

Washington County Museum

Oral History Interview with Harry Bodine

At Washington County Museum Library

November 2, 2011

Informant: Harry Bodine

Interviewer: Beth Dehn, Wynn

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W= We are in the home of the Bodines, and Harry is willingly reiterating his first part of his life experience, which unfortunately was misplaced and so we're having to repeat it. And this is November the 2nd, 2011 and we're in the Bodine home. So you want to start at the beginning Harry?

H= (laughs) My birth?

W= yes.

H= Well I was born in Houston, Texas. September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1932 and my parents were transplanted Yankees who were there because my dad was able to get a job, this was of course during the depression so that was very important.

And I was born in a place called Herman Park Hospital which has now grown to be a major medical complex in the Houston area as I understand it. Actually located in a suburb called West University Place which was adjacent to Rice University. That's southwestern part of Houston. And now its miles from the edge of the town, but in those days it was sort of the end of civilization, going in that direction. Anyway, we lived there for 4 years, 4 ½ I guess it was. In the spring of 1937, my dad was transferred to Dallas, Texas. He was working for national lead company, which we better know as Dutch Boy Paints. And so, we was basically a salesman for them, and so we moved to 4009 Brinmar Drive, near University Park on the north side of Dallas and we lived there for 4 years. And during that time, and also when we first went, the house by the way cost \$4500, and later on we drove by it and there was a for sale sign in front of it and one of the neighbors said it was listed for \$300,000 whatever thousand in 1980 whatever, way back. Anyways, the 2 bedrooms, maybe 3, and one bath. And the family size changed, starting in 1940. My, I had an aunt who had died in New Jersey who had 2 daughters, and one of them, the oldest one came to live with us at the house in Dallas, she was 12 at the time. I was going on 8. And a year later, another death in the family resulted in her younger sister also coming. So we suddenly went from a family with 2 children to a family with 4 children, which caused my parents to feel it's time to find a larger house.

So on Christmas Eve, of 1941, we moved into a two story Dutch colonial and we were there until 1948. In the meantime I was enrolled in the Highland Park public schools in that area. In 1948 my dad was promoted to assistant sales manager of the St. Louis branch and so we moved to St. Louis, MO and lived in a suburb called Glendale, which is sandwiched in between Webster Groves, which was founded by the Yankees, and Kirkwood, which is founded by the slave owners. And the, anyways, I finished the last two years of high school. I graduated from Kirkwood High School and then went down the highway a 120 miles to the University of Missouri and enrolled in the school of journalism, which in those days tuition was \$50 a term. And my whole freshman year, everything, food, boarding, fraternity membership and dues was \$975 for the whole package, which is amazing when you consider what people are paying in 2011. Anyways, 4 years at Miszoo, as a result of enrolling, this by the way is June the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1950. Two days later of course, the Korean War broke out, and three months after that, I registered for the draft when I turned 18. And because I was in the ROTC at Miszoo, I technically was in the service. And I realized of course at that point, this was back in the days when there was a draft. Just about everybody who could stand up was in the military at some form or fashion. And so I knew I was going to be serving, and so I just stayed in the ROTC so when I graduated from the University of Missouri in 1954, I received a diploma from the university in one hand and documents from President Eisenhower welcoming me to the armed forces in the other.

So, two years followed in the army, in the field artillery for first at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and then to Fort Riley, Kansas where I joined the 40<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion as one of their Fort Observer Officers in those days. And at one nice little interlude there, because the whole unit was picked up and moved from Fort Riley to Germany in the summer of 1955. The whole division went. And the Big Red One, the first infantry division had been in Europe since 1942 moved to Fort Riley, Kansas.

So anyway, we just all got on the boat and went to Europe. A lovely 10 day cruise on the General Butner by the way (laughs). But anyway, in the middle of this period, someone in Washington D.C. decided that the troops needed more education about Europe. So I was detached from the unit, much to my battalion commander's total disgust. I had the only journalism degree in the outfit and I was shipped off to Fort Slocum, New York, which is an island in the Long Island Sound, where I attended classes for 40 hours a week for two months. And we, there was no duty beyond that, And the fort was located on an island in Long Island Sound, and the only thing wrong with this, was my salary at that time, take home pay as a second lieutenant was \$189 a month after taxes. And that did not go very far in New York City in 1955 as we found out.

Anyways, I spent a year in Europe, mainly in northern Bavaria, 22 days of every month we were in the field, playing Boy Scout waiting for the Russians, who luckily never came. And anyway, at the end of that time, I was able to leave the service and start my career in my field. And just before I went into inactive duty, I made a trip out to Roseburg, Oregon where I could get a, basically a 3 month job, just to do something to earn some money. And it was in construction, but while I was there of course, I met the

people at the News Revue, which is a daily newspaper in Roseburg. And so when I started writing letters in Germany, inquiring about jobs, this is way before the internet, the conveniences we have today. Roseburg responded and said they had two positions open and they would start me at \$70 a week, which is roughly \$15 more than I could earn in the Midwest. So anyway, I came out to Roseburg and that was my first time in Oregon. And I was there for, actually 7 or 8 months and then took a side trip to Ontario for 2 years. Ontario, Oregon on the far eastern side of the state, cause in those days I thought I really wanted to own my own newspaper at some point. And so it would have to be a weekly. I went up to visit Elmo Smith who had just been defeated for re-election as Governor and he started his career with \$25 of his own money and in Ontario in 1933. So how do you go about doing this? His response was "you should work for a weekly and it should be a good one." And so I wound up at the Artist's Observer in Ontario, two wonderful years because I was kind of the press lord of Malheur County and really run the news operation and the editorials in any way I wanted. It was fun, you know. I really enjoyed that experience.

