

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #363 - Sides A/B/C

Subject: John Wall Graham - With Video

Place: Graham Home - Burns, Oregon

Date: June 29, 1994

Interviewers: Barbara Lofgren & Dorothea Purdy

Release Form: Yes

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy, along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we're at the home of John Graham. And we're going to be talking to him about the local air force, or radar base in Burns. The date is June 29th, 1994. And we'll begin, John, by asking you your full name.

JOHN GRAHAM: I am John Wall Graham.

DOROTHEA: And when were you born?

JOHN: July 17th, 1936. I was the fifth child of eleven children. I have five brothers and five sisters.

DOROTHEA: Can you give us their names?

JOHN: Yes, yes, Jack Richard, Maxwell, Geraldine, Bonnie, I'm the fifth one, Douglas, Ray, Eleanor, Frances, Mike and Verna. The last two were named for their parents.

BARBARA LOFGREN: You were born in Mississippi?

JOHN: I was born in Louisville, Mississippi.

DOROTHEA: What were your parent's names?

JOHN: Mike Ward Graham, and Verna Wall Graham.

DOROTHEA: So you have your middle name after your mother?

JOHN: That's right. I am the last John Wall for something like six hundred years in the family.

DOROTHEA: You're the last?

JOHN: The last.

BARBARA: None of your brothers had sons that were named John Wall?

JOHN: No, none of the brothers. So I'm the very last one of the line, unbroken line. There were John Walls for years, and for centuries that came down. And everyone had a John, and the last name Wall. And Wall is an English name that came from the old ages when the people had a big wall around the town to protect it from its enemies. And the wall people were the ones that stood on the wall to defend. And that got to be a little bit cumbersome and dangerous, because sometimes they would sneak up on them. So, they decided that the wall people should just live in the wall, and they would be there to fight whenever they needed to. So they were on twenty-four hour duty guarding the city. I guess they did a wonderful job because I'm here to verify it.

DOROTHEA: Now, do you spell that W A L L ?

JOHN: Yes, just like Wall Street.

DOROTHEA: Just like it says, okay.

BARBARA: And what did your father do for a living?

JOHN: Dad was a lumberman all his life. He was superintendent of lumber mills in Mississippi, and until I was age 12, we moved to Alabama and he was, took a position there with a company that made both lumber and especially hardwood flooring. And I worked at those little jobs in the summertime when school was out. And Dad always managed to find a particularly obnoxious job to give me, so I would be sure to be glad when school started again. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Made you think twice about getting a good education so you wouldn't have to do those rinky-dink jobs, huh?

JOHN: I absolutely knew that I did not want to do that forever.

DOROTHEA: And your dad, you said earlier, that your dad didn't go to school past the eighth grade.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: Can you tell us why?

JOHN: Dad finished only the eighth grade. His father passed away at that time, and it left him with

a mother, and I think four sisters, that he was to help take care of and get through school. So he quit school and farmed at a young age until he just raised his family, put them through school. And for that reason, he was particularly interested in making sure that all of us went to school. He wanted us to not finish high school, it was, he wanted us to go to college. It wasn't if we're going to go to college, we always talked about where you're going to go. And very little was said about what are you going to study, you know. He just wanted us to go to college.

DOROTHEA: So are there any other brothers that are, or sisters that are dentists?

JOHN: No, I'm the only one. I've got a sister that's a lawyer. Have a brother that's an accountant, foresters, and geophysicists, and pulp and paper technologist, and bankers.

BARBARA: A little bit of everything.

JOHN: Yes, that's right. But everybody did something different, you know.

DOROTHEA: No more medical doctors or anything?

JOHN: No, not in my family.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

BARBARA: And your mother, you say, worked as a postmistress for a while?

JOHN: Yes.

BARBARA: You mentioned that she did some substitute teaching. Was she a teacher to begin with?

JOHN: I think, I think she inherited that job, simply because it was a little old country school. I think it may have been only one room, it may have been two. But she was the, as I recall have her telling it, she was the only available person that ---

BARBARA: She wasn't certified, but just had enough knowledge to get the kids through.

JOHN: Yes. And in those days, she had taken quite a few classes, and so forth, but she had no college.

BARBARA: Well, a lot of times, early on, if you graduated from high school and could take a test, then you were qualified to teach grade school.

JOHN: Maybe that's what it was, but she had a small school with just a few teachers, I mean, a few

students. And I think she may have been the only teacher. If there was another one, it was only one.

BARBARA: And so, you went to high school then in Alabama?

JOHN: Yes.

BARBARA: And then did you go on to college at that time, or did you go into the Service, or ---

JOHN: I went to college the first year out of high school. And I was doing fairly well in engineering, but I really wasn't happy with what I had wanted to do. I had always thought that I wanted to be a doctor. And at the break of the first year, I decided that I was heading down, wandering down a road that I didn't really want to go, so I decided that maybe I should go into the Service and help decide what I wanted to do.

So I went to the naval recruiting office in Decatur, Alabama, to talk to the naval recruiter, and he was not there. And the air force recruiter came over and asked if he could help me. And I said, "Well, I'm going to join the Navy." And he said, "Well, come here and talk to me until he gets back; he'll be here." And before I knew it, he had me signed up. (Laughter)

BARBARA: With good persuasion, huh?

JOHN: Yes. And that's the way it was. Incidentally, he didn't tell me to take my birth certificate with me along to the induction center, and because of that, I had to come back home, get the birth certificate, and then be inducted the next day. And that caused me to be inducted on February 1st, 1955 at 8:00 a.m. The G.I. Bill of Rights for the, went out at midnight, the night before.

BARBARA: Oh no.

JOHN: So, I got no G.I. Bill help for my eight years of schooling.

BARBARA: What a bummer.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: If you'd of had your birth certificate with you.

JOHN: That's right, that's the way it was.

BARBARA: So, you graduated from high school in 1954 then, and went a year of college, and was out in ---

JOHN: Uh huh. Well, I went a semester.

BARBARA: I see, okay.

JOHN: And I, the semester was over in January, and I was into the Service on the 1st of February 1955. And I had a nice stay at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas for basic training, and that was a three-month thing. It was nothing particularly, you know, it was just hot.

And then, we took our little test to see what we were best suited for, and my paper came back stamped ACW. And I had, but in, actually had qualified for any job in the air force according to the test.

DOROTHEA: What's ACW?

JOHN: That's aircraft control and warning. And so, they let me choose the things that I wanted to be, and I chose guided missile maintenance, intelligence, and other electronics, and so forth. And when my assignment came back, it had AC&W on it, just like the stamp said, ACW operator. So I got to go to school in Biloxi, Mississippi, for, oh, maybe two months or something, I don't know. It may have been ten weeks, I can't remember off hand what it was, but it was extremely hot and more mosquitoes than I had ever seen in my life until I got here. (Laughter) And I graduated there --- Taking that ACW operator course, it was a little funny thing happened. They promised us at the beginning of the class that every person that's first in their class got to choose where their assignment, get to pick their assignment. So, I read the manual and tried a little bit. And I was number one in the class, so I picked Germany for the place for me to go. And when my assignment came, it said 634th AC&W Squadron, Burns, Oregon. So, I went into the orderly room and complained that I had been promised that I could pick my assignment if I was first in the class. And they said, "Well, didn't you pick?" And I said, "Yes, I chose Germany." And he said, "Well, let me see your papers." And I showed him, and he said, "Well, you're going to Burns, Oregon." He said, "When you get, we said you'd get to pick, we didn't say you'd get what you picked." (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Oh.

BARBARA: This is the military.

JOHN: That's right. And that's exactly right. So, I went to a map of the United States and found

Burns. And much to my surprise, you know, it's on everything. It's on even, at that time, Burns was on every globe even.

DOROTHEA: It still is.

JOHN: Not the new ones.

DOROTHEA: Oh, not the new ones?

JOHN: It's replaced by Klamath Falls now.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

JOHN: The new ones, just in the last couple years, it changed. When the breakup of the Soviet Union came about, and they redesigned the globe, they took ---

DOROTHEA: Took Burns off.

JOHN: Took Burns off the globe.

BARBARA: We ought to protest.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, we'd ought to.

JOHN: And that was it. So, we got our orders, there were eight of us being sent to Burns, Oregon, from Biloxi at the same time. And we were put on the train at Biloxi, the high-speed train from New Orleans to Chicago, and it went through my hometown practically at night, we went "whish" right on through it, never ever stopped.

DOROTHEA: Hi.

JOHN: That way. And we were switched in Carbondale, Illinois, to Union Pacific, and Union Pacific brought us to Saint Louis, Kansas City, Denver, Cheyenne, Ogden, Boise, to Ontario. We had tickets to Burns. See, at that time, there was a rail line here, but there were no passenger cars at the time. So, the Union Pacific got us a bus ticket from Ontario to Burns. And we came into Burns about 10:00 p.m. on my birthday, my 19th birthday, July the 17th, 1955.

DOROTHEA: Was it hot?

JOHN: No, it was cold. It was about 40 degrees or something, or maybe 55. But coming from the Gulf Coast at 100 percent humidity, our teeth was just chattering, and we were purple. And the cowboys were walking in the street, just wiping sweat. Oh, it's hot. And we were so cold, you

know, and we was, could not believe it. But it was a nice breeze, and so dry, you know, that it was just --- we just thought we was going to freeze to death.

We were met at the bus station, the Trailways Bus Station by Bill Springston, who was; his job in the air force was a cook. But they didn't have any drivers, and he was assigned to meet us. At that time, there were only sixteen people stationed on the 634th ACW.

DOROTHEA: So there was eight that had come earlier than you did?

JOHN: No, sixteen, sixteen came earlier. And the eight would be twenty-four.

DOROTHEA: Okay, okay.

JOHN: So Bill said, met us, and they welcomed us all to Harney County. And he said, we said, "Where is this place we're going to?" And he said, "You won't believe it if I was to tell you." So we went out the highway to the mill and he turned off. And at that time, that road was dirt, I mean not gravel, it was dirt.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

JOHN: And he said, "Well, you have to wait a minute," he said, "this road, it's illegal for us to be on this road, so don't tell them how we came." And he said, "There is no log trucks on it tonight though, because you know at this time, so we'll be safe." And he went all the way up to the top of the hill there. And at that time, they were building the road from the logging road up to the main gate. And it was all ripped up and so forth with tractor places, and impassable. So, Bill turned off, and we went right through the sagebrush up to the site. (Laughter) And we thought that we'd already hit the end of the world when we turned off on a dirt road. And here he, then he came up through the sagebrush behind the site.

And we got out, and there was just nothing, you know, a few Quonset huts. It hadn't even been constructed yet, it was still being built. And he told us where we would sleep, and we were all assigned to the very first barracks on the left, as you come in now. I think the skeleton of the building is still there. And my bunk was the second one on the right from the front door. And I stayed there most part of two and a half years.

