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An Interview with Mary Hausch

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

Voices of the Historic John S. Park Neighborhood

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

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This project was the brainchild of Deborah Boehm, Ph.D. and Patrick Jackson who taught at UNLV and resided in the John S. Park Neighborhood. As they walked their community, they realized it was a special place that intersected themes of gender, class, race/ethnicity, religion, sexuality and gentrification. Patrick and Deborah learned that John S. Park had been listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and that original homeowners, local politicians, members of the gay community, Latino immigrants, artists and gallery owners and an enclave of UNLV staff all lived in the neighborhood. Therefore, they decided that the history of this special place had to be preserved, joined with the Oral History Research Center at UNLV Libraries and wrote a grant that was funded by the Centennial Committee.

The transcripts received minimal editing that included the elimination of fragments, false starts and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the narrative. These interviews have been catalogued and can be found as non-circulating documents in Special Collections at UNLV's Lied Library.

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Interview with Mary Hausch

April 7 and April 10, 2009
Conducted by Claytee White

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PROLOGUE

It was during the year 1971 when Mary Hauer's arrival in Las Vegas with her girlfriends, a Ohio University friend, the University of Colorado and a friend from Vietnam War era and given her a rooming from first marriage papers. The opportunity of the trip and the enjoyment of the weather resulted in her staying in Las Vegas and getting a teaching position at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. For the next thirteen years, she worked her way up the newspaper ladder, served local education boards that included newspaper, a groundbreaking series of PTA-NEA was started, and she became the first woman city editor and managing editor of the newspaper.

The career path was filled with obstacles. It was an era of cultural roadblocks and competing factions. Eventually, Mary was passed over for the ultimate opportunity at a 4-3 editorial position with a staff-level "executive editor" position. She describes the ensuing difficult experience and how she ended up teaching at UNLV. During her robust journalism career, Mary's personal life also had some rocky times, but ended happily when she met and married Bob Coffin, a long-time partner for a newspaper. Bob is now retired and works for the John S. Park neighborhood council. The couple bought the Gubler House in John S. Park and Mary describes the charm of the house as well as the neighborhood, historically and currently.

Mary was a strong party person in the effort to have John S. Park designated a historic neighborhood. This involved all sorts of meetings, parties of a community, the use of historical photos, stories from what she calls the "warrior phase" to the "bunches" to the north street by now residents. She also talks about the challenges for those looking to preserve the historic designation for their neighborhood.



Preface

It was spring vacation 1971 when Mary Hausch arrived in Las Vegas with four girlfriends. As a Ohio University senior, the closing of college campuses due to anti-Vietnam War protests had given her a reprieve from final tests and papers. The spontaneity of the trip and her enjoyment of the weather resulted in her applying for, and getting, a reporter position at the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. For the next nineteen years, she worked her way up the newspaper ladder, covered local education issues that included desegregation, a groundbreaking series of POW-MIA war stories, and the Nevada legislature. She became the first woman city editor and managing editor of the newspaper.

Her career journey was not always smooth. It was an era of cultural roadblocks and emerging feminism. Eventually, Mary was passed over for the ultimate appointment of *R-J* editor and was placated with a short-lived “associate editor” position. She describes the ensuing civil rights complaints and how she segued into teaching at UNLV. During her robust journalism career, Mary’s personal life also hit some rocky times, but ended happily when she met and married Bob Coffin, a then reporter for the newspaper. [Bob is interviewed separately for this John S. Park neighborhood series.] The couple bought the Gubler House in John S. Park and Mary describes the charm of the house as well as the neighborhood, historically and currently.

Mary was a tireless participant in the efforts to have John S. Park designated a historic neighborhood. This two-part interview paints a picture of a community that has weathered various phases from what she calls the “widow phase” to the “homeless” to the rebirth stirred by new residents. She also offers advice and thoughts for those looking to achieve the historic designation for their neighborhood.

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV

Voices of the Historic John S. Park Neighborhood



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Mary Hausch 4/7/2009
Signature of Narrator Date

Claytee D. White 4/9/2009
Signature of Interviewer Date

Interview with Mary Hausch

April 7 and April 10, 2009 in Las Vegas, Nevada
Conducted by Claytee White

This is April 7th, 2009, and I'm in the house of Mary Hausch. This is Claytee White from the Oral History Research Center. So how are you today, Mary?

I am great, thank you, Claytee.

Wonderful. Mary, let me just tell you just a tiny bit about what I'm going to do. I'm going to do a life history, so I'm going to start asking you about where you grew up and things like that, and then we'll move, till today.

OK.

OK, good. So, tell me about your early life and your family life and where you grew up.

I was born in Akron, Ohio and I lived there, until I was about twenty, so I went to high school there, and everything, and I had three sisters. And very much a fifties (1950s), typical kind of childhood. Mother didn't work, stayed home and, you know, my father worked.

What kind of work?

He was a research chemist for Firestone for forty years.

So did you get to travel with the family during the summers?

Oh, my father was the big believer in the epic family vacations. How did you know? And we took a three-week trip once, camping, through Yellowstone, Grand Tetons [National Parks], you know, across the country, down through California, even went to Tijuana [Mexico] for an afternoon, came through Las Vegas [Nevada], my first visit to Las Vegas. I'm not sure how old I was, maybe about nine years old. We stayed in a motel on

Fremont Street. And, yeah, we took those vacations every summer. My father went to all fifty states in the country in his lifetime and that was a big deal, to him, so he wanted us to see as much of the country, as we could, and we did.

So how was it for your father to live with four women?

Well, I think the hard part was on those family vacations, going to bathrooms because, you know, he had five women going to the bathroom and him, you know, so. [Laughing] And back then you didn't pump your own gas, so he didn't really have anything to do while we were going to the bathroom.

So, where did you go to school?

Well, I went to elementary and high school in Akron, and then I went to Ohio University. And by the time—it was interesting—by the time—my senior year in high school, my family moved to Pennsylvania, a suburb of Trenton. My father went to manage an adhesives plant for Firestone. And it was my senior year in high school, so my uncle had to adopt me, so I could keep going to school there. I went to court with my father and my uncle, and my uncle, adopted me, and that way I had residency in Akron so I could go to high school there, and that way I also kept my Ohio residency, although that wasn't my intention. And I went to Ohio University and my parents funneled my tuition through my uncle.

How was it to leave the family? As close as you must have been, how was it to leave the family and stay there while they moved to Pennsylvania?

Well, I was the second child, so my older sister was already in college. And the day they left it was really sad. I remember sitting on the front steps of my house crying, because my family just left. But I was living with a girlfriend, somebody I wasn't really that close

to but it was somebody whose mother would take me in, and Stephanie had her own car, and seemed to have a lot of money, you know, and so we were allowed to go to drive-ins, the kind where you eat. We were allowed to go to Gardner Brothers and Swenson's, you know, all the time. And so it was fun. And I was co-editor of my high school paper, so, I couldn't leave. And I had a good time and then I wanted to go to school in Ohio, so it just kind of worked out.

That's interesting. How did your mom feel about allowing you to be adopted?

I don't think she cared. [Laughing] You know, everybody knew it was what it was, it was a formality that there was no way I could stay in the school. In fact, it was somebody in the school that suggested it to me, said, well, you know, you have to have a legal guardian here.

Yes. What was your major?

Journalism.

How did you decide to do that? What inspired you?

I think when I was young I loved the Brenda Starr comic strip and I read that all the time. And I was a very good writer so, I don't know, I put out a family newspaper, a little one-sheet newspaper when I was about in junior high. Then I worked on the junior high paper, and I worked on the high school paper. I was very focused. I knew what I wanted to do. And the summer of my junior year in high school I went to journalism camp, at Ohio University, so that settled where I was going to go to school. Very smart of them to have those because otherwise I probably would've gone to Kent State [University], because they had a really good journalism school too.

So, I went to Ohio University, but I had a high school boyfriend who was a cadet at the [U.S.] Air Force Academy. And so, Tom's locked up at the academy, he can't date at all, but I of course dated in high school. But Tom was always my Christmas and my summer boyfriend, and I wanted to be with him, so I went through college in three years, so that I could be in Colorado Springs [Colorado] for Tom's senior year at the academy. So I just stormed through school and I went to school, went only one summer, and I was resident advisor most of the time. My three regular years, I stayed in the same dorm, and the dorms were in a way almost like sororities. So, I stayed at Crawford Hall the whole time and I was a resident advisor there for three years, so I had my own private room and I loved it.

And my last quarter of college—we were on the quarter system—to keep from going to summer school, I got permission to take twenty-four credits. And the normal load was fifteen or eighteen but I had good grades so the dean gave me permission to take twenty-four credits. And I was starting to unravel, about April. I had a recurring nightmare that I was missing a class, that there was some class I never ever went to. And, you know, I'm trying to be a resident advisor, I'm just going to all these classes. It's a nightmare, and this is the height of the Vietnam protests, in 1970, and every day you walked across the college green, there were sit-ins and demonstrations, so there are tons of distractions.

And then the tragedy at Kent State happened. And Kent State, that was a fluke that happened there. It should've happened at Ohio University in the mind of people at Ohio University, that we were the most militant school in Ohio, and I'm dating a cadet that wants to go off and "kill gooks" as he put it, so I'm not into that at all. And, right

after Kent State, my campus erupted. It just went crazy. My cafeteria got firebombed, so we couldn't eat in our cafeteria. A girl coming out of the library was blinded in one eye by somebody throwing a rock at her. There were just these really horrible demonstrations.

So the president closed the university early, and you had twenty-four hours to leave town. My father had never particularly liked me going to Ohio University and he was a staunch Republican, staunch supporter of the President [Richard M. Nixon], and everything, and didn't like the liberal tone on my college campus. And, when he had to leave his job, he managed this important plant, he was very busy, he had to leave to come and pick me up on twenty-four hours' notice, he was so mad, he just worked up his anger all the way there to come pick me and just [said], you never should've gone to this school, you know, this, that, and the other, picks me up to take me home.

And when they closed the school they hadn't decided what they would do about the quarter, because the quarter wasn't over. So, it's like a gift from God. The president [of the university] said, the seniors, if they want, can take whatever grades they have, and they can leave. They don't have to take exams, they don't have to do any more papers. So here is Mary Hausch with twenty-four credits, still having a ton of papers due, not looking forward to all these exams, and suddenly I don't have to do any of it, and I had A's and B's in everything. I just walked away from it. I was done. Where everybody else had to take exams. They added a couple of days to the quarter, in the next fall or something, you know, to take the exams. But not me. I was done and I was gone.

So you went to Philadelphia to be with your family.

Yeah. So I went with them. Well, they just drove me. I just went there. And then, I wanted to work in Ohio. I'd interviewed for jobs in Ohio but I wanted to live in Colorado Springs. So I didn't have a job in Colorado Springs but I convinced my father to co-sign on a car for me, and I bought this blue Maverick, and I set off for Colorado. And I drove to Colorado by myself, and got there. I had a surprisingly small amount of money. I don't remember how much cash I had but it was not very much. And I got a job at the Colorado Springs *Gazette-Telegraph*. And I guess the rest is history, you know, life just went on.

Oh, that is great. Now when did you go to graduate school?

I never went to graduate school. I only have a bachelor's degree.

Who knew? That's amazing.

I only have a bachelor's degree that I got in three years.

Oh, it's amazing. OK. So after Colorado Springs? How long were you at the Gazette?

Well, I was there about eighteen months. And I broke up with my boyfriend right away. It was like, I was hardly there, I was there three months, and I broke up with him almost immediately. I didn't realize how much the antiwar stuff on my campus had had an effect on me. I wasn't part of it, I never demonstrated or anything else, but I did know a couple of people who died in the Vietnam War, and that did seem senseless to me, and I had cousins going to war and I didn't like any of that, and I knew people going to war. And I moved to Colorado Springs and here was my boyfriend, wanting to be a fighter pilot and wanting to go "kill gooks."

And he used that terminology.

Oh, yeah, oh, definitely. That was the word. The dehumanization of the enemy was appalling to me. And then I was supposed to take some kind of class on how to be an officer's wife. Tom and I got pinned when I moved there. And neither one of us were quite ready to be engaged, so I got pinned to him. And I lived in an apartment building on the way to the Air Force Academy that a lot of girlfriends of cadets lived in. And in fact I'm still friends with one of those women now. I just was like horrified. This was not the life I wanted. I was already becoming more of a feminist than I realized, and I did not want to spend my life as Mrs. So-and-so, somebody's appendage. And so I broke up with him. And my parents thought, good, you can come home.

Why do I have a feeling that you didn't go home? [Laughing]

I never went home. [Laughing] I never went home. And I'd been offered jobs in Ohio, so I could've gone back to Ohio, and I didn't. I stayed in Colorado Springs for eighteen months. I did go to Tom's graduation from the academy. I was close to his parents, so I went to his graduation with them. And I didn't have any real reason to be living there per se, and I came to Las Vegas.

