

Opal Stoop, narrator
Brenda Lawson, interviewer

01/19/2005, tape 1, side 1

BL: Can you tell me again what your full name is?
OS: Opal Rose Bradshaw Stoop.
BL: And, Opal what's your date of birth?
OS: July the sixth, 1906.
BL: Okay, so how old are you?
OS: 98
GL: 98. You feeling well and gettin' around good.
OS: Yep.
BL: Good. You're lookin' good.
OS: Well, thank you.
BL: Can you tell me when you moved to this area?
OS: When I what?
BL: When you moved to the LaGrande or Union County area.
OS: When I was three years old.
BL: What is your first memory of living here?
OS: We lived down on Y Avenue when I was three years old, moved here. And, uh, right next to a grocery store called Sinden's.
BL: Sinden's.
OS: Sinden's Grocery on the corner of Y and Fir.
BL: Um, Um. What did you parents do here? What was the reason for them moving here?
OS: Well, my dad built houses and did condu (?) work and then he would paper houses.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: You know and like that. Mostly he built one.
BL: Okay, did you mother work outside of the home or did she stay home.
OS: She, uh, at one time before I was born, she had a dress making shop in Summerville.
BL: Were you ever told anything about that business or any details about what she did?
OS: What she did, she made dresses for people and things like that.
BL: Did she do this by hand?
OS: Sewing Machine.
BL: Or sewing machine. Okay.
OS: Old treadle one.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: Um, Um
BL: Now, when you lived on, um, did you say Y Avenue. Yes, Y Avenue. Did you start school when you lived at this location?
OS: I went to Greenwood School. Well, we moved from there over on Willow Street. And, from there I went to Greenwood School.

BL: Can you tell me about Greenwood School?
OS: Nothin' unusual, just a school house, with teachers, and.
BL: Okay. Were there a lot of students at that time?
OS: Oh, yeah. It had the school busy at recess time, kids all over the playground (laughs).
BL: Um, Um. What were you studying?
OS: I was pretty young, I don't know. About the first grade.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: Second grade. That kind of stuff (laughs).
BL: How did you get to school?
OS: Walked.
BL: You walked. Were there buses?
OS: Nope.
BL: So, the other kids who lived further away, did they also walk?
OS: Some did I guess, I don't know. I suppose some had a ride to the school. But, I always had to walk.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: I walked from Willow Street to Greenwood School, even through four feet of snow.
BL: Really.
OS: One winter, they had to plow a path for us to get through. But, they never closed the schools them days.
BL: You didn't get a snow day?
OS: Not _____ a lot of snow.
BL: Did you have any brother and sisters Opal?
OS: Yes, I had three brothers and a sister.
BL: Were they older or younger than you?
OS: I had a brother and a sister and a brother older than I. And, then one younger.
BL: Did they go to school at Greenwood with you also?
OS: My sister died when she was six years old. I didn't, wasn't born yet.
BL: Um, um. Did the brothers go to school?
OS: Um, um.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: My, huh, brother just older than I was in World War II? World War I? World War I!
BL: Um, Um. (Someone talking in back of tape and BL responding to them).
BL: Can you tell me more about the school days?
OS: I don't know, it seemed like we always had a good time at school. For recess we played games and the teachers would tease us once in a while. (Laughs).
BL: Did you bring your own lunch to school?
OS: No, we didn't. They had a
BL: They had a cafeteria there.
OS: Um, Um.
BL: So, they had the good home cooked meal at the cafeteria.
OS: I can't remember. Seems to me, I kind of always took my lunch (laughs).
BL: Took it from home (laughs).

OS: (Laughs)

BL: Um, Um.

BL: Can you tell me a little bit about having chores at home? Did you have to do chores?

OS: Yes, we certain chores to do and when we came home from school we had to change clothes, because we had school clothes, and we had home clothes. So, we had to keep the ones for school nicer than the rest of them.

BL: What is the uniform or just nicer clothes?

OS: No, just _____ my mother was a dressmaker, she made all my clothes.

BL: Okay. So you changed your clothes when you got home and then what would you do?

OS: Well, chores around the house and the place.

BL: Did you have different chores than what your brothers would have?

OS: Pardon.

BL: Were the chores that you were assigned to different than the chores your brothers did?

BL: For instance, would you do more indoor chores, and he would do outdoor chores? Or, was there any _____?

OS: I don't know. I don't know

BL: Okay.

OS: I was always busy doing something.

BL: Um, Um. What kinds of things did you do for fun after school?

OS: For what?

BL: For Fun?

