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An Interview with Martha Gould and Joan Kerschner

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

The Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV
University Libraries
University of Nevada Las Vegas

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Preface

Martha Gould and Joan Kerschner have been instrumental in most phases of library development in Nevada – from the branch to the state library. Their stories are fascinating and cover the techniques of moving a physical library to installing massive computer systems. They became librarians as young women and worked their entire careers in the field. Their memories add depth and profound meaning to the work of librarians.

Gould grew up in a small mill town on the Sugar River and attended the University of Michigan. A librarian at Dartmouth College gave her a job and then insisted that she return to school for a master's degree. She earned her MS in Library Science from Simmons College.

Kerschner hails from the Midwest, growing up in Abe Lincoln country. As a young girl, she went into their little Carnegie Library to rest and to view photographs on the stereograph while in town shopping with her family. She attended college across the river at Kentucky Wesleyan College and then earned a master's in library science at Indiana University.

Martha and Joan have lobbied and testified before assembly committees to help bring libraries in Nevada to their current standing. This interview is about serious work told by two women, one who became state librarian, who look back over their many accomplishments with laughter and great joy.

The recorded interview and transcript have been made possible through the generosity of Dr. Harold Boyer and the Library Advisory Committee. The Oral History Research Center enables students and staff to work together with community members to generate this selection of first-person narratives. The participants in this project thank the university for the support given that allowed an idea the opportunity to flourish.

The transcript received minimal editing that includes the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator. In several cases, photographic sources (housed separately) accompany the collection as slides or black and white photographs.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director
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ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER at UNLV

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Name of Narrator: MARTHA B. GOULD

Name of interviewer: CLAYTEE D. WHITE

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Martha B. Gould 10/27/2005
Signature of Narrator Date

1690 W 6th
Reno NV 89503
Address of narrator

Claytee D. White 10/27/2005
Signature of interviewer Date

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER at UNLV

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Name of Narrator: Joan G Tinker

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Joan G Tinker 10-26-05
Signature of Narrator Date

Address of narrator

Claytee D. White 10/27/2005
Signature of interviewer Date

Today is October 27th, 2005. And we're in the Venetian. We're in a suite overlooking the other part of this hotel. And I'm interviewing --

Martha Gould [Answers in italic].

And --

Joan Kerschner. [Answers in regular script]

So how are you both this morning?

Great.

We're fine.

Wonderful. First, I'm going to start just by talking about your early life, where you grew up, your family, what kind of things you did as a kid. Martha, I'm going to start with you.

Well, I grew up in a small mill town on the Sugar River just where it goes into Connecticut and New Hampshire. My grandparents, both on my mother's side and my father's side, were actually pack peddlers who came from Europe at the turn of the century. My father owned drugstores and then a restaurant and a summer hotel. I went to Bluff Elementary School, Way Middle School. And that's what it was called, Way Middle School. Then I went to Stevens Junior High and High School. And from there, I went to the University of Michigan. During our growing up years, my sister and I worked in the business with my mother and father. My sister went to the University of Michigan. And two years later, I followed her to the University of Michigan.

Then after I graduated, I couldn't find a job. So I wandered into the Baker Memorial Library at Dartmouth College, which was close to my hometown. They gave me a job. About six months into the job, Ms. Adams, Ellen Adams, who was the woman I worked for, sat me down and she asked me what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. And I said, well, you know, I like being a librarian. And she said, well, then you have to go to graduate school and get your master's. I said, I really don't want to go to back school. And she said, Martha, let me put it to you this way; you will either go to library school or I'm going to fire you. So I ended up going to Simmons College. I am old enough in the profession that I don't have an MLS degree. I have an old master's of science.

In which area?

In library science. But at that time, it was just an MS degree.

Interesting. Joan.

Well, I think this sets the stage for how Martha and I grew up in very different situations and became very close friends. And we've always complemented each other because of that, I think. But I grew up in the Midwest, and I grew up in the country on a farm in Abraham Lincoln country. So I grew up just a few miles from where his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, is buried and where he grew up as a young man and theoretically walked seven miles to return six cents to someone and where my great grandfather paddled him across the Ohio River to Kentucky on a flat boat at one point because there was no bridge to Kentucky. So the only way to get there was a ferry. And that became my grandmother's honeymoon, to go across the ferry to Kentucky. So it was a very, very rural setting at the time. It's become industrialized now because there is a huge Alcoa plant, huge coal and fire and other plants on the river. But I definitely grew up on the farm.

I just was always a really good student, loving to read and get my hands on anything that I could read. But I didn't know there was much of such a thing as a librarian because we had a little Carnegie Library in our town 12 miles away, but we never really went there for anything other than to rest if we were in town shopping. So my great knowledge of the Carnegie Library was that they had the stereograph, which is the old machine that you put a sepia photograph in and look through them and it magnifies them. So I always wanted to go to the library so that I could look at those photographs. They were out on the tables. We never checked out any books. But my parents had tons of books in the house, and they subscribed to every magazine. So maybe that's where I got my love for reading...

So I went to a very small school that had two grades in one classroom. There were 8 in my class and 21, I think, in my room. We went through eighth grade, which was the smallest class. And I graduated in a high school class of '45 [1945]. I was always the big fish in the little pond, as my teacher tells it, because I played basketball and softball. I was a cheerleader. I did everything that you could possibly do that I might not have had an

opportunity to do if I had been in a larger school. I ended up being the salutatorian of my class and always just assumed I was going to college. Even though not another single person in my family had ever even thought of going to college, I had thought so from the first day.

So I got a scholarship to Indiana State University. And my parents felt that that was way too big a step for the little fish to go to that big of a pond. So I went right across the river to Kentucky Wesleyan College and graduated in two and a half years because I was quite anxious to go away and get started with my life. So I married somebody in the military so that I could make that happen. I suppose it was because of all of my love of history and the Lincoln connection that I mentioned that I, from the time I could remember, loved everything about the West. My major games were to pretend I was coming out West on a wagon train or just being a cowgirl or being an Indian, more likely. I liked to be the Indian.

So my life became fate on two levels. First of all, I didn't know anything about being a librarian. But when I was a senior, my counselor, who was a teacher, said, well, maybe you'd like to be a librarian, they don't have to grade as many papers, when I told her I wanted to be an English teacher. Little did they know. So that planted a seed in my mind. The other piece of fate was the person I married was stationed in Glasgow, Montana, and then Las Vegas, Nevada. Actually, Indian Springs. So I got to become a librarian and fulfill my dream of coming out West, where I've been ever since.

Did you go back to school?

I went back to school after being here in Las Vegas and in Myrtle Beach and in Glasgow, Montana, and got my master's degree at Indiana University in library science. I then came directly back out here because I had fallen totally in love with Nevada and never wanted to leave again.

Wonderful. Two questions. Explain the books in your home. For farmers, that is kind of unusual.

Well, you know, my parents just seemed to read a lot and books would just kind of appear. I think they kind of passed them around. My dad liked westerns. He always read

the Zane Gray. And my mom had saved all her books because she loved books when she was a child. So I read a lot of really old books. There's one that they still enact as a play in West Virginia called the "Trail of the Lonesome Pine." And I remember reading that many times. So I don't know. Everybody was reading and I was just reading.

Then in your classrooms, the teachers would have sets of books like Nancy Drew and that kind of thing. My favorite story about that is I remember my mother saying one day when I was reading Grace Livingston Hill. She said, you shouldn't be reading that trash. And I misinterpreted that. It was meant it wasn't very highbrow literature and I was wasting my time. I thought there was something juicy in it that I missed. So I went back and read it again. I never did find it.

What is a pack peddler?

It's literally a peddler who carried his wares in his pack on his back. My father's father, my Grandfather Louie, came from outside of Odessa, Russia. And my mother's father, my Grandfather Abraham, came from Lithuania. Actually, how they ended up pack peddling in New England, I've never quite figured out nor has anyone else in the family. But the Hellers settled in Claremont, New Hampshire. And the Quints settled in Keene, New Hampshire. And I always have had this wonderful vision of the two grandfathers meeting in Bellow Falls, which was a market town, and one saying, "I have a son," and the other saying, "I have a daughter." But my parents were married in 1928.

Like Joan's family, there were always books. I was lucky. We had the Fiske Free Public Library in Claremont, which also was a historical society. They had lots of molting stuffed birds in the basement. I even remember the first time I went to the library. There was never a question in either my sister's or my mind. We were told from the very beginning that we would become educated women. There was always someone reading in the house. We had books all over the house.

My mother was multilingual, though she had some problems with English. So we would get books in Yiddish for her from Boston. She would write away to the library in Boston, and they would send Yiddish books for my mother and my grandfather. My mother read and spoke and wrote Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Yiddish. My father could speak

German and Yiddish and a French Canadian patois called Canuck.

And you and your sister?

They would never allow anything but English to be spoken when we were in the house. When mother and daddy wanted to talk and they didn't want us to know that they would talk to each other in Russian or Polish or whatever it was -- but when it came to my sister and I, the only thing we were ever allowed to speak was English.

Now, how does that impact you today now that you have done so much traveling all over the place, all kinds of meetings? Do you regret that you didn't learn other languages?

Absolutely. Absolutely. My sister and I were in the college preparatory curriculum in high school. We studied Latin, French and Spanish. Actually, I could speak Spanish at one time, most particularly when I was working in Puerto Rican Harlem in New York and then again when I was working in New Mexico. But I have what they call a dead ear. It's very hard for me to distinguish sounds.

On the other hand, my son is one of these linguistic naturals. I don't know where he gets it. Probably from --

The generation before.

Yes. And you know, he picks up languages like this.

That's wonderful.

It's disgusting.

Because of this love for reading and love of books that both of you have, I want both of you to comment -- this has nothing to do with this interview -- but I want you to comment on today's television, the way kids interact with television, and all of the games that they play. I just want you to talk about that.

Well, I'm in the midst of that right now because we have a granddaughter in our house who is a senior in high school. She is quite bright and dramatic. We expect to see her on stage someday. But she's pretty much a non-reader. She's getting an A in English with great difficulty because she loves the English, but she reads so poorly and so slowly because she hasn't been reading her whole life. They have a book assigned once a quarter.

It was painful for me to watch her read that book. It took her the entire quarter to get through it. And she was enjoying, but she would read one, two pages. But she's a whiz at everything else.

There's just a disconnect when you've had that quick game-playing TV/video mentality. My daughter is a graduate of UNR in business and a great saleswoman and business head and all that. She doesn't enjoy reading. She likes to read magazines only and something that is fast because she just can't take the time to sit down and read something. It breaks my heart in a way that that's what's happening with this generation. Now, I have a young grandson. And I'm reading all the studies that say don't put them in front of the TV, there's something about that light thing.

Correct.

And so I'm trying all the time to shield him from that because he loves books at 18 months. We hope that that can continue.

Maybe that will skip a generation, as well.

I would hope.

I think that in the early days of television, when television was live and, frankly, there was better programming, when Stephen was growing up and when my daughter, Leslie, was growing up, there wasn't that much television.

I think it is a detriment to learning to speak. One of the studies that I read many, many years ago talked about the fact that children who have a strong auditory experience; in other words, they have parents who talk to them, who read to them, who interact with them, have less difficulty in breaking the code and learning how to read. When Stephen was a baby and I brought him home from the hospital, I used to carry him around the house. And I would chant nursery rhymes to him, and I would sing stupid little songs to him. It was very interesting when we moved here. Stephen went into the third grade. They tested him, and he was reading at the first grade level. We actually didn't hold him back on the advice, actually, of the principal of Anderson Elementary School. Instead we found a tutor for him. And I remember Mrs. Garret sitting me down one day and she said, your son can read. He has no trouble reading at all. He just doesn't want to.

That's exactly how I feel about my daughter because she at age three could sing the very complicated words to every song in the Mary Poppins. They're long and --

And complex.

Yes.

At three she could do that. She could recite every nursery rhyme, and we read to her constantly. But it's just not important to many kids in this generation to read.

I think it is important.

It is. And I think that because we worked with Stephen and then -- when he finished second grade, he was actually reading on a seventh grade level. The problem we had is he was a square peg in a round hole because he would be reading things that he enjoyed. He didn't read a lot of fiction. He was really into nonfiction. He would read magazines. I'd find him reading Newsweek, which sort of blew my mind. Then when he ended up in graduate school with an MBA in logistics, he does a lot of reading now. Actually, he writes for some of his own professional magazines and is published.

But what we have today with this whole move toward technology and using technology, the disconnect between the teacher and the student, I think, is perhaps the most serious that we face today. Because when you sit a kid down in front of a television set and the curriculum is on the TV, then you lose that human interface. It's the teacher who forces kids to think about the materials that they're reading and to begin to explore verbally. You don't have young people coming out of school today that have the verbal skills that Joan and I have.

Or the writing, actually.

Or the writing skills.