In 1959, I went back to Roseburg City as the editor, at a \$108.50 per week and was there for another year and a half and then I given **bipartisan** at another weekly newspaper paper in Colorado, was there in Louisville, which is spelled like Louisville, Kentucky, 22 miles from downtown Denver. And we were waiting for the boom to come and it did. But unfortunately it was not soon enough. And so in the meantime, Winona Fishbach entered my life, and so we were married in March of 1961 and we found it just about impossible to live on the meager workings of this newspaper. So I, uh, we made another move. And this time, this was to Boise, Idaho, where I managed a small weekly newspaper for two years, in competition with the Idaho Daily Statesman, where I learned all about selling advertising when it was really uphill you know?

And the, anyway, 1964, I left the Observer and I spent 6 wonderful weeks trying to elect a congressman in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of Idaho and my candidate was Dick Smith who was running a Republican primary. He was a state senator from the Eastern part of the state. So anyways I was all over South Idaho and Eastern Idaho during that period and met a lot of wonderful people and it was lots of fun but our guy came in third. In a three way race about a thousand votes behind the winner. He turned out to have a very interesting career in the United States Congress by the way, not a happy one necessarily. The, (coughs), excuse me, anyway, on primary election night, August 1964, we learned that the campaign was over. My last paycheck would come on the following Friday. So here we were, by that time we had a son who was a year and a half old. So it was time to get serious (laughs) and uh, I lined up a job in California, in the weekly field, which could have led to eventual ownership. That was the game plan. And so before we did move, made the drive down there, we thought we'd make one final trip to Portland to visit Winona's parents, who were living in Hillsboro. And while we were here, her younger brother, who I had hired in Roseburg, was working at the Oregonian. And he said "well why don't you go down and talk to them." So I did on a Saturday afternoon. Robert C. Knotson. Anyway I wound up being hired by the Oregonian and stayed for 33 years. So that was sort of the story on that. That was kind of the career path, if you will. And at the time, we started work in August, and on October 1<sup>st</sup>, we'd

moved into a house on Englewood Street, about a 100 yards from where we're sitting at the moment. And we were there for 9 years. And then we moved around the corner to this house which has a full basement, more space basically. And two bathrooms, which is kind of nice we discovered in time.

So, at The Oregonian, I started off on the copy desk, which is a copy editor's position and the story in those days was, this is before computers of course, we all sat in a great horseshoe shaped desk and the copy editor would hand us stories that we were to edit and write headlines for. And it was a good way to start out basically and you learned a lot about the folks and about the operation of the newsroom, which was, by the way, far more casual in those days than it is, the way the business has evolved over the years. After two years there, I was called over to the managing editor's desk one day, Ed Miller. Mr. Miller said "we want you to take a new job here. We want you to be women's news editor." And I said "oh Mr. Miller, I'm not really interested in brides and recipes. I'm not eager to learn." And he says "well we have a problem, and you're going to solve it." And that is, there were two women running this operation and who really did not get along very well. So I was to be the buffer. But Mona loved it because suddenly I was working nine to five, Monday through Friday. We could plan our weekends and you know it was really just, cause otherwise my schedule would change week by week on the copy desk.

**So anyways**, Mr. Miller's final comment to me on that day was "this will not be forever." So fourteen months later, a vacancy occurred on The Oregonian's political team. Governor McCaul, in his first year in office, had called the legislature into special session to pass a sales tax and so Harold Hughes and Blaine Schultz were the reporters at that point and Blaine had enough of Salem, and did not want to go back to, what we call, Fun City. (laughs) So anyways, I went and impaled myself on the spindle of Miller's desk and "send me in coach, cause this I really am interested in and I'd really enjoy doing this." And so that happened.

So anyway, that was the start of eight years in Salem and covering politics which was really enjoyable duty. And I was very fortunate that Harold Hughes was my mentor, he was very experienced and he was the one who basically, guided my through the initial forays in Salem until we got started. In fact the first night we were down there together, we went out to, we had dinner at the end of the day and they filed out stories and got to the restaurant and he opened up the menu and he went to the most expensive steak on it and he says "Bodine, always remember, it's the advertising departments duty to earn the money and it's our responsibility to spend it." (laughs) and that's one of the hallmarks of the industry I guess, still is. The, uh, but I was very fortunate, in the, I had four sessions at the legislature and the way the duties were broken down was the senior reporter concentrated on tax and revenue issues and had the House of Lords, the Senate, in the daily sessions and the junior member got the House of the People, which was a little more crowded. But you're right there on the floor of the chamber and the privileges, you know, of the floor and so you really got a chance to learn it. And my part, when I wasn't in the house, I spent a lot of time with the joint committee on Ways and Means, which is the legislature's budget writing arm. And so I practically lived with these

people for five months and I had a chance to tour all the prisons, all the state mental hospitals, all the institutions, the school for the blind and the deaf and so forth. I got to see them all. And when these people went looking, they looked in the closets, I mean, they basically had, nobody was to say no to these folks, you know? And so it was a very good education, just to be able to tag along and absorb.