OS: Oh, we'd skip rope and then have two twirl the rope and we'd jump in and play that way. Or, we would take it by ourself.

BL: Um, Um.

OS: And, we got one kid at school that we teased the heck out of. He'd run every time he see these girls a comin'. (Laughs) As long as he kept runnin' away, they kept teasin' him too.

BL: Did you have a bicycle?

BL: Did you have a bicycle?

OS: What'd she say?

BL: Did you have a bicycle?

OS: Nope.

BL: Nope.

OS: I had to learn to ride a bicycle by the neighbors that had a bicycle.

BL: Um, um

OS: But, they let me learn.

BL: Did you do any roller skating or

OS: Yes, plenty of it. It's a wonder I didn't knock my head out.

BL: (Laughs). Where did you roller skate?

OS: I roller skated on the cement sidewalk trying to learn. And, every time I'd (laughs) go down my head would go kerplunk. (laughs) I said it's a wonder I had anything but marks on my head.

BL: Do you remember what you roller skates looked like?

OS: They were steel rollers. And, they hooked onto your, around your toes, the hooked on, and then a strap around the ankle.

BL: So, you wore them over the top of your shoes?

OS: Um, Um.

BL: Okay. Did they strap on?

OS: No, No, they just strapped on the bottom of my shoe.

BL: (talking to someone in the background) Okay.

BL: Did you have any pads or helmets to wear? To cushion the fall. No, you just had to be tough. huh.

OS: It's a wonder I haven't bumped my brains out. Fallin' down.

BL: Did you have a favorite place to hang out with your friends?

OS: I don't remember any in the school days. I liked to skatin' rink after I grewed up.

BL: Um, um. How long did you go to Greenwood School?

OS: Well, until I had to go to seventh and eighth grade. And, then I went up to Central.

BL: Central School is where you went

OS: The folks moved, so we went in a different part of town.

BL: Um, Um. And, then did you go to high school in LaGrande, also.

OS: Nope.

BL: You finished school in the eighth grade?

OS: Yes.

BL: Was that common?

OS: Yes, some of them.

BL: For many of your friends?

OS: My oldest daughter got into her senior year. She come home tellin' me about this and that and this and that. I said are you just know taking that. She said "Yeah." That was their senior year. And, I had that stuff in seventh and eighth grade.

BL: Um, Um. It's a big difference isn't it?

OS: Um, Um. They really shoved it into us.

BL: Um, um.

OS: (Laughs)

BL: Was it your decision not to go onto school after the eighth grade, or your parents?

OS: I don't know. Never thought of it. I don't even know how come I quit. Probably hard times.

BL: Um, um. Do you recall what you did after leaving school? Did you go to work?

OS: No, not 'til later years.

BL: Um, Um.

OS: My later years I ended up waitin' tables and driving cab.

BL: Tended bar?

OS: What?

BL: And you tended bar.

OS: Yeah, I tended bar.

BL: Um, um. Did you have a favorite job.

OS: Well, I enjoyed waitin' tables.

BL: What did you enjoy about it?

OS: The people would, were neat, how nice they are and

BL: Um, Um
OS: How nice they think you are, you know and so on.
BL: I heard you had a nickname during those years.
OS: Me.
BL: I heard you might have a nickname from your customers during those years.
OS: It was called 'Speedy'.
BL: Why did they call you Speedy?
OS: Cuz, I could wait on more people (garbled tape)
BL: Okay, that makes sense. Tell me about a typical day at work at the restaurant.
OS: A typical day.
BL: A typical day.
OS: Oh, typical. I had a lot of fun.
BL: Did you?
OS: Yeah.
BL: Did you have to wear a uniform?
OS: Yes.
BL: Do you remember what it looked like?
OS: We had to take off our uniforms, maybe washin' them, keepin' clean.
BL: Um, um. What restaurant were you working at?
OS: I worked in Jim's Chinamen. Jim _____ restaurant. And, I went from there to answering telephone in the taxi stand.
BL: Um, Um.
OS: And, pretty soon I was driving a taxi.
BL: Did you enjoy that job?
OS: Um, Um.
BL: Was there a big demand for taxi rides?
OS: Oh, yes. And, then they put crews from the railroad out to North Powder and brought back a crew that was just finishing and things like that. So, quite interesting.
BL: Bet you met a lot of neat people there.
OS: Um, um.
BL: When you were waitressing, I am gonna' back up just a little bit. Did you, was it mostly local people coming into the restaurant?
OS: Yeah, a lot of them.
BL: Was the freeway going through town at that time?
OS: I don't remember.
BL: No. Did that come in later?
OS: Evidently.
BL: Okay. So, you probably didn't have a lot of people traveling through LaGrande.
OS: Don't remember that part.
BL: Okay. What was a favorite for the locals coming into the restaurant? You said you worked at a Chinese restaurant. So, did you work nights?
OS: Yeah, I went in there one day and asked if they needed help. And, I said I'd like to learn the wait tables. He said "Fine and dandy, I'll teach ya', if you don't get mad at me." I said "Yeah, I want to know." So, every time I'd turn in an order, then he'd tell me how to turn it in.
BL: Um, um.

