

ORAL HISTORY OF WANDA FIELDS
ON
TEACHING IN KODIAK
1952'S THROUGH MID -1970'S

INTERVIEWER/TRANSCRIBER: ANGELA SMOLDON
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KODIAK COLLEGE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Dr. Gary Steven, Project Director

The following is an autobiographical interview of Wanda Fields November 30, 1993. Speaking on education in Kodiak during the 1950's through the early 1970's.

AS: PLEASE GIVE US SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION: BIRTH DATE/PLACE, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND.

WF: I WAS BORN MAY 12, 1921 IN BROWNWOOD, TX ACTUALLY WE WEREN'T LIVING THERE...WE LIVED IN RALEIGH CALIFORNIA, BUT IT GETS TO 120 DEGREES DOWN THERE, SO MOTHER WOULD TAKE THE FAMILY TO BROWNWOOD TX, WHICH WAS NOT TOO MUCH COOLER, BUT AT LEAST IT WAS A LITTLE COOLER.

I WENT TO SCHOOL IN RALEIGH, CALIFORNIA THROUGH MY JUNIOR YEAR AND THEN GRADUATED FROM LONG BEACH POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL MY SENIOR YEAR. AND THEN WENT TO LONG BEACH JUNIOR COLLEGE FOR 2 YEARS AND WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS, AND GRADUATED THERE WITH A DEGREE AND A MAJOR IN MUSIC AND A MINOR IN SOCIOLOGY. ACTUALLY I MARRIED THE CHRISTMAS BEFORE I GRADUATED, THE CHRISTMAS OF 1942, AND GRADUATED MAY 1943. I DIDN'T BEGIN TEACHING IMMEDIATELY, WE HAD OUR LITTLE HOME THERE IN OCEAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA, AND I WAS BUSY AS A YOUNG BRIDE THERE. I PLAYED FOR THE CHUCH THERE AND DIRECTED THE CHOIR THERE. THIS WAS WAR YEARS, DURING THE WAR, AND IN SAN DIEGO, THERE WERE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO CAME OUT FOR THE JOBS, AND ALSO THE WIVES OF THE SERVICEMEN THERE, SO THERE WERE A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY. AND I HAD A MALE QUARTET AND WE SANG QUITE A BIT, NOT ONLY IN OUR CHURCH, BUT IN OTHERS. THEY USED TO HAVE "SINGS" OR WHATEVER, ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS AND PEOPLE WOULD COME IN, THE BLACKWOOD BROS. QUARTET, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE HEARD OF THEM, BUT THEY WERE FAMOUS AT THAT TIME AND TRAVELING ALL OVER... THEY WOULD BE AT THESE "SINGS" AND ALSO OUR QUARTET.

THEN IN 1945 WE WENT UP TO LOS ANGELES AND ATTENDED THE LOS ANGELES BIBLE INSTITUTE FOR A YEAR AND A HALF AND THEN THE NEXT SEMESTER, THE SPRING SEMESTER OF 1947, I WENT TO U.S.C. TO TAKE SOME MORE CLASSES TOWARD GETTING A TEACHER'S CREDENTIAL...I WAS GOING TO TEACH IN COMPTON THEN, I HAD THE JOB ALL LINED UP FOR THE FALL, BUT IN THE MEANTIME I FOUND OUT OUR FIRST SON WAS ON HIS WAY, SO I DIDN'T TAKE THE JOB. AND THEN A YEAR AND A HALF LATER, FRIENDS OF OURS FROM SAN DIEGO WERE UP HERE AT THE BAPTIST MISSION, IN FACT TWO COUPLES WE HAD KNOWN THERE WERE AT THE BAPTIST MISSION, AND THEY NEEDED ANOTHER COUPLE TO COME, SO THEY WROTE, AND WE SAID WE'D COME, DEWITT HAD BEEN WORKING IN THE DEFENSE PLANTS AND HAD BEEN LAID OFF OF HIS JOB, SO WE CAME UP TO KODIAK TO BE PARENTS AT THE BAPTIST MISSION. AND WE WERE THERE FOR THREE YEARS. WE HAD FOURTEEN CHILDREN IN OUR HOME, INCLUDING OUR OWN SON, AND THE LAST SIX MONTHS WE HAD FIFTEEN CHILDREN...AND IT WAS A HOME, LIKE A REGULAR HOME OF COURSE IT MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT WITH SO MANY CHILDREN, AND THERE WERE REGULATIONS THAT EVERYBODY HAD AT THE MISSION...AFTER THAT WE DIDN'T WANT TO CONTINUE IN THAT WORK. AND I APPLIED FOR A