So anyway, the sessions were in May of sixty-nine and seventy-one, which I think was the most productive one that I recall. That was the year of the bottle bill and the uh, let's see, what else was it?

W= Excuse me, bottle bill?

H= That's the Oregon bottle bill, yeah, the deposit/return at a nickel? Which incidentally was introduced by two conservative Republicans from the Oregon coast, who just wanted a way to figure out how to get the litter picked off the beach. McCaul embraced it, McCaul got a lot of credit, but he was kind of, he came late to the party on that. But, of course, once he did, he was a marvelous mouthpiece for the bill. And, uh, trying to think what else, I guess the other was Landy's planning bill, Senate bill ten. And, 1973, the democrats took over the house and the House of Representatives was a pure democracy. Just nobody was in charge of anything. But at the same time the senate fell to the Democrats under Jason **Bow**, his nickname was Darth Vader, and there was no question who was running the Oregon Senate. And everything, the trains all ran on time, you know, interesting, comparing the two. And the session went on and on, into the summer, past the fourth of July. And that's about the time I thought, well maybe the legislature's not that much fun. I was losing my summers. And also the kids were growing up, you know? And I would commute back and forth. The first two sessions, we actually moved the family to Salem, which was cheaper than renting an apartment and eating out, by the way, when you do all the math. But anyway, 1975 was my last session down there. And in the meantime, I was of course, covering campaigns and I had a chance to meet and interview five presidents of the United States, past and future during that period. Starting with Nixon, Carter, Reagan, George Herbert Walker Bush, and, let's see, I'm missing one.

W= Clinton?

H= Pardon me?

W= Clinton?

H= No not Clinton; Clinton was after my time. Let's see...Nixon...Ford. Gerald Ford was the other one. And the best interview I had of the whole batch was Jimmy Carter. And that's during, the legislature was in session, in 1975, and I got a call on a Friday that the democrats were meeting at Willamette and the former governor of Georgia was there, campaigning for President. "you mind going back down and interviewing him?" I really did not want to do it. I didn't want to get up the day. It was a day just like today,

beautiful sunshine and I did. I'm glad I did cause I had Carter alone in a cafeteria of the student union down there for an hour. And that does not happen with presidential candidates anymore, you know? Just nobody gets that kind of treatment unless they're really, nobody's paying attention to them yet, you know? But, I came back and wrote an article for the forum page, which was, you know, I think was a positive article and anyway, let's see what else?

Well after 1975, it was time for me to make a change at the Oregonian, I think the National Conventions had been fun, I did two of them in 1972, you know? And having done it, I have no desire to be anywhere near another one. (laughs) But I came back and I was what was known as regional editor of the paper, so I was in the main building down on 1320 Southwest Broadway and my responsibility basically was to manage the news coverage of everything outside of Multnomah County. And in those days we had one reporter in Washington County and one reporter in Clarke County across the river, so they were under my supervision. We also had about thirty-four correspondents, scattered around the northwest, who were part-time people who would write stories for us and call me up and say "do you want this?" And I'd say yes or no. So I enjoyed that, but on the other hand, I did not, after two years I was ready to get out of that room and away from the office politics and so we had another situation in Hillsboro at the time where I got sent out to Hillsboro at that time to cover Washington County. That was my first real initial contact with the county and I was there for eight years. We had an office on the street, the old courthouse faces, which is Southeast 2<sup>nd</sup> I guess it is. And, mainly to cover the county government and related agencies and some general assignment, but most of it was structured around what Washington County does and how it operates and I was able to get some really good training in those days and I think one of the most interesting to me, was of all things, assessment and taxation. And Washington County was fortunate in having people running that department who had been there for a long period of time and they were left alone for a long period of time and they were very efficient at what they did, you know? So it's all the ins and outs of the county board of equalization, how that works, the mechanics of it always had sort of fascinated me. Obviously it's a study of how people get along with people. And we had an interesting county board in those days. One member in particular, Virginia Daag was, you never wanted to be late at the start of a meeting, cause that was the opening remarks time. Virginia was famous for firing salvos across the heads of the bureaucrats, shrapnel landing in all directions and loved to do it.

