Jeannette Baum

AUGUST STANGE AND STANGE MANOR

JB: As I recall, Mr. And Mrs. Stange came to La Grande with their two daughters. They lived in a house now occupied by the Chinese restaurant on Fourth Street while they were building their lovely manor on the hill. That was about 1910.

I: I believe the Mt. Emily Lumber Company was started by August Stange.

JB: That is correct. He bought Bowman Hicks Lumber and renamed it Mt. Emily Lumber.

I: Do you know why they came to La Grande specifically?

JB: I suppose for lumber.

I: Perhaps he learned of the sale of Bowman Hicks through a national advertisement?

JB: That could be. The same thing happened with Mr. Hoffman. He was in Tennessee, and came west to take advantage of the timber. He bought a lumberyard in Union. These people came west to take advantage of a more lucrative situation.

I: Did you ever hear of a brother who may have been here before August arrived?

JB: I was never aware of a brother.

I: When did you first meet or learn about the Stanges?

JB: We came to La Grande after the war. You didn't come into La Grande and not know about the Stanges because their house, itself, attracted attention.

David, my husband, admired the house so extensively I think that, in the back of his mind, he thought he would own that house. The first time I saw the house inside is when we went to look at it in early 1962, when it went on the market. David wanted to buy it. I didn't feel we could afford it, but he was going to see to it that we could. We bought the house in 1962, and were only the second owners after the Stanges.

I: Why do you suppose they wanted to sell the house?

JB: Age and retirement. I think they were in their eighties and needed to cut back. August Stange sold the lumber company to the Templetons who had it for a short time, and they, in turn, sold it to Boise Cascade. I think they changed the name from Mt. Emily to Templeton Lumber Company. They were from Portland, and brought their son-in-law and their son in to run the mill.

I heard that when August and Priscilla Stange first came to live in the house on Fourth Street they had a chauffeur or butler that would take the girls to school in a little basket-like cart drawn by a horse. The basket was like what you would see on a hot air balloon. That was quite a fascinating thing to see. It was quite the envy of all the children in the neighborhood because they thought it was pretty nifty to get to go to school in a cart drawn by a horse.

The Stange girls also took dance, and had a ballet bar in the attic. My children were always intrigued with that.

I: What else did you learn about the house? Do you know the name of the architect or contractor?

JB: The contractor's name was Charles Miller from Pendleton. He lived here during the time of construction. It was my understanding that he was paid $10,000. There is some confusion on what it cost to build the house. My son, David Baum, thought they paid $100,000, but I recall if was $80,000. We purchased the house for $35,000 in 1962. We didn't take possession for six months because the Stanges wanted the time to move.

PURCHASING STANGE MANOR

I: Why do you think the price was so much lower?

JB: For one thing I think they couldn't find any buyers. Don Ragsdale told me that not a house in town went for as high as $35,000. After we bought the house, he said houses started selling for $32,000, and prices were getting better.

I: You led the market.

JB: It kind of sounds that way.

I: Did you ever see any documents or plans of construction on the house?

JB: We had the plans. We may have left them in the house. We sold the house to Larry Fuller an insurance man. He had five children, and during the seven years they lived there they had two more children. The Fullers sold it to Hart who now owns the Haines Steakhouse. The Harts had it for quite awhile, and ran a bed and breakfast in the home. Larry Fuller used it only as a residence. The Harts then sold it to the McClures, and the McClures sold it to the Jensens.

I think the house plans may have stayed with the house. Mrs. Jensen may have them.

I: Was there any other documentation regarding construction?

JB: Other than the plans, that was all.

I: I read somewhere that there were special orders for marble and various kind of high quality wood from afar.

JB: Yes. Italian tile from Italy went into making a lovely fountain in the sunroom, according to the Stanges. George Bugg's father painted the house. George was eighteen at the time, and assisted in the painting.

I: Was Mr. Bugg a member of the Stange family?

JB: No. He died recently.

I: What do you know about the painting of the house?

JB: Mrs. Stange told me that they had seven coats of paint put on and never painted the house again. They were very, very careful. They did a lot of antiquing, particularly up around the baroque borders. It was still lovely when we moved in. We never painted the large entry hall because it was quite charming.

The Stanges had a man come in and build the stairway. Shortly after they moved in the stairway collapsed. The man who repaired it told me about it. He also helped with incidental repairs after we moved in. I don't remember his name, but he was a man who would stand up to Mrs. Stange. She was quite formidable. She was charming, and had lots of friends and parties at the house. But hired help was hired help.

Their maid, and full-time housekeeper, never came into their part of the house. She lived in the kitchen and had a downstairs basement washroom. To get

to her quarters you went through the kitchen and up the stairway. There, she slept, and went for relief from her duties. But the way they called her, or let her know that they wanted her was by a callbox in the kitchen. If number six came up on the callbox she would go up to Mrs. Stange's bedroom to see what she needed. She never went unless she was called. If the call button four flew up she knew Mrs. Stange was in the sunroom. The dining room had a button on the floor beneath the carpet. That was used if the Stanges needed her in the dining room for dessert or something. Mr. Stange used that button so much it wore a hole through the rug.

I: Do you think the Stanges came to La Grande expecting to live at a high economic level.

JB: Yes. They brought their butler with them. I believe he might have been a combination butler-gardener.

I: I understand that Mr. Stange was not at all pretentious. He was a rather small man who was pretty ordinary in his arrangements with other people. Is that true?

JB: Yes. I didn't think that August was a man you would even notice if you didn't know who he was. When I met him his face had started to line very prominently. But Mrs. Stange was a beautiful woman.

I: Did people regard them, and the way they lived, uppity?

JB: They certainly did.

I: Was there some ridicule?

JB: Somehow, no. I don't know why.

I: Could it have been because of August's plain manners?

JB: It could have been.

I: Were there raised eyebrows from the way Mrs. Stange treated the maid?

JB: I know one time when the sink plugged she accused the housekeeper of putting her mop water down that sink. The poor housekeeper had not done that, but Mrs. Stange was just unbending about it. When the plumber came and discovered it was something else that caused the plumbing to quit functioning, the housekeeper was not to be denied. She up and quit, which was quite a shock to Mrs. Stange. I think for the first time in her life she apologized to that woman, but the housekeeper didn't give in. She just left.

They always had two cleaning ladies that came in twice a week, and a full-time cook and gardener. The gardener, I think, slept in a little house behind the garage.

It was quite a rich way to live. We couldn't live like that when we bought the house, but I did have a little household help three hours each Tuesday and Thursday.

I: It would be almost impossible for one person to take care of the whole house.

JB: That's right. We didn't sleep in; we got up and took care of the house. It ran us.

I: How did the house run you?

JB: For one thing I had to do more work than Mrs. Stange to cut down on household help. The whole family had to be careful and not waste any time when they cleaned their rooms, and try to keep things so that I didn't have all this trial.

I: What other difficulties did you have besides the vastness of the house?

JB: Expenses like painting, and heating. We lived there at a time when gas or oil was nineteen cents. Now it's a fierce price. We cleaned the outside windows once a year. Mrs. Stange probably could clean them more often, but we couldn't, and didn't overdo it.

David loved gardening and did all the planting. He had a beautiful border along Spring Street that was just gorgeous. It was a perennial border. He also planted two hundred Tam junipers around the front and side of the house. They are still there today.

August Stange had lovely roses, but shortly after we moved in there was a terrible freeze and we lost his beautiful Peace roses and climbers. David had to replace everything.

Maurice Gekeler was a wonderful handyman who mowed the lawn. David, Jr. helped when he got old enough. In fact, David, Jr. was a tremendous helper. He could clean out a garage like you've never seen before. It helps when the family participates. Mrs. Stange and her daughters never had to clean, but I am sure August may have puttered in the yard a little; I know he did in later years.

I: How many years did the Stanges live there?

JB: From 1924 to 1962. About forty years.

I: Was 1924 when the house was completed?

