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Berkeley, California

Rose Barquist

Rosie the Riveter  
World War II American Home Front Oral History Project

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Interviews conducted by  
Samuel J. Redman  
in 2011

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Rose Barquist

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Interview 1: March 30, 2011  
Begin Audiofile 1

1-00:00:03

Barquist: Okay.

Redman: All right. My name is Sam Redman, and I'm here today with Rose Barquist.

1-00:00:10

Barquist: Quist.

Redman: Barquist, Rose Barquist.

1-00:00:12

Barquist: Barquist.

Redman: Barquist.

1-00:00:13

Barquist: It's Swedish.

Redman: It's Swedish. Oh, very good.

1-00:00:18

Barquist: It's very important. Quist means fun, and Barquist means son of the bear, son of the mountain, depending on what part of Sweden you come from, I guess. I don't know.

Redman: Okay, I see, so then, well, today is March 30, 2011, and we are in Oakland, California. So you were raised in Iowa, is that correct?

1-00:00:43

Barquist: Yes, I was not out of Iowa until I was fifteen, and then I went to Illinois for a few days.

Redman: Okay, and that was more or less, you were there until you were fifteen you said.

1-00:00:59

Barquist: I was born on a farm out in Iowa.

Redman: Okay, now in Iowa, I'm from Minnesota, so I know that in Iowa they don't say what town they're from, they say what county they're from very often. Do you recall what county you were from?

1-00:01:15

Barquist: Polk County.

Redman: Polk County, okay, very good.

1-00:01:13  
Barquist: Des Moines, Iowa.

Redman: Exactly, so tell me what it was like to grow up in Polk County in Iowa.

1-00:01:23  
Barquist: Well, my father was a farmer, and he wasn't a very good farmer.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:01:30  
Barquist: And it was during the twenties when farming, a lot of people left their farms in those days, but he grew, we grew wheat and oats, and we had horses and pigs and cows. My father was a, we had Guernsey cows, and we milked cows every morning and night, and we sold milk to the local dairy.

Redman: Okay, okay, and can you tell me about, I'm sorry, can I go back and just ask, we might want to wait for another one. [noise in background]

1-00:02:14  
Barquist: I don't need to touch that, is it better if I don't, or do I—?

Redman: Yeah, it's better, well, yeah, you can just leave it like that, it's perfect.

1-00:02:21  
Barquist: Okay, if it falls off my knee, I'll try to catch it before it hits the floor.

Redman: Okay, sounds good. So stepping back a moment, Rose, may I ask what year you were born?

1-00:02:29  
Barquist: May 15, 1924.

Redman: Nineteen twenty-four, okay, so you would have been maybe seven or eight at the start of the Great Depression.

1-00:02:41  
Barquist: Yes, depending on when you think it started.

Redman: Okay, okay, so you have some very early memories of the start of the Great Depression and what that was like for your family?

1-00:02:56  
Barquist: Yeah, well, my father lost two farms.

Redman: He lost two farms.

1-00:03:01  
Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: Okay, okay, and so as a young child what do you recall learning about that?

1-00:03:06

Barquist: Moving.

Redman: Moving.

1-00:03:08

Barquist: Moving from one house to the other, and being evicted because we couldn't pay the rent.

Redman: Okay, okay, so you had mentioned, you had joked or maybe not joked, that your father was a farmer, but he maybe wasn't a very good farmer.

1-00:03:25

Barquist: Well, he had various problems. He probably in this day and age he would have been diagnosed with, what is it they call it, the chronic fatigue syndrome.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:03:38

Barquist: But he was always tired. He had had rheumatic fever when he was a child, or typhoid fever or something, barely survived his childhood, and therefore, he was always sickly, you might say.

Redman: I see, okay, okay, so then tell me about when you moved into a new house after your father lost both of his farms, where was that in succession? Did you lose one—?

1-00:04:12

Barquist: Oh, yes.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:04:14

Barquist: He lost his own family farm, and then he lost my mother's family farm, yes because my mother had a—

Redman: Okay, so times were pretty tough.