Why Las Vegas?

On vacation. I came to Las Vegas on vacation the spring of 1971, just with four friends, and we were—I don't remember what hotel we stayed at but we stayed at a hotel, and we were talking about what a great place this would be to live. It's sunny and warm and it's still only spring. And so we decided for the heck of it, we'd all apply for jobs here. And so I went over to the [Las Vegas] *Review-Journal* and applied for a job. The city editor was up in Carson City at the legislature, so I didn't even meet him, but, you know, I talked to somebody, and that was that, and we went home, back there [to Colorado

Springs]. But I did love that weekend in Las Vegas. We went to see Bill Cosby. Back then people dressed up a little bit more and I bought this backless long dress I wore. And, in early September [1971] the city editor called me, from the *R-J*, and talked to me and liked my clips and things, and hired me sight unseen. It was just almost unreal. I never interviewed with him face-to-face.

You were meant to be here.

I was meant to be here. And, in my mind I was only going to stay for about two years because I wanted to work at the *Denver Post*. My favorite aunt lived in Denver [Colorado] and I liked Denver a lot. I had to put in my time, enough time to work in Denver, so I thought I would stay here two years, and I've been here ever since.

[Laughing]

Oh, that is wonderful.

I keep telling people that someday if they don't close the *Denver Post*—they've closed the *Rocky Mountain News* now—but if the *Denver Post* stays open I guess someday I'll go be a reporter there. I don't know.

So tell me what it was like working for the *R-J*.

Well, it was great there. I mean you have to remember the town was very small. I'm not sure what the population was in 1971. My husband would know but I don't know. But this was small. The newspaper had the previous year moved in the building where it is now, from its little location on Main Street. And they didn't begin to fill up the building, so we had tons of space. And there weren't that many reporters, and there weren't women reporters, very much. There was only one woman reporter there at the time before me, except of course for the women over in the society section.

So what was your job?

I take it back. There were two women reporters before me. So, I came here thinking I would get to cover a new consumer beat and that appealed to me, and shortly after I got here, the city editor, Roy Vanett, said, we don't have money for the consumer beat. We can't have that. I thought he was going to fire me. He said, so you're going to have to become the education reporter. And I didn't really want to do that. I didn't come here to become the education reporter. You play the hand you're dealt.

What did that mean, education reporter?

Well, the education reporter covered the Clark County School District [CCSD], anything K-12, covered the university system [University of Nevada, Las Vegas, UNLV], and the community college [Community College of Southern Nevada, CCSN] was just starting, so I covered the fledgling, infant community college. I also covered the library district [Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, LVCCLD] as part of that. Now, that's split up into a couple of different beats. And then in the summer, I was supposed to do, you know, because they didn't think about covering education that much in the summer even though they should've, I did other things, and that led to me creating an unusual beat for myself, a couple of years later.

What was happening in education in the early seventies here?

Well, where I was really lucky, was that it was the court-ordered integration of the Clark County School District. And I have a whole notebook of my clips. And, I was on the front page all the time. And the judge governing the integration, Judge [Bruce Rutherford] Thompson, was up in Reno, so I got to go up to Reno for a hearing. I also went to Reno for regents' meetings. So I got to see some of the state while I was at it. I

really was lucky. And one of the reasons they assigned me to cover it was because I had no vested interest in the issue. The woman that I inherited education from, Nedra Joyce, had covered it four years, but she had a child who was going to be part of the Sixth Grade Center Integration Plan, and she was seen as pro-integration. So, the city editor looked at me, I had no kids, so I had no vested interest there, I was new in town, I honestly didn't care, and so I had to cover this issue. It was very volatile, particularly the anti people, that we would call the bus-out people. They were just obsessed with this and how horrible it was, and they would call up and they would say, you know, you wrote this many words about the other side and you only wrote this many words about us, what are you doing? And I thought, who's sitting around counting words in stories. So I was trying to play it down the middle, I thought, because I didn't have an interest in it.

So what about that time still sticks with you today, about that integration and the articles and what was happening?

Well, I have some funny remembrance of it. One, the integration plan was so grossly unfair to the people in what was called the Westside. The black community, their kids got to stay in the neighborhood for kindergarten and sixth grade, and every other year they were bused out. How could the people that were bused into the Westside for one year, complain about this? That was nuts. So they had these sixth grade centers on the Westside; what had been the black schools became sixth grade centers, and those schools were built in the fifties, were a little rundown. They improved them, and there was a misperception that the kids were going to black schools. Well, they were all white kids being bused into them, and they were like fortresses. They were completely safe. And an interesting thing was that educationally they turned out to be a great thing. My sister

taught in a sixth grade center. And educationally they're really a very good idea actually because sixth graders are hitting puberty, they got all these issues going on, they pick fights on elementary school playgrounds and beat kids up, and you put them off on campuses by themselves, kind of to be ugly ducklings together. And it also prepares them to go to junior high. They start changing classes, they start having different teachers. It was a wonderful, nurturing place for them. But you had all these private sixth grade school starting in churches, and you had ministers saying God came and spoke to them and said, start a school at your church, and by the way, just make it a sixth grade school. You know, I've yet to get a thing from God that was that specific for me to do anything. So they did that.

But where it was interesting for me personally was that our city editor was very protective; and he had, I know in his heart and mind, he thought if I went over to the Westside, I would be raped for sure. I was very thin, if you can believe that, I had really long blonde hair, and he knew something terrible would befall me, so he would assign male reporters to go with me. Well, it was like going to school and having a boy carry your books. I'm not going to have a reporter go with me. They didn't want to go with me. So, the reporters and I would get together and I'd say, look, I'm going to be gone about two hours. They would go and hang out at the Shamrock Bar or something for two hours, and of course there weren't cell phones, you couldn't talk to each other, and we'd get together back in the parking lot, walk in the building together, and the city editor never knew I went over there by myself. Of course I never got raped; of course nothing bad ever happened to me. I was in my car with the doors locked, driving to the sixth grade

center, getting out and going in the sixth grade center, and nobody on any street corner was trying to do anything to me anyhow, so, you know. It was very uneventful.

So it sounds as if you had a sister who moved to Las Vegas as well.

Yeah, she came here after I did; a couple of years later.

That's interesting. So she became a schoolteacher.

She was a schoolteacher back in Pennsylvania, and she got divorced. Pennsylvania was where her husband had lived, and she didn't want to stay there. Although she graduated from Penn State, she didn't want to stay in Pennsylvania. She looked at going back to Akron. She didn't want to move home with my parents. So, she just came out here because of me. Because I covered the school district, of course, I arranged for her to interview, you know, with the head of human resources or whatever, and so she got hired, and she still lives here.

Wonderful. Now is she someone that we could interview? I would love to talk to someone about the sixth grade centers.

No. You can't talk to her, and I'll explain why in a little bit. And she didn't teach there that long. Yeah. I think, you know, that would be a great history project, would be the whole sixth grade center thing, and you definitely have to interview [former Governor] Dr. [Kenny] Guinn on that because he was school superintendent. That was his era. I don't know at the time that they were planning it if they thought of the educational ramifications of it, but I thought educationally it worked out really well. And nobody was ever murdered, beaten, or anything else over there. And, like I said, it was the black kids that suffered the burden. They were bused all over the whole valley, for every grade.

So tell me what the city was like for a young professional in 1971.

I moved here in October of 1971, and I was making \$145.00 a week, which was not much money, and so I moved into, I don't know how to describe this place. It was on North Ninth Street. I moved into a two-room apartment above somebody's garage, on an alley. And I lived on an alley, parked on the alley, went up the steps over the garage, and I had a living room, a bathroom the size of a closet, and I had a kitchen. And my dilemma as a young, single person is, where do you put the bed? You're dating, and you have men come over and there in the middle of the living room is your bed. It was just a little too suggestive for me at that point in my life. So I put the bed in the kitchen. It was crammed in the kitchen, and the closet was in the kitchen too, next to the refrigerator. You know, you could lay in bed and open the refrigerator, and get out something to eat and just stay in bed. And so in my living room, I had beanbag chairs and concrete-block shelves. I didn't have much money and it sure looked like I didn't have much money.

But it was fun.

It was fun. And I lived there, I don't know, about a year.

What was entertainment like in the beginning?

People went to shows on the Strip a lot more. I teach media ethics now and would advocate against the practice now, but reporters got to go to all the shows for free. You were invited to go to shows, and I can remember the first time I got invited to a hotel, to a show on my own, and I thought, why are they inviting me? I'm an education reporter. And another reporter said, oh, but at some point you'll cover a hotel and they know it. And my very first show I went to was over Christmastime, and I already had a boyfriend, and he went home for Christmas and I was here by myself for the holidays and the city

editor was going to the topless show at the Dunes [Hotel and Casino], so he took me with him, and I had never seen anything like that in my life and I was just shocked. And I think it's interesting in our lives how we evolve and we don't even know the evolution is taking place.

I was really becoming quite the feminist. And I think feminism is a very good thing, by the way. I don't see it as a militant kind of thing. In fact now if somebody says, you know, I have students who say, you were a feminist? Wow! And they're looking at me like how [could you be] and I say, you're not? Feminism is just for, you know, everybody having the same rights.

Well, the biggest news issue in Nevada at that time was the Equal Rights Amendment [ERA] and whether or not the Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified. And it only needed passage by a couple more states to become part of the law, and Nevada was one of those holdout states, and it was never going to pass in Nevada, and my newspaper was staunchly opposed to it, did editorials against it.

How did you feel about that, working for the newspaper?

Oh, I didn't pay any attention to their editorials anyhow. At the time the publisher was called the general manager and they came from him and I didn't pay any attention to it. But I became a really strong believer in the Equal Rights Amendment. Another woman on the staff was covering hearings on it and things and that was hard for her, I think; because she was for it too but you have to, you know, remain neutral in your coverage.

But the arguments against it were so ridiculous. The one I really laugh at now is that the people opposed to it kept saying, well, women will have to go off to war, they'll have to fight, in the military, and, you know. In fact, one of the most fun assignments I

had as a reporter came out of this discussion, and occurred in Colorado Springs, that there was talk about women going in the military more, and people were just appalled at the notion. So I got to fly, I can't even remember the kind of plane, an F-16, I think, I got to be in the copilot's seat of that, and it was one of only a few times I ever did a first-person story, and it was for like the idea, should women be fighter pilots? Well, what a stupid, superfluous story on one flight on, you know, an F-16, what kind of a dumb idea was that? But anyway, I got to fly in that jet.

You know, so Nevada, much to the joy of the people who lived here, did not pass the Equal Rights Amendment. But I made some wonderful friends in that period. Cynthia Cunningham, what a tremendous lady, and Rosemary Clarke. They were both on the state board of education. Harriet Trudeau. All these women who were, you would have to say, really strident feminists and just pushing, but yet they were married women with families. Cynthia I particularly admired and I'm still friends with—she died a long time ago but her husband Harold [Cunningham] retired to New Mexico. But he ran the Nevada Test Site [NTS]. And when she was done protesting the Equal Rights Amendment, she protested the Nevada Test Site, and here she's married to the guy who runs it. And they had really interesting dinner parties. They lived not very far from here, and they would just have just an interesting assortment of people over at their house. They would have his test site kind of people and then you would have, you know, Cynthia's friends and things. And she was just a protester at heart, I think. You know, I just had that mindset, then, after that.

So how long were you with the *R-J*?

Nineteen years.

And what other beats did you cover, other than education?

I covered education and then I carved out a beat for myself one summer of POW-MIAs [prisoners of war-missing in action], that I got sent to cover the dedication of a tree or something, I don't know. One of the things that made me successful as a journalist, I'm a real idea person and I can look around and think of five story ideas just looking out my window. So, I did that and I said to the city editor, Roy Vanett, I said, Roy, I want to write more stories about the POWs, find out who they are and write about their families, but write about the MIA people. We had a whole lot of F-111 pilots from Nellis [Air Force Base] that were just classified as missing and some of them, their husbands were known. So I wrote some stories about them, and everybody was wearing POW-MIA bracelets then, silver bracelets (they weren't silver, stainless steel or something) and I wore one. Now I would say a reporter covering something shouldn't wear a bracelet for it but I wore one for Colonel Dutton. And when the men came home, their wives all said, you need to let Mary Hausch interview you because she's the only person who cared about us. So I got to interview all these POWs who came home, and write their stories.

Oh, that's fantastic.

So that was a lot of fun. And I covered the legislature some. I talked my way into going up there in '73 because education was a big issue, and we only had one reporter up there, so I got to go up midway through the session.

