

*Art Zimmer*

on

Construction, the Earthquake,  
Christianity, and the Kodiak Christian  
School

by

*Robert J Fish*

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Alaska Oral History Project

RF: This is the Alaska History Project and I am here with Art Zimmer to have a conversation to see what things were like back when. Art, could you tell us a little bit about where you came from before you came to Kodiak.

AZ: Sure, I'll back up as of the time I got here, which was in June, I think the 27th of 1963, on a DC-3. That was the old PNA airplanes that used to fly in here. They now use them to fly through the interior. They give people tourist rides now and they use the DC-3s to fly them to various parts of Alaska for sight seeing. They were very droney, but they got you here and that's how I first came in. But before that I lived in Anchorage one year. I actually come from Canada. I'm still a Canadian citizen with a permanent immigrant visa in the U.S. I immigrated in Tok, Alaska in 1962, May 4th. There's a port of entry there. The reason I came here or the means by which I came, I was working in Fort Nelson, British Columbia, welding for a maintenance crew on a highway gravel crushing outfit. I was their maintenance welder in the summer of 1961, I think. One evening I chose to go to a prayer meeting fifty-five miles in, I was at mile 245, stationed there, and went into Fort Nelson, which is mile 300, just to go to a prayer meeting. I desired to go to an Alliance Church up there and at that time met some people who had stopped through from Anchorage and they were operating Chapel-by-the-Sea. There was a man and his wife and their daughter. They had another young lady with them

named Carol who was a secretary up there, worked in Anchorage and lived with them apparently. She kind of got my interest a little bit. Or I thought I was a bit interested in her. But I was interested in seeing Alaska. It always seemed like a romantic place to go to. A romantic idea, place to go to. So I asked them about the possibility and wrote to them, I think. In fact I wrote Carol I believe. Through that contact they arranged to have me come. They said they were going to start a Bible school that Fall or the next year and that I might be able to work with them. I had finished a Bible school tour of four years in Canada, Prairie Bible Institute for three years and prior to that in Saskatchewan, what's now (garbled) Bible Institute, after high school. So I did arranged through their sponsorship as the Chapel-by-the-Sea, I needed a U.S. sponsor in order to enter the country. In those days it wasn't very hard to enter, now it's harder to get across, at least from a developed country. It isn't so hard from other countries. I got my visa prepared and pass port and all of that and I got in here as I said on the 4th of May of '62 and went there and lived there one year, at the Chapel-by-the-Sea for about six months, and after that I went and got independent. I went welding in downtown Anchorage for an old iron works shop, some maintenance work, and supported myself and in the summer of '63 came down here. My purpose for coming here was to weld flotation tanks for Al Dean's ship yard, but when I arrived he had decided to purchase prefabricated tanks, floats, and so I instead went into carpentry and have done it ever since. Pete Olsen, an old timer here that

many people know, just passed away. He took me with to a job sight. The first we did was repair a windblown hanger right across from what was then the old air terminal, the airport, which was on the Base Road, just beyond the present airport. The hanger building is no longer there, but at that time it gave me my first job, here. And then after that I went into other work, carpentry work, which maybe I'll tell about a little later. But back in Canada, I was born there in 1936, which makes me this year sixty, just turned sixty on the 2nd of April. I don't feel it, but I must be.

Anyhow, I was born to farm parents. They were having a difficult time getting a farm started and in fact when I was three weeks old they moved to a whole new beginning about twenty or thirty miles north of where I was born in Central Manitoba. I'm sorry it was just, more Southwestern Manitoba. Then we moved to an area called, near Roblin, which is on highway 5 between Dauphin and Yorktown, Saskatchewan. Dauphin, Manitoba and Yorktown which is northwest of Winnipeg about 280 miles. It was a rolling hills, some plains country, cold, very cold in the Winter. Anyway I grew up there on a farm and took eight grades of school in the grade school, one room school house, Chalvale's School. We had one teacher for as many as thirty-five students, usually in the high twenties, grades one through eight. Then I took two years of high school there, 9th and 10th by correspondence and there was also one of those teachers. In fact, she was a new teacher, a young teacher, that hadn't taught much before, Shirley Silbas was here name, I think a Ukrainian girl. Anyway, or

