

LILA BISHOP (Referred to as "LB")

Interviewed by April Curtis (Referred to as "AC")

Transcribed by Paula Helten (August 24, 2011)

AC: I am interviewing, um, Wila, Lila, is that right? Lila Bishop at 301 Cay. It's about 1:30, and um, I'm gonna ask you to say your name.

LB: Huh?

AC: Go ahead, and do you want to say your full name?

LB: Lila Bishop.

AC: Okay and when were you born?

LB: In 1912.

AC: All right. Okay Mrs. Bishop, you were born in 1912. Where were you born?

LB: In Kansas, um, Hartford, Kansas.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: And uh, [throat clearing] consequently all my first, um, training years were in Kansas.

AC: I see.

LB: And uh, around Hartford, Kansas.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Oh, and Emporia. In fact, we went to, both of us went to Emporia, went to college.

AC: Uh-huh. Now, where's Emporia?

LB: Well, it's about twenty miles from, from Hartford. Um, there aren't any particularly distinguishing, um, factors that I can think of except it's on the Neosho River.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And um, that was a good play, um playhouse well for a lot of people.

AC: Mm-hm. Did you, what did you take at school? What were you?

LB: Well uh, we both took music.

AC: Both you and your husband,

LB: Yes.

AC: Lynn?

LB: Uh-huh.

AC: Is that L-Y-N-N?

LB: That's right.

AC: Okay. And um, when did you graduate from, now was it a college or junior college?

LB: Yes, it was a full-scale State college.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Somebody's at the door!

AC: Okay, I'm gonna stop for a second.

[no interruption]

AC: Okay, so did both of you major in music?

LB: Yes.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Mm-hm.

AC: And what did you, what was your, uh?

LB: Well, piano was, was my _____, and uh. Course uh, voice was when he was uh, [throat clearing] and his teaching was all in the vocal department.

AC: Mm-hm. Is that where you met?

LB: Uh, yes really [chuckles, throat clearing]. Course you won't want to put down that it [stutters] always amuses me when I think about it. My first meeting was, with him was at uh, oh, what shall I call it, uh, a State Contest for high school students. I was playing a lot of accompaniments for my _____, and so my teacher said, "Just go there and stay the week. And no, no point in you coming back and forth and back and forth and back and forth." So, I went up there and stayed the week. Well, the last day of this, um, I was sitting in a, uh, well I don't, don't, don't know that this is important enough even to talk about it. But I was sitting in the auditorium when they were having this contest.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And I was getting ready to play for the flute solos. Well, Lynn came down the aisle, and it was about four o'clock, and the sun just struck him like this. You know, it was just like a blaze of light practically because he had red hair, almost red hair anyway. And uh, I thought, "Wow" [chuckles].

AC: [chuckles].

LB: And I looked at uh, his flute which was also grabbing the sun, and oh, that was sort of the beginning right there.

AC: Wow, knight in shining armor?

LB: Yeah [chuckles].

AC: So um, so then you went to college together after that?

LB: Yes, Lynn had already been to school for one year when I went. Oh, and I'm a little vague about this because it's been a long time ago, you know. So I, I can't remember, but there was, there was a year difference in when we enrolled in school. And Lynn was there for one year first. And I think probably he was there for one year after this exposure in the auditorium because I don't think that he would have been uh, in that contest if he'd been, already been in college.

AC: Mm-hm. So, when did you move to La Grande?

LB: Well, that was quite awhile ago. I, I should have uh, looked up a lot, a lot of records I guess.

AC: You can guess, guess, estimate it.

LB: [chuckles]. Oh, we moved to La Grande um, a long time after that. Lynn taught, um in, in Gridley High School, and I taught in uh, Hartford High School, um for uh, I'm vague again about this. I don't really know how many years, two or three years, anyway.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And then Lynn got a job uh, uh in a bigger school, and uh, we moved. And by that time, um, we had decided to get married, and then we got married and moved onto this bigger school in Emporia.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Then we went to college there. Lynn was already in college in Emporia.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And I was just ready for college, and so, that's where I went too.

AC: Mm-hm. Yeah, so you probably moved to La Grande in the 30's? Was it in the 30's that you _____?

LB: Yes, it was in the 30's.

AC: Mm-hm. Probably mid-30's or late 30's, do you think?

LB: Well, I guess I figure, I should have asked you for the questions before you came [chuckles].

AC: Oh [laughs]!

LB: Then I could have looked up the answers.

AC: It's not that important. I'm just trying to get a feel for what the time period was. In the 30's, that's fine.

LB: Well, Lynn taught four years, I think in Gridley School, and we were uh, in Emporia for quite a bit of that time. Um, and then uh, we moved on to, let's see, where did, where did we live for sure? Well, we just lived in Emporia.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, he taught there, and for awhile.

AC: Mm-hm. Did you come to La Grande because of a job that he got? Did he apply for a job here, or? How'd you get to La Grande?

LB: Well, that's the way we got to La Grande. Uh, Lynn wanted a job in a bigger school, and um, one was, maybe uh, more opportunities outside of school

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: as well.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: So uh, this job opened up, and oh gee, this could do an awful lot with breaking, breaking your back that hurts [chuckles]

AC: Yeah [chuckles].

LB: and so on.