So I was reporter four years, primarily did education; then I became assistant city editor. And the paper's still really small, and wasn't nearly as compartmentalized as it later became. So, when I was assistant city editor, one of my main jobs was writing a lot of the editorials. That gave me daily access to the editor because he would tell me what to

write, and whether I agreed with it or not, I would write the opinion of the paper. And I became pretty good at opinion writing and I also found, I could write a stronger editorial if I didn't agree with something than if I did. Because if I didn't agree with it, I had to research it, and I had to either get inside the general manager's head or the editor's head, trying to figure out where they were coming from. And so I could make things I didn't agree with at all sound logical and worthwhile. So I did that.

What else does an assistant city editor do?

The assistant city editor—back then, see, part of the problem was that the city editor wouldn't relinquish any control, so I edited some copy and things but, as the *R-J* was later structured, reporters answer to different assistant city editors and kind of work for them. But back then, I was writing editorials and I was doing whatever the city editor wanted me to do. And we were still editing copy on paper. We didn't have computers yet. So I did some of that.

Then they wanted to move the city editor to the copy desk, so I became the city editor. And I was the first woman city editor there and that was kind of a big deal. Two other women, Joy Hammond and Nedra Joyce, had been assistant city editors in the past, but no woman had been city editor. So I became the city editor and that was pretty interesting because certainly none of the men on the staff had ever worked for a woman, and I had a few run-ins with people who didn't like the idea of working for me and I had to fire somebody and that was hard. But I enjoyed it and I discovered I liked being an editor more than a reporter because I do have tons of ideas, and I was always getting ideas off my beat, and now I can be giving my ideas and making people do my ideas.

So, I was city editor, and then the news editor got himself in some legal trouble, so he got fired and lost his job, and the editor, Don Digilio, decided that the paper needed a stronger management structure, and frankly he didn't want to do a lot of his job very much, so I got promoted to managing editor. And I was the managing editor for a decade. And I really liked working for Don Digilio. He's still alive. What a colorful person Don Digilio was. And he gave me so much control over things that I did the whole department budgeting, which was really kind of interesting because one reason I became a journalist was to avoid doing math and here I'm doing the budget. And I got to buy all the comic strips, I got to buy the columns. So I was really putting my imprint on the paper. And I started an action line column. Those were popular, back then, and I expanded the business section. I did all kinds of things I wanted to do, there.

Well then, he got fired. The *Review-Journal* was part of the Donrey Media Group and firing was kind of a way of life in the Donrey Media Group. It was like, when I covered the university, a university president got fired every year. The regents had to find somebody to fire, it seemed liked, and so I covered a number of firings, then. In the Donrey Media Group, people just got fired for all sorts of reasons, and Don Digilio got fired. When he got fired I had to help clean out his office, which was kind of—you know, he had a loaded gun in his desk.

At any rate, (after) he got fired they brought in an editor from California, George Collier. And George didn't really want to live here, but he was brought in to build a case against the general manager so he could be fired. So he was sending off all these memos to California, to do in the general manager, and he didn't much like me either. And he was bringing in some of his people. He even brought his secretary over from California.

And the man who is still the features editor of the paper came from Ontario [California] with him.

Ultimately, George didn't like it here, but he built a big enough case that they fired the general manager, Bill [William] Wright, and it's really, looking back, was a shame because Bill Wright, and it was many years after I worked there that I could call him Bill Wright, because his name was Mr. Wright, I mean you did not call him anything but Mr. Wright. And I didn't necessarily like Mr. Wright, and he was a hard taskmaster, a difficult person to work for, but yet I look back, a very fair person and he had a very generous side to him too. He was really big into Nevada history, and he was on the state history board, chaired the state history board for years, and he spent all of his vacations roaming around Nevada, as he said, collecting things. Some people might call it stealing things, but anyhow, you know, collecting Nevada history. After he died, it was the most incredible yard sale of all time, of all these artifacts of Nevada history.

At any rate, in short order, George Collier went back to California, a new general manager named Earl Johnson came in, and a new editor came from California who had not been part of the Donrey Media Group at all, a man named Tom Keevil. Tom was a great person to work for.

But, to back up, when George decided to go back to California, Bill Wright was still the general manager, and I applied for the editor's job, because I was managing editor, and because of Don Digilio's style and indifference, I was doing a lot of things the editor could do. In fact, I knew more about budgeting and things than he did. I was making a lot of the decisions on story play, who did what, I supervised the sports department. I was in many ways running the show and it served me well and it served

Don well. I loved being in charge, and Don liked doing whatever he was doing. So, I applied for the job and Mr. Wright just said, you're too young for the job.

How old were you at that point?

I was probably about thirty, so I thought that I was too young for the job.

And that was when George Collier left. Then Tom Keevil came and Tom was actually a great boss, and he's one of the best bosses I've ever had in my life, and I'm still friends with his wife, Claire Keevil. Just a great couple, nice people.

And I learned a lot from Tom. And Tom, he didn't like budgeting either, so he kept me doing the budget and he pretty much let me keep picking the comic strips and other [things]. He saw what I liked to do and he let me do it. But he was great to be around and I went to lunch with him a lot, and we got along really well. Tom had to have heart bypass surgery, so he was gone for a couple of months then, and I ran the whole show and it ran fine. No disasters or problems.

I think women intuitively are different kind of managers than men and I definitely was. Like, we had a meeting once a week of all the sub-editors and things. I always brought people birthday cakes. I did a lot of nurturing kind of things like that, that a man's not going to do.

Anyhow, I'd have to have notes to know exactly how long Tom was there, but the year after his heart bypass surgery, he got this fatal lung disease. And, I can't even remember off the top of my head what it's called, but there was no Internet then, you know, so now if you get a disease you plug it into the Internet and boom, you know what you have. Well, Tom went to the library and read books and it said that this disease was always fatal within six months. And his doctor wouldn't tell him that. But he saw that and

he told me that. He said, I'm going to die within six months. And, so, I talked to him about I could become editor now. I've served under three different editors. You know, George Collier didn't let me do quite as much as Digilio or Keevil did, but I was still in charge of a lot of things. And Tom thought I should be editor and Tom said he would tell, the general manager that and things.

So Tom's illness really progressed more quickly than people thought. In this disease your lung fills with fibers and you choke to death. It's a horrible death. So Tom all of a sudden is in intensive care in the hospital. This is a really traumatic thing. And I had a young child at that time. We seem to have glossed over my first marriage.

OK, but we're going to come back to that.

Anyway, somewhere along the line I got married, and I got divorced. Then I'm married to my husband now. So, how did we leave all this out? I don't know. I don't know.

At any rate, Tom dies, and Earl Johnson is the general manager, and I write a formal letter of application, but I could see that Earl's not very interested in my application. Well, there's no reason for me not to be editor now. I'm not young anymore, I've run the place, half the people in the room I personally hired, and it's running very well.

So, the weekend of the primary election, it was election night, and election night you pretty much work all night. You stay there late getting everything wrapped up. I went home in the middle of the night, slept for a couple of hours. The next morning I come to work, and I am called down to this big conference room. And in there is Fred Smith who runs the whole company.

From California?

No, Fred Smith lived here, but he ran the Donrey Media Group. It was headquartered in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was here but we had very little contact with him. The headquarters was up on Hollywood [Boulevard] and not anywhere around us. But he was there, which is odd, because I never have conversations with him. And so he tells me that there's going to be a regime change, that Earl Johnson has been fired, that Dave Osborn who I had known before as an ad manager, and I think he had left, he was coming back as general manager, and that Sherman Frederick was going to be the editor of the paper.

Well, I was absolutely astounded because I had hired Sherman as an intern, and then I hired him as a reporter, so he was younger than I was, he did not have the experience at the *Review-Journal* of running a big newsroom, but he had gone off and become a general manager for them at small papers. He was in Alamogordo, New Mexico, which was just this little, miserable paper, you know. And he was waiting in the next room.

Well, I was angry. I was not a timid little thing anymore, you know, I was a grown-up woman, and this job should've been mine, and I knew it should've been mine.

And they knew.

And they knew. And I argued with Fred Smith. But there was no arguing. It was a done deal. Then they had a meeting of the whole staff in the afternoon. Dave Osborn, the new general manager, is introducing Sherman, and most people don't know Sherman because he had been gone for years from the *R-J*. And, I just am standing in the back of the room, still trying to process all this, and John [L.] Smith, who's now a columnist, bless his heart, and somebody I had brought to the *R-J* from the [Las Vegas] *Sun*, to his credit, said, well, what about Mary? You know, it was like, what happens to Mary?

Well, I went and talked to Tick [Richard] Segerblom, and I hired Tick to be my attorney, and I decided to file against the paper with the Equal Rights Commission. But, Tick said, you're going to wait and file on the 179th day. You have 180 days to file, but you have to have them play their hand. You have to see what they're going to do to you. Because to placate me they gave me a new title of associate editor, and a \$10,000 pay raise. And the pay wasn't all that great then at the time still, so, you know, that was a big raise for me. But nobody even knew what an associate editor is. When you look in a newspaper, you know managing editor and you know editor. Associate, it was like it was a made-up title.

To placate me they said I could attend department head meetings with Sherman and, you know, this, that, and the other. But Sherman quickly started taking things back. He took the budgeting away from me, he took buying syndicate features away from me, and that was something I really liked doing and I was very good at it; some of the best comics in the *R-J* are ones I put there. I don't know if you noticed the comics in my hallway but I have a lot of original comics, like *Garfield* and stuff, signed by the people.

So right when I filed my thing at the Equal Rights Commission, the 179th day, but they still don't know it, when 180 days are up, I'm suddenly not allowed to go to the department head meeting anymore. They were running the clock too. And they started cutting back on my duties. It took a while for them to know that I had filed. And Sherman was already setting about to hire a managing editor and he hired Tom Mitchell, who is now the editor.

So once I filed with the Equal Rights Commission, I might as well have been a leper. I had my own personal leper colony which was my office. And Sherman's

secretary sat right outside my office door and she was told to spy on me. She was writing down stuff and Sherman's office and mine were just separated by a partition with glass, and he was eavesdropping on me too. And there was a secret file about me. It was being built, you know, trying to make me look bad. And Tick had said, no matter how tough it gets, you will be at work every day and you will be at work early. They can never say you're tardy, never anything, you know, you are going to be there all the time.

But, very quickly, the managing editor is hired, and the managing editor is getting all my old duties, and I don't have anything to do as associate editor. And they're starting to have all these meetings that I don't get invited to. But, there [are] editors under me that are very loyal to me, so they started giving me copies of memos and things that my name isn't on. And I'm building my whole case.

We had a hearing at the Equal Rights Commission, and the lucky thing for me was that this whole big upheaval took place at once so that Fred Smith was the one that hired me. You shouldn't have had the head of the whole company, I mean that brought in the editor, you shouldn't have had him telling me—I shouldn't have said "hired," you know, telling me I wasn't getting it. So my action was against him because he's the one who took the action against me. He had to come to the equal rights hearing, which he didn't like.

So, the Equal Rights Commission ruled in my favor, and said I was wronged, but they have no power. They can't really do anything. I filed with the EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission], and I now added to my charges because I can prove I'm systematically being discriminated against in my new job, and my new job was like a non-job. And, after I filed then, nobody wanted to be seen with me either. I

couldn't get anybody to go to coffee with me. I would go out to my friends and say, hey, let's take a break [and they would say] oh, I got to do something. Two minutes later, they'd be in taking a break with somebody else, but nobody would take coffee breaks with me. People were giving me stuff, but nobody wanted to be seen with me, nobody would go to lunch with me. I might as well have been on an island or in Siberia.

That must've been tough, going to work every day like that.

Yeah, well, and it was, and it was hard. You know, it's terrible. How can I not remember my own life? But I'd have to almost look at the stories about me. I can't remember the sequence of events. I filed a new charge with the Equal Rights Commission, I think, and then I filed with the EEOC. Well, the day after they found out about me filing with the EEOC, they sent me home with pay. They suspended me with pay.

And, I had had this dream of leaving the *R-J*, this recurring dream, and in my dream I walked out the door. I have this big, beautiful picture that's hanging in my office at work now, a French print, and in my dream I was walking out the door with that. So, when I left, I carried that out the door.

But nobody knew what was happening and Sherman was such a coward person, he was off hiding in the men's room the whole time this was happening, which was wonderful because normally when you fire somebody—well, I wasn't fired, I was only suspended—under duress, you have Security or something [escort them]. You don't let them take things. Well, because Sherman's off hiding, and they didn't send any security down, my office manager, I had him come pack up, I said, everything, the contents of all my filing cabinets, everything. And so I took home every single file I had. And I had been building a case against them but I foolishly had left most of it there, but I brought it

all home. I loaded my car to the gills. And people were seeing all this stuff coming out of my office and some people are [saying], what is happening to you? Well, I couldn't quite tell people, but as I was leaving I went to the railing, up into the newsroom, and I made an announcement that I was suspended, and people said, will you ever be back, and I said, no. I'm gone. And I knew I was gone.