In 1980, I think it was, the, she ran for, first let me back up. In 1979, the Washington County had had a home rule charter for about seventeen years and Virginia and her friends re-wrote the county charter basically to restore the general law, three member county board, raise the salary from a \$150 dollars to \$27,600.00 a year which drew an enormous number of candidates into the special election in January of 1979 I guess it was. And 46 in all, and I think when I covered some of this in the other interviews, I won't go into the detail on it but anyway, from a personal standpoint, the fallout of the following year, Virginia ran for the chair of the board against the incumbent Miller Duriss. And I covered that campaign and about a week before the election, we ran a story about people placing lawn signs illegally. And I loved the one the Beaverton

school had nailed to a telephone pole over on **Butner** road which doesn't quite fit the rules. This is just classic, it happens all the time, but having been involved in four **library levee campaigns** I'm sort of an expert now on what you can do and what you should not do with signs. But anyway, on the Friday before the election, suddenly I was sued at The Oregonian for \$1,350,000 by Commissioner Daag. Anyways it was the basis of my reporting and The Oregonian publishing, what I'd written. And one of the statements was in one article I'd said that Duriss had substantial Republican support and Virginia wanted \$750,000 punitive damages for that comment. This is bizarre, it was. So anyways, just strange. And the County Council at that time, **John Jenkins**, stopped me in the hallway and he says "you know I read the complaint" and he says "I'm embarrassed that a member of the Oregon State Bar filed this thing you know." So anyways the election came and she won; she'd won the election. And so she was with the two other commissioners and she had the job for the two years and the next time around in 1982 there'd been another charter revision and we went back to a five member board that we've got now and so **Wes Milenbech** defeated Virginia when she ran for re-election and she basically eventually left the county and most recently was running a Chamber of Commerce in Westport, Washington, up in Greys Harbor. But that's the end of that particular part of the story.

But in 1986, I'd been in Washington County for eight years and I was transferred downtown to cover metro in Multnomah County and it was interesting, the comparison of the governments there and did that for two years. And then in January of '89 we had a death, a reporter died in the bureau out here and I was asked to come back temporarily and wound up staying for nine years, until I retired it turned out, which was fine. During that period, I basically was covering the City of Beaverton and the service districts around Beaverton and eventually I got into Tigard City Council and Tualatin and basically learned to, just about dealt with all of them during this period, which was, I enjoyed. And just about, you have to be sort of a nut on government but that's the story on that one.

W= Harry, did The Oregonian change hands, change ownership while you were there at all?

H= No it did not. There was one scare I guess, it happened I think when S.I. Newhouse, the head of the Newhouse family that owns the newspaper died and there was some thought that the estate was going to have to come up with a billion dollars to satisfy the death taxes you know. And that's when the auditors from the Los Angeles Times showed up at the building and started going over our books with the idea of purchasing The Oregonian. It was extremely fortunate that this did not occur. Somehow the Newhouse lawyers were able to preserve the assets of the estate. And, uh, so The Oregonian was not sold at that point, but that's the only close call I think we had. In fact, we had the same publisher, Fred Stickle, who came just about the same time I did and retired several years after I did, fully retired. And so there was a constant leadership there and then one question that I think is asked a lot is how much influence was put on you in the way that you wrote your stories and I can honestly say that I was never pressured to write anything that I thought was inaccurate or wrong. And frankly, most of

the time, I was just allowed to do my job. I certainly was edited. And I had a couple of editors along the way that I do not remember with great fondness. But, on the other hand, that was sort of a minor blip in the course of life so to speak.

W= Did The Oregon have a certain point of view? Oregonian.

H: The Oregonian, there was a clear distinction between the editorial page, where you look for opinion, and the news department that actually covers the news. We did have a policy in those days, when editorial writers would go on vacation, they would draft somebody out of the newsroom to go in and write editorials, but there was a... I never received any instruction to tailor a story to fit the editorial department's viewpoint. In fact, I think there was sort of an independent feeling in the newsroom that if anything, they'd go out of their way to not to it. (laughs) Cause it didn't agree with the editorial viewpoint, you know?

W= It was a one family newspaper?

H= It was a family, the Newhouse family, owns the Oregonian. Has since about 1948.

W= And they still have it?

H: They still have it, yeah. They only major shake-up that occurred came well after I retired in about 2008/2009 when Craigslist showed up and suddenly destroyed classified advertising. And the department of revenues for the paper fell dramatically; in fact, it went into a deficit situation, which as far as I know, never happened from 1965 on. And so, things had to happen at that point, the staff had to be reduced. The Oregonian had a history of not ever, never laying anybody off in a downturn. They would basically struggle through it. And the uh, I worked for thirty-three years, I think without exception, for thirty-three years in a row, we got some sort of a Co adjustment during the year. And the reason for that goes back to, uh history basically. Nineteen fifty-nine there was a strike against The Oregonian and The Oregon Journal and the publisher at that point, publishers probably plural at that point, I guess, had bought business interruption insurance so they were able to keep paying the bills. You know, it was a very bitter strike. There were, trucks were dynamited, out in Milwaukie, delivery trucks were and Donald Newhouse, who was a member of the family, was shot in his own basement through a window up here in Portland Heights. You know, this was pretty serious. And unfortunately, the whole thing to me, was an unbelievable tragedy, because it all started cause there was four people, five people, in the back shop of The Oregonian, when they were trained to take off the machine they were working on because they were phasing in something new and these people said "No, we're not going to do that". You know, so they went on strike. So then the newsroom, five hundred reporters/editors were called out to support the strike and I don't know whether you remember that or not, but this all happened just at the beginning of the Christmas shopping season, it was deliberately a time because it was the worst possible time from the newspaper's revenue standpoint. But this was on a Sunday I think, and the following



day, the people who did not go out the door, from both papers, cobbled together what they called a hybrid and the front page had The Oregonian masthead, four columns, four columns, and The Oregon Journal on the other. Basically, hit the streets with this thing. As I recall, it was about sixteen pages of nothing, really minor, poor excuse of a newspaper but they got it out.