AC: So, was it then Eastern Oregon College, or Teacher's College at the time, do you remember what the name of it was?

LB: I don't remember that it was ever called Teacher's College
AC: Uh-uh.
LB: on paper. I think it was Eastern Oregon College.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And later on, Eastern Oregon University, I think.
AC: Yeah, uh-huh. So, when you came to La Grande, um, and he began to teach at the college were you also teaching at that time?
LB: I was uh, teaching, but not at the college. I was teaching uh, piano and organ
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: to the students. And it was for campus credit, but uh, I didn't uh, I don't think you could say I was on the staff particularly, you know.
AC: Mm-hm, but you were teaching students there, right?
LB: Yes, and I wasn't doing much in the way of classroom teaching for awhile
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: because they needed somebody for the individual teaching.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: So uh, that's what they got.
AC: Uh-huh, so what was the college like when you first came? What, what were the students like, and what was the college like when you first came to Eastern?
LB: Well um, it's a good question in many ways, but it's a hard question to answer because you see, this is my first college experience, and so I really had no comparisons to make.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And I, it uh, it just seemed to me that it was a very nice place to be, and the buildings were fine. There was a music hall that was, it was separate. And there was a big auditorium that was separate, and uh so.
AC: Was it the Inlow Hall? Was this, was this where you taught, in Inlow Hall, or do you know where it was that you, you taught?
LB: Well, I didn't teach in Inlow Hall, I don't think, because there was an auditorium if I remember correctly.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And, but there was a music hall, a separate music hall
AC: Do you remember what the name of that was?
LB: where the _____ classes were. Well, it was just music. As far as I was concerned it was a music hall.
AC: Mm-hm. And it had classrooms?
LB: Yes.
AC: And practice rooms?
LB: Uh-huh, it had regular classrooms like you'd have any place.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: Only uh, there weren't so many of them, and they were all in specialized things. They, we didn't diversify very much.
AC: Mm-hm. So, were there just the two of you, or were there other people?
LB: Oh yes, there were other people. Um, in fact I took uh, lessons from a very fine voice teacher there. Uh, and uh, I took piano lessons from a very good piano teacher there.
AC: Mm-hm, do you remember who that was?
LB: Each, each one, uh, Pearl Wideman.
AC: Pearl Wideman?
LB: Mm-hm.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And uh, what was the name of the little voice teacher? Oh dear, you know, a year's just
AC: [laughs], hopefully.
LB: a long, long, time.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: But uh, she was very good. She'd had some opera experience, and you know, she was uh, very specific about what I was to do with this, and this
AC: Mm-hm.

LB: and this, and this, and this. And I thought, boy, I'll never pass the course under her [chuckles].

AC: [laughs].

LB: Because this is completely strange to me, but it didn't work out to be that way. She was uh, very helpful

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, taught me how to sing right, I know.

AC: Did you sing in the choir?

LB: Oh yes, we had uh, about a hundred and twenty-five, I'd say probably, in a mixed choir.

AC: Was it community and, and in college, or?

LB: No, this is just college.

AC: Wow.

LB: There were quite a lot of students. I can't tell you how many, but a lot of students. And uh, we were um, and we, what we sang was specified by them. You know, you either sang contralto or you sang soprano, or what.

AC: What did you sing?

LB: Well, I sang alto most of the time because they were singing things that had such high, awfully high, exposure. And now, it was fun.

AC: Mm-hm. Do you remember your first house in La Grande?

LB: Well, my parents lived in La Grande.

AC: Oh, uh-huh. Did you grow up here then?

LB: Not, not, not La Grande, we were, I'm still back in uh, where we went to school.

AC: Oh, uh-huh. Do you remember when you moved here where you lived?

LB: When we first came to La Grande, um, I really should uh, should have taken time. I should have gotten some questions from you, _____.

AC: I can come back also. So, so this is just a preliminary interview. I can come back later too, and we can talk, and I can ask you some more questions as well, so. Um, so, um, you and Lynn moved to La Grande, and you were working at the, the college. Um, and what kind of place do you think La Grande was at that time? I mean, do you, what kind of town would you call it at that time?

LB: [sighs]. Well, of course it looked big to me because we had come from smaller places.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: But uh, I expect there wasn't uh, it wasn't as big probably as it is now.

AC: Mm-hm. Did you, um, was it a big change for you from Kansas?

LB: Well, yes and no. What I was doing was a big change. Um, my job was a big change, but uh, I don't know that I noticed so much difference in the uh, environment.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: You know, after all it's still in the west.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. What were you, what were the students like? Um, did you have students from the, from the farm services? Were there students at the school?

LB: Well now, uh, we're talking over a number of years, you understand?

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And, and some of those years we had military students. But uh, only during the war years

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: did we have those.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: The rest of the time they were mostly just uh, people graduating from high school and going right in to college.

AC: Mm-hm. Mostly going into teaching, or were there a lot of different?

LB: Mostly into teaching.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. When did you have your first child? Did you have children?

LB: I had only one child. [throat clearing] And uh, we seemed to have a bad time trying, trying to have this family, and so uh, she was born in 1933, I guess.

AC: Mm-hm. What's her name?

LB: Linda.

AC: Lilla?