1-00:04:22

Barquist: Oh, terribly tough.

Redman: What were the houses like that you lived in, do you recall?

1-00:04:28

Barquist: Cold in the winter.

Redman: They were cold.

1-00:04:29  
Barquist: Then we had a wood stove to heat the house, and this was Iowa, it was very cold.

Redman: Yeah.

1-00:04:38  
Barquist: Very cold, and the way you stayed warm is you went to bed.

Redman: Okay, sometimes with coats on, or—

1-00:04:44  
Barquist: With your sisters.

Redman: Yeah, okay, so you had siblings.

1-00:04:47  
Barquist: I had a sister and two brothers, three brothers actually.

Redman: Okay. How did they relate to you in terms of age? Were they older or younger?

1-00:04:53  
Barquist: I had two older brothers, one older sister, and one younger brother.

Redman: Okay, okay, so then the houses were cold, and were they brick or wood or—?

1-00:05:08  
Barquist: Wood for the most part.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:05:12  
Barquist: We always had a piano.

Redman: You always had a piano.

1-00:05:14  
Barquist: Because my mother played the piano, and that's one of my very earliest memories.

Redman: Okay, learning to play—

1-00:05:19  
Barquist: My mother playing the piano.

Redman: Okay, I see, so what type of music did she play?

1-00:05:27  
Barquist: Oh, she played a lot of music. She played mostly popular music, music that was popular in those days.

Redman: Would she buy sheet music at all?

1-00:05:39

Barquist: We had sheet music, yes. I don't know whether she bought it or, yeah, I guess she did.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:05:41

Barquist: But she played all kinds of music, and as a matter of fact, I have a collection of old mountaineering songs that we used to sing. You know before television and radio I remember the first radio broadcast I ever heard.

Redman: Is that right, okay.

1-00:06:07

Barquist: In 1928 I believe when Lindbergh flew the Atlantic.

Redman: Oh, wow, that's the first radio broadcast.

1-00:06:14

Barquist: The first radio broadcast, and people came from miles around to listen to the radio.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:06:17

Barquist: Because there was only one in the neighborhood.

Redman: And do you recall where that was?

1-00:06:20

Barquist: At my grandmother's house.

Redman: Is that right, okay.

1-00:06:23

Barquist: In Dallas County, Iowa, yeah.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:06:25

Barquist: I remember vividly. That was now before radio, television and all that people amused themselves by singing to each other.

Redman: Mm hm.

1-00:06:36

Barquist: I have a collection of those songs; a DVD is being made right now of songs that I remember from my childhood. I got a whole list of them over there.

Redman: Okay, wonderful, wonderful, so do you know why mountaineering songs? Why those were popular?

1-00:06:51

Barquist: Yeah, because my family came through Kentucky on their way West. I had a part of my family were on the Mayflower, and they landed in Massachusetts and went West.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:07:07

Barquist: They were in upper New York State, that was where part of my family was, also, and they came, as a matter of fact, my family moved from upper New York State to Iowa in covered wagons because that's when the land opened up when the what was the Louisiana Purchase between, opened up for settlement, my family moved out and took up land in the state of Iowa.

Redman: As part of the homestead?

1-00:07:42

Barquist: Yeah, and it's still in the family.

Redman: Oh, wow, okay, that's wonderful. All right, so your grandmother then lived quite near where your parents resided at one time?

1-00:07:58

Barquist: Well, yeah, both grandmothers did. One grandmother lived in Perry, Iowa; my mother's father had died at a rather early age. He was the Colonel who was descended from the Mayflower passengers. My mother's mother was part Cherokee Indian.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:08:18

Barquist: So they lived very near us. Then my father's mother, you want to hear all this family scandal?

Redman: Oh, yeah, sure, certainly.

1-00:08:31

Barquist: Want to hear family scandal?

Redman: Yeah, of course,

1-00:08:32

Barquist: My father's mother was a Protestant. Her family was from Northern Ireland, Scotch Irish she called them, and she married an Irish Catholic by the name of—

Redman: Oh, wow, okay.