So, that was, I think, in November [ca. 1990], and that was the end of my *R-J* career. I didn't get fired until February [ca. 1991] but, you know, they paid me for a couple of months and then they thought, why are we paying this horrible person?

So what happened with the EEOC?

OK, well, that was just going to take forever and they told me, it was in L.A. [Los Angeles, California], and I had sent them literally boxes of stuff, and they said, your case is too big and too complicated. We're understaffed. We like your case, you know, but we're pretty much going to be setting it aside.

So I had switched to Kathy [Kathleen] England as my attorney and I petitioned them for a right-to-sue letter. They gave me a right-to-sue letter and I sued the *Review-Journal* in federal court for discrimination. Then we were going to start taking depositions, and, we only had to do one deposition. Kathy said, who are the people to depose? We made a list and I said, I want to start with Bill Wright because I think that Mr. Wright will come through for me. And that was the only deposition we needed to do. And Mr. Wright, you know, bless his heart, said in the deposition, that he should've told me, the first time I was passed over, that Fred Smith made a crude sexist comment about a woman never being editor of the paper. And, Mr. Wright said, I was selfish for myself, and for the paper, because you did so much that I wanted to keep you there, but I

could've told you then you never would've been editor, and that was right about when Knight-Ridder and Gannett were starting to promote women, and ultimately Barbara Henry, who was editor in Reno, and then publisher in Reno, went on to be publisher of all these big Gannett papers. And, I could've gone into a chain like that and had that same career path. Mr. Wright said he felt bad about that. And, part of my case were I'm a hoarder and a saver of stuff and I had boxes of stuff and I was saving [the] company's annual reports and things, and part of what I was preparing for my federal lawsuit was to lay out that this was a company run by good old boy white men from Arkansas. And I had this company brochure that just showed all these white men together, and they were all about the same age range, and they were good-old-boy Southern boys. Kathy and I figured out that that was an approach to take. Most of their papers were in Arkansas, Southern kind of places, so she started asking Bill Wright about Fred Smith's attitude towards black people.

What an approach.

I have to think about going here in a history thing but yeah, I'm just going to do it, I don't care. Bill Wright said, you know, she asked him if he called them black people, or colored people, how he referred to them, and Bill Wright paused, and he said, the only thing he ever called them were niggers. That was what he called them. And he gave examples of just incidences of really rude treatment towards black people, and again, he repeated this horrific word, and said that those are the only words he ever called them by. You could just see their attorney David Olive, who I used to be friends with, and got along really well with, was sitting there about to die. And this is being put in a deposition that who knows how it's going to be used, and you could just see this man in court,

testifying this, and this getting back to Arkansas. And Bill Wright said that all the people in Donrey, this was how they felt, and that was their word for black people, and they treated them in a way befitting of that word; they were demeaning to them, just over and over. So, at the end of that deposition when it was all over, Kathy said, that's the only deposition we will have to take. She said, it's over. They can't live with this. So, sure enough, pretty soon, their attorney calls and wants to go to arbitration.

But they were building a case against me and sending out messages to me that they had hired a law firm in Seattle [Washington] that specialized in First Amendment. They had an L.A. law firm. So this was a huge deal to them. They had attorneys all over the place. They got James Kilpatrick to write a column against me that ran in papers all over the country. And this column was about Mary Hausch, the person out to destroy the First Amendment. What they said was that, equal rights kind of legislation should not apply to newspapers and the hiring of editors because newspapers had a First Amendment right to make whoever they wanted as editor. And, so they were exempt from anything and therefore they were allowed to discriminate. He did this whole column against me. Of course the *R-J* ran it but it ran in papers all over the place, which was like really bizarre because who in all these cities would know who I was or anything? But I was some big threat to the First Amendment.

So, we went to arbitration, and I told Kathy that I wanted to present my own case. I said, I'm never going to see them in court. I'm going to settle this because Kathy had said, Mary, this is going to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and it's going to cost you more money than you have to fight it, and it's going to take seven or eight years out of your life, and the Supreme Court is becoming more conservative. I think I

would've taken it all the way to the Supreme Court, if I felt for sure I would win but I thought, wow, what if I lose and I set women back? I want to break the glass ceiling but what if I get there, and the Court says there are certain businesses and things that are allowed to discriminate? I mean I couldn't do that to other women.

So, we went to arbitration and I said, I want to present my own case. You know, I practiced what I wanted to say and what I wanted to do. We go to the arbitrators' thing, and on my side of the table it's me, Kathy England, and one other female attorney that works for her. There's three of us. The other side of the table, it's like the table's almost not long enough. It's Fred Smith, it's the general manager of the paper, it's Sherman Frederick, it's attorneys from L.A. I don't remember if somebody was there from Seattle or not, I think just L.A. They had all these high-priced, high-powered attorneys there.

I had my talking points on paper but I'd reversed what I was going to say, so I pretty much just let it all out. And, Sherman and Dave Osborn are fundamentalist Christians, they're big on their wives never worked, they're big on big families, you know, family values and stuff. So, something I revealed during that that was unknown was that I'd had a miscarriage, in the middle of all this, and my doctor felt that stress might've caused it. I just sat there and I looked at these men, in this, and I particularly looked at Dave and Sherman on that and I said, and I've lost a child over this. That was kind of a powerful moment.

Anyhow, I had a whole list of demands I wanted, and Kathy, bless her heart, said, we're just going to put in all kinds of frivolous things. If you could have anything in the world you wanted, what are the things you want? And I had a whole list. And they had their thing.

Well, earlier on, in all this, Dave Osborn had called me one day and asked me, what it would take to settle the lawsuit. And I named a figure, and he said, hell will freeze over before we ever give you that amount of money. And I said OK. You know, well, then, I'm pursuing this.

So, anyhow, I can't say how much money I got because, you know, I have to give it back if I say, but we settled for an amount of money greater than that [amount of] money [that I had asked for originally]. And when we were walking out I made a point of getting near him and I said, so hell froze over today, didn't it, Dave? Because we could've ended it much sooner.

But a fun part of what I did was, the only thing, except for the money, that I hung on to doing was, I said—by now I'm teaching at UNLV and I said, I want a scholarship in my name at UNLV, from the Donrey Media Group, for ten thousand dollars. I wanted to do it because I wanted to help kids, but I also knew that had to be public. They can't give a donation to a university and have it be private. And, so then UNLV wanted to put out a press release, a little press release about this new scholarship, and David Olive, you know, called me up and he said, you got us on that one, didn't you? Because I had to get their permission for it to be outside of the confidentiality thing.

Wow! What an amazing story.

Well, let me say how I got to UNLV out of that. I had started teaching at UNLV years before. UNLV and journalism had a great history of adjunct faculty teaching the practical application courses. And, I had taught a number of courses, and when I got put on suspension in November [1990], as luck would have it, I was going to teach one course in January [1991] but Barbara Cloud called me up and she said, we have another class we

need somebody to teach that semester, Copyediting. Could you teach that for us? So, then I upped it to two classes then.

And so about the time I left the *R-J*, Barbara Cloud called me up, and she said, why don't you apply for this opening? I mean they asked me to apply, and I'd already been trying to think, what am I going to do? How can I reinvent myself? I didn't want to go to work at the *Sun*. What can I do? And I had called the school district. Well, they said, of course you can't be a teacher in the school district, because you don't have an education certificate. But, I would argue with anybody that a city editor is a teacher. A lot of that job is teaching people and I was really good at it.

So, Barbara said, well, apply for the job at UNLV, and she said, you only having a bachelor's doesn't mean anything to us because you have twenty years of experience as a journalist and you've been an editor, and I was very well known in town. I was very, modestly speaking, she said, highly regarded. And I had a good reputation. And so she said, you apply. Don't worry about your degrees. It won't make any difference. But I went through the regular application process anybody would where you have to come in and like teach a class in front of them, and there's a thing where you talk about your research. Well, I don't do any research but I went in and talked about running a newspaper. I talked about how you run a newspaper.

And so the faculty overwhelmingly voted to hire me. We were in [the School of] Liberal Arts. I had to go to the Dean of Liberal Arts office. And, I can't even remember that gentleman's name, but I'm sitting in his office. He did not look at my résumé one minute before I'm in there. So he's looking at it and stream of consciousness out loud he said, well, what are you here for? You only have a bachelor's degree. You think you're

being offered the job? And I said, well, they asked me to apply. I applied and they told me the only thing left to do was talk to you. I think I have the job.

See, and I was very lucky. This is in the era of Bob [Robert C.] Maxson, and Bob Maxson and I were good friends. Bob Maxson knew his way around town, and Bob Maxson knew to be friends with people in positions of power. And Bob Maxson, to his credit, there were a lot of really good things about Bob Maxson, and one of them was he taught a class every semester. He said, everyone on the campus should teach. And he taught a leadership class. Now, teaching it is maybe stretching it because he had somebody that was like doing it with him, but his way of teaching it, and people that took it said it was one of the most brilliant classes they ever took, he brought different community leaders in, to talk about their leadership style. So I came as a guest lecturer in Bob Maxson's class several semesters. Then he always had a really nice dinner at his house for his guest lecturers at the end of the semester, and gave you—I still have a couple of little knickknacks, you know, that I got from him, doing that.

Well, Bob Maxson liked me a lot and so, he thought it was great. In fact, right after I got hired, he called me up, and welcomed me to the university and he said, well, you got to tell me a couple of months into this what you think because this world is completely different than what you're used to, and he said, I think you're going to get frustrated in this world, you know, where decisions are made in decades, not in minutes, you know.

But at any rate, so, I got hired, to be a professor and I started out, first as a lecturer, and my first year there, I was in an office with two other lecturers, and it was just no space, three desks, one telephone, three people who didn't like each other. I mean

it was an interesting thing. But now I've been there, you know, eighteen years, whatever, and I was meant to be a teacher. I thrive on it. I love it. So that was how I got there.

Wow! Now tell me how you met your first husband.

My first husband was Terry Shonkwiler, and he owns an ad agency in town now. And I met him right away, when I moved to town. He was a sportswriter at the *Sun*, and I'm a reporter, and back then, you know, the journalists in town all hung out and went to parties together, and it was kind of—you'll laugh at this—I had to figure out who I was going to date, among all these journalists in town. One person who asked me out was Bob [Robert A.] Stoldal. I never went out with Bob Stoldal because I'd already started dating Terry at that point.

It was fun dating him. I went to football games with him and sat up in the press box with him and I would watch him call in his stories by dictation and I didn't know how to do that at that time, so that was kind of interesting to me to see. And, Terry and I were a great couple or, you know, so I thought, so we dated about four years before we got married.

And, then we got married—I don't even remember what year we got married. It must've been December of 1975, maybe, I don't remember. At any rate, I remember the December wedding. And we got married at University Methodist Church across from the campus, and they decorate it beautiful at Christmastime, so it was just, you know, just a really nice wedding. And, how long were we married? How you forget. We were married about five years.

But while that was happening, I got promoted and I became managing editor. And he had some issues with me becoming a, quote unquote, "important person," and you

know, at one point when we were in marriage counseling, he said, well, you were just a reporter when you married me and I thought you would just be a reporter. Well, he had gone on to, you know, he did PR [public relations] for hotels and things and worked at different ad agencies. He certainly improved his status in life. Why wouldn't I improve my status in life? And, I'll just politely say that there were some fidelity issues in the marriage, strictly on his part.

So, we ended up getting divorced. Before we even got divorced, this guy who wrote a sports column for us, Bob Coffin, asked me to go out to lunch. Now I had interviewed Bob many years before. He was a graduate of UNLV (it was Nevada Southern [University] when he went there) and he'd been president of the UNLV Alumni Association, so I one time did a story, something to do with the Alumni Association, and I interviewed him. But, I interviewed hundreds of people. I didn't remember him whatsoever, and I never even knew that I had interviewed him till he reminded me later on. At any rate, he was a sports columnist for us. He wrote a golf column. (My husband's a great writer.) And he wrote our golf column, and somewhere along the line he wrote a column that made Bill Wright mad and Bill Wright wanted to cut his pay and he said, how much are we paying him? And I said, nothing. So he said, well, start paying him, he said, so we can either cut his pay or fire him. It would mean more if we fire him if he's getting paid. So we started paying him.

When he asked me out to lunch, the day we were going to lunch, I told Don Digilio, oh, why did I agree to go to lunch with this guy? He's just going to badger me to pay him. I thought he was asking me out to lunch in my role as managing editor and him

a sports columnist wanting to be paid, and I figured he was going around the sports editor or the sports editor must've said, go to her to get paid.