LB: Linda.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: You see, we had Lynn, we had Lila. She had to be Linda.
AC: Oh, of course.
LB: [chuckles].
AC: Yeah, uh-huh. So, were you, did you continue to um, teach classes after you had your daughter?
LB: Yes, I did. Well, there were never enough piano teachers.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And um, by that time I was pretty heavily into organ, and there weren't any organ teachers. So um, you know, I was just _____ by that.
AC: So, did you play organ at the churches as well?
LB: Yes, and I played organ still here.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: I played twenty-nine years, I think.
AC: Wow.
LB: Church organ.
AC: Mm-hm. What churches did you? Did you play at a lot of the churches?
LB: Oh, Methodist churches.
AC: Methodist churches?
LB: Uh-huh.
AC: Uh-huh. Yeah, and did you, you taught organ also?
LB: Yes.
AC: Mm.
LB: I didn't have too many organ students because organ wasn't that popular back in those times. But I had only six, eight, organ students along with the piano students.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And most of the organ students would be through the college rather than private teaching.
AC: Mm-hm. Did you teach at the college, or at your home?
LB: Well I, it depended on uh, somewhat on when they wanted, where they wanted to be taught.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: The college credit was the same. It didn't make any difference whether it was at my home or whether it was on the college campus.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: So, and um, I had some very good students. In fact, I've got one that is stilling playing organ for the Methodist Church here.
AC: Oh great, who's that?
LB: Uh, Lanetta Carter.
AC: Oh!
LB: What's her name? I don't what it is.
AC: Is that Lanetta Paul now?
LB: Yeah.
AC: She was your student?
LB: Well, I had her for two years in high school.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: And then uh, she uh, quit, decided maybe she wanted to go to the university. And so, when she started her college work she went to, to the university up there.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: But uh, after she had a couple of years in the university she decided that she wanted the private teaching.
AC: Hm.
LB: And so she came back to me, and I had uh, oh, I had her for at least three years, more after that.
AC: She's a wonderful teacher.
LB: She a very good musician.
AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Very meticulous, and uh, boy, she wrote everything down, you know [chuckles].

AC: [chuckles].

LB: It was almost a regular _____ with her, I tell her something wrong!

AC: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Well, you have had a big, both you and your husband have had a big influence on the musicians in this valley. There's a lot of people that were taught by both of you. Do you still see some of your students that, that?

LB: Oh no, no I haven't saw any students. You know how old I am [chuckles]? Figure that out.

AC: [chuckles].

LB: No, I uh, haven't saw any for quite a number of years. In fact, I don't even play this piano now because um, I need to have a couple of cataracts removed, and I'm chicken. I don't, I don't really want to. I don't have any, any real reason for it.

AC: Mm-hm. Do you miss playing?

LB: Uh, yes. Yes I do.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: But uh, I'm a little bit chicken about this. My sister had cataracts removed and one of her eyes didn't, couldn't take it, and she's blind in that eye.

AC: Oh.

LB: And you know that can kind of scare the dickens out of you.

AC: Sure.

LB: So uh, I haven't done anything about them. I may get the nerve some time, but uh, I'm getting pretty old now to have operations on my eyes _____. The library brings me uh, real uh. She brings me four books every two weeks, mostly new ones.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And um, it's um, it's nice to be able to get those because since they are off the press, new off the press you know,

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: it's not very likely that I'd know anything about them.

AC: Mm-hm. That's great. They deliver them to you, huh? That's nice.

LB: Well, it's a service that they offer here probably through the university. I don't really know.

AC: Mm-hm. Um, I have a question about um, the changes that you saw from the university when you arrived, or the college when you arrived, to what it's like today. What are some of the changes that you have seen come through the music area?

LB: Now, you're talking about this particular university?

AC: Yes, mm-hm.

LB: Well, the facilities are better. Um, you see, we've got this fabulous new auditorium over here

AC: Yeah!

LB: which we didn't have. And uh, I can't remember exactly when it was built, but uh, it hasn't been here all that long, I know. And uh, it's, I'm delighted with the fact that uh, although I'm handicapped now, they will accommodate me. And uh, I can go in a wheelchair, and there are a couple of spots for wheelchair people.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And I'm much more comfortable that way than I would be if I was just sitting in a regular seat.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And um, I go to most of the plays. I get season tickets always for the symphony, and I don't get season tickets for the plays because I'm not all into all of it. Now, just recently for instance, they had "Fiddler On The Roof." Well, I don't know whether you've looked through your um, uh, [phone ringing] whether you've looked through your archives. I guess I could use [phone ringing]. I have to know when these things happened [phone ringing] because I really don't know myself.

AC: Mm-hm. Did you enjoy "Fiddler On The Roof?"

LB: Well, I enjoyed it very much when Lynn, and oh what was his name, um, the uh, the man that was doing the?

AC: Lyle Swartz? Was it Lyle?

LB: No, it was before Lyle Swartz, the one, one before him.

AC: Oh, Dick Hiatt?

LB: Dick Hiatt!

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Yeah. Dick was wonderful. Um, this is before _____. And uh, I thought it was wonderful. In fact, I thought it was so great that although Linda was away at school, she went to the university. Papa says, "You're not, you can't go where I've been teaching. It's not, not right."

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And so that was alright with me. But uh, he just had scruples about uh, this built-in business, you know [chuckles]?

