

## CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

### VERA DUDLEY

Jacobsen: Today is May 6, 1996 and we are interviewing Vera Dudley about her experiences with Central Washington University who has been a student and a substitute faculty member, what else? Vera would you give us –

Dudley: Faculty wife.

Jacobsen: Faculty wife, of course. Would you give us some of your personal background, early life?

Dudley: Well the Washington State Normal School was a part of my life because I was born in Ellensburg, reared in Ellensburg and went to Central which wasn't - it was Central, I can't remember, from 1941 to '42 and then I dropped out and came back after Stanley and I were married and he had already graduated from Central and we moved back here when he became a staff member here. I went back then and finished my degree and taught in the Ellensburg Public School and then when I retired from that I came back to Central and taught for Gene Kosey part time for three years.

Jacobsen: I like that but also would you tell us where you were born and your early years? Just give us background on you.

Dudley: I was born in Ellensburg. I went to the Ellensburg Public Schools. My, both my grandparents were pioneers here, both sides of the family. I had two uncles that graduated from the Normal School in 1919 and it goes on down through the history. I have really been a part of Ellensburg because I'm related to about 50% of the people that are in Ellensburg.

Jacobsen: That's interesting. That should add a lot to our tape. What did you happen to major in when you were here as an undergraduate?

Dudley: Okay, I majored in business education, minored in geography and one of my other loves was music. I took classical music but did not pursue that because - did teach private piano at one time but I knew that I could not do public school music. That was just not part of my make up to do that.

Jacobsen: Having been born in Ellensburg, apparently you lived at home when you went to Central?

Dudley: Yes.

Jacobsen: So you didn't experience any dormitory activities?

Dudley: No.

Jacobsen: Did you have any close friends that you remember?

Dudley: At Central?

Jacobsen: At Central.

Dudley: No, I had one and - Norma Jean Wilson, Lester Wilson's daughter. My closest friends went out of Ellensburg. Most of them to the University and other than that I can't think of any real close friends. I knew a lot of people because there were so many of us that were here and the college was much smaller then and you get well acquainted much easier because you had the same people in all your classes.

Jacobsen: Did you have to work to help finance your way through school?

Dudley: Not when I was - when I first started right out of high school and then, of course, when I came back Stanley took care of my needs but I didn't work at that time either. I was very lucky.

Jacobsen: Do you remember what college cost at the time? What was the tuition if there was a tuition?

Dudley: You know, I do not have a memory of that and I - even if I could look that up. You see, I wasn't responsible for those bills at that time. My father took care of that so I just really don't remember.

Jacobsen: What was your father's occupation?

Dudley: He was the city treasurer here.

Jacobsen: Oh?

Dudley: Before that of course he had a Studebaker garage and wrecking service, many other things.

Jacobsen: So things about money matters. As I recall, they hadn't established that quite that early in your undergraduate years. Can you think back about some of the college professors that might have made a significant contribution to your undergraduate studies?

Dudley: Yes, I can. In the '40's I would be remiss not to mention Nicholas Hinch. He embarrassed the girls in the class terrifically, I think. "Girly, you don't know what life's all about." He taught English and we learned grammar, believe me, because you didn't pass his class if you didn't. You had to count the letters in each line. Our margins had to be justified by hand. He was a real stickler but as a result, I still am a good writer.

Jacobsen: So he prepared you for that even though he might not fit today's sexuality situation.

[Something about Bill Stephens is missing here.]

Dudley: No, today he would not be very popular but he - and then everybody called him Pop Stephens and I enjoyed my classes from him because I knew very very little about psychology at that time and ? kind of a revelation. I had really good instructors.

Jacobsen: So he taught largely psychology for you. I understand he also taught philosophy?

Dudley: Yes.

Jacobsen: Did you have any from him?

Dudley: I didn't take any philosophy at that time. All of the professors, I don't think that we in those days really complained about our professors like we did later on.

Jacobsen: Can you recall maybe two or three others, you don't have to add a lot about them but just for the names?

Dudley: Well, when I came back in the '60's, of course, with out a doubt the most outstanding person in my college life would have to be Bob Funderburk in geography. He could give a great deal for some of us that he took out and put in a special ? We just felt like we had probably an education that we wouldn't get anywhere else.

