

AL 101

Interviewee: Jeanette Harp

Interviewer: Connie Llewellyn

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L: This is Connie Llewellyn, and I am interviewing Jeanette Harp at her home in Gainesville, Florida. Today is June 2, 1988. This interview is for the Florida State Museum Oral History Project. We are going to be talking about the history of the Junior Welfare League of Gainesville. Good morning, Mrs. Harp.

H: Good morning, Connie.

L: I would like to start this morning by getting some information from you. What is your address here?

H: 2805 NW 83rd Street D-416, and the zip in Gainesville is 32606.

L: Thank you. Now for a little biographical information. Where were you born?

H: In Quincy, Florida, in Gadsden County. It is about eighteen or twenty miles west of Tallahassee.

L: And what year were you born?

H: 1910. It is easier to figure out my age by just subtracting ten from the current year.

L: What were your parents full names?

H: My father's name was Daniel Alexander Shaw. My mother was Mary Elizabeth Love, but she was called Bessie.

L: And were they from Quincy?

H: Yes, and they were both born there and their parents were born there, so we go a long way back. We are real Florida crackers.

L: You are real, true Floridians.

H: Yes.

L: How did you come to live in Gainesville?

H: Well, let me think. My father was in the tobacco business in Quincy. When that went bad, he got Mr. Keeter, who had worked for him for many, many years, to

go in with him in the Ford business [Shaw & Keeter Ford in Gainesville]. My father lived about six years after he moved to Gainesville. He and my mother moved in the latter part of 1924. I said I was not moving, so my mother said, "All right. You can stay here at my sister's until Christmas. Then, when Christmas comes, you can come to Gainesville, and we will live there." We did not have much argument. That was the way things were in those days. That was the law.

L: So you were about fourteen when you came to Gainesville?

H: Yes.

L: When Christmastime came, were you ready to move to Gainesville?

H: It was not a matter of whether I was ready or not--that is what I had to do.

L: That was the end of your extension?

H: Yes. So I went to high school here for a year and a half.

L: At GHS [Gainesville High School]?

H: Yes.

L: Tell me what the earliest thing is that you remember about your life.

H: Well, some of the happiest memories I have were when my father moved us out of Quincy for a while. At one time, he moved us when I was a babe in arms to Hartford, Connecticut, where he introduced the growing of shade tobacco up there on the Connecticut River Valley. They are still growing it up there, but they have quit growing it in Gadsden County. He was the one that started growing tobacco under shade. That was just for the wrappers of cigars. I do not remember that move.

Then he moved us to a little community, a little settlement across the Georgia border near Bainbridge, Georgia. It was called Amsterdam, and we lived there until I was five. I have such happy memories there because I was free and enjoyed being free. I do not really remember very much detail, but I had such a warm feeling about it.

My father talked to the school board about county school taxes, and he told them that if he did not have to pay school taxes, he would see that he would pay for a school teacher for the white children and a school teacher for the black children. So my two older sisters went to school in a little one-room school house. He

found a college graduate, a lovely lady, to teach the school there, and she lived with one of the families there. There were several families of white people, and she lived with one family and taught school.

I was so anxious to go to school, but they would not let me. Finally, one day, they said I could go to school with the two girls. When I got there, pretty soon I wanted to go home. The teacher said she could walk me back to the style. There was a style over our fence. Do you know what that is?

L: Yes. Tell us anyway.

H: A style is steps that go up to the top of the fence and then down on the other side. They left me there on top of the style. Then I got to thinking, I am scared to go back to school, because there may be a bull out there on the road. And I was scared to go down toward the house because we had a vicious duck that would bite me and chase me; I was scared of "Sonny Boy." I was also scared to stay up on the style because I thought there might be a wasp's nest under it. So I yelled and yelled and yelled for my mother. I do not know if she ever heard me. I do not remember the end of that story, but I was a very spoiled little brat.

L: I guess that was scary.

H: But I liked living out there and the way it was.

L: Well, that is interesting to me that your father made that suggestion to the local government that they hire a teacher for the black children as well as for the white children, because that was in the 1910s.