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: And, and I guess he had

AC: So, Lynn was the choir teacher? Was he the vocal teacher?

LB: No.

AC: Or the instrumental teacher?

LB: Linda was going to the university at that time.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: She had graduated from uh, regular college. She was doing uh, advanced work.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: In fact uh, she got her Master's at the university.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And, and she did the, I can't remember. I guess, I think she got all of her Doctorate away from here.

AC: Mm-hm. What did your husband teach at the college?

LB: Well, starting in its early stages he taught practically everything in music.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: But as things progressed, and as we got more students, um, he was teaching mostly the instrumental things.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And um, he taught uh, oh, for the first four years, maybe uh, vocal music too. But he uh, finally went into the band work mostly.

AC: Oh, so mostly band? Did he teach orchestra also, or?

LB: Yeah.

AC: Mm-hm, yeah. Did he like it? Did he love it? Was that his passion?

LB: Well, I don't know that he had any choice. Now, I don't know whether you mean as one compared to the other?

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Uh-huh. He liked to sing better than he liked to play.

AC: Hm.

LB: But I think as far as teaching was concerned, I'm not sure that it made any difference.

AC: Mm-hm. So, what kinds of things would he sing?

LB: Oh, The Elijah.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: You know, and some of those things.

AC: Was he an opera singer, or was he a?

LB: No.

AC: No.

LB: No, not really. Uh, in fact he always made fun of his voice, and I said, "Lynn, people like to hear you sing, just accept it!" [chuckles]

AC: [chuckles]. Would you ever sing together, the two of you?

LB: No.

AC: Mm-hm. Did he sing in the choir as well?

LB: Oh, he directed the choir.

AC: Oh, he directed it? Uh-huh.

LB: Yeah.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: I think every place he was. I know he directed the choir in the Methodist Church here even.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And it was after he'd had church choirs for about twenty-eight or twenty-nine years.

AC: Mm-hm. So you were did you start in the Methodist Church when you moved here? I mean in the 30's, did you start going to the Methodist Church?

LB: Well, I grew up in a Methodist Church in Hartford, Kansas.

AC: Oh.

LB: And I played for them for, they didn't have an organ, but I played for them for a long time, um, when I was in school. And then after that, um, well it was just all kind of melted in, you know [chuckles].

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: Because there weren't too many people who got enough proficiency to, to be able to do things kind of off the cuff like you have to do with a lot of that stuff.

AC: Why'd you like playing the organ? What was it about the organ that you liked?

LB: It was the need. Nobody could play the organ.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: They had this beautiful organ and nobody could play it.

AC: In the Methodist Church here?

LB: In the Methodist Church in, in Topeka. See, we, we didn't stay in a small town for a long time. Lynn's last years were in Topeka, Topeka High School.

AC: Oh, uh-huh. So, when you came to La Grande, and you started playing at the Methodist Church, you, you played the organ at the Methodist Church for a long time, right?

LB: Yes.

AC: Yeah, um, what was the

LB: I started to figure it out the other day and thought it was twenty-nine years

AC: Wow.

LB: probably that I played the organ.

AC: What's the difference for you between playing the organ and playing the piano?

LB: Oh, all the difference in the world.

AC: What? Explain to me because, because I don't play.

LB: Well, playing the organ is an instrumental thing that you get help with the way the instrument it built. You know, there's all kinds of stuff inside that instrument that is gonna help you. Something went wrong one Sunday, for instance, and uh, I couldn't make one key make sound. It absolutely wouldn't sound. So, I had said something about well, there was somebody in, in the audience who really knew a little bit about the way things were, and he said, "Well, if you can do without it this Sunday, I'll fix it so you can play next Sunday." And it was what they call a fifer, a key that sticks,

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: and you can't get it loose. And uh, then it just _____ all the time, and then you, drives you crazy.

AC: [chuckles] Mm-hm.

LB: But um, actually an organ is a mechanical thing. Everything's got to work on it. If it doesn't work, you're in trouble.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Real bad trouble. That's not true with the piano.

AC: Mm-hm. So, which do you prefer? If you had a choice, and you could play either one, which one would you have chosen?

LB: Oh, I think I'd always take my first love, the piano. Because the piano is right there, and when you put your hands on it you get a sound. You don't have to worry about fifers. You don't have to worry about uh, getting the right combinations to sound good, you know.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: But I like the organ too and certainly for churches. It was nice to have an organ

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: because it has so much more possibility

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: for sound.

AC: Mm-hm. Um,

LB: And Lanetta is still playing this organ here.

AC: Yeah. When, when you listen to Lanetta play, do you ever feel like you can hear yourself in some of the way she plays?

LB: I don't think I ever put myself in it, but I think, "Yeah, she's got it. That's the way it goes." [laughs]

AC: [laughs]. Uh-huh.

LB: She, she's very talented.

AC: Uh-huh.

[recording interruption]

AC: You mean to talk about Lanetta?

LB: Uh, she had some ties. I don't know how these came about. With some people in Russia, and um, about two years ago they asked her if she'd come over and play a concert for them. And I think she stayed over and played some, gave some lessons too. And now she's been going back. Uh, I think she just got back here recently from, uh, just over there.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. Um, let's go back again to um, when you first moved here and you were work, working at the, the college, and Lynn was teaching. Um, what were the students like in the early days when you first came? What, what um, how would you characterize them?