JB: I think so. To think that there are actually houses now on the market that are far older than the Stange house was when we bought it. Actually, it has been kept pretty well.

LIVING IN STANGE MANOR

I: It appears that the house has changed very little since it was built. Has there been any remodeling done in the past?

JB: Yes. The Harts opened up the kitchen and utilized the pantry. They had a pass-through table, an island, to accommodate their bed and breakfast. That's all the remodeling that I know of.

I: I have heard that there is a stage in the basement. Is that true?

JB: Yes, there is. The recreation room in the basement is as large as the living room. It was marvelous for the children's playroom. We put in a ping-pong table, Foose ball, and a pool table. Someone, I think it was Mona Ott, gave us a coffee table with a checkerboard implanted in it. We also had a television in the room. The kids were delighted.

We never locked the house because kids came and went all day long. Often, they brought their friends. Many times when I would come home I would check the rec room and there would be kids that were not mine.

The stage had lights and footlights. There were no stage curtains when we moved in.

I: Do you think the stage is still intact?

JB: Yes. It would be foolish if it were not.

Right off the recreation room is another room, which houses a huge well that was used to water the yard.

I: Did it have a pump mechanism?

JB: Yes. It wasn't operable when we moved in. August had transferred to city water before then.

Every closet in the house, as well as the basement storerooms, was finished in beautiful cedar, which just smelled wonderful. This was done to protect from moths. I hope those are still intact.

We moved in 1977, after about fifteen years. I think everybody else has also had a sense of timeliness about the house.

Mrs. Stange left a big tapestry hanging on the left wall as you ascend the staircase. It is still there. It wouldn't fit in just any home. It belongs there.

I: Do you know the history behind the tapestry?

JB: Only that they brought it with them when they moved to La Grande. The dining room set also stayed. It was designed for that room.

I: Are other rugs still in the house?

JB: Yes. We did some carpeting because the existing rugs were quite old. They were lovely, thick rugs in mauve and brownish-gray. I always called them mole. Gorgeous hardwood floors surrounded the rugs and throughout the house except the attic and basement.

I: Did the hardwood floors have a pattern to them?

JB: No. They were just straight, in the 1920s style.

Carpeting was laid in the front room, dining room, and hallway. We replaced the dining room carpet because of the worn spot August made when pressing the service button. We took up the carpet in the front room and carpeted the stairway leading to maid's quarters, which is where my son, David, lived. He had his own private stairway and bathroom. August sold us his big roll-top desk that we placed in the little anteroom off David's bedroom, which was just right for his study. After military school, David didn't want to go away to college. He wanted to stay in La Grande and go to Eastern. He was going to become a lawyer, and he took all of the courses that would help him. He loved his quarters, and he was the one who really loved the house.

We also redecorated the dining room in periwinkle blue flock wallpaper. We hung Austrian drapes and tiled the breakfast nook in a deeper periwinkle blue, and wallpapered that room also. The rooms stayed that way until the McClures bought the house. Mrs. Stange never redid anything. The same wallpaper had hung for forty years when we bought the house. Once we redecorated it stayed that way the fifteen years we lived there.

The Stanges also had tennis courts and a stable. During that time the Stanges owned the entire block. Now, there are four other houses on the block that have replaced the tennis courts and stables. There was certainly no other house like it, not even now. August Stange obtained the best furnishings there were for the time.

Downstairs was a screened wine cellar, which I used for canned goods. I did a lot of canning then. In the front was a beautiful balcony, but August had ceased to run it. All that was left was the cement part that was concave.

I: Did you see it operational?

JB: No.

I: What do you think the fountain may have looked like?

JB: I believe it was quite pretty. I'm sure August would have had the finest construction done. I never saw it, but other people have. Of course, so many people are now gone that used to know the Stanges. The fountain was completely surrounded by Betty Friar roses, which were gorgeous. The roses were still there when we moved in.

I: Why did you decide not to revive the fountain?

JB: Because of the expense. August had not maintained it for the same reason. He was no longer financially secure. The family took a downturn in their lives.

I: How do you know that?

JB: I learned it from Gale Beals, the man who bought the mill from him. The Templetons brought Mr. Beals here from Washington State. It was he who said Mr. Stange was in financial straights.

I: Do you suppose that was the main reason for selling the mill and the house? Or perhaps it was because the lumber business had declined?

JB: Either that or too many of them were trying to live off the business. I think it was just too much family. His brother-in-law was here, and his son-in-law, George Decker, Anne's husband. He gave up his dental practice early on and came here to work in the mill.

I: So, you think the payroll was too big?

JB: Yes. There was an article in the paper when Gale Beals came to town and took over management of the mill. He was their top gun, so to speak. He spoke of the decline in the Stange Empire and what condition they were in. Anne Stange did not like that being told one bit. It was embarrassing. He didn't stop to think what he was doing. He spoke in a manner of a businessman just telling the facts. Anne, her husband, George Decker, and her sister are all dead and gone. There's no secret about it now, but it was kind of sad because they couldn't live at the high level they were used to. They had no butlers left. Still, they did pretty well.

I: Did you ever see any of their expensive cars in the drive?

JB: No. We came to town right after World War II, and we didn't even have a bucket let alone any cherries to fill it. We were starting from scratch. I had worked while David was overseas, and saved some money that tied us over, but we were not able to buy a house at that time.

I: Do you know of any old photographs of the Stange house when they resided there?

JB: I've never seen any. Mrs. Stange never mentioned any photographs when she showed me the house.

People tend to photograph more now; it's more popular. When my daughter came home from college she said, "Do you know we don't have a family picture?" Because of her, the younger generation, we got a family photograph taken in the Stange house.

Anne and George Decker adopted two children, a boy and a girl; the girl lives at Wallowa Lake. I don't recall her name, but I know where she lives. My son, David, rented a house next door to her. She might have some pictures, or their grandson, Gary Decker, from Portland. The daughter fell out of favor with her mother. They did a lot for her, and she just wasn't able to perform the way

they would have liked. The grandson stayed with Anne in her latter days and helped get her organized. When she died everything was pretty much left to him.

He had a lot of difficulties, and I don't know what ever became of him. He wasn't reared here. I do know that he tried to rob the Stanges one time while they were gone. He went in through the outside cellar doors, breaking the glass. Once inside the basement he couldn't get upstairs because all the doors leading to the main house were locked. There are two stairways leading from the basement washroom, one from the better part of the basement, the rec room, and so forth.

I: Were there any special features such as dumbwaiters or laundry chutes?

JB: Oh, yes. There was a wonderful hydraulic elevator that brought wood up from the basement to the living room.

I: By hydraulic, do you mean it operated by an oil pressure system or was it electric?

JB: It was a pressure system of some kind. My son, David, could tell you more about how it worked. As a kid he took an interest in such things.

I: As far as you know, does it still work?

JB: I do not know. There was also a laundry chute on the second floor, to the basement that was handy. Something very unique were the built-in wall refrigerators. The old iceman would drive up and chop out a good piece of ice, open a door on the outside of the house, and put the ice in the icebox. There were four storage areas to cool the food, with the ice in the middle storage. Mr. Stange discontinued ice delivery and put in a refrigeration mechanism in the center for cooling foods. There was another refrigerator in the kitchen for freezing foods.

I: What did they do for bathrooms?

JB: There were four bathrooms on the second floor, and a toilet in the basement for the maid. On the first floor was a washroom, with toilet and washbasin.

The master bath was part of our quarters, Dave and I. It was equipped with a lovely shower and separate tub. It was a good size room, about twelve or fifteen feet by nine feet, maybe, and not particularly unusual other than it had very lovely tile, and a lovely little footbath.

Mrs. Stange had a lot of trouble with her feet. She would sit on a stool and soak her feet in this footbath. You couldn't sit in it, although you could certainly bathe the dog in it, which is what my children did. They bathed Phoebe monthly in that footbath.

