

Gathering Our Voice

Interviewees: Mansfield Museum Board including Ethel Poole, Tom Snell, Linda Bayless, Colleen Black, Elsey MacIntyre, Doug Tanneberg, Darold Wax, Helen Kemp

Interviewer: Nancy Warner

Date of Interview: May 24, 2010

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Nancy Warner: One thing I would ask you to do, it will help a lot with the integrity of the recording, is, even if you are feeling motivated to do so, please don't pound on the table. [Laughter].

Darold Wax: We reserve our ranting and ravings for the meetings! [Laughter]

NW: It would be really good if you could not, like, drum your fingers; it's amazing how much this thing picks up. As you can see, I have started placing it on this rug to sort of buffer any background sounds. It picks up pretty well, but you might lean in a tiny bit when we get to you down there. What I would like to do, is kind of like a voice print. If you could just say your name, and where you are from, we'll just go around the room. I'm going to start with you because you are on my left.

Ethel Poole: You want my name?

NW: Uh huh.

EP: Ethel Poole.

NW: And where do you live?

EP: Mansfield, Washington

NW: OK

Tom Snell: Tom Snell, Mansfield.

Linda Bayless: Linda Bayless, Mansfield.

Colleen Black: Colleen Black, Mansfield.

Elsie MacIntyre: Elsie MacIntyre, Mansfield

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Doug Tanneberg: Doug Tanneberg, Mansfield area.

Darold Wax: Darold Wax, Wenatchee, but with Mansfield connections.

Helen Kemp: Helen Kemp, Mansfield.

NW: OK, thank you all. I'm Nancy Warner and I'm here doing a group interview with some of the founders, and some of the movers and shakers of the Mansfield Museum. It is May the 24th, 2010. So, um, just because it's a pretty big group, I'm going to go around the table and ask each one of you to respond to a question. So, I'll start with you.

EP: Why did I sit here? [Group laughter]

NW: I just want you to tell us how you got involved in the Mansfield Museum.

EP: Quite easily! Darold Wax, um, Darold, what would you call yourself?

DW: Pardon me? Well, let's not get into that!

EP: Well, I need to know because you were the head of the museum. Well, I um, was keeping up with what he was doing with the museum, but I really didn't want to get involved at the time. So I, um, just kept my ear open to hear what he was doing, and all of the sudden he said to me: "wouldn't you have some friends in Mansfield, your friends in Mansfield that you could get to come to the museum meetings?" "Oh," said I, "I could try." I came home and I contacted Helen Kemp and Colleen Black, and they responded very easily and quickly, and I thought, "Oh well, that wasn't so bad!" [group laughter]. So I proceeded to get a few more members for Darold, because I felt like he needed some help with the museum, so I was going to get some help for him. So that was how I got involved.

NW: Okay. Great! How about you?

(3:37)

Tom Snell: Um, I have always been a history person. I, um, My grandfather homesteaded here in nineteen-two, and my dad grew up here, and I listened to 'em, so I learned a lot of history over the years, and I tried to get a museum started many years before, but this group came together and we got something started. So it's been a long time comin' but it's been a well worthwhile project.

NW: What was the spark that made it come together?

TS: Just enough of us old people got together to make it work.

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EP: Well, that building became available, wouldn't you say?

NW: Oh, Okay. So that bank that the museum is in came up for sale?

EP: Well, they were going to tear it down.

TS: Yeah, it was in the process of being torn down... but not that you can tell it anymore. I think it looks pretty good.

EP: Can I interrupt here and say, and I think Darold will agree with me, and one of my meetings, one of the alumni from several years ago, proposed that if he gave a thousand dollars, and the others matched it, they could start with that building. Was that right?

[Indistinct talking]

Linda Bayless: That's true. Don Glasscock approached me one Play Day and said that he would be very interested. I said, "Oh, well, I had been talking to Alex about the building" and he said, if we donated so much, we could get started—and Don was our very first donor. [Indistinct chatter]

CB: Well, we were in a class reunion, and they all graduated in 1942, and, he hasn't lived here since then, and a lot of them haven't, but my husband Gordon, and my sister-in-law, Arty Black and I were there, and during the course of the meal, Don Glasscock got up, and he says: "Why don't you start a museum in Mansfield, in the old post-office building?" And Janet Malory Kinzel got up and said, "That place! The floors are rotten and it's not worth doin' anything!" But that's when he suggested, "I will put money down; I will put money if you get it started." Well, Artith and I came back and we kind of talked about it, and neither one of us are two instigators, but he came and talked to you about it, and he really wanted it. He didn't live here, but he lived here when he was a boy. In fact his father worked in the store that the Baylesse's have now.

NW: Oh, so a strong personal connection to the place, and in a place where he could do something about it. And what year was that?

CB: Well that was the class of 1942, and that sounds like that was, maybe their 50th anniversary.

EP: That would have been about right.

LB: '94 was about when we approached Alex, and we went looking for some money because we had to have some money for the building.

EP: Well, Don Glasscock actually provided the money. To start with, then other people matched it. (7:58)

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LB: Right, the Douglas County Port District bought the building for us. They put up so much money and the town put up so much money in order to purchase the building. And then Don did donate and then helped start our renovation of the building.