Polish. Anyway, she helped me with the tests and so on but I otherwise pretty much tutored myself with correspondence. That's how I got grades 9 and 10. I then went away to a Christian high school, (garbled) Bible Institute, which was then Two Rivers Bible Institute, it changed and moved. That's where I finished high school, which is a very good school, and that's where I learned Algebra. I had a hard time starting. I graduated at age about eighteen with senior matriculation subjects all done, chemistry I and II, physics I and II, trigonometry, algebra, geometry, and the social studies and all the other stuff. I took one semester of typing, and maybe one of piano so I can still play a little bit of piano. And I do my typing is as much as I need, maybe thirty or forty words a minute. I have my own computer now, that I use once in a while. That's how I do my letters to the editor. I should say backtracking just a little, from age five through twelve I attended a summer Bible school which was in the same grade school house that we went to for day school in the winters through spring. Then in the summers the school was vacant and they allowed the Canadian Sunday School Mission workers to use it for a week of full days or two weeks of half days of vacation Bible school. It's a nondenominational christian organization that works with children in rural parts of Canada, much like the American Sunday School Union does in the America. With that I learned much of the scriptures. I got my Bible base then from scripture verses and little songs about the Bible and such like. I learned to love the scriptures. It was very much a desire to me to

(garbled). That was a mile and a half south of the farm. The church we attended as a family was the St. John's Lutheran Church a mile and a half north, also yet in the country. It was a big family church where it seemed like a lot of people. It was only about maybe a hundred and some people, but to me it seemed a lot. But I was never as intrigued with church life there as I was in the vacation Bible school where I was, at the age of eleven, was told that I could know my sins were forgiven, as a group we were told. We needn't sing a lie about it, we were gonna learn a song about sins forgiven and she said you can stand by your desk silently and invite the Lord into your heart. She told us how and we did. I did at least. My brother, two years older, apparently didn't or at least it didn't register with him because two years later he got off the tractor on a field and was convicted in his heart about needing to be a christian and he got saved out there by himself. Among the Rumanians east of our community, ours was a German community, German speaking. In fact I couldn't speak English when I started school at age seven. I knew more German than English, very little English yet. That Rumanian settlement had a preacher come in by the name of Bill Wright from Africa. He spoke a series of meetings and that one night, I recall, he spoke on Isaiah 14:9 "Hell from beneath is moved to meet thee at thy coming," a real powerful message. It was in a little log building. You could reach up and touch the log, ceiling joists. But, all that was humble, but the message of God was well preached there and it was that stirred my brother to get saved. Anyhow, I went from that to

the christian high school after which I took a year of Bible school, graduated from high school in 1954. It was in my twelfth year, at about March 13th, my mother passed away, fairly young at age forty-eight, of Lupis sickness, swolled up and chocked to death. My brother and her mom was present when she passed away. So I went home for that, and saw my dad very broken hearted. It was at that time that I believe my dad got right with the Lord himself. He had always been a Lutheran, thinking that was the right way, in fact he expressed that, he said, but now I (garbled), I have the Lord in my heart. And now he passed away at ninety-three, this February 10th, I was back home. I remarked to the Lutheran people that, they asked for comments from friends and relatives, so I was able to tell them where I date back, my beginnings and his, spiritually. Despite the fact that the Lutheran Pastor said that he was saved at baptism, I said no, this is what he said, to me. So anyway, my parents were moral, (garbled) brought us up in a good way and certainly taught us how to work. They worked very hard and loved us, we were five, I was third of four boys and then we had a sister afterwards. We're all home now, when Daddy passed away. So then as I said earlier, well I went west. I went to Prairie Bible Institute after the first year of Bible school in Saskatchewan. I went there for three more years and graduated in 1958 at Prairie Bible Institute with a Pastor minor and a Christian Education minor and had some music subjects to. Quite a bit of missions was stressed, but the foundations of my belief and the thrust of my life I think was largely settled while at Prairie.