There was another little bathroom for two other bedrooms, located off our daughter's room, and a sitting room with a fireplace separated our daughter and son's rooms. She also had an overhanging veranda off her bedroom. Two other bathrooms situated at the opposite end of the house, one for the maid's quarters, another for the guest bedroom.

I: Did you change any fixtures while you lived in the house?

JB: No. The fixtures, as far as I know, are still there. At one time I thought about changing the fixtures. When Anne Decker heard about it, she wanted to buy the old fixtures. Of course, I never did, and I'm glad. To me, the fixtures always looked like they should be at a beach home. The fixture in the hallway should have been a little more elaborate, a few more crystals and things.

I: Was there another telephone system besides the one to summon the maid?

JB: An intercom was used when Mrs. Stange wanted to talk to her husband in another part of the house.

I: How did that work?

JB: As I recall it was a press button type.

I: Was it in use throughout the house?

JB: They could talk to the garage man, and probably to the maid.

I: It sounds as though it was designed for the business of the house rather than for socializing.

JB: True. Another thing that was absolutely remarkable was a vacuum cleaner system, which was put in about 1923 or 1924. The vacuum could be plugged into a hole in the wall throughout the house.

I: How did the system turn on?

JB: I recall that a switch turned on the whole system. But, I never felt the suction was strong enough. It had its own bag down in the furnace room that had to be cleaned and changed. It was easier for me to use a regular vacuum. One was kept upstairs and one downstairs.

August Stange was a trophy hunter. The downstairs was filled with elk, moose and deer head.

I: He shot these animals?

JB: I don't think he shot all of them. I think he went on hunting parties. He loved those things and yet he couldn't take them with him. Mr. Stange did love elegance. In the recreation room he had a very special wood, blue pine. It's quite rare, with blue streaks in it. I learned to appreciate it when I had learned more about the rarity of the wood.

I: Did you leave the animal trophies when you sold your home?

JB: Yes. Quite frankly, I don't particularly like stuffed animals. They were given to people who really wanted them. We gave one to Bob Fallow for his place in the woods.

They all loved elegance and fine things, and their daughters, Anne and Jane, lived the fast life. August had a lot of movie star friends, and had several photographs of movie stars that he took with him. Bing Crosby stayed there once.

I: Were there any maintenance problems while you lived in the house such as leaking roof, plumbing or electrical?

JB: Never any roof or plumbing problems. Charlie Young was a wonderful furnace man who took care of the furnace for me. I used to watch him fix the furnace so that I could do the minute things to make it function, then I wouldn't have to call him. I paid attention whenever a handyman came. I had a big toolbox that I used for some repairs.

Once, a little water came into the basement. Whether there is still that problem or it was taken care of, I don't know.

I: 1920s wiring wouldn't be up to code now. Did you have any problems with wiring?

JB: No. I think August had the house rewired before he sold it.

We never blew any fuses or anything. But I did understand the fuse box. Whenever the boys would get so interested, David too, in a football game and wouldn't come up for supper when I called, I simply went down to the basement

and pulled the master switch. When the lights would go out they would think the whole neighborhood lights were out, and they would come up to supper. It was a wonderful way to get their attention.

HOUSE TOURS

I: When you invited people in for social occasions did you notice anything in particular about people's reactions to the house?

JB: Yes. I had a friend from Oregon State University, Jean Floyd Henniker. She was the women's editor of *The Oregonian.* When she came into the house she kind of stamped her foot and said, "What do you want with all this room?" That was the only overt reaction I ever got other than people wanting to go through the house.

One time during a party I went upstairs to find a man going through the whole house all by himself. I was kind of surprised because the party was downstairs. A lot of times we arranged for people to see the house. But this particular time I hadn't gotten around to straightening our quarters or Marie and Raymond's quarters, and I didn't want anyone to see it. But he went up and satisfied his curiosity, and there wasn't much I could do about it.

I: Besides the size of the house and the impressiveness on the outside, what else do you think might have intrigued people who lived in La Grande?

JB: I know they were intrigued with the fact that there were not a lot of trees covering up a view of the house.

David drove down to Portland in a big truck and picked up two hundred tam junipers to plant. A friend of his told him they needed to be hand watered every day for at least thirty days. So one day while I was out watering them a very nicely dressed lady came along and we started talking. She was in town for just a few days. I asked if she would like to see the house. Boy, did she! She was so delighted, and I was delighted for her. I showed her the house, and a couple of days later, while I was out in the yard, she again came by with her family. I felt badly that I couldn't show it to them that day because I had an appointment scheduled.

I: Did you ever get requests from organizations to allow them to do fundraisers that would feature the house?

JB: I'll tell you one strange thing that happened. The front doorbell rang one day, and when I answered it a man stood there with all these children. He said, "We've come to see the historical house. This is the house that's tax-free, isn't it?" I said, "Oh, no. This is our personal residence. It isn't even on the Historical Register." It was his understanding that it was a museum of sorts. But, I knew they would be greatly disappointed so I allowed them in.

I: Maybe he was making up this little story.

JB: He and the children were from the Seventh Day Adventist School. I think it was a genuine request.

After a new publisher for *The Observer*, his name was Anderson, went directly to the courthouse to check if we paid taxes, the county assessors office posted a sign stating, "The property at 1612 Walnut pays a full tax." He wasn't the only one. It happened time and time again.

A neighbor across the street used to allow her children to play in our yard as a public playground. I didn't mind so much, but one little boy liked to ride the garage door. It was electric and he would push the button and grab the door to ride to the top. I couldn't get him to quit so I spoke to his mother who didn't seem interested in stopping him. I spoke to another neighbor, Della Overlin, about the situation, and she said, "Get your fourteen year old boy to go out and give him a good swat on the bottom. But don't you do it." Oh, I got a kick out of it. It worked.

I: Has there ever been an attempt to have the house placed on the Historic Register?

JB: Not that I know of, but I think it should be because of the fact that there is no other house in town like it. I don't know whether the bed and breakfast people tried to. Presently, the name is spelled S-t-a-n-g, without the 'e' on the end. When Anne Decker heard that the McClures had changed the spelling, she sent her daughter to talk to them.

I: Why did the McClures change the spelling?

JB: Because people were mispronouncing the name. I still don't think that is a reason for changing it.

I: I have heard that the Jensens plan to change it back.

JB: I hope they do because that's the original spelling. The McClures lost sight of something there.

I took them a bedspread and matching draperies I had purchased for one of the rooms, and gave them some incidental things that had been in the house. I have things from the Stanges like this settee. I had it recovered, though.

I: Did you purchase a considerable number of items from the Stanges?

JB: Oh, yes. Let's go into the music room and I'll show you the four tables that I purchased from them.

GENERATIONS ON THE OREGON TRAIL

I: Tell me about your family coming to Oregon.

JB: My great-great-great maternal grandparents, the Leggett family, came to Oregon in about 1843 from Missouri.

I: Do you know what made them want to come here?

JB: They had heard about the good life in Oregon from people who brought back wonderful news.

I: The good-life meaning the Willamette Valley?

JB: Not only that, but everybody in the valley were well; back in Missouri, for some reason, they were sick. So they wanted to come out where they could participate in this good life. So the Leggetts, and my great-great grandfather, Benjamin Grubb, and his family, along with my great-grandmother, Melissa Grubb, came on that trek, and they all arrived safely.

I: Do you have any letters or diaries from the trip?

JB: The Leggetts took the Meek Cutoff, which was a very, very sad affair.

I: Tell me a little about that.

JB: I wish I could. There is a book; I have the name in my files. I thought I would go down to the library and see if they could get me a copy. It's not in print any longer. Many people lost their lives on that cutoff. It was bad advice. But my family arrived safely, and wrote back to their daughters and their families about how glorious the valley was.

I: Is there a record of them coming through the Grande Ronde Valley?

JB: Not the Leggetts, but my mother's father, James Hager, came through here and stayed for a winter. But it was too cold and windy for him so he went on into the Umatilla area.

I: Did he write letters back home?