OS: He says "Just tell me what you want and I tell you how to turn them in." Then he showed me how to stack my dishes on my arm. Things like that. But, I really learned in a hurry.

BL: Good.

OS: What a good teacher.

BL: Was it hard work?

OS: Well, I didn't think it was. Cuz, the dishes were heavy you didn't have any choice on what they weighed and one thing from another.

BL: Um, um.

OS: (Laughs) (Talks to someone in the background)

BL: Tell me about some of the other jobs that you had.

OS: Well, I get through over at the taxi stand and the guy on the corner, Lance, would call up and say Opal when you're through come over take cash for me. So, I'd go over there and take cash for him.

BL: It sounds like you put in a lot of hours.

OS: And, then, uh, I worked in the Long Branch and I worked in the Foley Grill as a waitress. _____, he called me Speedy. (Laughs). Cuz, I could wait on more people in less time.

BL: Um, um.

OS: I really enjoyed it.

BL: Were you married?

OS: Oh, yes, I've been married.

BL: Been married more than once?

OS: Huh?

BL: Been married more than once?

OS: Um, Um.

BL: When did you get married the first time?

OS: 1935, I think it was.

BL: Did you get married here in LaGrande?

OS: Um, Um.

BL: Where did you get married?

OS: Huh?

BL: Where did you get married?

OS: Where, in LaGrande.

BL: Was it in a church or at the courthouse or in a home. Do you recall?

OS: No, I don't remember.

BL: (Laughs)

OS: Holy smokes. (laughs). Yeah, I know he got hurt in a truck wreck. And, he laid five months in the hospital in The Dalles. If he'd lived he would have been nothing but a vegetable anyways. They had to pry out the seat from underneath him, to get him out of the cab.

BL: Um, um.

OS: It was two consolidated trucks parked on the highway, on a blind curve. One going to Portland and one coming to LaGrande. Side by side. He didn't have chance coming around this blind curve. It took the outside, or inside, next to the bank, instead of going, otherwise he would went over on the railroad track. Right over the banks on the

railroad track. And, they had to pry the seat out from under him to get in out of it. And, he lived five months in the hospital, in The Dalles, and then he, uh, passed away.

BL: Did you have children by him?

OS: Two.

BL: Boys? Girls?

OS: Two girls.

BL: Two girls. Okay.

OS: I didn't have no boys. I just got nephews.

BL: Okay. So, then did you remarry later.

OS: Oh, yes.

BL: So, your first husband was a truck driver. What did your second husband do?

OS: I don't remember. Do you?

BL: What was his name? We'll start with that.

OS: Jack Powell. He wasn't worth _____ (laughs).

BL: Okay.

OS: So, I got rid of him in a hurry.

BL: Any children by him?

OS: Huh.

BL: Did you have any more children? Just the two girls.

OS: I got three girls all together.

BL: Okay. Well, tell me a little bit about the girls. Where did you have the girls?

Were you in a hospital or at home?

OS: I was in the hospital for the first one, second one, and the third one I had to have a c-section.

BL: What hospital were you in?

OS: Grand Ronde, the old Grand Ronde. Boy, you really got good care there.

BL: Did you?

OS: And, then in old St. Joe I got good care.

BL: Can you tell me about that?

OS: It's just good care. Laying there to have my appendix out in St. Joe.

BL: Were they comfortable rooms?

OS: But, this huh, when I fell and broke my head, this has not been to long ago, 1995, I went to the hospital and had a surgery. I kept complaining about it felt like I had a horseshoe on my left heel. They didn't look. When they did, there was a blister on it. By that time, my second daughter had pulled a sock off of this foot and she said there were blisters all over the foot this, of the foot. Boy, did they get busy then. I couldn't walk for a long time.

BL: Um, um.

OS: And, now I still have calluses on that heal.

BL: Wow.

OS: So, anyway, the thing they used on my feet that is supposed to _____. That's what made the blisters.