- 1-00:08:52  
Barquist: Yes, and their families were both so angry with them that they had to move to the next county.
- Redman: Wow, okay.
- 1-00:09:03  
Barquist: So they moved to the next county and took up land, and that's my grandmother's farm. I remember vividly.
- Redman: Right, okay.
- 1-00:09:13  
Barquist: So religion was always a very big subject in our family.
- Redman: Is that right?
- 1-00:09:15  
Barquist: Oh, my God.
- Redman: What sort of a church did you attend? What denomination?
- 1-00:09:23  
Barquist: Let's see, one grandmother took me by the hand and took me to the Methodist Church. Yes, let's see, another great aunt took me to the Baptist Church.
- Redman: Okay.
- 1-00:09:40  
Barquist: I don't remember, I remember going to a Catholic wedding when I was about five or six, and that's where I learned about languages. Well, I learned about languages also from some little ditty that I used to sing, but I really learned that there were different languages by going to a Catholic mass when my cousin got married, and I couldn't understand what the man was saying, so I asked my mother, "What's he saying? What's he talking about?" And she said "Well, that's Latin."
- Redman: Right.
- 1-00:10:20  
Barquist: Well, that was new to me. I was I think five or six.
- Redman: And, okay—
- 1-00:10:25  
Barquist: Anyway, the fact that people spoke different languages—
- Redman: So you attended a number of different kinds of churches, but it was outside family influences trying to drag you—

1-00:10:35  
Barquist: Consequently, when I go to church, well, here I can go to any church I want to and feel sort of comfortable, but I belonged to a Unitarian Church for a long time.

Redman: Okay, so maybe some of these influence—

1-00:10:49  
Barquist: Yes, I'm sure it did, but I have a dim view of all organized religion.

Redman: Okay, I see. So now tell me about what were your siblings like?

1-00:11:03  
Barquist: Well, my two older brothers, my oldest brother, married and had some children and as a matter of fact, his daughter lives up in Oregon, and I see her every once in a while.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:11:23  
Barquist: She's an elderly person now, and my second brother died quite young. He died of infantile paralysis.

Redman: Oh, wow.

1-00:11:35  
Barquist: He died in a, one of those, what were they called?

Redman: An iron lung?

1-00:11:40  
Barquist: A breathing machine, where they breathe for you, a terrible machine.

Redman: Yeah, iron lung?

1-00:11:48  
Barquist: Iron lung, that's right. He died in an iron lung.

Redman: Wow, okay.

1-00:11:51  
Barquist: He left a wife and children also, with whom I am acquainted and see every once in a while. My sister just died a couple of months ago.

Redman: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

1-00:12:06  
Barquist: At age 90, and she lived in Texas near her son, who has a ranch in Texas, and she also has a daughter who lives in Florida, and I see them once in a while.

My younger brother married, but he was drafted and joined the Marines and was lost in Korea.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:12:38

Barquist: I mean lost, they never found his body.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:12:44

Barquist: I keep hoping that they'll locate some dog tags someday.

Redman: Okay, so could you tell me about what a typical day may have been like for your parents growing up in Iowa?

1-00:12:58

Barquist: Well, it depends on where they were. When we were still on the farm, they'd get up at the crack of dawn and go milk the cows.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:13:04

Barquist: And send the dog out in the pasture to bring the cows in. As a matter of fact, we had a pony, an old broken down cow pony that my dad had bought for the kids, for us to ride, and when I was five or six I used to be put up on that pony and told to go bring the cows in, and I did.

Redman: Is that right, okay.

1-00:13:26

Barquist: The horse knew enough to bring the cows in, but I just road along, went along for the ride.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:13:39

Barquist: Actually, she pretty much did what I wanted her to if she wanted to.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:13:45

Barquist: Yeah, she was a good old horse. I loved her dearly.

Redman: So learning about some how to run the farm a little bit, even at a very early age and contribute.

