

Hammond, Betty, 1103 Main Street, Grinnell, Iowa
Interviewed by Amy Myers
Transcribed by Jean Barker and Amy Myers

Tape #1 Side A - April 25, 1993; 9:35 a.m.

Amy Myers: What we want to start out with is your childhood. What can you tell me about it? Where were you born and what time of the century?

Betty Hammond: Well, I was born in 1933 in Missouri, around Newtown, Missouri, which is down in the sticks. I lived there until I was 5 years old and then we moved to northern Missouri, up to Kirksville, Missouri, closer to Iowa, and that's where I went to grade school. I went to a country school and there were six children in our family, 5 girls and 1 boy. I was the youngest for 10 years and then I had a baby sister come along; and of course in those days, you didn't know a baby sister was coming along. I came home from school one day and I had a baby sister and I didn't know what to think of that as I had been the baby for 10 years. I think to make me feel better my mother sent me up to our next door neighbor which just lived up the road to tell her because she didn't know we were going to have a baby sister either. I kind of think I looked down my nose a little bit at first because I had been the youngest and that, but we got along just fine and I took care of her and my mom was a little ill as the years went on so I had a lot of responsibility to take care of her. So I grew up mighty fast. Of course, living on a farm you have a lot of responsibility.

AM: You say you had 5 girls in the family and 1 boy.

BE: Yes

AM: So, was there pretty much shared responsibility in the family?

BE: Well, of course, me being the youngest, the older girls were more ahead of me, graduated and that, and my brother and I, which there is 4 years between us, him and I kind of palled around together. I was more the tomboy and he should have been really the girl, I think, because I kind of took care of him.

AM: (laughter)

BE: We lived on a farm and of course I had to walk about 2 miles to country school and in country school when I started there was only three of us in the class, 3 little girls, and of course we just kind of grew up together there. And I think everyone misses out - we really had a good time in country school.

AM: Yeah?

BE: Everybody looked after everybody else and we had a really nice teacher - she was an excellent teacher. She could play the piano, and she could just put on the best programs, you know.

AM: hmmm... oh

BH: Of course the older kids took care and helped teach the younger ones and helped the teacher out. We had a one-room school house with a basement and then we had what we called a "cloakroom". And of course we had these little green chairs and if you were bad you had to go sit in the cloakroom on these little green chairs and I don't think I ever had to go in there and sit.

AM: (laughter)... That's good!

BH: (laughter)... No, I think I did probably. Of course the big deal was you got to go out and dust the erasers or take down the flag and just a really good time. I remember, I think one thing that really sticks out in my mind, there was only 5 of us in school the last year and the bakery in town there ran a contest and whoever could save the most bread wrappers, they gave big swings for outdoors and then the second prize was a big slide. And of course we won the second prize and our teacher let us put this (our one-room school house was big) and she let us put it in the east side of the school house by the windows where we could slide and keep it in there. And I think probably that was still in there - it was in there - when they closed the school because I was the last student to be there; the last year I was the only student so they closed it and sent me into town to school.

AM: hmmm... Okay. So at this time you lived out in the country?

BH: Right.

AM: How far away were you from town?

BH: Oh, probably 11 or 12 miles from Kirksville, the bigger town - that's where they sent me into town then for school. But we always walked to school in the wintertime and we had blizzards just like they have up here, you know.

AM: Yeah...

BH: But, oh we would have, like they would have pie suppers and would auction off pie suppers or box suppers and Christmas programs, and of course, that was back before there was electric lights, you know.

AM: Uh-huh...

BH: And I was born during the Depression - I don't really remember a lot about it but my folks telling me about it, you know, and there was a drought that year down in Missouri too and of course the ground down in Missouri isn't like in Iowa. When you have a drought down there you don't raise much food or anything.

AM: Oh...

BH: Because the ground is so clay. But I know my mother had told me, I think it was about the year so when I was a year old or that, in 1933 and '34, that they just couldn't raise anything. There was no water, and of course back in those days you didn't know about irrigating and you know all of that stuff. I know she said they had turnips - they did raise turnips and they had like lard and that and you could make a gravy. I don't think we ever really went hungry or anything but there were a lot of people that did, you know.

AM: Yeah...

BH: But by living on a farm, you did have a little something to eat and that. Of course, when I was a young girl there in Missouri why I always helped out in the field and everything and we had the horses and we had around 300 head of sheep used to raise lambs. And, of course, I helped my mom in the house and then I went to the field and helped my dad in the field. My older sisters were gone away from home and it was kind of up to my brother and I. Well then, he worked at the dairy there in the community so it was kind of left up to me and my mom.

AM: Uh-huh...

BH: I worked out in the field and helped make hay...

AM: hmmm...

BH: ... and drove the horses. I remember once I was plowing corn with the horses and the horses run away - they got scared a little bit or something. Well, one field was right next to the train track and I think that's probably what set them off. And of course, you drove the horses; when you plowed corn you had your hands busy on the plow holding the plow and the reins tied around you, but they slipped right off, which could have ben really bad if they hadn't...

AM: Yeah...

BH: ... but they did slip. I suppose I was little enough...

AM: Yeah...

BH: ... because I would have only been about 11 or 12 years old. And I remember my mom took ill one summer - and that's when you had threshers, you know, like a big threshing ring would go around the countryside and everybody, they was going to be at your house a certain day, and then you were responsible. And my dad, I was probably 12 years old, because I think my little sister was about 2, and he came in that night and said we were going to have threshers the next day, which was about 5 o'clock the day before and so it was up to me to feed probably 25 to 30 threshers.

AM: Ummm...

BH: So, I could dress chickens I remember. We had raised chickens; we always raised a lot of chickens and sold them and so I got busy and I dressed the chickens. I remember making mashed potatoes and gravy and I made a big dishpan full of macaroni salad.

AM: (laughter)

BH: And I think I made cakes then with peaches and strawberries over them - I think that is what I had for dessert. And the ladies, then they came about 11:30 and helped me get it on the table and that. But I was always older because I had a lot of responsibility before my age.

AM: Yeah. The threshers, were they like community people just going around?

BH: Uh-huh... just the neighbors. Just like we went to their place maybe the next day and threshed the oats with the big threshing machine and before that you cut the oats and shocked them up in shocks...

AM: Yeah...

BH: ... which I don't know whether you would know.

AM: I've seen pictures but... (laughter)

BH: That would happen maybe like 3 or 4 weeks before...

AM: Okay...

BH: ... and we would shock these oats up and they would cure in there and then the threshing machine and the crew would go around to every farm and they would thresh these out and then you could either feed your oats up or could sell your oats and then you had straw to use to bed down your cows or sheep or whatever - or hogs - or whatever you had.

AM: Okay.

BH: But, I don't know if you have ever seen an old threshing machine.

AM: Actually, near where I live they have what they call the "Old Thresher's Festival".

BH: Sure, well that's what we done.

AM: Yeah... all the machines and everything.

BH: Uh-huh... and lots of times before, you know, just like this morning I was going to mow the yard here and it was too damp; well down there it would be maybe damp so they would send the kids out. Like, we would run out and we would knock over these shocks so that they would dry...

AM: Oh...

BH: ... so then they would be ready to thresh maybe about 9:30 or 10:00, you know.

AM: Okay. Was the community always this involved with one another - did they help support one another?

BH: Oh, yeah.

AM: Or was it just especially closer to the Depression?

BH: No, that is just the way life was there until we got the big combines like they do now.

AM: Uh-huh.