Mr. Maxwell, the principal in that school for many years, affected my life perhaps more than anyone did. I still listen to, and copy, and distribute messages of his on cassette tape recorders, such as the born again life, I give that away quite often. The spirit filled life, things like that. He was very sound in his teaching and moved me much in that I treasure that heritage (garbled). He in turn was affected by men like Steven Olfert, who was a great challenge to me as well. Alan Redpath, men like this. They were challenges and spoke in these conferences at Prairie Bible Institute School. So I have had a good heritage in that way. I did though break away from the Lutheran Church at age fourteen, after confirmation, I took that in German and in English. I was actually pushed away because I disagreed with their reason for baptism or communion. They said it was for salvation and for forgiveness of sin. I said no. Jesus said that it was a remembrance of me was the communion and the baptism was an outward sign, expression of faith already imparted in the conversion prior to baptism is what I realized at age fourteen. I was later baptized as an adult at age nineteen, in the Nuchuka River in an Evangelical Free Church meeting in Prince George, British Columbia, where I had gone to work for a year or so, before I went further north to Fort Nelson where I stayed about a year and some. I worked as a welder on (garbled) Tractor Company for a while, a caterpillar company, with a few places in British Columbia and then went to Fort Nelson. I actually went there to weld on oil rigs. I did some of that one winter. And a did a little bit of construction, and from



there I moved into Alaska.

RF: Well, when you arrived in Kodiak, you grew up in country that was farm land with pretty cold winters. When you first arrived in Kodiak it was June?

AZ: June 27th of '60

RF: What were your first impressions of Kodiak? It's an island. It's very different then where you grew up. What struck you?

AZ: Well, I have quite a vivid picture in my mind of first landing here. Mr. Phillips had an old rusty looking orange-red carry all. He came to pick me up. I made prior arrangements with the Bible Chapel. He was the pastor. That's Dave Phillips dad. He was pastor here then. He met me, picked me up at the airport. I remember bringing us around dead man's curve and I got my first view of town. That was quite uh... it made an impression on me to see the actual city of Kodiak. I then came in and got acquainted with a few of the people there. They had the old Bible Chapel where now the Fish and Game Building is, across from the Russian Orthodox Church. The Catholic Church was there right across the street from the Orthodox and further over where the Fish and Game Building is, is where the Bible Chapel was. The upper corner back toward town, that

block of land, was the fisherman's hall. That's where the carpenter's union meetings used to be. All that got taken down. The Catholic Church got moved out to where their present place is. They use it as a thrift shop, their old building, they built a new church building. The Bible Chapel, I lived in, they had quarters there. There were some skid shacks attached and several young fellows, I think a few were in the Coast Guard maybe, or Navy then. We shared some room in these places and helped around, kept the premises cleaned up. We contributed toward food. So the Phillips kind of lodged us, fed some of us, board and room there and paid. I then I went with Pete on this carpenter job. The impressions of .... I guess I was just busy with life and didn't take too much note of what really happened on the water, for quite a while, I didn't get on it for some two years. I did too. Phillips had boats. We went on a few outings across to Long Island and Woody Island. But life here seemed very busy to me and industrious. People were busy with work. That was in '63. The winter's were certainly milder than where I came from. I didn't mind that at all. I did go, at the Bible Chapel, I, the old one, I was given an adult class shortly after I came and taught that for some years, a Sunday School Bible class. I led singing there for a number of years, maybe ten. Maybe with some intermission they had different ones at times came through. I was otherwise involved with college age youth. We still have quite a few get together's like that. I should say this of my impressions. I remember hearing a cow bell, when I worked for Chuck Eadress after doing his, he did various house repairs and

things, he got me little jobs here and there. Actually Chuck got me into contracting, cause the first building I did actually followed the earthquake, the same summer of the earthquake, which was then the temporary jewelry store downtown for Mrs. Blankenburg, which then got moved out and is now the old beauty shop, I think. No, its the one that's built under the building, its a two-story building across from the goody shop, Mill Bay Road, which is on the town end of the building that is near Ardinger's. There are various stores underneath. There's an apartment complex above it. Well its on the town end of that building. I built that building for \$4,000, all material and all labor including the wiring and the plumbing. That was my first contract. I did that in the summer of '64. It was Chuck who got me on, but when I used to work for Chuck and he did some work at the Baptist Mission. I'd hear this cow bell always out there toward the ocean and I wondered where are these cattle pastures at? I later found out those are buoys. It took a while.

RF: You've already mentioned several things that I want to make sure we talk about. Number one, clearly your connection with the church, the Bible Chapel in particular, are very important. So I do want to come back to that. But I don't want to skip over the earthquake, which you mentioned. That occurred...

