died, she, Mrs. Anderson was principal for a year or two, and then Mr. Red. Then who was after Mr. Red up here?

AEOLA: Benson.

REATHA: Benson. I never taught under him.

AEOLA: Well, who took over right after Red?

DOROTHEA: Was that Bailey?

REATHA: No.

DOROTHEA: Was there a Bailey?

REATHA: No, no, he was over all the schools.

DOROTHEA: Oh, he was the superintendent, right.

REATHA: There was somebody after Mr. Red, and I was ---

AEOLA: Uh-huh, because Mr. Red passed away when he was still teaching.

REATHA: Yeah. Oh, I don't think Mr. Couzins did.

AEOLA: No, he was gone.

DOROTHEA: I don't know who the ---

AEOLA: I can't remember.

DOROTHEA: --- principals are anymore.

AEOLA: Well, you know, the principals then was the principal.

DOROTHEA: Principal.

REATHA: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, now they're, yeah.

REATHA: It was somebody, because Mr. Red was sick for a while, but I don't remember who it

was, right off my head. Huh.

DOROTHEA: I cannot remember to save me.

AEOLA: I was long gone by then.

BARBARA: So did you ever have any time for hobbies or anything while you were teaching and raising your children? Your days were pretty full, was there any time?

REATHA: My days was too full; I didn't have time. I would like to have crocheted or knitted, or something like that, but I didn't have time. In the summertime, when I wasn't going to school I had a garden, so we'd have something to eat, too.

DOROTHEA: Did you do a lot of canning then?

REATHA: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: You had a big garden?

REATHA: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: How did you take care of it, did you, because you were probably going to school a little bit at that time also ---

REATHA: Saturdays and Sundays, and nights after school. Worked my kids into helping me.

(Laughter) She don't like pears today because she had to help peel pears.

AEOLA: I can eat a canned one, you know, but I don't like the fresh ones.

DOROTHEA: Well, you also have walnuts around here; did you ever do anything with them?

They're the black walnut that you don't ---

REATHA: I've still got some in the deep freeze I've been going to take down to the basement and crack. You freeze them and then put them in the vise and crack them.

BARBARA: They split easier.

REATHA: Oh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well, that's good to know. I've never known how to take care of them, I hate them. I love them, but I hate to do anything with them.

REATHA: Well, usually when you crack them that way, they come out pretty whole; they're not too broken up.

DOROTHEA: My sister always, she had two black walnut trees, and she'd give us a whole big, she put them in nylons. And she'd give us great big old long nylons full of them. And I'd say, what do I do with them, you know, because I didn't know how to crack those little things. She didn't teach me either, she didn't show me how.

REATHA: Well, yeah, I had two trees out here, but I had one cut down.

DOROTHEA: Do you have any English, or just the black?

REATHA: Just the black, yeah.

BARBARA: You have been retired now twenty years. What have you done with your time since you retired? What keeps you busy? What do you like to do?

REATHA: What keeps me busy? Well, I used to go with Elmer out when he'd go out to buckaroo for these, when they went out to brand for different people, visit with those people, liked that.

DOROTHEA: I think you've cooked for your kids during haying season. Have you done some of that?

REATHA: Oh, I did some of that for Frank and Mildred. And I went to Lodge.

DOROTHEA: Okay, you belong to the Rebekahs. Do you belong to any church group or any other organization?

REATHA: No.

DOROTHEA: How about retired teachers, or ---

REATHA: Well, I did for a while, and I didn't keep that up either. I didn't ---

DOROTHEA: I know that you like to work with your hands. Do you still knit and crochet, and do little, what do they call that, plastic---?

REATHA: No, I don't do much of that needlepoint because my eyes won't let me, they get to dancing around and I can't keep it a going where it is supposed to go. And I like to sew, so made some quilts and stuff.

DOROTHEA: Have you gone on many vacations?

REATHA: No.

DOROTHEA: Done much traveling?

REATHA: After I retired, no. After I retired, the first year we spent Christmas there in Klamath Falls with my son and his wife and family. And then that summer, I went to, we went to Arizona to see his sister that lived there, and then one down in California. And I had a grand niece get married, and we went to that wedding. That's about all the traveling. And we used to go to Eugene, over there where his sisters are, and his mother was there.

AEOLA: You used to go to Marsing where his uncles were.

REATHA: Pardon.

AEOLA: You went to Marsing.