But we was big open bay barracks with just these army cots, and that's what it was. In the daytime,

we helped build the base with concrete work, and lift the boards, dig the ditches, you know, with ---

DOROTHEA: That ACW says all kinds of work.

JOHN: Yeah, but it was aircraft control and warning. And I remember our commander was Captain Thomas Barnes, and he had the first vanity license plate I ever saw, and it was 634 ACW, and it was a Washington license plate.

BARBARA: So, when you came here, the base had been here for, I mean, the beginning of the base started at what time, what year do you think?

JOHN: It was 1955; it started in 1955. They started construction on it, the contractor started construction on it that summer.

BARBARA: I see, okay.

JOHN: And they were, it was not functioning. In fact, the kitchen wasn't open yet, is why Bill got, drew duty driving the bus.

BARBARA: So, you actually did not have a job, military-type job to do when you first arrived here?

JOHN: That's right.

BARBARA: It was to construct the base ---

JOHN: The base.

BARBARA: --- to get it going.

JOHN: That's right.

BARBARA: And so, did you do any military-type stuff for a period of time?

JOHN: No, no. In fact, we didn't even get paid for like three months, because our records and everything were lost. They had no idea ---

BARBARA: Where you were, and what you were doing, huh?

JOHN: --- that this was going on, see. It officially wasn't opened.

BARBARA: Okay, what was the purpose for them putting a radar base here, do you know?

JOHN: The purpose was to help identify any aircraft coming into the area, and in protection of the Hanford area.

BARBARA: Hanford.

JOHN: In Washington, the nuclear place. That was the number one priority that we were to protect. There was another radar base at Condon. Well, the radar base here at Burns, our call sign was Mac Beth, the code name, and Condon was Waterloo. And we reported in to Condon, and Condon reported in to Igloo at Moses Lake, Washington. And Igloo reported in to Showdog at Spokane. (Laughter) And to the south we had communications, direct lines, just open lines to Winnemucca who was call sign Vaudeville. And Vaudeville had open lines to Hamilton Air Force Base in Northern California. Vaudeville would pass traffic up to us, coming up from the south that were then already identified. And we'd pass it on to Waterloo, you see, through the area. And vice versa, coming down, we'd tell them who it was.

I remember some particularly lonely nights we'd get to talking with the people at Winnemucca, and you know, to pass the time of day, he would make a local call and patch us in to the Combination Bar at Winnemucca. (Laughter)

BARBARA: To spice it up a little bit.

JOHN: We could talk to the girls there. It was kind of a thrilling deal to be talking to somebody about all this sort of stuff, and never having seen them, and wondering about it, you know. But of course, they invited us down, and we never made it. You know, Winnemucca was a long trip. And where I came from, when we, we lived 90 miles from Birmingham, and we didn't go more than twice a year, that was a trip; it took planning to do that. And just to take away and go a 450-mile round trip, that was daring at that time, you know.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

JOHN: So we didn't, nobody ever did, you know, as far as I can remember. That was so funny.

BARBARA: So, in all this reporting and watching for aircraft, did you ever have any plane that you could not identify right away?

JOHN: Oh yes, oh yes.

BARBARA: Is that right?

JOHN: There would be some that had not filed their flight plan, and so forth. And so we would

have fighters that would scramble from either Boise or Spokane, and they would intercept them and identify. And most often, that they were like a DC-6 or DC-7, see that was, in that time there were more propeller planes than jets. It was just the beginning of jet travel. There was an old T-33, there were jet fighters and F-86's and stuff like this. But not much commercial jet stuff.

And so, when we got a jet coming into the, toward Hanford unidentified, it caused consternation, and we had to see what it was. And it was, you know, kind of fun. It would be, somebody had filed his plan, and it hadn't been passed on, it would be like a commercial airline, you know. It was never an enemy plane, you know, never any of that stuff.

And I remember, one night I got a call from a pilot of a B-52, and he was over Alkali Lake, and he said, "I want to declare a partial emergency." And I said, "Okay, tell me how is that?" He says, "Well, I'm going to go a partial May-Day here," he says, "I had a flame-out, all engines, but I got it back now." Complete loss of electricity. So, I reported partial emergency, May-Day, Baker 52 such, and whatever it was, you know, to Spokane. And I thought they were going to have kittens. How can you have a partial May-Day flameout? It's terrible, you know. But he got a light, and started back up, and he made it to Spokane, where he landed.

DOROTHEA: Well, how long did it take you to get your, the base working then, after you got here?

JOHN: About two months, it was about two months. And I was one of the lucky ones. I had KP the very first day, and Bill Springston cooked the first day, the first meal that was served up there.

DOROTHEA: So what did you do before you had the facilities, in other words?

BARBARA: Just helped build it, huh?

JOHN: Well, yes, and we were dependent on the cafes in town for food. And pretty soon, we were all broke, and the town's people were very kind and invited us in. They knew we hadn't had any pay for months, and they invited us in and fed us. We went to every potluck or wiener roast, or whatever we could get word, they were having anywhere. And in fact, that's how I met old Marge. I went to the Christian Church, because I heard they were having ---

DOROTHEA: Potluck.

JOHN: Uh-huh. And at that time, I got there, it was a potluck and wiener roast. And I hadn't eaten for like two days at that time, and so I made sure that I was in the very front of the line. I grabbed a wiener and just kind of fanned it through the fire and put it on that bun. And Marge came rushing by and knocked it off, down on the ground. And I looked at her in amazement. And she saw how shocked I was, so she picked it up and dusted it off and put it back on my bun. And I ate that hot dog, and it was one of the best ones I ever had. And that was our first meeting. (Laughter) So I know it's a good thing to say you met your wife at church and all that, but, and that's true for us. But that wasn't why I went to the church.

BARBARA: God will get you for that.

JOHN: I lost my place in line and was last again, so I ate that hot dog.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

JOHN: She's kept me fed ever since.

DOROTHEA: Well, what all, how many more people finally ended up, up on the base?

JOHN: Well, at the time, I had spent about two, two and a half years here, and a few of us decided that --- there was an air force regulation that you could not be sent overseas if you didn't have at least a year left. Well, most of us had something like eleven months and twenty days or something at that time; there were several of us. So, we decided we'd volunteer for overseas duty. And I remember Jim Cooksey was one of the eight that came in when I did, and I dared each other to volunteer for Korea. So, we did. And he really wanted to go, and he didn't get it, but I did. So I went in and complained to the orderly room that I'm sorry, you're going to have to give this to someone else because it's against regulations to send me overseas now, because I don't have enough time. And the officer in charge says, "We'll make an exception for you."

So, on my way to Korea, in Japan, they changed my assignment and I was stationed on a little island off the coast of Siberia. I spent my last eleven months there on Okushiri Shima. And that was a little back and forth cat and mouse playing with the Russians. One day, they would send a plane over that would fly right over our little radar establishment, and we knew they could bomb us whenever they wanted to. And they would just be down low, almost hit the radar, you know. And

then, you know, the next day we'd send a plane over there and fool with them, you know, over their coastline. And it was back and forth like that all the time. And periodically, the Russian submarines would stop our little supply ship and inspect it to see what they were bringing us. We got mail twice a week, mail and supplies. I think it was Tuesday and Friday was what it was --- and a little ship that brought us there.

We were, it was February that I was getting sent to the island, and I caught the little ship and he said, "It's a good thing you got here, and when you did, because we're leaving early." I said, "Well, according to my papers, you're supposed to leave in about twelve hours." And he said, "Yes, but it's a typhoon coming, we got to get out of port." So, he said, "Either get on or stay here." Well, I had never been in a typhoon, but I got on that ship. And all he was doing was leaving port to get out in the typhoon so his ship wouldn't be wrecked against the dock. So, I got to ride that ship through that typhoon, too. (Laughter) And that was an experience that I could have missed, but ---

BARBARA: Did you get seasick?

JOHN: Oh yes, everybody there, everybody got seasick. All the, except the ship's crew, you know. I thought it was terrible of them to --- that day, most of us were the sickest they served spaghetti.

DOROTHEA: Oh. Well, let's go back just a little bit now, and when you came in with, into Burns with the other eight people, can you remember who all those guys were?

JOHN: Jim Cooksey was one of them, Herman Willis was one, Johnny Tripp, Gary Brinkmeir, Harold Foster, and myself. How many did I name?

BARBARA: You need two more.

JOHN: That was, gee that was only forty years ago, I ---

BARBARA: That's why you can't remember then.

JOHN: But it was ---

BARBARA: And a couple other guys.

DOROTHEA: Couple other.

JOHN: Yeah, Harold Ward. Now, there is one other one now. I can't remember. But Johnny Tripp was a story in himself. At Ontario, when we were waiting for the bus, he said, "Let's go into

this bar and see if we can get a beer." So we walked into the bar and he paid for his beer with a twenty-dollar bill, and the bar tender gave him nineteen silver dollars in change. And Tripp had never seen a real silver dollar. (Laughter) But he had nineteen, enough to pull his pants off, and then he didn't want to spend that money; he wanted to keep them, and that was all he had. When we came here, the food service wasn't even open.

But Johnny Tripp's father and brother had been to Burns the previous spring to look over and evaluate buying Willow-Ray Dairy, and they were from North Carolina. They had come from North Carolina to --- and they, but they had thought for sure that they were going to buy it at the time, but something came up that they didn't. And he says, "Can't you, just look at," he says, "if they had bought that I could stay at home all the ---"

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

BARBARA: If only.

JOHN: Uh-huh. But I guess by the time it came to be about 75 people, the radar operation started. And it was divided into four crews, the radar operations, and the communications people, and so forth, had twenty-four-hour staff all the time. And we ---

BARBARA: What did the base look like up there? How many buildings are we talking about, and how was it situated up there?

JOHN: I think, as best I can remember, it's pretty much like the ruins that you see now. A good share of the, you can see the concrete foundations for them. Some of the buildings are at the high school now, the motor pool buildings, the shops, and stuff. That was removed down there, you know, and the wiring, the cables, and so forth were taken away and sold for scrap. You know it was just pirated till it was just ruined. I think we had four barracks, we had a kitchen and mess hall, we had a dispensary, doctor's office, or we had really a medic, he would look at you and decide, ask you if you were allergic to penicillin, and if you wasn't you got some of that. You know, that was about it. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: That was your big medical ---

JOHN: That was the medicine, you open up and say ahh, if it was red, you got some of this, you

know, and this kind of stuff, you know. I remember him telling us to never tell anybody how deep the well is up here. And I thought it was so funny because they never told us how deep it was. I don't know how ---

DOROTHEA: How was you going to tell somebody?

BARBARA: Just in case you saw the figures cross your desk or something.