NW: Now, tell me a little bit more about that process. Taking it to the Port—a committee of you put it to the Port.

LB: I just thought... I had been visiting with some of them and thought maybe they would be accepting, and I talked to the manager at the time and she said, “Well, it won’t hurt to ask.” And so I went down, and they were very receptive of the idea. And so they gave us some money for the building, and then the jail(?) put up some, and Alex gave us a very good deal on it. And then we were able to purchase the building, and then, there were donors like Don, and other ones, that we met and said, “Hey, now we’ve got to start an organization.” And Darold, bless his heart, was the leader, and we’ve gone on from there. And that’s about what it amounts to. You’ve got to be in the right place at the right time.

NW: Well something about the rest of the museums about the region; I don’t think anyone else is going to have this story about a port district being involved. This is interesting.

LB: Well, they were able to... I was trying to think how they did that for EDC, which was an economic development at the time.

TS: Well, they gave us money to restore the building, which actually ended up being used to buy the building itself. So we did stop the process as far as it being torn down, and then we started working from there.

(9:57)

NW: Yeah, well, it sounds like a success story from their standpoint as well.

TS: We had some people step forward right away. One couple gave us enough money to put a new roof on it. And we started it, and then working with different organizations, one of them was the jail of Wenatchee, and we used inmate help to do a lot of the building and work inside, so it came about, for us, pretty fast for a while.

NW: Wow, it sounds like a bit of an avalanche, once you got things movin’ there was a lot of momentum.

LB: There was a lot of desire.

NW: That, in itself, is a very interesting question. I want to come back to that and talk about that a little bit more. But if we can finish going around the table... I think I have a pretty good idea of

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how you got involved, Linda. And would you tell me just a little bit more about how you got involved?

Colleen Black: Well, just like Ethel, she called me one day, and said, Darold wants some people just to come and see about what's going on in the museum, and that's just why I came, and I just kept coming back; I didn't have any intentions of getting involved, but then, you know, I thought, "I've lived here all my life, and this is one project that I think is important; I wouldn't mind helping."

EP: I'm very proud of the people that I scared up.

NW: Good job, good job, that nudging is a very important role.

EP: They have been, everyone has been very active and interested, I think.

NW: So how did you get involved?

Elsie MacIntyre: Well, the museum organization was well underway before I became involved. I think, probably one of my first contacts, was the year before we had permanent exhibits. They had different things that they displayed on Play Days, and this particular year they were using the past Apple Blossom Princesses as one of their displays, and I happen to be one of the former apple blossom princesses from Mansfield, and I was contacted to see if I had any souvenirs that I had saved from the past, and I participated in that, and then Darold contacted me to start attending a meeting, and then...

EP: I think I asked...

EM: I really intended to get involved before I did, but you know how sometimes you just put things off. And then you just... [trails off]. And that's the way I got involved. And I should have said the Mansfield area, not the Mansfield town, because I do not live right in town.

NW: I suspected that, when people said Mansfield, they probably should have said greater Mansfield [laughter].

TS: Our museum is actually the Mansfield area, not just Mansfield proper.

NW: That's something else I would like to understand before we are done, because there is the museum in Waterville, the Douglas County Museum, so I would like to understand [phone rings in background] how I think they're starting to talk about one in Pateros, so it would be interesting to understand how they all overlap and connect. (Pause) How did you get involved?

Doug Tanneberg: Well, I think my initial involvement was probably a year, maybe two years, after the group decided that they were going to attempt this project, and probably conversations

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with Tom and Darold, and probably a nudge from Ethyl, I don't recall. At any rate, my family was a pioneer family from the area as well, and I thought it was a worth-while project, so I came and listened and I've been here ever since.

NW: Now Darold, how did you get involved?

DW: I'm an outlander, I was aware of the background that Tom has sketched in, and then, having moved back to Wenatchee in '96, was informed, when we had our inaugural meeting, and I think that inaugural meeting was either May or June of 1999, and the word went out—word of mouth, I don't think any formal word went out—and at that first meeting we probably had ten or twelve interested citizens, at least four or five of us are around the table right now, others who moved on, some who literally moved away... but I think, from that initial meeting, May/June of '99, we've met, every month, with maybe a one or two month exception, every year. So we've been fairly consistent, and we've had to do that to move things along. So I've been involved since '99, as have some others.

NW: Last, but not least, how did you get involved?

Helen Kemp: Ethyl talked me into it! [Laughter] That's really what happened, because I said, I don't really have time to do that, you know, so she said, "Well, come to a meeting and see." Well I came to a meeting, and then it seemed like I was handed the books almost every time that I came. And then they gave me this job, so it seems like, now, you can't get rid of it, so I had to keep coming [laughter].

TS: You are appreciated though, Helen.

NW: Are all those notes from the museum meetings—in the booklet? It's good that you're keepin' bound notes, too.

HK: Oh well, this, is my little notes that I have to, then when I get home, I write minutes up. This is from our last meeting.