AZ: March 27 of '64.

RF: ...less than a year after you'd been here.

AZ: That's right.

RF: Tell us about that. What happened?

AZ: In the Fall of '63, to find myself employment, I guess I got interested in self-employment, I found out that the Navy was disposing of warehouses, barracks, buildings. They wanted the sites cleaned up and I was looking for something to do, so I found out that you could sign a little contract. They had forms and stuff that you set up and pay a little deposit to guarantee the removal of all the debris, but salvage lumber out of these. So I undertook, I purchased a barracks, which was thirty by seventy or something like that, up in the hills here somewhere, in Swampy Acres, right here, past deadman's curve, on the way to the base. That was more work than fun, or than money, but I cleaned it all up, took it apart, salvaged what lumber I could. There wasn't much salvageable lumber really in those kind of deals. But I did it and got it all done. In order to move the lumber I needed a truck, so I looked around, and found an old flatbed, a 1942? Chevrolet, two ton. It had tubular frames over and it used to have a canvas top and it used to be a military truck where they'd haul their personnel back and forth in, shuttle them. I bought that for

\$200 somewhere, I don't know where. It worked and I did some repair to it and I used that to haul my lumber. I left the pipes over the top with the tarp off. It was not a dump truck so I had to push all on the lumber on and pull it all off and stack it wherever, and then found sales for it. I think I was selling at the market price around then was \$200 a thousand. It was good first growth fir lumber, 1" by 6", 2" by 8", 2" by 6", flooring. Then, Ray Turner, a coastguardsmen, and I went together and purchased two of their warehouses, which were 63' by 151' with a 10' wide dock on the long side. Two of those were right near the road that, you come around deadman's curve toward the base and the first clearing against the mountain is where the first one was and the other one was just a few hundred yards further in. We undertook to take these apart, he'd help when he could, and it was for me a steady job, taking this apart. We paid a \$500 deposit for each of the buildings, but we were salvaging lumber and we hired a little help to take the roof boards off. There's a lot of nail pulling work, 1" by 6"s, 2' centers, nailed down with eight-penny nails. There's a lot of pulling. So I remember hiring a few helpers. We'd pay them by the hour. We were selling some of the lumber and doing all right. It had lots of, well the framing 2" by 8", rafters 20s and 14s, and the double layer sheathing on the walls 1" by 8" and 1" by 6", 2" by 6" studs, and then the floor was where we made our money. That was decked with 2" by 6" tongue and groove, almost all vertical grain fir, straight, no knots almost at all, up to 22' long, 2" by 6" T & G, and then it was laid over 2" by

12" s that was also number 1 or number 2 fir, 14' long 1' centers. They were laid over girders that were lapped six wide, 2" by 12" s, 18 feet. That made our money when we started loading that stuff out and selling. The canaries were doing quite a bit of building. They were a good market source for us. So, we had the second building down, the floors were pretty well cleaned up and I remember we had lumber on the dock, we were loading this flatbed, another fella I had hired to help me. We were loading it when suddenly the earthquakes began to erupt. I was backed against the dock, and I thought this is going to be exciting, I'd like to watch something move. I heard the trees move, wave back and forth with the quakes. I looked around and didn't see any big enough trees around, even a power pole. (garbled) But the sensation was that I was like on a, the dock was like sitting on a, standing on a skiff when the wake goes by and it waves you up and down. That's how it felt standing on that dock. The truck was just bouncing back and forth bumping against the dock. We asked each other, "I wonder if they felt something like this in town?" So we finished our load out. We loaded up full with this lumber and drove to town. As we came around deadman's curve we saw a helicopter or two circling and boats circling around in the harbor, moving out toward base. It just looked like something was wrong. We didn't know. We never dreamed that tidal waves accompany earthquakes. We just didn't connect that. At least we hadn't over heard hat before. So we quite soon knew that the people in town must have known something was happening to