That's very true. Before I get back to your careers and talk about how interesting they are, one more question. Libraries are changing rapidly. Some library, not very long ago, tossed out 70,000 volumes so that they could --

San Francisco Public Library.

-- so they could put in more computers. So how do you feel about this change?

I hate it. I hate it for a number of reasons. You know, Joan and I are responsible

for a lot of the technology that has come into libraries in the state of Nevada.

Sure. We totally embrace it.

And we're not against technology. But the Web is not a library. What happened is that the director of the San Francisco Public Library, who did some of this, is a real technic rat. I think living in 1984 would have been great for this particular person. Only a very small percentage of information and human history is on the Web. So when we take away from young people the ability to go into the stacks and to go through the history books and the science books so that they have the historic background to understand what happened here that got us to here, you do not necessarily get that. And I don't understand it because I'm not a reading teacher and I'm not a scientist. But there is a different reaction when you physically hold a book and read versus sitting in front of a screen.

I agree. I think libraries are a little too quick sometimes to jump on a bandwagon. And this whole syndrome of a certain generation that is following us preferring to get their information on a computer, in a way we overreacted to that.

I'll tell you a quick anecdote about my library in Henderson and the current director, Tom Faye. He'll be proud to know that I mentioned him in this context because he was our computer guru of this state. I have a strong feeling that all of my staff should know what's going on in the news every day. We had a number of newspapers delivered. Everybody was supposed to have read the newspaper or be reading it so they know what's going on during the day. Tom pointed out to me, since many people weren't reading those newspapers, that people his age, which was 35 and under, preferred to read the newspaper online because they just couldn't be spared the time of holding and turning a newspaper and they could do more than one thing at a time. I can do more than one thing at a time, but I don't prefer to do that while I'm getting my news.

So libraries see that syndrome and overreact by putting more and more computers in, and that takes up more and more space, and we have fewer and fewer books. I think there will be a reaction, to come back to what Martha says, that we aren't able to do as much scholarly research in many cases without the books, although many things are being transferred to the Web that we would never believe. I was able to do some research for a

patron in the writings of a pope from 232 because the Papal Library is being digitized. So there is some miracle, wonderful things for research like that. But still I think we need both.

We do need both. It's interesting because, while I get the local paper and I get news magazines, I find that I scan the Washington Post and the New York Times online in the morning. That is mostly because you can't get the New York Times in Reno, Nevada.

And that's the good news.

And that's the good news. You know, when you look at, say, the digitization project at the Library of Congress, they are able to digitize materials that are so fragile they cannot be handled. That is a positive. That is a distinct positive. However, the other side of digitization projects is digitized material is not permanent. It will breakdown depending on the amount of use. So when you plan to digitize information, most particularly in research libraries, then you have to have in place the strategic planning for not only constantly refreshing the information so that it remains permanent, but to have the planning and the human resources, the human infrastructure, to support the technology because we don't know what's coming down the pike. There will be types of technology that Joan and I couldn't even begin to believe. I mean, wireless was something that came after I retired.

So you have to understand it. If you don't plan for the future, then the day will come -- and the federal government has not really done this very well. And as a result, there is information in the federal government that is on the old floppy discs, the old Dictograph, you know, those funny rubber bands. They can't be read anymore because no one has maintained the technology.

The same thing is true at the state level. My old department had the archives and records department. We had a box that we would take out to show the agencies with at least 15 different forms of technology from keypunch cards to the dictobelts that Martha was referring to that legislative minutes are held on. There's only one machine in existence now that can read or understand those dictobelts, which there's legislative intent from the 60s. We'll never know what the thinking was. When an attorney wants to interpret a law,

they go back to legislative intent. If that machine breaks down, the courts will be guessing forever. So it's a continuing problem. I'm sure that after compact discs, there'll be another thing and another thing and another thing.

One of the reasons that [John] McCain and [Joe] Lieberman asked the U.S. National Commission to do the study we did on permanent access to public information is there is no uniformity among federal agencies. They all use different technology. They all have different whatever. So one agency can't talk to the other. The National Archives is literally pulling out its hair because not only are they having trouble getting agencies to give them information in whatever format it is currently in, they don't have any standards as to what will be maintained electronically and what needs to be maintained in hard copy.

The philosopher Santayana said, if we don't learn from history, we are bound to repeat whatever bad things we did. [The quote is: "Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it" or "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."] I'm terrible on quotes. It's true. We don't have the history of why something came into being. Without that history and without knowing what worked and what didn't work, where is society going to go?

There are a number of experts in our state on this very issue, Peter Michel [Michel is the Director of Special Collections at UNLV] from here being one of those, about maintaining archival records and perpetuity and how to move them from one level of technology to another. And it's been probably 10 or 15 years that we've been working on standards and trying to get them implemented for state agencies for the very same thing. At the state we call this era "The Black Hole of Information" because we've been afraid that because we've gone from about 1975 or '80 to around 2000 without standards and without some way to logically, as Martha said, have a plan to progress from one type of technology to another and maintain those records, that someday all that era of history will be lost from government and other places, as well. So hear, hear to you and Peter and anyone else who can help with that process. It's just not recognized as a big of problem as it is.

One of the things that we're seeing at the federal level, and I'm sure it's also true at

the state and the local level, is that so much now is done by E-mail. So the historic background of why something came to be is being lost because no one is gathering the E-mail. That's very serious, most particularly at the congressional level. In past years we had actual memos. We had hard copy of things. So we can go back to the 1790s and the 1800s and the early 1900s, and you have all of this wonderful history. It's in black and white. There is another problem, too, when you talk about keeping hard copy, and that is you need to do two things. You either have to make sure it is on archival paper so that it doesn't bust into flames or crumble or you have to microfilm. Because right now really the only true archival permanency -- boy, am I going to get shot --

No. It's true.

It's true. It's microfilm.

The state and county agencies are microfilming like crazy because they do realize that.

And in some ways, Nevada is ahead of other states and ahead of the federal government because we are putting records on microfilm. And there is an archival type of microfilm that theoretically will last for -- what is it -- 500 years.

Hopefully.

Now the technology is there where the material that is in a database can actually be transferred to microfilm and vice versa. Don't ask me how it's done. I couldn't tell you. But I know it can be done.

Wow. This is so interesting. But I'm going to get back to your careers. So I am going to start with Martha. We're going to talk about what happened after the woman told you that she was going to fire you if you didn't go to graduate school and you went ahead. But what happened after that?

Well, I applied to a number of graduate schools. I was accepted.

Give me the year.

That would be in 1953, in the winter of '53-54. I was accepted at a number of graduate schools, including Simmons. Simmons offered me a teaching fellowship, which I accepted. I do love a wonderful story, and I won't use names. But there was one graduate

school in Southern California, which is no longer in existence. I actually got a letter from the dean, who is also no longer with us having gone to her just reward, saying that I was not the caliber student they wished to have in their graduate school. I kept that letter for many years. So I spent two years at Simmons going to school part-time, working full-time as a teaching assistant.

Then after my master's degree was completed, I worked for the New York Public Library. I was the children's librarian on the Bronx bookmobile and on the Statton Island bookmobile. But I came from a very small town of about 4,000 people, although my high school had more students. We had 92 in my graduating class. And to the best of my knowledge, I am the only girl in my graduating class that actually finished college and went on to a graduate degree.

Do you have reunions now?

I finally went to my 40th reunion. Then last summer I went East for a week, and I went to my 55th reunion. Most of my classmates, even those that moved away, have come back to live in Claremont. I think that maybe five percent of the class lives elsewhere, which I find fascinating. They live in Claremont, and they winter in Florida along with the hurricanes, which is neither here nor there.

(End side 1, tape 1.)

From there I had an old Library Services Act demonstration project on the Osage Indian Reservation. So I spent a couple years in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. When the project ended, I then went to New Mexico where I was a consultant with the New Mexico State Library. That's where I met my husband. So I only lived in New Mexico for a little less than a year. We moved eventually to Los Angeles. I spent almost 13 years with the Los Angeles Public Library as a children's librarian. I became a senior children's librarian. So I supervised -- what was it -- 11 branches and two bookmobiles in terms of children's programming and trained children's librarians. Because when you come out of library school with your master's degree, you have a lot of theory. Then it takes time to learn how to put the theory into practice. And every library does it differently.

So I was with the Los Angeles Public Library. Then there were a couple of years

when Jerry Cushman, who was the head of the library school at UCLA, and Benny Tate Wilkins, who was another senior children's librarian and who now lives here in Las Vegas, by the way, retired. And I and Etta White taught in the continuing education division at UCLA. We taught children's literature. We team taught, which was fascinating. I got to do picture book storytelling and fairy and folk tales.

Then we really wanted to get out of Los Angeles. So we had come up here to Reno on a skiing vacation. Arthur wandered up to the university, and they offered him a lectureship that was one-third, which wasn't a hell of a lot of money. And we looked at each other, and we sat down. And we figured out, if we liquidated the business and everything, that we bought ourselves about five years. And we figured in five years something would happen. So we moved to Reno.

Before that, tell me what life was like in L.A. for a young couple?

Actually, it was exciting. My husband is a documentary filmmaker. He freelanced for a number of years and then opened his own studio. I remember the year that I was pregnant with Stephen. He was doing Rockefeller's presidential run in California. He snuck me, this huge pregnant lady, into the old Ambassador Hotel so I could spend the night with him. It no longer exists. But the longer we stayed in L.A. and we went into that whole period in the 60s between trying to deal with my daughter being, you know, the quintessential hippie and the whole move for youth, youth, youth with lots of gold chains, it was just not for us. So when we had the chance to move to Nevada, we did.

That's wonderful. So I want you to stop right there at Nevada, at the border. Now Joan, I want you to do the same thing. I want you to bring me from college to Nevada.

Well, I was in a big hurry to finish school because I wanted to get married to my Air Force boyfriend. My dad said, I have just been paying for you to go to college, and you don't have anything you can do if you're going to marry some guy traipsing around the country, so you've got to get a teaching degree. So quickly in the last semester, I took a few more education courses so that I could have a teaching certificate. And my dad, as usual, was so right. Because when I got to Glasgow, Montana, which was the first place he

was stationed in 1966, I got a job immediately. I walked in and the principal gave me a job teaching speech and drama because I had been doing that in college.

But I wanted to say that being involved with someone in the Air Force in the 60s allowed me to have a lot of really interesting experiences that I would probably never have had. My naivety of what was going on in the world at the time allowed me to have them because I was so totally open and didn't have a clue what I was walking into in most cases. The Rosa Parks era reminds me of that. I've been thinking about it all week because that's when -- not the 50s, but the 60s, when so many things were happening.

It so happens that my first big adventure on my own was right after the Selma, Alabama situation. My then future husband was going to be stationed in Biloxi, Mississippi, and I was determined to go visit him. So I had won a little prize of \$65 from the local newspaper for writing an article. I took that and a few more pennies that I made working part-time in the library and bought my bus ticket. And I informed my dad that I was going to Biloxi on the bus. I was so oblivious to that potentially being a dangerous thing for a 19- or 20-year-old girl to do alone. So my dad said he didn't approve, but he didn't stop me. We had a standoff in the living room where I had my suitcases sitting, waiting for him to take me to the bus. And he had his arms folded. And ten minutes before it was going to be too late, he took me to the bus station.

So that was one of the formative experiences of my life because I rode the bus all the way through the South and had some real wonderful adventures watching people all over the world that I hadn't seen before. I didn't know much about Selma. It was a word in the back of my head. I got off the bus and went into the ladies' room. I was the only white girl in there, but I didn't think anything of it. I sat down. Well, all the other ladies in the whole place just stopped and looked at me because evidently in Selma still it said colored only. I didn't know. I didn't think a thing about it. So I'm thinking why is everybody looking at me? It was much later that I realized that it was only a few months after the Selma situation.

So you had gone into the wrong restroom?

Um-h'm. And I didn't think a thing about it, and nobody said anything to me. They

just all went --

They probably thought you were trying to make a statement.

They probably did. Well, I did. And I'm glad I did. I just didn't know I was doing it.

What was it like in Biloxi when you arrived?

Well, getting to Biloxi was interesting because I also was only vaguely aware of bus situations. I mean, I was very naive. I loved basketball. So in college, I always tried to sit at the same table with all the basketball players -- there were about half black and half white -- to just, like, rub off. I loved to play basketball. I knew everything about it. So I listened to everything. So I got on the bus before Biloxi. I'm not sure where, but the last stop. And the only place to sit was in the back where there was a very tall guy who looked just like one of my basketball player guys. And everybody in the back of the bus was black. But I thought, oh, cool, I'll go sit by him and see if he plays basketball. And my hair was dyed very blond at the time. I created a little stir back there, but I made some friends and I had a great time. Like I said, at the time none of this crossed my mind. Everybody always seemed just surprised to see me in these situations. It was probably a couple years later before I realized why they seemed so surprised to see me.

