

Narrator: Powell Graham
Interviewer: Micheal Minthorn
August 9, 2005

I: It's August ninth and I am talking with Powell Graham, at the Grande Ronde Retirement residence. All right. Okay, first thing I am going to ask is for you to say your full name for us.

PG: Well I don't use the Sirius, but it's Sirius Powell Graham.

I: And when were you born and where were you born?

PG: Milton Freewater. In the Freewater portion, it wasn't combined then. April 25th, 1919.

I: And uh, did your parents, your parents had been living in North Freewater for quite a while?

PG: Yes they were farmers. I was the fourth of four boys.

I: Uh huh, and when did you move to La Grande

PG: I came to college there in 1937 and played football.

I: Can you talk a little bit about your experiences at, now that was a normal school at that time?

PG: It was a normal school.

I: Can you talk about some of your experiences of going to Eastern Normal school right? Eastern Oregon Normal...

PG: Eastern Oregon Normal School.

I: Can you talk about some of your experiences that you remember?

PG: Well uh, I got a letter from Bob Quinn before the starting of football and all he said was you did alright in football last year and if you could come over and make the team I'll give you, pay your tuition and find you work, room, uh that you could work your room out and uh a job for fifteen dollars a month. This was in 1937.

I: Had he seen you play football?

PG: No he hadn't seen me play.

I: Oh so how did he know he wanted you?

PG: He read the report.

I: Oh. Uh huh, and what position were you playing on the team?

PG: The first year I substituted for every position in the backfield, and the second year I was quarterback.

I: Can you describe what it was like to be a brand new person at the Normal School as a football player?

PG: Well there wasn't many students then, 187 I think. And uh so it was no big change from high school except the football players were bigger.

I: Uh huh, well when you first got to Eastern where did you stay?

PG: I stayed at a Miss Millne, had a tree nursery at 11th and J.

I: Is that M-I-L-L-E-N Millen?

PG: N-E.

I: Oh okay. And what was the tree nursery.

PG: They raised trees to sell. All kinds of 'em, and coming from a fruit farm, that was right down my alley.

I: What were your jobs there?

PG: To um, prune the and uh to hoe all the weeds out.

I: Do you remember what kinds of trees they were?

PG: I don't remember. All kinds of decorative trees.

I: And did they sell the trees in the valley?

PG: We sold them to homes, for decoration in front of the home.

I: Uh huh, and how did they transport the trees to the home?

PG: They, the buyer came there and bought the tree and transported it himself.

I: And so you got a job at the place you were living.

PG: Yes.

I: So what was your schedule for work there, did you get up early in the morning?

PG: Anytime I could.

I: Uh huh, and who got you that job?

PG: Bob Quinn, the coach.

I: So he found you a job and a place to stay. So describe some of your early experiences at the school, what kinds of classes were you taking?

PG: I was taking mainly science and German, and . . . well just science and German, and World Lit. It was required to take some courses.

I: Do you remember anything about those courses?

PG: Oh, only the last year I was in plays I uh, spent most of the time spring term . . . going over Eastern Oregon and Southern Oregon to recruit students . . . in plays.

I: Oh, so you acted in plays?

PG: Yeah.

I: So you were a football player and an actor.

PG: [laughs]

I: Do you remember some of the plays that you were in?

PG: No I don't.

I: What was it, uh . . . can you describe the experiences of being a football player at that time, what kind of training regimen you had?

PG: Well, . . . Bob Quinn always had us run a hundred yards after we had finished practice and . . . it was tough. I weighed 145 pounds drippin' wet and with all the big kids. Big men, really. They were all a couple years older than I was, three or four.

I: What do you remember about the games? Do you remember and particular games that you . . .

PG: Well the first game I happened to be safety on defense, and we had a poor team as our opponent, and I ran back four punts for a touchdown. I remember that in the paper the next Monday morning. Graham Thrills Crowd.

I: What did you wear?

PG: Wear?

I: I know it was probably different from what football players wear now.

PG: Oh, the helmets were just leather helmets, just a cap really, made out of leather. And other than that we had the same attire they use now.

I: Uh huh. Do you remember what kind of coach was Coach Quinn?

PG: Very good.

I: Why do you say that?

PG: Well, I would have not got to go to college if it hadn't been for him. And he was a good coach.

I: So what was his coaching style like, was he uh . . .

PG: Anything to win the game.

I: Oh. [laughs]

PG: You had ... back then we played double wing, single wing, T formation, we had plays for all of them.

I: And how would you learn that, how would he teach you that, those plays?

PG: Just at practice.

I: Where did you practice?

PG: Up at the college.

I: Uh huh, did you have a specific field that was used for football or is it the same field that they . . . ?

