

1 **Telling Our Story: Honoring the Past**
2 **The History of the Forest Grove City Library**

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4 *Volume 2: The 1940s and Beyond.* Interviews with Boyd Lewis and Marcia Oriet,
5 longtime residents, patrons and volunteers at Forest Grove City Library. (Note: There is
6 considerable space on this videocassette to add additional information. Very little is
7 currently known about the Library's history between the 1930s and 1960s.)
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11 Interviewer: Linda Stiles Taylor (LT)

12 Interviewee: Boyd Lewis (BL)

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15 LT: ...What originally brought you to Forest Grove, Boyd?

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17 BL: Uh, my father died in 1939 and my mother thought it would be better if we moved
18 here because my brother was going to Pacific University at the time. So we picked up,
19 sold the place and moved over here. I finished my last two years of high school here, and
20 started at Pacific University and went for a year and a half and then...uh...there was a
21 little thing called World War II came along, and I left for approximately three years, and
22 then came back and finished my college education at Pacific.
23

24 LT: And what did you study at Pacific?

25
26 BL: I was a music major. Nowadays they would call it a performance music major.
27

28 LT: At what point did your wife...she was already here too?
29

30 BL: No, I met my wife in De Moines, Iowa, while I was in the service, and by the time
31 we moved here (thinks for a minute)... no we didn't have any children when we moved
32 here but, uh, all three of our children were born in Forest Grove or Hillsboro (nods
33 toward that direction) because the hospital was over there. First one was born in the
34 hospital in Forest Grove (chuckles), which is no longer a hospital. When I was at Pacific
35 my wife would wheel... generally our son, our oldest, down to the campus occasionally
36 and uh, in doing so she went right past the old library on the corner...College Way and
37 21st. And she took books out of the library and I'm sure to read some to the children,
38 although I wasn't, I wasn't involved in that...she, uh, that was her choice.
39

40 LT: So Mary was the one that was doing the read aloud, the bedtime story...
41

42 BL: Yeah, yeah. I don't remember my parents reading to me, but I'm sure they did,
43 because they were both avid readers also. And so I think I acquired a reading habit very
44 early on.
45

46 LT: What's your very earliest memory of the Forest Grove City Library? Do you
47 remember when you were still in high school or...
48
49 BL: (Thinks) Yes. I - I can't say...I don't remember any specific time there, but the
50 librarian was like an old friend...to everyone in town...as far as that's concerned.
51
52 LT: Everybody knew everybody?
53
54 BL: Yes. Everybody knew everybody. Yes, I used to think I knew everyone in Forest
55 Grove.
56
57 LT: You probably do cuz you're so outgoing. (LT talks over BL) she is saying: Well
58 being one of the most outgoing people around and the friendliest I wouldn't be surprised
59 if you knew everybody still.
60
61 BL: (at same time he is saying) I cannot say that now. (Laughs, then continues). But I
62 have (clears throat)- I look back on fond memories of occasionally taking a book out of
63 the library to read. Of course going to Pacific doesn't give you a great deal of time for
64 recreational reading.
65
66 LT: Uh, huh....and you had a campus library too, right? So you could use that.
67
68 BL: Oh, yes.
69
70 LT: It must have been much larger than the City Library at that point.
71
72 BL: Well yes, the...(thinks) what's the name of the...Carnegie Library, Carnegie Library.
73
74 LT: Oh Pacific University...
75
76 BL: Yes, the old building that is on the walk right behind us...this, uh, parking lot.
77
78 LT: Basically across the street from this library that's now the education building.
79
80 BL: Yes, right across from where this library is now.
81
82 LT: So the education building today was the original campus library?
83
84 BL: Yes, that's correct. It was a Carnegie-grant library.
85
86 LT: Oh. So when you went to school at Pacific, you actually went to the Carnegie Library
87 across from where we are today. Ahh.
88
89 BL: Yes, that is exactly right. (laughs)
90
91 LT: A lovely old building.

92

93 BL: Yes, it is...a very nice building.

94

95 LT: So those days the City library was so tiny it wouldn't have had much of a magnetic
96 attraction for Pacific students.

97

98 BL: (laughs) Uh...a city library and a college library have different content and, uh, the
99 city library of course was for more of recreational reading as far as I was concerned.