them. We got to the hill just above the boat harbor as you come down toward town and Ernie Mills was out there directing traffic. He said "We just had a tidal wave and we're about to have another one. Get up to high ground." I said, "Can I go through?" He said, "Go." So I went through and down through the middle of town I noticed the streets were wet. Some of the sidewalks were kind of turned around where some of the restaurants used to be. A building or two I noticed as I drove through was dislodged, out of place. So we went up and parked by the Griffin Memorial Building and began to watch the action. By then the second wave was coming through I guess. That's the one that flooded downtown, which we didn't see until the morning after, the next morning, that night. I walked out by the sea. But we parked there and we watched the water movement, rising fast through the channel. Pretty soon we saw boats drifting out into the channel. Then we saw buildings, I don't know, some of the houses window deep, waving back and forth just quietly floating out to sea. The boats would be unmanned circling around and bumping something once in a while, either each other or a house or something and which also went out to sea. It was an awesome, eerie, quiet sound and sight. You could hear the creaking and the groaning of things and all of a sudden a pop as the water would float stuff off their moorings. That's when the Donna Lea Atchison Building, he had a big store right out in front. He had piling, a pier, straight out where now the ferry dock is. That's where they used to be. That's all been filled in now. They were down at water level and there

was quite a big store complex there, an industrial store. All that flowed away. When the wave was done all you saw was the tops of, was those stumps. Nothing else was left. It all floated out. So that was an eerie thing. Tony Manly was a marine friend of ours who, he and I, at about 3:00 in the morning, we walked out. It was a very quiet, crisp night. The moon was out and it was the night after the quake. We walked down Rezanoff Hill, and where Kodiak Rental Service is now, that was Clark's Service Station, the water level was right above the door line of the building. The old Selief fishing boat was deposited right at the base of that little hill just against where the Koniag Building is, where now the office supply store is. It was left with a whole bunch of crab aboard and they of course started to smell a few days later. That one was then, they built planking and locks and rolled it, towed it on rollers all the way back and launched it a few days later back into the water. There was quite a bit of salvage work. Boats were left on the shore of town. It was quite a mess down through town, just water damage that floated stuff high and then dropped it down or turned it upside down.

RF: So I imagine it was quite some time before Kodiak got itself back together and did you get in on some of that? Did you get to work on some of the reconstruction?

AZ: Actually, the benefit I guess that came to me was we had a good



market for our lumber. I remember after I brought that load of lumber through, actually we unloaded it at Spruce Cape, where Pastor Phillips had his yard, he said I could store it there. Ray and I donated all the lumber for the Bible Chapel, the first 4,000 square feet, before the new addition now. But we donated all the floor joists and the decking that went on it, the 2" by 16" t and g. That was on my truck that day. So that load came across those tidal wave streets and is built into that church building.

RF: So that's when the building was built?

AZ: '67. But the lumber was stored and then used there. But I thought then, it was sort of a sense of depression came to me and I felt like everything is over with, there won't be any future for this place. What's gonna happen now? Everything was like at a stand still. And it was. It seemed like everybody was stunned. At least it seemed to be it was. And I think people were, because you have to start, pick up the pieces, and decide what are we gonna do. And, of course, core of engineers came in and they did a lot of the directing and reconstructing. Then SV loans, 3% loans, came to town and financed a lot of the construction. So a lot of the old stuff downtown that was either no more or then was torn down and made room for all the new buildings. The bars are what thrived. These people that owned Ships and Tony's and the others, they all built these good big complexes with low interest money. So I guess the liquor

industry didn't seem to suffer to badly. No harder than ever after all. As to work it generated, we sold quite a bit of lumber, then the canaries had suffered a lot of loss and they were a pretty good market for us. We sold quite a bit of wood to them. It made our effort pay. I did a house job for someone, an old house, that she also put in for and received SVA money, saying that the earthquake damaged her house. It really didn't. It was rotten. I saw that. But that was up to her. But she obtained money and hired me for a month or more to do repair work, rebuilding work, down in the basement. So I think some people took advantage of it in some ways, but the town grew and by '65, which was probably the peak year in king crab and shrimp maybe, at least king crab and shrimp, both were very good industries at that time. While I was, I guess it was the summer of, maybe it was the spring of '65 when I did that jewelry store. I remember being downtown for about a month there doing that. It was in September, I think, possibly it was '63, I can't remember. But, I was just amazed to see the kind of life style I saw downtown. The drunkenness, the drinking. It was just flowing fast. These guys yelling and whooping. They were in from fishing, had lots of money and that stuff really turned them on. That impressed me quite a lot, the liquor lifestyle, drinking lifestyle. But the town seemed to turn on. It came together pretty good. There was a lot of pride in saying we will build bigger and better. I remember then, it was hard to have people even acknowledge that God was (garbled).  
...generated any response to Him or fear or anything. Though as we know

historically, from the Bible, most any natural disaster is usually always linked to God speaking to people and dealing with people to turn to Him. It's usually provoked some response. I saw little of that in Kodiak, very little conscious like that.