BH: But as neighbors you went around and the community had, or maybe one person owned, a threshing machine but everybody used it and everybody helped in order to use it.

AM: How do you think the Depression affected the community as a whole? I know that individual families were probably affected differently and to a different extreme.

BH: Well, I think that back in those days everybody was in the same condition. You didn't have a lot and everybody was equal. I mean people didn't... I'm sure there were people in town that were better off, you know, but the community always stuck together. Sometimes you wonder if you wouldn't be better off to go back to get more community-wise people together.

AM: Uh-huh.

BH: You know I think sometimes we don't mix. Of course in those days getting together with the neighbors and that was your entertainment, because I can remember when we didn't even have a radio, you know. And then we did get a radio and we listened to that. But it was going to the school for things, the country school, or to the church things and that was your entertainment. Once in awhile I did have a neighbor that later, like when I was about 12 or 14, that moved in and they worked in town and they would take me to the show with them quite a bit. So later on we usually went to town once a week, like to get your groceries. I can remember my mom and dad would always go on Saturday morning usually and I usually stayed home and did the housework for her so she wouldn't have it to do when she got home and that would be all done. And then Saturday night my brother and I would go to town.

AM: Oh, okay, so everybody got their turn.

BH: Yeah, there was an armory there in Kirksville and they always had a dance and the neighbor boy and my brother and I would go in and they would let me off at the armory at the dance and then I don't know what they did...

AM: (laughter)

BH: They probably went looking the girls up, you know. (laughter) Took the little sister you know and dumped her off.

AM: (laughter)

BH: But my brother and I, we were pretty close, and of course, like I said, the other older girls worked in town and one got married so they were kind of gone as I got to the teenage stage.

AM: Okay. So you were on the younger end of the family.

BH: Right, uh-huh.

AM: As far as living in the northern part of Missouri compared to the southern part, or the area where you lived before, since you were born in the Great Depression, you probably weren't exposed to it that much in the southern part of Missouri. Do you think it was probably worse where you were or...?

BH: I think it would have been worse where I had been born because it was - what would you say - off in the sticks and that you know. I was like one or two or three when we moved away from that part, but it would have been a lot worse over in, it

was around Milan, Missouri, and my grandparents lived over in there too. Although my grandparents, like I said, we never were a family that ever went hungry like a lot of people did. My grandparents lived on a farm and they were actually - they weren't rich - but they always had cows and when you had the cows and the chickens and the butter and everything like that, you don't have that worry. And of course we raised a garden and that. But it was I think pretty bad when it was so dry and you just couldn't raise anything. And nobody had anything because it was just dried up down there. But like I say, up here in Iowa it probably wasn't nearly that bad, like dusty and bad because the ground in different up here, hold the moisture better so they probably could raise something maybe.

AM: Yeah... okay. Should I ask you probably about your teenage years? You say that you would go into town on the weekends to the armory. Was that common, I mean just like what the teenagers did around then?

BH: Yeah, you went to the dance at the armory or went to the show. And of course, like the show was probably a quarter or 50 cents and you were lucky to have that much money. You just didn't have ten dollars or five dollars or that sort of thing. I did like when they sent me in from country school, which I think was about sixth grade. I went the last grade in the country, which was the fifth. Of course, it wasn't real hard for me. I kind of worried you know because they had four grade schools in town and of course there is different sections of town and this was where the more, what would you say, well-off kids went and it kind of worried me because my mom always made all my clothes and you know it was out of old things. But she could sew really nice and they didn't look that way. But you know you always wonder. But the kids really took me in and I didn't have a hard time. Of course, I am kind of outgoing, and I was really a sports-minded person and so that got me off to a good start.

AM: Yeah.

BH: We went to the junior high there; there is a college there and the junior high set right there by the college and we had a lot of practice teachers that came from the college. And in the junior high years, of course, we would have all the tournaments and that within the school and I was an All-State basketball player...

AM: Oh... hey!

BH: ... in later years.

AM: Oh, yeah... well that's good.

BH: So I was in sports and drama - I always liked drama and art and all that, so I think when you are in those kind of things instead of just sitting back and I did take

part in all of that, so that helps.

AM: So that made the transition easier, then.

BH: Uh-huh, right.

AM: Okay. Um... let's see... when did you move to Grinnell?

BH: Okay, we moved to Iowa when I was about between 14 and 15, around in there. We moved to Beaman, Iowa, which is north of here, north of Marshalltown about 40 miles. I think it is straight north of here, and my dad took a job at Beaman and that's why we moved. He had decided to quit farming and he got a job at Beaman, Iowa, and that's how we moved to Iowa.

AM: Okay.

BH: And I started to school at Beaman and it's a good community up there. Of course my husband was raised up around Beaman and that's where I met him was in school.

AM: Okay. Could you tell by this time, I don't know... I mean I'm sure the Depression hadn't ended, but could you tell from living in the central part of Iowa compared to the northern part of Missouri, was it an easy transition also to move?

BH: Yeah, course, like I say, I'm pretty uh... I'm not bashful, you know...

AM: Yeah.

BH: ... and you know it makes a difference. I never was shy or you know... Oh, yeah, I could tell the difference, people were a lot better off up here. And you could just tell the difference in the way people lived and that and not just well off but advanced - they were further advanced up here on their machinery and that sort of thing. My husband lived on a farm when we moved up here, I met him in school. When I started going with him and the when we got married, I worked in the field and that. We had tractors too right at the end down there, but they had had them quite awhile up here, see, where down there you didn't have them quite as soon.

AM: Okay. So things were just a little more advanced.

BH: More advanced, yes, up this way... uh-huh.

AM: Did you find the same sense of community?

BH: Yes. We was taken into the Beaman community, you know, people were just

really nice. We have always been real fortunate that way everywhere, even when we moved to Grinnell, Monty and I are pretty common people.

AM: When did you move to Grinnell? Had you lived in Beaman when you were married?

BH: Uh-huh... sure. We got married, I was sixteen and Monty was 18. We started out, he worked as... back in those days a lot of farmers had hired hands... and he took a job as a hired hand and we lived on the farm where they lived. They had two houses, a small house and a big house and we lived in the small house. His wages was \$125 a month, but we didn't have to pay rent. We didn't have to pay electricity. We had some chickens of our own and we had our meat, so actually you know... He worked there for 2 years and saved enough money to start farming ourself. So we rented a farm about 5 or 6 miles away from there and started farming ourselves on our own. It was 80 acres and he would farm that and we had milk cows, dairy cows and he also worked as a carpenter in the daytime and I would have all the chores done and ready when he would come home at night and had the cows all in and everything and then we would milk them and we had milking machines then and that took lots of cleaning in keeping them clean because you have to sanitize those, you know.

AM: Oh, okay.

BH: But he was... I remember when we went to rent his farm, he would have been 20 and I would have been 18 and the lady that was renting (that owned the farm) she was a little hesitant because we were pretty young kids you know to be taking on a farming responsibility and milk cows, and of course, he had milked at home.

AM: Yeah.

BH: They had... when he lived with his folks in high school and that, they always milked around 30, 40, or 50 cows, Jersey cows, so he knew. And then, like I say, my mom had been ill when I was younger and I knew responsibility so that was no problem. I knew how to keep house and clean.

AM: Okay.

BH: So, anyway, we lived on the little 80 acres and Monty worked and I did the chores and that and we lived there 5 years. And while we lived there, we were married about 3 or 4 years, and we had a little boy, and that's the only one we had.

AM: Oh... okay.