TEACHING JOB HERE IN KODIAK, THEN I BEGAN TEACHING, THAT WAS IN 1952. MY FIRST CLASS WAS A 5TH GRADE, WE HAD WHAT WE CALLED THE OLD DOWNTOWN SCHOOL...THE FIRST YEAR I WAS IN THE OLD DOWNTOWN SCHOOL, WHICH HAD SIX ROOMS ABOVE AND THEN IT HAD SOME ROOMS BELOW, AND THEN THERE WERE QUANSET HUTS ALL AROUND THAT WE TAUGHT IN...I TAUGHT IN A QUANSET HUT...AND BEING MY FIRST YEAR, THE SUPERINTENDENT SAID, " YOU'LL HAVE ABOUT 18 PUPILS IN THIS QUANSET HUT." I ENDED UP WITH 25 FOR THE WHOLE YEAR...VERY CROWDED, DESKS THAT WERE ON WOODEN RUNNERS...JUST ROOM FOR MY DESK UP FRONT [MR. FIELDS INTERJECTS: HOW MUCH DID YOU GET PAID A MONTH?] IT WASN'T MORE THAN \$3000 A YEAR OR SOMETHING, IT WASN'T VERY MUCH I KNOW...THAT WAS AN INTERESTING YEAR.

AS: WHO WAS THE SUPERINTENDENT THAT YEAR?

WF: IVAR SCHOTT, HE CAME THE SAME YEAR WE DID, THAT WAS HIS FIRST YEAR. HE STAYED FOR 20 YEARS AND WAS SUPERINTENDENT

AND THEN THE NEXT YEAR THE FIRST WING OF THE EXISTING SCHOOL WAS BUILT, FROM THE OFFICE TO THE CAFETERIA THAT AREA UP TO, IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE IT SINCE ITS CHANGED SO MUCH.

AS: NOW IS THAT WHERE THE JUNIOR HIGH IS RIGHT NOW, OR IS THAT MAIN MAYBE?

WF: IT'S WHERE MAIN SCHOOL WAS...THEY DIDN'T GET IT FINISHED UNTIL OCTOBER OF THAT YEAR... AND WE HAD TO TEACH ON SOME SATURDAYS TO MAKE THE 180 DAYS FOR THE YEAR...AND THEN THE NEXT YEAR I WENT DOWN TO 3RD GRADE AND STAYED IN THE LOWER GRADES. I TAUGHT FOR 20 YEARS TO RETIRE OVER A PERIOD OF 25 YEARS, BECAUSE OUR 2ND SON DUNCAN CAME ALONG IN 1956 SO I WAS OFF ABOUT 2 YEARS AND OUR OTHER SON CAME ALONG IN 1960...ALTHOUGH THAT TIME THE KINDERGARTEN LEFT AT CHRISTMAS...WENT AWAY AND DIDN'T COME BACK APPARENTLY I WAS THE ONLY ONE IN KODIAK, CERTIFIED TEACHER, THAT THEY COULD GET TO FILL IN, SO I FINISHED OUT THE KINDERGARTEN YEAR THAT YEAR...WE COMBINED THE CLASSES SO THAT I HAD JUST ONE SESSION OF KINDERGARTEN...THEN ABOUT 1971 OR 2 ABOUT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR...THE PRINCIPAL CAME TO ME AND THEY DIDN'T HAVE A MUSIC TEACHER OUT AT THE BASE...I WAS TEACHING 2ND GRADE...THEY WONDERED IF I WOULD GO OUT AND TEACH MUSIC AT THE BASE...THAT WAS INTERESTING BECAUSE WE HAD THREE SECOND GRADES THERE AT MAIN SCHOOL, SO I HAD TO DIVIDE UP MY CHILDREN AMONG THE OTHERS, THEY WEREN'T SO CROWDED BUT WHAT THEY COULD TAKE THE ONES I HAD. SO IT WAS FUN PARCELING OUT THE KIDS TO THE OTHER TEACHERS. SO I WENT OUT TO THE BASE, WHICH WAS AN ADVENTURE IN ITSELF. DRIVING OUT THERE EVERY MORNING...WE HAD A LOT MORE SNOW, ICE, HAZARDOUS ROADS THEN AND DIDN'T HAVE THE GOOD TRACTION ON TIRES THAT WE DO NOW. IN FACT I HAD CHAINS ON MY TIRES, AND SOMETIMES THEY'D BREAK. SO I HAD QUITE A FEW INTERESTING EXPERIENCES GETTING TO SCHOOL THAT YEAR, BUT I ENJOYED IT. AND THEN I STAYED OUT THERE UNTIL I FINISHED, FOR SIX MORE YEARS...I TAUGHT FIRST GRADE THE

NEXT YEAR. AND THE OTHER TEACHER THERE WAS A NEW TEACHER SHE'D HAD NO EXPERIENCE IN FIRST GRADE AND HERE WE WERE TWO NEW TEACHERS TO FIRST GRADE...WE KNEW HOW TO GET STARTED BUT THEN WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO, SO WE WENT TO THE PRINCIPAL...HE HELPED US FIND THE RIGHT BOOKS...THEN I MOVED UP TO SECOND GRADE.

I ENJOYED TEACHING...OUT THERE WAS A SMALL GROUP. THE FIRST YEAR WHEN I WAS TEACHING MUSIC THE NAVY WAS STILL THERE AND THERE WERE ABOUT 500 STUDENTS IN THAT SCHOOL...THERE WASN'T A CLASSROOM FOR ME....A LITTLE PLACE WAS PARTITIONED OFF IN THE CAFETERIA...AND THE KIDS WOULD COME IN AT NOON...JUST A PLACE TO KEEP MY MUSIC BOOKS AND WHATEVER.