PG: We played all our games on the high school field. And then we had a practice field about where it is now.

I: What else do you remember about being a football player at that time?

PG: Very little. [laughs]

I: [laughs] Do you remember any of the players that you played with?

PG: Bill Thomas, Ron Wok, . . . Doug Drager, Virgil Horn, . . . Mel Olson, and uh . . . from here there was Bill Bohnenkamp. That's about all.

I: And this was the 1937 team?

PG: 37 and 8, uh 38.

I: So what were the crowds like, I mean what kinds of people, would the whole town come or, did you have good crowds?

PG: Mostly we had good crowds.

I: Did you travel?

PG: Oh, yes. We went to Boise State, uh . . . Walla Walla to Whitman and uh Nampa Caldwell, to Northwest Nazarene. And . . . that's about all.

I: Do you remember any specific games that were unusual or exciting for you, or horrible?

PG: I remember one time I was safety in the back half under a punt, backed away from it instead of catching it, and . . . when the play was over, the whistle blew and I called uh, Quinn called me out of the game and I sat on the bench the whole rest of the game.

I: Uh huh, So were the referees from this area or did they bring referees in?

PG: No they brought 'em in.

I: Could you . . . um . . . tell me the difference between games that were played then and now?

PG: Well then if you went out in a quarter, you couldn't come back in. And they . . . had not free substitution, only one player could go in at a time, and he couldn't go to huddle give a play.

I: How many . . . I'm sorry go ahead.

PG: That's the main difference.

I: How many people were on your team?

PG: Eleven. We carried eleven players at once, same as now only we carried 35 on the team, I think.

I: Uh huh. So if someone got hurt there were people to come in.

PG: Yeah, replacements.

I: Do you remember anyone getting hurt?

PG: Not severely . . . no.

I: That's good. Anything else that you remember about playing football? What did you like about it?

PG: It gave me a means to go to college . . . I had a job for 25 cents an hour over the winter if I didn't go to college.

I: And what would that have been?

PG: In a fruit warehouse.

I: Oh, is that where you worked before you came to college?

PG: No, I worked on the farm.

I: Oh, uh huh. So it gave you a means to come and uh . . .

PG: Yes, in a depression.

I: Oh, uh huh. Can you describe what it was like, what La Grande was like and looked like when you first got . . . ?

PG: Very similar to now . . . there was La Grande Hotel where the new building is on Fourth and Adams, across from the . . . bank. There was Safeway .. err umm . . . La Grande Hotel, and it was a beautiful hotel but it had been ruined so they tore it down and put a Safeway store in.

I: Uh huh. Okay going back to your uh, to the football days, because this is very historical information for if a child wanted to figure find out what football was like, you know, what it was football, uh, how football was different than it is now.

PG: Mainly the substitution rule.

I: Mmhmm, do you think it was that you played harder or that it was more difficult?

PG: Oh yes, individual played harder because he had to pay . . . play defense and offence. He had to know the plays and defense and all that.

I: What were the locker room discussions with Mr. Quinn, was it Dr. Quinn or Mr. Quinn that coached?

PG: Yes.

I: Was he a tough coach, was he a yell scream or was he a quieter coach?

PG: Very quiet. He didn't yell and scream at you at all. No, he was a good coach.

I: So what happened, okay so you went to college in '37 and '38,

PG: Yes.

I: Then what happened.

PG: I went to pharmacy school, private pharmacy school in Portland. And the last year the state system bought it out so I graduated from Oregon State School of Pharmacy.

I: So the two years that you spent at Eastern gave you the credits that you needed to transfer?

PG: Yes.

I: Anything else you want to talk about in terms of going to the Eastern Normal School that you remember?

PG: No, it was then the only building was Ackerman School, uh the main um administration building, and the gym was all that was at Eastern Oregon.

I: What kind of, ah, what kind of equipment did you work out, you know I am assuming that you had gym facilities to uh strengthen . . .

PG: Enough exercise was the way.

I: Oh uh huh. What did you use to build up your strength on?

PG: Practice, practice, practice.

I: So you didn't have weights to lift or any of that?

PG: No.

I: So what kind of exercises did he have you do to build up your strength?

PG: Just practice football. No exercises. Oh we'd do pushups and stuff that didn't require equipment.

I: Jump rope?

PG: Huh?

I: Did you jump rope?

PG: No. Nope.

I: How long was your practice?

PG: As I remember about an hour and a half a day.

I: Did you have spring football also?

PG: No. Nope.

I: So it was just in the Fall.

PG: Yes.

I: And when did you start, did you start before school and . . .

PG: About two weeks before school.

I: Did you have to keep a certain grade point average?

PG: No.