BH: We just had the one boy.

AM: You said that since you were such a young couple that the landlady, or whoever owned the land, was rather hesitant. Now during that time, was it common for people to get married at that age or was it just her personally?

BH: No, she really... she knew that we were hard workers and that and it was just the youngness, I think. And it wasn't real common for people to get married that young. We just decided to get married and I was going to just stay in school - but you didn't do that in those days. Now you could do that. And I could have just as well went to school if I had wanted to, you know. And we just went on with farming and doing our best. But they kind of frowned on that in those days and so anyway I haven't been sorry one day.

AM: That's good.

BH: Like I say, everybody couldn't do it, and not that I'm anything special, I don't mean that, but I just mean him and I both had had lots of responsibility and I acted older than what I was. And we didn't have any babies right away, where that would have tied me down. I was able to go with him and be outside with him and work with him and that, so that helps. You know, if you had had some children right away and been tied down sometimes it is different. But we just kind of grew up together.

AM: Okay. You said it was discouraged that girls continued school. Do you think that the Depression and World War II helped to kind of equalize or give women more chances?

BH: It must have, I think, because... of course when that happened, you see, World War II would have been over.

AM: Oh, okay.

BH: Because you see, in World War II, 1942, I would only have been 10 years old and you know the war was on in 1940, 1941, and 1942. But I think after that why it just began to be more common. But I think it was even quite a few years before they even looked upon that - I think like 10 or 15 years after that before they began to look upon girls being married and go to school.

AM: Oh... okay. How was World War II; did that have a big effect on your family?

BH: I had a brother-in-law that (my older sister was married) and he was in the service but he wasn't in the fighting. He was stationed in Nebraska. And again, I would have only been 9 or 10 years old. And again, from not having a radio and it isn't like it is now with television. I knew that there was something of war but I didn't realize what it really consisted of. I knew my brother-in-law had a uniform and was in the service and they were out in Nebraska stationed at Hastings,

Nebraska. They would send pictures and talk about the barracks and there was an air base there. But I didn't really realize what was going on because you didn't have access to newspapers or you didn't have the radios or television or anything. And we lived out on a farm, so you don't really know anything like now. Now you know everything that goes on, you see it on TV, you know. So I didn't really actually realize what that really contained on a war.

AM: Okay. So you weren't really isolated, but you didn't really know.

BH: Yeah, right... you just wasn't concerned about it. I would go to the show, you know, on Saturday maybe or Saturday night and they would have the news reel and you would see this but that was off somewhere where you didn't really know and didn't affect you really, you know.

AM: Oh, okay. Did you know any family friends or any brothers of your friends - did they go off to the war? Was there anybody in the Kirksville area?

BH: I can't really remember... no, not in the neighborhood. I'm sure there was some that went, you know, but I guess being 10 years old you don't pay that much attention, with playing ball, fishing and swinging on the grapevines - that's what I used to do. I used to go out (I was kind of a tomboy) and we had a big timber, and of course, with wild grapevines. Of course, I loved movies. I liked to watch "Tarzan" and all of that.

AM: (laughter)

BH: I would always play out there by myself so much. And of course my brothers and sisters always said I was pretending to be a movie star. Well, I did, I was always one movie star or the other and I had a pretty big imagination when it came to acting and singing and all of that. I did a lot of that out on the hay rack and in the timber and that.

AM: Your childhood and family then wasn't really affected that much by World War II.

BH: No. It was just that we had this brother-in-law but he wasn't in the fighting. You know that would have been a lot different.

AM: Was there any experience that really sticks out in your mind in your childhood that you think was an important even that helped you become who you are today or something that really affected you? I know sometimes I can remember something from my childhood that seems right now like just a little detail and I don't know why I remembered it. Is there anything like that - any kind of story that really is a memorable thing for you?

Tape #1 Side B

BH: Well, I guess not anything... well, I think the country school and going there. I said if everybody could do that. Of course my mother, she passed away when she was 45. But she was really a super person. She could sew, she could do most anything. Of course, she only had probably a 7th or 8th grade education. But I think we just knew right from wrong and I can't remember any real incident. I think just growing up in those days. I said to my daughter-in-law the other day that it is too bad that everybody couldn't live in those days and these days too because you feel like you knew the harder times and then the modern times too. But, no, I guess not anything spectacular. I had kind of a dull life, I guess. (laughter)

AM: (laughter) Well... no.

BH: Maybe I'll think of something.

AM: I know it's always awkward when you are being taped.

BH: I can't think of anything other than just living there on the farm and learning how to keep house and work.

AM: So you think the experience of living on the farm really helped you more than the children who lived in town?

BH: Yes, we really knew what it was to know how to work. Because it was hard work, especially down there without the tools and the modern conveniences. We carried all our water in and carried it all out and didn't have a bathroom inside. And of course we raised 300, 400, or 500 head of chickens and sold the, so we had to dress all of those. But the thing of it is, I feel like that was good for me. At that time I probably thought it was a lot of work, you know, but it taught me. I'm really thankful for what we have now because when Monty and I got married we didn't have anything and we started with zero, nothing, and you didn't have any help from anybody. So it has been a lot of hard work and saving. We did a lot of saving. We didn't spend a lot of money during the years.

AM: That's one thing I notice when I talk to my grandparents about that. Nowadays it's not like it was back then. People back then knew the value of the dollar and had different priorities.

BH: Well, like when I told you we started farming there, Saturday night we would go to the town north of us, which is Grundy Center, and I would take the eggs that I had during the week that the chickens laid and that is what we bought our groceries with, what groceries we needed. But you didn't require a lot of groceries

like you do now, because we had our milk, meat, cream, and eggs, and I raised a garden. I raised chickens and butchered then and so you didn't require all of this. And then we would usually go to the show when Rick was little and we would always take him with us and never had a babysitter involved. And then during that time I was real sick once and just about passed away, so that is one incident that made me thankful for my family and for just feeling good. And I thought if I am ever able to do a day's work I'll never ever complain because I was near death, so I am thankful. That's one incident that does stick out in my life and I was only 23 then.

AM: Oh, wow...

BH: So we were pretty luck that I came out of it, cancer is what I had, so I had 30-some treatments after that and have never been bothered since, so I'm a pretty lucky person.

AM: Oh... yeah.

BH: So I guess that's probably the biggest thing that I am really thankful for, that I feel good.

AM: That's good. I know, because cancer - that's something major. It needs aggressive treatment.

BH: Yeah... every day I went. Some days I would have to skip a day because I would just get too many. You think you won't make it through, but I was pretty lucky.

AM: Good. You said you have a son whose name is...

BH: Rick... Richard - we call him Rick.

AM: (laughter) We have uncles, Dan, Daniel... okay. Now, at the time you had him you lived in Beaman.

BH: We lived in the country on this little farm that we had rented.

AM: Okay...

BH: We lived there... well, we worked as a hired hand for 2 years and then we started farming and we had lived over there about a year and a half before we had him, so he was born on this little farm.

AM: Okay.

BH: So he went out with me to do the chores and sometimes if it was real cold I

would leave him standing in the window. I remember he was about 2 years old and I left him standing there at the kitchen window while I went out to do the chores. I had put the window up just a crack because it was steamy in the house and I thought he had taken every thing that he could find loose and threw out that window. I had antique plates on the wall that was Monty's grandmother's. He threw those off the wall out there. He took the salt and pepper shakers off the stove. Everything was outside through the crack of that window.

AM: (laughter)

BH: Some of it was broken and some of it wasn't, but I guess he thought, "If you're going to leave me in here..."