AS: THAT'S KIND OF LIKE NOW AT EAST.

WF: YEAH, RIGHT. THEN I HAD TO TAKE EVERYTHING THAT I WANTED FOR MY CLASS TO THE CLASSROOM AND SO I WHEELED THAT PIANO UP AND DOWN THE HALLS TO THE CLASSROOMS...AND IF I WANTED TO PLAY THE DRUMS OR THE CYMBALS I'D HAVE TO CARRY THEM... THAT WAS A VERY INTERESTING YEAR... THE NEXT YEAR THE NAVY HAD LEFT AND WE DIDN'T HAVE EVERY ROOM TAKEN...THE MUSIC TEACHER HAD A GREAT BIG ROOM TO HIMSELF AND IT WAS ALL SELF CONTAINED.

ALL DURING THIS TIME I CONTINUED TO PLAY THE ORGAN AT THE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH. I PLAYED THERE AND DIRECTED THE CHOIR MOST OF THE TIME...DID THE CHRISTMAS CANTATAS AND EASTER CANTATAS...THEN WHEN WE MOVED OVER TO THE BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH WE ONLY HAD A PIANO AT FIRST, I PLAYED THAT, THEN WE EVENTUALLY GOT A SMALLER ORGAN...A HAMMOND...AND THEN WE GOT A LARGER ONE, THE ONE WE HAVE NOW...IN THE EARLY YEARS WE PRESENTED THE MESSIAH, AND I PLAYED THE ORGAN FOR THAT...

AS: YOU DID THE LAST TIME I THINK WHEN I SANG, JUST TWO YEARS AGO.

WF: WELL, I ONLY PLAYED SOME BACKGROUND...THE SCHOOL ONE TIME WHEN MR. WELCH WAS HERE, THE SCHOOL CHOIR PRESENTED THE MESSIAH SO HE ASKED ME TO COME IN AND PLAY FOR THAT, I PLAYED THE WHOLE THING, IN FACT I'VE PLAYED THE WHOLE THING SEVERAL TIMES...OH, ANOTHER TIME, MR. WELCH HAD THE COMMUNITY CHOIR, AND THEY DID HIRE A FELLA FROM ANCHORAGE TO COME OVER AND PLAY, I GUESS HE PLAYED...IT WASN'T ORGAN...A FINE MUSICIAN I'M SURE, PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN, HE WAS TO COME OVER ON SATURDAY FOR THE PERFORMANCE ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON. HE CAME; HE DIDN'T KNOW THE MUSIC; HE COULDN'T PLAY IT...SO AT SEVEN O'CLOCK SATURDAY NIGHT, WE WERE SITTING EATING OUR SUPPER, MR. WELCH CALLED AND SAID, "I WONDERED IF YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO PLAY FOR US TOMORROW FOR THE MESSIAH." BECAUSE I'D PLAYED FOR HIM BEFORE, SO I TOOK MY MUSIC...WENT THROUGH WHAT WE COULD SATURDAY NIGHT...THEN NATHAN LEWIS AND I GOT TOGETHER SUNDAY MORNING, HE WAS PLAYING THE PIANO, I WAS PLAYING THE ORGAN SO WE GOT TOGETHER AND PRACTICED ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF OVER SOME OF THE THINGS WE HADN'T GONE OVER BEFORE...AND

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, I PLAYED THE MESSIAH.

AS: OH WOW, ONE DAY...NOT EVEN ONE DAY'S NOTICE...MAYBE 18 HOURS AMAZING...WHAT DID THEY DO WITH THE GUY THEY SHIPPED OVER FROM ANCHORAGE.

WF: WELL, HE WAS JUST ASTOUNDED THAT I CAME IN AND PLAYED THIS THING YOU KNOW, THEN HE DISAPPEARED, I IMAGINE HE WENT BACK TO HIS HOTEL AND THEN GOT ON THE FIRST PLANE OUT...

AS: WERE YOU TEACHING DURING THE TIME OF THE TSUNAMI. WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THAT ON THE KIDS, THE CLASSROOM, SCHOOL IN GENERAL...