NW: OK, that's good. I can see why you keep her! [Laughter] So, we've talked a little bit about this question as we've gone around the first time, but was there, specifically, about the notion of a museum in Mansfield that made you want to contribute to it in one way or another—through your time, or organizing others... Some of you have already spoken to this already. Maybe I'll start with you this time.

(17:10)

DT: Well, gosh, I always go back to conversations I had, at the time, with probably my hundred year old granddad. And he would tell me stories about this area, and I always thought, we're

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going to lose this history if someone does not... and then Darold and I have done some recordings with some of these pioneers, you know, and I always remember the question—we talked about the first president—and I think Darold might have been in the room at the time: talk about the first president you remember, Grandpa, and he said, “Well, I don’t know, but I can remember the day that McKinley was assassinated.” And, you know, that was a long time ago. And that kind of history, and you know, the stories he could tell about the harvest and the cattle, and... [trails off] I just thought that this was a worthwhile project and that we needed to work on that.

NW: And what would you say about when you were called to contribute, what made you want to get involved?

EM: Well, my father came here as a young man, at the age of 19, in 1905, and he had two brothers here, and they had come and taken homesteads, and he was not old enough to take a homestead, and so he had to wait until he turned 21 to take a homestead; and so, my family has been here forever. This is not the original site of Mansfield. And when he came, it wasn’t even this site, and so, I just remember a lot of things. I’m of a different generation than a lot of people my age, because my parents were older when I was born, and I used to come to school with the horse and the wagon, or the buggy and the hack, and, you know, just the history that’s involved in this... and my dad stayed here for 10 years, and then went back to visit his parents in Missouri, and met my mother, and married her, and then brought her out as a new bride, and I remember her telling how things were when she first arrived and how she had to carry water a long way, you know, and just the hardships they went through. It’s history.

NW: Why do you think it’s important to share that history with people?

(20:15)

CB: Well, I think that for the younger generation, for one thing, and for my aunt that died a few years ago, and she was 90, and she wrote a lot of things down, and I can faintly remember my great grandparents, Chapman. They went out on Dyer Hill, and my grandparents did, and then of course myself and my two brothers. And I think that when you get older, it really means something to you—I just wish I would have asked more questions. And I’m glad that she wrote down a lot of this, because she said how she lived on the farms, like, Kelsey said, and they planted an orchard, and they worked so hard, and I think about my two grandmothers a lot. I guess it’s because I’m older, I don’t know! I never used to think about them all that much, but I remember them, you know, and they had an influence on my life. And oh my, if they could see how we live today, the luxuries that we have, you know. And I just think it’s important, and I was sitting at the museum one day, and a family came in, and they had... I don’t know which one it was... He was so interested, because the Mansons lived here, and I thought, you know,

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that's something, when your grandkids come, that they know their family from way back, and, you know, I just think it's a good thing, for the younger generation, to know where they came from and who their families were.

NW: Have you seen a lot of change in the Mansfield area in the last 25 years that would make the history seem even more crucial? Or is it just the passing of individuals that has reinforced the need for something like a museum.

LB: I think it's the passing of the individuals; every time someone passes we lose some history. And we have tried, as Doug said, they have tried to get some interviews and stuff I like that. I didn't grow up in Mansfield, but I've lived here for several, several years. I just see so many things that you just don't want to forget, and like Darold said, we want to preserve the history. That's the purpose of the museum.

CB: Well, the town looks different than it did, when did it start changing? We put in blue-stem park, there was an old hotel that burned down, and we got rid of that, and we put in the park up there, and, of course, I can remember the post office from when I was young, it used to have a whole row of poplar trees.

EP: Well it changed when this side of the street burned down! That really changed the...

CB: Well, as I remember, when I was a young person, we lived on a ranch, and we came in the summer, and then we can in in the winter time, to go to school. And then the busses started running. As I remember, Mansfield was really dry. There weren't that many trees—it wasn't, you know, It's really changed, I think, for the better. And that building, I always thought, "That's a shame that that building is going to be destroyed." Because, there were a lot of memories there.

(24:45)

DT: You know, Nancy, as a farmer myself, just the change, and I think about my granddaddy, we purchased one of these new, combines—air conditioned cab—that would cut a quarter-a-day. One machine would cut one quarter of ground, and I got him in the cab of that combine, and he was speechless! He just sit there, and I would say, Grandpa, this is going to cut this whole quarter today. It used to take us weeks to do a quarter. And just the farming techniques and how they've changed, and that all happened within his lifetime. And there are kids today who won't remember the railroads... When was that? [indistinct chatter] '82. A lot of those kids, you know, don't remember the railroads comin' and haulin' the grain out of here. So everything has just changed a lot, as far as farming practices; it's amazing.

NW: Yeah, it makes you wonder what it's going to look like a hundred years from now.

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TS: Going along with what Doug was sayin' there. One of the things my dad told me that just stuck in my mind is, as, they had 160 acres, and he said, as soon as he could get on it in the spring, they would start plowing with a single petal, what they called, foot burner plow, and he was hopin' to get done by the 4th of July. Well, Doug's farmin' that same thing and...