Jacobsen: Can you mention some of the things that he did that made him seem outstanding to you?

Dudley: He, first of all you respected him because he was such a gentleman and he was so knowledgeable. He would suggest that maybe we should read a particular book that would give us a better understanding of whatever happened to be that we were studying at that time. He never had us read so many pages and then test us on it or anything like that. There was discussion and he would tell us what he was going to discuss the next period and he expected us to be prepared so we did whatever was necessary to prepare. We had textbooks but we also spent a lot of time in the library researching from there. He just taught us more about living than studying, getting a grade, and getting out of there.

Jacobsen: I understand he had a personal knowledge of a lot of the places and brought back some visual aides.

Dudley: Yes, beautiful aides, yes. And not only that, he taught things like weather and climate. He had a terrific knowledge of those things.

Jacobsen: Do you remember any of the administration at that time who stood out to you?

Dudley: Urn, not as a student, particularly, but of course I was involved with the faculty women and going back from Dr. McConnell and Mrs. McConnell and then coming up through the years, it just seemed like that we faculty women in those earlier days, we had a great time especially because we were small and we really got to know those people and so you felt more a part of them than I think probably I do today but they were - I never had any complaint with them. I always felt that they were?, then.

Jacobsen: Did you happen to do things like participate in student government or activities outside of class that you enjoyed?

Dudley: I participated in the early '40's in a dance club and a music club and then when I came back, of course, I had a family to think about. I participated in the business education club. Other than that, I didn't participate in any student activities.

Jacobsen: Do you think those extra curricular activities prior to marriage held any equivalence to classes?

Dudley: Yes, I think that's the way you developed an understanding of people from other areas. We didn't have as much ethnic groups as we do now but I think that we learned that people had different thoughts and different ideas and you learned to listen to them, become a part of their life as they became a part of your life.

Jacobsen: You mentioned some acquaintances, do you think of any others through extra curricular that??

Dudley: There were a number of people within the music department, you know, but I would be at a loss to give you names but we were able to do some small group things and this was extra curricular because I wasn't a music major and it was just a fun experience to be around those people that shared that interest.

Jacobsen: I find that interesting because that's the thing that a lot of music majors play up today, they like their small groups. Do you recall how you felt about the value of the library?

Dudley: I used the library a lot. I don't remember having any complaints. I recall meeting younger students - I was quite a bit older - there and working with them and studying with them and that was a nice part of my time because I was so much older. I was old enough to be their mother and - so that was nice that they accepted me and I accepted them.

Jacobsen: You mentioned earlier that you'd been extensively in geography.

Dudley: Yes.

Jacobsen: Do you have any memories about things such as registration or working with the business office, student health or was there a health center at the time?

Dudley: You know I don't recall because I lived off campus. I would have used local doctors and as far as registration, I just recall standing in line a few times but other than that I rather think that - I don't recall being concerned that I couldn't get into a class.

Jacobsen: Before?

Dudley: Either, either time.

Jacobsen: Let's see, you were - Stan was not a student while you were a student, right?

Dudley: No.

Jacobsen: Did you happen to receive any awards or honors while you were a student?

Dudley: Well, yes I did. I received a National Business Education Merit Award as a student and then I graduated cum laude.

Jacobsen: Were any things like women's rights thought about in those particular years even prior to World War II or after?

Dudley: Not that I recall but and the reason I say this - some of the students were a little concerned. They didn't think I was treated quite fairly because I was older and they worried a little bit about some of the professors were a little harder on me. Of course I knew them all, you know, so it was difficult for all of us. I don't recall any discrimination problems like that.

Jacobsen: Was there such a thing as a smoking, drinking, narcotics issue one way or the other in those early years?

Dudley: I don't think - well, going back to the '40's a number of young college women smoked because it was their first time away from home and that seemed to be the like they say cool thing to do today. In the '60's if you recall, you know, there were lots going on and I think that was the time when they had O'Leary here talking about LSD and all of those things but - and I think that there was probably a lot of it going on but I didn't pay any attention.

Jacobsen: So you saw quite a distinction between the early '40's and the 60's?

Dudley: Oh yes. Absolutely.