I: [laughs] So you just played no matter what.

PG: Uh huh.

I: What about weather?

PG: Well, I played in snow and ice, rain . . . but the snow would go in it and melt it in the daytime. It was the worst.

I: Why was that?

PG: It formed ice that got colder and sliding on ice is not fun.

I: Uh huh. Yeah. So what was the toughest team you ever played?

PG: I don't know. Probably Boise State . . .

I: Did you have cheerleaders?

PG: No.

I: No cheerleaders?

PG: No.

I: Huh.

PG: I don't remember any.

I: Okay, so you went to Portland. When did you come back to La Grande?

PG: I came back on graduation from Oregon State and I planned on working in Walla Walla. I had a job there, but this was . . . my wife and uh, we came back here and Mr. Robert's Leisman drug needed a pharmacist so I went right to work.

I: Okay, what was the name of the drug store?

PG: Leisman.

I: Leisman. Is that L-E-E-S-M-A-N?

PG: L-E-I, I don't really, I don't know what . . . S-M-A-N.

I: Uh huh, and what was the name of your wife?

PG: At that time it was Margalee Purdy.

I: And did you meet her when you were at college?

PG: No, I met at a Christian Church Summer School.

I: Was this during the time you were going to college?

PG: No, high school.

I: Oh you met in Milton Freewater then.

PG: No, [laughs] It was at Wallowa Lake.

I: Oh, uh huh. And her name was Purdy, P-E-R-D-Y?

PG: P-U-R-D-Y.

I: Uh huh. And so were you married when you went to Portland?

PG: No we were married uh, the last year of college.

I: So in 38.

PG: 9. 40. 40.

I: Uh huh, and where did she live? La Grande?

PG: La Grande?

I: And what, was she uh, were her parents from La Grande as well?

PG: Yes, they had lived in La Grande a long time and run Purdy's Dutch Shop. Which was an ice cream, um . . . plant really.

I: Where was that?

PG: It was . . . on the triangle across from Ten Depot.

I: And it was called Purdy's Dutch Shop?

PG: Yes.

I: Huh. And what was inside Purdy's Dutch Shop?

PG: It was a windmill construction and it had a big propeller or a windmill up above, and it was basically an ice cream plant and that's all you can say.

I: Uh huh. Were there stools for people to come and sit, or did you just buy your ice cream inside?

PG: They might have had one or two tables but you bought the ice cream and he made specialties for weddings and anniversaries and such.

I: So do you remember going in there when you were in college to get ice cream?

PG: Oh yes.

I: And would you get cones or would buy it by the box?

PG: You'd get cones and they're usually dipped in caramel or chocolate.

I: So vanilla was the only flavor or were there other flavors?

PG: Oh no, they had lots of flavors.

I: What was your favorite?

PG: Huckleberry.

I: Where did they get their cream and milk?

PG: Out of Spokane I think.

I: And did they make the ice cream there in the store?

PG: They made it right there.

I: Oh. Do you know how they made it?

PG: Well, [laughs] with a freezer. Uh, and uh, two and a half gallon freezer . . . he'd make some days a hundred gallons of ice cream. There was no other major ice cream in La Grande.

I: Would he sell it all over the place or was it mostly in La Grande.

PG: No, only in La Grande.

I: And how did you meet? How did you meet your wife?

PG: At a church school

I: At a church school at Wallowa lake.

PG: Yes.

I: Uh huh. Okay so you came back from uh, Portland, and you went to the drug store and you were a Pharmacist?

PG: Yes.

I: Can you talk about, a little bit about your first days as a pharmacist in La Grande?

PG: . . . I don't remember the first day to clearly . . . We had doctors and used ointments and powders and pills that were not already made up and you had to make them.

I: Oh.

PG: Dr. Richardson.

I: Richardson?

PG: Yes.

I: So you had to make up the, uh, did you order the supplies and then . . .

PG: (Inaudible) did.

I: Huh, did other doctors do that or was he the only one?

PG: Oh, practically all prescriptions you had to make.

I: So describe the process you would use to make, um, something for an illness. I mean, what kinds of things would you put together to make.

PG: Well it depended on the illness.

I: Uh huh, can you give me an example?

PG: Well, uh, Doctor Gregory always had a tonic that he made uh, which was, had four ingredients. (Inaudible), and he would change the excipient--the QS part, for quantity sufficient--uh, the bulk of it, and he use some pepsin or, I can't think of the other one . . . not right now. But it was much different than now.

I: Uh huh . . . Where did you order your supplies?

PG: Out of Portland.

I: So would you know what to order, or would the doctors order it, or would you have ...

PG: You have to have the supplies on hand. You'd order 'em. Out of Portland.