BL: Can you tell me about your involvement in the church here in LaGrande?

OS: The what?

BL: Your involvement in the church?

OS: Christian Church

BL: Okay.

OS: Well, I sang in the choir when I was 15.

BL: Had you gone to that church all through your childhood?

OS: Ya'.

BL: Do you remember where it was located?

OS: It was on 7th Street at that time. Now, it's on 10th.

BL: Okay. So you started singing in the choir at age 15. Did you have any other involvement in the church?

BL: How long did you attend there?

OS: Oh, Lord, I don't remember. One time I had a party, we took three people. They went through the whole crowd. The first one told em' who they were with, the next one come by and told them what they were doin', and the next one come by and told em' where they were at. So, we had to remember that. When it came out turn to recite it, we had to tell. But, I was with a minister on top of a woodpile, runnin' a footrace. One would give ya', each one give ya' one difference here. But, it was kind of fun. Everybody got a kick out of it.

BL: That sound like a good way to start a rumor. What other things were you involved in LaGrande? Were you involved with any kinds of clubs, or groups?

OS: Well, I joined Eagles when I I'm still an Eagle.

BL: Okay.

OS: I'm a past State President of the Eagles.

BL: Why did you join?

OS: Because, somebody asked me.

BL: Okay.

OS: And, it's a friendly, friendly group.

BL: Um, um. Did you have a specific mission when you first joined? A goal for the group that you were involved in.

OS: No.

BL: So, what sort of things would do in the group?

OS: Well, we looked out for our sick and see if there were things we could do to help out others. And, things like that. And, we had a sick committee. If anybody was sick, they'd go see how they were and so on so forth. Times have changed though since them days.

BL: Um, um. Why do you think that is?

OS: Huh?

BL: Why have they changed do you think?

OS: Well, a lot of them don't seem to care whether they go to lodge or not.

BL: Was there a stronger sense of community then? A stronger sense of community?

OS: Yeah, a lot of them do.

BL: Um, Um.

OS: It always seemed to me like after I joined I was always runnin' around see how this one was and how that one was. And, then we'd report back.

BL: Can you tell me about becoming President of the Eagles. You mentioned that you had been the President for the Eagles Club. Can you tell me how that came about?

OS: Well, they have a moninating, nominating committee, and then somebody's name is nominated and she don't want to quit, she just say I deli...., she don't want to go for

that office, she'd say "I decline." But, if she don't decline, then it's hers. And, so on and so forth, like that. It's, it's a, it's a good, it's a good friendly organization.

BL: What were your responsibilities as president?

OS: To see that order was kept, and carry out the motions, and things like that.

BL: Did you have a weekly meeting? Did you meet on a weekly basis?

OS: No, twice a month.

BL: Okay. What, did your club consist of only women or were there men in there as well?

OS: The men had a club too. But, they were separate from the ladies.

BL: Okay. And, then you didn't only take on the position one time, how many times were you President.

OS: Five.

BL: Five.

OS: Five times I was President. And, then, um, past state president. Took me 10 years to go through that one.

BL: Tell me more about that.

OS: (laughs) That was quite interesting.

BL: How so?

OS: Well, we learned more as you went by, you know, from year to year you learn more. More, so everybody kind of got used to you. And, then one lady wanted to know if I wanted to go on to the higher up and I said no, I'd be gone too much. She wanted to run me through a Grand _____ Officer. (Laughs) I said "No." (Laughs) I'd gone far enough.

BL: Um, um.

OS: But, some of them did go on.

BL: So you went as far as State President. Did that require a lot of travel.

OS: Oh, yeah. I had to visit every auxiliary in the State of Oregon and go to the national convention my besides.

BL: Oh, wow. Where was that?

OS: Where ever they, different places each year.

BL: Where did you get to go.

OS: I went to Boston.

BL: It sounds like a fun trip.

OS: Um, um.

BL: Now during this time when you were the President of the club in LaGrande, were you working at that time as well.

OS: Um, um.

BL: Do you recall what you were doing then.

OS: Waitin' tables.

BL: Okay. So, you were pretty busy.

OS: Um, um.

BL: And, then you had your girls at home.

OS: Um, um.

BL: Were they going to school at that time? Were they in school at that time?

OS: Um, um.

BL: Okay. Where did they

OS: Excuse me, do you have aspirin?

BL: Yes, I

(PAUSE IN TAPE)

BL: We were talking about the Eagles. About your involvement in the Eagles. So, you had meetings twice a months.

OS: Um, Um.

BL: What other activities did you do? What other activities did you do while you were in the Eagles?