WF: YES, I WAS TEACHING 2ND GRADE. THE TSUNAMI AND EARTH QUAKE CAME ON FRIDAY, THE SCHOOL, THE JR. HIGH SCHOOL AND GYM WAS THE REFUGE FOR THE PEOPLE WHO'S HOMES HAD WASHED AWAY OR FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER DIDN'T HAVE A PLACE TO STAY. WE WERE LIVING IN THE BARONOF MANSION/MUSEUM DOWNTOWN, AND BECAUSE OF OUR LOCATION THEY ASKED US TO MOVE OUT OF THE WAY BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW HOW FAR UP THE WATER WOULD COME SO WE WENT UP TO THE SCHOOL, WELL ACTUALLY THEY DIDN'T TELL US TO. WE WERE UP ON THE MOUNTAIN UNTIL ABOUT 2:00 IN THE MORNING AND WE SAW EVERYBODY ELSE GOING TO THE SCHOOL. THAT WAS WEIRD. ALL THE LIGHTS WERE GONE, SO THEY HAD CANDLES IN THAT LONG HALLWAY...THEY HAD A COUPLE OF CANDLES ON TABLES...PEOPLE WERE LEANING UP AGAINST THE LOCKERS ALL THE WAY ALONG...WE FOUND OUR WAY INTO THE GYM. PEOPLE WERE LYING ALL OVER THE FLOOR ON COTS...THEY WERE REFUGEES...THROWN OUT OF THEIR HOMES...THE NAVY BROUGHT IN STUFF FOR BREAKFAST...THEY FED US MUSH. THEN MONDAY MORNING THE SCHOOL WAS STILL FILLED WITH ALL THE PEOPLE, THE SECOND NIGHT THE NAVY BROUGHT IN LITTLE NAVY MATTRESSES...SO WE HAD A LITTLE MORE COMFORT...IF YOU CAN CALL BABIES CRYING ALL NIGHT COMFORT, THEY WERE SO UPSET. IT WAS CERTAINLY A GREAT LEVELER: WE WERE ON OUR COTS BESIDE THE RUSSIAN PRIEST AND HIS FAMILY, AND SOME OF THE OTHER PEOPLE...PEOPLE THAT WOULDN'T ORDINARILY SPEAK TO YOU OR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU WELL THEY WERE ON THEIR COT TOO. THEY HAD TO EVACUATE THE HOSPITAL BECAUSE IT WAS ON THE WATERFRONT, YOU KNOW BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE WATER WAS GOING TO DO...THERE WAS A BABY BORN UP THERE THAT NIGHT, AND OUR MAGISTRATE HAD BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL UNDER AN OXYGEN TENT, AND THEY BROUGHT HER UP AND SHE DID DIE DURING THE PROCESS. SHE WAS COUNTED AS A VICTIM OF THE TSUNAMI. THERE WEREN'T THAT MANY HERE ON KODIAK ISLAND, AROUND THIRTY, CONSIDERING HOW MUCH WAS DESTROYED THAT WASN'T SO MANY PEOPLE...WE'D ALREADY A PLACE TO EAT ON EASTER...SO WE WENT TO THEIR HOUSE FOR THE DAY. AND BY THAT NIGHT WE WENT BACK TO OUR HOUSE, TO THE MUSEUM, WE DIDN'T HAVE WATER...I BELIEVE THE ELECTRICITY WAS ON BY THAT TIME...OUR OIL STOVE HAD GONE OFF AND WE HAD BEEN TRYING TO FIX IT, ONE OF THE RUMORS THERE WAS THAT THE OIL PIPE HAD BEEN BROKEN, BUT IT

HADN'T...JUST THE CARBURATOR SWITCH HAD LIFTED IN THE TIDE SO WE JUST WENT BACK, I'D GOT TO THINKING ABOUT THIS LYING ON THE COT...AND SURE ENOUGH I WENT BACK AND FIXED THE SWITCH SO WE HAD HEAT. I BELIEVE WE HAD ELECTRICITY, BUT WE DIDN'T HAVE WATER. THE NEXT DAY WE TOOK A HOSE TO THE NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE, WHICH HAD WATER AND BROUGHT WATER INTO OUR HOUSE. THEN IN A DAY OR TWO IT WAS RESTORED.