RF: It's been a long time since the earthquake, I guess its been thirty-two years since then, I guess I'm curious. Are there any other events, not necessarily to the magnitude of the earthquake, but any other events that you think have shaped Kodiak's history significantly? Does anything else stand out?

AZ: It doesn't at this point. I was gonna say. It wasn't the shake of the earthquake that damaged this town very much that I could tell. It was the water damage. I've just seen it as a, more or less, a steady economy. It has its rises and falls, fishing seasons and that seems to effect the town more. We had about a 15% drop in real estate values about maybe seven or eight years ago, whenever Anchorage took such a dip. They went down about 50%. There were a lot of loses there. But it wasn't long before it went back up about 7% or 8%. Now it's close to par with what it used to be at its peak before. But there was a time, I think in the late sixties or early seventies, when land values really did appreciate very fast. For instance, we bought land in Baronof Heights, one lot for \$7,000 and raised it to \$26,000 and some on the sail, after I built on it, just the land. The other

two lots next to it, one I bought, well I bought the two lots for \$8,500. And one of them was appraised for, I think, \$26,000 and some. The other one, stopped at about \$20,000. So, just an indication of just about three times, four times, five times as much. And that was pretty typical of land all around. So people that purchased land then and sold it recently, or more recently, or a little while later at least, they made their money. Land values have been fairly stable, prices at least, seem like in the last some years, \$20,000 to \$30,000 per building site is pretty common, and still is. They used to a lot less. When I came here, fuel at the pumps was 22 cents a gallon. And then of course, remember that under Jimmy Carter everything went way up to \$1 and some. It might have been about the time the land values changed, I can't remember. But that was noticeable, very noticeable.

RF: Do you remember how high the gas prices got here in town?

AZ: How high? Probably no higher than right now. It's \$1.60 some or so. Some prices here. We bought bulk fuel for most of the years I ever lived here. I bought a 500 gallon tank and had it filled on the yard and I used to buy fuel for 20 the 30 cents per gallon cheaper. Have it when you needed it, right on the yard. I still do that. Anyone can do that if they have a place to put it at.

RF: Okay. I'm gonna switch topics on you, cause I know that you were also involved in the Kodiak Christian School here in town. In fact, I think your children went through the Kodiak Christian School. I just wanted to hear, were you in on the foundation of that school?

AZ: Pretty much.

RF: Tell me about the school. How did it start?

AZ: I don't recall the years, what year, but it was an interest, my wife was a school teacher, Arlene, who I met here the summer of '63 and (I didn't tell you that story) began dating the winter of '63-'64. We were married the earthquake year, August the 7th, 1964. There were people here at that time, Mary and Fletcher Talkington, a real tall old man, from Florida I think. She was a school teacher also, a wonderful first grade teacher, very much loved by the school system here for a lot of years. She always, and Arlene, had a burden to start a christian school. That's where the idea seem to come from. Arlene taught here three years, taught first grade. She taught, we were married in '64, I guess she didn't teach the next year, because in December of '65 we had our first child, who is now 30. So it's a few years back we got us a grandchild. We formed a steering committee of local people, which I remember consisted of Woody Phillips was on it, for a while at least, as sort of an advisor and Chuck Mackey, myself, I can't

remember, one or two others. What we then did was to enquire wherever we could to find out how to start a christian school. We were referred to Chuck (?last name?) who was doing a good job at one, administrating one, up in Kenai, Cook Inlet Academy. During that time, we we decided to visit several christian schools. I was not on that team that went of about four, I remember Chuck went, Arlene went, Woody Phillips went, I can't recall just who else, maybe four, to Anchorage and they visited about three schools. One was the Harvester School. I don't remember quite who the others were. I believe they also went to so Cook Inlet Academy in Kenai or Soldotna, and tried to get ideas on how they operated, what to do and so on. We got ideas. Then, Arlene and I went down to Seattle and were referred to Mount Lake Terrace Christian School, which had an elderly couple administrating it, had done for many years, the Atkinson's. They were very good to us. Took a lot of time. He was like an old grandfather kind of person. They could feel with us the burden and shared with us their hearts of how they were doing. They had a pretty good school going, including high school. It's still operating, doing very well. I remember them, after they'd share with us all the different things on how to establish a curriculum and all those kinds of things. Finally he says, "Well, when you've done all your research and prepare to write a book on how to start a christian school. If that fails then just start." And that's about what we did. We started looking around for teachers, with a lot of information we'd put together and we found Mike Rostad, I believe was our first teacher.