OS: Activities?

BL: Um, um.

OS: What?

OS: Oh yeah, I bowled.

BL: Okay. How often did you bowl?

OS: Well, once a week. Except when I wanted to substitute on another team. Another day, I'd always fill in.

BL: Um, Um. Now, was this part of being involved in the Eagles, or what this a separate group?

OS: No, it's an Eagles club that was in bowling too. So....

BL: Okay. Was there a bowling league at the Eagles, in the club?

OS: There was at one time. They had pin balls didn't they. That didn't last long. We went out to the bowling alleys.

BL: Um, um. Where was the bowling alley.

OS: There was a bowling alley. There's what.

(talking from people in the background).

BL: That was the original bowling alley.

OS: Down under is what they used to call it.

BL: It was called "The Down Under?" That was the name of it "The Down Under?"

OS: Uh, uh. It was underneath the Red Cross Drug Store.

BL: Okay.

OS: That's where it was.

BL: How many....

OS: At that time.

BL: How many lanes were in there?

OS: Five.

BL: Okay.

(talking from people in background)

OS: I made my first 200 down on that, then lane too.

BL: Did you? Jerry said that one of them had duck pins on 'em. What's a duck pin?

OS: It was a small ball that you used in your hand, without any holes in it.

(talking from people in background)

BL: Did they have an automated system, that sent your ball back, like they do now?

OS: At first they didn't, they had pin setters. They had to roll the ball back and then set up the pins for you knock 'em down again. (Laughs).

BL: So, a pin setter, was that a real person who did that? Was it a young person, or just whoever was working?

OS: Kenny was a pin setter.

(Talking from people in background)

BL: So, all day long that was the job of the pin setter. Just to sit up pins for all of the lanes, or were there more than one.

(Background: One pin setter would set up two lanes).

(talking from people in background)

BL: So you did a lot of bowling in those days.

OS: Oh yeah.

BL: Did you rent your shoes? Did they have shoe rentals at that time?

OS: No, no. I had my own shoes.

BL: Did you have your own ball?

OS: Um, um.

BL: Did a lot of people bowl?

OS: A lot of people bowl now.

BL: Pretty popular past time. It was a popular past time?

OS: Um, um.

BL: What about dancing?

OS: I enjoyed it.

BL: What about dancing? Did you ever do any dancing?

OS: Oh, Lord, yes. (laughs)

Tape 1, Side 2

BL: We were talking about dancing here and Opal has a story to tell me about dancing.

OS: My husband and I were traveling around and we heard music. We were in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He said lets go see what they're doin' with that music. So we went in. We started dancin'. The music stopped. The orchestra leader come over and he said "I seen you two dance someplace before."

BL: Where, where had he seen you?

OS: We lived in Oregon, but we were in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: And, he had seen us dance someplace before.

BL: Wow.

OS: Well, we had a routine of our own. And, we both enjoyed dancing.

BL: Where did you dance in LaGrande?

OS: Eagles Hall.

BL: What about Zuber Hall.

OS: Huh

BL: Zuber Hall .

OS: Oh, the Zuber Hall. Yeah, I danced there too.

BL: Can you tell me about Zuber Hall? What was it like?

OS: It was just a hall. They had an orchestra. They had a balcony. People 'ld get up there and sit there and watch people dance.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: Didn't want to dance. I guess. I dunno.

BL: Do you remember what the dance floor looked? Or, any of the decorations?

OS: No, not. Eventually, it wasn't fun to dance on any more. They had it turned into the Fellows Gardens. They served meals and things in there then.

BL: Oh. Tell me more about your dancing.

OS: It was right there behind the Sacajawea Annex.

BL: The hall was. Okay.

BL: Did you go there on a weekly basis.

OS: Huh?

BL: Did you go dancing weekly?

OS: Well, every chance I got. (Laughs)

BL: Tell me what you wore? If you were going out for a night of dancing what would you wear?

OS: Ordinary clothes.

BL: A dress, pants?

OS: Dress, slacks, whatever, whatever you wanted to wear.

BL: Heels?

OS: No, you couldn't, I kept interfering with high heels. (Laughs) I had my ankles sore all the time.

BL: Was there any formal dances? Or was it pretty casual?

OS: I don't know. There used to be a skating rink too. At the old K.P. Hall. Where was the old K.P. Hall?

Person in Background: I thought it was Zuber.

OS: No, no. There was a hall upstairs. It's right in there close to where Penny's is, I think. The place there, maybe it was the next block. You had to climb the stairs to get up to the dance hall.