JOHN: Never tell anybody how deep the well was that served the place. We had a power shack, you know, where the diesel generators were, and the radar operations building. And when I was here, we had just one bubble deal. And I understand they got a couple more after I left, that last year. They had a supply building, and an officer's quarters building, and orderly room building. We had the auto garage, you know, the motor pool buildings and shops. A post office and we had communications center, the radio there. And they were just beginning to talk about building the snack shop and the post office, there by the main gate. The main gate was built when I was there, and they kept a person on duty to stop everybody, you know, if they're coming in and out there. But that building on the left as you go in now was not there when I was here. But that was really a half basketball court, you know, and a snack shop.

DOROTHEA: Kind of a relaxing place.

JOHN: Uh-huh, a rec hall is what it was. They had some books, you know, a little library, and so forth. It was a pretty nice place. At first they, we got these big steel trays that we ate off of, you know, like you see in the army thing. They were steel trays, and steel spoons and forks and stuff, and they would serve "pow", you know, you just slam it on there. That was, you know, didn't mean much about mealtime at that time. But later, when Winnemucca closed, Winnemucca food service people had gone a little bit out of the way and gotten dishes. So the base here rushed down to Winnemucca and got their dishes rather than have them ship them back to somewhere. So after that, the Burns boys got to eat off of plates, with cups and glasses and ---

DOROTHEA: And the real, real service, in other words.

JOHN: Yes, yes, yes.

DOROTHEA: You felt like you were eating a meal instead of a slop.

JOHN: Uh huh, it was good restaurant type dinnerware, and it was very nice.

BARBARA: So, during the time that you were here, did they start the airfield out here? Did they have planes coming in, or was that later or earlier?

JOHN: No, that was earlier. The airport was built for training of B-17 pilots and bombers. It was already here when we got here in '55. The B-17 pilots and crews were trained for the Second World War.

BARBARA: Okay.

JOHN: And, but the air force did use this when some of the dignitaries would come down and so forth, they would use the Burns Airport. In fact, one time we had a B-47 declared an emergency and he landed here on the Burns Airport, and he almost made it, but he rolled off about 20 feet and sunk in the mud on the end of the runway. So they immediately surrounded it and wanted to make sure nobody would steal any secret, whatever they had, you know. And then, they had big trucks come from Spokane, and they unloaded the equipment that was classified onto the trucks and got the plane light enough to where they could pull it back on the runway, fueled it up, and it took off from the Burns field here. And that was a six-jet plane, the B-47, it was a big one, big bomber.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I remember that, uh-huh.

JOHN: It was a big thing, you know.

BARBARA: So again, at the time that you left here in, was it '58 then?

JOHN: Yeah.

BARBARA: '58, the numbers wise at the base were?

JOHN: Had grown to about 150.

BARBARA: About a 150. And then how long, what year did they close this down, do you remember? You weren't here, but ---

JOHN: Yes, I was here, I was back here as a dentist at that time.

BARBARA: You were back at that time?

JOHN: And I would say it was about '68, about 1968. It might have been '69, but it's in there somewhere. I just don't have that down.

BARBARA: So basically, it was here about thirteen years?

JOHN: Yes.

BARBARA: It was here a fairly long period of time then.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: Now, during which time did they build the housing up here by where Cramer's live?

JOHN: Early, early on, that was built early on. And in fact they wanted, the story was told, I don't know how true it was, that the air force people had wanted to build the base, the housing and so forth where it is, but the actual men's quarters and stuff on that little flat where the, along where the school grounds and the shops, you know, adjacent to that housing there. And the city fathers wouldn't allow it, because they wanted these untrustworthy boys to be off in a safe place.

(Laughter)

BARBARA: So, they didn't want them that close to the school, probably.

JOHN: Uh-huh, uh-huh. And then it was, as things would have turned out, when they closed the base, they would have had already built electrical shops.

BARBARA: A lot of facilities, yeah.

JOHN: Automotive shops, cooking school, it would have been a built-in community college. But I mean hindsight is better than foresight sometimes.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

JOHN: But that's what it was ---

BARBARA: Well, maybe they figured it would be a little hard to operate right down inside the town rather than have it, you know, adjacent to.

JOHN: Uh huh. It was said the only things that would be on top of the mountain would be the antennas and stuff, and everybody else stayed here. But I'm sure, you know, if it had been that convenient, there would have been a lot more hassle with the boys getting into trouble.

DOROTHEA: Well, how did you manage to come to town? Did you have some kind of transportation, or---?

JOHN: At first no one here had their own automobile, you know. They would run the bus for us to come down and eat. And the, at night the bus would usually leave the compound up at about 5 o'clock. The day shift was over at 4, so about 5 o'clock the bus would head to town, and bring the people to town to eat. And it would stay around for us to go to a movie or some entertainment if we wanted to, and then it would head back up the hill about 10:30, 10:00 or 10:30. And it began later on that there were a few married people coming in, and they would ride that bus back and forth on their shift work also, you know.

DOROTHEA: To get back to the air force base.

JOHN: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: I mean, the Fairview Heights is what it's called, so ---

JOHN: Well the, everything, the work site was all the way up to the top of the mountain, so they had to go up there, you know. And we had to take that road that goes through the reservation up there. Because at that time they had those twelve-foot wide log trucks running that private road, and there was no room to meet it in some of those sharp curves, you know. It was just tough yet, you know. And so you didn't break the rule of not getting on it during the daytime more than once, after you met one of them coming around one of those blind corners, you know. It was just that was the way it was.

That first winter here, I had never seen so much snow, and have it be so cold. It got extremely cold, I thought, but actually it was just a normal winter.

DOROTHEA: Had you not adjusted to the weather yet, huh?

JOHN: Well, it seemed like it was cold in July when I got here, and it just kept getting colder that first year, you know. But the next spring it seemed to warm, you know, and it was better, you know. We had huge snowplows that looked like a big middle buster plow that had wings out both sides of the thing.

BARBARA: Kind of a V.

JOHN: Yeah, a V shape thing that would handle snow up to 20 feet deep. Well, of course, it never got that deep, without it going through it one time, and already, you know, some on the sides got

that high, you know, occasionally. But very seldom that much snow. We had all kind of arctic equipment and stuff at that time, you know, it was ---

And I actually got frost bitten, my hands stuck to a car that had frozen up. And I helped push it off the highway, and I stuck to it like the bottom of an ice tray. I pulled my hands off, and they were just glistening white. And I remember one of the McCullough brothers at the McCullough's Garage, down there where Tuning's Studio is now ---

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

JOHN: --- told me, he says, "Well, we got to thaw you out. Let's get you under this water." And he said, "You can't put hot water on you, or everything will die." So he was putting just cold tap water, and like January, which is just a little above freezing, and it felt like it was boiling to me, you know. But he treated me, and I've still got them. You know it was kind of silly.

BARBARA: When they, when the first people arrived here, they came without families, and as the numbers on the base increased, did men bring their families with them to stay here?

JOHN: Oh yes, uh-huh. Oh yes. The officers, generally speaking, were married to start with. The commander had family, wife and family here to start with. And, but most of the early Servicemen were single and very young. Very young, but smart enough to handle all of life's trouble.

## SIDE B

DOROTHEA: Well, let's go on to how you felt when all this equipment started to coming in. Did you feel like you had really gained a great accomplishment, or did it come in in just stages?

JOHN: It just trickled along. It didn't seem to; it didn't seem to me that we were accomplishing much at all. You know it was just a thing to do.

And I remember that first summer, or that first fall that I was here, everybody was talking about the Harney County Fair and so forth. And I think it was just before the rodeo was taking off in good time, and that was one of the things that I wanted to see, had never been to a rodeo. And I was walking around the fairgrounds, alone, and I was in my uniform, and this fellow wearing glasses and a little straw hat come up and started to talk to me, and he told me his name was Marcus

Haines. And I told him where I was from and so forth, and this was my first time to be at a rodeo. And in fact, during my county fairs as a child growing up, we never once went to the exhibits, we went to the carnival. And so he says, "Well, I've got to show you the exhibits." So, he gave me an escorted tour through all the livestock exhibits and told me what was fine cattle, and all this kind of stuff. Showed me the fine points of this, that, and the other. And I later came to know that Marcus was a very important person with the Harney County Fair, a very important person with Harney County and 4-H, and a very nice person, and we became friends and kept up with each other's family throughout the time. It was, I just can remember walking through all that dust more than anything else. Seemed like dust was ankle deep out there, and it gets that way nearly every year, I guess. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Yeah. And I don't know where it comes from. We planted grass and everything, and there is still dust.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: It's always dust.

BARBARA: I was going to ask you, specifically after everything got rolling at the base, what was your job when you reported for duty, or shift, what did you do?

JOHN: I was the crew chief of Baker Crew for aircraft control and warning, otherwise known as "scope-dope". We watched the television, or the cathode ray screens, the radarscopes. And we'd talk, we'd report, you know, hooked up by phone lines to the ground bases, and hooked up by radio to the aircraft.

BARBARA: Okay.

JOHN: And there was very little communication to the aircraft unless the aircraft was on a training mission, you know, he would maybe have had a new navigator or something, and they'd call in and ask us his position and so forth.

BARBARA: So it was a pretty boring job, in other words?

JOHN: Yes, it was, it was extremely boring. Just see it go around, and around, and around, and around. We used to say, doesn't bother me, bother me, bother me. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Who was your, the base commander at the time that you were here?

JOHN: Thomas Barnes was the first one, first commander. And when he left ---

BARBARA: Was he a colonel, or a major?

JOHN: He was a major. He was Major Tom Barnes. And then the second commander was Captain Kubic, but I've forgotten his first name. The First Sergeant's name was Patterson, and he lived in Alabama, also, about sixty miles from where I lived, so we took our leaves and drove together, back and forth in his car.

BARBARA: Okay, you mentioned meeting Marcus here. And then you also mentioned meeting Marge here. We know that you married Marge, can you tell us a little bit about --- did the friendship blossom right away, or ---

JOHN: Sort of. It blossomed right away. We dated each other six years before we married. We got away from each other several times, and kept getting drug back in. But at least we knew that we wanted each other before we did.

DOROTHEA: Well, tell us something about your courtship then, during the time you were here and after.

JOHN: Well, I was making a whopping salary of \$77 a month at that time. And you see, I'd already had two promotions since I'd been in Service to get that high. And I was sending \$50 of that home for a savings account to go to college. And so, we didn't have any money, and we would go to the movies, and stuff like that. Or it was very, very minimal costs situation, you know.

BARBARA: So you were a cheap date, in other words?

JOHN: That's right. In fact, that's one of the things that I did regularly was ask somebody to take me out. And they thought I was just joking until it come time to buy the tickets. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Well, what did you use for transportation, did they have a vehicle that you could use, or ---

JOHN: Some of the guys had cars, you know, and they'd get old junker cars that we'd work on two or three days that would run. And I finally got a car that, before I left. I had an old 1950 DeSoto, and that must have been about '57. And ---

DOROTHEA: Did you buy it here; you mean?

JOHN: I bought it here. It was, I bought it from Bennett, was a ---

BARBARA: A Chevrolet Garage?