DT: Nancy, I'm out here this morning in a tractor, I push the auto button in the tractor and it drives the tractor. I just sit there and watch it. So, technology has come a long way. [Indistinct chatter]

TS: We still have to go at this at the other angle, we have to tell these people that this happened. We need to remember this. I can remember a lot of it. Ethyl, she corrects me every once and a while.

EP: Well, my memory goes way back... oh well it isn't my turn. But I'll go ahead with what Doug was saying. I found out yesterday, last night I heard the story, my son is Colleen's son-in-law. He tells me, he just got back from a trip to Minneapolis, and bought a new combine. I said, "Why would you even have to get in the cab!? There are eighteen computers in that thing!" And all he has to do is push a button and it does everything; am I right, Doug? Now that's come a long ways. I was tellin' Tom, well he probably doesn't remember, this was probably in 1945, they came home with a Minneapolis—they corrected me on the name—a Minneapolis Full League Combine (?). It was bright yellow, if you can imagine that, a combine bein' bright yellow. It must have come in on the train, I don't know how else it would have come in. And he said, "maybe I ought to bring my new combine in and load it in the yard." Just because, that's where Dad, unloaded his Minneapolis Full League—but anyways, a combine with eighteen computers that does everything.

NW: So the museum is going to provide—already provides—a reference point for people. It's a touchstone, and it's a reference point, and it's built by this community...

EP: Um, I wanted to say too, I've been there when people really do enjoy comin' from San Francisco or someplace, and they find their relatives in those albums. I had a Russian couple come, and this is a real story, they came from San Francisco and they thought they should be looking for their ancestors around Waterville, but they came to Mansfield to check it out. Well, I happened to be there that day and I said, "Well, I, remember Russians goin' to school with my sisters." We came to find out that it was their relatives from their pictures in the albums. That guy, you know, had all that electronics stuff, telephone, video and everything—he went outside the door there to call San Francisco, and to tell his brother, "You aren't going to believe where I am"—I think it was their dad that they found. Or their sisters, there were several of them, Russians, in that album, and it happened to be Rocio(?) School House. And I remember Russians at the school house, sure enough, it was their family. They were so excited. And there has been

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people from Seattle come over and they are so excited; they can't believe it, they can't believe it that they found their history—they just stumbled onto it!

(30:37)

DW: One of the things we've tried to do, Nancy, and you'll see this when you peek in, and that is, we are aware that Mansfield is like a lot of different communities, if we charted the history of Mansfield, the founding of Mansfield, the village roles have changed over time, fire has struck, you know, lot's of similarities with a lot of other towns. But one of the starting points, wouldn't we agree, is our commitment to the idea that Mansfield, however similar it may be to other towns—Nebraska, wherever—it's unique. It's unique because it is the only portion of the earth's surface that Mansfield Washington occupies [bangs the table], and only the people who have lived here have lived in Mansfield. So in the museum, we've tried to emphasize a place—in fact, one of our signs on the wall, what?, “A place, a people, a new community”—one of our... (trails off). And our people! So when Ethyl Poole makes reference to photographs in the albums, yes, lots of people, but we're trying to acknowledge that without those people—and they're unique! they were here, they weren't anywhere else—the history, the story, would be a little bit different. So we're trying to be attentive to those who contributed. They played a role; we want to remember them.

NW: That's great. I wonder if we should just take a little break here... [visitor enters room] So Darold made the point about... we were talking about contributions, I asked each of you to share why you decided to contribute to the museum. And then you wanted to take that to another level and talk about, and explore how the community has been able to contribute.

DW: Right, and the extent to which the museum is an engaged, contributing, institution within the community. You know, we don't want to claim too much, and I don't think we should get too grandiose ideas about that, but wouldn't you say, Tom, that the museum has become a motivator, mover, a centerpiece? – Not for people just to visit on Play Day and Lion's Club auction day, but in other respects as well.

TS: Yeah, it's really quite popular, and we've been able to put together some interesting stuff for people to look at, and we've compiled a lot of history in just a short amount of time. People are really interested in what we're doin', so I think we've got a real show-place.

NW: Well, I look forward to seeing it, you know, I've heard great things about it; It's just described as a little gem, a little gem up here on the Waterville Plateau. So, to be a little gem, it has to be accessible. So how do you go about making it accessible to the community so the...

TS: Well, it's open every weekend from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day, and then, it's open by appointment so all that someone has to do is give us a call. Ethyl is our main

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coordinator. During other times there's always somebody available if somebody wants to go look at it.

NW: So you just work together as a team to make it accessible.

TS: Yes.

NW: Well, I think that's really something to be proud of. That's really where a community—you really are community—you're really modeling how you want the community to see the museum.

EP: You might say we're organized, we have a schedule. It's all written out, we have meetings and the schedule. So it's organized, I'd say.

NW: Yeah, it seems like it's been pretty professional from the get go, with a lot of people really pitching in, in a consistent way.

EP: Working together.

(35:00)

NW: So let me ask you this, because I think this question kind-of gets at the heart of a lot of things, what are you personally most proud of in the Mansfield Museum? Darold?