It actually could have been dangerous for you.

Well, it could have, yes. Because anything is dangerous for a girl of 19 or 20 years and as naive as I was. But, no, I had no problems or anything. I just had a great time.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could remain in that consciousness?

Yeah. Exactly. Really. I know I think of that. I was just so oblivious and just having such a great time. I was perfectly safe and met lovely people. So that was good.

Then we got married and went to Glasgow, Montana. That was wonderful. I loved going to Montana because, you know, my little dream of going to the West. Because I taught speech and drama, we rode buses all over the vast expanse of Montana doing speech meets, you know, forensics. And our play won state. I just had a wonderful first year of career despite the fact that when I started I was 20. I didn't turn 21 until September of that year. So I was almost as young as the students. But luckily, I don't think they knew that.

Then we were stationed in Indian Springs or Las Vegas. That was an even more formative year because -- oh, I did want to say about teaching in Montana that it was a really wonderful experience from the perspective that half the class was military brats in a way and half the classes were kids that might have gone to a one-room school. I would have children who had been to Paris, whatever, sitting next to somebody who had been -- there had been eight in the whole class of every grade. And amazingly, they were on a par. I had great students there. They were talented. They were able to do great things in performing plays. We did the "Diary of Anne Frank." We did "Riders to the Sea." We did some really wonderful things. Those kids inspired me for life. If teachers had those kinds of students all the time -- things were different then. I just really believe they were. So then I came here and signed on to teach speech and drama here.

Your husband was stationed where?

Indian Springs.

Tell me where Indian Springs is.

It's outside of town about -- it's where the Predator [MQ-1 Predator is a medium-altitude, long endurance, remotely piloted aircraft system] is based. At the time it was where the Thunderbirds [USAF Air Demonstration Squadron] were based. And they're still here, like, five months a year. And he was a navigational aide's assistant. So he kept the things going on the ground so the Thunderbirds could practice. He was one of those guys.

So we're both in Nevada right now. Which year do you first arrive in Nevada, Joan?

It was 1967.

And when do you arrive in Nevada, Martha?

August 10th of 1972.

Okay. Same era. Just a few years apart. Your husband gets a job at the university in Reno?

Yes.

What was your husband's educational background?

He's a graduate of Los Angeles State University and has a master's degree from UCLA in journalism. He had been a combat photographer during World War II. I wished that, you know, he talked more about his experiences during World War II. He was with the guerrillas in the Philippines, and he was with MacArthur. He was one of the combat photographers with MacArthur when he waited ashore at Leyte. And he was the third person to set foot on the Japanese main island when we invaded Japan because he went in with the rangers. As a combat photographer, he survived eight landings in the South Pacific, always going in with the first wave.

Do those photographers carry guns?

No. No. You carry 70 pounds worth of camera equipment. He became a documentary filmmaker. He was actually making films for the New Mexico State Land Office when I met him in Santa Fe. As I said, he opened ABC's West Coast news operation back in '63. After the Kennedy assassination, he left ABC. He said -- well, I won't tell you what he said. Yes, I will. He said, you know, television news reporters are all horrible people because -- and it's not so much true now as it was way back then -- I mean, they would just fight for the stories. The trauma of the assassination was more than Arthur could take. So we opened our own studio. He had clients like GE and Minasco and old Western Airlines. He did political campaigns. But we just got to hate living in Los Angeles.

He came to the university. He taught television news broadcasting and then moved to the college of agriculture and was with ag communications, which later became that whole educational instructional media centralized for the entire university. He was at UNR for 20 years.

Did you think about your career at all as you were moving to Reno?

Well, I didn't think I would have a career. When we came here the first time and I walked into the Washoe County Library, I looked at this magnificent building. And I thought, oh, God, someday I would love to work here. I was not even looking for a job then. I was just visiting. I was greeted by a gentleman whose first words to me is, "There is no work for you in Nevada and don't bother going to the university. My wife works at

the university." I looked at him, and I said, "but I'm not looking for a job. I'm just here as a visitor."

So your reputation had --

No. Nobody knew who I was. Nobody knew who I was. I was a visiting librarian. That's all.

We moved to Nevada. I applied for a job. The only opening at the time was at the State Library. I applied for the job of reference librarian at the State Library. The State Library at that point was in boxes. I mean, boxes. We had been in the old basement of what was then the Supreme Court building. It is now the Attorney General's building. We were being moved into what is now the Laxalt building, but was then the old courthouse and post office. It was my job to supervise moving into this facility. Well, first of all, I came in November of 1972. Joseph Anderson was the state librarian. You came in January. And you can tell the story of how you first met me.

Well, first I want to ask -- give me the function of a State Library.

Well, the old State Library had functioned also as a public library until the Ormsby County Library, which is now the Carson City Public Library, came into being. But the function of a State Library is to serve the State of Nevada, to serve the state agencies, and to serve the legislative council bureau and to serve the legislature. And that's its primary function. And to maintain the records and the archives. Now, at the time the archives were -- that's where the archivist's claim to fame was he once stuffed a whale?

I don't remember. Something like that.

We won't go there.

How did you get from Indian Springs to the State Library?

Actually, I had a brief time in Nevada, which I'll tell you about and then a little more. I signed the contract to teach speech and drama again like I had been doing in Montana and went happily off on a 30-day leave to Indiana with my husband and came back two days before school was to start. And there was a note on my door saying that the school district had over-signed contracts, but they noticed that I had library classes from my old days. So they put me at Tom Williams Elementary. Robert Seal was the principal.

I didn't have an elementary credential, and I didn't have a library credential. But I had some library classes, and I had worked in the library. So my biggest memory of going there -- and it's North Las Vegas -- I walked in, I put the key in the door to the beautiful little library that the school had, and I thought what in the heck am I going to do in here? I have no idea. But that was the beginning of my library work here because I found out very quickly, and I loved that just one year that I was there.

Then my husband was stationed in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. I got another one of those wonderful serendipitous experiences because I moved there. And while the boxes were being delivered on our porch, a principal of a school where I had sent a resume came and said, I have a federal program that I think you would be perfect for because you are not from here. That's because the classes in Myrtle Beach had been segregated. And because they had federal money for this program, they were going to have to have black and white students in the same classroom for the first time. So because of my background of having been in Glasgow, being in the military, and all that, he thought I'm not a local, I won't have a problem with this. Which I didn't, of course. I said, sure, I'll take anything. I want a job. And that was another wonderful experience.

I remember the first day. I thought, now, I'm not going to do anything about where kids sit. I don't know how tense they are. I don't know how worried they are about this. I'm just going to let them kind of self-select. They self selected sides of the room. The black kids sat on one side, and the white kids sat on one side. I watched as the year went by, and they moved together. It was a thrilling experience for me. It really was. I was a little less naive at this point in my life. We had a wonderful summer there.

Then they offered my husband the opportunity for either re-upping with a big bonus or getting out. And he decided he wanted to get out of the Air Force. So we didn't know what to do. We went back to Indiana. I worked in a high school library because by then I liked the library thing. And I decided to go to IU [Indiana University] and get my master's degree, which I did up to 1972. I came in August of '72, but didn't know Martha then.

What did your husband do when you went back to Indiana?

He got a degree at IU as well in communications. And he hadn't finished his college when we got married. He had only one year. So we both went to school. He started doing deejay and some commercial things and that kind of thing. I taught school again in a consolidated school where I was the librarian and English teacher in a small school up there. Then we decided that we couldn't live without Nevada. We had fallen in love with it, and we had to come back.

What is it about Nevada?

I don't know.

I feel the same way.

We fell in love. We were here a year when he was at Indian Springs, and we were in love. We had to come back. I was able to be reinstated in the school district. So I called. And they said I could be the librarian now that I had an MLS, library degree from IU, I could be the librarian at Western High School or Moapa Valley High School. I didn't quite know what I wanted to do. But we wanted to just go up and visit Northern Nevada. We went up to visit Northern Nevada, and I interviewed at the school district there. It was too late in the year. It was August. So after two weeks up there and thinking what a beautiful place it was and maybe we'd like to stay, I decided, well, that's not practical. I need to go get one of those jobs. So I called the school district. I said, I'll take Western High School. And they go, well, we were waiting for you, but you didn't call in time. We gave that one away. You have to go to Moapa. Moapa or Carson City? I'll stay in Carson City. Then I sat down at the table where we were having breakfast because I was on the pay phone. And I said what have I done? We have no jobs, we have no money. He goes, I don't know, what have you done? I have no job, no money.

But about two weeks later, he got a job as a deejay, and I started making the circuit. I was substitute teaching in Washoe County. And I started making the circuit to look for a job. I had a very similar experience to Martha at the Washoe County Library. They were both unpleasant, so I don't know why we ended up working there. The first one I was a little sweaty. We were moving in. But I wanted to get a library card. And I had already looked up how you get a library card. And you had to have something that had your

address on it. So I had a power bill that had my address to prove you were a resident. So I went bobbing down to the library in between unpacking boxes and sat down and gave the lady, who shall remain nameless -- I sat down and said, I want to apply for a library card. And she's looking at me, a 27-year-old hippie-looking girl, I'm sure, not too well dressed, and said, well, I'm sorry but I can't give you a library card, you haven't lived here six months. I said, oh, but I looked up how you get it. I didn't tell her I was a librarian. I've got proof of my residency here. She looked at it. She's really upset. So she went over to Harry, who was there for a number of years. She comes back and she puts it up. Well, I just had to turn down a nice colonel -- retired colonel, that was it -- I just had to turn down a nice retired colonel because he hadn't been here for six months, but I have to give you a library card. So that was my first experience at the Washoe County Library.

So I went home. I got all cleaned up and went back to apply for a job. I encountered the very same gentleman that Martha had encountered. He took me into his office. He said you might as well go. There are no jobs in Washoe County. No one ever leaves this library. It doesn't grow. Nothing happens to it. You'll have to get a job doing something else. But rather than saying my wife works at the university and don't bother to go see her, he said grudgingly, my wife works at the university and she is a more positive person than I am. So if you want, go talk to her.

So I went up to the university and asked for her. And they said she wasn't in. But the director overheard me just asking. That's Morehouse, the most wonderful director the university ever had.

What is his name?

Harold Morehouse. And everyone calls him Hap. He came ambling out of his office. He's a very slow-moving guy. He said, well, she isn't here, but could I help you with anything? And I said, well, I was just inquiring about jobs. So he says, come right in my office. And he sits down, and he talks to me about 45 minutes about how important it is to this state to have people come in and how we need new blood and how he would love to help me. And he gives me a couple of announcements about state jobs and says, come and see me anytime and we'll see if we can get you on card time and was just wonderful.

So eventually, I applied for a job at the State Library just like Martha had. So that's how I got to the State Library about six months after she did.

Wonderful.

When I started at the State Library, we were in boxes and we were in the basement of what was then the old Supreme Court building. We were in the process of being moved into a new facility. Now, actually, I had moved libraries before. When I moved to the New Mexico State Library, the library was housed in the old prison waiting to go into new quarters. My office actually was the cell block B. I've had some very interesting experiences. So I was put in charge of moving this library. At the time the head of Public Services was a gentleman whose wife also worked for the State Library. There was a little bit of nepotism there. I don't know. Can we use names?

If you are not going to defame them.

I won't use names. And I'm not defaming them. I really am not. These were people actually who did a lot of really good things. But Nevada library land had become very ingrown, and Joan and I were the first really new blood that had come in in a number of years. We were outsiders. We really had to prove ourselves, painfully. So this particular gentleman had taken a job in Las Vegas at the Las Vegas Public Library. And between taking the job at the Las Vegas Public Library and moving to Las Vegas, the Las Vegas Public Library had signed a contract with the Clark County Library District, which was not a consolidated district at that time. So suddenly, this particular gentleman, who was no longer the head of library system but the head of a branch, wanted to come back to the State Library. And the State Library and Joseph said, you can't do this. We're a small state. You've taken this job. They're expecting you. It's not something you can walk away from. This gentleman got very, very angry. When he left Joseph's office, I stopped him and I said, you know, you're leaving. The only person that's left here to do anything about moving the library appears to be me. So what I need are the inventory sheets, the lists of where everything is stored. And his comment to me was, you can sink or swim, you can go to hell, I don't give a damn. Well, I didn't sink. I swam, as did Joanie also.

First of all, I went out to see where the books are stored. When you moved a

library in those days, they didn't have the great big, huge carts that you could shrink-wrap everything on. So everything was packed in boxes. When you pack materials, you do things backwards so that they come out of the boxes in the right order. I got out to the artistic fence warehouse, and I walked into the warehouse. There was this mountain of boxes. Nothing was labeled. Books were spilling out of them. We actually put the book collection back like a huge jigsaw puzzle. What we did is we found the shelf list. And there's an old rule of thumb that one inch of shelf list cards equals about 100 volumes, give or take. So basically, that's how we did it. We measured out on the stacks in the basement of what is now the Laxalt building. Building and grounds had taken all of the book stacks and put them out on Lake View Hill. They were actually buried under three feet of snow. When it was time for us to move, I went out with Archie from building and grounds and a shovel, and we literally dug in the snow until we uncovered them. I mean, I felt like Alice had fallen down through the rabbit hole. I had come from the Los Angeles Public Library to this.