I: So the doctors would write a prescription, and you would put together whatever.

PG: Just like now, only you made the prescription.

I: That must have been, you would have had to know quite a bit about what you were doing. Much more so than just putting pills in bottles.

PG: Uh huh.

I: Uh huh. What other duties did you have as a pharmacist?

PG: Oh, running the store uh . . . Mister Roberts, I only worked there about six months and he wanted to sell me half interest, and so I bought, put myself on the dotted line for uh, half interest. And then I was, I had to go to World War II right after that.

I: Oh, so you only worked for six months before you had to leave.

PG: Yes. But in the agreement my wife had to stay and work for me to . . .

I: . . . Work in the drugstore.

PG: Yes.

I: What did she do in the drugstore?

PG: She sold and kept books and everything.

I: Where was the drugstore located?

PG: Where the Hallmark store is now.

I: Oh, McGlassens now. Uh huh. And it was called Niesans?

PG: It was called Leismans.

I: Liesans, I'm sorry.

PG: Leismans.

I: Liesmans. Okay.

PG: Until 1947 when I bought it outright. And when I came home from the service, Mr. Roberts said, "I'm tired working, you gotta buy it." So I bought it outright and changed it to Graham's Drug Store.

I: Alright. So how long were you gone?

PG: About two and a half years.

I: So, your wife . . . So was Mr. Roberts the primary pharmacist while you were gone in the war?

PG: Yes. I had to hire a pharmacist, pay him out of my hat. The store.

I: Oh. Who did you hire?

PG: Clay Rinehart, and old time pharmacist.

I: While you were gone did pharmacy change much?

PG: No. Not much. Nothing happened but the war.

I: Yeah, yeah. What were some of the most popular remedies, for say a cold or, at that time?

PG: They really didn't have anything. It was nothing, in fact penicillin had just been invented, and not penicillin, uh, sulfur drugs. Sulferfiandral [?]

I: How were those given to patients, was it in a pill or was it in . . .

PG: In a pill.

I: Uh huh. Were there other things, in the early days before you went to the war, were there things that people wanted for certain kinds of illnesses?

PG: They didn't know any better. They just had tonics and uh, cold preparations but they were just . . . fake ingredients usually.

I: Placebos?

PG: No not placebos. Well tonic one of the tonics had a call. Had wine as an excipient to build up the volume.

I: Huh, wine?

PG: Wine, port wine.

I: Huh. Do you think they worked just as well as today's medicines?

PG: No . . . uh no no . . . but its all we had then . . . then there was one preparation, a tonic that was called beef, iron, and wine.

I: Befirenanwine?

PG: Beef, iron, and wine.

I: Oh beef, iron, and wine. Uh huh. What was that for?

PG: Tonic, just to make you fell better.

I: And it had beef, iron, and wine in it.

PG: Yes.

I: Did it make you feel better.

PG: Yes, [laughs].

I: [laughs]. So it had enough stuff in it to get you going.

PG: Uh huh.

I: Do you remember any of the other tonics that were popular at that time?

PG: Well, hadacall. According to the label it would cure anything. (Inaudible) pills was a laxadine. Uh, I can't remember too many.

I: So you remember the doctors that were.

PG: Oh yes. Doctor Gregory, Doctor Hahn, Doctor Branner, Doctor Ross, Richardson, and that was about all in the early days.

I: Uh huh. What, as a pharmacist, what were the differences between those doctors?

PG: Oh lots of difference. Richardson used nothing but extracts. The people now think these uh, extracts are freak, uh what did I want to say . . . new things, but we used them back then. I had the biggest supply of extracts in Eastern Oregon.

I: What about the other doctors, did they have favorites as well?

PG: No. They mostly made out the prescription to fit the need.

I: Were there any epidemics that went through La Grande that you were having to fill prescriptions for?

PG: . . . Just flu . . . and we gave polio shots to the public when they were made available.

I: So people would just line up and come into the store?

PG: Usually had a clinic on Sunday or Saturday, at one of the schools and people would come there and line up.

I: And you would provide the penicillin, or whatever you were giving them.

PG: Well, it was handled all by a committee.

I: Really, what do you mean?

PG: I don't know how to describe it. The supply was always there when a doctor nurse and I would go out.

I: So a committee would order it?

PG: Somebody would. I don't know who. Polio Association.

I: Oh, they would like, set it out and you helped.

PG: Yeah.

I: Did you administer it or were you just getting the medication ready?

PG: We administered it. The first time was on a little cracker.

I: Oh really.

PG: We put a dose on a cracker and some uh, cracker doesn't seem right. Put it on a something, like that.

I: Uh huh. And that was the polio vaccine?

PG: Yes.