DW: I'm proud of its place in the community. I'm committed to Mansfield. I'm committed to this community. And it's struggling! as are our other small communities. And you need something to hold on to, like a school, and people to attend that school. I think the Mansfield Museum has helped to arouse—would you guys agree?—some excitement, some recognition: That this is a place with a history, worth preserving, worth carrying forward, so in our displays that peoples are making reference to, this will be about the 5th year we've had a special display. One year, on families, to cite an example, we invited families to prepare a panel, and our concern at the outset, I think was, "Will we get enough families to make it worth while?" We've got quite a lot of space, over there, as I think you will see, and the problem became, soon enough, that we had too little space! And we were able to accommodate everyone, but we must have ended up with about 30 families, do you think? An excess of two-dozen. It got all of those families thinking about the general question, you know, "Who are the Wainscotts; who are the Laymores, who are the Glessners?" Let's see what we'd say about that family history. And then to be able to present that in the Museum, gave people a sense of participation, a sense of fulfillment, as sense of recognition, that they count for something! We all count for something! That's what I'm most proud of. Is that we've connected with the community, and served—not alone, there are a lot of community organizations; and they should be proud of them—but I think the museum has helped to generate and excite some energy doing that.

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TS: And also, we've extended ourselves out to the surrounding area, and [laughs] pretty much worldwide! Because we've had visitors from other countries, besides Canada. We have not gotten anything but good feedback for what we've done.

NW: That kind of helps keep you goin', doesn't it?

TS: Yeah. And we're not collecting just a whole bunch of artifacts, we're putting things in that *mean* something to people.

NW: Seems like maybe you're focusing more on the story, of the individuals.

DW: The uniqueness, is probably too much to say. You've visited, Nancy, probably many more museums around the area than probably any of us. We've all visited a few. But it seems to me that probably so many of the museums are almost generic in character. That doesn't make any difference whether that is Okanogan, that seems like it has something to contribute, but to a large extent, you could shuffle collections around, and they'd be pretty much the same. I mean, we've got a rock collection here, we've got some Indian culture items here... What we've tried to do, is focus very sharply on a place, and a people, and tell a story about that place and people. And I think that's what makes this place unique as a museum. I think, more than any other—and that's not to say that's a better way of doing it than the way others have done it, it's to say it's the point we've made, and I think it's made us a little unusual—[we are] unique in the family of Museums in the region. People who come in the door and exit the rear are going to be informed about a group of people who lived in a place, and something about their lives, you know, what it was like living here over a period of time. We've worked really hard, I think, to do that. And you'll see that, Nancy, when you look at the museum.

(39:15)

NW: Wow, I'm impressed. I'm impressed because, you haven't been in existence for all that long, and it's kind of, sometimes hard to get that kind of ownership and group buy-in on a trajectory sometimes. Sometimes people have different opinions. So, that's interesting. Let's talk some more. What are you most proud of, about your involvement with the museum do date, knowing that it's going to keep going on for a long time yet? [Laughter]

HK: Well, I just enjoy workin' with them, you know, and just going over and takin' my turn. Like Ethyl said, you see so many people different people come in and want to talk about it. I've learned a lot just listening to Ethyl. And, you know, she talks about the people that come in over there. She relates back, and you know, she likes the families, and, you know, that helps me to really think more about that museum and what it's doin' for the community.

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NW: It makes you feel good to help make those connections for people. Could I ask you that question?

DT: Again, I'll agree with what Darold said about the special projects. I think the special projects, and I think the Play Day Weekend, which is a big weekend in Mansfield, as well as the Lion's Club auction in the fall, was another where a lot of people come and gather, and you'll see, the front door of the museum will be open, and you'll see a group of people at any one time there's probably 50 people in the museum. And people are asking, "What's the special?..." You know everybody is excited about the special projects, "What's the special project?" Whether it's the Quilt Display, or the one this year was just outstanding, the railroad, the history of the railroad, the Burlington Northern Railroad... So I think the special projects—I really like the idea—and again, I would... it's brought all the people together. People have really taken an interest in that. And so, each year, everyone's looking forward to that Play Day display, and this year it's going to be a school display, the history of the schools.

NW: Anything else that you are personally proud of having contributed to the museum so far? I know you've done a lot of construction.

DT: I think to see that project come together the way it has, you know, and I guess, when I started with the group here, the building was still in pretty tough shape [laughs], and you know, there's been a group of us from putting the old gymnasium floor down in there, and pullin' all those individual nails, and puttin' that hardwood floor down, to the sheetrocking, and on and on and on while building the platforms, yeah, just to see the building come together [cough in background] and look like it does today, you know, it didn't seem like, at the time, like doin' the work was that big of a job, but you look back and you say, "whoa we did a lot of good work!" But it's all come together.

TS: It's been a lot of hours put into that.

DT: And just a lot of different people involved, a lot of hours.

NW: Wow, I'm getting the sense that there have probably been a couple hundred people working on this project in one way or another, would you say that's true?

DT: Well, we don't have that many people in town, do we? [Laughs] [Indistinct Chatter]

(43:00)

DW: Maybe a bit of an exaggeration, but you know, lots and lots of people/

NW: Well, you know, I was even thinking about people who even donated money.