To the landfill in Carson City. There's a great picture of Martha on the back. She had a gray cape. She always wore that cape. And she's out there directing traffic with her cape and the snow. It's a beautiful picture.

That's wonderful.

There was the day that we got a phone call. The newspaper --

(End side 2, tape 1.)

-- the library and said that the head of building and grounds had decided that the \$300-a-month rent to maintain -- what is it -- 1,000 rows of microfilm was just too much, and they were going to move it to an open shed. And, of course, that was the day it was snowing. So Joseph and I jumped into his truck, and he parked his truck in front of the truck that was going to move the microfilm. I don't think I did this, but Joseph swears that I did; that I climbed up on the front bumper of the truck and absolutely terrorized the driver. The driver said, look, my hands are tied, you're going to have to talk to Mr. Barrett, who was then chief of staff. And everybody was petrified of Howard Barrett. So I called his office and spoke to his secretary. And she said, well, Mr. Barrett can't talk

with you, he's much too busy. I said, well, then you can tell him that if we don't stop this, then the state will be faced with paying over \$100,000 to replace destroyed microfilm. There was a pregnant silence. And Howard Barrett got on the -- I don't know why people were afraid of him. I never had a problem with him. And over the years, we became good friends, especially when he went to the Nevada Taxpayers Association.

So anyhow, I explained the problem. Needless to say, they didn't move the microfilm. Then we were getting ready to move everything into the building. And I very casually said to one of the construction foreman, what's the weight-load factor? He said, oh, Mrs. Gould, there's no problem. It's 85 pounds per square foot. I said big problem. We had to rearrange the stacks in the first floor. If you go into the basement, there are these big stone arches that are part of the foundation of this old building. We had to set the stacks so they actually were over these arches so that they wouldn't crash through the floor.

But over the years the floor still sagged.

Yes. Joanie, at this point, was the documents librarian. And we had to totally rearrange the second floor so that the heavy cases with all of the documents in it were around the perimeter so that there would be -- and by then, I had gone on to Washoe County Library. There was a time when staff at the State Library in that old building came to work in hardhats.

More than once. That's another problem, but...yes.

Did you want to join in right now and say something about this move?

Tell them how we found the documents collection.

Well, actually, starting back to what you mentioned about when I first met you. Martha had been hired in October, and then I was hired in January and I started in February of 1973. I was going to be the government publications librarian. You can imagine what that collection looks like from your knowledge of it at UNLV. I didn't know very much about government publications. I just wanted the job and figured I would be doing a lot of OJT [On the job training]. So Martha called me and invited me over to her house because she wanted to give me a little warning that we were kind of marching into a

hostile environment because she had heard -- or I guess Joseph Anderson had told her that some of the senior staff was in an uproar because he had hired a children's librarian and a school librarian for two key positions at that library, which they felt was just outrageous. And from a little perspective, it may have been. But we were too outrageous to let that bother us ourselves, right? So she wanted to warn me about that. But you know how Martha's voice is so proper and --

Yes.

-- and very sophisticated. So I had never met her. So I thought, wow, I had really better get myself together. So I got all dressed up, and I was nervous about meeting this impressive woman that was on the other line that was going to be my colleague. She was in an apartment yet because she hadn't moved into her house. And she opened the door. And here stands a lovely lady that looks like a hippie in a muumuu with her long, long hair down to her rear, barefooted, in an apartment filled with books and paintings. I mean, there was so much art and so many books, you couldn't walk through the place. And I thought, oh, I'm going to like her.

So you took off your shoes at that point?

Yes, I could kick my shoes off and meet her son who was crawling around on the floor peeking around the corner at us all evening. He wouldn't go to bed. Stephen was being Stephen. He was quite a rambunctious little child. But we really hit it off, and she let me know that day that we were going to have to stick together. So we started riding the bus from Reno to Carson together because it was winter and it was a hard commute in those days. So we jumped on the --

The old LTR.

Many state employees rode the bus from Reno to Carson every day. So we would get on the bus -- we lived on the same end of town, out there in the south -- and talk about how we were going to manage our day. And then we would ride home and lament how horrible it had been.

How many people rode that bus?

MG The bus left Reno -- left the downtown bus station which was then where

Harrah's east tower is. It left -- what -- about 6:30. It sort of went around town picking up state workers. We got it down near the corner of Gentry Way, which was the end of town in those days. It was pretty much open pasture south of Moana. There was a whole group of us. Most of the bus were state workers.

Probably 25 or 30 state workers rode it every day. Our big treat when we waited for the bus in the afternoon was to get an Almond Joy candy bar to soothe our troubled minds of all the things that had gone on.

But as far as the government publications collection, Martha, by six months later, she had the reference collection well under control. But the government publications collection was pretty much lost. I'm not quite sure how we found it initially or if she remembers that. But they filled up the entire loading dock with the boxes. They were in random order by the time they put them there. We had a basement. We had a second floor. So I had kind of laid out where things went, but I didn't really know having never seen it. So we decided we'd just have to put them on the shelves because I had two great assistants who had seen it. We had six high school students to help with that. Then we would have to shift as we got to various places. I lost count of how many times we shifted. But I do know that the night that we finished all the boxes on the loading dock, I went home and slept peacefully and came back the next morning and the loading dock was full again. I do know it was full four times. I began to think that this was never going to stop. And that took six months for us to put that on. Because we would put them on the floor they went and then in the general area that they went, whether it was Department of Interior or whatever. Then we would shift. Then we would do that again.

And shift and shift.

And during that time, water got in the basement. Do you remember? And we were mopping. Some staff got ill because they were wading around with water in their boots trying to get the water out.

If it hadn't been for the elevator guys who were putting the elevator in -- what they did is they put boards on the frame, and they actually lifted everything that was in the basement up to the second floor. And that's really what saved a good part of the

collection.

When I look back -- and I can remember. Because we got in a car and we drove around. They had told us that part of the documents collection was in the back of a semi. It was in the trailer park. And we found a semi sitting in a field behind the old armory. It was unlocked. I boosted Joanie up, and we opened the door --

No wonder you remember it.

-- and, wah-la, there was the documents collection.

This is unreal. What a way to get started.

Well, I'll tell you one thing that it did for me that was wonderful. I don't believe that there is probably another government public collections librarian in the world who can say they've touched everything in their collection three or four times.

That's right.

Because I didn't know very much about it. I came out of that six months having the best education I could have ever possibly gotten because we weeded at the same time. A lot of the census material had never been weeded. So there would be multiple copies and copies of things that were superseded and that kind of thing. So I really got an education in that six months and a lot of back-breaking labor, too. When we tell these things, it hardly seems like that could have possibly happened. But it really did.

It really did.

It's a good thing we're here to reinforce each other or no one would believe us.

Yes, I'm real glad that the two of you are here together.

We were putting the library together during the 1973 session of the legislature. I would get phone calls from LCB [Legislative Council Bureau] because we were LCB's backup. Because everything was in boxes and a lot of stuff hadn't been unpacked, I would call the university library and say, would you go to such-and-such box? This is what I need. We had what was known as the Ball-to-Gould Express. Joy Ball was the public services librarian at the university. She lived around the corner from me. So what we would do is, if Joy needed something from the State Library, I would carry it home and my son, Steve, would walk it over to Joy's house. If I needed something from the university

library, Joy would bring it home and her son Steve would walk it over to my house. That was known as the Gould-to-Ball Express or the Ball-to-Gould Express.

Now, what is LCB?

Legislative Council Bureau. That is the research facility for the legislature. They also called on the State Library for a lot of research. And we never knew why they wanted the research. They would just call us for it. And then we never knew what legislator we were working with. But that was the year that Swackhammer [William D.] decided that there didn't need to be a State Library. So here Joanie and I --

Where was he from?

He was the Secretary of State. He had done a study on efficiency and economy in state government.

Oh, yes.

One of his recommendations was that because there was a community college and a public library in town already that the State Library could be dismantled and those functions divided between the two existing libraries.

Do all states have a state library?

Yes, they do.

I'll put it this way. By the time -- and that was my introduction to lobbying for the Nevada libraries. And let me backtrack. I grew up in a family that was very political. My father was a very political person. So politics is something that I cut my teeth on. But I had never been a lobbyist. I had never done any of this. I didn't know anybody in the legislature. But all of a sudden, Joanie and I found ourselves fighting for the State Library. By the time we were through, Swackhammer was an ardent supporter.

Wonderful. Why did you two lead that fight? Weren't there other people who were just as interested?

Oh, absolutely.

Oh, yeah.

The Nevada Library Association had a wonderful campaign that year. And then our boss was Joseph Anderson. One reason that we were thrown into this, I think, is that

state librarians report to the governor and they don't lobby. So we were probably, as new people and not entrenched, able to say more in different situations than the rank and file at the State Library would have been able to say and certainly than the director would.

So we did.

We did.

What was that like? Tell me about that fight and how you convinced this person.

Well, you know, really it was a matter of just being convinced that the state couldn't function appropriately. Martha talked about the aspect of serving state agencies. The Legislative Council Bureau in those days maintained only a very small room of publications. Their research staff had a key to the building for probably five years during -- five sessions that I worked there where they could come and go in the middle of the night and do their own research if they needed to. So they were big advocates. I think that Mr. Swackhammer probably didn't adequately interview the clientele.

But the part that Martha didn't mention was that our other statutory equal is to provide backup services to public libraries. And so one of the things we were doing there was cataloging for almost all the rural libraries, central purchasing for them, and answering their reference questions. They had very small collections in those days.

And most of the staff in the rural libraries were not trained librarians.

So the public libraries came out of the woodwork once they were marshaled to do that. They really --

Most particularly Mr. Swackhammer's constituency.

Yes. And then the other really important thing, I think, was that Governor Michael O'Callaghan was the governor and he became a strong supporter. I'm not sure that he was consulted when this study was done. I think it was kind of done in a vacuum and somebody said, oh, this is a good idea.

Actually what happened is the study never saw the light of day and that was it.

I stayed at the State Library for two years. I had told Joseph when he hired me that I really wanted to work at the Washoe County Library. There is a real irony here because

the gentleman who told me there was no job for me in Nevada, it was a part-time job that he had. Mr. Andrews [Pat], who was then the director of the library system -- how do I put this gently? I think he really wanted to get rid of this gentleman. So he made the job a full-time job, and this particular gentleman didn't want to work full-time. He was, by the way, a hell of a fine reference librarian. No question about it, he was one of the best. But I applied for the job. Then the gentleman who told me I could go to hell, sink or swim also applied for the job. Now, this was the year that I was invited -- this particular gentleman was the president of the Nevada Library Association and he invited me out of the association. I had been the public information chair, which was a two-year appointment. And he just said, I don't want you, go away. So I went away. I remember Billie Mae Paulson was very upset because, she was a president elect. Anyhow, that was the first and only time, I think, they ever went to Tonopah. We've never been back to Tonopah since.

I don't know what happened in Tonopah because I stayed behind to run the State Library. Mr. Andrews had interviewed me and interviewed this other gentleman. He had said that he was going to make the announcement in Tonopah. And I figured that this particular gentleman would get the job and I would just stay on at the State Library. Anyhow, Joseph came back on Monday and he said, Mr. Andrews wants to interview you tomorrow morning. I said oh. So at 8 o'clock in the morning, I went down to the Washoe County Library. And at 11 o'clock in the morning, I finally looked at Mr. Andrews and said, I have to ask you a question. Are you or are you not offering me this job? And he said, well, Mrs. Gould I thought you knew. And I said, how could I know? You didn't say anything. I became what then was just librarian IV. That was my rank. And then I called Joseph. And this particular gentleman's wife also work at the State Library. In fact, she worked for her husband. But that's neither here nor there. And she was very upset, walked out of the library and literally never came back, but went on to some really fantastic things in Southern Nevada. Very, very fine librarian.

Why did you want to leave Reno and work in Washoe?

Reno is Washoe.

Carson City.

I mean, why did you want to leave the State Library and go back?

Because basically my background is public library work. The minute I walked into that building, that gorgeous building, I said someday I've got to work here. What I didn't know is that it would involve things like what do we do with the lice in the chair from the bums? And how do I handle the aphids that are eating up the plants? The things they don't teach you when you take administration in library school. But that you learn on the job. Joan stayed on and became the state librarian.

Eventually.

And tell me about becoming the state librarian. What was that like and how long did it take in order for you to do that?