I: And when was that, do you know?

PG: No I don't.

I: When you came back from the war and you changed the name of the, of the drug center, how did you change the drug center from what it was before?

PG: Just changed it.

I: Did it have basically the same things? Did you add more to it?

PG: Yes. I added a lot of stuff over the years. A lot of lines, specialty lines, Hallmark cards. I remodeled it in 19 . . . 60.

I: Is that when you brought the Hallmark cards and things like that?

PG: No I had them before.

I: What made you decide to bring in Hallmark cards along with the pharmacy.

PG: It was available and they uh . . . brought in the racks . . . boy it's getting hot in here.

I: Lets stop for a second . . .

I: Okay we were talking about um, the differences that you were making to the drugstore when you came back from the war.

PG: I completely remodeled in 1960 and uh, we had such lines as Dorothy Gray, you're probably not familiar with it. A complete line of cosmetics. And from the wave school(??)

I: Did your wife, was your wife still working at the drugstore with you?

PG: Yes. She worked all the time.

I: Did she order the . . .

PG: No I ordered it.

I: Uh huh. Uh huh. So you decided what you thought people needed?

PG: Yup. With the help of the salesmen.

I: So what made you decide to order makeup and hair supplies?

PG: Just demand.

I: So you could get a lot of different things at your store.

PG: Yes.

I: What other kinds of things did you have besides the cards and things, the cosmetics.

PG: We had um, cameras, I had the biggest camera department in Eastern Oregon. I sold 16mm sound projectors to the schools, and uh everything. And cameras. It sure changed.

I: So through the '50s it changed quite a bit.

PG: No, really since I was out. Digital cameras.

I: Oh yeah. Yeah . . . Yeah it's quite a bit different now isn't it, it doesn't have as much variety right now.

PG: Oh yeah.

I: So what was your wife's job in the pharmacy. What was her job?

PG: Anything and everything.

I: [laughs] including what?

PG: Including selling, and uh bookwork. She did mostly bookwork.

I: Did you sell the cameras as well as do the pharmacy?

PG: Yes.

I: So you did also employ other people in the store?

PG: Oh yes, I had a fountain and I had four girls on the fountain.

I: This was a soda fountain?

PG: Yes.

I: Oh my gosh. And what did you sell in the soda fountain?

PG: Anything. Ice cream, we had lunches, sandwiches. We didn't cook a thing there, except for hot beef sandwich, which was a particular choice of most everyone.

I: How would you prepare a hot beef sandwich?

PG: I don't know. The girls did it.

I: Uh huh. And did they have stools to sit on?

PG: We had 14 stools, and two booths.

I: So you hired young women to sell the ice cream and make the sandwiches.

PG: Uh huh. Sodas, banana splits, milkshakes.

I: What was the most popular thing besides the hot beef sandwiches?

PG: I don't know. I paid very little attention to them.

I: When did you put the fountain in? Or was it already in?

PG: It was already in.

I: Oh, okay so before you left for the war the fountain was already part of the drug store?

PG: Yes.

I: So you had a whole lot of different kinds of things going on.

PG: Oh yes. Very busy store.

I: Yeah. Now I have heard that your store was a place that people went to talk about things.

PG: It was, at the fountain.

I: What kinds of things did people, were people talking about?

PG: I don't know, I was busy in the store.

I: Uh huh, I heard it was a place where just everything was talked about. People would come . . .

PG: I opened up an hour late just for men to come in to bids.

I: What were they (inaudible) about?

PG: Everything.

I: Like, such as?

PG: The football scores, or the basketball, and basketball season. Coach Archiedons Ward who was the football coach after Bob Quinn, used to come down all the time. Ron Walk from the principle of the high school used to come.

I: What time would they be coming in, what time would you open?

PG: 8:00-9:00.

I: Uh huh. And this was just kind of a men's social gathering?

PG: Yes.

I: Uh huh. No women?

PG: Very seldom.

I: Uh huh. This is men's hour huh?

PG: Yep.

I: Uh huh. Did they talk about politics?

PG: Very seldom.

I: So they talked about things that were happening in the town.

PG: Yes.

I: Did you get involved in the discussions, or were you too busy?

PG: Very seldom.

I: [laughs]. Uh huh. It sounds like it was a place to be, the town hub kind of thing.

PG: It was, but the fountain was busy all day.

I: Did you offer specials?

PG: Very seldom.

I: So did you have certain waves of people, did kids come in after school and get sodas and . . .

PG: Yes, we had . . . the men in the morning and then the women would meet there to go and shop or something else. And uh, then . . . we had a big news crowd, and at last 1:30 the students would come in . . .

I: And what time did you close?

PG: We closed at 8:00.