1-00:13:55

Barquist: Oh, sure. My husband and I lived on the farm for a while.

Redman: Okay, okay, so this skill—

1-00:14:04

Barquist: Much later.

Redman: Okay, very good.

1-00:14:06

Barquist: I knew a lot more about farming than he did.

Redman: Okay, so did you like attending school when you were young?

1-00:14:12

Barquist: I loved it. I used to go with my sister and brother, when they went to country school, and I'd sit there and watch the teacher and so forth. Yes, I loved school.

Redman: Okay, so you went even from a very young age then.

1-00:14:27

Barquist: I knew what school was, yeah.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:14:28

Barquist: I used to play school.

Redman: Is that right? Okay. So did you have any particularly favorite subjects in school when you were growing up, any particular topics that you were very interested in as a child?

1-00:14:47

Barquist: I always liked reading anything. I loved reading, and I learned to read at a very early age. I was reading by the time I was five.

Redman: Do you recall what types of things you may have been reading?

1-00:15:02

Barquist: Oh, children's books of one type or another, simple, books that were written for simple vocabularies. I thought the process of reading I was entranced with for a long time when I was a very small child.

Redman: Is that right, okay.

1-00:15:15

Barquist: Oh, yes. The fact that you made sounds, that those letters had sounds attached to them was fascinating, still is as a matter of fact.

Redman: Yeah, yeah, it's a pretty amazing idea if you really think about it.

1-00:15:31

Barquist: Yes, it is.

Redman: So can you describe a little bit, you mentioned that some of your siblings had been to a country school. Is that where you would then—?

1-00:15:40

Barquist: No, by the time I was of school age, we had moved to a farm, another farm, which was in the district of a consolidated school, and at the time that I was five or six in rural Iowa, they were busy consolidating all these one-room schools into other schools, so I rode a school bus. Well, actually it was a neighbor's car to school, and to this consolidated school, and I was in that school until I was in third grade.

Redman: Okay, so the smaller schools were shutting down and joining with these larger schools.

1-00:16:23

Barquist: Yeah, which was probably a good thing.

Redman: Okay, and why do you say that, I'm curious about why that may have been?

1-00:16:27

Barquist: Well, for one thing, the one-room schools were often taught by teachers who were only high school graduates if that.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:16:38

Barquist: They had very limited curriculum and very limited experience. I'm sure some of them were very good, but—

Redman: Then having to teach this wide range of age groups in one classroom.

1-00:16:51

Barquist: Yeah, you start from one to seventh grade, and how could you do that with any degree of real accomplishment.

Redman: Okay, okay, so then attending this slightly larger school, was that an exciting thing for you?

1-00:17:08

Barquist: Oh, very.

Redman: Okay, why was that exciting?

1-00:17:12

Barquist: Well, let's see.

Redman: What do you recall about that?

1-00:17:10  
Barquist: What do I recall about that? My third grade teacher's name was Miss Banning, I remember that.

Redman: Miss Banning, okay.

1-00:17:19  
Barquist: She was a very dedicated teacher. She took a group of us to Des Moines.

Redman: Okay, to Des Moines, Iowa.

1-00:17:35  
Barquist: Which was twenty-five miles away, and I saw a city for the first time.

Redman: Okay, and that was very exciting.

1-00:17:44  
Barquist: Oh, goodness yes.

Redman: So this would have been in third grade.

1-00:17:47  
Barquist: Mm hm.

Redman: All right, okay. So what was Des Moines like from a third grader's eyes who had never seen a city?

1-00:17:57  
Barquist: What do I remember about that? Streets for one thing, and all the people, and the store windows. We went to Yonkers Department Store and looked in the windows. What else did we do? I think we ate in a cafeteria, big deal. I can't remember what else we did, but it was, just walking along the street I remember was very exciting, very exciting.

Redman: I see, okay, so then you moved on when you got a little older, you started high school but at a different school by then?