It took a long time. I wanted to answer one more thing about the lobbying which is that my life really started to fall into place around the 1975 session, which was about the time Martha left. One of the reasons is a wonderful mentor. And that's why I mentioned to you about women's history. And that was Jean Ford. Like so many women in the world, I am one of Jean Ford's protégées. She was in the legislature, and she was very much a library supporter. She wanted the library to do some things that would support the legislature. She and Richard Bryan, who was in the senate at the time, had an idea that we could help by consolidating the annual reports to save money. There were millions and millions of annual reports. Everybody did expensive glossy ones, and no one could ever find them in six months. They had no uniformity. So they wanted us to do a biannual report. We had no statistical abstract in the state. So Jean called and asked Joseph Anderson and myself to come and visit her. She had this idea, and she provided the avenue for me to take the lead to try to get my first bill through the legislature.

That was also a time of big transition for the State Library because, as Martha mentioned earlier, that had been the public library until 1969. It was wonderful as a public library, I'm sure. It's remembered so fondly by its most famous client, I think, or patron, Robert Laxalt. And every time Robert Laxalt saw me, he'd have to recount the story of how the two little lady librarians let him read every book in the State Library and take the books to the sheep camp and that they always came back smelling like sagebrush and

sheep doo. But they didn't mind, and they let him take them in and out all summer every year and that he did read every single book in the State Library as a young man. There were many people that remembered it in Carson City in that way.

But we now had a public library, and we needed to divest ourselves of the public collection and really focus on being a research library. That was so painful for so many people. And again, my being in the right place at the right time, the new girl who had no old, preconceived notions that that should be a public library and the fact that my office was across the hall from the state librarian who suddenly decided that I should go with him to every meeting and be involved. I was the one ready to go. Let me know everything. Let me learn everything. So I got to get into the lobbying in through Jean. And, of course, Martha got tapped for lobbying. We were friends already. So we would work together. So that was a really exciting growth period for me.

And the State Library did transform in the 70s from an old public library or a schizophrenic library that didn't know what it was supposed to be doing exactly into a strong research library. I was still the government publications librarian, but I was the one always willing to travel. So I'd run to Washington. I'd do this. I'd do that. My hand was always in the air. So that's one reason, I think, that I was lucky enough to be looked at as state librarian material. But I was down three layers in the administration at that point. Then my boss left. So --

Is that Joseph Anderson?

No. He was the state librarian. I was way down there, just the publications librarian. The head of public services was Bob Gray and he left. So Joe gave me that job. Then we reorganized because we had three assistant state librarians, I think. We reorganized at my suggestion, and I became assistant state librarian. So we fast-forward from 1973 to 1985 --

So by 1985, you're the assistant state librarian.

Yeah, I became assistant state librarian about 1980, one or two. We had one for public services, which was myself, and one for technical services. So then Joe became ill. Richard Bryan made me acting state librarian. That was in the fall of '85. He passed away

in June of 1986. At that point Richard Bryan told me that -- he didn't exactly promise me. All throughout that six months, he said, you have my full faith and authority to do whatever you need to do, which was really important because -- we'll have to talk about that bond issue -- we had some tense times during that period of time. Then about a month later, I think it was July 26th, Richard "Dick" Bryan appointed me as state librarian. That's how I got there.

That is wonderful. Now bring me up to -- you want to talk about a bond issue. So bring me up to that point and what you are doing now.

I went to the Washoe County Library as the librarian IV. We decided to make that the public services librarian. Mr. Andrews made no bones about the fact that he wanted to retire in '79 and that my job was to turn the Washoe County Library system into a system. At that point the branches were pretty much doing their own thing.

How many branches are we talking about?

At that time we had the branch in Sparks. We had a teeny, tiny branch in two classrooms at Incline Elementary School. In 1978 on a handshake, we opened up the Stead branch, which served as the original library for what is now Truckee Meadows Community College. We had three bookmobiles that ran on contracts with Churchill, Lyon, Storey, and parts of Humboldt County. One of my jobs, unfortunately, was to end the book mobile service because the bookmobiles were falling apart. In those days unless you had a landline, you couldn't operate. We were going to Mark Twain Village down in Silver Springs. And in the period of time we were there, for three hours, two people would come on the bookmobile. So it really wasn't cost effective.

Mr. Andrews retired in '79. The board did two things. They named me acting director and changed my title to assistant director. I was acting director for -- what -- about a year? The then chairman of the board who is since deceased, Dr. Becker, didn't want a woman as director. He made it very clear to me. So I didn't apply for the job. There is a wonderful story later because later, when I did become the library director, a year after I had been the director, Dr. Becker walked into my office and he said, I have to apologize to you. And then he said, anytime you want anything from the Ford Foundation,

you just let me know because I play pinochle at the Prospectors Club every day with Bud Bradley, who was the head of the Ford Foundation.

Anyhow, Reno was still small in those days. People got to know you. So Mr. Verostic became the library director. He was there, I think, a little less than a year when he had a very tragic accident. He literally gave himself a frontal lobotomy. It was a really rough time. He damn near died. He was on his son's moped not wearing a helmet. As it turned out, the moped had a malfunction and would vibrate terribly. They had taken it in and had to have it repaired and fortunately had kept all the paperwork because in the end he got a settlement from the company. So I was then the acting director. Then Mr. Verostic came back to work to see if he could do the job. It became very obvious that he couldn't. I found myself in this awful position of not only doing my job but his job. I didn't know what to do. So I took a month and went to Japan during budget. I figured that the only way I could really let the board understand that he couldn't handle the job was not to be there at a very crucial time. I had tons of vacation. Arthur and I had a wonderful time in Japan. I came back from Japan to a total disaster. We had no budget. The staff was in total disarray. Frank simply had lost the ability to make decisions. It became very obvious to everybody.

Was it obvious to him?

No. And he was very angry. The board finally had to tell him that -- I mean, they worked with him. They worked with his lawyer who was suing the company. I had to do depositions. He got a huge settlement thanks to Peter Newman because he could never work again. I had to clean up the mess. There were people in the county who felt that I had really screwed Frank royally. To be with Frank, as long as he didn't have to make any kind of a decision, it wasn't obvious --

(End side 1, tape 2.)

In '73, '74 that we started the network? -- other department heads who were angry at me. I had a staff that was in total disarray and no budget. We were a month away from the new fiscal year. It was an interesting introduction to becoming a library director. We were facing some serious budget shortfalls. When I look back on it, I'm really not quite

sure how the hell we survived. But we did. In the ten years that I was the library director at Washoe County, we had passed a tax override. We opened branches in shopping centers. We did six partnership libraries with the school districts, two of which became separate buildings as community libraries. We did a lot of cooperative things. I beefed up the reference collection. Oh, and of course along with all of this, back --

Yeah. I have that as the next topic.

What kind of network?

What is now the statewide inter-library loan and statewide database.

Actually what happened was that the Ball-to-Gould Express, which Martha started, was becoming the basis for an inter-library loan network throughout the entire state. Just before Martha left, the very first technology was installed at the State Library. It was a Twix machine.

There was three Twix machines, one in Elko, one in the State Library, and one in Clark County.

Who called you the Twixing Pixie?

Chuck Manley.

But that was the beginning of a network. As that grew, Martha actually had the idea of having a summit at the State Library. So people that you know, I'm sure, from both university libraries who are still around and from all the major public libraries came to the State Library and talked about how to develop a true network that wasn't mail and hand-delivered and using technology. I think that might have been just around the time you were leaving or right after you left. But anyway, Martha even named it. It was called IN, which was Information Nevada. And you were "in" if you could be a part of the information Nevada network. That was the beginning of the era of technology.

My end of the technology in those days, because I was still the government publications librarian, was that someone had started a catalog with state publications, which the State Library operated a network by law and sent state publications to both universities and a few other libraries. And we cataloged them, but then we would have to mail out the cataloging. It was slow. So I wanted to do that on a computer system. Bob

Andril, who was an assistant librarian -- I guess assistant to Hal at the university library, had a program. That's where the keypunch cards came in, an old fashioned program. But in the 70s, it was a big deal. We could keypunch catalog records and send them around the state. So that was my part.

Martha's part was she was -- oh, and there was another part at the State Library which was that Joseph Anderson set aside \$40,000, which was a tremendous amount of money in those days, to see if we could make electronic records for all of the library records we were cataloging centrally for the various rural libraries. We were going to do that through the state computer system. The cost was horribly prohibitive. So we made something called the Title Locator Index. And you could get microfiche with titles and symbols for what library owned them so that we could borrow amongst ourselves. Then Martha one upped the ante. And you can tell them what you did.

Joy Ball and I had gotten together. The university really wanted to install what we call a turnkey system to handle circulation and to use as the basis eventually for building what would then have been a microfilm catalog using a company called Autographics, which I think was the only one around at the time. They didn't have any money, but they had space. I had LSCA money, the Library Services and Construction Act money. So we did a contract with the university. Now, Hal was not quite as recalcitrant about it as Mr. Andrews. I really had to work on -- I had to sit on Mr. Andrews to get him to go along with it, not literally, but figuratively.

So we actually put the equipment in the university library, but it was run by staff from the Washoe County Library. The two people who were sort of the two people responsible were Dorothy MacLind, who was then the head of circulation at the university library and Getchell, and myself. In those days a drive was as big as a washing machine. We used the old heavy doughnut platters. I mean, this is really a long time ago. I mean, my little computer at home is ten times more powerful than our first system. It was my job to go up to the university library to do set copy and to bring the system up in the morning. So at 5 o'clock in the morning, I had a key to the university library. And you know the building talks when it's empty. It's really creepy. I used to drag my poor son out of bed to

come with me because I didn't want to go into that building alone. And we would do set copy.

We spent two years inputting data and training staff. The day we went online in August of '78, everybody panicked. I remember one of my staff saying to me, how can you do this to us, Mrs. Gould? We don't know what we're doing. And I said, what have you been training for for the past two years? Oh, yes. It was pretty funny. But it worked very well for ten years. We had some funny experiences. And I'll tell you, Dorothy MacLind and I knew so little about technology that the day that we brought the system up, the printer printed out supervisor error. And Dorothy and I looked at each other and we literally said, which one of us is the supervisor?

I have to tell another one. Martha told on herself after she went to a major conference and they were training librarians about technology. She said it was wonderful. I always wondered how all those little A's and B's got across those lines.

I didn't realize they were pluses and minuses, zeros and ones. I'll tell you we really didn't know what we were doing.

What I was able to do, at the end of ten years, we were so big at that point that we split, so to speak. That was a very tense time because the university thought they could keep the equipment. They didn't realize that the equipment belonged to Washoe County because it had been bought with our federal dollars. I had the very unpleasant job of having to go to the university and remove the computers. I was not, shall we say, greeted with open arms. But I worked a deal with the county. So the county's man from the information services took over maintaining our system. Then when the county wanted to expand, they suddenly realized that because we could work together and everything could be on the same system, I had the money. They had a brand-new computer room facility and lots of trained staff. So the way the county was able to really implement automation was because the library bought the original equipment using Library Services and Construction Act money.

Then I was able to hire two incredibly wonderful people, both of whom went first to the university library and were told there were no jobs and then came to me and I hired

both of them, though I had a little bit of difficulty with personnel when I told them I wanted to hire John Cooper Smith as our Internet services librarian. And personnel said what? I said, forget it, I'm hiring him as a reference librarian.

The first Internet librarian probably in the state.

He was. And he not only ended up developing our Internet branch, but he ended up really being the Web master for the county, which meant that I got more money in my budget.

Then at the same time, the first library to have a CLSI computer system was Las Vegas, Clark County. They then followed Martha's lead and made an agreement with UNLV and had exactly the same situation for a number of years. Then in 1980, a group of the rural libraries around the State Library came to me because we had been so involved in technology and said -- one of them, Dora Witt from Fallon said, we're ready to give up our bookmobile funding, which the State Library provided, and put it into a computer network. So four of the counties and the State Library went together and developed another copy of what they did. We had a CLSI system at the Carson City Library that was run by the State Library on behalf of these libraries. Eventually, most of the northern rural libraries joined that system, which was called --

CLAN, Centralized Library Automated Network.

Thank you. I only ran that thing ten years.

Explain to me exactly how it worked.

Well, what happens is there is a central site for the computer. Then each of the libraries are connected by telecommunication to that. They input their data and cataloging from long distance. Each night we have the same kind of system Martha had with the big discs. I was the backup person theoretically, but I was over there all the time. If lightning would strike, the system would go down. You had to run backup up every night on those discs, move them in and out. That's why in those days, I had muscles.

And so did I.

And then you could be called out any time of the day or night because that system had to be kept up and running. Telecommunications was horrible. We had microwave

connections and phone lines, just analogue phone lines to run on. Libraries as far away from Elko were running on our system in Carson. So it was a quest, a never-ending quest, until the Internet arrived, a good ten years, a faster telecommunications system. So we ended up all trying to connect all these systems, the CLSI system at the State Library for the rural libraries, the CLSI system -- eventually, Elko got their own and they had their hub. Martha's hub at Washoe County. And the one downside here in Clark. We spent various amounts of money, time, and energy working with the university libraries and the university computing people and the state-computing people trying to manage this thing. I know when the Internet came along and made all of that obsolete, I thought why didn't we just sit around and wait for this thing? Why did we waste ten long years of juggling to make that happen.