JOHN: Chevrolet Garage, and a Chevrolet Garage is a Ganger and Grover, is that right?

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

JOHN: That was what it was named at that time. And it was the 76 Oil Company's service car. So it had ---

DOROTHEA: A few miles on it.

JOHN: --- a few miles on it, but it was in good condition. And I bought that old DeSoto, and that was our little car to get around with. It was extremely hard to get up the hills in the wintertime without snow tires, you know. But we did it.

BARBARA: So was Marge out of school, was she going to ---

JOHN: No, she was going to high school at the time. She was going to high school, and we would see each other periodically. You know, there for rotation I would come around to where I had to work from four to midnight, so of course we didn't see each other then, you know, in those shifts. But we would see each other through the week, and I got to going to church too on Sunday. And that was really good, you know, unless I was working.

DOROTHEA: Well, we better mention Marge's last name was ---

JOHN: Weare.

DOROTHEA: --- Weare.

JOHN: And her father was Dr. John Weare. And actually, he's the one that helped me decide to be a dentist instead of an M.D. Because I remember when I would be at his house visiting, so to speak, the phone was always ringing. And he was making house calls and going back and forth to the hospital all the time. I mean, he didn't seem that he could go to the bathroom without the phone ringing. So, I decided instead of being a medical doctor, I would be a dentist, because everybody knew it was against the law to have a toothache after office hours. (Laughter)

BARBARA: You just have to wait until morning.

JOHN: But that's really what changed my mind on medicine, that it was just all day and all night kind of things, you know. A kid would fall off a bicycle, you know. And then in the night, a fight after the bars closed, and people had their heads busted. All kinds of stuff, you know. It was just on and on, and on, and on.

BARBARA: Did he recommend a school to go to?

JOHN: No, he let me decide that for myself, you know. He, when I told him that I thought I was going to study dentistry, he said, "What?" He said, "Are you sure that's what you want to do?" And I said, "Well, I think so. I know I don't want to study medicine, because I don't want to ---"

DOROTHEA: I don't want to watch you, huh?

JOHN: Uh-huh. And really, I wanted more family life than he had. The kids grew up with him gone all the time, he was gone. And I wanted to have a family life, too.

BARBARA: Now, coming from a big family, you were accustomed to having someone around then?

JOHN: Yes, yes. Yeah, my folks were always around. And a lot of brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and everything. Family was important. And I have tried to make that very important with my kids now, you know. And they see it, you know. If you haven't got close family, you're in trouble, you know.

DOROTHEA: So what did Marge do while you went to Korea?

JOHN: She was still in, she was --- well, she went to college in Denver, the Colorado Women's College. And she got her associates in art degree at Colorado Women's College. And then I got out of the Air Force and I was going to the University of North Alabama. And she decided that she would just transfer to there. So, we got married. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: In Alabama?

JOHN: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: What date?

JOHN: We got married, oh gosh, November I think, 1959, I believe it was, and '59 or '60, or '61. Anyway, it was a long time ago.

DOROTHEA: One of those dates.

JOHN: Yeah.

BARBARA: You left here in '58?

JOHN: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Then you had another year's duty, so you didn't get out of the service until '59?

JOHN: In February.

BARBARA: February '59.

JOHN: And I started back to college.

BARBARA: And then you started the second semester in college?

JOHN: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Okay.

JOHN: I started back, and then that summer she came down, and we got married.

BARBARA: So, you got married the next fall, then.

DOROTHEA: So it must have been ---

BARBARA: Must have been '60.

DOROTHEA: '60.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: November of '60.

BARBARA: One of those years.

JOHN: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And then you went ahead and went to, finished your schooling in Alabama?

JOHN: Yeah, I finished my Bachelor of Arts degree in three and a half years. And I had made a deal with Marge that if Oregon would have sent me in dental school, I'd come to school in Oregon. But it took five times writing to Oregon asking for an application, to even get the application. So, I was fairly sure that Oregon wasn't going to send me. I was accepted at Alabama, the University of Tennessee, and at Emory at Atlanta. And when it, when I announced to my professors at the college that I was turning down Emory to go to Oregon, they about held a wake for me because they

had never heard of anyone turning down Emory. Emory was high on, oh had been high on its past reputation. If anybody ever went to Emory, they'll have it made the rest of their lives, if you graduated from Emory. And that was just a big tradition school.

DOROTHEA: Now, is this a dental school?

JOHN: That's a university, a full-fledged, wide university. It's similar to, it would, it's like the Ivy League School in the South. You know that was it, Emory University in Georgia. It was, that's the big time deal. Generally, your folks have to have money to get in there, but I didn't have any money, and I didn't even have enough sense to know I couldn't get in, but I did. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Well then, how did you come back to Oregon? Was it ---

JOHN: I was accepted in Oregon, so I came to Oregon to go to dental school.

BARBARA: In Portland?

JOHN: In Portland. And Marge worked at, first at the customs house down on Broadway and Everett Street. And then over at the ---

BARBARA: My husband's father was a custom's officer in Portland, too. They might have known each other. Yeah, he worked out of there, too.

JOHN: Uh-huh. From '60, about 1962 to '63, it was during that time. And then she got a promotion over to Bureau of Indian Affairs, no, internal, Bureau of Interior, now.

BARBARA: Department of Interior.

JOHN: Okay, anyway, that big one by Lloyd Center. So that was, she made the living. And she made almost enough money for us to get by on. And my jobs, while I was going to dental school, I'd take jobs of pouring beer at the ball games, or whatever they wanted me to, fry hamburgers, or whatever, you know. But whenever it was a game, a professional game we could sell beer. So to do the job, you have to be over 21 to do, you know. So, I poured beer. And they would get angry, because it was against the law to give it to them in a bottle, because they'd get drunk and throw the bottles down the stairs, stands and kill somebody, you know. It was dumb. They had those cups that would hold just a bottle of beer. But the fans would not buy it out of a tap, because they wanted to be sure they got a full bottle.

BARBARA: Get a full bottle.

JOHN: Yes, and they'd watch you pour it out. Silly. That's right.

DOROTHEA: So, all the time, did you have it in mind that you would come back to Burns?

JOHN: No. I had kind of planned that I was going to go to orthodontic school. And we had looked at Fresno, Stockton, Merced, and Redding, California as possible places to go after I got out of ortho school. When I graduated from regular dental school, ortho school required two years of general practice before they'd let you into ortho school. So, I talked with Dr. Hibbard, who lived here in Burns, just across the street from my father-in-law. And Dr. Hibbard said, "Well, come work with me." So, I came to Burns for two years, that was in 1966, and my two years aren't up. (Laughter) That's exactly --- well, you know, people were so nice to us, you know, that you come to realize that nice people is the thing that makes the place worth living in. And having nice people around all the time, that's a wonderful thing. And you get to looking at going back to zero income, that was not attractive at all. So, you know, maybe it's better we just stay like we are because we're beginning to make a living and was paying off some of the debts that I had accrued over the years of, seven and a half years of, or for seven more years of school.

DOROTHEA: Okay, when you first came in and worked with Dr. Hibbard, was he in the medical clinic where you are now?

JOHN: In the same place that I am now.

DOROTHEA: In the same building.

JOHN: And another, see I haven't moved very far. The other thing that's kind of comical is Marjorie was born in this old hospital over here, two blocks away. She is two blocks from where she was born.

DOROTHEA: She hasn't moved much either, has she?

BARBARA: Not spread her wings very far.

JOHN: That's right.

BARBARA: Well you say you went to school back in Alabama, and you wanted to put in to Oregon to the dental school in Oregon. What made you want to come to Oregon to go to medical

school?

JOHN: Marge made me want to do that.

BARBARA: Oh, she made you want to come to Oregon.

JOHN: Yeah, she made, we made the deal, that if they would accept me that I would do it.

Because it took at least a half a dozen times writing, and I would get the letter back that we are not interested in anyone from east of the Mississippi River. And they point blank talked like that.

BARBARA: But I was just curious, if you had at that time no intention of practicing in Oregon, you talk about California ---

JOHN: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Why would you not go ahead and accept, doing your dental school there? Was it just the fact that Marge wanted you to come back to Oregon?

JOHN: Marge wanted to come here, and I knew that Oregon Dental School was rated in the top three. I didn't know, at the time, that Alabama was rated number one, and I rejected their offer, their acceptance. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Real smart move on your part. (Laughter)

JOHN: Yeah. But, you know, they couldn't believe that they were turned down, you know. And he asked me; I was there when they accepted, at the interview. And although it was against the rules at the time, you're supposed to be notified by mail, they voted to accept me with me sitting there. And I had to call and tell them, when I got accepted in Oregon, and he said ---

BARBARA: He wanted to know why, uh-huh.

JOHN: "Why, why are you taking Oregon over us?" And I said, "Well, I know that Oregon is rated in the top three, and I want to go to a really good school."

DOROTHEA: Oh.

BARBARA: And you were not aware that they were number one.

JOHN: No.

BARBARA: So that ---

DOROTHEA: And they didn't tell you?

JOHN: No.

DOROTHEA: They didn't say well we're number one. What did you want different?

JOHN: Well see, every few years, every three or four years they send a battery of inspectors around to all the schools, and they access how they're doing, and how the students are doing and all this stuff, and they make some sort of ratings. And who got the most points, or something, and it changes just regularly, you know. So, it just happened at that time.

DOROTHEA: Well, how long did you work with Dr. Hibbard, then?

JOHN: Four years.

DOROTHEA: Then he retired, and you purchased his business then?

JOHN: Uh-huh, that's right. In fact, when he was, when he decided to retire I had already bought half of it. And we had worked together, I guess, I worked as an employee for like two years, and then I bought into the business, bought half. And we came to the idea that I was to buy him out, or his son Bud would come and take it. Well, Dr. Hibbard's wife wanted her son to have the office that they had built. And I thought that was justifiable, you know, that was fine.

BARBARA: Was he a dentist, also?

JOHN: Yes. But Bud didn't want to come back to Burns. So, he had practiced in Portland, and he was doing fine there, and they each wanted to stay there. And so Dr. Hibbard and I were talking that how about buying the other one out. Who was going to stay, and I said, "Well, my mother taught me how to divide stuff." There was a bunch of kids, and there was always a piece of pie or something there that two wanted, so one had to divide it, and the other one got the first choice.

(Laughter) You see ---

BARBARA: So you better make it jolly well even.

JOHN: And I said, "We'll have one set the price, and the other one decides whether he buys or sells at that price." And he said, "Okay." And then he said, "Who is going to set the price?" And I said, "Well, how are we going to decide that?" I said, "We'll flip a coin for that." And I flipped a coin, and I lost. So, I had to set the price. I came home and told Marge that we might as well start packing up because we'll be leaving, because I set the price, and I'm sure he'll take it. Because I set

it fairly low, because I thought we were going, and I didn't really, at that time, didn't really think I was going to stay here. So, I set it low. And he was very upset, he didn't, Dr. Hibbard didn't want to accept that, but he wouldn't buy my half at the same price. (Laughter)

And Mrs. Hibbard wanted Bud to come and take it. And Bud wasn't about to buy it all at that price, you know, both halves. So, we finally agreed and I bought his other half. And we've been here ever since.