I'm not certain, but I think he was. We had Mike come and we gave Mike grades four through eight and he was the administrator as well.

RF: How many grades was the school at that point?

AZ: I don't remember if we started with the little grades yet. We may have. Actually, he did a pretty good job. He was very interesting. He had devotions for the kids as well as the academic subjects. He got good grades for them. Questa, our oldest was then I think 4th grade. That's when she started and she went through 11th grade at the Christian School. The high school subjects she took the years were by correspondence. After which the board decided not to have the high school. Mainly because there were not enough parents who had high school children. They did not want to use the additional tuition that may have been accrued from lower grades to support and sponsor the higher grades. Despite the fact that the parents then of the six or so high school kids who were eligible wanted to hire this teacher and just pay for it all themselves. The board still didn't want to undertake it at that time. Which I think was a failing mistake. I don't think you should start kids out and then turn them loose. I think those four years of high school are the terrific polishing years of all you've put into them before that time. All the value base you lay, you can establish in those high school years and then turn them into a career search through their following education. I learned a lot in those years. I was on the

board for nine years after being on the founding committee. I was chairman of the board for a while. We looked at the Christian School conservatively in its finance management and all. Therefore we felt, and we went to a number of the christian school conferences that the Association of Christian Schools International held in Seattle. As many as 1,400 delegates, teachers and delegates would come. Arlene and I went a number of years, on our own, just to see and get feedback and information and possible leads to teachers and so on. We'd bring information back, a lot of good information and we'd supply it to the board members here. They would often very commonly tell us that a twenty to one student - teacher ratio was what you need to survive as a christian school because the funds are just not as plentiful there. The parents pay their taxes for public school and then have to pay private money for tuition as well. The school got started and we actually went along quite well and we began to grow and did grow and we're glad to see it's fairly stable now at about one hundred or so students. Our vision then and our purpose was to provide for a need that was here. If there's a need for anyone's child to be educated in a christian setting, we were able to do it. That's why we chose to exist as a christian school. For a while it was difficult to get some of the christian parents to believe in christian school. They wanted us to influence the public school system as believers they said. But when their children began to have distress in the public school system and they were distressed with them, some of them became believers totally in the christian school. They



were one hundred and eighty degree converts. Which was good to see. People did see the value of it. When I was on the board and Arlene too had a lot of influence, she was curriculum coordinator for quite some time. She did a good job and a hard job searching out good curriculum and getting to the teachers, getting this to the board rather. We like to see that the spectrum of learning, it starts with God and ends with God. If all learning begins with God, if the child knows God, and you bring them to know the Lord then they're free to learn all about the things He's put in the world. Then they pursue learning and at the end of every spoke of learning, its like a wheel with spokes, they would find in their search of learning, God in it, whether it was in the social sciences or the other sciences or what. We were told at the christian school conferences how to integrate the Bible into every facet of learning. Our desire, and Chuck (?unknown?) told us this a lot, he would come over and have mini conferences with parents and show parents the value of christian school. That helped get the idea through the community. They told us, and we believe, we have to establish a Biblical world view in the minds of children. If so, then everything they learn , they will learn with a view to making God known, to the people of the world. So they would also for themselves, they're finding the sciences, be it math or physics or chemistry and all. They would see God's design in everything. Whether its in the social sciences, they would see the purpose of God's influence or intervention in society, in the histories of society. We felt like, we have

now the opportunity to introduce God into all the areas of learning where He really should be, because he provided the basis of all learning. Rather than to have them learn all these things in a secular arena and exclude God. We found it was a very good opportunity and still is a very good opportunity. We're all for the christian school. Academically they did very well too.

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For an index of other recordings in this collection see the index:

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