JB: No. I learned from his children, from stories that he told them. He attended a wedding while he was here in the valley.

Once, when my sister, Florence Davidson, was at a PEO meeting, someone gave a report, and read a wedding list. My grandfather's name was on that wedding list. But we weren't smart enough to inquire more about it and perhaps get a copy or something. Afterthoughts are a wonderful hindsight I guess you could say.

James Hager came out in 1862, two decades after the Leggetts. He and the Leggetts were not related. He apparently obtained some sheep and started increasing his herd. When he married my grandmother, who was eleven years younger than he, they took up residence in Ukiah, at a sheep camp they established to winter their sheep. Their first baby was born in Ukiah, and died of pneumonia five months later. I think this kind of bothered him because his next child was born in Umatilla. By the time the third child was born they had moved to Heppner, and acquired a lot of land. He did very well with his sheep. At that time wool was very precious and buyers would purchase his produce. I have pictures of buyers in Heppner coming in for his produce. He was quite a well-to-do man. He was able to leave his nine children each a nice piece of property, and probably some money. This was the Hager side of the family.

Then, there were the Leggetts, the Grubbs, and the Holmans. A Holman daughter married my grandfather, James Hager. That is how they are connected, and they all participated in the trek west. They wanted to come to Oregon badly. It was supposed to be the Promised Land.

I: Did you say that you have written records from them?

JB: I have one letter, a copy, which my great-grandmother's parents, the Benjamin Grubbs, wrote to the Leggetts. In the letter their daughter stated that they were not getting along well back in Missouri, their health was very poor, and they were going to sell everything, as they needed a better life. They and their children wanted to come to Oregon. She also wrote that they would need some help and asked if the Leggetts would come out on the trail at least three hundred miles to meet them.

I: Do you think they realized how difficult the trip would be?

JB: I think telling them to come out three hundred miles to meet them was a bit much, but they knew how difficult it would be. Of course, it has been done a lot. Look at the Mormons when they went up to save that handcart company. They went miles after them; distance was nothing.

I: Family ties must have been strong to overcome the difficulties of meeting someone three hundred miles in a wagon with oxen or horses.

JB: Yes, and probably supplies like you wouldn't believe. I would like to have heard about it, but there was no record of what transpired, or if they even did it. I'm sure they must have.

Anyway, that side of the family, my mother's side, was the pioneers. My father's family was in railroading, settling in Eugene in 1910. They came out by train, not wagon.

GROWING UP

I: Did you grow up in Heppner?

JB: No. I lived there two and a half years. I was born back in the horse and buggy age. I can remember the horses and buggies coming into Heppner, and my mother saying, "Oh, now you come on in the house. We got to shut the doors; the horses and buggies are coming by." They would kick up a lot of dust and she wanted the doors and windows shut and us kids inside because the dust was terrible, I guess.

Dad worked at a bank in Heppner. He had been a basketball player for the University of Oregon, and was captain of the team for a couple of years, kind of their hotshot player. A sports writer wrote about him once, saying, "When Sid stays awake…" which he did finally wake up in this last game, "…we won the game." When I ran across that article, I talked to Dad about it, and it made him mad all over again. In Heppner, the man who was coaching the high school basketball team got sick so Dad coached the team. After about three years in Heppner, he took a job in Salem as a bank examiner, and traveled for a year. He didn't like that, so we moved to Medford where he worked at the Jackson County bank.

EARLY YEARS WITH DAVE

I: Skipping a few years, you met a man named David Baum.

JB: Yes. I met him at Oregon State College. We married after we graduated. There were few married students on campus in those days. It wasn't exactly accepted in college life, and I certainly didn't want to do that. I was enjoying college, and the social life.

I: He was then drafted into military service?

JB: He was. He was in the ROTC. In 1943 he was drafted into the Army at Fort Lewis. He was away from campus several weeks, shoveling coal up there.

I: When he was released from the service you decided to move back to Union County?

JB: Yes. David was born in La Grande, and he considered this his valley, and wanted to come back. At the time, housing was very tight.

I: Where did you find a place to live?

JB: We lived on his parents' farm on Catherine Creek for about six months while we tried locating a job and a house. We finally rented a little duplex from Delyle Green on Main Street

Their farm was on a road later named Miller Lane after the Miller family who had lived there for over a century. They raised alfalfa and wheat, and Mrs. Baum raised cocker spaniels. They also raised sheep, chickens, and rabbits for their pelts and for the meat. She had lots of vegetables in the garden and a huge raspberry patch. It was a family who came through the Depression, and they made everything count.

I: They were hard workers, then.

JB: Yes, they were, very much so.

I: Did you take any time to go into the town of Union?

JB: No. If I recall, they had a lot of family, and we socialized a lot. There were the Baxters and the Hutchisons, and their families. I don't know why I didn't get involved in the town. I think I was too busy trying to get my own life settled.

I: My understanding is that Union was a fairly thriving place with the flourmill and various other businesses as well as two schools operating simultaneously.

JB: There was a dairy and big sawmills, too. It was a very interesting place with the lovely old Victorian homes. The Queen Anne and the mansard style roofs were fascinating.

I: Of course there was no freeway, so there must have been a fair amount of traffic through Union on Highway 30.

JB: That's correct. Traffic didn't really bother me being out on the farm. Life was still pretty slow moving.

OUR FIRST AUTOMOBILE

I: Were there a lot of automobiles?

JB: It was a very tight production of the automobile at that time.

I: What do you mean?

JB: They weren't producing automobiles at the rate people wanted them. David and I had saved up enough money during the time that he was overseas to buy an automobile. The trick was that there were so many people ahead of you on a waiting list that you couldn't get one. Ervin Hess who owned the Chevrolet garage in Union told David that he would get the next car. He was giving cars to the vets that had come back from World War II. So we finally got a car.

I: Was that your first car?

JB: Yes, the very first car, a Chevrolet. I can still see it. It was maroon, and quite boxy looking.

I: Did you learn to drive right away?

JB: I had already learned to drive when I was very young, about fourteen.

I: Did you use the car to do shopping?

JB: I don't recall shopping. For one thing, we used what we had, and we were still recovering from the Depression. David had two brothers, Frank and Bob, which the family was still trying to put through college. We didn't buy anything frivolous believe me. Of course, reared during the Depression as I was, you were

lucky if you had one pair of shoes. My family experienced that just like every other family did.

It's nice to live in an era that you don't have to count every penny. Back then I can remember a penny would buy ten pieces of candy. You watched your pennies back then.

I: Why did La Grande seem like the more desirable place to live?

JB: Because of its size and the fact that I think David, in the back of his mind, planned to go into business.

I: Was he employed while you lived on the farm?

JB: Yes. He worked for SigmaNu Fraternity as their Western representative. He traveled a lot. We didn't have children at that time, so I traveled with him. It was fun. I got to see eleven western states.

I: In your Chevrolet?

JB: Yes, my Chevrolet. After doing this for several years David realized that it wasn't what he wanted. His father started an insurance business, but didn't have an office. He sold life insurance by personal contact. David said to his dad, "Let's get an office downtown and really develop an insurance business." And they did.

THE ECONOMY IN LA GRANDE AFTER WWII

I: Were there other insurance businesses in La Grande.

JB: Oh, yes. There was Reynolds, and Wilkins, which were both good-sized operators.

I: What made him think there was room for another insurance agency?

JB: He thought the economy was such that it could use another insurance agent. And, of course, it's the hardworking guy that gets the business.

I: Can you remember some of the signs that the economy was thriving during that period?

JB: For one thing, downtown stores were doing very well, and were prosperous. Both the U.S. Bank and First National Bank were doing well. Trotters Men's Store was exceptionally lucrative for the Keffers and his partner, John Group. Others that did well were Jack Pear and his son who owned a jewelry store and optometry department.

I: From what you say, optometry combined watch making with providing eyewear.

JB: Yes. Jack Pear had a great personality. I think he and his son did well together, to support their families.