Anyway, the following day they were able to build a press run up and so by the end of the week they were basically almost back to their pre-strike circulation and the delivery was recurring. But as a result of this, I think, management felt they really owed the people who supported them during this crisis. So when I came to work for the paper, it was five years later, we still had a handful of pickets circling the front door of the building down there on Broadway, but there was no real danger involved at that point, and I'm not the hero. But anyway, what I think the publisher and the Newhouse family realized if they allowed The Oregonian to fall behind what was happening in Seattle and San Francisco, there would be pressure to bring the union back. So the idea to keep the union out was just to keep giving the troops everything these other people were getting was because the union was bargaining for them. And so that's sort of, I think this was the history over the period of time. And from the standpoint of, from my standpoint it was fine, cause otherwise, I certainly was not impressed with what the union had done that was here, and I've always felt it's easier working for one boss then for two. And if you got a labor union involved, you basically are taking orders from two different directions and they may conflict.

W= Was there ever any big competition to the Oregonian that went under? Was there another newspaper here?

H= You know, by the time I was on the scene, it was The Oregonian and The Oregon Journal. The strikers actually started a paper called The Portland Reporter and it operated for four or five years I think. It was just not able to compete against the establishments which is typically not at all unusual with what would happen in a situation like that. But the only time I can recall, any direction coming from New York, from the Newhouse headquarters, on how to cover the news was when the Arab-Israeli war broke out in 1973 and somebody called Portland and said "we want you to send Jerry Pratt to Israel to cover the war." And he was our business editor at the time, not sure how this happened, but anyway, Pratt flew to Israel and the war was over by the time he reached Tel-Aviv. (laughs). He got a nice trip out of it. And that's the only time I can recall having, you know, outside dictation. And I don't think the Newhouse family, unlike some of the other newspaper chains, Hearst and so forth, when the publisher took a stand, every newspaper in the chain was supposed to salute. The Newhouses didn't work that way. Everybody was sort of, the local publisher was in charge and so that was the local decision. You might have The Oregonian going one way, say for example, The New Orleans Times, which was a Newhouse paper, going another. And the family also bought a part interest; they were part of The Denver Post for awhile. But there was no buying up everybody, singing acapella, you know, on the editorial policies. And I think they're all pretty different you know.

W= And the quarter circulation? I mean there was competitive local papers, you know, The Valley Times and so on, but, and I know people here, that didn't get The Oregonian or don't get The Oregonian because they're satisfied with The Valley Times. Did they have really an in-depth circulation all over Oregon? Or just Portland?

H= When I was a regional editor, I was tracking this very carefully, and in that time we were the 10<sup>th</sup> largest newspaper in the state of Washington for example, in circulation, mainly along the Columbia River counties. And Fred Stickle said one time, "In order to be viable, the newspaper has to have penetration in fifty percent of the households in the market."

W= Really?

H= Yeah. And so, whatever the magic number was, that was the goal. And I think, there was a story in today's paper by the way, in the business page about The Oregonian circulation increasing, which is good news. But the Sunday paper at one time, was up to I think about 450,000 and we're not anywhere near those, 311 something now. It's more than the daily but it used to be dramatically different. And the reason was, people in the outlying communities, like Roseburg for example, would have a Monday through Saturday paper and so they'd take The Oregonian on Sunday and what has happened beyond the metropolitan area, is that the small dailies out there now have Sunday papers. Roseburg has one for example. So there's not the incentive to get the other. The other thing to is how much news can The Oregonian carry from around the state? And you're never going to be able to compete with a really good small daily newspaper like The East Oregonian and The Astorian, was another very highly regarded paper there. And of course The Register-Guard of Eugene is very dominant there. As far as the suburbs go, one interesting thing that did happen was in 1982 the decision was made to basically close down The Oregon Journal and have one paper instead of two and I'm sure it saved some money. But interestingly enough, I remember being called to a special meeting of the staff on Labor Day weekend, a Sunday, and I thought "we've never had one of these and I'd better show up" and that's when they announced the journal would shut down. But they also announced no one would lose a job. Unlike Minneapolis and Des Moines and other places where they did this, where there were massive layoffs, no one lost a job. And I remember somebody was actually driving down the Columbia Gorge to start work for The Oregon Journal and heard on the car radio the paper was closing (laughs). "So, do I have a job or not?" The answer is he did and you know, went on from there. So what are you going to do with all these people? And the answer was, we're going to go to the suburbs. And we're going to make sure that we do not suffer the fate of major dailies in other markets, which allowed themselves to be surrounded by strong weeklies that became strong dailies so they're living in the areas like Arlington Heights outside Chicago, where that's where all the money is, and so suddenly your Sun Times and your Tribune are having to really battle. So what we did was establish suburban news bureaus and we staffed them with about a dozen reporters each and an editor and photographer. And one in Washington County, right over here in our shopping center, across from our shopping center. Which was very convenient when I worked here of course; cause I could literally walk to work. I didn't