100 Although I read for educational purposes of things I get from the library anyway...too.

101

102 LT: But, you're certainly a mystery fan as well.

103

104 BL: Ah yes, I am a mystery fan of long standing. (chuckles)

105

106 LT: Do you remember when um the new library was built? Do you remember your first
107 experience coming...?

108

109 BL: Yes, I remember when the new library was built here...next to the police station
110 which had been built when...well, they were both built about the same time. And I
111 remember the first time I came in here (thinks)...it was to get recreational reading and
112 Mike Smith was the lib...the Head Librarian at that time. And I read an article in the
113 *News-Times* where Mike asked for volunteers from the community...and I'd recently
114 retired from Tektronix. This would have been about '84, I suppose, something like that.
115 And, I came down and spoke to him and he said well, that would be wonderful. We have
116 something for you to do. And of course Linda (Taylor) was the uh, in charge of
117 the...what was it?

118

119 LT: Washington County Cooperative Library Services Outreach to Elders and
120 Handicapped. How about that for a mouthful?

121

122 BL: Outreach yes, what is now Outreach anyway, we would pull books for seniors and so
123 forth...for the...would be delivered to them. (pause) Now where were we?

124

125 LT: Well, you were talking about when you first came to Forest Grove City Library and
126 you volunteered in the program I had been running, in Library Outreach.

127

128 BL: Yes, and uh, I...My first impression...of the library...everyone was very nice. Of
129 course when you're a volunteer people are nice to you. And I've often said over the years
130 that one of the reasons I continue to volunteer at this library...the entire staff is very
131 friendly and is always willing to help you with anything...that the library can do for you.
132 And nowadays with the, advent of uh, WILI and our access to the Internet and so
133 forth...it is more interesting 'cause they can get more things for us now. (laughs)

134

135 LT: Well that's one thing...you are currently the volunteer that has been with this library
136 longer than any other, and when we interviewed Robyn she talked about how, um, the
137 change, you know, we've seen you in the course of those years, and how many volunteers

138 when we change to a new technology, or, they are reluctant to go there but that you're a
139 volunteer that has stuck with it and gone with the flow and learned the new technology
140 and as the library grew, you grew, and your skills around what...

141

142 BL: Well, I even now ...I have not...I'm not involved in a lot of the functions that the
143 librarians do here. But I like to think that I can...I volunteer for some of the things that
144 are more onerous duties. That people don't perhaps like to do as well...(both chuckle)...
145 because I don't mind doing them.

146

147 LT: You're-...there are two things that you contribute to the Forest Grove community.
148 You're famous in town as an actor and tireless worker for Theater in the Grove.

149

150 BL: Um-huh.

151

152 LT: I'd like you to talk a little about how that started and um...

153

154 BL: Well, um, I started performing when I was about 5 years old. And my first large
155 scale public performance was a school performance in about the 5th or 6th, maybe the 7th
156 grade. And, we did a shortened version of Il Trovatore? And, I sang Azucena? Who is the
157 mother, an alto role. I was tenor in those days (laughs) I'm not a tenor anymore (more
158 chuckles). And all through my school, high school, I have been active in musicals and in
159 regular...and in plays...dramas, comedies. I've always enjoyed it, and I have continued
160 to this day. I've done something like 66 productions, I think, in Theater in the Grove.
161 And, I've done a few in Pacific since I graduated. I did a lot of plays in the...while I was
162 going to Pacific... it was a lot of fun.

163

164 LT: So, people around here know you, um, in part because of all the different characters
165 and roles you've played...

166

167 BL: Yes.

168

169 LT: ...And the children see you and say "Oh, there's Franklin Roosevelt from Annie," or
170 Smee from Peter Pan or... as well as being a familiar face because you volunteer at the
171 library and have done so for many, many, many years. So you make a valuable
172 contribution to your community in both respects.

173

174 BL: Well, I'm, I'm generally an outgoing person and...

175

176 LT: That's an understatement. (laughs)...one of the most outgoing.

177

178 BL: I like to talk, and I get to talk to and see a lot of people, and some of whom I've
179 known before, and some I have not...(chuckles). And I think that is an attitude which
180 pervades the entire staff of this library also. They're willing to talk, and to do things, and
181 that is my philosophy of life, anyway. I think that's what we're here for, to be friend to
182 the neighbor, be a neighbor, you know. Yes...

183

184 LT: Well you certainly live that principle out...and we're grateful for it.

185

186 BL: Yeah.

187

188 LT: Well, thank you very much for being with us today, and for sharing your memories.

189 And thank you for the contribution you've made to the City and all the many ways...in

190 your many roles. (laughs)

191

192 BL: O.K.

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