THEY DID ASK THE TEACHERS TO COME UP TO THE SCHOOL AND HELP WITH, YOU CAN IMAGINE ...WITH ALL THE PEOPLE THERE. BUT I HAD TWO YOUNG CHILDREN AT HOME AND I FELT THEY NEEDED ME MORE THAN GOING UP THERE, SO I DIDN'T GO UP. BUT I KNOW A LOT OF THE TEACHERS WENT UP, SPENT THEIR WEEK UP THERE, HELPING THE PEOPLE UP THERE...THE SCHOOLS WERE CLOSED ALL THAT WEEK. THEN BY THE FOLLOWING WEEK WE WERE BACK IN SESSION. AT ABOUT TUESDAY OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK, JUST AFTER NOON THERE WAS A REAL BIG SHOCK, IT WAS JUST A QUICK SHOCK, IT WASN'T LONG LIKE THE OTHER ONE WAS. OF COURSE EVERYONE WAS NERVOUS ANYWAY AND ON EDGE AND THE FUNNY THING... IN CALIFORNIA, AS WE WERE GROWING UP WE HAD EARTHQUAKES ALL THE TIME SO WE WERE TOLD " IN AN EARTHQUAKE GET UNDER YOUR DESKS"...SO HERE THIS QUAKE CAME SO I SAID TO THE KIDS, " GET UNDER YOUR DESKS!" AND I CRAWLED UNDER MINE, YOU KNOW THEY ALL DID IT! WE NEVER PRACTICED IT OR ANYTHING...THEY ALL JUST DID IT. ...NOTHING HAPPENED ACTUALLY. I HAD ABOUT 20-22 STUDENTS, BUT BY THE END OF THE DAY SO MANY PARENTS HAD COME TO GET THE STUDENTS ...THAT I HAD ABOUT 9 STUDENTS LEFT BY THE END OF THE DAY. IT WAS A VERY TRAUMATIC TIME TO GO THROUGH, ITS HARD TO DESCRIBE IT, I DON'T EVER WANT TO GO THROUGH ANYTHING LIKE THAT AGAIN. THE THING WAS, YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHO HAD BEEN LOST IN THE TIDAL WAVE, AND WHEN YOU'D SEE YOUR FRIENDS OR EVEN PEOPLE YOU DIDN'T KNOW...YOU'D WANT TO GO UP AND HUG THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE STILL ALIVE. ALONG WITH THAT, I KEEP THINKING OF THESE FUNNY THINGS, ...DEWITT WAS OUT AT THE RANCH AT ANTON LARSEN BAY, AND HE FILLED UP WITH GAS, FILLED HIS TRUCK WITH GAS, HE THOUGHT THE WHOLE TOWN WOULD BE DOWN, CAUSE WE'D BEEN IN CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKES BUT THIS WASN'T LIKE THAT, AND SO HE GOT HOME AND THE ONLY PERSON HE SAW ON THE ROAD WAS AL NIXON GOING BACK TO HIS PLACE AT BELL'S FLATS. THEY PASSED SOMEWHERE ON THE ROAD, YOU KNOW. THEN SOMEHOW WE GOT THE IDEA THAT AL NIXON HAD GOTTEN CAUGHT SOMEWHERE IN THE WATER, AND HE HAD DROWNED, WE GOT THE IDEA HE WASN'T ALIVE ANYMORE, THEN ABOUT A WEEK LATER AL COMES TO THE HOUSE, AND I OPEN THE DOOR...I PROBABLY STOOD THERE A MINUTE REALIZING THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY STANDING THERE...I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING A GHOST. FINALLY I CAME TO MYSELF AND SPOKE TO HIM, YOU KNOW, I'M SURE THAT I STOOD THERE AND STARED FOR A WHILE.

A.S.: AND HE HAD JUST GONE BACK TO BELL'S FLATS...

W.F.: WELL, HE'D JUST GONE BACK...I DON'T KNOW WHY WE THOUGHT THAT HE'D...WE YOU HEAR ALL THESE RUMORS IN AN EARTHQUAKE...AND WELL THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE WE KNEW VERY WELL THAT WERE LOST...

A.S.: STRUCTURALLY, WERE THE BUILDINGS HERE BUILT MORE SOUNDLY THAN IN CALIFORNIA.

W.F.: NO, MOST OF THEM HERE, AND I SUPPOSE STILL ARE, ARE WOODEN STRUCTURES, AND WOODEN STRUCTURES GIVE. IF YOU HAVE BRICKS OR STUCCOE THINGS LIKE THAT CRUMBLES...THE ONLY DAMAGE WE SAW TO THE BUILDING ITSELF (THE MUSEUM) AND WE DIDN'T DISCOVER THAT FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, ON THE THIRD STORY THE CHIMNEY FROM THE STOVE DOWNSTAIRS...THERE WERE SOME CRACKED BRICKS AND WE WERE ABLE TO REPAIR IT...I JUST HAD WESTON AND WALLACE AT HOME AT THE TIME, WE WENT OUT ON THE FRONT LAWN AND I COULD NOT HAVE STOOD UP IF HADN'T HELD ON TO WESTON, IT WAS THAT STRONG. IT LASTED FOR 4 1/2 MINUTES...WE COULD LOOK OVER WHERE THE OIL TANKS WERE...YOU CAN'T SEE BETWEEN THEM BUT DURING THAT EARTHQUAKE THEY PARTED AND YOU COULD SEE BETWEEN THOSE THINGS. WE'RE JUST FORTUNATE THEY DIDN'T BURST LIKE THEY DID OVER IN SEWARD...AND CAUGHT FIRE.

THE NEXT DAY, THE 28TH WAS DUNCAN'S BIRTHDAY...USUALLY WE'D TAKE 8-10 BOYS TO ANTON LARSEN BAY, SO I HAD GONE DOWN THAT AFTERNOON AND HAD BOUGHT WIENERS, BUNS, POP, ETC...AND HAD PUT THE WIENERS IN THE REFRIDGERATOR, BUT THE OTHER THINGS WERE SITTING ON THE TABLE...WELL WHEN THE EARTHQUAKE CAME, ABOUT 5:30 IN THE EVENING, WE HADN'T EATEN DINNER, I HAD BEANS ON THE STOVE, AND WE JUST GOT IN OUR CAR AND WENT ON UP THE MOUNTAIN. SO OFCOURSE THERE WAS NO PARTY THE NEXT DAY, BUT ABOUT, AFTER A WHILE YOU KNOW, WE HADN'T HAD SUPPER WE WERE GETTING HUNGRY, WE TOLD DEWITT TO BRING US SOMETHING TO EAT...SO HE BROUGHT US ALL THE PICNIC STUFF...THAT'S WHAT WE HAD TO EAT ABOUT MIDNIGHT...BUT HE DIDN'T GET THE WEINERS...JUST HAD THE POP AND THE OTHER STUFF...AND LITTLE WALLACE WAS FOUR AND HE SAID, "I DON'T LIKE THIS PICNIC, LET'S GO HOME."...WELL, THIS ISN'T MUCH HISTORY.