H: Well, it was up to my father. Yes, that was in the early part of the 1910s.

L: That is an interesting attitude to have had at that time is the point I am making.

H: Yes. They grew tobacco on several farms there, and he was in charge of it. Then they had a packing house. They had the big barns to dry the tobacco in, and then they put the cured tobacco in the packing house. Black ladies sat at tables and sorted them leaf by leaf and packed them in cases. Then they had to be put in a warehouse to cure them or season them. I do not know what you call it. It was quite a labor-intensive kind of thing. They used all kinds of poisons in the warehouse, to be sure, so that no bugs would eat up the tobacco.

One time there was a terrible explosion in the packing house, although I do not remember much about that. But when I became ten years old, that is the age of hero worship, and I was afraid my father was not a hero. So I asked him, "Papa, were you ever a hero?" He had to think a minute, and he said, "Well, one time,

when they had that explosion, I went into the packing house to get some of the drums out so they would not explode any more." And I thought, well, he is a hero.

L: When you did come to Gainesville? You said you just went to high school for a year and a half, and then you finished.

H: Yes.

L: What do you remember about growing up in Gainesville, the time that you were here in school.

H: Well, that is a very brief memory. I enjoyed the friends I made.

L: About what size town was Gainesville when you came?

H: It was, I think, 10,000 population, and the University was 2,500.

L: A good bit smaller than today.

H: Yes, and it was nice. We girls all got in cars and rode up and down University Avenue. The boys out there had no place to go except right down to the Courthouse Square. There was a drug store there, and they sometimes went down there into the drug store or did any shopping downtown. University Avenue was not paved. We rode up and down, and if anybody was hitching a ride, we would give them a ride. Then, if they were hitching a ride back, we would pick them up and give them a ride back. Of course, we knew a lot of them, and they knew a lot of the girls.

When we had these meetings of the Junior Welfare League, I do not even remember where we met to begin with. We might have met at the [Gainesville] Woman's Club, because it was a branch of the Woman's Club at that time, I think.

L: It was sponsored by the Woman's Club.

H: When we would get out of a meeting, we would drive to that drug store, sit outside, and order a Coca-Cola. They were a nickel, and there was curbside service. We would sit in the car and drink our Coca-Colas and rehash the meetings. Lots of other young women had come there, too.

L: It must have been quite the gathering place.

H: Yes, the drug store was the gathering place, inside or out in the parking lot.

L: Well, now, this was in the 1930s, when the Junior Welfare League was being formed.

H: Oh, yes. That was a lot later.

L: This was during the Depression, then.

H: I finished high school in 1926.

L: What did you do when you finished high school?

H: Well, I was sixteen, and my mother thought I was too young to go off where my other two sisters had been. I did not want to go there, anyway, so she sent me to a little Presbyterian college in DeFuniak Springs, [Florida], called Palmer College. It is not in existence now. My mother knew the people who were running it. In fact, the man who was the president was a relative, and we knew some of the other people there. So she felt that in my immaturity I could survive there.

Then after that I did go where the two other girls had been, to Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. I went there haltingly and rebelliously. But I had to do everything they told me those days. It is different from the way my one child is.

L: So were you at Palmer College for one year?

H: One year, and then I went to Agnes Scott for four years. I sometimes suspect other things of my mother. I think probably Agnes Scott would not take me. I know some of my courses were not acceptable, like home economics, which they did not count as an academic course. Maybe they said they did not want anybody that young. I do not know what it was. But I have a feeling that she had applied for me and that they said, "No, she needs more credits." So, I took some courses at Palmer, and they were accepted as high school credits, I guess. All that was beyond me, but looking back on it, I have some real suspicions. So I finished there. It was too hard. I did not care for that academic pursuit.

L: Oh, really. What did you finish in?

H: I think it was English and psychology.

L: How did you like going to school in Atlanta?

H: Well, I loved being in Atlanta, but I hated school work from the beginning to the end. But when I did graduate I wept, because I hated to leave that life and get in

the real world.

L: There is a change.

H: Yes.

L: What did you do when you finished at Agnes Scott?