So we went to lunch someplace downtown, I don't even remember where, and he's not bringing up his column, at all. He's not bringing up getting paid. I can't believe it. You know, we're just talking about all of sorts of things around town, but not about paying him. It's really bizarre. Near the end of the lunch he said, you know, I know you're getting divorced, you know, are you divorced yet? And I said no. He said, well, have you started dating? And, it wouldn't even have crossed my mind to be dating but I said, I don't know, I guess I could go out with you. So, you know, we went to the movies that weekend, and I guess the rest is history.

By the time I finally got divorced I was pretty well dating him. And my husband at that time had moved up to Lake Tahoe to get away from me. And, he was certainly involved in plenty of relationships up there. So when we got divorced, only one person has to go to get divorced and I got divorced in the judge's chambers, not in a courtroom, and you can get your divorces sealed, so I of course got my divorce sealed because I knew within two minutes of getting divorced, that our [the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*] court reporter would be down there trying to see my divorce, and sure enough, he comes back to the newsroom and he says, I can't believe you sealed your divorce.

And the most fun thing in my divorce is that I used Bob [Robert D.] Faiss as my attorney. Bob Faiss and I were good friends, and Bob did my divorce and Bob said, we have to put your cats in there, and I said, oh, my husband hates my cats. He would never want them. He said, that's why they have to be in there, because, he said, there's going to be something else he wants, and if you don't stipulate that the cats are your property, he's

going to say he wants the cats, to get something else, and sure enough, that's how it played out, later on, because he didn't want those cats.

Anyhow, we got divorced, and I started dating Bob. Bob was divorced too. And we dated for seven years before we finally got married. But we didn't live together though. I had a house up near Jones [Boulevard] and the expressway and he had a house downtown.

Downtown where?

His house was on Lewis [Avenue] right behind the Macayo Vegas Restaurant on Charleston [Boulevard]. And they [the restaurant] had a house across the street from there that they used as a kitchen to make stuff. It was like a kitchen house, and they made all their salsa and stuff there, and oh, the aroma of that cooking. We would walk over to Macayo Vegas and eat so often. It was just the smell of that place.

And, Bob continued to write his golf column, and one year I entered him in the state press contest for column-writing, and he ended up winning second place in the state, and some guys in sports got mad at me, you know, they said, oh, she's just entering her boyfriend, and I said, well, some of you were entered and you didn't win an award. But Bob was a really good writer and he wrote a great golf column and I don't even remember how long his golf column lasted.

What was he doing for a living at that point?

He was an insurance broker. He's still an insurance broker. And, then he ran for the Assembly, and I was still at the *R-J*, and this was something they tried to use against me, you know, when they were getting rid of me or whatever, was that I was married to a politician, so I couldn't be an editor, because I was married to a politician, you know.

So he won the Assembly race but I set up my own barriers on that, that I didn't read stories he was in. In fact, because I didn't read stories that he was in, his age was wrong in a story. If I had read it, I would've known how old he was, but the dumb reporter didn't factor in his birthday. And, yeah, Tom Keevil had great fun with me the first time they endorsed him. I was very involved in politics when I was there. I set up all the editorial board hearings for candidates, scheduled them, and I was in on all our endorsements, but I couldn't be in on his race because I'm dating him. So Tom interviewed him and Tom interviewed his opponent and said, you know, Tom called me into his office and said, Mary, we interviewed Bob, and Bob came in and had coffee with Tom and me all the time. Tom loved Bob. And he said, Mary, we interviewed them both and we have to go with the other guy in the endorsement. Well, I could hardly believe it because he was running against like a nobody person. Well, Tom was just joking to give me a bad time.

Anyhow, we dated for a long time and then we got married. And it was an election year when we got married and so we were busy with the election, so we got married in my sister's backyard and we had a real small wedding. But I was very close friends with Charles Vanda. I don't know if you know who Mr. Vanda was, but I have a couple of pieces of silver of his in the other room, and Charlie and I were just great, great friends, and he was dating Marjorie Barrick, so Marjorie Barrick was at my wedding. And just a, you know, little wedding. And, then we had a big reception after the election, with tons of people. The rest is history. And we lived in two different houses when we were first married.

So where was the first house?

This is the only house we've lived in, together. This is our house.

Wonderful! So you moved here together. How did you find this house? And tell me where it's located. You don't have to give me the address.

OK, well, our house is located one block off of Las Vegas Boulevard, on Fifth Place. I don't mind saying that. When the house was built, Las Vegas Boulevard was Fifth Street. And in this neighborhood you'll see Third Street, Third Place, Fifth Street, Fifth Place. There's an Eighth Street and an Eighth Place.

So, this was Fifth Place, one block off of that, and just this quiet little place. My husband was an elected person. He had to stay in his district. So we had to live in his district; we started looking at houses in the district, and, I looked at a number of houses and it was summer and I was pregnant and I'm looking at all these houses and I didn't like any of them, and I was still looking a lot with the realtor but this house we came together, and the realtor said, I think I found you a house. And we pulled up out in front and the front door, to me, is the exact same front door as the front door on the *Leave It to Beaver* TV show. And I looked at that and I said, this is the *Leave It to Beaver* house. [Laughter] And I liked the front door; I liked how the house looked from the front. The realtor had already come and looked at it. And, so I fell in love with the house. I was walking around. There's a pull-down ironing board in the laundry room, there's a cedar closet, there's a walk-in closet for storage. I fell in love with it. Everything about the house I just loved. We're walking around and I'm loving everything, and my husband is elbowing me to not love everything, you know, stop liking the house, Mary, you know, just say, well, I guess it could do. I knew. I knew, the first time I walked around this house, it would be my home.

And it had an owner in between us and the Gublers [V. Gray and Rita Gubler] for, I'm going to say two years but maybe not even that long. This couple bought the house from the Gublers with a lot of the Gublers' furniture. The only thing left of the Gublers probably is the dining room table. The chairs I've replaced but the table was Mrs. Gubler's. And, that was a couple, their kids were older or something, and the man had gotten cancer and there was no way they could stay in this house, so they needed to sell the house. So, Bob and I still owned two houses. You know, we had been married for a year but we still had two houses. It's hard to explain it. And, we kind of lived in two houses too. I lived at his house a lot but I had cats at my house. Cats are an underlying theme in my life. And, so I had to go feed my cats, so I stayed with my cats some. My next door neighbor, I just love this man, I'm pregnant and he says, so which one of us is taking you to the hospital—that no-good husband or me? What do I need to know about this pregnancy to take you to the hospital? [Laughter]

And so we had some urgency to find a house, so we found this house, and we just fell in love with it and we bought it. And, I didn't even know when I was buying it that it was called the Gubler House and it was Rita Gubler's house. I was in Junior League and Rita Gubler was in Junior League, but I didn't really know her. She was like, you know, in an upper stratosphere of Junior League, not my level of Junior League.

So, we bought this house. And I got toxemia in my pregnancy. I was working every single day at the *R-J*, and I was just like a water buffalo, and my legs were swollen. I'd take my shoes off at work, and then I'd have to leave in my bare feet because I couldn't get them back on, and I'm padding around the newsroom in my bare feet, you know, trying to look like an important person, just, you know, huge. And, so I had to quit

work, oh, like the week before the baby was born, not much. I had toxemia though, so they decided to induce labor two weeks early. Well, we're just closing on the house. So my husband took me to the hospital, to Women's Hospital which no longer exists but wonderful place to have babies, Women's Hospital on Sahara [Avenue] at Burnham [Avenue] because they were a women's hospital and they cared for women. Just the kind of place you should have babies. So, I'm over there getting labor induced. My husband leaves to go to Sears, which is nearby, to buy a refrigerator. My sister, who's supposed to be helping me, is in my old yard digging up my daffodil bulbs to move them over here. And, I'm in labor. There's no cell phones. Nobody has cell phones. So I call my friend Charlie Vanda who's eighty years old, and I'm crying. Charlie says, do you want me to come over there, and I said, no. Finally my sister comes over, dirty hands from daffodil digging. My husband gets done buying a refrigerator. He bought one too small. What is he thinking? [Laughter]

So I have this baby, our son Walter, and then, Bob moves into the house the next day. And, Women's Hospital had a limousine service. They would send you home from the hospital in a limousine, you know. My husband's here busy moving in [and] I have the limousine take me to my girlfriend Dell's house, with my new baby. And my son was only six pounds, three ounces; he's like a midget of a baby. And, I went and rested at Dell's house, and some of my girlfriends—I had loads of girlfriends, bless their hearts, they were wonderful—they came over that day, they're lining the shelves with paper, they're trying to unpack. The only room they got completely done was the nursery. I mean I have no nursery because I don't have a house. But I had the crib, I had everything else. There was a little table out on the patio that I finished, you know, that summer.

Anyhow, so, my husband came and picked me and our baby up, and brought me home, you know, and he said, I can't even attempt to carry you over the threshold of our house, so I'll carry the baby instead. [Laughter]

So we came home to this house and I only took two weeks off work. That's how essential I was at the *R-J*. And except for the first few days, my secretary came every day with stuff for me to sign, and to do. And you know I look back on how shabbily I was treated by that company, and shame on me, that I didn't take off more time and that I let them bring work into my environment.

But it was OK, it turned out.

So, we settled into this house and it had a lot of—

So describe the house to me, and the name of the neighborhood.

It's called the John S. Park Neighborhood and now it's the John S. Park Historic Neighborhood because it's the only historically designated neighborhood in the city and I helped get that on. I'm pretty proud of doing that. But I didn't begin to have the sense of history. My husband did. My husband specifically wanted to live around here because he went to John S. Park [Elementary School], he went to St. Joseph's [Elementary School], he went to [Bishop] Gorman [High School], and the houses he grew up with are all within walking distance of this house. He didn't want to just be in the district; he wanted to be in the neighborhood.

So we moved in this neighborhood, and it was only after I moved in that I found out that it was the Gubler House.

And tell me who the Gublers are.

The Gublers, they're both deceased, but Rita Gubler was an extremely social woman. Mr. [V. Gray] Gubler was a prominent attorney in town and he was a bishop in the church. The First Ward of the Mormon Church [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or LDS Church]. is over on Ninth Street, just a couple of blocks away. The neighborhood was predominantly, almost every house, looking across from me, every house were Mormons. By the time we moved here there were a lot of Mormon widows. But they were all Mormons and people walked to church. The Mormon Church had a lot to do with the neighborliness of this neighborhood.

People I knew for other reasons, all sorts of social reasons, started saying to me, you live in Rita's house! Oh! One was Helen Cannon, and I dearly love Helen Cannon. I got to know her when I covered the school board and she was on the school board. And, Helen said, oh, Mary, I've got to come over to your house. I just love Rita's house. I want to see what you've done with it, and she said, I loved playing bridge at your house. Her [Rita Gubler's] maid made the most wonderful cucumber sandwiches. And I said, well, Helen, I don't play bridge, I don't have a maid, I don't know how to make cucumber sandwiches, but, come on over anytime, you know. I could never live up to Rita's standards. And the house was still very much Rita's house. The entire house was wallpapered.

OK. Even this room? We're sitting in the living room.

The living room was painted, but what we didn't know was, it was painted on top of wallpaper. That's another story for you. But the bedroom had this silver flocked wallpaper with lime green on it. Not my thing. The living room had floor-to-ceiling drapes the whole front wall of the house, which covered these nice windows, and, the

carpeting was kind of a faint peach color and the drapes matched, and they had the Gubler initials embroidered in the bottom. And had this beautiful white couch that went kind of halfway across the living room wall and around the corner, had a corner table behind it which was kind of neat, and went down the other side, and then had matching chairs. Great living room, very formal, very formal kind of living room. A formal dining room table with six chairs. The chairs in there now are my chairs.

And you've added two chairs to it?

I have eight chairs now at my table. You know, it was obviously a house that was meant for entertaining, and Rita obviously entertained a lot. You know, you have a maid, you entertain.

One of my funny house stories is the maid's button in the floor. The house was all carpeted at the time, and nobody mentioned the maid's button, and we're having dinner in the dining room, just the two of us and our baby, in a high chair probably, and we hear a ringing sound. Well, this house, one of the unusual things about the house is that we have a back doorbell. We don't just have a front doorbell; we have a back doorbell that rings differently and then the front doorbell so you know which door to answer. So we hear this buzzer sound and we think it might be the back doorbell. My husband gets up; nobody's at the door. We know it's not the front doorbell. We sit down and we eat again. Pretty soon there's this noise again. And we figure it's coming from the kitchen, but we can't figure out—there's no appliance on, there's nothing that would be buzzing. And husband's the one who figured out, he was making it happen just by how he moved his foot around on the floor. And we saw the buzzer—I think I went in the kitchen and he was at the table—and we saw this little buzzer thing, and so we figured out it was a

maid's button. And there's a swinging door between the kitchen and the dining room, so when you're eating the door would be closed, and the maid would be in the kitchen, and when you wanted—and you wouldn't hear the buzzer so much when the door is closed. And, so when Rita Gubler wanted something, she's not going to get up and go get the maid. She just discreetly—she knew where the button was, she knew when to avoid it, but if she needed the maid, the maid would come.