Person in background: Right now, that's the Mason's building.

OS: Could be. Can't remember.

BL: Do you recall the music that, that you danced to? Did you have any favorites?

OS: Cab Driver, Mac the Night, Down Yonder, _____.

BL: Uh, uh. What sort of dance did you do? What there a name for the dancing you were doing?

OS: We had our own style.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: You _____ danced didn't you.

BL: Was it fast, with a lot of swingin' around?

OS: (Laughs) Ask him, he saw us dance.

Person in background: Yeah, they swung around.

OS: Yeah, we swung around, and kicked up our heels. We really enjoyed it.

BL: Did you dance any, in any other places here in LaGrande.

OS: Oh, I danced at the Eagles, danced at the Zuber Hall. They used to have dances up on the mezzanine floor in the Sacajawea Annex. Not the Annex. I never did like them marble stairs in the hotel.

BL: Why not?

OS: To slippery.

BL: Oh.

OS: So, I'd take the elevator.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: (laughs)

BL: What was it like inside? The Zack (sp) Hotel? Beside the marble stairs, do you recall what it looked like.

OS: The marble stairs going up by the main floor and they were kind of slippery to me.

BL: Was it pretty in there?

OS: Yup, anyway it was on the mezzanine floor that we danced. _____ also had six tables up there for the Indian Festival of Arts. And, then they had judges and judged to see who fixed up the prettiest table, to represent the Indians.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: Interesting too. I got involved in most anything. (Laughs)

BL: Sounds like you were very busy.

OS: I enjoyed every bit of it.

BL: Uh, uh. We're talking about some of the hot places to dance in LaGrande. And, you did quite a bit of dancing it sounds like. Can you tell me about some of the other locations.

OS: The Tropadera.

BL: The Tropadera.

OS: It was a night club.

BL: Okay.

OS: Danced in there quite a bit.

BL: Was there a place called Lynne's Villa.

OS: Uh, uh. That was out on the highway.

BL: And they had dancing in there as well.

OS: Uh, uh. And the Q & E was another one on the highway and they had dancing there too.

BL: What did the Q & E stand for?

OS: Queen and Eva. Two women.

BL: Were they the owners of the club?

OS: Uh, uh.

BL: Okay.

OS: That was there names. The two girls. They were sisters, Queen & Eva. Q & E. (Laughs)

BL: Any other places that you recall dancing in.

OS: Where ever I went. Out of town or any place, if there was good music, I was dancin'.

BL: Was the music live, all the time?

OS: Most of the time.

BL: So, tell me more about the music. Were they local musicians, were they traveling musicians, where did they come from?

OS: Oh, some of them were just local. Once in a while you'll find a troupe that going through, you know. But, they'd let you know plenty ahead of time. So, that you could advertise it. It was real nice.

BL: So, this just wasn't just, a, a, one or two people in a group. This was a whole orchestra who played.

OS: One or two?

BL: I mean, how big was a group that played music?
OS: Sometimes, they had a full orchestra. Sometimes it just somebody, four or five, and at one place we'd go, _____ played. It made no difference what tune he was playin' when we walked in the door he'd start playin' Mac the Night. (Laughs)
BL: Was that your favorite?
OS: It was the tune that we danced good to.
BL: So, you had sort of a reputation around town about the dancing.
OS: I love dancing. I still do.
BL: Where did you learn to dance?
OS: (Laughs) I guess at home.
BL: You learned at home. Did you parents dance?
OS: Not that I know of.
BL: What was your husbands name? Your dancing partner?
OS: Well, now, the last one name was Dole.
BL: Dole?
OS: D-O-H-L.
BL: D-O-H-L. Hum. What was his last name.
OS: Stoop. That's my last name.
BL: Okay, that makes sense. What kind of work did he do?
OS: Railroad.
BL: Did he travel a lot?
OS: No. Just local.
BL: What did he do?
OS: They had a name for it, but don't ask me what it was. (Laughs) He worked in the yards.
BL: Was his work mechanical or was it more managing, scheduling, maintenance?
OS: He worked on the engines that come in, didn't he.
BL: Did he ever tell you anything about his work?
OS: He'd come home and say "Ya, I twisted my ankle." _____. And its winter time. So, I'd get out a tub and some Epsom salts, soak it, and pretty soon he was up and walkin'. (Laughs)
BL: What do you think has been you favorite part about living in Union County?
OS: In Union County?
BL: Uh, uh. What has kept you here for all of these years?
OS: I guess it was my family. My mother was born in New York State, my dad and I were. They met in _____, Kansas. Got married and had three kids and then moved west and then had two more.
BL: So you just stayed in the area because your family was here?
OS: Yeah, I had three girls. Still go 'em. One lives here and one lives in California. _____ pretty quick. The other one lives in Pendleton.
BL: Um, um. Do you think that Union County still has a strong sense of community, like it did before, or has it changed?
OS: I really don't know.
BL: Let me ask you about, um.... There I go, I lost my train of thought again. (Laughs).