I: So from eight in the morning to eight in the evening.

PG: Yes.

I: That's a long day.

PG: Yes it is.

I: How did you survive it?

PG: I don't know [laughs].

I: [laughs]. How did pharmacy change as you went from the '40s and '50s into the '60s and '70s?

PG: Well the '70s the uh . . . computer had just come out and I was on the state board at the time.

I: The state board of pharma . . . of pharmacology?

PG: Of pharmacy. And uh, we had to learn computers to be able to check up on the pharmacists and a few of the pharmacists just, the original computer about a six month

supply, so that they were online to the bank in Portland and about a six month was about all that it could take and they'd erase it all and start over. And we couldn't have that as a state board because we couldn't have it destroying the records. So we made them have a hard copy, but computers completely changed the situation of pharmacy. Now the computers will automatically draw up the last ten or so prescriptions and tell you if there is any compatibilities. Which the pharmacists before had to remember all that.

I: But that's easier.

PG: Yes. And everything's prepared. They don't have to prepare anything.

I: Now how long, um when did you um, stop, um working at the pharmacy.

PG: Actually I stopped, I sold my store in '69 but I went on doing relief work for about another ten years. Twenty years, no ten years. Then I had severe heart problems and had to quit that.

I: So at the time that your pharmacy was real busy and uh . . . how were you able to do the pharmacy and run that big operation?

PG: It was necessary and so you had to do it.

I: So when people came in to get their prescription, did they have to wait or did they call their prescription in? How does that work?

PG: You filled them immediately. And if it was one that you had to prepare they'd come back and pick it up.

I: Oh I see. Did you have an assistant?

PG: Oh yes, always.

I: Yeah, and were these people who were trained or were they people you would train?

PG: They were pharmacists.

I: Oh so were they people who were going to college?

PG: No. Pharmacists. They had already graduated.

I: Oh okay, so you had another pharmacist besides your self. Uh huh. So how many did you have working in you store?

PG: I had a clinic pharmacy and I had one up there all the time. And one um . . . later on, no, I had one downtown all the time.

I: What do you mean a clinic pharmacy?

PG: In the La Grande Clinic.

I: Oh you had, oh okay.

PG: Had a pharmacy in there.

I: Oh so you ran both of those.

PG: And the hospital.

I: Oh my gosh, you ran three pharmacies?

PG: Yes. And one in Pendleton. I was in partnership in Pendleton.

I: You were a busy man weren't you.

PG: Yep.

I: What were the differences between the pharmacies or were they all similar?

PG: Well the clinic pharmacy was just prescriptions, that was all. Course the hospital was prescriptions and entropy solutions and, which I stored in the bottom of . . . the pharmacy downtown.

I: Oh and then you would just drive them up?

PG: Yes. And band-aids, bandages, sponges, everything for operations. It was entirely different.

I: So you had to order supplies for three or four places?

PG: Yup.

I: And how would you know how much to order?

PG: You'd just hehe, went by the seat of your pants. You . . . hoped you'd ordered correctly.

I: Did you order almost everything from Portland?

PG: Portland and Boise.

I: And were a lot of the things refrigerated?

PG: No, uh, very seldom.

I: Oh, so solutions and things were not refrigerated?

PG: No.

I: Uh huh. So did you order plasma, blood, and all of that?

PG: No. They ordered their own blood, but they did mostly at that time they did mostly live transfers.

I: Uh huh, so you ordered the I.V.s and all of that.

PG: Yes.

I: Uh huh. Wow that's a huge operation.

PG: Tell me about it.

I: Yeah, I can imagine, I can imagine. Um, so how did you, okay this is a stupid question, but how did you read the doctor's handwriting?

PG: As far as I'm concerned most of the handwriting is in a foreign language. In other words they are terms that you are not familiar with, but the pharmacist is. So they are easy to make out, especially when you had a limited number of doctors.

I: So you had, especially when you were starting out you probably knew each person's handwriting pretty well.

PG: You gained that knowledge quickly.

I: So if you couldn't read something you just call and ask 'em?

PG: Call 'em and ask 'em.

I: Uh huh. Did you have good relationships with the doctors?

PG: Yes, very good.

I: Uh huh. Now were you the only pharmacy in La Grande?

PG: Oh no, there were six pharmacists. Pharmacies. Hone, Red Cross, Glass, Rites, my own, and uh Payless.

I: What made yours different from everybody else's?

PG: Mainly the fountain and the stock that they carried . . . I had a complete pharmacy downstairs. In other words I had a backup supply, because you needed it then. We didn't have overnight service from Portland. Which they do now.

I: Right . . . So if I was a customer and I came in and I needed something, would they give you their order and then maybe sit down and have something to eat while they waited for you?