DOROTHEA: So, when did you start having children?

JOHN: While I was in school still.

DOROTHEA: While you were in school.

JOHN: We had our oldest daughter. And then, the first year we were here in Burns, Kathy was born. Barb is six years older than Kathy. And ---

DOROTHEA: She was born in Alabama?

JOHN: She was born in Alabama while I was finishing college. And ---

DOROTHEA: Do you just have two daughters?

JOHN: Just two. I got --- and a little anecdote about the education. I'm sure you probably remember these parties you were, had been invited to and they didn't tell you what was going to happen, but you needed to be there, you know. So, the first one of these things that Marge and I went to, the husbands were separated from the wives and put on different part of the ring and so forth, and you were to write on your paper, you know, the thing you wanted more than anything else. And it lists three things; it just turned out this Amway deal, you know. So, I put down I wanted my children to go to college. And I couldn't think of any other two things I wanted bad enough, you know. And Marge, on the other side of the room, wrote the same thing, that she wanted the education for her kids. And she had nothing else on her list. (Laughter) We was, really wanted ---

BARBARA: Great minds.

DOROTHEA: Great minds work together, that's what they say.

JOHN: People wanted big automobiles, and yachts, and fur coats, and a trip around the world.

BARBARA: Frivolous stuff.

JOHN: Yes. And she wrote education for the children, and that's all, and I wrote education for the children.

BARBARA: Your parents had really ingrained it in you.

JOHN: That's right, uh-huh.

BARBARA: So, it must have been tough if you had saved a little money while you were in the service, going for college, and then you were not on the G.I. Bill at that time, then.

JOHN: That's right.

BARBARA: So, did you have weekend jobs, night jobs to help get you through college?

JOHN: Oh, yeah. Yes.

BARBARA: Then, besides having a child during that time.

JOHN: I was the science teacher's, the chemistry department ---

BARBARA: An aide?

JOHN: Teacher's assistant, uh-huh. I had the authority to flunk students. I mean, I could give them their final grade.

BARBARA: Huh.

JOHN: And if I couldn't pass one of them, I always sent him to the professor; I wasn't about to give a guy an F knowing that his mother was scrubbing floors at night.

BARBARA: You weren't paid to do that, really.

JOHN: No. I was getting thirty-five cents an hour doing that. But it really helped me with my education, because as I was helping other students understand it, you know, you have to explain it.

BARBARA: You were better able to understand it yourself.

JOHN: Yeah, explain it in different ways; you have to learn it better yourself. And it really helped me after I got onto higher levels.

BARBARA: And then so, like you said, when you did come to Oregon, then you had to have little odd jobs because Marge's was not enough to ---

JOHN: Just not enough, it was not enough.

BARBARA: --- to get you through, too.

JOHN: And I would work all summer. And the first day of school, we paid the fees the first day, it wiped out the bank account.

BARBARA: You did not; you went nine months to dental school?

JOHN: Yes. And I'd have a summer job, and everything I could do. I remember once, I was offered a job of, was a job of painting the bridges. They were going to paint all the bridges across the Willamette River. Well, they're extremely dangerous because you walk cables to paint underneath it, and all its high places, you know. And it had been something like, for the four times previous, four consecutive previous times they were painted, someone was killed. But it was like, they were going to pay like \$20 an hour or something, you know, and that was a lot of money.

BARBARA: High-risk jobs.

JOHN: Yeah, that was a lot of money to do that, you know. So, I wanted to do it, and Marge just kept on, please don't do that, I just don't want you there. She says, "You'll fall off of the cables and get run over by the freeway that goes under there, and all that, you know." And so, I thought she was wrong about that, but I didn't. And that summer, a guy was in the hinge of the Morrison Bridge deal when somebody let it down.

BARBARA: Oh, yuck.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I don't think you were destined to do that.

JOHN: You know it was just; he was in there painting the hinge.

BARBARA: And so, then when you finished up and came back to Burns, was Marge excited about returning home, or was she just kind of put up with it, and then looking forward to going someplace else?

JOHN: Well, she was glad to have the time to spend with her folks. Because actually, I think she got to spend more time with her mother and father than she had when she was growing up. And of course, Grandma was just tickled with the kids, you know. They would spend the night with Grandma one night, and it would take us a week to get them straight again. Because Grandma let them do everything, you know. But it was, it was nice like that. And I think she realized that, just

like I did, we talked it over, that you know, things were going pretty good. Although, if I went to ortho school and we moved to California we'd make four to five times more than we're making now.

BARBARA: But it would cost you that much more to live, too.

JOHN: It would cost a lot to live, and we wouldn't be where any family was or anything. And we realized that we had friends here, and were fairly happy. We had enough, we didn't have, you don't need an excess, you know, we had enough. So, we go ahead and stay, like it was. Get all the debts paid off, and then we'd decide. Well, when we finally got the debts paid off --- I'd paid my last school debt, one year before Barb started to college.

BARBARA: Then you can start all over again.

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

BARBARA: Why should you be any different than the rest of us? (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: Then you have two daughters, Kathy and Barbara, and what kind of education have they gone into?

JOHN: Barbara got a, went to Oregon State got a Bachelor of Science degree at Oregon State. Went to Oregon Health Sciences University, got a Doctor of Medicine Degree. Then she took three years residency at Providence Hospital in Portland on internal medicine residency, and passed her certified boards, as a certified internal medicine doctor. And she has opened her office in northwest Portland on the, right on the border between Beaverton and Hillsboro, Aloha. Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Aloha, it's a three-way thing there on that corner of 185th and Cornell Road. So, and Kathy graduated here, both of them graduated Burns High School, went to Oregon State as did her sister. Barbara had graduated at Oregon State, and was voted outstanding senior student at Oregon State before going to medical school. Well, Kathy came to Oregon State with this; they were looking to see who Barbara's sister was. And Kathy went to Oregon State with 30 advance placement credits from the high school, and managed to get her bachelor's degree at three years at Oregon State. And graduated at dental school at Oregon Health Sciences University four years later. And she was thinking, trying to decide whether she wanted to specialize in dentistry or not.

Came home to work with me while she made up her mind, and she's still here.

And I think the things are happening to her as it did to me. You know, she has told me now that she does not want to do anything, just one thing all the time. That she likes being able to do different kinds of things, and seeing different people. She said, I like to see the little kids, and I like to see the older people, and all that stuff. And if I was just doing braces or something, I would be, just a bunch of brats. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Get burned out at an early age.

JOHN: Yes. And you know, or if she was just doing surgery, you know, that kind of stuff, that would be the same sort of thing. She said, "I like the variety of stuff." And you know, just like, it's fun.

You see a little girl come in, and you see her ribbons in her hair and stuff. And you say, "My, they are pretty ribbons, did you get just dressed up just to come to the doctor?" "Uh-huh." (Laughter)

BARBARA: Did Barbara live with Kathy when she was going to school up there?

JOHN: Yes, yes, they had apartments together, and lived together there for oh, several years.

Barbara was in the residency end of the thing at that time, you know.

BARBARA: Not doing very much.

JOHN: And she would have times when she was on call, like seven --- she would have 72 hour shifts, nobody, you know. They're breaking that up now; they're not giving them like that, you know.

BARBARA: Maybe they're getting smarter as they get older, you know.

JOHN: Well, I told Barbara something, I don't ---

BARBARA: People don't make good decisions when they're completely worn out.

JOHN: No. That's what I told Barb, I said, "Barb, how do you handle an emergency that comes in when you've been on duty 72 hours?" I said, "I don't believe I could give male or female correct, 100 percent of the time if I hadn't slept for 72 hours, you know."

BARBARA: No, I just think it's bad judgment to do something like that.

JOHN: Uh-huh. And it was really done because that's the way it's always been done. They said

we're teaching you to handle stress. Well, you really got stressed there when you ---

DOROTHEA: Does she and her grandpa visit a lot about medicine?

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: And the changes I suppose that have taken place.

JOHN: Yes. Dr. John (Weare) was telling a story about, see, when he went to medical school, that was the days before the wonder drugs, you know, and he was telling about how, you know, if somebody got pneumonia, you kind of told the family to kind of get ready for the worst. And especially if it got in both lungs, what they called double pneumonia; you just went ahead and started planning a funeral. And he said then they invented penicillin and they called it the wonder drug, and the miracle drugs, and they were a miracle. Because he said, "You see people with the pneumonia, double pneumonia, that they for years, you know, a few years there it's in, go ahead and die, you know, every time." And then he said, "You give them pills for about a week, and they get well, you know." And he says, "And they come walking out of the hospital," and he says, "Man, it is a miracle, you know." And it was that sort of thing that he saw from one aspect, all the way through that. And now it's gone again, another big bound, you know, higher.

DOROTHEA: Just like with your surgeries and things, they would have put you in bed, or in a wheelchair, or something, and said, sorry.

JOHN: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And now, you know, look at what they've done with that.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: Did both of your girls decide that they wanted to do something in medicine when they were growing up in high school, or when did they decide?

JOHN: Barbara decided fairly early that she was going to be a doctor; she couldn't even say it at the time, she was so little. It was before she started school. Kathy decided later. It was, I think, she decided even after she got to college, at what she was going to do. And it was, she had it in her mind she wanted to be an interior decorator for a long time, you know. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Whatever.

JOHN: And then she decided, you know, that she would give it a try. And it was, studies were always very easy for her, both of them. I think perhaps a little easier for Kathy than they were for Barb. Both of them could just learn just zip, zip, zip, you know. Say it once and they had it, you know. Read a book and spout it off, you know. I had to study with mine, I was the tortoise sort of, I just had to plod through it, you know, slow.

And it was, I think my education was lacking because I never really learned to speed-read it. I could go about 250, and that's it. But I've got about 100 percent retention, and that was, or I used to have. The only thing I can remember now is I forget everything. (Laughter)

BARBARA: So, you've been in practice then for, since ---

JOHN: Twenty-eight years.

BARBARA: Twenty-eight years, okay. And over the years, what big changes have you seen, and how often do you have to go back to school, or seminars, or classes, or whatever to be updated on techniques, medicines, whatever?

JOHN: Oh, we go every year. We have to take 40 hours of classes; I think 40 hours a year to be in an Academy of General Dentistry. The state requires that it's, I think, 40 hours each two years for your license. But I'm in the Academy of General Dentistry, and I usually do about twice what is required.

DOROTHEA: Do you do these; do you have to go somewhere else to get this studies?

JOHN: Yes, uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: And where do you usually go?