A.S.: WELL, WHAT CAN WE DO TO TIE IT IN...HOW ABOUT THE COST OF FOOD? DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT THE "PICNIC" COST? FOOD PRICES.

W.F.: I DON'T REMEMBER, BUT IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN NEAR THE COST OF NOW...THE PRICES HAVE GONE UP.

A.S.: DID THEY GO UP A LOT RIGHT AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE?...BECAUSE OF OTHER'S COMING IN...WAS THERE MUCH...TAKING ADVANTAGE?

W.F.: NO, I DIDN'T NOTICE MUCH OF THAT. OF COURSE THE DOWNTOWN WAS WASHED AWAY, WE ALWAYS SAID THE URBAN RENEWAL THAT CAME IN THEY CAME IN IT WAS TO BE A TWO PHASE THING, AND THEY DID PHASE ONE, BUT WE FELT THEY ALMOST DID MORE DAMAGE THAN THE EARTHQUAKE. BECAUSE THEY HAD IT MAPPED OUT WHERE THEY WERE GOING TO DO ALL OF THIS. THEY TORE DOWN BUILDINGS THAT WERE PERFECTLY GOOD, AND GOT PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR HOMES. WE JUST FELT THIS WAS UNFAIR...THEY DID STRAIGHTEN OUT THE STREETS...WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED... PHIL STONE WAS SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BAPTIST MISSION

AND WE RODE DOWN MAIN STREET WITH HIM AND THE ROAD WENT LIKE THIS (CURVEY)...HE SAID THEY WERE WATCHING A BEAR ON THE MOUNTAIN WHEN THEY MADE THE STREET. BUT URBAN RENEWAL DID STRAIGHTEN THE STREETS AND WE GOT PAVED STREETS, SOMETHINGS OUT OF IT. BUT THEY DID TAKE A LOT OF BUILDINGS, AND SOME OF THE HISTORICAL BUILDINGS FROM DOWNTOWN. WE FELT BAD THAT THOSE WERE DISTURBED.

A.S.: DID THEY TAKE ALL BUT THE ERSKINE HOUSE?

W.F.: YEAH, JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING BESIDES THAT. WELL, LET'S SEE THE OLD POST OFFICE, WHAT'S NOW THE CANNERY BUILDING, THAT WAS STANDING, THE RUSSIAN CHURCH WASN'T HURT. IT WAS PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING ON THE OCEAN SIDE OF THAT, BUT SOME OF THE THINGS, OVER WHERE BETTY SPRINGHILL LIVES, THAT AREA, THERE WERE SEVERAL HOUSES TAKEN, IN FACT WE HAD A HOUSE JUST KIND OF ACROSS THE STREET FROM HER THERE, IT WAS PERFECTLY GOOD, BUT THEY TOOK IT AWAY.

A.S.: WE WERE TALKING IN CLASS A LITTLE ABOUT THIS URBAN RENEWAL AND IT CAME UP THAT A LOT OF THE TIMES THEY WOULD TAKE MORE FROM LAND OWNERS, OR THEY WOULDN'T PARCEL BACK REALLY AS MUCH AS THEY HAD TAKEN FROM INDIVIDUAL PEOPLE.

W.F.: THAT'S PROBABLY TRUE. THEY WERE TO HAVE PHASE TWO BUT I THINK THE PEOPLE REBELED AND WE DIDN'T GO ON TO PHASE TWO.

A.S.: ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE GOVERNMENT DOING ITS THING AGAIN. TRYING TO FIX SOMETHING THAT ISN'T BROKEN.

PARTICULARS OF EDUCATION:

W.F.: RIGHT. WHEN I FIRST TAUGHT PHONICS WAS THE THING. WE HAD LITTLE PHONICS BOOKS...WE WENT IN A PHASE OVER THE 25 YEARS I TAUGHT. THEN WE, THE NEW BOOKS GOT AWAY FROM THAT PRETTY WELL, AND THEY WEREN'T TEACHING THE PHONICS, AND THE KIDS WERE MISSING OUT, I FELT, BECAUSE OF THAT. AND BY THE END OF THE TIME I WAS TEACHING, IT WAS BACK IN TO HAVE THE PHONICS. AND THE SAME THING ON THE MATH, WE WERE TEACHING THE REGULAR MATH. THEN WE WENT INTO THE "NEW MATH", THEY CALLED IT, AND WE HAD...THE LITTLE MAN WITH HIS FIVE FINGERS...THIS LITTLE WOODEN THING OF A MAN WITH HIS FIVE FINGERS...ANYWAY I FELT IT WAS MORE CONFUSING TO THE KIDS. I DIDN'T FEEL THEY WERE GETTING IT AS WELL AS WITH THE TIMES TABLES... AND THAT DIDN'T LAST BUT A FEW YEARS, THEN THEY WENT TO SOMETHING ELSE. THEY WERE CONTINUALLY CHANGING THE MATH CURRICULM, AND I THINK THAT CONFUSED THE KIDS AS THEY WENT UP THROUGH THE DIFFERENT GRADES, TO INTERMESH ALL THESE THINGS. YES THERE WERE A LOT OF CHANGES. OF COURSE WE STARTED OUT WHEN I FIRST TAUGHT WITH "DICK AND JANE" AND THOSE LITTLE BOOKS, AND FOR THEIR TIME, THEY WERE FINE. THEN WE GOT INTO SOME OF THE