H: I came to Gainesville and taught school for two years.

L: Where did you teach?

H: The only elementary school in town, which is now called Kirby Smith.

L: Was it called Kirby Smith then?

H: No, it was called Eastside Elementary School.

L: What grade did you teach?

H: I taught the fourth grade.

L: How did you like that?

H: Well, I loved the children. Mrs. Metcalf was the principal. She separated the children into homogenous groupings, and I had the cream of the cream of Gainesville. They are some of the grandmothers in Gainesville now. They were all so eager. Years and years later, Rodney Bishop, who taught there, too, as did Shirley Lazonby, asked me, "Jeanette, do you think you were a good teacher?" Well, I had never thought about that. I told her, "Well, I do not know. let me think." Then I said, "I do not know if I was a good teacher or not, but I know the children enjoyed it."

L: Well, that sounds like a pretty good sign to me.

H: They were just delightful people. They were just adorable. But I did not like the life of a school teacher. In those days, any teacher who smoked or had a drink was fired. That is just to show you what the attitude toward teachers was. We were just servants of the public. We were under a tight reign, and I did not like it. So I decided I would go back to school. I went to Emory. I took a year and got a master's in I guess you would call it clinical pathology or laboratory something, bacteriology, hematology – all that. It was taught with the sophomore medical students. Then I decided I would go to New York and work up there. That was every girl's dream in those days. But I

could not do that. I was told I could not. Here I was, about twenty-two, and I was still controlled. Can you imagine? It is amazing how uncontrolled my daughter was.

L: How did you feel about it at that time? I know you are telling me now that you think it is incredible that you allowed yourself to be controlled, but how did you feel when it was happening?

H: I did not like it, but I just thought I had to obey. Isn't that stupid?

L: Well, it is not fair to judge something in a later period of time something that happened earlier.

H: Well, after Janie, our daughter, had taught here for several years, she decided that she was not going to teach any more. She told her father and me that she was going to drive up to Indianapolis to Mike Mays' wedding. Mike is a relative of ours. Then she was just going to take off and go to San Francisco, going all around up in the northern part of the United States. She was going to visit a boy there that she had met when she was in Geneva – she worked for a while in Switzerland. He was a Czechoslovakian, and he and some of the young people had gotten out of Czechoslovakia when the Russian tanks came in. He had seen his friends run over. Anyway, she wanted to go see Igor. My husband said, "Now, Janie, if you want to go out there with somebody else, you may, but you may not go take that trip alone." And she said, "Daddy, you know I am an adult, and I am going." What a contrast that was – daughter and mother.

L: You are making a good point. About what year was this, just to give us a context?

H: I am trying to think how old she was. She was born in 1947, had finished school, and taught several years, so I would say she was in her mid- to top-twenties. She knew she was an adult. That is what she wanted to do, so she did it. She really got to liking country music, because that was all she could hear on the radio.

L: During the trip, you mean?

H: Yes.

L: Did she have a good time?

H: She is glad she went. She stopped in Illinois with a relative of ours one night. He persuaded her to buy a tent, so she bought a tent and slept in the tent one night.

L: That is really adventurous.

H: She said she really was glad when she got to Igor's place because she had not talked in so long. She said all she could do was talk a blue streak, and she just talked and talked and talked.

L: That is a very interesting comment, though, on women and the times in which they lived. I think that is valuable. You were telling me that you sent yourself back to school to get this master's, and then you wanted to go to New York. But you did not go; they would not allow you to go.

H: My father was not living anymore. He had died quite a bit before that. He died when I was a junior in college.

L: What did you do instead of going to New York?

H: I got a job at the University in the Animal Husbandry Department.

L: So you stayed in Gainesville?

H: Yes. My mother lived alone, and she had spent a year back in Quincy while I was in Atlanta at Emory. She looked so much worse at the end of that year than she had when she left Gainesville, and I could not go off and leave her right away. I felt that way. Then I think she blossomed out some more. I think she liked Gainesville and did not really want to go back to Quincy. Anyway, that is the answer I guess to what you asked. I stayed in Gainesville. After I worked at the University for a while, I quit that and worked at the Ford garage in the bookkeeping department. I did not grease the cars. But I gave up all my higher education and learned to do a little bookkeeping.