PG: Quite a bit few of them did.

I: Uh huh. And then buy their makeup or buy their Hallmark cards or whatever.

PG: Uh huh.

I: Yeah. Why do you suppose there were so many pharmacies in La Grande, that's quite a few for a small town?

PG: There was no big chain. Payless then operated as independent . . . and . . . they were all little pharmacies.

I: And did you all get along and know each other?

PG: Well, it depended on the person.

I: Uh huh.

PG: Some of them you couldn't get along with, some of 'em you could.

I: Uh huh . . .

PG: Glass Drug was, and I'll say this for Mr. McMannis that ran it, he was the only one that when I came into business came up and welcomed me to La Grande.

I: That was neighborly.

PG: Uh huh.

I: Uh huh, yeah. Well can I get back to this early morning men's discussion. I am just very intrigued about, um . . . what made you decide to do that? To open that up?

PG: I don't know.

I: [laughs] Would the mayor come in too? Were there other dignitaries that would come in the morning and have discussions?

PG: Very seldom, did anyone from the city come in.

I: So mostly good friends of yours it sounds like.

PG: Yup.

I: Back in sports. Yeah.

PG: Mainly.

I: So what were the businesses near you downtown at that time?

PG: There where the new building went up right beside us was Faulks ID store. It was later called ID store. It was a mercantile. Right beside it was a men's shop . . . uh . . . it was practically part of the store, but differently ran.

I: You mean from the Falks store?

PG: Falks.

I: Falks. Uh huh.

PG: F-A-L-K-S.

I: Uh huh. And what did they sell in Falks?

PG: Uh, everything in the mercantile line.

I: Uh huh. Clothing, that kind of thing, or?

PG: Women's clothing, uh . . . yardage . . . everything like that. And on the other side I had a surplus store . . . ran by

I: . . . talk with Mr. Graham . . . So you were talking about a surplus store?

PG: Yes.

I: What was that?

PG: Well it was army surplus from World War II.

I: Really?

PG: Yep.

I: So what types of things would you, have been selling?

PG: I don't know what they sold. I . . . and then it was, uh, Lucky Trice had a shoe shine parlor here, and then it went back to a surplus store.

I: I am very curious about Lucky Trice's shoe shining parlor, can you talk to me a little bit about it?

PG: Well Lucky and I were best friends, in fact I used to go pheasant hunting with him, quite often. But uh, he had uh, Harry Patrice was the shoe, a Greek guy, which actually shined shoes.

I: So they had someone shining the shoes?

PG: Yeah.

I: From Greece?

PG: Well he was from Greece and a kid.

I: Uh huh. How many stations would he have in there for shoe shines?

PG: Oh, he had probably six or eight . . . cushions.

I: Do you remember what kind of shoe shine he used?

PG: No. I didn't pay that much attention.

I: So was Lucky shining the shoes too or was he manager?

PG: Yes he would shine shoes too.

I: So when you walked in the door how much would it cost to get your shoes shined?

PG: I don't know.

I: Uh huh.

PG: A quarter, probably.

I: So when we were selling the surplus clothing [inaudible] . . .

PG: The what?

I: When they had the surplus shop, was it before Lucky came in with the shoe shine?

PG: Yes.

I: Were people buying surplus things from the war?

PG: Oh, camping things and stuff like that.

I: And then it was a surplus shop again you said, and was that also army surplus?

PG: Mainly.

I: Uh huh. And what was the street from you?

PG: Payless Drug Store.

I: Oh so you had a drug store right across from your drug store?

PG: Yep.

I: Huh. How does that work?

PG: [laughs] I didn't pay any attention to him.

I: You were too busy.

PG: Yup.

I: Uh huh. Now when you were working as a pharmacist, did you keep track of the football team?

PG: Oh yes, I used to announce all the games on the radio.

I: Oh you did?

PG: Basketball, football, for the high schools, college. Ken Lillard had radio . . . station.

I: What radio station was that?

PG: KOBN.

I: How did you get involved with doing that?

PG: I don't know. I just happened. I was on the public address system before that.

I: Did you start doing that as soon as you got home from the war?

PG: Almost.

I: Uh huh.

PG: I don't know when I got started. I did it for 20 years.

I: Wow. And, how has that changed from, um, I know that . . . there is still a public address system, is it pretty much the same now or did you have to do some things that worked differently early on?

PG: Oh, it's the same.

I: Did you enjoy doing it?

PG: Yes.

I: What did you like about it?

PG: I got in to see all the games.

I: Did you travel with them as well?

PG: No. I did once to Milton-Freewater.

I: So people probably knew you very well from all over?

PG: Yes.