OTHER PROGRAMS...IT'S BEEN A CONSTANT CHANGE. A LOT OF IT WAS EXPERIMENTAL. SO WE SAY...I DON'T THINK IT BROUGHT THE KIDS WHAT THEY REALLY NEEDED. NOW WE DID GO THROUGH AN EXPERIMENT HERE IN KODIAK, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE AWARE OF THAT, DR. LYNN WAS HERE. IT WAS WHEN EAST SCHOOL WAS FIRST BUILT. THEY BUILT EAST SCHOOL TO DO THIS. TEAM TEACHING TYPE OF THING...EVEN MORE THAN THAT...THE KIDS WOULD GO FROM ROOM TO ROOM FOR THE DIFFERENT SUBJECTS. NOW, WE WERE DOING THAT AT MAIN TOO, NOW AT EAST IT WAS MUCH EASIER TO BECAUSE THE BUILDING WAS BUILT FOR THAT. THEY HAD FOLDING PARTITIONS AND ALL, SO THEY COULD EXPAND ROOMS OR MAKE SMALL ROOMS...IN MAIN IT WASN'T SO EASY. THE KIDS HAD TO GO OUT IN THE HALLS AND BACK INTO A ROOM. AND ONE YEAR THEY CUT DOORS FROM ALL THE ROOMS TO THE NEXT ROOM, SO THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO OUT INTO THE HALLS, THEY COULD GO THROUGH THE DOORS. AND THAT DIDN'T TURN OUT TO BE TOO GOOD EITHER. WE DID IT AT MAIN ONLY ONE YEAR, BUT THEY DID IT AT EAST MORE THAN THAT, SEVERAL YEARS. BUT THEY FINALLY DECIDED THAT JUST A SINGLE CLASSROOM FOR A CLASS WAS BETTER, RATHER THAN HAVING THESE LITTLE KIDS RUNNING FROM PLACE TO PLACE. THE TEACHER NEXT TO ME THERE, WE WERE DOING 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD GRADE...I FOUND IT WAS REALLY DIFFICULT...I ALWAYS FELT LIKE I WAS NEGLECTING ONE GROUP. THAT YEAR, AFTER THE OTHERS HAD NOT DONE THIS ANYMORE, THE ONE TEACHER AND I EXCHANGED. I WOULD TEACH HER CLASS ENGLISH AND SHE WOULD TEACH MINE MATH...AND AGAIN WHEN YOU HAVE 1ST, 2ND & 3RD GRADE, I FELT I WAS NEGLECTING THE 3RD GRADE SO MUCH...WE ONLY DID THAT THAT ONE SEMESTER.

A.S.: I REMEMBER, IT MUST HAVE BEEN 1973 OR 1972, IT WAS BEFORE I MOVED FROM WESTERN WASHINGTON TO EASTERN WASHINGTON, THAT THEY HAD JUST STARTED THAT IN MY SCHOOL, I WAS IN 4TH GRADE I THINK, AND WE HAD TO DO THAT MOVING FROM THIS ROOM TO THAT ROOM. BUT THEY HAD THE ACCORDIAN DOORS...I REMEMBER BEING CONFUSED, GETTING UP TAKING YOUR THINGS AND MOVING FROM DESK TO DESK...

W.F.: NOW ONE YEAR, THEY WERE FINISHING UP EAST SCHOOL, SO WE HAD TO HAVE ONE CLASS IN THE MORNING AND ONE IN THE AFTERNOON. SO THE MORNING CLASS WENT FROM ABOUT 8 TO 12...THEN THE AFTERNOON CLASS WOULD GO 1 TO 5. THAT WAS REAL BAD. BECAUSE WE HAD TO TAKE ALL THE STUFF OUT OF THEIR DESKS, WE HAD BAGS FOR THEM OR SOMETHING, THEY'D HAVE TO PUT ALL OF THEIR THINGS IN THIS BAG THEN WE'D SET THEM IN THE CLOSET. THEN IN THE MORNING WHEN THEY CAME, I HAD A MORNING CLASS, GO GET THEIR BAGS TO USE FOR THE DAY PUT IT ALL BACK IN...THAT WAS REALLY CONFUSING...THEY'D LOSE THINGS...THINGS WOULD GET MIXED UP. WE DIDN'T DO THAT ALL YEAR.

A.S.: HOW ABOUT DISCIPLINE...YOU KNOW HOW DISCIPLINE HAS CHANGED OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS...IF YOU COULD START RIGHT NOW WOULD YOU CHOOSE THE SAME PROFESSION.