L: How did you like that?

H: Well, I did not like the hours I worked. That is what I will get to about the League. I worked six days a week and sometimes on Saturday night until 10:00. It was terrible. I was not very active in the League, you can imagine.

L: You had a time problem.

H: This is how that problem ended. There was a couple here in Gainesville named Lester and Evelyn Hale [Lester Hale was vice-president for student affairs at the University of Florida], and she was from Louisiana. Well, my husband is also from Louisiana. He was stationed toward the end of the war in Jacksonville and came over to see Evelyn and Les Hale. They introduced us, and then we got

married.

L: So this was in the 1940s then?

H: Yes, we got married in 1946. I was thirty-six and he was thirty-eight. We were married just after my thirty-sixth birthday, so I was pretty young. [laughter]

L: Yes, and you were certainly pretty. I know that because you still are. I want to talk a few more minutes about the 1930s, and then we will start talking about the formation of the Junior Welfare League. You were living in Gainesville most of the time during the 1930s, during the Depression, right?

H: The Depression nationwide was 1929, but I think with our family it was before that. There was some terrible plant diseases that attack the tobacco, and the bottom dropped out.

L: For farmers in general.

H: Yes, in that place. So that is why my father got out of tobacco farming and went into the Ford business. He looked around, and he got Mr. Keeter to go in with him to do a lot of the work. He more or less backed it up. But Mr. Keeter was certainly a wonderful friend to him, and to my mother and us children after my father died. From then on he never quit doing for us.

L: How did the automobile business do during the Depression? Were people able to buy cars?

H: I guess so. I was not in on that too much. We survived.

L: They must have bought cars.

H: Well, we certainly did not have anything when we came here. Mama had always charged everything everywhere she went. He told her, "Do not get anything you do not have the cash to pay for." So we were really scrimping; we had a rough time.

L: A whole lot of people did.

H: Yes. He asked Mr. Keeter to please see that his girls got an education. He had Parkinson's disease, so he knew ahead of time that he would not be there long. When he died in 1930, I guess the girls had already finished college.

L: I was just wondering what your impressions of living in Gainesville in the 1930s during the Depression were. Were there soup or bread lines?

H: Oh, no, I do not think there was anything like that. In fact, I guess the most I felt it personally was when I was in college, because I got so little spending money. It was not nearly enough, and I really resented it. I had very little appreciation for my parents. It is amazing.

I was going to a dance, and I just had to have a new dress. A friend of mine who was in school there said that she lived in Atlanta – her father taught at [Georgia] Tech. She said, "Jeanette, I have a charge account at such-and-such, a little shop. They have really attractive clothes, and they are not terrible expensive. Go in there and get what you want, and charge it to me." I was so thrilled! I went in there and found this great little black evening dress that was fourteen dollars, and I charged it to Mary Breedlove. I wrote my parents and asked them to please send me fourteen dollars to pay her for something I had charged to her. I got a blistering letter from my father saying, "Do not ever charge anything else to anybody as long as you live." Well, he enclosed the money, and I had the dress.

L: Were you back in Gainesville by the mid-1930s?

H: Yes, I came back and taught school in the school year that ended in 1932 and in 1933. Then I went back to school up in Atlanta, and I finished there in 1934. After that, I came back here in 1935 to the University.

L: And this is when the Junior Welfare League was being formed in Gainesville. I believe you were a charter member.

H: Yes.

L: Tell me a little bit about that group and how you all were formed.

H: I have no idea how we were formed. I think that Aunt Carrie and her nieces just started telling different ones about forming it and seeing if they wanted to be a part of it. They told some of us, and I was included.

L: I see. Now, Aunt Carrie was Mrs. McCollum. Who were her nieces?

H: They were Kitty Kincaid and Louise Kincaid. Kitty is now Mrs. James Feiber. They have another sister, but she was not living in Gainesville. Her name is Mary Fuller. I do not really know how I got in, but the group of friends all got together, more or less. It was a little town and just a bunch of people. We were going to start doing welfare work, so we named ourselves the Junior Welfare League. I guess the first thing we started on was the lunchroom.