AM: "Then I'm going to do some damage!" (laughter)

BH: I would always have everything ready and then when Monty would come home at night he would do the milking and then we would clean it up. We have been married 44 years, so...

AM: Wow!

BH: Time really went by fast.

AM: I know my parents have been married 25 years or 20-some years. Oh, 44 years - wow! That's quite a bit of time.

BH: I tell you, it seems like about 20.

AM: Yeah... oh really?

BH: Yeah, doesn't seem like 44. So you know we lived there on the farm about 5 years on the small one and then we had a chance to rent a bigger, probably 320-acre farm over by where we had worked as a hired hand. The same family kind of owned it, so they knew us. So we rented that and lived there 10 years and that's when we decided to move to Grinnell.

AM: Was there farming that you wanted to take over in Grinnell or you just decided it was time to move?

BH: Well, we had a cousin down here, Monty's cousin. He owned a restaurant here and they had run it for a few years and they decided to sell it. It was a good restaurant so we decided that we was going to have a farm sale and was going to buy that and move to Grinnell and that's what we done.

AM: Oh, so then...

BH: So we bought a restaurant here and we ran that for a few years and that was fun - I mean it was work. Naturally, anytime you are in a restaurant and it is open until 12 o'clock at night, and it opens at 7 in the morning, then you know it's work. But anyway, we run that for a few years. Rick was about 10 years old then and that was the only thing that bothered us was that we would go to work and he would still be in bed and we would come home at night and he would be in bed. He was down there with us as much as he could, but when school was on he had to be home so we had to have a babysitter. And that was really what bothered us, that we was never with him. So we had a chance to sell it, so we sold it and bought grain elevators here in town.

AM: Okay.

BH: So we ran the grain elevators, we had three of them. We had two and then we built a new one out south of town that sits out behind the Hy-Vee there - we built that elevator. We ran those for 25 years, then sold feed and fertilizer.

AM: So you kind of ran a few businesses. You said that one of the things that bothered you most was leaving your son with a babysitter. Do you think that the time he grew up in, that family was more supportive and more important, not really by choice, but just out of necessity? I know now people have to have babysitters all the time. Do you think that that is really... I mean because I know that some people argue about how you can still have the family life and everything.

BH: Well, we missed that. Of course Monty and I had never (neither one of us) had ever been away from him, you know. We always took him. Maybe once every 2-3 months we might leave him with somebody to go. I played basketball but Monty always took him along. I played State AAU basketball at night but Monty always took him along and he stayed in the crowd with him. So we never even got a babysitter for things like that. But we felt like if we stayed in the restaurant for 3-4 more years we would just miss out. But he was down at the restaurant a lot with us, we always had him down there. But at night you know we had to have him home because of school. Friday and Saturday nights he would stay down there with us. We just felt like when you have a chance to sell something, maybe you better take the chance. Then we bought the grain elevators and ran those. Then we bought the farm. We had a couple farms out east of town and we moved. We lived in town while we were in the restaurant and then the same year we bought the grain elevator we bought a farm out west of town here and we did move back out on the farm then.

AM: Oh... okay.

BH: So we put in 25 or so years at the grain elevators.

AM: Wow... yeah. You mentioned AAU basketball you played. I'm not familiar with that at all.

BH: Well, it was just a type of basketball the state had and it was like people out of high school on the teams.

AM: So that kind of kept you in sports then.

BH: Yeah, and then we have always been basketball and sports fans - basketball more than anything really. Monty played and he was a good basketball and baseball player. Our son never was big in sports and that's funny because I was really sports-minded when I was in junior high and high school. I mean I loved sports. That's probably the only thing that I would say I would have changed in my life, but I didn't have the opportunity.

AM: Yeah...

BH: Your folks didn't take you to town and make sure that you... and I'm not bragging, but I did have a big ability at sports and I could have gone a long ways I know, in any sport, I think, because I could do most any type of sport. But you didn't have the chance that you have now. Your parents didn't have time to make sure that you got... and I didn't have access to getting to go and do things. But I think I could have, and I think that is probably the only thing that I really have any regrets. I think I could have been in the Olympics in certain things.

AM: Yeah... wow.

BH: Because I had the drive and I had the ability. But you didn't have the chance that you have now and I wasn't in the right place probably at the right time, you know. Like I say, that is probably the only regret I have had for my life, if I had one.

AM: If you had had the opportunity, though, your life probably would have turned out differently.

BH: Right, and I wouldn't have had mu husband and wouldn't have had my son, so I kind of feel like things happen for the best sometimes. I was really kind of a little wild thing.

AM: (laughter)

BH: I was! It's probably a good thing that I met up with the husband that I have because he was nice and calm and I'm a little more... and living with him I've settled down quite a bit. But I mean I never did anything bad but I was just always out for a good time, you know, and joked and liked to tease. I have calmed down quite a bit

since then. (laughter) Quite a bit! It was just good fun. I knew what was right and what was wrong, you know. I never hurt anybody, that's for sure. I was kind of for the underdog anyway, if a girl or somebody was getting mistreated at school or something. I never wanted to be treated that way so I thought why should somebody else.

AM: So your son, did he grow up out on the farm then?

BH: Yes.

AM: And where did he go to school at?

BH: Here in Grinnell. He graduated from Grinnell and they still live out on the farm. He did farm our farm and then he owned a couple farms himself and he did the farming and then he helped us at the grain elevators too. He worked down there quite a bit. He always had to help chore and we had animals, hogs and cattle, and he always had to help with the chores.

AM: Then farming has kind of been in the family?

BH: Yeah. Monty's folks were farmers too and he grew up on a farm so we were just farmers. Rick always had a lot of friends out. You know he was the only child but he still always had a couple boys that just about lived at our house. And the one says, "I always knew _____ was welcome and we could come and go, but I knew when it was time to get up at 7 o'clock I was to be up and in the hoghouse helping clean it."

AM: (laughter)

BH: I never said anything about them going out but I said, "If you can go out, you can get up and help clean the hoghouse." So they knew they were welcome but they still had to get up and help.

AM: Where did your parents come from? Were they born in America or did they immigrate?

BH: I don't really know a lot about my background, been always going to go in to this and see if I had time, but doesn't seem like I ever have time. It takes quite a bit of time on genealogy. But my mom, her name was Livingston. I always wanted to look into that because I always had a feeling that there was some pst things about the Livingstons. As far as I know, they came from Missouri, and that's just about all I really know. My mom always said she had a little bit of Indian, but I don't know. She was black-headed. Her father passed away when she was 5 years old. If she was here... You should really know these things before, but you don't do it and it's too

late. But I had both grandmothers in Missouri and they both lived to be 101, so they haven't been dead but a few years.

AM: Wow... 101.

BH: But I think I'm Irish. And Monty, he's from England. I think his relatives came from England. I think I'm Irish and Scandinavian type person. I think they were the wild ones. (laughter)

AM: I'm sure you weren't that wild! (laughter)

BH: No, it was all healthy but I was a teaser. I liked to tease and like I say, swing on the grapevines. I was a tomboy - I guess that's more the name of it.

AM: So, you said your family was mostly from Missouri. Were big family occasions common, where people would get together? Or was it just once in awhile when the whole family would get together? I don't know how far apart you lived.