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DW: Well people working on the building, working on displays...

NW: Donated money, maybe, to the remodel, to the renovation. So it might be an interesting number to add up, just to see what your impact, what your ripple effect is, so far, because you are just getting started. So by the time he's 55, just think of it.

[Laughter]

TS: Well, we're already looking forward to expansion. We haven't gotten done with this project yet, but we're looking ahead. We've acquired an old one-roof school. And that's going to be, before we get this project done, figurin' out how we're going to get it moved onto the property next door, and then, work from there, to see what else we can do.

NW: I was wonderin' about your expansion plans. I knew about that school house, and that is your next phase.

TS: This is one of those works in progress...er...process. It's never going to be done. Hopefully there will be someone to take over for us, so we can work right into it. CJ might be the answer there too.

DT: We're putting a lot of burden on you!

NW: It's on tape too! (Pause) Linda what's one thing you are most proud of? About the museum.

(45:00)

LB: I think about, when you think about 1999, and we're in 2010, and to look to what we've done in such a short span, I'm very proud of that. When Doug was talkin' about the gym floor, when they were tearin' the school down, I don't remember who called me. They said, "they're tearin' the whole school down. They're tearin' the gym floor up now, we've got to get it if we want it." And I mean, we rounded up kids and everybody, and we just started takin' as much of that wood, no matter what size pieces, whatever, we got it loaded in and saved, and then I think Tom, did you and...anyways, someone else, they put all the sizes and everything together, bounded it so that we were ready for it... [trails off] so I mean, it's just kind of been that type of thing, that Doug and Tom, whenever they had time, and another gentlemen that they needed to dig out the basement so they could pour, and he was takin' five-gallon buckets out of dirt. I mean, I'm just, I'm proud of the people.

TS: We've been able to recruit people when we've needed it the worst. One of them was Doug's father-in-law, from Vancouver, B.C, and he came down and spent several weeks helpin' us work

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inside the buildings. That was special times, really. He had a good time, we were havin' a good time.

DT: And we've often talked about, I know Darold and I have talked about, and Darold says, Mansfield is a town of characters. And my father-in-law, havin' him be from the city, he comes down here, and we put a good day in at the museum, and I said, "George, before we go home, let's go across the street and have a beer." So we walked in the pub, and when we got home, his eyes, and he looked at Loraine, and he looked at Loraine and said, "You won't believe it" he said, "you could write a Hollywood movie in that town! [Laughter] That really is a town of characters!" Yeah, and he was just, he was just, amazed, you know?

LB: Well what Tom and Doug have both said, we've had... we've enjoyed doin' it. It's been a work of love, not a have-to type thing.

(47:40)

NW: Boy, does that make a difference.

LB: It makes a huge difference, and it shows. It shows in the building.

TS: And we've got ownership in it. You know, the Douglas County museum in Waterville, for the Mansfield people, it's the Waterville Museum, not Mansfield. We needed our own. There is some stuff from Mansfield, yes, but we needed our own, and we've got it, so,

NW: Great! So what are you most proud of, what's one thing you're most proud of?

EP: Oh, the whole situation! I'm proud of these people! Of them working together! I mean, this little group has done a lot. And another thing, I would have hated to have seen that building torn down. I think Mansfield would have lost a lot if they just destroyed the building. That's a beautiful building. Inside now, but outside, it's been here for so long, and it's been a nice building. So, I'm just proud of the whole thing.

NW: It seems like you should be, boy!

EP: My ancestors in my family have been there for a hundred years. I should be proud of the whole situation, which I am.

NW: Their story goes on. So how about, do you have anything to add that you are personally proud of, having personally contributed to it?

CB: Well just like everyone said, I'm really proud of it because I like to decorate, I'm one of those persons, only, mostly in my home, but, you know, it's just an added attraction, and it's just beautifully done, I think. I'm proud of it because, when people would drive through, you know,

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and see that old dilapidated building, and now it's brought up to where it should be, and then the park right across the street, I belong to Garden Club too, so there's two beautifications that have gone on in Mansfield.

(50:00)

DT: And Colleen mentions the Garden Club, and now, the Garden Club, from the park across the street, they've taken an interest in the museum, and now, they have planted tulips in the garden, and they're getting flowers along the building, and that's nice. They have an interest in that museum.

TS: I don't know about the flowers they put out in the front, though, I don't think they're going to grow. [Laughter]

DT: They won't freeze in the fall, will they?

TS: You'll be impressed when you see them too.

NW: I did see that, and I thought they would be very good in a wind. They could probably hold up to a wind.

CB: It's hard to keep the flowers watered, you know, and keep them looking nice. Somebody has to really take an interest in doing that.

TS: Those were made by a local gentleman, too, one of our younger ones. He seemed to be pretty proud of them too, and they were putting them up.

NW: Well, I wanted to ask you, before we move on to a last question, is there anything that you would like to share that you're particularly proud of?