She had a lot of Junior League kind of bridge parties. She also had a lot of bridal showers. I've met any number of Mormon women who had their bridal shower at my house. And all the boys, the Gublers had their boys and the boys in the neighborhood all came and played basketball in our basketball court. So it was a very social house, and social people. The back of the house was structured where it has three doors off the patio, and so the period when Mr. Gubler was a bishop, people could park—there's a long driveway on the side of the house and people could park in that driveway, up near the garage, and just walk around the back and go into the den, and could meet privately with Mr. Gubler, without disturbing the rest of the family. Although it's interesting there's no door on that room, and I've always wondered why it didn't have pocket doors, because I have pocket doors throughout the rest of my house.

So describe the house to me. You started describing it.

It's a weeping brick house, which were very popular in the fifties.

And what do you mean by "weeping brick"?

A weeping brick, it's like really a concrete block house, but the brick seeps out from the pores, if you will, and that's why it's called weeping brick, and it gives it a fancy look.

And when we moved in, the shutters were all in the garage, kind of in disrepair, but the

house needed shutters, and so we fixed the shutters and put the shutters back because there were places around the brick where the shutters need to be. So we restored the shutters to the house.

We walked a lot around the neighborhood and I saw a lot of houses had weathervanes, but my house didn't have a weathervane. So I wanted a weathervane, so my husband, for my birthday the next year, bought me a cupola and a weathervane, and we had a weathervane installed on our house. And of course, that's been up there twenty years now, so anybody would think it was an original thing.

So you've been here for twenty years?

We've been here, it'll be twenty-two years in October [2009], that we've been in this house.

I fell in love with the house. My motto is now, only buy custom-built houses from Mormons, because my house has storage that makes it the envy of the world, and I have a huge garage with a big area behind where the cars can park, and at the back of my house there's a storeroom. I'm a real Christmas person, a real holiday person, and I desperately need that storeroom. And I'm a china-holic. I have way too much china. So I've got these corner cupboards. I have great cupboards in the kitchen. And I can have things with ease. Like I keep my crystal in my corner cupboards, in my dining room, so it's really easy.

When you walk in the front door, or back on the house, the house makes a great presentation when you come in the door. And I have a formal living room off to the right, and I have the dining room off to the left. The dining room has pocket doors, so you can close that off, you know, if it's a mess you can close it off, if you wanted people to not see how you have it set. I like to have dinner parties with very formal tables. And I, in

fact, had a piece made, built, to put on top of the Gubler table, so that I could seat twelve. And we were in a book club for many years with twelve members. And some people would have to have a side table; I wanted everybody at one table, so I had thing [added to the table]. The room comfortably holds twelve chairs, so I just have this bigger piece that makes the table wider and much longer, and I can easily put twelve chairs around it. So at Christmastime I always have it out for twelve, and if I'm going to have a party or something, I set it for twelve. I like to have a very formal table, so if I'm entertaining I close the pocket doors, and I'll have the hors d'oeuvres in the living room or in the den or on the patio, depending on the season, and that room is shut off. And then when I'm ready to serve my dinner, I light the candles on the table, and I go around the backside and I open the doors. That's my presentation moment.

I helped a guy at the *R-J* find his wife. He married one of my girlfriends, twenty-one years ago this June [2009] in this house, so I had their wedding here, and we had the wedding cake and everything in the dining room, but the doors were shut off. We took all of the furniture out of the living room and we put it all toward the far, like a little altar place at the far end, and we set up rows of folding chairs, so the bride was able to come down the aisle, you know, and get married in my living room, and then the reception was out on the patio and outside, but also we opened the dining room doors, and during the ceremony the caterers are still busy, fixing up the food and everything, and we had a, you know, wonderful buffet in the dining room for that.

This house is just really great for [entertaining]. My husband ran unsuccessfully for Congress one year, and we had his announcement out in front of our house, and we had chairs set up all over the driveway, and he announced from the front steps of our

house, in February, when all of my daffodils were in bloom. It was beautiful. And then we invited everybody into the house for a party afterwards, and again, the people were setting up the food in the dining room, and the bar out on the patio. So, it was a great, you know, place for that too, and that's, I think, one of our special memories of the house, that both [former Governor and Senator] Richard [H.] Bryan and [Senator] Harry Reid spoke at that. So, you know, that was a special time in our house.

Tell me about the social. You told me a lot about the political here in the neighborhood, in John S. Park. What about social activities? Is there anything that the community does together?

We have an annual street party over on Ninth Street that people come to. And I think there's a lot of friendships within the neighborhood. The neighborhood's gone through an evolution. When we moved in, it was in the widow phase of the neighborhood and there were a lot of Mormon widows in the neighborhood, or other widows, and almost all of them have died now. But they were a predominant thing in the neighborhood, were older widows, and that was nice in some ways. I had some caroling parties for my son's Boy Scout troop or my daughter's Girl Scout troop and we would carol to the Mormon widows in the neighborhood, and I taught them [the children] about neighborliness and gift-giving. We were particularly close to a widow across the street from us, Mrs. Wegner. We just loved Mrs. Wegner, and my kids interacted with her a lot. She was pretty homebound but we would go over there and even our favorite cat loved her. Our cat Lucky would go over to visit Mrs. Wegner. She would talk German to him and he seemed to like it. I said, this is a German cat here, you know.

At any rate, I think there's a sense of neighborliness. If you sit in my living room, all day you'll see people walking by. Some people walk down this street, avoiding Las Vegas Boulevard. But people in the neighborhood walk here.

It was interesting. Before we moved in, our one concern about the house was being one block off of Las Vegas Boulevard and [it] being loud. Well, one thing inside the house, the walls in this house are really thick and you do not hear the [outside]. In my house, it's quiet. But we were worried about neighborhood noise; so we came here on a Saturday night and parked our car across the street. We wanted to see what was happening. And we weren't out there very long, and a man comes and taps on the car window, Rulon Earl, and asks us what we are doing in the neighborhood. Rulon Earl lived across the street, down a few houses, and he was a real Mormon patriarch, and had been on the Housing Authority for many years, another prominent Mormon attorney, and he said, what are you doing in the neighborhood? He was kind of a one-man neighborhood watch. So we got out of the car and said who we were and what we were doing, and he gave us his blessings to buy the house, told us we would love living here, and they were great neighbors to have. Rulon Earl was just a really nice man.

At the time we moved in, our next-door neighbor was Bob Albright, and anybody who lived here in this era would know Big Bob Albright, owned Generator Exchange, and he did his own TV commercials, and he sponsored movies on TV. It was like we moved next door to this celebrity, Big Bob Albright of Generator Exchange. Mr. Albright and his wife were just delightful people. He died when we were only here a couple of years but his widow lived there for many years. In fact, her children still own the house.

Now the neighborhood's in transition. We have quite a few university professors in the area. The woman who lives next door is a professor. Another one lives down the street. A couple live over on Sixth Street. So we have a lot of professors around.

Why do you think this area attracts so many people from UNLV?

I think it attracts UNLV people because, one thing, it's a close drive to UNLV. You know, an awful lot of university people live in Green Valley or Summerlin, and, you know, what a horrible commute that would be. And here, this used to be ten minutes from UNLV. Now it's about fifteen. Nowadays, that's not a bad commute, and so I think that makes it popular. And the neighborhood has a resurgence now of people with young children, and so that makes it more attractive for the people with young kids, because you have kids around the neighborhood more.

So I'm going to end it. Are there any other memories of John S. Park? If you could tell us briefly about the National Registry activity, anything about that, the work you did to get this [neighborhood] on the National Register [of Historic Places] that you would like to [recount].

Well, we weren't really involved in the National Registry thing so much. That was more city-driven. What we got was the designation.

I became interested in history through my husband. My husband is a book collector, and my husband owned a bookstore [Bob Coffin Books] for a number of years in a shopping center across from the Boulevard Mall that's not there anymore. Anyhow, he owned a bookstore there, and if I called it a used book store he'd be mad at me because he called it an antiquarian bookstore. He specialized in books about Nevada and the West, and he had arguably the best collection of Nevada books around, and ephemera

about Las Vegas, old Las Vegas High School newspapers and stuff, and he also specialized in U.S. Geological Survey books. Kind of an interesting sort of place. And he was very interested in history, having grown up here, so he had more of the sense of history than I did.

But long before we were a historic neighborhood, there was an opening on the Historic Preservation Commission, and I didn't realize the Historic Preservation Commission interviewed people for the job, and people vied to get their endorsement. And that was how you got on the Historic Preservation Commission. You had to have their stamp of approval.

So they asked me to come to this meeting and I thought I was just going and I had mild interest in it, but here's somebody else who's an applicant and we're being interviewed, to get this appointment, and I didn't know it was competitive. I knew the other lady. I never would've competed against her. Well anyhow, they voted to nominate me. I got appointed, and part of why they wanted to nominate me was she didn't live anywhere in the historical area and I did live in a historical neighborhood.

So, early one when I was there, we tried to get Downtown designated, and that didn't work out. But we started developing interest here. We're going to have to have Part 2 to finish this conversation. But we had a fight over keeping Bob [Robert E.] Stupak from building Titanic [Hotel and Casino] right by our house, and that kind of galvanized the neighborhood and it certainly got my activism going, and I really worked very hard on that campaign. And then, after that, we decided to go for designation.

And I think this might be a good place [to stop].

OK. Cool. I need to correct something that I said early on because I realized, two minutes after I said it, I made a mistake in my personal history. When my father came to get me from college, he'd moved back to Akron. And I was thinking, when I said that, we didn't go back to Pennsylvania. So where I said my father drove me back to Pennsylvania, he was just driving me back to Akron, and I set out for Colorado from Akron, not from Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania thing was like a four-year thing in their life. OK.

OK, good. So, going for designation, that's where we're going to pick up when we come back. This is wonderful, Mary. Thank you so much.

OK, great! OK! I had fun.

This is Friday morning, April 10th, 2009, and I'm with Mary Hausch. This is our second session. Mary, how are you doing today?

I'm real good.

Fantastic! You look happy today.

I am. I'm getting ready for Easter.

That's right. And your house, I love your Easter decorations.

Thank you.

Yes. So, Mary, we stopped the other day and we had started talking about the John S. Park Neighborhood and getting the designation for it, and you were going to tell me more about that process, and I have lots of other things to ask as well.

That process occurred in 2003, but I think it really goes back to 1999, when we were faced with Bob Stupak, who lived on Sixth Street. He lived at Sixth and Franklin

[Avenue], so a stone's throw from my house, if you can throw stones good, I guess. And

he had already built the Stratosphere [Hotel and Casino] tower, which some people in the neighborhood opposed but I think it worked out OK. Then he wanted to build a replica of the Titanic, right up against our neighborhood, on Las Vegas Boulevard by Park Paseo. And this would have a big tower that would cast a huge shadow over blocks in the neighborhood. The imprint of the land he wanted to do it on, frankly, wasn't big enough for the project. But he wanted to do this, so I was one of the people in the neighborhood who galvanized against this and said, we just can't allow this to happen.

What was the Titanic to be used for?

It was going to be a hotel-casino. And he hired a big-time lobbyist to help him out, a PR firm, to get this on. And we went to our councilman Gary Reese and Gary Reese has been extremely supportive of our neighborhood, and Gary Reese said, if you show me the neighborhood is opposed to it, I will be opposed to it, and he said, generally other people on the [City] Council go with the wishes of the person who represents the area. So we went door-to-door, to get signatures of people, and people were just overwhelmingly opposed to it. That's a time-consuming process because you can't get three houses in a row for people to be home at the same time, so you have to keep going back over and over. We wanted an area much larger than the historically-designated neighborhood because it would impact people blocks away.

I felt from my years in journalism and having some savvy in that regard that that wasn't going to be enough, so I spearheaded a PR campaign, and one of the things I did was I had John Smith, an *R-J* [columnist] and good friend, come over for lunch at my house and then I said, let's take a walk around the neighborhood. Well of course, I'd arranged for neighbors to be home ahead of time. John and I stopped at a couple of

houses and people said, oh, would you like to see my house. And I got people from different TV stations to come out, and I planned certain neighbors for them to talk to ahead of time. I said, would you be willing to talk to a person? So one of my neighbors a couple of doors down who lives in what we call the Alpine Village House, was one of the spokespersons. She and her husband had owned the Alpine Village Restaurant [Inn], and their house looks like a little chalet. So, she was one of the people I had talk. Very effective. I went for older, widowed women to be spokespersons.