BH: Well, when we moved and I was 3 years old, we didn't live real close to relatives. It was mostly just neighbors. Then once in awhile, maybe once a month, we would go over to my grandparents. But until we got a car we didn't go anywhere. You didn't do any travelling. You just didn't get in a car like you do now and take off and go up to grandma's house and that. It was on horses and in the winter time you didn't go. I remember one winter we all had the measles, even my mother. Then my grandmother did come and stay with us. I can remember that because my mother was down in bed with us too, all of us. Then I had the whooping cough at the same time.

AM: Oh, no!

BH: Of course, it didn't keep me down. I was jumping on the bed. On Sundays when my sisters were growing up, then they would always come home on Sundays and I always hated to see them come because they messed up the house. I was so particular. (laughter) Well, I would have it all cleaned up and they would come and I would get after them. They would leave stuff lay around. I always like things put away but they would pile stuff. They were high school age or a little older. They would come home and bring all this stuff and I didn't like it because they would mess up the house. I don't know if you have seen a big old cook stove, like a wood stove. That's what we had on the farm. We had this big iron black stove that you cooked on and of course it had a place for hot water on one side (a reservoir) and it was really pretty handy. The only thing bad was that you had to carry the wood in and burn it and carry the ashes out and clean it. It was nice because up above you had this warming oven and you kept your leftovers and things up there.

AM: Oh... okay.

BH: My mom, I can remember when I was a teenager, like when I was 11, on wash day (you didn't have a washer and dryer) you had a washing machine and in the wintertime you had to hang the clothes in the house to dry and I hated that. I hated to come home and see those clothes hanging in that house. So my mom she would always make doughnuts so I would have homemade doughnuts when I came from school on Mondays and she would have all that stuff on that stove. I guess when I look back that is the kind of things I remember, is that old stove and that was really nice, you would think as much work as it caused and stuff, but it was nice. She made all our clothes and if we were going to be in a program (when I say a program, that was a country school thing where you had parts where you got up and sang) and she would stay up late at night and sew so we would have this dress. She could look at a dress in a store window and go home and cut it out and make it without a pattern.

AM: Oh my...

BH: So you know people have so many different talents. If I had a talent like that... I mean I guess that's things you remember about.

AM: You said that when you got a car it was easier to get together. Was that a big event?

BH: Oh, yeah, that was really something. And of course it wasn't a fancy car, like a Model A I think was the first car my dad had. I think he traded that off and got a little better car, you know, but that was quite a thing. The radio was quite a thing. You didn't have any contact. We didn't even have a telephone. When I started to school in town I had to go meet the school bus - it didn't come by my door. I had to walk about a mile I suppose - it seemed longer than that to me when I was little. But now when I drive back down there that road doesn't look near as long as it did when I was walking that. It's strange...

AM: Your perspective changes.

BH: I remember I used to dream so many times. I loved to go to school. If there was a reason that the bus didn't get there or something I would cry - I wanted to go to school because I liked it. I used to dream pretty often about being almost to the bus and I wouldn't have any shoes on and I couldn't run back home and there was just something about it that you couldn't run. I suppose I was thinking about missing the bus or something and would make me dream that. Yes, I liked school and I didn't like to miss.

AM: What kind of things did you study in school then?

BH: We had social studies. Now this was in town. Of course in country school you just had history, arithmetic, reading, and that. ut when I went to town school we had social studies and history, drama, art, PE (that's what I liked). (laughter) I liked the physical education. But just the regular things I think, algebra and geometry and all that.

AM: You said the radio was a big thing.

BH: Well, that was your communication with the outside world really.

AM: As a family I noticed people would listen to the radio.

BH: Yes, at night you would listen to "Amos and Andy".

AM: I have heard of one called "I Love a Mystery".

BH: Oh, yes, we always watched that. And "Fibber Magee and Molly" and then in the daytime you had your soap operas. My mother and I, we would always plan our work around (if I didn't have to go to the field) having things to do like getting the canning things ready so that we could hear the radio. So we would go out and get the outside work done so we could listen to "The Young Widow Brown" and "Ma Perkins" and "Stella Balaz" and all of those during the day. It was just like it is now with some of them. I don't watch them now because I'm at the store all the time. Oh yes, my mom enjoyed those and like I say, we would shell peas or get everything in so that we could listen to the programs that we wanted to listen to. But you worked all the time. There was not lots of play time in those days. One year I remember we put up 860-some quarts of food. We didn't have a freezer and you had to preserve everything by canning them. Well, I still can.

AM: My grandmother does that too. My mom does.

BH: I can meat and everything. Now where do your folks live?

AM: My family lives in southeast Iowa and my grandparents live there.

BH: So you know kind of what it's like.

AM: I've heard their stories and just try to figure out - have they exaggerated this? (laughter)

BH: Probably not. I'm probably not even making it as bad as it was in parts, you know. I think by me being only 9 or 10, or just being born, I didn't realize even as bad as it was because I wasn't old enough. I was only 1 or 2 years old when the bad part was going on.

AM: I haven't really talked to them about the Depression but I've always heard their stories about walking through the snow to get to school and everything.

Tape #2 Side A

AM: We were talking about how my grandparents have told me stories about working and going to school and everything.

BH: Oh, I started to say, I never minded working. In fact, I enjoy working and I wouldn't even need to work now other than I am just not the type of person to stay home and not work, I've worked so many years. Then, of course, my daughter-in-law and I have the Hallmark store together.

AM: Oh... okay.

BH: And I had it at first and then I decided to go back and help my husband at the grain elevators because we had sold them and then we got them back. I owned the store by myself and then she bought it from me. After we sold the grain elevators again then she said if I wanted to come back in with her, that would give her a chance to be at home with the kids and that's why I'm really helping her out until we get these kids all through school. It gives her a chance to go to the school functions and be gone for their needs and stuff. But when you have a business, you have to be there.

AM: Yeah... really.

BH: And so I take over and stay up there while she goes to different things and be at home with the family. But there has been 44 years of hard work I can tell you. When you start out with zero nothing and no chance of inheriting anything, why you either got to work or... The Grinnell community is behind us. They have always traded with us at the grain elevators and we are thankful you know. Of course you have to give service to get that business. But I feel like Grinnell has always been good to us and I'm real civic-minded for Grinnell people.

AM: I know you say you are still active. What kind of things are you involved in in Grinnell? I think my professor said you are in theater?

BH: Well, I was. (laughter) That's one of my wild things.

AM: That's not a wild thing!

BH: It was so funny. A friend of mine, Marion Jones (Mrs. Addison Jones) she is doing "Camelot" right now. She is director. She said, "Betty, why don't you come

down and try out for a part in this certain play?" I said, "Oh Marion, I haven't done anything since I was in junior high and high school. You wouldn't have a part to fit me anyway. I need a hooker part of something like that." She said, "That's just what it is." (laughter) She wanted me to come down, there was a part in "Camelot" here to try out - a queen or something, husky looking queen. I said if you don't get anybody, to let me know. But it takes so much time. It's fun but it makes me a little nervous. I said if it's not a very big part it wouldn't bother me so much, but yeah, I was in the theater and then I have been active in the Main Street. I don't know if you know what the Main Street organization is. we started that about 6 years ago. We had so many empty buildings and we were a little concerned. We didn't want our town to... you know how some of these little town shave disappeared by empty buildings and just a growing thing. So we did form a Main Street organization and the state was giving out funds at that time and we applied. For 3 years we had assistance from the state but after that we were on our own to upgrade our buildings and try to get people to fix their buildings up downtown and not let main street get to looking bad. So I was in that for 5-6 years.

AM: And then with the store your time was probably taken up.