- L: I believe that is right, the lunchroom project at Eastside.
- H: You can find out from people who were really involved in it. I was not; I did not do any of these jobs. We had to put in a certain number of hours, and we were assigned what we could count as hours and what we could not. I was not able to participate in the lunchroom project. We had a well-baby clinic later, and then there was a dental clinic. All these dances and silver teas and things that we put on, which you can read about in the scrap book, were to raise money. We did not solicit money from people, but we invited them to come and pay.
- L: Were those very successful events?
- H: I think so.
- L: And you reached out to the whole community, not just your club?
- H: Oh, yes. We would sell tickets. Anybody that would like to come could come to any of those things.
- L: I am curious how the silver tea got the name "silver tea."
- H: They would put silver in a little bowl.
- L: Oh, silver money.
- H: Yes.
- L: That is cute.
- H: That was the way they did it. In those days we did not give folding money because that was too much. This was before inflation.
- L: Right. So you had a lot of money-making projects?
- H: We had to, because we had to buy all the groceries. The girls themselves cooked the food. I think they eventually did get some paid help. But to begin with, they did it all. The only thing I remember doing was going out with Rodney Bishop and interviewing the mothers of families, like social service workers. We interviewed them to assess that they were eligible for a free meal.
- L: Tell me a little bit about that. I have not yet talked to anybody who knew about that part of it. How did you structure the interview, and what were you looking for?

H: We were so flat footed, and we did not know what we were doing there, especially me. But I tagged along with Rodney; she did most of the interviewing. I was amazed that we could go in and ask people such personal questions in order to find out if they were working or were gainfully employed. All of this is quite personal, and I found it most uncomfortable.

L: How did the people seem to feel about it that you were interviewing?

H: They did not seem to mind. They wanted their child to get some food. It worked out all right.

L: What other sorts of questions did you ask?

H: I think it was mostly about their financial situation.

L: So that is how you determined who qualified for the program.

H: That was all, as far as I know. Some of this is just my imagination. You see, at this point in my life, a lot of my brain cells have deteriorated.

L: Now, Mrs. Harp, you know I do not buy that.

H: Well, I am glad, but it is the truth.

L: With your work schedule, how did you make your hours that were required?

H: Well, once in a while I would have to get a typewriter and do some typing for the League at home. I was not a typist, and I hated to sit down and do more desk work after doing it all day. I was not really into it because I could not be into it too much.

After I had been in it for two or three years, they needed a president. I know they asked quite a few different people to be president, although not one of them told me that she had been asked to be president and she turned it down. Well, they finally got to the bottom of the barrel, and I said, "Sure, I would be glad." I was glad because that made all my hours. So I was the president for one year. Then I resigned, and that was pretty drastic.

L: At that time it was a big step to take.

H: It was too bad, but I just simply could not keep it up.

L: Well, there was a time commitment involved, it sounds like.

H: Oh, yes. You had to work and produce, and I was not productive enough and

could not make my hours. I have this number in my head that we had to produce ninety hours, but that was for the year. It does not sound like so much now. But you do not run it that way now, do you?

L: That sounds about right. I know they have changed it from a certain number of hours. Now you work on a project basis. You select a placement and do whatever that project entails. Some jobs are heavier hour-wise than others.

H: You know, I am amazed at the young women today who are in the League and working and doing all these things. So many of them have careers and families. I think it is amazing how they spread themselves around in so many areas. I do not see how it is possible.

L: I guess they have a lot of energy. You are right. You were a career woman and taking on this responsibility for volunteerism, just like women today who are career women and have children to be responsible for. It is a big step.

H: Well, I did not have anything to do. I lived with my mother, and I did not take any responsibility at home whatsoever. The only thing I did really for her was I was her chauffeur. She never learned to drive, so when I had the time I would take her to get things she needed and do things that she wanted to do.