BL: I wanted to ask you if you remember any events happening in Union County, big events, such as fires, floods, or storms, or things that really stand out in your memory?

OS: All I remember is that when they had the small pox epidemic. And, everyone in our family was sick but me. They all got it but me.

BL: Can you tell me more about that?

OS: And, uh, they, uh, grandma sent word that my oldest brother was, had the small pox, so we went out, got him and brought him in with us. I was the only one on my feet. So, my grandma come around to make a list of what I needed. Then she'd send somebody to get the stuff and I was taking care of all them.

BL: How old were you?

OS: 12.

BL: So, did they get sick one at a time, or how did it sort of unfold?

OS: No, not one at a time. It was three at a time. Then we had the flu epidemic.

BL: I want to back up just a little bit Opal. When you were talking about the, um, you were talking about this epidemic of small pox, did everyone in town have it? Now, I don't mean every single person, because I know you

OS: They always had to be quarantined, put out a yellow flag, when they had small pox at that house.

BL: Um, um.

OS: Then they put out a red flag when they had scarlet fever at a house.

BL: Okay.

OS: And things like that. They don't quarantine any more.

BL: So, what kinds of things while you were taking care of people, what kinds of things would you have to do? And, how did you keep yourself well.

OS: My grandmother came over to make a list of what I needed. And, then she'd send somebody to go get it for me. And, I got through the winter that way.

BL: This lasted all winter?

OS: Oh, yeah.

BL: So, you couldn't leave the house during this time? Were you allowed to leave the house.

OS: I go very far away, with everybody sick. (laughs).

BL: Were you doing the cooking and the cleaning and all of those things.

OS: Whatever I could do, I did, and I had too.

BL: Were they given medication for small pox.

OS: I can't remember.

BL: You don't recall medicating them. What about a physician? Did the doctor come out to the house to check in on these people?

OS: Doctors used to come to the house.

BL: During the small pox epidemic, did they come to check on the patients then?

OS: I think so, but I ain't sure.

BL: Okay.

OS: There's just certain things that stand out in my mind, you know. Then there is some that I don't remember.

BL: Um, um. So, once they got through with the small pox, then you also mention scarlet fever. That would be a different colored flag.

OS: Never had scarlet fever. But, there were a lot of people in town that did.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: But, many folks had the small pox and my oldest brother had the _____ to get the small pox.

BL: So, this must have been a common occurrence?

OS: Uh, uh.

BL: People getting sick from these kinds of things. Were there special instructions about how to care for someone, so that you wouldn't come down with the same symptoms.

OS: They sent someone in to take care of my dad, a nurse, you know, who had the small pox. I remember that.

BL: Uh, uh. Can you hear that? My tummy's growling.

OS: _____ (Laughs). Maybe I better shut up.

BL: Can you think of anything that I'm missing? Things that are just really sticking out in your mind?

OS: Sometimes, I just can't remember seems like. I nose runs and my feet smell.

(Laughs). Otherwise, I get along just fine. (Laughs)

BL: So, do you remember other events that would of happened here that really stand out to you that you were involved in.

OS: Some of this is all I forget.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: Ironstone Mary.

BL: Opal has just thought of a couple of other things to tell me about. One of them is a statue.

OS: It's a Ironstone Mary.

BL: Okay.

OS: A long time ago, she was on Adams Avenue and they would have tin cups chained to the thing because it was a fountain. It was right on Adams. Well, they moved it from there over to 4th & Depot, and an old guy got drunk and he run into Ironstone Mary, knocked her off her pedestal. So, then they put it back up again. Got it all fixed real nice and darned if he didn't come by and do it again.

BL: The same person?

OS: Yeah, the same person.

BL: There were cups attached to the fountain so you could drink....

OS: Attached with a chain. Yeah. It was a drinkin' fountain.

BL: Where did they, where did the statue come from?

OS: Ever since I remember, it was downtown. First, it was on Adams Avenue, and then they moved it up on the corner of Depot and 4th.

BL: Who was Mary?

OS: The Ironstone Woman.

BL: Uh, Uh. Did she have some kind of significance for the area.