So, when the City Council ended up voting on that, the only person who went with Bob Stupak was the mayor, Jan Jones. And she voted against the neighborhood but the other people on the council all supported us. And Stupak had been a big supporter of hers.

Of hers. OK. So that was a political [move].

So I don't think we were surprised by that, you know. But the neighborhood showed up in force at that and I can't say enough about people in this neighborhood, and how many times, fighting expansions of porno businesses, adult book stores, all kinds of things, the people in this neighborhood have gone down to Planning Commission after Planning Commission [meeting], City Council meeting, you know, going down there, having to put money in the parking meters, figuring out how to park, and you're talking about people in their seventies and eighties, going out at night, and they've done it over and over again, to protect our neighborhood. So, it's really been a wonderful thing.

In the campaign in 1999, we had people get up and talk, and one of the people who got up to talk was my daughter, who at the time was, wow, only about five years old, maybe six, and she got up in her little Brownie uniform to be against it. At one meeting,

it was some issue later on when she's there in her Girl Scout uniform, people on the other side, a guy got up and he spoke and he said, I'm the veteran and I'm here to counter the Girl Scout to speak on whatever the issue was at that time.

But at any rate, I think the Titanic thing gave us what I'll call a spirit of place. We realized that collectively we had a neighborhood we wanted to save, and even if we didn't know each other very well, we knew we wanted this neighborhood. So we started having neighborhood meetings and we came up with a neighborhood plan. There was a city planner, Yorgo [Kagafas], who was just fabulous in working with us, and coordinated our meetings, kept us going, and we had all these meetings up at John S. Park [Elementary School] and everybody in the neighborhood was always noticed, and people could come, and then we voted as a neighborhood to go to the city and ask for historic designation. And, the City Council and the Planning Commission had bad experiences, as had the Historic Preservation Commission, with trying to put that designation on a neighborhood downtown, and it was literally putting it on the neighborhood. The Historic Preservation Commission wanted to do that in the area around Las Vegas High School, and they were too late coming to the table on that, and at that point the neighborhood had flipped from being a residential neighborhood to a business neighborhood, and so it was the Historic Preservation Commission forcing it on them. The City Council said, after that negative experience, that it had to come from the community. It had to be people coming and asking for it, that they were not going to be a party to ramming it down anybody's throat.

We got neighborhood support enough to go to the Planning Commission and talk about it. Well, at first go to the Historic Preservation Commission, they endorsed it, go to

the Planning Commission, they endorse it, and take it to the City Council. But at this point, there was some opposition building to it, a few people from the neighborhood, particularly a few homeowners along Sixth Street, who hoped the zoning would be changed. They were hoping that the law offices on the other side of Charleston would start moving over here, that they could make big bucks selling their homes. Well, there are only so many attorneys who want offices in houses, and there are barely enough of them to sustain the neighborhood where they are, so they simply weren't going to come over here. But there were a few neighbors who were vocal opponents, and they started, you know, spreading rumors about what would happen and what you could and couldn't do with your house, and that it would be very restrictive. So they started a petition drive against it, and we had a petition drive in favor of it, and some people who were confused signed both petitions, so we were having problems, and Gary Reese said shortly before the big City Council meeting on it, you know, have you really canvassed every house, you know, have you really done everything? Just a couple of days before the meeting, I'm looking at all of the signatures and a number of us were gathering them, and I realized somehow there was one block that had fallen through the cracks, that we didn't have a single signature from that block, so within just days of the meeting I went to that block, and went to every house on it, and fortunately most people were home, and these people were just like almost on an island, wondering why nobody had talked to them about it. And so almost everybody on that street supported the cause, and several of them even showed up at the meetings.

But it caused tension within the neighborhood. A neighbor across the street from me signed the petition against it and was fed a lot of ideas about our property being worth

grandiose amounts of monies if we could either, particularly on our street, Fifth Place, if somebody wanted to build a casino, maybe we could sell our whole block to them and make a lot of money. So there was some thinking of that or, you know, gee, I can't do things. When we finally went to the City Council, it was really great. The mayor made some kind of a statement about, if you want to paint your house with polka dots, you can do that, you know, we're not going to keep you from painting your house, which seemed to be a big point of contention.

We got the City Council's support, and we became the first historically designated neighborhood in Las Vegas, and in fact, we're the only one. To be historically designated, the homes have to be over fifty years old. And it's interesting because my house is the very last house in the neighborhood. I'm the cutoff point on the designated neighborhood. But, some houses down the street from are now over fifty years old, and so, a few people have wondered, well, gee, can we get in the neighborhood? And so there's a number of streets bordering us, where the houses were forty-five years old or so when this happened and now they're older, and I would love to see the neighborhood expanded, because the John S. Park Neighborhood is bigger than the part that is designated, so it'd be nice if we pulled more people into it, and there are some other neighborhoods such as the Beverly Neighborhood that those houses are about old enough too, and I would hope some other neighborhoods would decide that they want to do this too.

What would be your major argument for a historically designated community?

When people say, oh, but I'm going to have to go to the Historic Preservation

[Commission] every time I get ready to do something to my house, how do you counter that?

It goes back to my spirit of place kind of thinking, that people are attracted to our neighborhood and some other old neighborhoods such as the neighborhood the mayor [Oscar Goodman] lives in [known as Scotch Eighties] because of the character of the neighborhood, and people buy into any of these neighborhoods because of what the neighborhood is about, and if you care that much to move into it, it's worth fighting for, it's worth having, and there's a sense of pride. Something I would love to do in this neighborhood, that I've seen in historic neighborhoods back east, are have little bronze plaques on the house, and I would love to, when I ever have time, to apply for the license plate money to fund putting plaques on houses that people wanted them on. And you could have on your house, you know, "My house was built in 1950," and you could have the plaque say, "Historic Neighborhood," and maybe the name. My house is known as the Gubler House and even though I've lived here over twenty years, I don't mind saying I live in the Gubler House. And so, I'd love to get the plaques you could put on people's houses, and that would build the pride even more.

I did an interview yesterday in Boulder City, and I was in the historic neighborhood, and the house had a plaque on it. Right there beside the front door as you enter the house, there's a beautiful plaque, very small, maybe twelve inches by eight inches or something, twelve by twelve maybe. Beautiful thing.

See, and I've seen much smaller plaques. I grew up in Ohio, where [in] a historic neighborhood, the houses are two hundred years old or something, and some people say, well, isn't it kind of a joke that you're trying to give historic preservation to fifty-year-old

houses, and my response is, your history is what your history is. This is a big part of Las Vegas's history because Las Vegas, as a city, is barely a hundred years old, so this neighborhood is half as old as the whole city and we need to save that, just as we need to save older things.

My husband has really been instrumental over the years in helping [to] preserve the Mormon Fort downtown [Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park] downtown, and it had reached a point where it was in really decrepit kind of condition and it's been brought back and restored into a beautiful park. It even has a wonderful garden, such as it would've been when the Mormons maintained that garden.

Well, you know, we lost the wonderful neighborhood downtown, where the first people lived. Almost all of the railroad cottages are gone, and the ones that are left had to be moved to be saved, and I don't think we should have to just move houses to save them.

So I would hope people in other older neighborhoods would buy into this concept, and I guess as a member of the Historic Preservation Commission, I should get involved in outreach to those neighborhoods, to tell them about the process and to say, look, now we have this one neighborhood, it's been designated for six years now, and I think it's done a lot to maintain that neighborhood. No horrific things have happened and people who wanted to put in new windows were able to put in new windows, people were able to build additions on the back of their houses.

And paint their houses different colors.

Yes, and it's really helped hold the neighborhood together. It's interesting, a couple of people who were opposed to it have called me on several occasions now saying, can you

help with so-and-so because I think that they're doing this wrong and I don't think in our historic neighborhood they can do that, and I think, oh, how funny, now you like having the historic thing.

Yes, but that's great. That's great they've come around.

Well, we are really privileged in our neighborhood to have a brochure of a walking tour of our neighborhood. Somebody new just moved on my block a couple of months ago and I went down to their house with a plate of cookies and a map of the neighborhood—well, it actually wasn't a plate; I put them in a bag, to be honest. [Laughter] But, you know, I like to give people when they move in, the map and say, here's our neighborhood. Walk around, see what it's about, because we need to have new people buy in to the concept too.

Yes, yes, and I like what you said, the spirit. I love that. That's a wonderful way to say it.

Could you explain to me what the Hartland is? There's a house around the corner from you—

The Hartland Mansion. OK, the Hartland Mansion is owned by the Hart family, and that house has an interesting history because it was originally two houses that a man named Lawrence Arvey built into one house. And Lawrence Arvey owned a lot of candy stores in the Strip hotels, and they were these candy stores that had all different kinds of candy, had big barrels of candy and you'd pick out what you want and pay for them. So he created this mansion. Then he got into trouble (how to say this) with some sexual deviance problems and he got arrested and there were rumor of his Christmas tree with dildos on it and various things. And he bailed out and left the country, and I don't think

has been seen since. I think he went to South America or something. So he just disappeared.

The house ultimately went to the Hart family, and this is going back like twenty years or something, and they managed to get their zoning changed. That house has slightly different zoning than the rest of us, and they're entitled to have commercial social events at that house. And it has a beautiful indoor swimming pool, and very nice amenities in the house, and people rent it out for weddings—in fact I've been to a wedding at the house—and sometimes when conventions are in town, they have private parties there. And they also own the house right behind them, a small house that fronts on Park Paseo at the end of Fifth Place, and that's empty right now—in fact there's a "No Trespassing" sign on the door—but for a little while, Mrs. [Toni] Hart was operating that as a restaurant. They have a lot of parking in between the mansion house and that house. I was sorry to see that not work out because it was a nice little lunch spot, and when people wanted to have lunch with me, I would just say, well, let's have it at that restaurant, I can't remember what it was called, but I would walk to lunch. [Laughter] You can't drive up six houses to go to lunch, so I would walk to lunch. It was a great little restaurant but it was, I think, took too much effort and wasn't making enough money for them. So they stopped it being a restaurant and a couple of years ago they tried to make it a wedding chapel, and they invited everybody in the neighborhood over to talk about it, and we opposed that idea. I think we're ever vigilant about encroachment in the neighborhood and our thought was, you'd have all these limousines, and you'd have all this traffic. They were able to start the wedding chapel but it never took off, so they've quit doing that and right now the house is empty and that, I guess, suits us just fine.

So the little house is empty but the larger house is still [occupied].

The Hart family still lives there.

Oh, so the family actually lives in the house as well.

Yeah. Mrs. [Toni] Hart, she's a little older and I think she's in ill health but she still lives there with her son Garry [Hart] and maybe another one of her children. I'm not sure.

OK. It was just so big, I just wondered what it was.

Yeah, and it is beautiful inside, particularly this big room with the indoor pool. It's very nice for parties. [Note: For more information about the Hartland Mansion, see Joyce Wadler, "A Palace of Plaster," *Las Vegas Sun*, February 26, 2010.]

Good. I have seen one historic John S. Park, it's not a plaque, it's not a sign, it's that big rock-looking—

Right, that's one of the gateways to our neighborhood.

Is that the only one? I saw the one on Eighth Street.

Yeah, it's Eighth and Charleston, I'd say, and that's a little park [Circle Park]. When we first moved into this neighborhood twenty-some years ago, that was a different kind of park. It had grass, and it had a swing set. Oh, I'm not sure about the swing set; I might take that back. Yeah, it did, it had a kind of a play area, and when my son was a baby, we walked up there some with him, and let him play in the grass. But it became overrun with homeless people, and so to solve that problem, the city took out all of the grass and put in rocks and made it a place that wouldn't be nice to sleep in. We wish there could be benches there but if you had benches there, you'd still have that problem. I've thought about putting in, I've seen benches where they have like railings in the seating so you really can't lay there. It's a shame. I don't know, maybe we could have something like

that there. But now that the economy is getting worse, I've seen homeless people sleeping on the rocks there, so it's kind of sad. But that's like a gateway to our neighborhood.

There's a motel [Monterey Motel] on Park Paseo by Fifth Place that the back of the motel, it fronts on our neighborhood, and I approached the owner of that motel to see if we could put a mural on that wall, and we could've gotten a city grant to pay for the mural, and it would've been a smart idea for him because he gets graffiti on it, but he turned us down on that idea. That's again something long-term. I would love to still go back and revisit that idea of making that a mural that could show something about the park.

We did get a city grant for that little gateway park. There's a piece of sculpture in that park that's a plowshare, and it's to represent the area when this was the Dutton farm. This was farmland a little bit before it was a residential neighborhood, so that's what that sculpture is about.

Wonderful. Wonderful. I appreciate that so much. Those were the major follow-up questions that I wanted to ask.

At Eighth and Franklin, it's the same block where the school [John S. Park Elementary School] is, but on the other side of the block, Eighth and Franklin, there's a big white building with no name on it.