The year before I was president, there was a lot of tension between professionals and non-professionals. I was categorized as a professional. Anybody that worked was a professional. The ones that were married and did not work could make all the hours. They could not stand it that professionals did not do as much work as they did, and we could not stand it that we had to work so much and do the same. Before I was president there was some squabbling. I guess in any group of human beings there is some squabbling. Somebody said she did not think some of us worked enough. That is one reason I decided I was not going to work any more than I was doing, and that I just better call it quits.

So often at our general meetings there was so much discussion on what was brought up and so much pro and con going on that I heard some criticism about it: "Why do they not get things a little better organized and not have so much yakking." So when I got to be president, I decided at the board meeting that we would bring up whatever needed to be brought up among the board members, and then we would make a recommendation to the members, open it up for discussion, and vote. Somebody came to me later and said, "Do you know what people are saying about you? They are saying you railroad everything through."

L: You cannot please everybody, can you?

H: I said, "Well, I meant to do it." That is the opposite of what was fussed about last year, so they fussed about this this year.

L: What did you do in your year as president? What were your duties?

H: Nothing. I have not ever done anything. I do not know why you keep saying you are going to get some real meat out of this. I cannot remember if there was anything; my memory has totally evaporated. All I can tell you about is that we changed the constitution almost every meeting. I think one of our businesses was to amend the constitution. We would bring up whatever needed to be brought up. I cannot remember any of our problems.

L: So you were really the organizational person for the group.

H: That is how I played it, I guess.

L: Since it was still a very young group--you must have been the third president, so it was just three years old – there was still a lot of ironing out to do.

H: We had not found our way, probably. And we had to change back and forth. I really do not recall anything about what our goals were or what our problems were at that time.

L: You were talking about the fact that there were professionals and homemakers in the group. How would you say the split was? Was it half and half?

H: I guess they were mostly homemakers.

L: What size group are we talking about here?

H: I think it started off at about thirty-five members. How many are there now?

L: I would say about 150, but that is a gross estimate.

H: This is a little town. We knew everybody, and these were our friends. I am sure that in this group now you probably do not know everybody.

L: Well, I am no longer an active member, but even four years ago when I was, you are right, you really do not know everybody. If you make an effort, you can recognize a face and name together.

H: This was sort of a fun thing. We enjoyed it, and we enjoyed seeing each other. I am sure that the ones who were free to work at the lunchroom worked hard. The ones that helped start clinics, I am sure, put in a lot of hours with that, too.

It was a real wonderful job. I cannot imagine doing such a thing. The government took over these things eventually.

L: But it was your group that identified the need and set up a program to fill the need.

H: I have a feeling that Mrs. McCullum – everybody called her Aunt Carrie – was our inspiration, our guide, probably. She was a wonderful organizer, and she was a wonderful club woman for many, many years. I think she was a state president and something else and something else. Then she joined the National Catholic Women and eventually became the national president of the National Catholic Women's organization.

L: I have read several newspaper coverages of her career.

H: So I would imagine she had a lot to do with our training and our projects and the creativity part of it. We were just flapping along behind her probably, except there were some people that knew better what they were doing than I did.

L: I am sure, as you said, that some people had more time to put into it than the people who were working. What other sorts of jobs did they give the women who worked? You told me about taking typing home. I can understand things like the lunchroom, which has to be done in the middle of the day, that somebody who has a daytime job could not do that. Was the Welfare League fairly flexible in what they needed and the times they needed so that people could make their hours? Did everybody that worked take home typing?

H: No. I see what you mean. All these parties that were fund raisers took a lot of organizing and a lot of work, like decorating and selling tickets. When we put on Follies – Rolling Rhythm and themes like that – of course, we had to get the programs. Then I think we sold ads in those things. The members who worked could do all this kind of stuff in their spare time, and they could go to these parties. There were dollar dances. That brings it back to me all these dances and those kinds of things that we had that do not go on any more. We had tea dances, Halloween dances, and all this stuff, and that took a lot of work. People who were working could work at that at night.

L: I see. That is exactly what I was asking for. Tell me a little bit about that first Follies. You said it was called Rolling Rhythm?

H: Yes. Well, I cannot tell you too much about that. I was in it.

L: What did you do?