REATHA: Yeah, we went to Marsing quite a few times, in Idaho, to see his uncle.

DOROTHEA: Did you rodeo any, did he like to rodeo?

REATHA: No, no. For a long time, he used to, what do you call that when they help them get off the bucking horses up here?

DOROTHEA: Pick up.

AEOLA: The pick up man.

REATHA: Yeah, pick up man for a while. But he didn't care for that after a while.

BARBARA: Did they ever have; do you remember them saying anything about rounding up wild hogs?

REATHA: No.

BARBARA: Was Elmer ever involved in that?

REATHA: I don't think so. There were wild hogs out in the tules all right, I heard him talk about that when he was a kid. But I never saw any of them, any of those, but he used to go on these wild horse gatherings.

BARBARA: Roundups.

REATHA: Or roundups, or whatever you call them, you know.

AEOLA: He did that when he was a kid with his dad.

REATHA: Yeah.

AEOLA: That's where he got started ---

REATHA: Well, he did that after we were married, too.

AEOLA: But that's where he got started.

REATHA: Yeah, yeah.

BARBARA: Did you ever hear them talk about the Chinese doing mining down in that country, early on?

REATHA: Oh, I just heard them talk about it, but I don't remember anything about it, no. But that was long before our time, too.

BARBARA: That was way early on?

REATHA: Oh yeah, yeah. Then during the depression that was hard times, I tell you, very hard times. I used to take the best part of his overalls, like the backs of them, you know, and made overalls for my boys. And made their underclothes and everything, we had to. No, we ate a lot of beans for a while, yeah. And when I was growing up, we used to go bare footed in the summertime. I had one pair of shoes for good, for fall, to start school with.

BARBARA: And if you outgrew them during the year, you kind of toughed it out, huh?

REATHA: That's right, you toughed it out.

BARBARA: Scrunched your toes up a little?

REATHA: Yeah.

BARBARA: Yeah, kids nowadays just don't realize what it was like a number of years ago. I mean, they go down now and have probably ten, twelve pair of shoes at \$50, \$60 a whack.

REATHA: Yeah.

BARBARA: Well, I shouldn't talk; I probably have a bunch myself. (Laughter) I can remember having, you know, just a couple of pair of shoes growing up, too. Going bare footed in the summertime, and making thongs out of pieces of wood and a piece of leather, and wearing those in the summertime, too.

REATHA: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And wearing one skirt that had three sweaters to go with it in the wintertime.

REATHA: Yeah, right.

DOROTHEA: Three blouses to go with your one skirt in the summer time.

REATHA: Yeah, we had about three dresses. There was one for good, and then we had one for school, and when we'd come home we'd change and put on our everyday dress every time.

DOROTHEA: And we didn't wear, girls didn't wear pants.

REATHA: No, no.

AEOLA: No, we wore brown socks.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I mentioned the brown socks already. I remember those brown socks, I hated those things.

REATHA: And we wore what they called bloomers, you know, under dresses.

BARBARA: What's the thing, what is the thing that you liked most about teaching? And what did you dislike the most over the years that you taught? What gave you the greatest pleasure in teaching?

REATHA: Oh, just seeing the kids learn, and learn to read, and learn to do different things like that. And to behave and get along and have fun.

DOROTHEA: I'm a real emotional type person. If one of your students did something extraordinary and got awards for it, did you feel proud? Did you feel like I helped that person do that?

AEOLA: We didn't have those awards then.

REATHA: That's what I was going to say; they didn't have any awards then at all.

AEOLA: Your academic awards and that kind of stuff, they didn't have that. I know in penmanship; I think we only got a little certificate saying we had accomplished our grade level. And I think that's the only award I can ever remember getting was in penmanship. Or anyone else getting, not just me, but anyone in the class.

DOROTHEA: We got papers and things, I mean you know, certificates in Burns. We got several of those for penmanship, and no absentees, and maybe straight A's, or something like that.

REATHA: All we got was for penmanship.

DOROTHEA: And that was it.

REATHA: The only thing.

BARBARA: What did you like least about teaching? The paperwork?

REATHA: Well, it was hard for me to teach history because I don't like history, and never did. And I didn't mind the paperwork so bad. But corrections, I mean, to help the students get their corrections, I think, was probably one of the hardest things to do. Because they'd hate to go back and do something, they wanted to go over it once, and that was it.