BH: Yeah, and with the farm and elevator and that, why, I was busy all the time.

AM: Gee... not enough hours in the day!

BH: That's just about right! Yeah, that's just about right. Then, Monty, he built a swimming pool out at the farm. He likes that. I'm not a swimmer at all. I'm scared of water. He is a flier. My kids are fliers and my daughter-in-law is taking flying lessons right now. My son is a flier and my husband is a flier. But I'm not a flier.

AM: You're not interested in going up in the plane?

BH: No, I've been up in it once and that's all. When I said I was scared of water, about 5-6 years ago we had a meeting out in Colorado, elevator type of convention. On our brochure it said they was having one day of rafting down the Colorado River. He just thought that was the greatest thing. So when we go tout there, when we went into the motel, she said, "Have you signed up for the rafting?" I said I didn't really want to. Monty said he did that when he sent the brochure in. So I thought, well all the other wives were going and I'm really not a scaredy-cat, except I never learned how to swim. That's another thing that you didn't have a chance to do. You didn't get taken in for swimming lessons, you know. You just didn't do those things when you lived on a farm. Families didn't have the transportation and you didn't have the chance so I never learned how to swim, although we had a pond that I waded around in. Or we waded in the creek and that kind of stuff. Anyway, I thought, well, I'm not going to be a kill joy, I'll go. So that morning everybody got up and got in this bus. They had the rafts on it and they went about a 2 hour drive up to this

Colorado River, at Snow Mass and Vail. We were getting on this raft. Ours was the last one to take off - there was 5 of them. He kept telling us things to do. If it tipped over, try to stay with the raft and don't get under the raft. And keep your feet out in front of you because the rocks would hit you in the head. Yet you were supposed to bring along the camera to take pictures and pop to drink. It was an old camera, I can tell you. Anyway, I said to my husband that I didn't know if I can remember all these instructions. He said, "Oh, he's just making it sound exciting." So we got on it and you rode it like horseback. You rode it with one leg in the water and one inside and you weren't hanging on with anything. You were paddling with a paddle and the paddle is what kept it. He told the right side to paddle then the left side and that is what directed the raft down through the river. So anyway, we got on, our raft was the last one. And I'm telling you, the river was extra high from the snow and rough and it was like a bucking horse from the minute we got out into that river. It was up and down and the cold ice water was coming up on you. I thought what am I doing on this. I thought, if anyone falls in this river it will be me, you know. Well, right away a man fell in and we grabbed him and pulled him back in, you know. So it was rainy and the guide was standing in the back putting on his rain gear and we were over next to these big rocks and our legs were out. So I hollered at him, I said, "Hey, our legs". So he told the right side or left side to paddle and that brought it away from the rocks. And pretty soon here we were again and I hollered at him because I was scared we were going to bump our legs on these rocks, they were big. Then of course we were going like this (makes up and down wave-like motions with hands) all the time. So I thought, well I better not say anything anymore because he is going to say, "Now lady!" Just about then the water didn't leave and sure enough we hit the rocks with our legs and it dumped 4 or us right off into the river. This lady that was in front of me, her and I went into this whirlpool around the rocks. Monty and her husband, I didn't know where they were at. After it was over they were way down the river ahead of the raft but we were still in here and couldn't get out of it, see. It just kept swinging us around in this whirlpool and, well, I thought I was going to drown because I was trying to hold my breath and I couldn't. I was swallowing water but I couldn't get out of it. But then after awhile - I don't know how long - I pooped up to the top. Of course we had life jackets on. The waves were slapping me in the face but I looked around and about 2 miles down the river I could see this raft and I had no idea if it was our raft or where our raft was - you couldn't tell because it was so far away, you know. I still had the paddle in my hand. I thought, well, maybe I can work my way to the bank, because you were moving. Well, you have seen the Colorado River on TV...

AM: Yes... I don't think I would ever go on it.

BH: ... and those rafts. So I thought, well, I am just going to try. Then I could see a bend in the river, you know like trees out and bend, and I thought, what's on the other side. You just didn't know what... So I thought, I'll just try to work my way. Of course I was moving so fast and that was our raft and they were holding it there.

They couldn't come and pick you up or anything but they could with the paddling hold it in one place. Well I was getting close enough that I could see that Monty was on there. So, I thought, well I'm just going to put my feet out in front of me and see if I either miss it or I don't, you know. And I came right up to it and they pulled me in. Then the other lady came up and I took ahold of her and Monty pulled her in. But she said she could swim. But I don't swim. She said she swims every day. She was fighting it though, I think. She was trying to swim it and was worn out. Where I was just going to try and kind of paddle my way to the side.

AM: Oh, my.

BH: But, a girl that was on there (it was her dad that fell in first). The guide said, "Let's go over to the sand bar" because he could tell all of us was really worked up. So we got off on the sand bar. Of course my husband and her husband didn't realize we had been in this whirlpool because they were out in the water trying to get back in too. They had been on down the river quite a ways. So pretty soon the guide said we had better get started back, so we had only started, and it was supposed to be a 3-hour trip.

AM: Oh... 3 more hours of that!

BH: Mary said she wasn't getting back on that. Her husband got kind of mad at her and he said "Well, Betty is getting on." I said I didn't want to but I didn't think there was any choice, you know. She said, "I'm not getting on. I'm sitting here until somebody comes after me." Well, it would have been about a 5-hour wait for somebody to finish the ride and then go back and come get her and everything. She said to me, "you sit here and wait with me?" So I said to Monty, "Should I stay?" He said that was up to me, that he wasn't going to force me to get back on that. So I was going to sit with her. Just then we looked up and this bus that had taken us up, he came along the highway and saw us on the sand bar and there was a road that curved down and he came down to see if we were having problems. We were so glad to see him. Her and I and this young girl, whose dad had fallen off, she wouldn't get back on either. She said she had been on raft trips but nothing ever like this. She had screamed until her voice was hoarse because she had seen us down in there and we couldn't get out. She was so scared for us. Well, my leg and Monty's foot, we both hit them on these rocks. About midnight they started to swell up. In fact, we thought maybe I had broken the bones in this side of my leg, you know. They started hurting and swelling, so Monty said, "Do you want to go home?" Neither one of us could go to sleep, you know. So we just got up and took out of there and headed for home. But I came of course to the hospital. By the time I got there my ankle and leg was about like that (indicates approximate size with hands).

AM: Oh, my gosh!

BH: So of course he brought me right to the hospital here to see if it was broke but it wasn't. I was pretty lucky. But they took my blood pressure and that was the first sign of high blood pressure and I've had it ever since.

AM: Oh... no.

BH: But then maybe I had it and didn't know it. They thought maybe it would go down because they said a lot of times things will bring it on like that and then it will go down but I've had to take medicine ever since, but then I might have had to anyway. But that sticks out in my mind probably the worst.

AM: One of those things, huh?!

BH: That and being so sick that time, being so thankful that I got well. And living in the country school times. It's too bad that everybody, of course we've had a small type of depression herein the 80's you know, that's more of a recession, nothing like a depression like my folks told about. It really wouldn't hurt us to go through something like that. It really makes you more thankful. Oh, I'm sure there are other people that appreciate and are thankful, but Monty and I are really thankful and appreciative of what we have because of not having things when we were young. And there were times when I wished I could have had things like the other kids did, but not real bad.