I: How were the Sacagawea and Foley hotels doing?

JB: As I recall the Chamber of Commerce moved into the lower level of the Sacagawea, and there was a wonderful coffee shop, also. They seemed to be doing all right. They hadn't yet started all of the motels in town, so they pretty much had a corner on the business.

I: Did you frequent the Sacagawea for various events?

JB: We went there for dances and meetings. Many convention meetings were held in town at the Sac, and the National Guard held banquets there when dignitaries

came to town. They had wonderful service, and nice second floor meeting and gathering rooms.

I: Did you go to banquets there?

JB: Yes, I did, a lot of them. I went to parties there. New Years Eve parties were held there, with a lovely place to dance, and lovely decorations. Whenever there was a big dance in town it was at the Sac.

I: Would you call it a first-rate hotel by standards of the 1940s?

JB: Back then, yes, I think.

I: How would you compare the Sacagawea with hotels in other cities you stayed in?

JB: At that time motels were coming into existence, and in our travels to the south, we stayed at motels. In Portland we stayed at hotels, though.

I: Was the Sacagawea as good as Portland hotels?

JB: Well, it had its own charm. I'd forgotten that the Foley Hotel was in operation at that time, too. I remember coming to La Grande in 1934 to watch my brother in the Eastern Oregon Track Meet. We ate dinner at the Foley Hotel, and it had lovely white tablecloths with all the accompaniments. It was a busy hotel.

I: That must have been during its peak years.

JB: It probably was. I'm glad that we were there at the time, and had that experience. Of course, when we walked out the door of the Foley and looked to our right, instead of seeing the old Safeway store, we saw the La Grande Hotel.

I: Was it in operation in the 1930s?

JB: Yes, it was. I never went in it, just past by.

One thing I did notice when we came back to La Grande after the war was all the drug stores in town. Moon's Drug was on a corner across the street from Christensen's meat market and grocery. The Sacagawea Hotel was on the other corner. Then there was Leishman's Drugstore, and up the street was Wright's Drugstore. Mr. and Mrs. Wright ran a family business, and they had a counter where we would go for some of her very good sodas. Across the street was Glass Drug. At that time Snat and June McManus, and partner ran it. I don't recall his name, but I do remember he rented a room at the Elks Club. So drugstores were doing very well then.

I: How do you think La Grande supported so many drugstores?

JB: Because they didn't have to compete with malls and other big stores like the ones going in out on the strip.

I: What was there about the drugstores that maybe attracted people beyond just buying medicines?

JB: They were also gift shops, and people gathered at the soda fountain. All but Glass Drugs and Roiters, Red Cross Drugs, had soda fountains. Moon's, Wright's, and Leishman's Drugs were the socializing places. Tom Graham, who purchased Leishman's Drugs in the late 1940s, kept the soda fountain going quite a long while. Of course the traffic went through La Grande on Highway 30. There was no superhighway. A lot of people traveling through would stop here.

I: Adams Avenue must have given La Grande the appearance of a thriving economy. David and his father were probably quite smart in thinking that another insurance agency could do well in La Grande.

JB: They turned out to be the biggest insurance agency in Eastern Oregon.

THE INSURANCE BUSINESS

I: Were you involved in the business in any way?

JB: Yes. I started out as the lonely secretary. I had a very nice babysitter for the twins while I worked. I worked six years until Ray was born, and I found that three children and a household were about all I could handle. Plus we were doing quite a bit of entertaining at that time, as David was moving up in the National Guard, which he headed. When people visited, I entertained the wives.

I: Why did the National Guard have a site in Union County, and what did they do?

JB: David served in the legislature for six years, and during that time he was able to get the first armory here. He thought it would be a boon to the community and to Eastern Oregon to get the first National Guard here in La Grande instead of in Pendleton or Baker.

I: There had to be some sort of military reason as well, wasn't there?

JB: The Guard came back from the Pacific at the end of the war after serving under Bob Carry, Sr. He no longer wanted to head the Guard, so David took it over.

I: So there was a National Guard here already. Where was the headquarters located?

JB: They had their drill hall in the center of town, over the Payless Drugstore, next to F. W. Woolworth store. The First National Bank was on the corner. The building was torn down; Pioneer Bank and parking lot is on that corner now.

I: Tell me more about when you were secretary in your husband's business.

JB: I took shorthand, and typed. I graduated from Oregon State in business. David was a brilliant man; he was very visionary and smart. He figured out the insurance business so fast, and it worked. New companies that came here were looking for a good agent, and David was helped by a lot of them. The business grew fast. His father sold life insurance when he came into the company, and he also had a few home fire coverage accounts. I think they had about thirty accounts when they first started.

I: Did David extend to crop, and other farm coverage insurance?

JB: Yes. He covered farms as far away as Pendleton. His reputation had grown, and he knew how to insure by becoming acquainted with the client's needs. He also knew what the businesses in town needed. If it was an inventory policy, he knew how to work it. That's the problem with some of these outfits today; they don't survive because they're not insured properly. An example is Sarah Bohenkamp's beautiful building that she had developed into a magnificent store. She had no coverage on her inventory, which was very devastating.

I: When you worked in the office, what was the tenor of business relationships?

JB: I think they tried to be polite to one another, but it was definitely competitive.

I remember Wendy Bill Wilkins; he was a fun guy. Wendy was out there for the business just like everybody else. He played the town Santa Claus, so I'm sure he obtained a lot of business through his joviality and activity. The Wilkins' were a popular family. Charlie Reynolds and his two boys, Everett and Charlie, Jr., had a very good business, also. You could feel the competition there. It wouldn't be normal, if you didn't. Once in awhile you don't like something that's happened to you, particularly if somebody steals an account.

I: How did the business people of that time dress for work?

JB: They dressed very nicely. You never went into a law office and saw girls in jeans, or in the summertime in shorts. You go into law office now, and the casualness of the women is absolutely amazing to me.

I: Was it an unwritten rule that everyone needed to dress formally?

JB: I think so. I dressed up when I went to work. I never wore slacks or jeans. I always dressed well. They dressed well in all the offices then. The men wore suits and white shirts with ties. David's father was well groomed, and he smelled good. He was a darling man.

I: Did you have any sense of why people thought it was either necessary or desirable for business people to dress formally?

JB: I think the idea that you dress for success was very strong then. The man that had on a suit was the man that you wanted to do business with. He was successful because he was well dressed.

I: Do you think the dress mode of business and professional people in La Grande contributed to a stronger sense of a class division than now?

JB: There very well could have been. I never thought about that. I do know that the laboring man has always been a very definite part of La Grande and its success. Many laboring men contribute marvelously to the community, and also to their churches. I knew one railroad engineer was always in our office. We had his business, and he loved to come in and visit every time he was in town. He was always dressed like he just climbed off the engine. His name was Mr. Stephan, and he was so much fun to have come in and tell stories about his work. His wife is still alive; she's one hundred and nine.

I've never stopped to think about what class my friends are. I work as a volunteer at the hospital. All economic levels of people work or volunteer there.

I: Some of the houses in La Grande that were obviously built to impress, along with the mode of dress and perhaps several other customs, I would think, would have made class division more obvious.

JB: Well, I can tell you this, after the twins were born, we left our little duplex on Main Street. Our landlord Mr. Delyle did not want children there. We moved down on Tenth Street in a little ramshackle home that was to be temporary because we couldn't find anything else. We rented for about a year, and then we were able to buy a house on Fourteenth and Washington. That neighborhood was all laboring people, and we labored right along with them. We were all trying to get along, and to improve ourselves. You kept a house long enough, at that time, so that when you sold it you could take your nice extra money and buy a better house. We kept buying a better house, selling, and buying an even better house. You wanted to do better for your children's sakes, so you could send them to college.

I: The Stange house must have been the climax for you.

JB: I didn't want the Stange house, I'll tell you very frankly. It was more than I thought I could handle. But David was moving up in the Guard and was becoming well known in the state. He wanted the house so that when certain people came to town they would have a good experience in La Grande, and realize that we were a force to be reckoned with out here.