LB: Well, there's so many different uh, people in the students, you know, so many different uh, talents for one thing, and so many different uh, things that they can do and things that they can't do. So, I don't know. That that would be uh, possibly a whole other thing to talk about.

AC: Well, I just wondered if there was a difference in the generation that you saw between

LB: Oh, I see what you mean.

AC: students of 30's, or the 40's, or the 50's?

LB: Yes, I think there was a difference in this way. Uh, they'd had more pre_____, previous experience, more previous lessons when they got to this level.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And when we first started out with organ particularly, they didn't have any background at all.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And that was tough.

AC: Was that because of the Depression that people didn't get lessons?

LB: No, it was just a progression of uh, moving on from the piano to the organ, I think.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And you see we're talking about money here because you don't play the organ if you don't have lessons, and quite a lot of lessons. Um, so that's part of it.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So, during the war years did um, you know in the 40's, did people have less or more funds to pay for lessons? Did it change?

LB: Well, the lessons were still pretty cheap during World War II.

AC: How much did you charge for a lesson?

LB: Well uh, that depended on where they were. Um, oh, on a general scale, probably four dollars a lesson,

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: but you don't take an organ lesson in a half an hour. You know, you can take a piano lesson in a half an hour and get something out of it, but

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: you'd just started on the organ. You, you needed to have at least forty-five minutes, and better to have an hour.

AC: Mm, mm-hm.

LB: And so, they're going to be more expensive because of the time involved.

AC: Were the organ students more dedicated just because it was more difficult?

LB: No, I think individual students are individual students.

AC: Yeah.

LB: Regardless of where they are, they are dedicated according to they're uh,

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: psyche [laughs].
AC: Right. What did you and Lynn and Linda do for fun in uh, La Grande when you weren't working?
LB: Well, there was the river for one thing, a good place to swim.
AC: Where did you swim?
LB: In _____ river.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And uh, they also had a swimming um, pool on the campus.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: After awhile, you know, all these things just kind of worked in gradually.
AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
LB: But I think uh, when you're trying to get comparisons to uh, how things were at that time, and how they are now, I don't think there's that much difference in the basic training.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: I think you pretty much have to start at the same place and go to the same place.
AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So, when you and uh, Lynn went out at night were there restaurants that you liked to go to in the 30's and 40's? Did you like to go out and eat, or?
LB: Oh yes, and um, one of the nice things when we were going to college in Emporia was they had uh, every weekend a college ball.
AC: Oh.
LB: You could um, one weekend it would be uh, oh, what do they call it? Well, you didn't pay for it.
AC: The admission was free?
LB: The admission was free.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: And then the next time was uh, you paid through the nose, you know [chuckles].
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: Like a dollar and half which was an awful lot of money at that time.
AC: Mm-hm. Did they have dances at um, at Eastern? Did you go to dances at Eastern?
LB: Yes, uh-huh.
AC: Yeah.
LB: Um, you see there was quite a music campus there. That was the best place, I thought, and we all thought to get a music education in Kansas.
AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
LB: There were other places you could go, including the university, but the university we decided right off was for people who wanted to go into _____, or something of that sort, you know.
AC: Right.
LB: Mostly solo, solo stuff.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: And of course, we didn't want that.
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: We wanted to go out with the idea of teaching what we learned.
AC: Right, right. So, when you came to La Grande, did you continue to go to dances, or were there dances at, at here, at Eastern?
LB: We danced until we got too old.
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: And, you know.
AC: What kind of dancing did you do?
LB: Oh, ballroom dancing.
AC: You did?
LB: Oh yeah [phone ringing].
AC: Uh-huh.
LB: It was dancing was the way we met [phone ringing].
AC: Oh!

LB: Dancing was what we did. And um, [phone ringing] the nice thing about it was uh, most of the dancing you didn't have to pay for [phone ringing].

AC: Right, right. So, were there places that you could go dance in La Grande? Did you [phone ringing] go dance in La Grande, ballroom dancing?

LB: Yes.

AC: Was it downtown [phone ringing]? Was there a place to go dancing downtown?

LB: There wasn't much uh, place to go, except college support things.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: Not very much.

AC: Hm. So, where'd you learn to ballroom dance?

LB: Well uh, we learned uh, in the _____ years of um, college

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: in Emporia.

AC: Ah? Uh-huh. Yeah. Well, that's wonderful that you danced

LB: And so we had some very, very good, um, dance uh, students. Um, and uh I'm not saying this right because it, I don't mean dance students. I mean uh, people to play for dances.

AC: Oh, uh-huh. Did some of the students at the college play for dances?

LB: Yes! In fact, all of the students in the orchestras played for the dances.

AC: Oh, huh.

LB: I don't think they could afford to hire anybody, and of course with students you don't have to pay them a lot

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: because they, they want the experience.

AC: Mm-hm. Did um, your daughter Linda, did she um, she, which elementary did she, she went to school through high school here, right?

LB: No, she went to, I have to think, think how old she is [chuckles],

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: and where she was when.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Because uh, she went to everything except the upper college levels.

AC: Mm-hm. Does she go to the Central Elementary School here in La Grande?

LB: No, she was through elementary school

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: before she left Kansas.