AM: You have to lose before you can actually know what it is to win. I think people appreciate what they have more when it is harder for them to get it. Well, your life is pretty exciting. (laughter)

BH: Well, I'll tell you, when we drove into town, a friend of ours had a jewelry store uptown, (Jerry Eckerman) and he knew we had been gone. He saw us come into town and that's when we had the elevator and Little Lawn and Garden Center. Do you know where the Little Lawn and Garden Center is? It is straight down from our Hallmark store. It is down by the railroad tracks. There is a little lawn and garden seed store - well, I started that.

AM: Oh...

BH: And that's when we were in there and had the grain elevator too. He had just happened to see us come into town and of course we were friends. He came down to see how our vacation was and he told me afterward, he said he walked in there and I was so hyper from this. We had driven from Colorado. He told me how hyper I was, and you know I'm not that way. Of course I told him about it and then he knew why I was the way I was. But that was in July. Then in November we had a meeting we always went to for the grain elevators in Kansas City. And this couple that was out there that fell in too, they were there. So I got to talk to Mary and her

friend that was with her there. And I said to Mary, "You know, Mary, about 2-3 months after this happened, one day it was just like something left my body." She looked at her friend and said, "What did I tell you? I think you were in shock and I think one day it just left and you felt so much better." She said, "Betty, that's just what I had told this friend. That one day it just kind of left me." And I suppose what you talk about is being in shock. So I suppose my system was just in a shocking type stage and one day it just kind of left. That was the strangest feeling. I felt so much better. She had experienced that same thing, so it must have been something to do with the shock. I know when I was in this whirlpool, of course with the water coming in on you all the time, I opened my eyes and she must have been above me in this whirlpool because she had the most awful look on her face - I'll never forget it. She was scared you know. I was scared... I could also feel this pressure pushing on me and I knew something wasn't right. I wasn't just in the water. I knew there was something going on because there was this pressure on my chest. So I suppose it was this whirlpool type of thing that we were in. The other night on "Rescue" - do you ever watch that?

AM: "Rescue"... yes.

BH: They had one of those and she was in a whirlpool. Somebody that knew I had been in that asked me afterwards did I see that and I said I did. And that's the way it was too.

AM: That was quite an experience.

BH: So you can see why I don't go in that swimming pool at the farm. I don't even want to mess with it.

AM: That kind of thing could give you gray hair or a heart attack!

BH: Well, it's a wonder really that I didn't have a stroke or something because I was so scared.

AM: The things that people do for excitement! (laughter)

BH: I'm not going to ever again.

AM: I couldn't see myself out doing that. (laughter)

BH: No, don't do it.

AM: When you moved to Grinnell, have you always lived in this house?

BH: No, we bought a house in town here and then, as I said, when we sold the

restaurant and bought the elevator a lady and gentleman that lived in Sarasota, Florida, they owned a farm out here west of town. They came back in the summertime and stopped at the elevator because they had some oats they had stored there to sell. They stopped to sell the oats to us. And they mentioned they had a farm for sale. Of course we knew which one it was because we knew the area. So it is just west of town at the end of the blacktop on 11th Ave. about 2 miles. So we bought that and moved out there then. We lived out there for 20 or 25 years. We have lived here about 10 years. I always admired this house and so the lady that lived here, Dora Rudkin, she always got her hair done down by the elevator and I would visit with her. I made the remark to her one day, I said "Dora, if you ever decide to sell the house, let me know." So that was probably 10 years before. So one day she stopped in and she said, "Betty, I've decided to sell - I can't take care of it anymore." She said she had heart problems and couldn't take care of the yard and it needed redecorating and everything. She said she was going to sell it and go to an apartment. But she said she remembered me saying if I ever wanted to buy it to let me know. So we had first chance to buy it. We loved the farm and had a big 15 room house out at the farm and then a small house besides. I just kind of wanted to see in the house. I really didn't even think we would probably buy it, you know. So I talked to Monty. I said, "Do you want to go look at it?" He said yes, we could look at it. So we looked at it and went home. I said, "Well, what did you think?" And Monty said, "If you want it, buy it."

AM: Wow... this house is beautiful. It's huge.

BH: Well, you'll have to look around before you go. There is a third floor. There are a lot of beautiful houses in Grinnell.

AM: Yes... that's what I've heard. I haven't been here long enough to even tell, so I didn't know if you had lived in this house a long time.

BH: No, I lived out at the farm longer than that. And we both liked the farm. In fact, when we first came to town I don't think Monty really was... he never ever said it... but I know I have had different people say, "Well, how do you like it in town?" And he would say, "Oh, it's okay." But now I don't think he would care - he likes it now. It is handy for us, especially since he is at the bank now and I can just walk to work. And we have had a good time with it. There hasn't been very many people in the house, even seen in the house, because Dora just had a small amount of friends. She just had a little cluster of friends and then her husband died. They bought the house and lived here 3 years and they never had any children. He died 3 years after and she lived here 30 years with no husband. So she didn't really get out and do a lot, just her little main friends that she had, you know. So when we bought it, of course, we were well known in town and everybody knew us and everybody wanted to see in here, you know. So our CPA, she said, "Betty, it would be so much fun... would you consider having our little club meeting there?" She

belonged to a club. Of course they would do anything for us, Judy and Roger Roland. I said, "Sure, whatever you want to have, we will have it." Well it just snowballed. I was getting calls all the time with different people wanting me to have these little club meetings and meals and I had to put a stop to it. One week we had 7 calls and people were wanting to tour the house. I do still once in awhile, if somebody wants to come with a tour, I will do it and serve dessert, but I don't really have time. It's fun - I like to do it, but you have to choose between being at the store or doing that. But if it is a good friend or if it is somebody that comes in from out of town and has their aunt and uncle or their daughter-in-law or something wanting to see the house, then I will. So there is a market if somebody wanted to entertain, and I love to do it. I don't like to cook, I'm tired of cooking. I think I did it since I was little and I'm tired of it now. As far as washing dishes, I like to do that.

AM: It snowballed!

BH: Yeah, it did. So I kind of had to put a stop to that because I was working at night getting my cooking done for the next day and running all the time.

AM: You sound like you are really involved though, like really active. And sounds like you have always been that way.

BH: Yeah...

AM: That's good. You said when you moved the transition was pretty easy. Did you find in general it was pretty easy for you to get involved in the community? Since you are still involved now I assume you enjoy these things.

BH: Yes. The job my dad took at Beaman was the janitor of the school so I would always help him at night at school, after school was out. People just took us in, you know. They had been without a decent janitor for so long that they were pleased to get people that really cared and took care. Of course, we still go back to Beaman. My husband graduated from there so every 3 years we go back. In fact, his folks live there still. They lived down here for quite awhile and lived in our house and went to Arizona in the wintertime. Now since his dad isn't able to drive back and forth they bought a house there. So we still go back up there. They live just across from the school. Of course they tore the school down. The gymnasium is there. It was real easy. The people are really nice people up around there.

Tape #2 Side B

AM: Yeah... okay. I know as a result of the Great Depression the people were forced to depend on one another more, is that true? Has that kind of held over throughout the years? I know in some areas people just don't know their neighbors.

BH: I'm sure there is, I think out East it is a lot more that way than in the Midwest. I think in the Midwest you will find, especially in a town this size or the size of Beaman, they are that way. But that is a farming community. At that time there was still a lot of your school functions and that was when you got together. We did a lot of playing cards with the neighbors. We played cards in the evenings with the neighbors. Of course there were always wedding showers or baby showers and that sort of thing. There were neighborhood club meetings. There were basketball games.

AM: Do you think overall in the years after the War and the Depression that people enjoyed themselves even though they worked really hard?