JOHN: Most of it has been taken in Portland. Once in a while, I can get one in Reno; once in a while, there is one in Boise. I've been to Denver for them, Las Vegas. I haven't been to L.A. for one yet, there is a lot of them are given around, like that. But we used to, Portland is about as close as, the good ones come anymore. And it's, Phoenix, a lot of them given in Phoenix. And since the grandparents are down there now, I guess I'll be going more to some of those.

DOROTHEA: Do you plan kind of a vacation around this time?

JOHN: Yes, yes, absolutely. See that's ---

DOROTHEA: So that you can, you've got more than just your schooling?

JOHN: All the trips have to; we have to plan them like three months in advance so we can have that time marked off.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

JOHN: And well, we know absolutely when we're going to do something like that, we just mark it off and do it, you know, off the appointment books.

BARBARA: So when you go to take this 40 hours that you have a year, does that mean 40 hours in class, or ---

JOHN: Uh-huh, ... hours, class hours. And they usually ---

BARBARA: So that's a week of 8 hours of class?

JOHN: And they usually get, they usually get classes that are like 7 hours credit, so you get to take some more, you know. Or an afternoon would be 3 hours or something like that, you see. You get a bunch of that kind of stuff. And ---

DOROTHEA: So, how long does it take you to get your 40 hours as a rule?

JOHN: Oh, generally it will take at least six trips. Six trips, sometimes you can get two or three days together, you know, and you can do it. But I find that I need to go somewhere and hear some study and so forth about every two months. And if, during that time since I graduated, see implants have been discovered and refined, and I've taken my schooling for that, and I've done them, you see. And I read about it, and go to the classes and see it, see the slides and so forth, and you come back, and you do it.

DOROTHEA: What is the difference between your practice that you're doing, and when Kathy came in? Was there any difference in the way you did things and Kathy did things?

JOHN: It's very little. The only thing, there are a little difference in materials and stuff, but that's it. And I had updated my practice, you know, practically every year as we went along, so I was already up.

DOROTHEA: Well, that's what I was going to say. I know that when you were in with Dr. Hibbard, we used to have spit bowls, and then we went from the spit bowls to the water, or

whatever. And then they have the suction. Where are you at now?

JOHN: We're with the suction. But we have the little spit bowls, because there is people that just panic if they don't see them.

DOROTHEA: You still have them then?

JOHN: Yes, we discourage using it.

DOROTHEA: So there is a lot of old-fashioned people yet in Burns.

JOHN: Yes, that's right, yes. It's very uneconomical, they say in the lectures.

DOROTHEA: How about sanitary, do they say it's ---

JOHN: We wash them, and you have ---

DOROTHEA: But I mean, is that what one of the reasons they say they got rid of the spit bowl, or whatever that's called?

JOHN: No. Cuspidor. The suction apparatus is dirty too, so it's the same thing.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

JOHN: We use the, we use throwaways now.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

JOHN: See, we've got about, oh, six dollars and some cents worth of throwaways for each patient now. And the terrible thing about it is you can't charge the patient any, generally speaking, you shouldn't charge the patient for sanitary things, you know. You see, it's not custom deal. You're supposed to keep it clean, you see.

But it's the throw-away thing, and the thing that really gripes me is no longer are we allowed to take them out to the mill and burn them in the furnace that's, I don't know, 2000 degrees or whatever it is. We have to pack them up and freeze them and stuff and wait for a truck to come and get them and take them to Tumwater, Washington, and they'll burn them up there.

DOROTHEA: So you're keeping the sanitary stuff in the red bags, and the blue bags, and the white bags.

JOHN: Yes, see this is idiocy to freeze these germs because if something happens and, you know, they fall off the truck or something, they thaw out. If we put them in that furnace, I mean, they're ---

DOROTHEA: They're dead.

JOHN: They're gone. I mean you, a nail goes through that, and you can't even find the melted metal.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

JOHN: You know, and that's terrible.

BARBARA: Some environmentalist is going say the fumes is coming out and it's going to do something bad to you.

JOHN: Yeah, they won't let us do that.

BARBARA: And what effect has Aids had on your practice, too?

JOHN: None.

BARBARA: The use of gloves.

JOHN: Oh, yes, we use that all the time.

BARBARA: And masks that maybe years ago that you didn't.

JOHN: Well, the real threat is hepatitis. There is even so many different kinds of hepatitis now, and it's like flu versus pneumonia, you know. Flu is prevalent, you see, and that's like hepatitis and pneumonia more rare. But Aids is more rare, but the same birds get them both, both the hepatitis and the Aids and stuff run together. And it's a product of our ---

BARBARA: Sick society.

JOHN: Our society, permissive ---

BARBARA: I mean, I hate to say that, but I mean really ---

JOHN: We're way too permissive, and the '60's, you know, that '60's time when there was the debate was whether there is a right or wrong and all this sort of stuff, you know. And now, we're paying for it. And it's there; it's just there. In fact, on this last hospital stay, when he said we're going to ---

TAPE 2 - SIDE C

DOROTHEA: Let's go and discuss some of the things that are changing in the dentistry. What

kinds of difference is there in the shots in other words?

JOHN: Very little. The old medicines that have proven to be very safe, the safest thing they can do, and there are only very slight refinements on it. Maybe put another carbon, or acid radical on it, on the molecule. It's essentially the same sort of thing except for the procaine. The old procaine, which was the generic name for Novocain, is not used at all because people got allergic to it very easily. Novocain was the brand name for procaine. Just like Kleenex is a brand name of facial tissue, you know. And it was so wide spread that it was just called Novocain for years, for years for all of it.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh.

JOHN: And now, its anilines ester lidocaine that is used pretty much, that most people get along very good with. And if anybody has trouble with that, it's a different sort of stuff that we can use that is even less likely to give a hassle. One out of a billion, or something like that will do it, but there are some sort of reported probable allergies to some of it, but not much.

DOROTHEA: Well, now, how did you feel when you first started doing the suction, let's say? Did you think that this would really be a going thing, or did you think that it would play down to where you would still go back to the---?

JOHN: Actually, I was trained to do it with the suction, and I had to work it in over a period of years. People wouldn't accept it when I first came. We didn't have the equipment in Dr. Hibbard's office to do it.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh. So then, that was a change for you, to you, to go back to the ---

JOHN: Yeah, I had to go back.

DOROTHEA: --- to the spital.

JOHN: I had to go back to the system so, the deal where I had the little hook hanging in your mouth.

BARBARA: Oh, and it would get in the wrong place, and it really hurt, too.

JOHN: Yes, uh-huh. I had to go back to that. And then after I bought it out, I changed it, you see.

BARBARA: How busy were you when you first came here? How many dentists were in town, and

the mill numbers were up, I assume.

JOHN: Yes. I think when I came here in 1966, Burns and Harney County was probably at its peak population time. We had that air force base up here, and the air force people here. We had the job corps center out at the Narrows with all those boys. And I don't believe I ever saw one of the job corps kids come in, but what he had about twenty cavities, you know. Really, all of them were just terrible, you know, they --- well, they were 18 to 20 years old, and they'd never been to a dentist, you know. And you could just work until you fell over, and you still wouldn't have them done, you know.

And at that time, the government paid for all of them to have all their stuff. In fact, one of the big things the job corps boys were doing, were joining the job corps until they got their dental work done, and then they could quit at any time, you know. And they would quit then and go back to where they came from. That got to be one of the ways around the rules, you know what I mean.

BARBARA: So, it was you and Dr. Hibbard, and was there another dentist?

JOHN: And Dr. Fulton was here, and Dr. Wood, there was four of us.

BARBARA: Fulton. Four. And were all four of you busy every day, booked up pretty much?

JOHN: Yes, yes, uh-huh. Yes, we were booked.

DOROTHEA: Well then, at one time, when you bought out Dr. Hibbard, you had Dr. Bauer work for you for a little while.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: How long did you work together as a team?

JOHN: Dr. Bauer, about a year and a half I think it was.

DOROTHEA: Now did he come in as a trainee, or ---

JOHN: He was fresh out of school, and he came in my office to work with me. And I encouraged him very strongly to come to Burns because at that time I was snowed under. I couldn't get people's work done, for all the emergencies. I needed help. And I got him to come, and I encouraged him to buy the old, the bank house, you know, up here on Court Street, it was for sale at the time. Because I felt certain that if he didn't get a fairly good place his wife wouldn't want to stay, and we got that.

And he stayed and worked with me. And at the time we were deciding, we were talking about building a new office for the both of us. And then I thought well, I've got two girls that are going to be going to college, and I already got a mortgage on my house, and I don't need another mortgage on the clinic. And so I backed out of that deal, and kept my office where it is. And he built a new clinic where he is now. And we both have been as busy as we need to be. It's worked out nice.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh. And now there is what, three dentists in Burns?

JOHN: No, we have four.

DOROTHEA: You still have four.

JOHN: Kathy and I are two.

DOROTHEA: Well, I forgot about Kathy, okay. Better remember Kathy.

JOHN: You better count her, because she is the only one working today.

DOROTHEA: Better remember Kathy, because she's ---

BARBARA: Well, there is only three, because you're not working, right?

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: But I mean actual offices, there is three offices.

JOHN: There is three dental offices. Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHEA: Well, where do you think Kathy is going to go with her dentistry? Do you think she will remain in Burns?

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: You think so.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: There is this question that comes up with everybody, is there is no men in Burns? Where do you think she is going to meet her man?

JOHN: Well, several years ago her Aunt Eleanor gave her a reading with a psychic for a Christmas present. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: But that's okay.

JOHN: And this psychic told her, now this was when she was in college at Oregon State. And they

were talking over the phone, and she said, "Oh my, your father is ill, isn't he?" And I had had my back go out, and I was over in Bend getting checked to see whether I was going to have to have back surgery. And she said, "You're really worried about your father, aren't you?" And Kathy was amazed, and said, "Yes, that's true." And she says, "Well," she says, "I see you going on through school, and you will go home and work with your father and mother and take care of them. And you will marry a tall red headed man from Montana." So we looked for, see a red headed dude we ask him where he is from. (Laughter) All the rest of it's been true.

DOROTHEA: And how about Barbara, does she, is she married?

JOHN: No, she is not married. She is busy still, long hours every day. She goes to the hospital before she opens her office. And quite often, she is back at the hospital after office hours. And in the night, if one of her patients has trouble, she's got to go check them into the hospital and so forth.

BARBARA: She doesn't have much social life right now.

JOHN: There is not very much.

DOROTHEA: So that phone is ringing at her house all the time, also.

JOHN: It's ringing all the time. And she's just about to get her student loans paid for now, and can breathe, you know. But it's under that big debt load that you've got to keep after it, and stay after it, and stay after it, and stay after it.

DOROTHEA: Well, always looking for new medical persons to come into Burns, do you think she will ever be interested in coming back to Burns?

JOHN: No, because her specialty is ---

BARBARA: Needs a bigger facility.