have to, need the car during the day which I usually did. So anyway, that was the story on it and I found out later, through a fraternity connection that, it was either **Knightridder**, somebody came along and sent one of their executives to this area to figure out if they could buy the Times publication, you know, could they start a competing daily newspaper in Washington County by combining all the weeklies basically. And the decision that was reached was the only way it will work is if you got The Hillsboro Artist too. Then you would try it, but otherwise the math just did not work. And so in those days the McKenny family was running the paper and had no interest in selling. So the whole thing went away and I found out about this was in 2003 or 2005 somewhere down the line, it was actually a fraternity reunion from Miszoo out in Arizona, sat next to the guy who had been sent here. He didn't contact me when he was in town (laughs). But I think that's the closest anybody's come to really launching a daily newspaper, except for The Portland Tribune experiment you know.

W= Getting on to something else, would you tell us a little bit more about your activities since you retired here, especially about the library involvement.

H= Well when I retired, my goal was basically to reform the Oregon Legislature. And it all started way back, the first session I covered, the special session back in 1967, lasted 23 days, spent \$92,000 and accomplished absolutely nothing except rebalancing the budget, which they had to do, which was only about \$30,000,000 out of kilter in those days. And I remember sitting there on the, on my desk on the Oregon house floor, on the last day of the session, raining outside, dismal. And the house was voting down everything the Senate had passed and across the rotunda the Senate was returning the favor for everything the house had passed and I thought this does not make a lot of sense to me, you know? So there's got to be a better way to run it. So of course I'd obviously heard about Nebraska, which is the only Legislature in the United States with no political parties, one house instead of two. And made a trip back there after I'd retired, and the following year, in 1999, Winona and I actually moved to Lincoln for a month, so I could track the Legislature day by day in the last month of the session. And I was very impressed with what I saw. And so anyway I came back and I was all fired up to do that, but in the meantime, earlier I'd received a call, actually before I'd retired, from a friend of ours, whose son and our oldest son were very good friends in high school, Pat Wonker. And she said "we would like you to consider serving on the Cedar Mill Library board. And I thought "well, I can't do that Pat cause if I did I'd never be able to write another line about the library. Call me after I retire." (laughs) So she did. So on July 1, 1998 I became one of the 11 members of the Cedar Mill library board. Monthly meetings, meet once a month. I thought I could certainly handle that. Of course, the next thing I knew we were going to be expanding the building. And we had, one of our board members was a woman named Sherry McDonald who was in the professional fundraising business. And so she, I remember the meeting, she looked us all in the eyes and you know what? "We're going to go out and we're going to raise 200,000. We're going to ask people for money. But before we do it, everybody sitting here is going to make a contribution to this drive, you know, all of us." (laughs). And so I signed up to get tapped for \$3,000. Which was a pleasure, made over a three year period. Anyway, we raised the money by the way. And I remember going down to talk to Jerry Frank

about it, I said "I'm not here to ask you for money, I'm here to ask you about raising money." And he says, "well how much are you after". And I said "200,000." And he said, "well in that community that's a piece of cake." I'm glad he thought so! But we did, we raised \$282,000 in three months and we spent it at the building over here on Saltzman. So anyway, had a three year term on that board and served as president of it for two years. And decided in 2001, when my term was up, that I would not stay on the board, but I could probably do more good for the library if we tried to raise serious money, which would come from the public, through the levies; the property tax levies. So anyway, we had four campaigns along that line. The first one in 2002 was a great example of how you don't want to run a campaign. We started late and we only had about, I'd say 1/3 of the library community involved at all and we only had about from July 23 to when the ballots were mailed in October and that's not much time. We raised \$7,000 and our largest, our only corporate contribution that year came from Powell's books, \$250.00, I remember that. So anyway, we had a campaign, the election occurred, the levy failed, by 611 votes county-wide. And so, no money. And what happened was after the property tax limitations in 1996/97, through a series of prior levies, there was a cash reserve built, and so basically the decision was made to spend down this money over the next five years rather than going to the voters. So the reserve got down to the prudent level, about \$2 million left, it was time to go get some more cash. So anyway the, that did not happen. The libraries went through a very long four year period after that. 2004 we made another attempt, this time in the May primary election. That time the voters said yes; fifty-two to forty-eight. But it didn't count because not enough people voted in the primary, there was no competition for president, no competition is no reason to go to the polls. People stayed home, so no more money. And so in 2006 the county put us back on the ballot in November where the double majority requirement did not apply and that time we got the job done. We got the levy passed with about 57% vote county wide and in that campaign, that year, everything was done right and uh, except we always had a problem for some reason or another in Tigard. I don't want to get into that particularly but we've never been able to get a campaign organized in that particular community. Why? I have no idea. But we're still working on it. In fact we have a meeting tomorrow morning; our only business meeting of 2011 is tomorrow morning and the main item of business is raising money between now and the end of the year through the Oregon Political Tax Credit, where you could take it off your income tax. Not a deduction but a dollar for dollar deal if you want to contribute to a candidate or to a political action committee that's registered which People for Libraries is. So anyways, that's been sort of the main focus. I have enjoyed it.