W.F.: NO. WELL FOR SEVERAL REASONS. WHEN I FIRST BEGAN TEACHING YOU COULD DISCIPLINE THE CHILDREN, WE WEREN'T ALLOWED TO SPANK THEM OR ANYTHING, BUT YOU COULD TAKE THEM TO THE PRINCIPAL AND HE WOULD IF THEY DESERVED IT. I REMEMBER ONE LITTLE BOY TORE A BOOK. I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO HIM, BUT I TOOK IT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT, IVAR SCHOTT AT THE TIME, AND SAID, " WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT THIS LITTLE BOY WHO TORE THIS BOOK." YOU SHOULD HAVE DISCIPLINED HIM RIGHT THEN, GO AHEAD AND DO WHATEVER...THE THING THAT BOTHERS ME NOW, PARTICULARLY THE LITTLE ONES COME UP AND HUG YOU AND LOTS OF TIMES THEY WANT TO SIT ON YOUR LAP. AND A LOT OF THEM DIDN'T HAVE LOVING AT HOME, AND I KNEW THAT'S WHAT THEY NEEDED, BUT YOU CAN'T DO THAT. I WOULD FIND THAT VERY DIFFICULT, BECAUSE I LIKE TO SHOW MY AFFECTION TO THE KIDS. IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT IF I COULDN'T PUT MY ARMS AROUND A LITTLE BOY, AND I WOULDN'T MEAN A THING BY IT.

A.S.: RIGHT, I KNOW. SAME THING. I TEACH OLDER KIDS, JR. HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL AND TEACHING MUSIC, MY MAIN THING IS TEACHING BAND, IF I HAVE A KID THAT DOES REALLY WELL I'D LIKE TO GIVE THEM A HUG AND YOU HAVE TO BE REALLY CAREFUL. AND BECAUSE THE KIDS ARE AWARE, IF YOU GET AN OBSTINATE OR OBNOXIOUS KID THEY CAN CAUSE A PROBLEM.

W.F.: THAT'S IT. THEY KNOW THEY CAN GET AWAY WITH THINGS AND PARTICULARLY WHEN I FIRST STARTED TEACHING, WELL ACTUALLY, THE KIDS HAD MORE SUPPORT. THEY CAME TO SCHOOL READY TO LEARN, READY TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS BUT AS TIME WENT ALONG THEY DID NOT HAVE THE DISCIPLINE AND THEY DID NOT COME TO SCHOOL IN THE FRAME OF MIND TO LEARN.

A.S.: I SEE THAT TOO, IT'S FRUSTRATING BECAUSE THERE'S STILL A SMALL FACTION, GROUP THAT IS DISCIPLINED AT HOME.

(DIGRESSION TO DISCUSS NEW WALLPAPER/CURTAINS BEING INSTALLED)

A.S.: WELL, THANKS, CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SAY...TO SUM UP.

W.F.: OH, WHEN I WAS TEACHING MUSIC OUT AT THE BASE I HAD A CHOIR, I TOOK SOME OF THE 4TH, 5TH AND 6TH GRADERS ...I HAD ABOUT 35 OR 40 KIDS, THEY HAD TO DO IT AFTER SCHOOL AND THEY WERE ALL BUSSED, A LOT OF THEM WERE BUSSED SO THEY HAD TO TAKE THAT TIME AND THEN GET THAT LAST BUS, I PRACTICED WITH THEM ALMOST EVERYDAY, AND THEN AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR WE WENT TO THE OTHER SCHOOLS IN TOWN, INCLUDING ST. MARY'S, AND SANG FOR THE OTHER CHILDREN. AND I THOUGHT THAT WAS REALLY NEAT. WE HAD A BUS TO TAKE US AROUND, ONE DAY, WITH APPOINTMENTS ALL DAY, I ENJOYED DOING THAT, AND THE KIDS DID TOO.

A.S.: WE DO THAT EVERY SPRING. I TAKE MY LITTLE BANDS... (JR HIGH) USUALLY TAKE THE BEGINNING BAND TO MAIN, OR HAVE MAIN COME TO HEAR THEM, BUT THEN I TAKE THE OLDER, 7TH 8TH AND HIGH SCHOOL

ERS, AND ITS FUN FOR THEM AND FOR THE OTHER SCHOOLS TO HAVE THAT VISITATION.

W.F.: I DON'T THINK THEY'D BEEN DOING THAT BEFORE I STARTED.

A.S.: WELL, MAYBE YOU STARTED A TRADITION.

W.F.: WHEN I WAS AT THE BASE, JENNY CRUMBLY - STEVENS, SHE WAS TEACHING... A GRADE OUT THERE, I DON'T REMEMBER NOW WHICH ONE, SO ONCE IN A WHILE SHE WOULD HELP ME.

A.S.: SHE'S BEEN TEACHING MANY YEARS.

W.F.: SHE HAS. WELL YOU SEE THAT WAS '72, THAT WOULD BE TWENTY YEARS, THAT WAS ABOUT HER FIRST YEAR HERE. SHE'S DONE A LOT.

A.S.: THANKS WANDA.

PIANO SOLO PERFORMED BY MRS. WANBA FIELDS

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