JOHN: --- it needs a bigger facility, you know. Her practice has a lot to do with the hospital patients and the very sick. The ones that get sent to Bend from here are the kinds she treats, you see, the ones that need her. And quite often the other doctors will send her patients with assortment of different ailments, and she watches over all of it and makes sure that they get sent to the cardiologist for the heart, and for the urologist for the kidneys, and you know. And she coordinates the whole thing.

DOROTHEA: Go to the right ---

JOHN: Medicine for a long time in Bend, that you go to this specialist, and this specialist, and this specialist, but they weren't talking to each other, and they were treating their thing, but the whole body was never getting watched after. You see what I mean? And that's what she does. And she gets these cases that have been surgerized, and still alive, and she is to get them well, see, and this sort of thing. And she gets people that come in that just doesn't feel good, and she finds out what their trouble is, and gets it straight, you see. And already I think, it's been two and a half years since she opened her office, practice, and already she has had patients from all corners of the state. From Washington, California, Canada, Alaska from just word of mouth, travels that have come to see her.

BARBARA: Well, that's good. Well, I know you have been off work for a while, but when you get back into practice again, how long do you think you will continue in your practice? And what do you think you'll do when you retire? Are you planning to stay here?

JOHN: Uh-huh, yes. See, I will be 58 on July 17th, so I've got seven more years before I can quit.

DOROTHEA: Unless they raise the age to 70.

JOHN: Yeah, if they raise, well if they raise the age to Medicare, I'll still have to work so I can keep insurance, medical insurance. Just this year, you know, has taught me that, you know, that without insurance I would be in trouble because of five hospital stays already. So I'll have to work until I'm eligible for Medicare just simply to keep insurance. And I think that's going to come to be, so I'll stay here.

And when Marge and I built this house, we built it to live until we die in. We built it for, to be comfortable. We didn't want it to be pretentious or any of that; we wanted livability.

BARBARA: Be able to live in it.

JOHN: That's right, you know, and this is what we do. You know it's nothing spectacular, you know, we got an oil cloth here on the table and this sort of thing, but it works, you know, it's functional.

DOROTHEA: Uh-huh, uh-huh, whatever works for you is what is important.

JOHN: And it's a good house, it was built solidly. I just have --- every time I go somewhere I'm always real happy to get back home. And I, I don't want to live anywhere else. My friends are here, and I think it's a big mistake to retire and go off somewhere else where you don't know anybody. Don't you think so?

BARBARA: Well, it's all in the individual, how much they make the effort of getting acquainted if they go someplace.

JOHN: Yeah.

BARBARA: I mean, you can't just sit at home and wait for someone to come to you, you have to make an effort to get out and get involved in something, and able to meet someone new and make new friendships. So it's not impossible.

JOHN: I know it's not.

DOROTHEA: It's not impossible, but it also makes you think, you know, do I really want to leave what I call home? So ---

JOHN: Yeah, that's right. And we were helping Barb look for a place in Portland, you know, she said I'm tired of paying rent for the apartment, I need to be getting some equity in a thing. And we'd go look, and it's so costly, and they build them right side by side, where you can lean out the window and shake hands with the people in the next house, you know. If one of them gets a fire, they're going to all burn on the block, you know. It's just jammed up, and they have to, in order to get a house with enough square footage to live in, they are all two-story or three, or whatever, you know. And it's just almost those row houses type thing. And they want so much money, you can't believe it. And here, you know, when I look out across the way there to Bob Smith's house, that's about five miles as the crow flies to my next neighbor. (Laughter) You know, and ---

DOROTHEA: So, besides work, what are your plans? Do you have a hobby?

JOHN: Oh, I do have a hobby. Right now, I like to dabble around in the stock markets and so forth, try to predict the future. And I have been predicting doom for two years now, and it hasn't happened, crashed.

BARBARA: Thank goodness.

JOHN: I've been predicting a crash, and they've still been going up, so I --- I'm about as good as anybody else I guess. Set a record high, and ---

DOROTHEA: Dr. John was, or Cliff, or one of the Weare's, were great rose growers. Did you continue this, or---?

JOHN: Yeah. I was not allowed to do much rose things. My mother always had me dig the hole and mix the soil and the manure and so forth, and then she would come along and sit the rose down in the hole, and then set it. And then, I had covered it back up and stuff, but Mother planted that rose bush. And I've got a few here now. At one time, I had over 200 rose bushes around here, but these winters, they're just awful hard on them.

BARBARA: They take a lot of work.

JOHN: They take work. But, you know, it's a different kind of work, and it's no stress on that work. And I really enjoyed it when I was able to do. But when I got down in the back, and I couldn't crawl around out in to do it, and get down in that stuff. As the bushes died off, I let them be, except this few I got right now. But at \$10 a rose bush, and you get fifty of them die, you know, every year, it gets too expensive.

BARBARA: Yeah. So what other things are you involved, organizations, and things that you give your time to?

JOHN: I've been a member of the Kiwanis Club for an awful long time. I haven't been in recent years because I have to come home and actually go to bed at noon. Or if I don't get that rest at noon I'm unable to work that afternoon, because my back will go out. And I've had one of the back surgeries, but the other one, they keep saying don't. Because I hurt in the back, instead of the legs, they say if you hurt in the legs we can do surgery and it will work. If you hurt in the back, it doesn't work.

DOROTHEA: That's nice to know.

JOHN: Yeah. Well, that's what they say, you know, how it goes. So, I just kind of take Tylenol and don't do much of that stuff anymore.

DOROTHEA: Be careful how you place your feet, huh?

JOHN: That's right. I can step off of a sidewalk with a little gradient there to the street or something, and not see it, and bump my back, and oh man I've got to go and lay flat three days, you know. Sometimes three hours will do it, sometimes three days, but I'll be doing that.

And I think Burns is my home now, you know. I really enjoy this wide-open area. I go out and take a deep breath of air and fantasize that nobody has ever breathed this air before, you know. And it's not that way down in the cities, you know. And ---

BARBARA: And so when you retire, down the road after you get back in again ---

JOHN: Uh-huh.

BARBARA: --- What do you think you'll do with your time? Will you get involved with other organizations? Will you travel, or what?

JOHN: Yes, I may start playing bridge again. I'm a senior master bridge player; I haven't played for ten years. But I gained that ranking very fast, and I'll probably have to get beat up two or three years before I learn how to play like I used to. I'll probably play bridge on the tournament circuit.

DOROTHEA: Do you like to travel?

JOHN: Yes, oh yes, I like to travel.

DOROTHEA: So, do you plan on maybe taking some trips out of the United States, or ---

JOHN: I haven't seen all that's here yet.

DOROTHEA: All the United States yet.

JOHN: Yes. I remember Marge said one time, "Would you like to go see the," what's those caverns there at El Paso, oh, the cave of, I can't, anyway, a big cave. And I told her I hadn't seen the Malheur Cave yet. (Laughter)

BARBARA: I've been in it.

DOROTHEA: You know I've traveled more than I ever thought I would in my little Burnsite world. I've been to Lewis and Clark Caves, I've been to West Virginia, I've been every place but New York and Chicago, and I have no desire to go there. But I haven't toured Oregon. So that, I have been to Crater Lake. I have never been to the Malheur Caves.

JOHN: Well, before I decided to come to Burns for my two-year stay, I went pretty much all over

Oregon, saw it all, you know, to see what's at any place. And I really liked, you know, to, more than any other, and it's, this was the place.

And at the same time I was, when I came to Burns I was offered to come in with a fellow at John Day. And he wanted someone who was going to be there permanently. So I had a friend that didn't have an offer at all, so I gave the job at John Day to my friend, who was going to be a permanent thing. And here is, to let you know what I do for friends, his wife became so angry that she never moved there with him. (Laughter) So he winded up getting divorced, so you don't want me doing you any favors.

BARBARA: I won't come --- I was going to ask you, has it been difficult or easy, to keep assistants in your office? Do you get them trained, do you train them yourself, or what's been the norm?

JOHN: It's OJT; on-the-job training is the way we've been doing it. And I tell people, you know, when they apply, there is only one requirement, and you have to be nice. I can't teach you that. And if you haven't already learned to be nice by the time you're old enough to work here, we're already at ... on it. But I can teach you the things I want you to do, and we go from there. And ---

BARBARA: So you don't hire, really, people that have gone to dental hygienists school, or assistants?

JOHN: I have advertised for years at a time for them, and have never got any that would come here. I've had a hygienist, maybe no more than a year out of the 28 that I have worked. I've, when the Air Force base was here, I did have some people work for me that had been to school, had special schooling on it. But that was just lucky, you know. Right now, you almost have to have someone come in with the Forest Service, or the BLM, or a school teacher, you know, the wife of a school teacher, or something that's trained. You have to be lucky enough to hear about that and get them to come.

And we, oh I was so happy a few years ago, I heard that a grade school teacher moved here with his wife who was a hygienist. And I was so happy, you know, get her right away. Got on the phone, and she says, "No, we're going to do our family now, I'm expecting a child, you know, in another few months and I want to get things ready for it. And as soon as it's at the proper age, we'll start

another one." Stuff like this, you know. So ---

BARBARA: Had their life planned out?

JOHN: She had her plan, like they were going to do it. And so, even when things happen to fall in place, sometimes they're not willing, you know, they know what they want to do. And ---

BARBARA: So you pretty much train people, and not have any problems in keeping staff there.

JOHN: No, no. Anne Miller worked for me for, I believe, 19 years.

BARBARA: She was there when I first came here. And Zelma, or Selma, Selma (Guthridge) was here.

JOHN: Selma worked for me 12 or so. Marge has worked for 10 or 12.

DOROTHEA: Does Marge assist you?

JOHN: No, she just does the books, she does the bookwork. Yeah, she flogs the typewriter and does the books.

DOROTHEA: Well, Edna Timms was working with Dr. Hibbard. Was she still working with him when you first started here?

JOHN: Yes, yes. In fact, is, one day when I first started, Dr. Hibbard, and his son Bud, and I were working there, three dentists working there and she was the only girl in the office. And she answered the telephones, took the payments, made appointments, assisted the doctors, cleaned up, all of it.

BARBARA: She made more money than the rest of you, or should have made more money than the rest of you probably.

JOHN: I tell the ones now, you know, that are starting in --- "Oh, there is so much to this." I tell her about Edna doing it for three doctors, and answering the phones, and making appointments, and all this stuff, too. And they think I'm lying, but she did it, she was very good.

DOROTHEA: Well, this brings me to a little story that I can tell you. When Edna and, or when Bud and Dr. Hibbard were working in the old office, which is now the rodeo office.

JOHN: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: My sister Helen worked for Bud. Then Bud left, and so Helen lost her job, and

Edna continued on. Well now, my daughter Kelly is working with a dentist in Colorado and she is his number one assistant. She has never gone ahead and become a full-fledged dental assistant, but she could pass, he says, with flying grades. Her job is to do everything but drill the holes.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: And so, I say yeah, well, you're the dentist, he's just the hole driller. (Laughter)

JOHN: Right now, I think that in Oregon, there is a, either the law has just been passed, or is proposed, that the doctor you work for could certify that you could do those things, and you don't have to take the practical exam on that.