OS: I know they called her Mary. I don't know.

BL: She was just some person who was from here and they made a statue to represent her?

OS: But, now they tell me they got Ironstone Mary over in _____.

BL: In Max Square.

OS: But, I've never seen it over there. I'll have to have you take me over there.

BL: There was another Mary that you were familiar with. China Mary.

OS: That was a Chinese joint.

BL: Can you tell me more about that place?

OS: _____ Johnson's had a dress shop, and a noodle parlor was over that dressmaking shop and they called it China Mary's because that was Mary Young's name. And, uh, it had, uh, I worked there for I don't know how long.

BL: What was she like?

OS: She was real good to us.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: And, Billy, one of the cooks, _____ will you do something for me. He'd say "Help me go to post office."

BL: Was he also Chinese?

OS: Uh, uh.

BL: Was it difficult to communicate with them, or did they have pretty good English.

OS: One time Ernie said "She say it right, she say it right." (Laughs)

BL: So, a lot of people came to the Noodle Parlor?

OS: Oh yeah, that was an eating place.

BL: Did you have a favorite meal there? A favorite meal?

OS: I worked there.

BL: So, you didn't eat the food?

OS: Huh?

BL: You didn't eat the food?

OS: Oh, yes. I always ate just anything I wanted.

BL: You didn't have a favorite? Okay. Do you feel like I'm missing anything here? Are there things you want to talk about that I haven't asked you? No.

OS: I think you've covered quite a lot.

BL: Have you enjoyed living here?

OS: Oh, yeah.

BL: You wouldn't do it any different?

OS: My childhood is here. (Opal is kind of mumbling here and hard to hear). I remember his homecoming, when he got out of the service. The last brother was in World War II. He's gone. They've all served their time.

BL: Uh, uh. You mentioned having a homecoming and I've heard a lot about the soldiers passing through here on the railroad. Were there any other visitors on the railroad that you remember?

OS: I know a lot of women would go down to see if _____ was on the train that was going through.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: They'd always be at the depot when a train was going through. See if there was anybody that was related.

BL: Did any famous people ever come through town?

OS: If they did, I was probably too young to remember. (Laughs)

BL: Any Presidents.

OS: Yeah, President _____ one time up at Meacham _____, wasn't it.

BL: Did you go to see him.

OS: Yup.

BL: Can you tell me about that day?

OS: Don't remember.

BL: Did you drive there to see him?

OS: I didn't drive.

Person in background: Who took you up there?

OS: I don't remember. I remember seein' him.

BL: Did you take any photo's?

OS: I don't think so.

BL: Did anybody else ever pass through town that you remember? Standing out in your mind?

OS: If they did, it was in the night and I didn't know.

BL: Okay. (Laughs).

BL: I want to ask you about one other thing, one other place. China Town.

OS: Yeah.

BL: Do you remember what that looked like?

OS: A lot of Chinamen lived down in there.

BL: Uh, uh.

OS: And then they went to start building the old Safeway, found pottery and stuff like that.

BL: Did you ever go there? Did you ever go into China Town.

OS: Yeah, I've gone through the town, ya'.

BL: Were there any businesses set up in there. Or was it only housing?

OS: Just housing I guess. I know one time I worked in a restaurant and I sent this one Chinaman someplace to get something. He'd always come back and say "I don't sleep good last night. I'd say "What's the matter." He said "Pork chop got drunk and I afraid he'd set the house on fire." They had names of each other (laughs).

BL: So Pork Chop was one of the nicknames.

OS: Yeah, (laughs).

BL: So you didn't go there a lot? You didn't go there a lot? Did you have friend who lived in there? Or just people you worked with?

OS: (Opal mumbling, can't understand) Chinamen's lived there. Jefferson.

BL: Could you tell there was a definite division between the Chinese people and the other people who lived here?

OS: Well, I was standing on the street corner by the telephone office one day, and I heard a pop shot. I thought Uh, Oh. Chinaman sitting on the sidewalk over there took a pot shot of a guy on the Post Office steps.

BL: Oh.

OS: I thought: Boy, I better get out of here.

BL: So, did you?

OS: I got out of there.

BL: Was the university here? Do you recall when the university was built? No. Did you ever go to any functions or do anything, participate at all, at Eastern.

OS: What?

BL: Any activities at all? Did you go to watch plays, or anything?

OS: I never went to college.

BL: Well, I've enjoyed visiting with you Opal.

OS: Thank you.

BL: It sounds like you had a lot of fun here.

OS: And, I'm still having fun.

BL: That's good. I'm glad to hear it.