Jacobsen: Do you remember the professors saying or expressing anything about academic freedom, intellectualization of activities? Did they show any concern about what they could say and what they couldn't say?

Dudley: To my knowledge, in my classes they said what they wanted to say. Maybe we didn't as students but they did. I never thought anybody ever held their tongue.

Jacobsen: Anybody particularly outstanding in that?

Dudley: Well, yeah Gene Kosey said what he thought and so did Ham Howard and sometimes that wasn't –

Jacobsen: How about Bill Stevenson?

Dudley: Oh yes, but then I was too young to realize it.

Jacobsen: Was there any concern about sexuality? Sexual rights? Any concern about homosexuality such as there is today?

Dudley: Well, that was all kept in the closet then. It wasn't brought out like it is today. I don't recall even being taught in a health class.

Jacobsen: What about things like voter's responsibility, citizenship, voting in general elections? You may not have voted before the war but do you remember –

Dudley: I recall that, I think it was? or Walter Berg who had taught the American history and we were given quite a unit on civics at that time and that would have been the only time that I can think that it would have been brought up at all.

Jacobsen: And that would have been after –

Dudley: That would have been in the 60's.

Jacobsen: ?

Dudley: Yes.

Jacobsen: You were here just prior to World War II?

Dudley: At the beginning.

Jacobsen: What was the kind of attitudes that were around about the military service at that time?

Dudley: There was a lack of young men on campus in 1941 and '42. They - some people quite before they went to school to go - girls to go work in the ship yards and McChord and places like that because there was a lot of patriotism and it was expressed openly. I don't recall anyone saying we shouldn't be in war.

Jacobsen: ?

Dudley: Oh yes, very much so. This - I think people really supported World War II.

Jacobsen: You were here also during the Vietnam Crisis? You saw it?

Dudley: As an observer I saw lots of conflict.

Jacobsen: In your '40's, were there many students that were receiving government assistance from student programs?

Dudley: I wouldn't have any idea. I know that the people that I knew were not.

Jacobsen: Probably after you returned there were still some on G.I Bills?

Dudley: Yes, yes. Of course Stanley, when he came back to go to school in 1947 had the G.I. Bill.

Jacobsen: Was there any play up of violence on the streets in those early years such as we have now?

Dudley: I don't recall. We didn't lock our doors in 1941 at home.

Jacobsen: So there was a quite a bit of?

Dudley: Yes.

Jacobsen: Was there much play on dieting, physical illnesses, health, jogging, etc. in those early '40's?

Dudley: I only recall one instructor that really gave us a diet of what we should eat and so forth but no, I - there was physical health classes, you know, we had exercises and that sort of thing but I don't recall any great play on it like there is today.

Jacobsen: When did you find your addiction to health and jogging?

Dudley: Oh, let's see. We ski and we had two boys that ski and so we from the times that those boys were old enough to ski we would go up to the pass and had to keep in pretty good physical shape but we were younger then so we didn't have to do as much. Now, of course we have to exercise to keep in shape every day. Use it or lose it?

Jacobsen: Your inoculation became more as a parent?

Dudley: Yes, absolutely.

Jacobsen: Do you recall any problems which became the focus of campus meetings? ? if you will prior to World War II or after?

Dudley: You know I don't really recall the early days. It just seemed to me like there were no problems. This was strictly then, a teacher's college. The people that came here were here for one reason and that was to get a certificate to teach. I think that they were very serious and they could not consume themselves with politics and other things that were going on even then in the world. I think that was different in the 60's. There were lots of things going on in the '60's, in the early '60's that were going on.

Jacobsen: Do you recall any of those particular things in the '60's?

Dudley: Well no. I know that there was meetings. I know that there had been speakers here and they'd be very controversial but I really don't recall any direct?

Jacobsen: You mentioned Timothy O'Leary. Do you recall the community's feeling about O'Leary and other speakers?

Dudley: I think the community was not too excited about having people like that either. I'm talking about the founding fathers.

Jacobsen: Right.

Dudley: And I wasn't too excited about it either because I had children who were going to college at that time so I wasn't too excited.

Jacobsen: So his advocacy for experiencing drugs was not acceptable or particularly appreciated. You've had a chance to see prior to our having a campus police force and after. Do you have any impressions of what effect that might have had - influence on students?