AC: Oh, uh-huh.

LB: See, that was a long time ago really.

AC: Yeah, yeah. So she, was she in high school when you guys, when you moved here?

LB: Yeah.

AC: Mm-hm. So, she went to La Grande High School? Yes? Uh-huh.

LB: And uh, I wish I could do the 60's times a little bit better but uh, time gets away from you.

AC: Yeah.

LB: You know?

AC: Yeah.

LB: It just really does.

AC: Uh-huh. Why don't you talk about um, um, how you and Lynn, what you and Lynn did in your free time? Um, you went dancing. You went swimming. What else, what would you do in the summers when you weren't teaching?

LB: Well now, you were talking about summer when you talked about swimming.

AC: Oh, uh-huh, uh-huh.

LB: Um, because we didn't swim much in the winter time. But there was a college pool, and there was a high school pool, but they weren't exactly what you'd be overjoyed with, you know.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, Linda was very musical from the word go. She just uh, picked up everything like that.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: So uh, it was easy to find things for her to do.

AC: Mm-hm. So, what did she play?

LB: She played the flute and piccolo.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Mostly.

AC: Is she still playing?

LB: Yes. In fact, she uh, played a concert with their uh, orchestra from Wisconsin in uh, well, it was in Rotterdam or one of those uh,

AC: Oh, wow.

LB: one of those towns.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Over there, they got together an outfit of fifteen people, and um, used some things. And um, Linda married a musician, and he's a composer

AC: Hm?

LB: along with other things. He teaches uh, where they are now.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: That's in Wisconsin.

AC: Mm-hm, any grandchildren?

LB: Um, one of their own, but they had such a long time before they thought they were gonna have any that they had adopted one.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: So they adopted one uh, Chinese boy. Uh, when he was uh, well, before he was born actually.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Got him when he was about uh, three weeks old.

AC: Ohh.

LB: From Taiwan.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And right now he's in Portland State, uh, finishing his second year at Portland State.

AC: Oh?

LB: But uh, you see when they came out to see us, they came through Portland.

AC: Mm? Mm-hm.

LB: And they stayed overnight. And they came down to see us in a rented car, and they stayed all night. And they came back. And um, he knew Portland before he ever enrolled.

AC: Oh?

LB: And then, [chuckles] it was kind of funny. For a whole year at least before he went to school he had uh, college catalogs.

AC: Oh yeah?

LB: You can sit any place in that living room of theirs; there was a college catalog here.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Took him the longest time to decide where he wanted, and he decided that he wanted to go to this place where he already knew things.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: He had been to the University. He had been through. He'd been to the, the rooms, and been to the classes. And he'd met a lot of the professors. And you know, he would, he just felt that since he was knowledgeable of that place,

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: whereas he didn't feel that way about other places, I'm sure.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And, and it's fine, except that it's kind of expensive to have to uh, pay uh, pay uh, _____ plane fare.

AC: Yeah, yeah.

LB: Back and forth.

AC: Has he been out here to see you?

LB: Oh yes, they were out here uh, every year.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Uh, [throat clearing] and uh, I think they'll continue to be out here every year even after uh, he graduates, if he does graduate from Portland State.

AC: What were some of the highlights for you about um, the musical experiences that you had with um, Lynn in La Grande? What are some of the things that you remember that were highlights in your past?

LB: Well my problem is we've been enough places now that I get kind of confused about what happened where

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: and when. And um, I don't know. One of the highlights for me was the year I started the organ.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Because of course that was different. And that was fun, and that was uh, and that was really like branching out.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: So um, I enjoyed that a lot.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, I think uh, with the boys, um, Benjamin is the one that's adopted, and he's uh, twenty years old now. And uh, he will be going back for his third year

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: in Portland State next year.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Um, it's expensive for them to have to pay transportation, but uh, the college where Hugo's teaching uh, pays the tuition.

AC: Oh, that's good.

LB: So uh, course he has to pay his own room and board and so on, but he doesn't have to pay tuition

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: at any other school.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: As long as it, as it isn't any more than it is at Carroll College where he teaches.

AC: Oh?

LB: But Carroll College is a private school,

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: and their tuition is [makes a noise that sounds high].

AC: Is that the one in Montana? Is that Carroll College in Montana, or where is that?

LB: Well, there are Carroll Colleges three or four places. This one happens to be in Wisconsin.

AC: In Wisconsin?

LB: Uh-huh.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Mm-hm.

AC: Um, going back to um, Union County, life in Union County, um, can you remember any highlights in Union County that, things that um, while you were raising your daughter, and uh Lynn was teaching at the college? Any shows that you remember, or concerts that really were, were important for, to, to recall? That um, you thought were really great? You mentioned that the "Fiddler On The Roof," you thought that was great, was there, were there other shows or concerts that you loved?

LB: Oh yes, there were lots of them. Uh, Lynn did the music for all of the shows after we came here.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And how long have we been here, twenty-nine years, or something like that?

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Quite a long time anyway. And uh, so he did the music for a lot of shows. And I think that's why the boys thought maybe they might enjoy going to Portland today.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: Because of that.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Um,

AC: So did he, he um, was the director for um, for the musicals that went on at the college?

LB: Well, there were two directors actually. There was the spoken word director, you know.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And then there was the one that did for the singing and for the orchestra.