And the other thing that Martha can tell you about is that we had that Title Locator Index, which was the basis of the data for the rural libraries, but they didn't own a lot of things. So Martha graciously gave up --

What we did is we created -- when we started inputting our data, don't ask me why I did this because it is a question of serendipity. But we put the Library of Congress cataloging number and the ISBN number in the record. We built our first microfilm catalog. Then I turned the whole thing over to the state of Nevada. That became the basis for the statewide catalog.

Between the title locator index and that huge database, which the other was small compared, people didn't have to input their data over and over and over again. They could just attach their holdings to it. So that gave us a big leap. At one point for about three years, we were the only state in the United States that had a statewide network that included universities and all the public libraries.

And Joanie and I often talked about this because when Maryland brought SALOR up, everybody in the library land in the United States went, oh, how wonderful. Joanie and I had been doing that for years.

We forgot to tell anybody or blow our horn. Really we were so busy that we didn't write articles for journals. We didn't think about those kinds of things at the time. We

were a big part of history.

The state of Nevada has been a big part of history in a couple of things. One is that in the late 60s, before Martha and I arrived, there was a small group in Northern Nevada that was called Silver Circle that signed an inter-local borrowing agreement that said you could borrow or lend from any library in that group and take your book back to any group. But it was very cumbersome. Then after we were there, we were able to manage to get a statewide borrowing agreement. That was the only one in the United States anywhere for many, many years that you could borrow or lend anywhere in the state.

So you could have gotten a book from UNLV and returned it at --

To UNR or Washoe County.

And we would mail it back to the home library.

And that went on for many, many years, probably close to ten years that we did that. That was before Internet. Internet just made everything easier.

I mean, I can still do this. I can walk into Henderson or Boulder City, and they will accept my library card. I can borrow books. We actually have a statewide card now.

We had a statewide card during that period of time. It was a little blue card with a little man on it. Every library pretty much in the state issued that card. Then as libraries needed to run bond issues, develop identities, and all that, they wanted their own PR piece. But now what you do is you just use your local card, and the local system will input your card into their system the first time you use it, and you can use any library in the state. So we're still a little ahead of the game as far as that goes. We're definitely pioneers.

It's wonderful to hear this about Nevada when usually you read something and we're number 48 or 49.

Exactly.

It's wonderful to have this discussion.

When I was appointed to the U.S. National Commission --

Tell me what that commission is.

All right. The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science is a presidential commission that is mandated by law to provide advice to the President and

Congress on the library and information needs of the nation.

And when did you become involved?

Well, I was appointed in '93. Well, I was actually confirmed in the fall of '93 in November. But my big whatever you want to call didn't come through until April of the following year. I was a Clinton appointee, and then I was reappointed in '98. So I served two terms. Inside the beltway they had no concept of the distances and the telecommunications that we have. So one of the things we did after I became a member and Jean Simon was in the chair, Senator Paul Simon's wife -- and she made me the vice chair -- we held hearings in Tahoe and we talked about the telecommunications costs and problems. And out of those recommendations and working with Harry Reid's office came the -- what did we call it -- the ERATE, so that --

That is an acronym for?

Well, it is a discount program for public libraries, school, and rural health clinics --

So you're saying E-R-A-T-E?

Yeah, E, dash, R-A-T-E. It's still in existence, but it's going away shortly.

And what happened is they tied it for schools, for some unknown reason, to the number of kids who are on free lunch. You could get up to as much as a 90-percent discount on your line costs, which was wonderful.

All of us pay a line on our telephone bill called Universal Service, and it's to subsidize rural service and the ERATE. We were able to expand that rural service, Universal Service, to public and school libraries. It has provided millions and millions of dollars in technology costs. That's why pretty much every school and public library in the United States is wired now.

It came as a recommendation from the hearing that we held up in Lake Tahoe. Actually Jean and I testified on the bill before -- I guess it was senate finance. God, I can't remember. It was too long ago. The commission has held a number of hearings. We've given advice. The one thing that we do -- and I used to call it like an angel dancing on the head of a pen. There is a very narrow line between advice on public policy and actually

lobbying. As a presidential commission, you cannot lobby, but you can give advice, which we did with great regularity. And of course having Jean Simon as the chair was a real bonus because Paul was still in the Senate. I remember that Jean picked me up once. And they had only lived in Washington, D.C. for 20 years. I'd come in on a late night, and she picked me up at old National. They hadn't started to build the new one. We got to talking and, all of a sudden, realized that we were in downtown Washington and totally lost. Jean is saying, I don't know where I am and I've only lived here for 20 years. It took us two hours to find our way back to the hotel.

I believe it.

I do, too.

But we need to go back to 1980, if you don't mind.

Is that the bond issue?

There are two things that are important about that. In the 1979 legislature, we had gotten the attention of the legislature enough to tell them that we are doing these wonderful things in libraries. Libraries aren't just sitting there doing nothing. They're growing and they need technology and they need buildings and they need to be supported with some state funds, which we had been trying to get through the legislature since the 60s, some kind of a state appropriation. So they did the thing that the legislature typically does. They gave us a study. The study was chaired by Senator Joe Neal. We had our first hearing in 1980 (maybe in Elko at NLA Nevada Library Association). Another assemblyman from down here in North Las Vegas, Bob Craddick, was on that committee and a few other people. But all came out to Elko.

And I happened to be president of the Nevada Library Association that year. So I became the spokesman at the first hearing and organized the hearing. We all paraded before the committee and told them all the things we thought were important that Nevada's libraries needed. A little later at the bar, Senator Neal came up to me and he said, you don't have a list of recommendations. You just have a lot of things you want. You need a plan. I said, I certainly do. So we set about to put together the first statewide master.

That was in 1979.

Actually, we didn't have it done by then because we didn't -- it came about as a result of that meeting in 1980, that NLA meeting.

That's right.

So we needed it done by 1981, the next legislative session. So we actually had three major meetings. Groups of librarians of all kinds met in Las Vegas, in Elko, and in Reno. We had a facilitator. We came up with a really, I thought, brilliant master plan that had 38 recommendations. They all went to the legislature. There were three really important ones that affected the future of Nevada forever. One was that we needed some statewide funding, which we had not been getting forever. Senator Neal took it upon himself to say, I will get you some money. I won't get you the million dollars you want, but I will get you some money or die trying in this session, which I think he almost did. But he got us a hundred thousand dollars a year which has blossomed now into much, much more money, almost the million we wanted way back when, which doesn't go as far. But that was the biggest foot in the door we could ever have. That was one thing.

Another thing that happened was there was a recommendation to build a new State Library building because we obviously couldn't be in that building forever. We'd been working on that for a long, long time. And we also had picked up the archives and records. So we were now the State Library and Archives. We were picking up some other activities. So we got the blessing of the legislature in that study, the legislative study committee, to pursue a study to build a new State Library.

And the third thing was actually a recommendation initially by Charles Huntsberger who was down here. And Las Vegas was growing, and there was only that one little library over there on Flamingo, pretty much. Then the Las Vegas Library was in a shopping center in Charleston. It had been under the freeway over there in downtown. I'm talking about 1980. That wasn't that long ago. So Charles was in a group that I was in. He said, I think we should run a tax issue for \$10 million to build libraries. And everybody in the room said we couldn't get that on. But it became one of the recommendations. As it became one of the recommendations, we got more and more the idea that we could get that done.

So the legislature -- I mean, they didn't care if we wanted to run a tax issue. So they passed the bill that said we could run a tax issue for \$10 million. So we could do the study. We got our money. Those were the three big things, I think, out of the 38 issues, all of which were important, of course.

So we tried to run the tax issue. It failed the first time. Do you want to give any more details on that?

The only county that passed the tax issue was Washoe County. The problem it faced in Clark County -- it actually passed within the Clark County district. But it didn't pass statewide in Clark County.

It was very close.

It was very close. But we ran it again -- was it two years later?

We ran it in '83, and then we ran it again in '85. At that point things had grown so much in Clark County that Charles Huntsberger, always the enterprising person that needed to build libraries, as well as Washoe and everybody else, had gone out and passed the local issue of 15 million because it was a matching bond. And he wanted to be able to match the entire 10 million. He needed to. But so did everybody else.

So he had \$15 million in hand when it passed the second time. And there became a big problem. That was when Joe was sick. I was acting state librarian. The money was going to come to the State Library's counsel and the state librarian to administer. Here we sit with the most populous county and \$15 million to match the whole thing, the historic county that has needed buildings long before Las Vegas was a so-called upstart at the time, without a match, and then all the rural libraries. So dividing the bulk of the 10 million was a very hot issue with the legislature, with our boards, with each of the libraries, and with me who was kind of hanging out to dry because I hadn't been initially appointed as state librarian. And people sometimes wondered if I had authority.

One of the things that had happened is that they had put something in that said that you had five years to come up the match. Washoe County --

That wasn't in the law. That was a regulation we tried to pass.

Yeah. Anyhow, to make a long story short, in the end Washoe County only got

\$99,000 out of the whole thing. I was very angry. Charles got the brunt of the money. He walked away --

Well, 7 million. And then Henderson got a couple million because Henderson at the time had the worst library in the state. It was falling apart. It was a little rented house with holes in the floor. They only had 15- or 20,000 people in Henderson at the time. But it was the poorest library in the state.

It turned out for Washoe County to be the best thing that ever happened.

How?

Because the fact that we lost what the county commission felt was our share, as did our legislative delegation, including Senator Raggio, who became an ardent supporter of both the Washoe County Library, libraries in general, and Mrs. Gould. So the county commission gave us permission to do our own study. I really think they thought that we were going to go back with a nice little 20-page study. What they got was a --

Blue-ribbon commission to end all.

Yeah. And something like 269 pages of in-depth analysis. That became the basis of all of the growth in Washoe County libraries. When I went to the Washoe County Library, I think we had less than a million dollars in our annual budget. When I left, I had quadrupled the budget. We had opened up the partnership. I negotiated contracts with -- I don't know how I did it. And this is the one thing I kept when I was on the national commission, I kept talking to Elise, which is the Organization of Library Educators, that when you teach library administration, you have to have public administration courses. No one taught me how to do budgets. No one taught me about tax law. I didn't know diddly-squat about personnel issues. We learned literally by the hair of our chinny- chin chins how to do this.

Absolutely.

But the entire growth of the Washoe County -- people in Washoe County were so angry that we lost that money that they came out in droves. In the end, in '94, we passed a tax override that allowed us -- this is a story I love. The way we did this is we wrote the ballot question that the tax override money could only be used for expanded, new, and/or

improved services. And it passed. It was the only tax issue in '94 that passed statewide. And the county said we're not going to fight you on this, but we're not going to give you any support. I said okay. The friends raised about \$20,000, which is not a hell of a lot of money to run a campaign on. I don't know how the hell we did it. But what we did was a flier, an information flier, that we literally gave to every adult patron over months in which we said this is what we promise you will get if the tax override goes through.

(End side 2, tape 2.)

-- able to open up libraries seven days a week and expand services and start the planning for new branches. And that's the year that I retired. I said, you know, the library now has all this money. It's ready for the next big jump. I was 62 years old. In '63, I would have celebrated 50 years in being a librarian. And you know what? I was tired. So I retired. I called Nancy Cummings, who used to work for the Clark County Library District, and then went to Yuma for a number of years. We had kept in touch over the years. And I knew that Nancy wanted to come back to Northern Nevada because that's where she was born and that's where she had lived until her mother married and moved down here.

Her mother is Ruthe Deskin.

Was Ruthe Deskin.

She died recently.

Anyhow, Nancy was appointed as my successor. Her expertise is really in building buildings. And the Washoe County Library has absolutely bloomed. But I wasn't ready to be there to take it through that next -- we needed someone there who had a construction background. That's something else they don't teach you in library school. I was great at doing strategic planning. And I'm a damn good politician. But I don't know diddly-squat about building libraries.

Isn't it great when we know ourselves?

Sure. Absolutely.

And it was time for me to go and time for someone else to come in. And Nancy has been there now for a little over ten years and has done a phenomenal job.

I'm going to come back and talk to you about some of your other appointments. I know that you're getting ready to go on a trip because of one of those appointments.

Right.

Well, I was going to say that Martha was absolutely right about Washoe. It turned out, as painful as it was at the time, it was good for Washoe and it was also good for down here because they had passed the \$15 million tax issue. They got another seven in the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. Those buildings were so successful that they were able to pass another hundred-million-dollar issue. So all the buildings you see here were over \$122 million. That doesn't include Henderson who got their one building for about 2 million.