EM: Well, if I would say what I'm most proud of, I would say the history that's preserved, in the area, but I have, also, one other thing. Like I say, I didn't start right away, and so, one of the first meetings that I came to, they were discussing what color to paint the restored ceiling, and that was one of the things that impressed me when I walked into that building, and I just sat there as long as I could without saying anything, and finally, because it was my first meeting, I raised my hand and was recognized, and I said, "why are we going to paint it?" And then the rest of them kind of fell in with it, so I was kind of proud that I spoke up.

DW: You made a contribution, Elsie, from the outset. That's good.

EM: Well, it boggled my mind to think why you would even want to paint it.

NW: That's a great story.

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DT: Well, and at the time, we were installing that ceiling, and I think Tom and I were in the building, we were doing some other work, too, but people were walking in and out. And everybody would walk in there and say, “What do you think of the ceiling?” And we would say, “we’re going to paint it.” And they would all go, “Why in the world would you paint it?” It was probably 90-some percent of the people; we started keepin’ a little tally, and we thought, “We can’t paint that ceiling! [Laughs]”

EM: I remember that day, Darold says, maybe we should take a vote!

EP: Oh, well, that would have been a disaster!

DT: The original ceiling was painted, so that’s why we thought it should be painted. And it was a stamp ceiling.

DW: And so much of what we’ve done, I suppose we’ve made mistakes, we all do, but the long roster, I suppose, will say that we’ve made the right decisions. One way or another, someone pops in, as Elsie did, and guided us in the direction we should have gone, and that has happened so many times. Somebody will come up with an idea, foreign to me, at least, that wouldn’t have occurred to me, and that ends up being the direction we take, and looking back we say, sure, that is what we should have done.

EM: It was my first meeting, so I was very reluctant to speak up, because I knew all these other people had been working so much longer, and here I’m, it just, it boggled my mind to think you would even *want* to do it.

NW: So, well, what do you think that says about the way you guys have run this thing? I mean, that someone can come in and make a suggestion and actually be listened to? Gosh!

EP: Well, that’s my comment. That’s why I say I am happy to be working with this group of people. I don’t think we’ve ever had a disagreement, we’ve all pretty much...

DT: Well, Nancy, I can tell you a story about one—and he’s probably the character of our group—and he’s not here now, he sometimes liked to buck the system just because that’s who he is, he always likes to keep us on our toes. He was against our window project and didn’t like the idea, but we voted to do it anyways. So Tom and I were working on the windows, and I was on the forklift, and Tom had me up, and Tom was sitting on the forklift, and he pulled up in his pick-up and he started up and he slapped his key on the fork lift, and he said to Tom, “I quit!” [Laughter] And we just looked at each other, and we sort of smiled, and we both, we kind of got down and both said, “He’ll be back.” And it wasn’t long, and he was back.

TS: Well, it was almost a year, but he came around and he said, “If you’ve got an extra key, I’ll help ya’.” But he’s one of those people who if five people say yes to something, he’d say no.

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DT: But he put a lot of work into that building.

(55:45)

NW: Oh, Okay. Well, I'm sorry he couldn't be here today, but his story can be woven in here. His perspective will need to be woven in. Well, I guess, just as an outsider hearing your story, one characteristic of your group is that you're open.

TS: That's the great part, you know, someone would make a suggestion, and maybe somebody wouldn't like it—the window deal—we had to do something with the window. We couldn't afford to put the original windows back, and in a museum you don't want the light in there anyways, and we built it inside so that they weren't. So this has turned out to be the best way to do it, with the artificial windows. It still makes the building look like it's the original; just because you can't see through the windows doesn't mean anything. It's worked out really well. It's made the outside of the building.

NW: Well, I do think we need to wind it up, but the other thing I'm really impressed by, and I think it would be really great to look at this a little bit more, is how other community efforts are kind of teeing off of the museum. I mean, the port district helped you get it, and, in fact, it may turn out to be a real community asset. It seems like it already is. And the more that you can kind of see that, with the Garden Club, and the people contributing, at all different ages and through all different skills, it seems like, that is economic development, that is community development, and so you have a really good example of how that can work, and it might be nice to point that out to some people. It strikes me as a really good example.

TS: Like it's been said, the Garden Club is takin' a little ownership in it now, they want it to look exceptional. The Lion's Club here has donated quite a bit to it too. And the schools, they thought it was an excellent project, too, and we're comin' out with a special deal this year.

LB: Well, they brought classes down, and have gone through the museum, and that has sparked kids' interests in history, which is very good.

NW: And you also have this great partnership with the school where, you're doing exhibits, I mean, that's where you really learn, is where you are creating something, rather than just looking at something someone else did. That's another good model, you've got all sorts of good successes to share around. This is just the beginning of that, so... I think I'll just—unless anyone else has anything else they want to offer up right now—I feel like we should...

EM: One thing that makes you, think about how important it is to preserve history is because, as a family of seven, I just have my sister and myself left, and she's quite a bit older than I, and we talk almost every day because she lives in Oregon, and different times, she likes to talk about

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old-time things, and different times she talks about things, and we don't know what the answer is and what happened and we think, we should've asked Mom and Dad about that. But by the time you were a kid you didn't think to ask about that question, and so that information is lost forever.