AC: Mm-hm. And that was Lynn?

LB: Lynn did the music.

AC: And Dick Hiatt did a lot of?

LB: And Dick Hiatt did uh, the teaching of the ____.

AC: Mm-hm. Were there any other musicals besides "Fiddler" that you liked?

LB: Oh yes, there was a musical almost every year.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: And that, we're talking about a lot of years, you know!

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: Um, one of the ones that I always remember is that one was uh, um, well, it was made for a movie star.

AC: Hm?

LB: "Once Upon A Mattress."

AC: Oh yeah!

LB: Do you remember that?

AC: Yeah.

LB: Well, that one was uh, such fun.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: I went to several of the rehearsals for that just because it was fun

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: watching rehearsals. And then "Fiddler On The Roof" came along, I, I was bored. And I thought, oh, I've got through six, six weeks of this [chuckles]. I don't know whether I can take it or not!

AC: [laughs].

LB: So I went, and I went into every rehearsal after that.

AC: Oh!

LB: I was entranced with that show.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: And then I saw it this year, and uh, _____ it _____. Now, now don't you write this down!

AC: Oh, I won't.

LB: [chuckles].

AC: I won't, I won't. We're just, we're concentrating on

LB: But uh, they changed it so much it wasn't at all like the show that they did before.

AC: Hm. Hm, that's too bad.

LB: Well, they overemphasized the building of buildings.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: You know they were always building something else on the stage. Well they, they just overdid that.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, that meant that they had to leave out some of the uh,

AC: More important pieces.

LB: of the words.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Uh-huh.

AC: Uh-huh. So when um, did Lynn play in the orchestra, or

LB: No, no,

AC: was he, he directed the orchestra?

LB: he directed the orchestra.

AC: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

LB: Because of course that's, that's the thing that's, that's interesting about um, playing for plays. Um, everything in on an acute timing schedule. You, you got to be right there

AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: right now. And I remember one of them. I can't remember the name of it, but uh, they were building a barn on the stage. Do you remember anything about building a barn on the stage?
 AC: Would that be for "Oklahoma," or something like that?
 LB: Well, it wasn't "Oklahoma" per say, but it was probably more like that than any other one.
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: And they were singing their little lungs out and their hearts out and everything, and then all of a sudden uh, they turned around and, and faced the audience and started out with this song. [chuckles] And it was so funny! I never will forget that.
 AC: [chuckles]. And the music had to be timed perfectly
 LB: Mm-hm.
 AC: with them building that barn?
 LB: It had to be because uh, it took a hundred and eleven bars, I remember,
 AC: [chuckles].
 LB: of music in order to, to have enough music to play that.
 AC: Oh my, gosh. Yeah. So, did you ever, were you ever in a musical
 LB: No.
 AC: up at the college? Even though you ____?
 LB: I don't have any musical um, feeling for action.
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: It's, I don't want it. I'll sit down and play for one. I did a lot of playing, rehearsing, you know,
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: and that sort of thing.
 AC: Oh, so you were the accompanist for awhile for Eastern?
 LB: Well, I never was accompanist for any, anything performed because I didn't think that was my job.
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: But uh, somebody on campus should do that.
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: But uh,
 AC: So who, um you, did you accompany quite a few people while you were here?
 LB: Oh yes.
 AC: Uh-huh. So did, were you accompanying some of the faculty members when they played at recitals?
 LB: Yes, in fact my piano teacher asked me if I wouldn't play second piano for something that she wanted to do a two-piano thing with.
 AC: Oh, great.
 LB: And I was so ____ about it that you couldn't speak to me for a week [chuckles].
 AC: [laughs].
 LB: I couldn't understand why she chose me to do it. But uh, I think it's because maybe I was a little more stable with my rhythm, and
 AC: Uh-huh.
 LB: some of those things because I was pretty particular about that.
 AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
 LB: But uh,
 AC: Yeah. Did you like playing with, recitals with people from the college? Did you like doing that when they played, you know a flute, or a clarinet, or something?
 LB: I liked playing for them
 AC: Mm.
 LB: much better than standing up there playing for myself.
 AC: Mm-hm.
 LB: Though, of course we had to play some solo things. In fact, once a month we had to get up on the stage and play something from memory on the stage. Scared me to death
 AC: [laughs].
 LB: for the first couple of years.

AC: Uh-huh. Did you accompany Lynn when he was teaching here? Did you accompany him for recitals?

LB: Yes, I accompanied him all the time.

AC: Mm-hm. Did you enjoy playing with, that with each other?

LB: Oh sure!

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: He was really an excellent player,

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: and uh, very reliable, you know. And there was never any, “Shhh, this is a quarter note! Play it as a quarter note!”

AC: [laughs]. So, do you think that uh, a lot of the communication between the two of you was, was in your music?

LB: Oh yes.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: And I was so mad at myself the last year that he was here and, and then working with these uh, plays. That I hadn’t gone to more of the uh, recitals because there are some I know that, that uh, one of the “Once Upon A Mattress” I would have really enjoyed going to those. But Linda was still in high school then, and you know, I didn’t want to leave her so many nights.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: I thought maybe she needed a little more tender loving care than that, but uh.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So, was Lynn gone a lot when you guys were living here? Was he gone a lot with music _____?