That turned out to be my baptism by fire because I had only been appointed officially as state librarian a couple months, and we were responsible for monitoring the federal money. Martha and I were in a few lawsuits. Remember flying down here to testify in a few lawsuits? Governor Bryan was really wondering what he had done when this came up because he appointed me officially in July. And in August or September, the City of Henderson was so excited -- the powers that be there were so excited at that moment to have \$2 million in their hand. They started to develop a whole complex over there, city complex. The library was the focal point of it, the way it had been designed, and such a focal point that they were going to use most of the \$2 million to design -- this was thanks to their architect, not the people themselves -- they were planning on designing cooling ponds that they would pay for with the 2 million and walkways to connect all the buildings with the 2 million. And then their idea, which they told me very directly, was that the library could go out and raise what they needed to finish the building. So I threatened to withhold their \$2 million. They threatened by sending letters to the Attorney General and the Governor to get my job. This all played out in the Henderson paper, which thank God only came out once a week. But for two months, you can see me called everything in there.

Did you keep those articles?

Oh, the library has them. In fact, I'm just retired as the Henderson director. And when I came down, somebody looked that up. She came in and she said, I don't think these are very complimentary about you. Do you want to keep them in your office? And I said, no, they're fine. But it was an out-and-out war, which several times Governor Bryan [Richard] called me to my office and said, what are you doing? Get off the front page. But he had faith in me that I was right. And the whole thing fell apart in a lawsuit. I had a big supporter in Senator Gibson [Jim] who was there at the time. And he believed that I was right, as well. They had to trust me a little bit, the new state librarian.

They lost quite a bit of money in all of that process, but they ended up building a building that was smaller and not as grandiose as they wanted. That was the only one they had when I came down here. So that was a tough time for me, but worthwhile.

Then the third thing that I mentioned was that we did get the authority to build a new state library. And to make a ten-year story short because it took ten years to get the funding through, first, the planning phase and then an architectural phase and then a construction phase and then the bid came in higher. So another round of bidding and all that. Then building, it took a total of ten years. But in 1993, we moved into a new State Library and Archives, which is the fabulous building in Carson City that is sort of the focal point of everything.

And I've never seen it. So I have to go up and see it.

You do.

Not only that, there is research that I need to do up there, as well.

Well, you'll enjoy it. It's really, really nice.

It's a state of the art building. It's fabulous.

So that master plan that we started in 1980 and those three major recommendations changed the faces of libraries from every corner of the state.

Forever.

One of the things that impressed me when I first moved to Nevada in 1992 was the library. That was so impressive to me. I think it's a beautiful building.

So many people say that. But at the time people called them Taj Mahals. They

called them a waste of the taxpayers money, this, that, and the other. So it was always an uphill battle, but it was always worth it. Now I see in all the architecture magazines, they're starting to recognize the contributions libraries make in all these communities. And that's really gratifying.

When you come up North, I'll take you on a tour of the new branches that we have built in Washoe County. Now, we still have the six partnership libraries with the school district and a list of schools that want to become partnership libraries. And then we finally went back to bookmobile service because now the technology is such that a bookmobile can be self-contained and you don't have to be tied to a landline to run equipment. The bookmobile is wireless. It uses wireless technology and is extremely -- I mean, it goes out into parts of the county where they don't have good library service. We go to preschools. We go to senior housing. The public adored the bookmobile, and they're raising money now for a second one.

Oh, that's wonderful.

Which is great because I cut my teeth on bookmobile service. I used to drive a bookmobile in Oklahoma.

You could do that again. Why not?

That's right.

No. I think my days of driving...

Now, tell me what role, because you know I want something about UNLV. We're getting ready for our 50th anniversary. Tell me more about the role that UNLV has played in some of these things that you've talked about today.

Well, for me, one of the first people I met was the government publications librarian, Alice Brown --

I just interviewed her this week.

She still volunteers at the Henderson Library and many other places.

She's really a phenomenal person.

Yeah. So we became friends, and we worked on a lot of cooperative projects with UNR, UNLV, and the State Library. We were the three libraries that did the first

cooperative purchasing in the state. And what we would do is buy these very expensive -- remember the American Statistics Index that you brought up -- big databases that were on microfilm at the time rather than online. And we would purchase them, one library or the other, from a cooperative grant and then share them back and forth. That was very important to the research aspect.

Then UNLV, being a really young library, I actually attended it when it was called Nevada Southern, I think, in 1967 for a class. Since you're talking about your history, I can't remember who the professor was, but he was involved in transplanting bighorn sheep out to Boulder City where I live now and look at the sheep. And we talked about that in every class. And then we wrote a paper about libraries at the end. So whatever...I learned a lot about bighorn sheep back then. We actually did the cooperative purchasing. Then UNLV's library and computing center, thanks again to Bob Andril that I mentioned --

Oh, he did a wonderful job.

-- did a lot of the initial -- for free -- a lot of the initial transferring of things from one format to another. So we had databases sitting on the university computer thanks to his pioneering efforts. And the very first database that was put out in electronic form in the state was one of state publications, which was a cooperative between UNLV and the State Library. And we would go up to UNR and run our cards through. So we had a person up there. So those two libraries were very important in that.

We also had a statewide computer user group that UNLV started and UNR. And I was a member because of this cooperative thing. It was called UNSLUG, University of Nevada System Library User Group. And it was such a horrible name that the community colleges, UNR, UNLV and basically myself had T-shirts made that said UNSLUG because we thought what is that? It sounds like something terrible. But those were the good old days. We met routinely, like maybe once a month at some points, to keep all the computing balls in the air and keep all the telecommunication things in the air. That went on probably from about 1979 until about 1989 when the world began to change.

We got the Internet.

UNLV's library was very instrumental in that. Another thing, being a new library,

as I started to say, is they didn't have a lot of government publications from the historic days. And Hal Erickson, who was the director at the time, did come to the State Library and we identified things that probably were more appropriate in a university library than a state library. They transferred a number of our old government publications down there. So we were part of that collection.

Hal was, in many ways, a visionary. As the director of the library at UNLV, he let Bob Andrew do all of these things and encouraged it and was responsible for building the addition to the round building.

I think I'm wrong about the state publications being the first. Because Bob really got into that through the union list serials. And he was --

Oh, that's right.

When I came to the state, he was working away on this little project where you had a database of every magazine and periodical and journal in every library and with a holding statement --

That's right.

-- so that everybody knew who had what.

I had forgotten that.

And that's where it really started at UNLV. And then he went on to be involved with the whole union list of serials in the intermountain states, which had been published in a big book. But, yeah, isn't that cool that -- I mean, pioneers here. There were a lot of them.

One of the things that we used to talk about is that Nevada had a small population in those days and not a hell of a lot of money. And survival meant that we had to cooperate and share resources. And that's what we did among all the different types of libraries.

So we never had this North-South rivalry with the libraries?

Yes, we did.

Yes, we did. But the North-South rivalry with the libraries really showed its head mostly when we had to split the bond issue. But at the same time, everybody was for the

common good. So when you had to come together to make something happen, you could do it. But we had the North-South rivalry.

And as I said, I was very angry when Washoe County lost what we thought was our fair share. But, you know, we turned it around. And part of the difference, too, is that Las Vegas is a district library. So they are their own government. Henderson is a district. They are their own government. They have their own tax base. Washoe County is an agency of local government.

They compete with police, fire, and other things. They have to fight for it.

And we have over the years competed very successfully.

Yes, you have. Well, one of the things that reminded me of is in that same study that I was talking about with Senator Neal and Assemblyman Craddick is that the two of them came up with a slogan, because after listening to our tales of woe -- I don't know which one said it first, but everybody started saying it -- they have to get together and share their poverty. Because we really were such a young state and so small and we really didn't have any depth of collections. People would move here and say the libraries don't have anything, you know.

The oldest and the most complete collection was the Washoe County because we actually got the money in 2002. But we opened for business in a Carnegie building down where the post office is on the Truckee River in 1904. So we just celebrated our 100th anniversary. We have kicked off an endowment program, of which I am now the chair. God help me. We're calling it the Second Century Endowment for the Washoe County. We're starting out very modestly and hope that it will grow.

But the difficulty in dealing with a library system that is an agency of local government is that people already see that there is a tax base because we're local government. They don't see us as a separate entity such as a district. That has its pluses and its minuses. And one of the things that I did, and Nancy has followed in my footsteps, is that I became a very active member of the county's management team.

Well, John MacIntire, who was the county manager, didn't realize until I pointed it out to him that he couldn't fire me because by law library directors of county library

systems that are part of local county government can only be hired, fired, evaluated, or terminated, whatever, by the library board. So that gave me an incredible free hand to do things.

Say things.

And say things. And I know that one year we were faced with a terrible shortfall when they did the tax shift. The State of Nevada was almost bankrupted. God, that was a bad year. I was told by the county that we would have to slash 10 percent of our budget. I think our budget then was barely a million dollars. It would have decimated it. So I worked with the staff and I worked with the library board. And we decided that there were two things we could do. We could nickel and dime the services, or we could close a branch and take the pot of money. So we decided to close the Sparks branch because it was the closest to Reno Central. Their operating budget was just what we needed. But the staff then could be sent to other branches to expand their hours. Well, the you-know-what hit the fan big time. John Mac called me into his office, and he laid down an ultimatum. And he said, Mrs. Gould, you will reopen the Sparks branch or I'm going to fire you. And I said, John, A, we are not going to reopen the Sparks branch and, B, you can't fire me. I don't work for you. I work for the board of library trustees, and they signed off on this. And in the end, we were the only agency in the county that was not cut. The other department heads were not happy with me. But we reopened Sparks. We didn't get an increase, but we didn't have to give up that 10 percent of our budget.

That's great. You've already told me how you ended your career at the library as a director. How did you end your career as the state librarian?

Well, I had an act three actually because after I had finished the State Library and we moved in 1993, I thought, good, I have accomplished my most important goal, and things will just move along now. But Bob Miller was governor then, and he had another idea, which was that he was going to reorganize state government and consolidate from 40 department heads, of which I was one, to 18 department heads. So we reorganized all of state government. And the reorganization for the state librarian in archives was to combine into, in effect, a department of cultural affairs. We have six museums statewide. Historic

preservation, arts council, and the State Library, and archives were the four divisions. So we did. We worked on that for two years.

Then Governor Miller chose me to run that department, which I should have been extremely grateful for and excited except he also didn't want to replace me because of cost-cutting. Every department had to pick their staffs from the existing staffs. Not every department, but my department had to also maintain the level of the old job. So I could have chosen someone else and taken them away from their old job and made them state librarian or I could do both jobs. And we were in so many buildings and had so many things going on and we were barely keeping the balls in the air. So I very unwisely chose to do both. And I kept being promised every two years that we'll fill your job. We'll fill your job. It kept not happening because we'd get to the legislature, and the legislature would say, oh, you're doing excellent. So I was pretty worn out in 1999. But it was a wonderful thing to do because we were so diverse at the time -- so disparate, I should say, that we called ourselves the Department of Museums, Library, and Arts because everybody wanted to have their name on the first line. It took six more years to get to be the Department of Cultural Affairs, which it is now. It's a really wonderful and exciting department that has had its ups and downs like any kind of a major consolidation like that. But they're doing very, very well. I was working like seven days a week most of that time in that six years -- or at least six days a week and long hours because all those organizations have tons of events. And if you don't show up and wave the flag --

Yeah. You're a problem.

You have to go someplace almost every night. So I was really, really tired. So I was planning to retire early. I thought, no problem, I'll go through '99, I'll go through 2000, and I'll retire. Then after my little fiasco with Henderson, I had gotten to know their library board very well. They were my friends because I was supporting the library board as opposed to the city. So one of the people who was still on the library board called me and he said -- my husband and I had bought a condo in Boulder City, my new husband, Mr. Tinker. So he said, I heard you retired and moved to Boulder City. Why don't you apply for director at Henderson? I said, I didn't retire. I didn't move to Boulder City. I

was working down here at least a week a month because of my job because so many of those agencies like the State Museum and the Boulder City Railroad Museum, Arts Council, they're all down here. And that's why I had the condo. And I said, I'm going to retire soon, so no thanks. Then he called me back again. Then he called me back again. And another long story short. I said, oh, I give up. I'll apply. And they called me down just to talk about it. And they offered me the job on the spot.

Now, which job is this?

That was director of Henderson Library.

How did you feel after being state librarian and then head of all the cultural and now you're going to become head of Henderson Library?

Well, first of all, that job was my life. Even after I said yes, I would come here, and I told the governor -- it was governor Guinn at time -- he said would I stay until the end of the legislative session. I said, I don't think they'll let me stay until the end of the legislative session, but I'll see if I can stay until our budget hearings are over. So the budget hearings were over on March 8th. Every day from the day they offered me the job, which was around Christmas, until then, I thought lightning would strike and I wouldn't be there because that was my life. I had been there every day for 27 years. I just couldn't see myself there even though I had said yes.