DOROTHEA: What about math? How were you in math?

REATHA: Oh, I was superior. (Laughter)

AEOLA: She's got A's in college to prove that.

DOROTHEA: How about science?

REATHA: The only thing I was bad in was history. And probably civics was next.

DOROTHEA: Now, now, I'm bad in history too; I had a problem with it. So, geography and history, I'm still terrible in.

REATHA: Well, I'm pretty good in geography. But science, we didn't have too much science. It was nature study, and about the flowers and some of the birds and things, not like they have science now.

DOROTHEA: Well, could you, you say you didn't like history, what was your hardest thing to do? Was it teaching in Lincoln's time, or that's my hardest problem, is why do we have to learn all that stuff. Is that how you felt about it also?

REATHA: Well, I just couldn't remember the dates, and I couldn't see why we had to learn all this medieval stuff that we had to do. They'd have us, we had to take medieval history in college and I couldn't see no reason for it, all those wars and things they had years ago. That wouldn't be something we'd want to teach our kids about, I didn't think. But we had to take some of it anyway.

DOROTHEA: I never could understand why we wanted to learn about that either.

BARBARA: Were you a tough master on your own children? Did you expect them to do certain things, achieve certain things?

REATHA: Ask her.

BARBARA: Aeola? What kind of a mom/teacher was she?

AEOLA: We were under the strict rule. We didn't get out of line because we knew we'd pay for it if we did. Of course, is all she had to do is say well you're a teacher's child, you know, and you do as you are told. And we did, we didn't buck her, we knew what we had to do and so we did. I've been accused of being a very strict mother myself, and I didn't think I was either. But ---

BARBARA: Were you all good students then because of the ---

AEOLA: Oh, average.

BARBARA: What she imparted to you?

AEOLA: We were none gifted; I don't think any of us were gifted children.

REATHA: No, no.

AEOLA: As they are today, you know. But we were average.

DOROTHEA: Well, I know that Frank was a football ---

REATHA: Oh yeah, that was his piece of cake.

DOROTHEA: Real, yeah, that was, he was a big one in football. Did your kids all go to college?
Or ---

AEOLA: All but me.

REATHA: All but her, I guess, you might say.

DOROTHEA: Did you really not?

AEOLA: I never went, never went a day in my life.

REATHA: The boys went to OTI. And Frank went one term, I think, down there at --- I don't know whether it was Ashland or Eugene.

AEOLA: Eugene.

REATHA: Eugene.

AEOLA: Uh-huh.

REATHA: And he didn't like it, so ---

DOROTHEA: And that was all he did?

REATHA: Yeah, just that. But then he went to OTI see, and they learned mechanics, and he was a

good mechanic. And Glenn went down there too, to OTI, and he learned diesel mechanic and he is good at that. And Arvetta went to college in Nampa, Idaho, Business College.

AEOLA: Links.

REATHA: Link, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Well, I've got to ask this question, because my little light tells me we're coming to the end of my tape. So do you think, or do you feel like we could visit some more? Or Barbara, do you have more questions?

BARBARA: Just what your plans for the future might be.

REATHA: Oh gee, the future, I don't know. Just live on to the end, I guess. Live here as long as I can and take care of myself, and raise a garden.

DOROTHEA: One day at a time.

REATHA: One day at a time.

BARBARA: I didn't ask you, when did you lose Elmer, I mean how long has he been gone?

REATHA: Since September 14, '89. Five years, I guess, this September.

DOROTHEA: 1989?

REATHA: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: Well, before we get cut off here, I'd like to thank you for the afternoon. We've enjoyed our visit, and probably brought back some memories. And made you think that, later you'll say, oh I wish I'd told them about that. And if you do think you'd like to, you know, do some more well we can come back. But we do want to say thank you for the afternoon, and the tea and the coffee. And we have enjoyed it.

REATHA: It has been a privilege to me, and an honor that I could do this for you.

BARBARA: Thanks.

DOROTHEA: Thank you. Now if this is all, and you can't think of anything else that you would like to add.

REATHA: Well, I could tell you how my great grandfather came over from Norway, when they came to this country.

DOROTHEA: Well our tape is about to close off, so do you want to put another tape in?

REATHA: No, you could take notes on it or something.

BARBARA: You can add a little bit on the video, maybe.

DOROTHEA: Let's do that. Okay. So thank you, and we'll now go to the video.

(END OF TAPE)

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