Dudley: We didn't need a police force in those early days. I think now they certainly do. It's one of those facts of life. Everything's changing and that's one of the things. ?

Jacobsen: Do you recall anything particular humorous that happened as a student or a faculty wife that you'd like to share?

Dudley: That I'd like to share? (laughs) Not particularly. There was lots of laughter and faculty wives had a wonderful group and we had a lot of fun but to recall specific instances would get very difficult being a faculty wife. Some of them, it was fun to be in a class because they were so interesting and it was always so nice to see them but to recall specific ones, I can't do that.

Jacobsen: Did you remember professors that were particularly interesting or?

Dudley: Gene Kosey. Ham Howard had a good class, too.

Jacobsen: Bill Stephens has come up. Was he?

Dudley: And you know, Nicholas Hinch, we though he was humorous. He didn't think he was but we did.

Jacobsen: So you had a difference of opinion. Have you ever happened to attend any other colleges than Central?

Dudley: Went to Texas A&M for a summer and took classes just for fun. That was with a bunch of doctoral students and that was quite an experience but I wasn't there for any degree. I was just there because Stanley was there.

Jacobsen: ? Tell us a little bit about what you've been doing since your graduation other than raising a family and supporting a faculty member.

Dudley: I've had a really great life. We - after I met and married Stanley and he was in the service at that time then we came back to Ellensburg and he went through Central and then we moved to Yakima where he taught and at that time, I worked in Seattle for a while and then I went to work for the Washington Oregon Canning Pear Association as their office manager and I did that until we moved back up here in 1957 when Stanley became a member of the Industrial Arts staff and I worked at the Valley Clinic while I was finishing my degree and then I was hired by the Ellensburg Public Schools to teach at the high school and I did that for two years and then I took a leave of absence and went to Ethiopia and I taught there at the University ? and then came back and finished my teaching, retired and came up to Central and taught for Gene Kosey.

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Jacobsen: Do you have a highlight about Ethiopia that you would like to share with us?

Dudley: Oh, the whole two years. For one who had never been around the different culture or hasn't been out of the state of Washington - well, I've been to Hawaii it was just a magnificent experience and the students were so interesting. The whole thing was just - Stanley would have a lot more to say because he was the big honcho.

Jacobsen: Did you find that a little bit more like the students in the '40's?

Dudley: Yes. Absolutely. They were there - this was their only chance to get out of their poverty was to get an education.

Jacobsen: Have you happened to have contact with the alumni office?

Dudley: A little. Our lives are so filled and so busy that we pick and choose but we do have some contact with the alumni office.

Jacobsen: A very hard question, what have we failed to discuss that you would like tell us?

Dudley: Not a thing, I'm ready to go home?

Smith: What about your work?

Dudley: Oh, that was a wonderful experience. They needed a part time teacher and I had just retired and they seemed to have an agreement that they don't ask people from the high school to teach for them unless they are retired. I taught electronic calculators. The students were really great. They - I had no worries of discipline, you see, because the students were either here to learn or you just didn't worry about it and I held office hours but I didn't have to be on any committees. I just enjoyed every minute of it. I'm almost sorry to see Stanley retire. It was a great experience.

Jacobsen: Did you find some contrast between high school students and college students?

Dudley: By and large, with maybe the exception of one student a quarter, they were there to really learn and they were so grateful because I would have students come and say, "You have no idea how much this has helped me in my accounting," or something like that and they seemed to be so grateful for what you did for them so I really liked that.

Jacobsen: One other curiosity, did you find much change in the high school students from when you began teaching until you retired?

Dudley: Yes, absolutely. Well a good example, I with another gentleman teacher had the ? program in the '60's and we had rules and regulations and if the student at that time didn't abide by the rules and regulations there was no questions, they were out. When I came back they asked me to do it after I had been to Ethiopia and I said well I assume you have the same? Oh no no no we might be sued. You can't do that so naturally I didn't do it because things were changing. Students were what I would call getting away with things that they should not be doing so there was a change in the students. But yet when I came to Central I found that they left that at home with them, basically. They were here to learn. They were paying for it, they were here to learn.

Jacobsen: Well thank you Vera Dudley. Eldon Jacobsen was the interviewer and Helen Smith, the camera operator.