BARBARA: That's interesting.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: She went to a school and got so that she could do the X-rays.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

DOROTHEA: And when she was working, she worked for Dr. Bauer. And when she was working for him, she went to school and got the certificate to do the X-rays. From there, she got married and moved to Colorado, and she went to work for the dentist up there. And they have a large office, and they go through lots of patients. And the amount of money that they take in per day sounds terribly, terribly high to me. But they think it's not a good day unless they take in this amount of money. So I really think, you know, wow.

BARBARA: Can you tell us maybe some of the funny experiences that have happened to you or your patients in your practice? Or what brings you maybe the greatest joy in doing your work?

JOHN: Oh, yes. Well, once some of these I'm going to send in to Reader's Digest, that all in the days work or something. You know, they give you \$300 for these little stories. Well, once a little girl came in, and oh, she was all decked out, she had her patent leather shoes on, and her nice dress, and ribbons in her hair, and all this. And this was her first check-up. Beg your pardon, I'd already done the check-up, and I had a little filling to do. And I got my little cotton, my little Q-tip with the topical anesthetic on it, and told her that I had some magic to do. Close your eyes while I do this. And she looked at me and said, "I know what you're going to do." And I was kind of surprised.

And I said, "Well, what am I going to do?" And she looked at that Q-tip, and she said, "You're going to clean my ears." (Laughter)

BARBARA: All right.

JOHN: So, and one other time, Ruby Mundy's little girl had been to the Parks and Recreation deal, arts and crafts thing, and she made a little kachina doll for me. And she brought it into her appointment after the arts and crafts class, you know, little feathers and all this stuff. And it was kind of a nice little doll, and I thanked her for it. Because in her way, she was trying to call me a witch doctor, but ---- (Laughter) But, you know, I thanked her profusely for it and put it in a drawer there and saved it. And a few days later, we had this tourist, I think from Connecticut that was driving through, and she had lost an inlay, and she, all it needed was just re-cementation, just a simple thing you do every day. And she kept telling me, all I want is patched up to where I can get to Portland, and so I can get it done right. So I told her, I said, "Lady, I will have you know that I just graduated from one of the most prestigious dental schools in the world, and I'm completely up to date; you have nothing to fear." And she kind of took a deep breath and let out a sigh. And I reached around and got that little kachina doll and started waving it over her head, and started into a chant. And I thought she was going to have a stroke. (Laughter)

BARBARA: She was not amused.

JOHN: No. And then I said, "Well, wasn't that what you expected?" And then she said, "Oh, I'm sorry." (Laughter)

BARBARA: Oh dear. So, what really brings you the greatest joy in your job, your profession?

JOHN: The children. I've always, you know, got a big thrill out of them, get their work done. Then tell them, you know, that we're all done now, and can I have a hug? And invariably they'll just hug me good, you know. And some of them will say, "No." No, you know, they don't want to hug anybody. The little boys, they think that's bad to hug, you know. Sometimes you know they think, well luckily when they get a little bit bigger, you know. The real little boys, a hug is okay and we do that. And when they're all done, and looking forward to their next appointment, and I tell them if you tell the nurse out there at the desk that you were a good kid today she'll give you a

present. They'll go out and, you know, even if I had to scrape them off the ceiling to get it done, you know, they're a good kid, you know. And they go out and they kind of drag their toe a little bit, and then look up at her and say, "I was good." And she'll give them some sugarless gum, a pack of sugarless gum, you know, and they like that, you know.

DOROTHEA: Is our cook about ready to run us out?

LADY: Whenever.

BARBARA: Have you seen a great change in Burns over the years that you have been here?

JOHN: Oh, yes, the population has gone down every year. The economic situation has got worse every year, you know.

DOROTHEA: Well, where do you look for us headed? Have you heard any gossip that we're going to all of a sudden be a big town, or where do you look for us going?

JOHN: I've heard the evidence, and it looks like it's a rumor. I've heard this situation, this Boeing rumor, and that's all it is, according to the Chamber of Commerce.

DOROTHEA: So, you think with McDonald's coming in, and PayLess coming in, that there is not something going on that the rest of us don't know about?

JOHN: No. I think we have very nice and good people here, that deserve good quality medical facilities. And I think that's going to change some, a little bit. I think that we'll begin to have more services done at the hospital than we are now, so that you don't necessarily have to uproot.

DOROTHEA: Leave town.

JOHN: Uproot your family to have some of this stuff done. And I really think that it will come on and be okay. I've always felt that I should not be judged by the quality of care just in my town. But anywhere else in the Northwest that I've tried to provide those services for the people, and I've taken the extra schooling and stayed there and done it. And I think that, well, Kathy is a much better dentist than I am. So I, of course, I'm prejudice!

BARBARA: Do you like practicing with your daughter? Has it been good?

JOHN: Oh, yes, oh, yes. That's a great, great thrill to me to see her come out and begin to learn how to make a living. She tickled me so when she graduated from dental school. She was doing,

"Yippee," she says, she is going to shoot me for telling this. But she just gave out a big scream, "Yippee, now I'm a doctor, I don't have to take crap from nobody."

BARBARA: Except my dad, huh?

JOHN: I said, "Well, how do you, well, why do you think that's so?" And she said, "Well, isn't that the way it is?" I said, "No, people will be telling you what to do forever. You know everybody that comes in tells you what to do."

DOROTHEA: How do you handle, and how does she handle people that come in with a toothache, and they've never been to a dentist before?

JOHN: You just tell them exactly what's going to happen. You know, it starts off with the children, you don't lie to them, you know. You tell them the truth, because if you falsify something, they'll remember you as the guy that lied, and they won't ever believe you again, you know, so you have to tell them what's going to happen. They say, "Are you going to give me a shot?" And I'll say, "Yes, but you probably won't even feel it, because I'll do it with magic or something like that." And I've had children, when we finish up, and they say, "Are you still going to give me that shot?" And I say, "Oh, we already did." They said, it's over, you know, and this kind of stuff. Sometimes they'll be looking for it so hard they don't even see it, you know, or whatever, expecting something. I don't know what they expect; maybe they don't know what to expect either.

DOROTHEA: Do you still get patients that have needed to go to a dentist for several years, and not gone?

JOHN: Oh, yes, oh, yes. I have seen people over 50 years' old that have never been, and what's more tell me, have told me that they cannot ever remember brushing their teeth.

DOROTHEA: What are their teeth like?

JOHN: Something you cannot believe. One of the gals that's just on OJT training once said, "I thought those pictures you had of people's mouths were the worst pictures you could get." She said, "Well, I've seen even worse than that on a lot of people, you know." And that's really true, you know. After you think you've seen it all, somebody comes in with something else, you know, and it's just been there.

I remember once in school that we were at tumor board and this guy came in and we put the X-rays up on the viewfinder, and it showed that cancer had invaded the whole side of his head. And the board leaders asked him how this came about, and he said, "Well, about ten years ago I got a sore on the back of my ear that wouldn't heal, it just kept oozing and bleeding a little. And last week my ear fell off and I thought it was time to get it checked." And so, he told the guy, "Well, we've got your films now and everything, and we'll make a plan and we want you to come back next month to the board meeting, and he dismissed the guy. And so the leader says to the class, now why did I tell him to come back next month? And I raised my hand and said it looks to me like if you're going to do anything you're already too late, that he is going to die. And he says, that's right, he'll die before next month and we won't have to do anything. He said the only treatment for that is to cut his head off, and that's against the law.

BARBARA: Well ---

JOHN: That's pretty rough, isn't it?

BARBARA: Yeah, that is.

JOHN: But I mean, people can do the unimaginable.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I can't believe that, but oh, I guess. Well, I think that probably your cook is wanting us to get out of her kitchen.

JOHN: Well, I'll get out of it, too. But I have enjoyed reminiscing and so forth. I remember when I first came to Burns, only the main street and up D Street to the school, and Egan Street down to the highway, and maybe A Street over west, on the east side of town were the only paved roads, and the rest were dirt with mud holes and knee deep in the wintertime. And it was, you know, we had a little bowling alley behind where the Central Pastime is now, you know, the little tavern. And it was, the ---

DOROTHEA: Pinsetters.

JOHN: Yeah, I pin set there for a while. You know, get ten cents a game on the thing. There must have been about no more than a dozen alleys there, or whatever it was, a dozen lanes. And the Gayway Motel had a skating rink on one side, and a pretty good cafe there, and so forth. It was ---

and then they had to change the name after this gay business came in, because it didn't ---

DOROTHEA: Yeah, that changed.

JOHN: But it was --- Burns was a, everyone that came here at the very beginning thought that they had been sent to the end of the world, and vowed never, never come again if they ever got out. And there have been quite a few that have stayed simple because the people here are extremely relaxed. The people here have a great variety of talents, you know for, and very good talents for being no more people than it is, you know, over the county. Very well educated per capita, you know, as compared to the rest of the country. And it's just a good place; it's just a good place to live. And that's what I'm going to do, I'm not through with Harney County yet, I'm going to stay with them. In fact, is, to tell you how closely bound I am to Harney County, I have a rock out there in the cemetery with my name on it.

BARBARA: You bought your plot, huh?

JOHN: And I bought my plot. And Marge and I will be buried out there.

DOROTHEA: I do too. (Laughter)

JOHN: And that's the truth.

BARBARA: Well ---

DOROTHEA: Well ---

JOHN: Go ahead.

DOROTHEA: Well, I think John, we're going to have to close this off, because we're running past our time, and we need to get a little video of you. So I think ---

JOHN: All right.

DOROTHEA: So I think if you choose a nice spot, we'll get out of your cook's way.

JOHN: All right.

DOROTHEA: And we can come back another time and reminisce some more if you think that there is something that we want to include that we haven't. And in the meantime, we would like to thank you very much for the afternoon, we've enjoyed it. And we plan on talking to Bill Springston and Allan Braymen, who I understand were two of the first ones that came in here.

JOHN: Yes, uh-huh. Bill was before me, and I think I got here before Allan, I'm not sure.

DOROTHEA: Did you?

JOHN: You know ---

BARBARA: Time slips away.

JOHN: Yes, it is too long ago, you know.

DOROTHEA: And Jim Cooksey has moved away, but he does come back to visit once in awhile, so we'd like to get with him also.

JOHN: Yes.

DOROTHEA: But we do not have anything on the radar base, or the air force base, or whatever we want to call it, and so we wanted to include that in our history files.

JOHN: Sure.

DOROTHEA: thank you for the afternoon, and we'll go now and do our little video.

JOHN: All right.

BARBARA: Thanks.

JOHN: Thank you.

(END OF TAPE)

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