W= I interviewed Ed House.

H= Pardon me?

W= I interviewed Ed House.

H= Oh you did?

W= Yes.

H= Okay.

W= For actually; actually it was for the church. We're on a strategic planning situation.

H= Oh okay.

W= And I, the first question I asked him was what do you see as an issue, the most important issue in Beaverton today in terms of the library? And he said, "there's three important issues; food, clothing and shelter." And what he drew my attention to was the fact that the libraries are trying to serve the new immigrants and the children who are learning English and so on. (Harry nods). That they have a problem with transportation; transporting them to the libraries. The bigger library runs a number of programs according to bus schedules and also, children don't have money for fares frequently and some of the communities, as this one that is Somalian, between Lombard and 217. There is no native leadership or guardianship. So what he sees is the library, in some respect, being custodians and guides in language matters, in school matters and last year they had a large clothing drive. This is the new aspect for the libraries. And I think, I wondered, like North Plains is a struggling library, and a struggling community, what do you see will the roles, and with the new technology, what do you see the role of the libraries going to be?

H= You know, I'd like to give some thought to that. Just of the top of my head, I think, you know, the libraries can certainly help with technology, if you can get to them. By the way, it seems to me that every time I'm in Cedar Mill, that just every computer station is taken. And I think we may have a different demographic than Ed House does. We certainly have an enormous number of, you know, foreign born, but they're mainly, many of them are engineers, well paid people. So, and they use, they've discovered the library. They use the library. And I think, one thing that has really been surprising to us, is we opened a branch in Bethany here in 2007, after we got money from the 2006 levy. And it's a store front operation, just like the one we have at Cedar Mill is. But the growth and circulation of that library has been absolutely phenomenal and I think now its number five or six in the county. The only ones that are bigger are Beaverton, Hillsboro and us, and Tigard. But by the time you get down to Tualatin and Forest Grove, it's right up there with them. And this thing is what? Four years old? But it's in an area I guess people like to read. And so they use it! And we've had to expand that library three times I think so far. The boards had some discussions now about doing it again. Because it's just the demand for the service out there it's just overwhelming. You know, as far as I think the library's always been available to help students, if they are, if they will use it and a lot of times, I'm not sure about the Somali population, for example, but in some cultures there's a non-academic, or not appreciation of academic, what's the word I want? Endeavors. And so it's just not pushed; it's just not pushed at home. I've spent a lot of time personally with a young friend of mine who we met through our church who now lives in Forest Grove and trying to convince him you know that having a grade point of zero point whatever is not a bright future for you. (laughs). And so, I've been able to,

we've had this conversation one on one. So I think, several things have to happen. The first thing is somebody has to get interested in helping a kid or the kids or whatever. That somebody who cannot be judgemental but to try to get them to the library for example. So I think what the, idea of clothing drive, what is fascinating, you know, I think we have four or five people calling us constantly about donating clothes, of course in Cedar Mill, we actually operate a resale shop as part of the library. And it's all volunteer and everything is donated and it's pretty much quality stuff, otherwise they would pass it along to another organization that will see to that it gets used. But that thing makes a \$120,000 a year profit. You know, since we don't get any public or local city tax money behind us, we have to go out and raise it. This is one of the, this is a major fundraiser for us, just right there in the building. And you know, you can find some great bargains. But I think you know, that the, as North Plains, I'm sure there are libraries in the less well-to-do parts of the county, or different economic group anyway that they're serving.

W= Debbie Brody is working out there now.

H= Debbie Brody is absolute the best director they could have. Next to the one we have. (laughs). When I was board president, my nightmare was that Peter Leonard would come in someday and say "well, I'm taking another job," so and so, so we'd have to go out and search for another library director. But, I'm not putting down the other directors, but if I was in charge with this task, the first person I would want to talk to would be Debbie Brody. She is really great.

W= Her mother was a longtime volunteer at the museum.

H= Oh really? Okay.

W= Many years.

H= Yeah.

W= (to Beth) Have any questions?

B= I do, I see that we're running very close on time. But something, sort of an over arching question, was, what people that you interviewed from Washington County, that were particularly prominent or interesting to you during your time working for the Oregonian. If you remember any particular individuals.