DAVE BAUM, POLITICIAN

I: Was he aspiring to a higher political office?

JB: Yes, but he didn't have the personality for it. He was quite controversial, and he created quite a bit of anti-Dave Baum. But he also had some tremendous followers who worked with him until the end of their lives. They believed in what he was doing.

I: What led him to run for legislature?

JB: To further his life, for prominence, and what he could do for the county and city. He knew how to operate. He also knew why and what his goals were.

I: He was in the House, not the Senate. Is that right?

JB: That's right. He served six years or three terms, 1949, 1951, and 1953. He ran for a fourth term, but that was at the time when Eisenhower's mid-term was very unpopular. His agriculture program and everything else was wrong, and the Republicans went down the drain. Nobody thought that Lee Reynolds, one of the most popular men in town, who was the assessor, would lose. He was one of those wonderful men who headed the Boy Scouts and took good care of everybody. We were stunned to think that he lost. But I wasn't stunned to think that David lost because he was just a sitting pigeon for that.

I: Did he speak of other legislators favoring the west over the east side?

JB: That was a known fact. From time to time that swung, and everybody knew who David Baum was in the legislature.

I: Do you recall any other efforts he made on behalf of La Grande or Union County while he was in the legislature?

JB: I recall later things. He got the industrial development park, Baum Industrial Park, out toward Fleetwood Trailer and the Boise Cascade plant. He got the farmers to sell him the land, and then he went to Los Angeles and encouraged Terry Trailers, Borden Chemical and even Boise Cascade particleboard plant to move in. He knew who to get to help him, too. He recognized the fact that not everyone loved Dave Baum, so when there was farmland he needed from a particular farmer he couldn't approach, he sent good-natured Bill Thomas to do the job. Bill Thomas was a realtor and very popular in the community.

I: Where did the money come from to buy the land? Did he help raise capital?

JB: Industrial development was his baby. He started the industrial development. As I recall, the money came from various investors.

I: Was there an official organization that he started?

JB: It was the Industrial Development Corporation. I'm not sure, but I think it could be run by the state now. Sometimes when you are raising a family you don't pay enough attention. You concentrate on your kids and their welfare, and getting you through the hard times of life for them.

I: What were some of David's reactions to what was going on in the legislature when he was a member?

JB: Oh boy, that's a long time ago. He was head of the Ways and Means Committee, and Tom McCall was the head man who helped him. I remember how much he enjoyed working with him. I wish I'd kept a diary at that time; it's been about sixty years ago.

I: Did you have specific duties as a legislator's wife?

JB: I was his secretary in the beginning, and there was a little controversy about that. I remember somebody writing a letter on my behalf saying that I had graduated in business from Oregon State, and who could be more qualified. It was nice to have that said about me. The last year I didn't go because my children were getting so that I had to be with them at home.

RAY BAUM, POLITICIAN

I: You have one son who certainly made a name in the legislature. Were you aware that Raymond was paying attention to what his father was doing and how he was reacting to be a legislator?

JB: I don't know where his interest in politics started, but it could have been that. Governor Hatfield, with his wife and children, came to town and stayed with us for a weekend.

One night I said to David, my son, who was about twelve years old, "Honey, you go up and get dressed, we're going to have dinner." He replied, "Why do we have to get dressed?" I said, "The Hatfields are here." "Hatfields? Why do we have to dress for them?" That was David as a boy. He was comfortable in his jeans.

Governor McCall stayed with us once, also. He got sick while he was in town, and probably stayed a little longer than he wanted to.

Governor Hatfield's administrative assistant, Warren Dunn, came with his wife and daughter and stayed with us awhile. I suppose that Raymond may have shown interest and thought he might enjoy politics.

When Raymond went to Willamette Law School he was president of his class; he took a very active part in politics at law school. He also worked for the Attorney General. Back when he was in college at BYU, he took a summer session with Mark Hatfield and went back to Washington DC. Then, when he graduated from law school, I told him that if he wanted to go into politics he should stay where he could develop a political base. He said, "Mother, I'm not going to stay down here where the traffic is so bad. I'm coming back to Eastern Oregon where I can hunt and fish." That's how both boys felt. They wanted to come back here where they could kayak, and hunt, and fish, and float the Colorado River, and enjoy this type of life.

He already had a name for himself in La Grande, being born and raised here. The only place he wasn't known was in Milton-Freewater so he worked real hard over there, but he still lost. His big win in La Grande offset his loss in Milton-Freewater. He ran against a man by the name Buck Rogers? Anyway, he went to the legislature with a good positive feeling about his election.

He was elected the next time without any problem, and then a third and fourth time. His family started growing up and all of a sudden he missed all the things that people like doing with their families. He said, "I can't go back down to the legislature." Many people expressed disappointment, and a few editorials were written of his retirement. But, that's the type of guy he is. He spends a lot of time with his family. He's got another son who is almost twelve years of age,

and I don't think Raymond will be going back into politics again as long as his family is growing up.

I: From your perspective, what is it about the Republican Party that attracted the Baum men?

JB: Ancestors. My husband's father was a Republican and my father was a strong Republican.

I: Did they ever say why they believed in Republican Party policies?

JB: Once in a while. In the Republican booth at the fairgrounds you see all the reasons posted.

I: Can you give any examples?

JB: I would have to research that. I've kept scrapbooks throughout the years. After David's death I kept a scrapbook for each one of the children up until last year. It's quite a chore, and I don't do it anymore. At Christmastime I presented everybody with at least one scrapbook, sometimes two or three. There would be a lot in those scrapbooks that could answer questions like these.

GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL

I: Let's talk about David, Sr.'s work in building a new Grande Ronde Hospital. How did he get involved in that?

JB: Dr. Fred Otten, Dr. Bill Cubler, and Dr. Gilstrap felt that since the old hospital was going to be condemned a new hospital had better be built. It would have been too expensive to upgrade or remodel the old one.

Dr. Otten was a very interesting man. He had been having trouble doing surgeries at the Catholic hospital that he wanted to do. He got in quite a bit of trouble one time when he wanted to do a certain surgical procedure on a woman and the nuns would not let him do it.

I: Did he think St. Joseph's hospital was a good hospital otherwise? Did he comment on the quality of the equipment or the facilities in general?

JB: Yes. He thought that it was a good hospital up until he ran into this barricade. But when this happened it convinced him that we still needed two hospitals, but that St. Joseph's still needed to be preserved. There was also employment to think about. He didn't want to put people out of work. I think at that time there were about fifty employees in the old Grande Ronde Hospital. Now, I think, it's close to four hundred.

There was a great deal of generosity in helping David get this project off the ground because the people in town had the same vision as he did. He chose men who were activists, men who would take an active part in raising money such as Spud Olson, Avery Hickocks, Tom Conklin from Cove, and many other fine gentlemen who were supportive both financially and in other ways. There was a board of about ten men formed in 1962 at the doctors' request. Lucille Lumston served on the board as secretary. She was a very intelligent lady who had a lot of input on projects. She was the grandmother of Susan Lewis.

David was under a lot of pressure to establish a new hospital because he had the reputation to accomplish what needed to be done.

I: Do you recall how the location was determined?

JB: He always said he thought a hospital should be a place where the sick can look down and see healthy school children playing in the playground, and see the wonderful life. It was a good life-restorative for patients. He liked the idea of being above the school.

I: Were other locations considered?

JB: Yes. There was another place, but he owned the property and didn't feel it was right to sell for that purpose. It would have been where the Mormon Church sits now. Some people felt that the hospital should be built out on Gekeler Lane, on flat territory. Anyway, he went with the first location, which was owned by Earl Miller, a dairy farmer. The land was purchased piece by piece as the hospital progressed. Then they started adding medical office buildings.

I: Did they have options on the other pieces of land?