That's the Mormon church.

You were going to talk about the different religions.

Well, the Mormon church is a pivotal part of our neighborhood, and that was the First Ward Mormon church. They moved out of the church last year and they've taken their name off the building. And we're really concerned about what's going to happen to that,

and there's rumors that the school district might buy it and do something with it, but the building has structural problems, and the Mormon Church evaluated what they wanted to do with that, and they just decided to let it be empty. So kids are playing in the parking lot a lot. I think it's a place where all the kids in the neighborhood first practiced driving, and things like that. You should talk to Jack Schofield about that house. Jack Schofield lives right across the street from there, and he's our regent, and I think he's lived there for fifty years. Anyhow, Jack is a, you know, highly regarded Mormon person in our neighborhood, and he was very upset about it closing down, because as he said, he liked being able to get up late and walk right across the street and be at church.

And tell me about that. Tell me about people walking to church in this community, not just Mormons but other [people].

There were a number of churches in this neighborhood, and the Mormon church is the only one within the John S. Park Neighborhood, but we also have, fairly close, Reformation Lutheran Church and a Baptist church that people could walk to if they wanted to.

When we moved in this neighborhood, most of my neighbors were members of the LDS Church, and at the point when we moved in, a lot of them had become widows. But people would walk over to the Mormon church on Sunday. I'm not LDS myself but I have respect for the religion, and I like the idea of people walking to church, just as the kids in the neighborhood walk to John S. Park School.

We've been lucky. The school is not the old school. The school was a wing at a time torn down, a few years ago, and replaced, so it's really a new school in the old school location, with the name and with the history of the school. That was one of the

many schools the district built in a growth period, and it maybe wasn't constructed as well as it should be and it couldn't be wired for electronics and things. So the school's been improved and I'm hoping that something good that will be within keeping with the neighborhood will go where the Mormon church is.

Good. Who are some of the people in the neighborhood that you know, not just the ones who hold office, but who are some of the people in the neighborhood that we cannot miss when it comes to collecting this history? Is there anyone that you know of that we might miss because maybe they're older or they're not as active and we just might miss the name?

Well, I think the gathering you had in December [2008], you had some people like Margaret [McGhie], she's just a pillar of history for the neighborhood, so I think people like that are really important to talk to. Jack Schofield just came to mind and we hadn't talked about him sooner because he's lived in this neighborhood forever and he's a former state senator for the neighborhood and he's now our regent, but he would really be a good person for you to tell you about other older people who, you know, live here and have lived here a really long time, because a lot of those are older and are widows, you know, [and] if you don't get a hold of them now, you're not going to get a hold of them. The lady from the Alpine Village House lives in a convalescent home now, for example, and I think she's still very coherent but she's, you know. Relatives of hers live in that house now but they don't really have any historical connection to the house.

So we need to get in touch with them or someone in the family so that we can talk to her.

Tell me about some of the changes that you've witnessed in the neighborhood since you've been here. Some of them you've talked about, but are there any other changes that you think should be mentioned?

Something that's happening in the broader neighborhood that bothers me and it's happening on my own street down a little bit is a tendency of people to put gates up around their front yards, and fence in their front yards. I don't like that at all. It's happened at a few houses within the historic district and it's, I think, a terrible precedent. You lose a sense of community when you wall yourself off, and then you also have, on my own block, you have a couple of houses where you have this hodge-podge of gates and fences, and they fight each other architecturally, they look terrible, and I'm thinking of the families who originally lived there like Rulon Earl. Mr. Earl passed on a number of years ago. If he saw that gate in front of his yard, he would be so upset. He had a beautiful house, and you can't even see his house anymore.

So how can we remedy that?

I would hope within the historic district, I've talked to [Historic Preservation Officer] Courtney [Mooney] about this, that it seems to me that's something they should have to come to the [Historic Preservation] Commission about, and it would be something where I think we have to take a stand and say no, you know, that doesn't work out.

An unusual thing about our neighborhood is that we don't have sidewalks, by and large, and there was an effort to put sidewalks in a few years ago, and that got voted down, and people like it just fine that we don't have sidewalks and people walk in the street and I don't think anybody's ever been killed. And we're about to get our street resurfaced, this year, and I know the people in the city asked us if there would be an

appetite for putting in sidewalks at the same time, but it'd be an improvement we would have to pay for, and I think the answer is no.

Yes. I think that's a good idea.

What do you like most about living in John S. Park?

The most. Wow. I love my house. [Laughter] I love my house. We're sitting in my living room and you hear nothing from the outside. But several people have walked by while we've been talking. And we're only one block off of Las Vegas Boulevard, old Fifth Street.

It's hard to believe that, isn't it?

You don't hear the cars, it doesn't spill over into our neighborhood, it's quiet.

This is like it's hidden away.

It is. I call it an enclave. And I have a big backyard, I have a wonderful backyard, and it's just it's quiet, it's peaceful, I have my own space, and I really like it. This morning I was up in a neighborhood in the northwest, and it is high fences around all the back, it's claustrophobic in those backyards, and you could carry on a dialogue with your next-door neighbor, you know, if you both opened your windows. Well, I can't do that here and I'm happy I can't do that here.

But people in your neighborhood would walk to the next-door neighbor's house.

Yeah, and people are very friendly. My next-door neighbor is gone for a couple of days, and he came over and said, we're going to San Diego, keep an eye on the house, and I know that if I go away he'll keep an eye on my house. One of my neighbors down the street, when I go out of town, she comes over and feeds my cats. We have a good sense of what we're about. And I also love how centrally located I am. When I would have my

kids' birthday parties at our house, you have to shoo parents away from kids' birthday parties. A lot of people have two parties at once: they have a parents' party in one room and a kids' party. I'm a real hands-on birthday party person and I don't have time to entertain parents, so particularly my daughter's parties, I would just tell people, I'm equidistant from the Fashion Show, Boulevard, and Meadows Malls. Take your pick and go shopping. [Laughter] And it's really the truth. And now we have the [Las Vegas Premium] Outlet Mall downtown that's very close. We're very close to the freeway, we're close to Maryland Parkway, you can get to a lot of places and do a lot of things from here.

Yes. What don't you like about it?

I think there's a fear of the neighborhood eroding, and we've worried some about that with the downturn in the economy. The house directly across from me is a foreclosure house that somebody's renovating right now. But I don't think you have to lose too many houses before your neighborhood's in trouble. And so I worry about that.

Periodically we've had crime problems but not omnipresent, not all the time. We had a house over on Sixth Street that was a drug house for a little bit, and when that house got shut down, then the crime went away too. And that happens in any neighborhood, you know.

Yes, it does. Yes. What advice would you give to the next neighborhood that become historically designated?

Well, you got to have somebody that will galvanize the neighborhood, and so it's finding a couple of leaders who will put the effort into going door to door and explaining it. It's really a sales process. And we had a brochure [that] we gave people about designation,

and I think that's an important kind of thing, that it's not going to work unless a majority of people buy into it. In fact, the City Council won't do it if people don't buy into it. But I think that's it's really worth going for. I felt the day after the City Council approved it, I just woke up with a smile, and I just [thought], we did it and wow, we live in the John S. Park Historic Neighborhood. And there are some other neighborhoods up around Our Lady of Las Vegas [Catholic Church and School] for example, they have a rock [that] the city put up, calling them a historic neighborhood, but they're not, you know. They're old houses and they're calling themselves a historic neighborhood. Well then, why don't they get designated? If they have that pride in their neighborhood, they should go for the designation and the protection.

Yes. I thank you so much.

It's been my pleasure. Come over anytime.

OK. Great.

So as we were sitting here looking through your sort of a notebook, scrapbook, as you were selling the idea of the neighborhood, of the historic neighborhood, tell me some of the things that you did.

Well, this is what we were just talking about as something I did. After we got the designation, I wanted to cement the concept that we were an important neighborhood and that there were benefits to come from this neighborhood, and that part of preserving our neighborhood is preserving the perimeter, places that aren't really in the neighborhood.

So, I just went around to some of these businesses and I said, can I print up very amateurish little coupons? What kind of offer would you be willing to give people? So like Milt's [Barber Style and Supply] barbershop which unfortunately has gone out of

business since then but he gave me a dollar off on a haircut. Well, he was an old-time barber. He wasn't charging that much. Cantrell's Cleaners which is the closest dry cleaner to our neighborhood, been around a long time, she came up with a sweater offer or something. I did this right after we got the designation, and so I mailed this out to everybody in the historic neighborhood, these little coupons, and I go to that dry cleaner and the lady, about a week later, was so excited. She said, people have brought in the coupon, and they're people that haven't been my customers before. You know. And these are the kind of things [I would do]. You know, my mental to-do list goes on forever. Sometime in the summer, maybe it'll be this summer, I don't know, I'll do it again. It was a lot of fun and it helped people say, wow.

Do you have a neighborhood association?

Yeah, we do, but it's really been inactive, and we need to revive that and get it going again.

Because we would like to, as part of this oral history project, we thought we would go to one of those meetings, and talk about this.

You know, unfortunately it's like so many things in life. We don't have an association like where you pay dues or something, and that was the fear people had about historic preservation, that we were going to have to be paying some kind of dues. I'd like us to have a meeting in the [Historic] Fifth Street School downtown so that people in the neighborhood could see that. Our neighborhood president Bob Bellis is moving out of the neighborhood, so we need to get a new president. In fact, I was thinking my neighbor right behind me, Kenny Stewart, was president when we got the historic designation, and

I was thinking of approaching Kenny about doing it. Of course he'd say, do it yourself, Mary.

That's what I was about to ask.

I am an extremely overextended person in my life that I do have trouble forming the word "no." I have to look in the mirror and practice "no." [Laughter] And so, I do too many things and, you know, in a time of crisis I'm going to be the first up to the plate, to save the neighborhood and stuff, but I'd like it if somebody else was president. I'm a behind-the-scenes mover and I'm not sure that I would want to do that. My husband however is term-limited out of the state senate, and he will need something to do in his spare time.

Oh yes! Wouldn't that be wonderful.

I don't know if Bob would consider it a promotion or a demotion from state senator to neighborhood president, you know. [Laughter] As we're talking, the idea is coming into my mind.

I think that would be wonderful.

But, yeah, we'll find somebody. But I think things like the little coupons, they sound kind of, you know.

I think it sounds like, when you talk about a spirit of a community, it makes me feel warm and fuzzy. Yes.

Yeah. And so that's what I want to have. Got to bring those coupons back.

Yes. I think that would be a great idea. Now, are you going to find anything else interesting over there?

No. No, close it.

OK, so we'll end it now.

OK, tell me about that again. You are the designated person for the Historic Preservation Commission.

Yeah, I was already on the Historic Preservation Commission but the makeup of the commission, there's designated people—there's an architect, a historian, things like that—and there's a seat for somebody who lives in a historically designated neighborhood. And so, when we got our historic designation there were two of us that were citizens-at-large that live in the neighborhood, but they decided to give me the seat for the neighborhood, so I'm in the designated spot now. My term just got renewed in March of this year, but if it hadn't, somebody else in the neighborhood would have to do it. And I was thinking about not doing it anymore, but I wanted to pass it on to my husband and he's preoccupied at the moment, so at the point that he's ready to do it, then I'll, you know.

[Laughing] You'll keep it in the family.

Well, I've mentioned in our other conversation, my husband has a greater heartfelt passion for the neighborhood probably than I do because he grew up in the general area, and he has a sense of history that just doesn't quit.

Yes. Yes. And I find that, in this neighborhood, you know the first roundtable we had with Senator Bryan and his sense of history was just amazing. And I've heard that [County Commissioner] Chris G.'s [Guinchigliani] sense of this neighborhood is the same kind of thing. So maybe there's something about these people with that sense of neighborhood, wanting to represent it politically. That's good. That's good!

Yeah. Could be. Yeah. Well, yeah, it's interesting because when you think, the senate district is large. So my husband represents it and we live in the district, and Jack

Schofield used to represent it, and he lives in the district. Chris G. was our assemblyman for years. Now her home is a little outside the district but we count her in anyhow, you know.

Yeah, because she's probably part of the neighborhood.

Oh, well, let me tell you, Chris G. is the most walking politician I've ever met in my life, and she knows everybody and anything about the neighborhood. We had a larger neighborhood holiday party. Every year we have a party at our neighborhood bar.

OK. And where is the neighborhood bar?

On Sahara and Sixth Street. Anyhow, we two years in a row had a Christmas party there, the larger neighborhood, and I mentioned to Chris at that party something about my next-door neighbor dying, and she said, why didn't you tell me she died, you know, I would've sent them a card. And so she really cares about our community and therefore her community too.

That's great. I think that's the way representatives should be.

Oh yeah, I do too.

Well, now we're going to end.

OK. That's it.

Thanks.

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