CB: And I keep telling Ethyl, "I wish you would start writing down, all these things," you know, all these things, and she can remember it, like the old grange hall, she can remember when it was a lumberyard, and I didn't know that, and so, she's the oldest one in the group, she just turned '92.

(60:00)

NW: Well, gosh, you know these little things you can put batteries in them, and you can drive around in a car with the battery going [Laughs]

CB: Yeah, well, she needs one. I'm 82, and I don't remember, what she remembered, at all.

NW: Yeah, just the lumber yards in Douglas County are fascinating to me, because you look at where the wood had to come from, and, somebody told me recently, I can't remember who it was, a lot of the things that were built, came from lumber in the mid-west, not over the mountains, because it was too hard to get it over the mountains. So, that's really interesting to think about.

EP: Well, at that time there were two lumberyards in Mansfield. This big red building over here was a lumber yard. It's a huge big building. And Oscar Miller ended up being the, I don't know what you'd call him, but I remember going to Waterville. There's an office on this end, a door that goes up to a little room there upstairs, in the big building, and that's where his office was, and I'm sure a lot of people don't remember that that's where we went to pay our light and water bill, which I think was three dollars... so there were two big lumber yards in town. But that is when they were building these big houses, 1915, 16.

NW: Pretty good market for lumber.

EP: I got a pretty good kick out of these people, them working on the old Spence(?) house, and I can remember way back, was the doctor that lived there at one time. Anyways, this one particular house, this young couple moved into it, not long ago, just a few years ago, and I heard her make the comment one day, "My house was born in 1942, or 3, or whatever." This young girl though this house was built in 1940; it was probably built in 1915. [Laughter] It was remodeled in the 40s. But see, a younger person, they can't relate to that. She thought that house was built in 1940 or whatever. It was an old house by 1942, it was built in 1915. In fact, most of the older houses were probably built in 1914, 15. That was the big year of the wheat crop, I guess, that's what they tell me, anyway.

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NW: It would be pretty interesting to get you in a car and just drive you around town, you know, “What happened here?” I mean, that would be really interesting.

EP: You know, there were two couples, that got the idea a few years ago, when they would go on their vacations, Norma and Paul Laymance, these couples would get together. Well, Paul and Norma, they lived in Mansfield, and they grew up in Mansfield, and they got to talkin’ about how they could remember who lived in such-and-such a house. Well they were born in 1940 [Indistinct: “No in 1930. 38? No, 33, 34.”]. So to them, they could remember who lived in such-and-such a house. But that’s... they made a record of who lived in that house at that time. Well, they got me involved in it, and, well, I could remember way back beyond when they could remember where people lived.

NW: Well, that would be a unique thing to keep in the museum, I would think, that sort of record.

EP: Well, they just did it for pass-time, but they got interested in it, and they got me involved.

NW: If you bought one of these homes, it would be really interesting to have a genealogy of the home, so you would have some roots, even if you were a come-here person, you’d know some context, you’d have some context.

LB: We’ve got that somewhere, but we need to have Ethyl, you know, take a look at that record, you know who lived in what houses.

EP: We did that?

(64:40)

LB: Yeah, remember, Jerry took everybody around last year and... [Indistinct chatter] So we have that record, but I think Ethyl needs to fine tune it still.

EP: I worked with Norma and Paul on that, and we have a record of it.

DW: You know, one of the things that has come out of the discussion, and I think the point is clear, is how hard, without again, too many slaps on the back, how hard it’s been, how difficult, how challenging, it’s been. You know, we didn’t just step into a building that was already there, we’ve had to work at it. And eleven years—not a long time, I suppose, in the history of things—but, we’ve been at it for a while, and it may be that one of the things that’s sustained us, and kept us excited, we’ve never been at a point where we’re just managing the museum, we’re always planning. And at this very moment, Elsey’s remarks about talking with her sister will be opening up, we think, a whole new dimension to our enterprise, when that vault is reconfigured into an archival storage space, because then, in a much more vigorous way than we ever have before,

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collecting the documents, the photographs, the literary remains that we know are out there, because people have already begun to give them to us... [trails off] and then as Tom has indicated, we've got the space of our museum with an almost completed basement. So it's going to be a long time, probably after when we've cycled on and CJ has taken over, before it's just a matter of managing that museum. We've been planning, trying to think ahead, trying to create a vision where we're making decisions from the very beginning, and the end isn't in sight, is it? We're still going to have to make some decisions, important ones, about what the rest of the museum is going to look like, and how the museum is going to place itself relative to the community, and the kind of contribution it is going to make, so lots of things to look forward to.

NW: Wow! Well, really I just commend you, really I'm really impressed and I've only started to learn about it. It's such a good example of coming together on the story aspect of it, and really not getting overrun by things. I think it's such a good example of that. So often it's, "here's an old wagon," you know, somebody gives you all this stuff, and then you're trying to take care of the stuff rather than all the other things that you're doing. And so...

TS: Yeah, we want the story with it. There are a lot of physical things we could put in there, but, we want the story that goes with it.

NW: Yeah! It takes some discipline. Well thank you, I'm going to go ahead and shut this off now, but I think this is a really good starter conversation on your history, and I hope it will all go well. And we'll go from here.

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