I: Were you ever on the city council or involved at all in city government or politics?

PG: Not in the city, I was president of the Chamber of Commerce . . . and the president of the Retail Merchants and Exalted Ruler of the Elks. President of the Rotary. [laughs]

I: You had a lot of responsibilities . . . So you were a [inaudible] minded person then?

PG: Yes.

I: What made you want to do that? Why were you uh . . .

PG: Just to lead.

I: Can you talk about how you, what you think the biggest changes are in La Grande?

PG: Very few. Very few of 'em. The biggest change is the ownership of the stores.

I: Can you talk about that?

PG: None of them are owned by the people that were [inaudible] was Zimmerman's was on the other end of the block, had a China Mary's.

I: What was China Mary's?

PG: Chinese food. It was upstairs and the buildings gone now. But in the next block where Red Cross used to be on the corner . . . of . . . I don't know anything else.

I: How about I go back to when you were, first came to La Grande and were working in the tree, in the tree nursery, right?

PG: Yes.

I: I had a couple questions about that and I kind of let it go by. Um, so who owned the tree nursery?

PG: Mrs. Milner.

I: Mmmhmm, and . . .

PG: A Scottish lady.

I: A Scottish lady, huh, from Scotland?

PG: Yes.

I: Wow. And so how did she start having a tree nursery in town?

PG: I don't know how she started.

I: I was just curious about where she got the trees, and do you know anything about that?

PG: No.

I: Uh huh. Was it a big place? I mean it would have had to be pretty . . .

PG: No, it wasn't a big place. It was, now its all grown over. 11th and J. 12th street there is a house that the manager of Penny's built; Homer Leffel was his name. It's on the property now. And the old house that I stayed in is still there.

I: Did she do this by herself?

PG: Yes, normally.

I: Probably hard work?

PG: Yes.

I: So it was good that you were there to help?

PG: Uh huh.

I: Uh huh. Did you help haul trees?

PG: No we never hauled trees.

I: Nope, they came and got 'em?

PG: They came and got 'em.

I: Yeah, my husband is an arborist, he's an urban forester so I am real curious about trees. After you retired, so you retired in the late '60s early '70s?

PG: Yes.

I: What did you do then?

PG: I worked in the, I was on the state board of pharmacy in the '70s, all of the '70s. I worked in the pharmaceutical association, and I worked at [inaudible] relief pharmacy.

I: All of the pharmacies around town?

PG: Around here. Baker and Elgin . . .

I: What are, what does the state board do? What are there jobs?

PG: Well then it was to regulate pharmacy, and to, you'd be surprised what some of the pharmacists would do for money.

I: For instance?

PG: Well, we caught one guy that had a quarter horse ranch up at Seattle, up in Washington. And he . . . that pharmacy . . . the air conditioning is not working.

[brief interruption to fix the air conditioner]

I: All right, so you were working on the state board during that, the time that you were retired.

PG: And I was also a consultant to the nursing homes.

I: Oh okay. In the area?

PG: In Pendleton and Baker.

I: So you were talking about some guy who had a quarter horse?

PG: Farm up in, and he was selling narcotics for raised prices, of course illegally, and supporting the quarter house, quarter horse . . . we had all kinds of trouble.

I: Not in La Grande did you?

PG: No.

I: Uh huh, that's good. Or in Union County?

PG: I wouldn't tell you about it.

I: [laughs] Yeah, I don't think you would want to tell me about it. So you regulate to make sure that . . .

PG: Yes. Uh huh.

I: Is there anything else that you want to talk about in terms of how pharmacy may be different now then when you were . . . um . . .

PG: Completely different. The computer had changed everything.

I: Do you think that pharmacies are as good as they were when you were working?

PG: I don't think they are as reliable. As professional, I should say, because of the technicians. The technicians basically fill the prescriptions and they've had . . . and the pharmacist checks it, but is that true all the time? [laughs]

I: So when you were working you filled the prescriptions?

PG: Yes.

I: And the technicians didn't?

PG: We didn't have technicians.

I: That's right, you just had pharmacists.

PG: Yep.

I: But now they have technicians.

PG: Yep, and the generic drug market has changed the whole situation. You used to know what a pill was by the shape and the color, and now there is no recognition at all, of shape and color.

I: So it is easier to get mixed up, right?

PG: You bet. I would think so.

I: But that didn't happen when you were doing it?

PG: No. 'Cuz we didn't have generics then. They were just coming in when I quit, had to quit.

I: Well, I bet the people of the town really miss the fountain and the early morning . . .

PG: They tell me so.

I: Uh huh, yeah. Well I really appreciate you talking with me today. It was very interesting, very informative.

PG: Thank you for coming.

I: Yeah, yeah.