JB: I don't know how it worked. I do know that Earl sold the property as it was needed, and it was very lucrative for him. It was nice that they could have some of the finer things in life because they had been quite a large, struggling family. The property went clear over to Hawthorne Drive, which is the street that forks off of Modelaire. They eventually purchased it all.

I: All that property for the hospital?

JB: He had the idea that it would be a hospital campus with doctors' offices and a pharmacy, which they did have.

There was also a piece of property on the north side owned by George Decker that they purchased, so there were two parties involved in the sale.

I: Do you know who the architect was?

JB: A Mr. Newton from Portland. I don't remember his first name, but he was very popular, and the people here liked what he did. I don't recall how he was chosen over other architects.

They raised a half million dollars in four years for the first addition, which was completed in January 1966.

I: Do you remember some of the money-raising activities?

JB: The generosity of the community and big business were the main contributors such as the railroad, Boise Cascade, and other large industries. And then the Hill-Burton funds came on the scene.

I: That's federal government, right?

JB: Yes. They were able to get a sizeable sum from them. Gale Beals, a retired CEO with Boise Cascade, was very interested in getting the hospital, and campaigned for fundraising. He was very successful. It seemed to catch hold, and just went forward. I was surprised at the money that poured in from this community.

I: Was there any fear that the hospital wouldn't succeed?

JB: Not where Dave Baum was concerned. He knew it would succeed. At the time of his death in 1977, he was just completing the third addition to the hospital.

I: So, from the time he began the campaign in 1962, it would have been fifteen years, then?

JB: Yes. The first unit was completed in 1966; the second unit went up in 1968, and the third unit went up in 1972 or 1973.

I: Was he equally involved in fundraising for all three units?

JB: Oh, definitely.

I: And, did he still head it up?

JB: Gale Beals stayed around quite a long while before he moved to Palm Springs. But, Dave never quit trying to raise funds for the hospital. He had established a foundation that was headed by Ross Herring, an attorney.

The board members would change from time to time when someone passed away, and they always tried to bring in active men. Dave didn't want anybody on the board that just came to sit in the chair.

I: There is an endowment fund established now, but the funds raised at that time were specifically for the construction and land purchase?

JB: Right. The first part of the hospital completed is the portion closest to the valley. Not where the information desk and gift shop are, but where the physical therapy is located. Beneath that were the kitchen and OB, and the surgery center. There is a marvelous book on the history of the Grande Ronde Hospital.

HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

I: Were you directly involved with the hospital in any way?

JB: I helped form the Auxiliary from the beginning. That was in 1964. The old hospital didn't have an auxiliary. David asked Jerry Braseth Palmer to head it up. She was president for three years and I took over the secretary-treasurer spot.

I: What did the Auxiliary do?

JB: It was made up of ambassadors for the hospital to do minor things such as deliver flowers, and visit with a patient. Now, it's developed into quite a bit more than that. But at that time it was just a friendly organization for the hospital.

I: Was it made up entirely of women?

JB: Yes. There were no men. There are now, though, about three or four, I think.

I: In the beginning was it made up of older, retired women? Or were there some younger?

JB: This would be in 1962 when I was forty. There were a few older ladies. Veda Fallow was probably in her sixties, and Eda Scott, but the majority of us were in our forties and late thirties.

I: What beneficial reasons did you give a prospective member to join?

JB: To further the hospital in any way by putting forth a good image. Of course in the beginning there were lots of little problems, and you had to be supportive and try to calm any criticism.

I: Have you remained active with the Auxiliary to the present?

JB: Correct.

I: Tell me some of the satisfactions you have had over the years.

JB: One satisfaction is the friends that I've made, and the esprit de corps we enjoy. I look forward to going every Tuesday and serving from twelve thirty to five o'clock on the information desk. At one time I worked in the gift shop, and operated the juice cart, and other things. Right now I pretty much just operate the information desk.

I: Is there ever a time when you can't answer someone's question?

JB: Oh, yes. But you can always find out. Lots of times I go to the office for help. There are always new problems and new questions. Someone came in with a big load of freight yesterday, and I didn't exactly know where he was to take it, but we found out.

I: What sort of training program is set up for this?

JB: Mary Tolls heads the training program for the desk, particularly. First, an applicant fills in a form. If everything is satisfactory they are given a TB test to make sure that they are healthy. They work with Mary Tolls for a while on the desk until they take over a spot. I think someone else trains for the gift shop because there is an adding machine involved.

I: St. Joseph Hospital went out of existence in the early seventies. Were there any difficulties when the two hospitals were competing?

JB: I would say that there probably was. The good, strong Catholic doctors wanted to see St. Joseph Hospital stay in operation as well as non Catholics who enjoyed the sisters and the wonderful aide they gave.

La Grande has always had two hospitals, even back when Dr. Phy had the hospital at Hot Lake. Everyone just thought it healthy to have two hospitals.

St. Joseph turned most of their equipment over to Grande Ronde Hospital. It was a generous donation by them.

I: Have you ever heard of the Wonderlick Hospital above the former Tropidara restaurant? In an interview with Donna Sands, she says that she was born there in, I think, 1932.

JB: That's something new to me. I've never heard of it. Often back in those days, the 1920s, doctors had a special building where they delivered babies. I don't know about La Grande, but I was born at home in 1919. Dr. McMurtle, who delivered me, had a small hospital in his house where he delivered babies, and removed appendixes.

But, I didn't move to La Grande until 1947. There could have been a small hospital in a building downtown. The Family History library has quite a catalog of phone directories. You could probably look it up.

I: Is there anything else about the origins of the new Grande Ronde Hospital that you think might be notable?

JB: Well, originally Dr. Gilstrap and Dr. Lee Johnson were very active in helping with the transfer. Dr. Gilstrap was generous in his contribution to further the hospital.

Dr. Richardson had left a large grandfather clock at the old hospital. His wife didn't want it in their home, so he took it to the hospital. I think Lee Johnson inherited the clock, and sold it to the new hospital for five hundred dollars, which was a buy. It still runs, and it is so beautiful.

There are sculptures in the hospital now, almost like you would find in a museum. I don't recall his name, but the sculptor is from Wallowa County. And, a third sculpture is soon to be placed in the lobby.

PEO ORGANIZATION

I: Tell me about the PEO. Has this been an organization you have belonged to for most of your adult life?

JB: Yes. I joined the DK Chapter in 1964.

I: Had there been a PEO chapter here previously?

JB: Yes. Originally, there was a chapter back in the 1920s. Then another chapter evolved, CO, so that would have been the second chapter. When it was discovered there could be a third chapter, our chapter was formed in 1962.

I: What would you say is most appealing to women in belonging to PEO?

JB: I think that it is scholarships for women. They see a great need for helping women with their education.

I: Has that always been the main purpose?

JB: Yes. That, plus the fact, we own a college. We own Cottey in Nevada, Missouri. It was originally owned by one of our PEO sisters, and she donated it to the PEO. A good sum of our yearly donations goes to Cottey. When you stop to think that there are about one hundred and fifty chapters in Oregon alone, the sum of money combined throughout the chapters in the United States supports PEO.

I: What makes this college special besides that fact that PEO owns it?

JB: Because it is a girl's college, and teaches fine arts, music, painting and sculpture. Dera Decker and Natalie Carey from La Grande have attended Cottey.

I: The PEO scholarship isn't limited to that one college, is it?

JB: No. I think we have about five different scholarships for women. One scholarship is for women coming back into the educational process. They may have had a couple of years in college and all of a sudden they want to go back to finish.

I: Do women need to be a PEO member to obtain a scholarship?

JB: No. In fact, we have had women members who have been turned down.

I: Are the women who are selected multi-racial?

JB: Yes.

I: How do they apply?

JB: The educational chairman is the promoter, and the scholarship is based primarily on need. The three chapters, together, give a yearly scholarship for Eastern Oregon University.

I: Are these full scholarships for tuition and room and board for needy women?