But I said yes for a number of reasons. One, I was tired and I had told them I will only stay three to five years because I can retire. And they said fine. They wanted to do some really exciting things. They wanted to build a new building, which we managed to do, the Paseo Verde Library. They wanted to run a tax issue, which we did twice and lost. We developed a master plan for the city, just fun things that I really kind of wanted to do. And they wanted to pay me more than the state pays, which all county agencies -- I mean, the disparity -- there have been articles written in all of our papers using me and several others as examples of how people leave to come here to the department of education who -- Mack Elistoy, for example, I don't know if you know him, but he was head of budget there, came here for a rather large raise many years ago. We are bound with examples. When you're trying to set up your retirement and you know your last three years

will be based on that, that was a motivating factor.

But the biggest motivating factor was the positive attitude. Sadly to say, there's a lot of negativity at the state. I usually insulated myself from it because I'm not a negative person. But there's just a lot of, no, you can't do that. No, you can't do that. You don't have the money. You don't have the resources. You can't do that. And when I went to Henderson, the clouds parted. Anything that I said "how about," they said "when?" When can I have that done? Good, let's do it. I had five glorious years of people asking me how soon I could get something done and not telling me I couldn't do it. So I will be eternally grateful for going to Henderson.

And she did a fantastic job.

Yeah. But at the time, you know, it did seem like it just couldn't happen. But I loved that job. So it was a great way to end my library career.

So now, you have already retired from Henderson?

Yeah. I just retired last year from Henderson.

Well, one of the things that I'm doing with Henderson is I'm consulting with some of the librarians over there because they are going to collect the oral history of Henderson.

Well, that's the project I'm working on. I started it. But I've just been trying to get out of it. They paid me last year to do some things. And I'm so busy because I live both North and South now. So I'm glad they're getting you. That's wonderful. I've done a few of the interviews and identified a few people. That's where they are.

I'm just consulting, meaning that I'm training them how to do it --

Excellent. Wonderful.

-- conduct interviews. And I'm going to critique some of their first work.

So you're working with Shannon?

Yes. And Michelle.

Good. Michelle. Wonderful. That's perfect. Good.

Well, you know, with my job at the university, this is what I'm allowed to do.

This is just part of the job that I created.

Well, this is the perfect timing because the other wonderful thing that happened to me at Henderson was they had their 50-year anniversary just before Las Vegas had its 100. I worked with Monica Simmons, the city clerk, who's very interested in the history. She had hired one of my former employees at the State Library, Jackson Armstrong Ingram to work on this project. Then he left and went to Alaska. He passed away sadly. We were very excited about the fact that Henderson at 50 years had so many people living in the city who can tell you everything about what it was like. So we actually, as part of that 50-year celebration, were trying to decide what could the library do to contribute to this because we're not a city agency. We are a district, as Martha said. What we came up with was we will have these celebrations of the old-timers. So we had three big gatherings of people from the city, some of which now, a mere three years later, have passed on sadly. They had reunions. And the third reunion was the best reunion because we had gotten together a mailing list with the help of a couple people working from my Rotary who are in there of about 300 people that they knew who were still living who were here in the 40s. We met and had a big dinner under the stars at the museum out there in Boulder City. We had 150 people who came that were from that era, and they had a wonderful time. Then we had the library's 60th anniversary because the library is actually older than the city. More of them came, and they brought us things like the first telephone from the dial telephone. The first phone call on a dial telephone, they brought us that. They brought us Basic High School jackets. We have a complete yearbook collection. That was a fun year getting that going. So that's what started this momentum of we've identified all these people, let's get them interviewed.

Okay. So that is what's happening now. So that's wonderful.

My last question to the two of you before I just allow you to talk a little more.

This state is a state known for its gaming and we do it well. How has gaming played a part whatsoever, in any way, with the libraries?

Well, actually, I would have to broaden that with the cultural institutions at all since that's been my thing. Interestingly, we wouldn't have the support financially that we do if we didn't have the gaming taxes. So we totally rely on them. As far as getting

support for events and that kind of thing, all the state museums, libraries, arts councils, everybody else, they have never wanted to do things that encourage people to do something other than come to the gaming table. So, for example, when I was in Carson City, when they built the Silver Legacy, we tried to get them to use some real artifacts instead of the fake ones they used. We had the real train that could have set on the tracks at Reno. We had the real things. And simply say this is from the Nevada State Railroad Museum. These costumes are from the Nevada Historical Society or the Nevada State Museum. And I'm not just singling out Silver Legacy. That's just an example. There was never any interest in doing something cooperative like that. Down here, I have found that the casinos are more generous in giving grants to the community. Maybe Martha has had better luck at Reno. But, for example, Station Casinos can almost always be counted on to give something to any event happening at the Paseo Verde Library. Green Valley Casino is across the street. Those kinds of one-on-ones work --

(End side 1, tape 3.)

My last comment was just they haven't been major supporters of funding for cultural events even in the way that, say, banks and other institutions in Nevada have been.

What we found in Washoe County is pretty much the same thing. We've never had a lot of support from the gaming entities, per se. From individuals, yes.

True. Absolutely.

But what we have found in Washoe County, which is much more diversified, I think, than they are at this point in Clark County, is that businesses have been incredibly supportive. So when we do functions at the library, we get a lot of support from the local business community. And slowly, Harrah's and the Atlantis are the two casinos that have been, I think, the most supportive of the Washoe County Library and of the friends of Washoe County Library.

But with Indian gaming having such an enormous impact on the casinos in the North, the community, as such, has really diversified and we're bringing in a lot of businesses. We have the huge business park developments in South Trukee Meadows. Lance Gilman is now doing the Tahoe Industrial Park, which sort of is to the east of town

and spreads between Washoe County and Storey County. So we're seeing a diversification of our tax base.

But the problem that we have in Reno is because we are a county agency. It is more difficult for us to go out -- over the years before I left, we managed to set up a situation with the county that they sort of left us alone and let us do our own thing. And we now have a development officer. We have a public information officer. So we're doing a lot more things. And we're doing a lot of cooperative things with Parks and Recreation. But gaming, per se, has never been a strong supporter of anything cultural.

No, absolutely not.

I think they're beginning to realize, at least in the North, that maybe that's been a bit of a mistake.

I think they're realizing here in Clark County, as well.

Absolutely. The modern letters program there and the racing --

That's at Mandalay Bay.

Mandalay -- Glen Christianson has been fabulous. One of the things that Henderson Library did cooperatively with Humanities, which I'm on both, is the book festival. And a lot of that came from our cooperation with the university and was able to be developed through that and then the funding through the Mandalay Bay.

And I think that next year we have to have more publicity for the book festival.

Oh, absolutely. The book festival has to have -- separate from that from the beginning, that we always seem to just collect enough funding to get the authors here and get them paid, the few that actually charge, and get the thing together. But we never have a big PR budget. And we have to have a big PR budget.

Can we compress it maybe?

Well, it was compressed. They've expanded this year. In the two previous years, it was over three days -- Thursday, Friday, Saturday -- primarily in Henderson. We had 5- to 8,000 people in the first two years totally attending the events. So I wasn't on the committee this year because I was doing something else. But the committee did decide if

they spread it out at events all over town over a week or so, they would attract a wider audience. I haven't heard what numbers it came up with, but I'm worried that it wasn't...

And we tried doing a Great Basin Book Festival, and it sort of fell apart mostly because our town didn't give us the support we wanted. They didn't quite understand that a strong book festival would be a viable part of our month-long Art Town, which is incredibly successful.

The book festivals are very much an example of the question that you asked. When I was at the state with Cultural Affairs, we hired the same company that puts on Art Town to do a study down here for us as to why we could have a Chitaqua program or a women's history program or something in Reno that would draw 2- to 500 people, and we'd have it down here and we were lucky to have 20. And we just couldn't break that barrier. The report is really interesting if you're interested in seeing it. They called it the noise factor. They said that there is so much going on here and that you couldn't even have a public relation budget big enough to shout over at homes or whoever. So you have to do that advertising in a different manner in a targeted audience, pod of people, and build from that. Well, that's the report we got at the state.

With that in mind, that's sort of how we built the Henderson Book Festival is we had a target audience that we mailed to. But it didn't grow. In fact, it was the same people. It was wonderful, but we weren't reaching out. And even year before last, we tried to have an event at Sam's Town. We had 4- or 500 people for the keynote speaker, and I was thrilled. We had 2,000 for John Irving, and I was thrilled. But that was because it was on the campus and we could reach that audience. But to get an event publicized in a community like Las Vegas that is not a big showroom show, even though you're a local, you're not seeing that. The other thing that we were talking about, the reading that's so critical is the Neon -- well, the R-J is our sponsor, and they put hundreds of ads in the first two years. They did an insert with eight pages the first two years. They did everything to promote this. Then you look at the readership of the newspapers, and you find out that people aren't even looking at that. We have most of it on the Web site.

One of the reasons that I think things are more successful in Washoe County is that

we are so small in physical size.

And there's less competition.

Less noise.

Yeah, less noise. Absolutely.

Well, I appreciate this so much. This has been wonderful.

Oh, you're wonderful.

I can't think of a better way to have spent my morning.

Oh, really. Thank you.

I learned so much. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

Well, we've always said that we needed to talk about --

Somebody besides ourselves, huh?

It sounds very egoistical for me to say that the libraries in the state of Nevada would not be where they are today if it were not for the work that Joan Kerschner did and, to some extent, for the work that I did.

Oh, to some extent.

Oh, let's not be modest. Thank you both.

Thank you very much.

I'm flattered.

(End side 2, tape 3.)

A

Anderson Elementary School, 7
 Anderson, Joseph, 19, 26, 30, 33, 34,
 38
 Andrews, 31, 32, 35, 38

B

Baker Memorial Library, 1
 Ball, Joy, 29, 38
 Barrett, Howard, 25
 Biloxi, 15, 16
 Bluff Elementary School, 1
 Bryan, Richard, 33, 34, 35

C

Carnegie Library, 2
 Carson City, 19, 21, 24, 32, 33, 40,
 51, 60
 Carson City Public Library, 19
 Clark County Library District, 23,
 48, 49
 Connecticut, 1
 Cushman, Jerry, 13

D

Dartmouth, 1
 Dr. Becker, 35

E

Ellen Adams, 1

F

Faye, Tom, 9
 Fiske Free Public Library, 5
 Ford Foundation, 35
 Ford, Jean, 33

G

Glasgow, Montana, 3, 4, 14, 16

H

Henderson, 8, 42, 47, 49, 50, 52, 54,
 57, 58, 59, 62, 63

I

Indian Springs, 3, 16, 17, 19, 21
 Indiana State University, 3
 Indiana University, 4

J

Japan, 18, 36

K

Kentucky, 2, 3, See, See, See, See

L

Las Vegas, 3, 4, 13, 16, 20, 23, 40,
 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 54, 59, 63
 Las Vegas Public Library, 23
 Laxalt, Robert, 33
 Legislative Council Bureau, 29, 30
 Library of Congress, 9, 41
 Lieberman, Joe, 10
 Lincoln, 2, 3
 Lincoln, Abraham, 2
 Lithuania, 4
 Los Angeles, 13, 18, 24
 Los Angeles Public Library, 13
 Los Angeles State University, 17

M

MacLind, Dorothy, 38, 39
 McCain, John, 10
 Michel, Peter, 11
 Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, 20

N

National Archives, 10
 Nevada, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19,
 21, 23, 25, 30, 31, 32, 37, 41, 42,
 45, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 60, 61,
 64

Nevada Library Association, 30, 31,
45
New Hampshire, 1, 4
New Mexico, 5, 13, 18, 23
New Mexico State Library, 13
New York, 5, 9
New York Public Library, 12
New York Times, 9

O

O'Callaghan, Michael, 31
Odessa, Russia, 4
Ohio River, 2
Osage Indian Reservation, 13

P

Paulson, Billie Mae, 32
Predator, 17

R

Reno, 9, 14, 17, 18, 27, 32, 36, 45,
55, 60, 61, 63

S

San Francisco Public Library, 8
Santa Fe, 18
Santayana, 11
Selma, 15
Simmons, 2, 12, 59
Simmons College, 2
State Library, 19, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30,
31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 45,
46, 50, 52, 53, 56, 59
Stevens Junior High, 1
Swackhammer, 29, 30, 31

T

Tonopah, 32

U

UCLA, 13, 17
University of Michigan, 1
UNR, 6, 18, 42, 52, 53

V

Venetian, 1
Verostic, Frank, 17, 36

W

Washington Post, 9
Washoe County Library, 18, 22, 26,
31, 32, 35, 38, 47, 49, 61
Way Middle School, 1
Wesleyan College, 3
White, Etta, 13
Wilkins, Benny Tate, 13