BH: Oh, yeah... I think so.

AM: I'm sure it wasn't a really happy time.

BH: I think everybody was just so busy trying to work and make a living. You didn't have time to look around and think, do I have as much as the other person? You shared things. Like if you had a bushel of tomatoes, more than you needed, you shared it. I can remember, I wasn't very old, but I remember my mom having this truck patch. That was down in Missouri when I was only about 3 years old. You had a garden and you had a truck patch down on the river bottom and we would go down with baskets and bring up food to can. We shared that with a man that lived in a log cabin there. We shared all of that with him. He would bring apples and she would make jelly and give him part of that. No, you depended on your neighbors for a lot of things.

AM: This is just the impression that I get from talking to people about this, but I think that the Great Depression and the years that followed kind of helped bring everybody closer together. It made you realize who you need to depend on and that everybody needed help once in awhile.

BH: It was your entertainment. You got together with the neighbors and you didn't go off to watch TV or to the movie much then - none at all then. Not in the Depression. They just didn't do things like that. You went to town on Saturday night usually. I can remember going to this one little town, had this drugstore. I can remember I had a strawberry ice cream cone and I thought that was so good. When I was little you didn't even have jello because you didn't have any way of getting that cold to set because you didn't have a refrigerator. Well, I can remember when we finally got a refrigerator and you just thought you was in heaven because you had some jello! It wasn't so much that you couldn't afford it, but you didn't have anyway to keep it cold. That was really a treat, having jello. In the wintertime you could have homemade ice cream with the ice but you didn't even have ice out in the country. Maybe in town they had ice, blocks of ice, but out in the country you didn't

have it. The same way with preserving your meat. You canned it or salted it down and cured it. Something that sticks out in my mind was my grandparents' farm, down in what I call the "sticks" of Missouri. We had this big smokehouse and we would go in there and hanging in the smokehouse would be all these big hams and sides of pork, bacon, and that. Those were the kind of things in my grandmother's cave (they called it a cave back then). They still have caves. But they had those instead of a basement. This house has a basement. You had a cave out in the yard, this mound of dirt with a door. You have seen those.

AM: Yeah... okay.

BH: You folks probably have them down there.

AM: Yeah... I have seen pictures.

BH: But you would just open that up and there would be tow after row of canned sausage an meats and beans, corn, just looked like a picture in there. Then down on the floor it was cool, and that is where you kept your cream and milk and butter down on the floor. It was made of brick on the sides. The caves were bricked up with bricks. It was so clean and everything. This is probably not very nice to talk about, but when I lived on the farm with my folks we raised chickens. Well, even after I was married we had an outside bathroom, toilet we called it. But every wash day after we were through washing, which was on Monday... like I said, Mom always washed on Monday and ironed on Tuesday... we would take that hot water and scrub out the outside toilet and put lime down it and kept it just as clean.

AM: Just as clean as an indoor.

BH: Oh, yeah... it was. Well, my mom was clean. We may have been kind of poor but we were clean. She said you don't have to be dirty. You can be poor but you can be clean and she was always a clean person. She could take anything and make something look nice out of it. That was a talent she had. It was wash day and also scrubbing the outside toilet day.

AM: Yeah... got to be done, you know.

BH: That's right. (laughter)

AM: In general, I just want to know what your impressions were. I know you said you were born during the Great Depression. I want to know what your impressions of that time period, like how the people lived. I know we talked about how there was a big sense of community and everything. Was that the main thing that sticks out in your mind about that time or if there was one general sense of community of a general sense of the population? What was the main thing that you thought came

out of the Depression?

BH: I think people realized when they had been through such bad, bad times that money isn't everything, that you learn to help people and get along without things, that you can do that. It would be hard now; it would be hard for you and it would be hard for me to have to go through a depression like that. I think we would have so many suicides because people can't do without. Whereas in those days nobody had anything. There were a few that maybe still had a lot of money, but very few. Everybody was in the same situation so they kind of came out of it and I think they were more thankful and maybe at the time didn't realize how much good that depression maybe did do for them. Maybe it woke people up. Which I think sometimes maybe now you would hate to see it, because I think there would be so many murders and suicides because people have had so much to spend and have that they couldn't. And maybe I would be surprised. I am glad that I lived when I did too. You will probably never know what it was like. And like I told my daughter-in-law the other day, I hate to be as old as I am because your life is going to be over. But still I am glad I lived in those days and knew what was going out and pumping water and having to live the hard way and drive the horses was. And there were good times, you know. You went out and slid downhill and went over to the neighbors and got them and went ice skating. And you picked up walnuts, and that . Lot of Sundays I would go out and pick up walnuts even in the snow and crack them and make candy. That was just what you did on Sunday afternoons. Now people get in cars and drive all over and see how far they can go. And they have motorcycles too. But people stuck together - they had to. If you needed help all you had to do was call on them. And I am sure there were probably some stinkers in the community like there usually is, but I can't remember it. I know I always tried to teach my boy, and I have tried to tell my grandkids the same thing, to do things for people that you don't have to be paid for. My mom, when I was probably 12 or 13, she was probably the first one in the neighborhood to have a pressure canner. (I don't know if you know what a pressure canner is)

AM: No... (laughter)

BH: Well, it is to can meat or vegetables. It has pressure so you don't have to cook so long. A water bath, you used to have to cook 2-3 hours. Well you could can beans for 20 minutes, where before that it took 3 hours in a water bath. Anyway, she ended up getting a pressure canner. And she got that by some type of program, not conservation (?) but a type of thing like that. Anyway, she would send me through the country with this pressure canner to the neighbors to help them so that it wouldn't take them so long to do their canning. So I would truck off with the canner and run it, because most of the neighbor ladies were scared of it.

AM: Oh... (laughter)

BH: You had to watch that gauge so that the pressure didn't blow it up. So I knew how to run it. But you didn't think about getting paid. You just went and helped your neighbor lady do whatever and you didn't think about being paid. I am sure lots of times I was given things for doing something like that. But I have always stressed with my son; I say you don't have to be paid for everything you do. I always feel like you get paid back one way or the other for however you act - whether you do good or you do bad. Some way or other it's going to come back on you and it may be in a different way. It may not be for you but maybe somebody will do something for my husband or something. But I think you always get in return what you put out. So I have always tried to do things that I didn't have to expect something in return. And I have tried to tell my grandkids that too.

AM: Good - that's nice.

BH: It's so easy now, everybody says, "How much are you going to pay me?" So they kind of know grandma doesn't approve of things like that.

AM: That's a good philosophy - I kind of like that.

BH: It's the same way with being mean or nice.

AM: Yeah - one way or the other.

BH: Sometimes you wonder when you hear of all these things that happen - like the girl at the College and all that. You wonder if things are going to come out right.

AM: Yeah... you hope so. Well, I really appreciate you taking the time for this interview with me.

BH: That's okay. I don't feel like I was very exciting though. (laughter)

AM: No, no! Your life is very interesting, really. I mean it's interesting for me to hear these things. Like you said, there is no way I am going to have to live through that... never the same thing, maybe something similar but never the same thing. So it's nice to hear somebody's point of view.

BH: Well, I guess it kind of sums up that Monty and I were pretty young when we started out and probably a good thing that I got ahold of him or I wouldn't be as far in life as I am now. He is a pretty special person too.

AM: Yeah... good.

BH: And we do have a nice family, kids, our boy. And we have a super daughter-in-law.

AM: Good - I'm happy for you.

BH: Yeah... so am I.