JB: Generally, it is a sum of money for them to use. I believe that the highest amount has been seven thousand five hundred dollars. It may not be enough for a full year, but it helps. A lot of times it is a sum of money to buy books for a girl who can't afford them.

I: Is this the primary purpose of PEO?

JB: We have money set aside for philanthropic needs. If there's a child, male or female, in grade school, that needs something, we provide them.

I: Historically, what has been the principle means for raising money for these philanthropic and educational purposes?

JB: In November we hold a tea with a silent auction, an open auction, and a bazaar. We do very well. We find that it's the best money making project we can come up with right now.

I: Has this been a typical PEO activity for most of the twentieth century?

JB: A lot of them gave a luncheon to make money. Others had an inter chapter auction. But ours is on quite a larger scale.

For the oral auction we had tickets for the Super Bowl game, with two nights in a hotel. We also provided a two-night stay at a resort in Coeur d'Alene.

I: Is this the only PEO organization in Union County?

JB: Yes. There's one in Enterprise, in Wallowa County also.

I: Are members women with social prominence?

JB: No. I don't think so. We have women in their twenties that are not socially prominent.

I: Then any women can join?

JB: No. You have to be invited.

I: How do you get an invitation to join?

JB: Women who are already members might manifest an interest in someone who is active in the community, and might like to join. The person has a choice. We can extend an invitation, and they can accept or not.

I: As soon as you say women who are very active in the community, suggests to me, that you need to be prominent in some way.

JB: I don't think you would know the name of the president of our group, if I said it because she lives on a farm, and has not been particularly active on a grand scale. She is highly intelligent, and has done a wonderful job as president of our chapter.

OBSERVATIONS ON OTHER SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

I: Tell me about other social organizations back in the1940s and 1950s that had primarily women members. What were some of your observations about them?

JB: The Soroptimists and Beta Sigma Fi are entirely women organizations that are active today. Epsilon Sigma Alpha was prominent back in the 1940s, and still exit today.

I: Was Epsilon Sigma Alpha purely a social sorority?

JB: It was a service group. Our money went to good causes. It could be a scholarship, or a needful thing. I can remember putting on a big reception for a local lady here in town whose son got married.

I: Were you aware of the organization's tie to the Masons, the Elks, the I.O.O.F, and the Rebekahs?

JB: My husband was a Mason; a Shriner, I guess you would say. But, I never joined the Rebekahs.

I: What about Eastern Star or Daughters of the Nile?

JB: I know that they are very, very active groups. I think they enjoy a ritual. I've always thought of it as putting their youth, the young ladies, forward in their dress and manners, perhaps building their self-esteem. But, I was never involved in any of those societies, so I'm not sure.

I: Could it be a ritual, a little bit like debutants, like the wealthy used to do with their young women?

JB: Like a coming out party? I do know there is a young girl chosen as a princess or a queen, something like that, which is quite a feather in her cap.

It's too bad that I wasn't a little more curious, but I was so busy with children and taking care of a very active husband, that I just didn't inquire about certain things. A friend of mine who lives in Salem wanted me to become a Daughter of the Nile, but with the house and everything, I couldn't manage that, too.

FAMILY POLITICS

I: Both David and Ray were state legislatures. Were any other family members active in politics?

JB: David's father was a county commissioner for about eighteen years, I think. When he grew old he actually lost the race, but it was time. He should have retired.

I: From your experience, what is involved in getting a legislative campaign going and completed in Union County?

JB: If you really want to get a good start you need to be a local boy, first and foremost.

I: So, name recognition, and I suppose trust?

JB: Yes, that's very true, and the solid reputation that the candidate has. Of course in this area we're not just Union County, we are Wallowa and part of Umatilla Counties, as far as the State House of Representatives. So it requires involvement by the whole family.

I: Before you started the campaign itself, were there family councils about whether he should run and for what office?

JB: Let's take Ray for instance. Ever since he was in high school he was thrust into a leadership position. He didn't particularly seek it, but he was elected class president his senior year.

His work in the Attorney General's Office and interning for Mark Hatfield was sort of the springboard. With his father's involvement in politics, and visits at our home by dignitaries, he was exposed to all of it.

I: Do you remember his announcing to the family that he would like to try?

JB: It came on kind of gradually. He talked about it when he had gone back east, and again when he was in law school. It was not surprising a bit.

When he decided, the whole family mustered our resources. His brother, David, went with him a lot, and one would take one side of the street, one the other side. Many people thought that David was Ray, and they would come up and say, "Oh, Ray, so good to see you!" Ray would be across the street.

I: As far as mounting a campaign and getting out to meet people in Union County, what procedures were used?

JB: Of course, you want the Republican Party in Union County to back you, and make sure that you are their candidate. Bob Brigotti was to retire from the legislature, and he wanted Ray to run for his seat. With Bob Brigotti's urging and interest

throughout the years, Ray decided to make a run for it. Naturally, you also spent a lot of time circulating and visiting people. This was in 1984, I think.

I was involved in going with him on a campaign and writing door-hanger notes when people weren't at home such as "Sorry, I missed you." If I knew the party, I would add their name to the note. I went with him to Milton-Freewater because I had lived there, and I thought it would be nice to look up some old friends, and help him out in that regard.

He gave speeches in Union County, wherever he was invited, at organizations such as the Farm Bureau, Lions Club, or the Rotary.

I: Did you hear some of his talks?

JB: Once in a while I may have, but I didn't make a point to go.

I: Was it customary in the 1980s, and maybe before that, to have opposing candidates at the same meeting?

JB: Oh, yes. At town hall meetings, at the commons in the middle school, Democrat and Republican candidates would speak. Sometimes candidates for the United States Senate would be there. They all got a ten-minute opportunity to put forth their points and opinions.

I: How did La Grande people react to political candidates?

JB: We felt a great deal of support in Union County because Ray was born here. People expressed it by donating to his campaign. Whenever Senator Hatfield or some other dignitary came to La Grande, they would schedule Ray to be with them.

It helped that Ray's opponent was not from Union County. His name was Buck Rogers. He had some good connections in Milton-Freewater, but he was never able to overcome Ray's lead in Wallowa and Union Counties.

I: In the early years, and when Ray was a candidate, did it seem to you that Union County residents were generally quite involved in politics?

JB: Yes, in the beginning. The Republican Party put on a supportive Lincoln Day Banquet, where Ray was speaker. Yet I saw a time when there was scarcely anybody that showed up. It has resulted in door-to-door campaigning. I don't recall anyone before Ray doing door-to-door campaigns. But we did. Ray took the whole family to canvas neighborhoods. We would be real folksy with people. Ray's little girl, Mary, would ride piggyback on her daddy's shoulders. It was the catchy things you did, but it was a lot of hard work.

His first campaign was against Judge Leroy Childers from Wallowa County. Naturally as county judge, he had created a lot of animosity, which we ran into quite a bit. But he did win that first victory quite handily. The second time he ran, the opposition wasn't well known. I think the candidate had lived here as a youth, and came back. But, by then, no one knew him.

Gordon Smith and Russell West both have campaigned door-to-door, after they spoke to Ray about it.

I: Does he think he has solid evidence that that is how you get votes?

JB: Once, when I was on a little gathering, some ladies from Wallowa County were talking politics, and didn't know whom I was. One said, "Well, I'm voting for Ray Baum. He came to my door and left me a note. I wasn't home, but he did come to my door."

Some people think it's not worth it, but I think it is, particularly if someone invites you in, so you have a chance to visit personally. You have to be swift. When they're not at home, you move right along. It's an interesting experience. Even Ray's sister went on campaign tours with him. She would take one side of the street, and if someone wanted to meet him, she would call him over. After a while I decided I would leave the campaigning to the young.

I: You apparently won't be called upon to do that again, anyway.

JB: No, I don't think Ray will ever run for state politics again. It was becoming a career for him. He was serving his fourth session, eight years, and he felt he was neglecting his wife and family of six children. He felt he needed to be home. So that's the way his life has gone.