LB: Don’t ever m___, and don’t ever marry a music supervisor.

AC: [laughs].

LB: I was lucky if I saw him!

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: He, he went to school lots of times, seven, seven-thirty in the morning to get things set up for all day.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: And then at night uh, he’d come in and grab something to eat. Then he’d go back and have a six-thirty rehearsal, and then following that, a seven-thirty rehearsal maybe.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Because that was the only time you had uh, for these special organizations.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Otherwise it had to be the big choir, or the, you know.

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So, did he conduct the Grande Ronde Symphony?

LB: Uh, just as a guest conductor.

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: Because he was not the orchestra conductor for them.

AC: Mm-hm. Would he ever play his flute in the Grande Ronde Symphony?

LB: Oh yes. He played the flute every time they needed him.

AC: Mm-hm. And you went to the, most of those concerts?

LB: Oh sure.

AC: Uh-huh. Did you notice a change through the years? Did the orchestra seem to get better through the years, or what did you think?

LB: Well, there was just so much difference actually. Um, the orchestras got bigger

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: for one thing. They got better for another thing. Um, that’s about all I can say.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: But uh, that sort of says it all.

AC: Mm-hm. Have you met the current conductor _____?

LB: Yes, I have. He’s a funny little fellow.

AC: [laughs]. Uh-huh. You’d, I’ve been here twelve years. And I think we’ve gone, we’ve had five orchestra conductors.

LB: Well, you’ve done a lot of shows yourself,

AC: Uh-huh.

LB: haven't you?

AC: Uh-huh, I have.

LB: What did you like?

AC: Oh gosh, of all the shows? Hm, that's a hard one, very hard one to say. Lyle Swartz directed a show about, oh gosh, nine years ago called "Crazy For You."

LB: Oh.

AC: Do you remember that one? _____?

LB: I remember the title, but I don't remember the _____.

AC: Yeah, it was written in the 30's. Yeah, and it was probably my favorite. Yeah, it, it was wonderful. Yeah, yeah. So uh, if you had your choice between, between going to a concert or going to a play or going to a recital, which would you choose?

LB: I'd go to a concert.

AC: Mm-hm. What is it that you like about listening to a, a concert?

LB: Oh, the solid__, solidity

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: of it, you know. And the fact that you've got all the instruments represented. And, and uh, it's a nice, big, full, meaty, sound you can't get any place else really.

AC: Mm-hm. Do you close your eyes when you listen to music?

LB: Sometimes.

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: Now, this last year I uh, was in a wheelchair over here, and so, I uh, couldn't do much of anything. But I get moved into this place, and Jody who runs it uh, um, was evincing some interest, oh, when uh, they were gonna have "Fiddler On The Roof." And I said, "Well, I really, really enjoyed that when I was in uh, school, and when I was back, you know."

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And uh, so I said, "I think you'd enjoy it. I'll get you a ticket if you would like to take me to that."

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: And she decided she would like to. She's gonna buy a season ticket that she

AC: Oh great!

LB: Isn't that wonderful?

AC: That's wonderful! See, you're still bringing people to music, aren't you?

LB: Yes!

AC: [laughs].

LB: Yes! And um,

AC: So, what would your advice be for a, a budding musician? I mean someone that just started playing the piano. What would your advice be for someone that really wanted to play the music?

LB: Try to be accurate. Don't just welsh through something, [phone ringing] you know. But uh, try to do it right. [phone ringing] _____ right, you're not gonna get any place with it anyway.

AC: Mm-hm. [phone ringing] Especially for those people that have to accompany you, right [chuckles]?

LB: Oh yeah! [phone ringing] Well, I was delighted one uh, afternoon [phone ringing] to record the music contest in the spring, I guess it was. [phone ringing] Do you know uh, Elizabeth Dryer dyer?

AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LB: Well, she was [phone ringing] a pupil of mine for years and years and years. And um, she was uh, [phone ringing] _____.

AC: [chuckles].
[phone ringing]

LB: I wish they could bury [phone ringing] all these cell phones.

AC: Yeah, me too, me too. So, you were talking about Elizabeth. She was your pupil.

LB: Yes, she started probably in the fourth or fifth grade.

AC: Mm.

LB: And uh, she was right there in Hartford all that time, and

AC: Mm-hm.

LB: so, I had her. And then uh, later on uh, I had her for a couple of years for organ.
AC: Oh? Uh-huh.
LB: So, I was nice. Well anyway, she called uh, in the spring and said she had uh, some people she was playing for the contest, and could she bring them over and play them with the accompaniment, of course.
AC: Right.
LB: And any ideas about it. So, that was fun, you know, having her come over and enough confidence in me [chuckles] to tell her the right things, I hope.
AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm, yeah. How many students do you think you had over the years? A hundred,
LB: Oh gosh,
AC: two hundred, three hundred?
LB: I don't know. A lot of them.
AC: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So, you enjoyed teaching?
LB: Yes uh, I think I enjoy it more than playing.
AC: Hm, why is that?
LB: Well, I can sit back and analyze better what's going on
AC: Mm-hm.
LB: if I'm not doing the playing, you see.
AC: Mm-hm, wow.
LB: And uh, that's how I always like to see them uh, do this uh, oh _____.
[recording ends]