H: I was the comic relief.

L: Tell me about that.

H: Well, between acts they always have to have something between acts when the curtain is down. Bill Thompson was my partner. I think he was at the University. I really do not remember much about it, but we were sort of like dumbos. I think we carried a rope – he held part of it and I held part of it – and we dragged it. We just walked like the Three Stooges, the stupid ones, or like the three stupid people in the Newhart TV show [Larry, his brother Daryl, and his other brother Daryl]. We just walked across the stage very slowly with a stupid look on our faces, and it just broke the audience up.

L: I bet it did.

H: From then on I was sort of famous around town. If anybody saw me, they would just laugh. I was typecast right away as being a stupid idiot, and everybody died laughing when then saw me. That was my debut on the stage. Did you have professionals come to train the dancers?

L: Yes, they do. Cargill, a company out of New York, comes down.

H: Yes, that is the way they did it. I do not know the name of it, but the man would come down and interview us ahead of time. Then he would tell us how many dancers to get and how many men to do this. They were the directors.

L: Was that the only Follies you appeared in?

H: Yes.

L: You quit after the first one?

H: Maybe we did not have another one, or maybe that was the only one we had while I was still a member.

L: Was it a one-performance show, or did you do it two nights?

H: One.

L: I bet the club made a lot of money that way.

H: Yes, and I think they still do.

L: I think they do.

H: This is just my own reaction to home-talent things. The best thing about it is in a small town where you know the people, this is the way it was. Now, with the town as big as it is and the membership as big as it is, I do not particularly enjoy these shows because I do not know the people in it. I think half the fun is knowing the ones in it.

L: That is true. That is a big part of it. Tell me a little about the salvage shop. Was there a salvage shop early on?

H: Yes. I think we called it the Salvage Shop. What do they call it now?

L: They call it the Thrift Shop.

H: Then we called it the Salvage Shop. I think they were two different things. Yes, we had that, but I really cannot tell you much about that. I think it was on Union Street, what is now SW 1st Street, just off of Main Street going west.

L: How far away from Main Street is it?

H: The next block. I think it was right down there.

L: Is that close to where Rice's Hardware is?

H: Yes. But I really do not remember exactly where it was. I did read that Miss Betty Miller let us have the building free. She owned it.

L: How often was it open?

H: Just on Saturdays, I think.

L: So some of the women who worked during the week could maybe work there, too.

H: Yes. We did not have any paid person working there at all.

L: How did you accumulate the goods to sell in the salvage shop?

H: Just asked. The girls brought some themselves, and then the word spread that, like the Salvation Army or Goodwill, we would like to have used clothing. I think that was all to begin with – just clothing. Are there other articles today?

L: They also have household items, like linens and kitchen goods, but the largest part of it is still clothing. Children's clothing is a really big part of it.

H: My church has what they call a clothes closet, and they have a big supply of all

kinds of clothes. It is so well organized. It is amazing. I guess the League's is, too.

L: They try to keep it organized. It is large. Things like your church's clothes closet and the League's Thrift Shop serve an important need in the community. I guess they use it for people who have fires or bad luck of one sort or another.

H: I do not know if there is any qualification.

L: Tell me, when you all formed the League, was it an open-ended membership, or was it until you were a certain age or for a certain number of years?

H: I think you could not be in it after you were thirty-five. Also, your life in it I think was seven years. I am not sure about that.

L: So you served for seven active years or until you were thirty-five.

H: I think that is the way it was. Maybe if you were over thirty-five you are not eligible for membership to begin with.

L: So was it mostly younger women who belonged?

H: Yes.

L: What would you say was the average age?

H: Well, we had members in their early twenties, in their middle twenties, and then on into their early thirties. Then it would peel off.

L: From the questions you have asked me that I have answered, it certainly sounds like the group is very different today from the way it started out. I think I have asked you all the questions I have. Do you have anything you would like to add?

H: No. I have gone way overboard on a lot of things that were not relevant.

L: I appreciate your talking with me. I have enjoyed it. Thank you very much.

H: Well, it was not as painful as I thought it would be.

[End of the interview]