H= You know, I certainly interviewed just about everybody who was connected with the county government; either as candidates or as being in office. And I'm trying to think, I don't remember any specific interviews that really stand out more than others. It was, I think I had a lot of respect with the people I was talking to. And let's go back to assessment and taxation for just a moment on that and that is when I was in Multnomah County, I went and I covered their board of equalization. And I found out they did it

totally different from Don Mason and Jerry Hansen and so forth were doing out here. And I still remember the guy who came in, a gentleman from Gresham, and he says, "I do not have a 12,000 square foot swimming pool. I do not own a 12,000 square for swimming pool, so get it off my tax bill." (Laughs). So, and the amazing thing is there was nobody in that room from the Multnomah County department of assessment and taxation, the board was flying blind. And so, that does not happen in Hillsboro. And I think that's sort of the culture set, it was, and I think the Oregonian was the one who did it, they ran pictures of the homes of the directors of assessment and taxation of the three counties, what they were on the tax rolls for, and one of them was reasonably appraised, it was Don Mason's house on Southwest Francis street there in Reedville. The Multnomah County and the Clackamas County ones were a fraction of their, I'm sure their neighbors were really impressed when they found out. (Laughs). The fallout on that one, in our case, you know, it was done right.

W= I was going to ask you about Tom McCall.

H= Tom McCall was fascinating, he was very interesting.

W= He was the governor.

H= I never was one of his confidants. He had some reporters that he was very close to; which is just as well because he wasn't calling me at three o'clock in the morning when he had too much to drink. But he was in certain ways a very complex individual. But totally open you know. I remember you'd start out at his office and you'd walk with him on the second floor of the capital building down to the coffee shop. You'd ask a question, you'd get four different answers before you'd get to the basement. And I still remember, the first time I was sent across the state line on the company's money, a Republican governors meeting, after the 1974 election I guess it was, in Sun Valley Idaho. And Harold Hughes' comment was don't let McCall out of sight. (laughs). And it turned out, I remember that Spiro Agnew came and spoke to the governor, and I had an early deadline so I rushed out of there and went back and wrote my story and filed it and came back into the challenger and I ran into **Steven Shaddick** who was Barry Goldwater's operative and he said, "what was your lead?" And I told him and he says, "Well you missed it." The story is not Agnew, the story is McCall and I thought, "Oh my gosh." And was furious, trying to find Tom, snow this high (raises hand) and drifts along. Finally caught up with him next to an outdoor heated swimming pool, steam coming off, beautiful out in the starts. Just a surreal winter picture, and I said "Tom, what you think about Agnew?" And he told me and I said "Tom, I can't use that language in a newspaper general circulation. Can you tone it down?" So anyway, then I ran back and phoned the story in, the update, and an editor on the desk that night decided to not change the story for the home edition so the next morning, every radio station in town had this story. And The Oregonian, who sent the reporter, didn't have it, and so I probably came closer to getting fired that time until the managing editor **Dick Doske** got down to the office and got a handle on what really transpired the night before but that was not a happy moment in journalism you know at all. McCall was very human and a great person to cover because he always made news. But when he was flying from

across the country, and he hated to fly, just despised flying. Anyways, what was it, San Francisco was a "one martini" flight. So he was coming from Washington D.C., it would be a "four martini" flight and you'd really want to be at the airport. He was always really good for comments, Hatfield in contrast was very reserved you know. In fact before you leave, there's something I want to offer you from Wilamette University, went to pull it out the other day. When he was Dean of students, he was announcing his first run for public office.

W= He was a Senator, Hatfield.

H= Mark Hatfield. He just died a year ago. By the way, it was an interesting tribute session down at the capitol building. There was a lot of folks I hadn't seen in awhile. But he was the one who, class Hatfield, he came to Ontario when he was running for Governor. And so they had him drive the jalopy around the race track at the fairgrounds. So here he is, and you have to climb in through the window of course. So the guys always looks like he'd stepped out of Brooks Brothers, I mean he was, no hair, nothing was out of place. Perfectly dress. So he put this white jumpsuit on and he crawled into the vehicle and drove about five miles an hour around. Wasn't spraying dust on anybody! Climbed out and went onto the next deal you know. He was incidentally the first public official, first candidate I ever covered. I'd just gotten out of the Army, I was in Roseburg, state Senator Hatfield was in Roseburg running for Secretary of State, white raincoat, always a white raincoat, not black. Anyway, I remember walking with him from the courthouse to somewhere in downtown and had sort of a walking interview you know? And after he was elected, in fact the same day I went up to see Elmo Smith in Salem, I called him and he was listed in the phone book. And we had dinner in what was the new Meyer and Frank store in Salem and that was the night that I met Jerry Frank.

### Part one ends here

one time when Wayne Morris was getting up in his years, and he lost in 1968 to Bob Packwood and ran again in 1972 and also I think '74, and he won the primary in 1974 and that was the year, we were, we got stories, I mean Morris was not well. And I remember that something had happened in Clam Falls or Medford, but of course this, they thought, Morris people say, "well that's just not friendly territory down there. They don't like us and so forth." But I remember we had a reporter named Todd Ingdall, who later went on to the Denver post, in Portland and I caught up with Senator Morris out in the Jantzen Beach shopping center. Where we detached him from the crowd somehow and backed him into a corner and ganged up on him and asked him, "we'd been hearing these stories about your health." But he looked at us straight in the eye and lied flat out, "Its fine. You know there's nothing wrong and all nonsense." And the following weekend, or two or three weeks later I guess it was, Mona and I were down at the beach at Yachats, at Wayne and Milou Thompson's beach house, and somebody had, they were installing a water line or sewer line, and somebody dug up