1-00:18:38  
Barquist: Well, let me see now. From White Oak, I was there in the third grade, we moved into town to Elkhart, Iowa, which was founded by a group of people who came from Elkhart, Indiana, and gave the town their old town's name. But Elkhart, Iowa is a town of its own, and I was in school there in the fourth and fifth grade, no, the fourth grade, and then I went to Perry, Iowa for the fifth grade because at that time we were having a little difficulty making ends meet and somebody gave me a job. I was twelve years old at the time, and I was sent to live with a family and take care of their small child and clean the house on Saturday.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:19:43  
Barquist: I went to fifth grade there. They had to send me to school, but before and after school I took care of the little boy.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:19:56  
Barquist: That was fifth grade. Sixth grade then I think was when we moved to Newton.

Redman: To Newton, still in Iowa?

1-00:20:07  
Barquist: Newton, Iowa, which is where they made Maytag washing machines.

Redman: Oh, is that right, okay.

1-00:20:14  
Barquist: Yes, big deal. My dad got a job at Maytag, and I was there all through high school.

Redman: Okay. So then can you tell me a little bit about, did your parents make this decision that you as a twelve-year-old girl would have a job at another house?

1-00:20:37  
Barquist: My father did.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:20:38  
Barquist: He was probably keeping me away from some of the things that might have happened to me at home because he married a woman with children, with boys, and I think he wanted to keep me away from my stepbrothers.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:20:59  
Barquist: And I wanted to be away from my stepbrothers, believe me.

Redman: Okay, so that relationship was not the best.

1-00:21:08  
Barquist: No.

Redman: Okay, to say the least.

1-00:21:10  
Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: Okay, okay, so then can you tell me a little bit about this job, what your responsibilities would have been at the house? You mentioned taking care of this young boy, and then there were other responsibilities.

1-00:21:26

Barquist: It was a family, the father, he was in Perry, Iowa, and the father had a job. He worked somewhere, I can't remember where. The mother's sister was living with them, and it was the mother's sister who had this little boy. Where her husband was I had no idea, but this little boy was something of a handful, and his mother needed to, I think she went to work occasionally doing something. They just needed somebody to look after him, to take care of him in the evening and the afternoon, after school, and then sometimes I got him up in the morning.

Redman: I see, okay, okay, so then eventually in high school did you start working at a drug store; is that what you had told me over the phone?

1-00:22:26

Barquist: Oh, that was after I went to Oceanside, but no, in high school, oh, let's see; I worked in the dime store. I worked in the public library in Newton. They hired people to shelve books and so forth. They paid ten cents an hour.

Redman: Okay, and that was a big deal.

1-00:22:48

Barquist: At the library, and well, I made, it was my money, and I made some.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:22:51

Barquist: It meant a lot, believe me.

Redman: Let me ask what you were doing with your money. What sort of things, did you spend it or did you save it at that time, or—?

1-00:23:03

Barquist: Well, I remember vividly giving some of it to my father because he needed it so badly, but for the most part I kept it if I could. I bought my own clothes, such as they were. Believe me, I don't know, I can't remember, but I'm sure I used it on my own expenses.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:23:38

Barquist: Well, there were things I needed for school.

Redman: Certainly.

1-00:23:43

Barquist: I don't recall exactly. It wasn't much.

Redman: Okay. So then tell me about what it was like to work at the library. That sounds like it was probably a good thing.

1-00:23:49

Barquist: The librarians were very nice to me, very nice. I learned the—

Redman: The Dewey Decimal System?

1-00:24:02

Barquist: Dewey Decimal System, I was trying to think of it.

Redman: Right, yeah, yeah.

1-00:24:08

Barquist: I learned it, and I had remembered it all my life. I could shelve library books right now.

Redman: Right, right, so how about the librarians? Were they something of a positive role model?

1-00:24:20

Barquist: They were maiden ladies for the most part, but they were very, very kind to me.

Redman: Okay, okay, so can you compare what that may have been like, what a librarian may have been like in that period in Iowa to a teacher, to a school teacher?

1-00:24:39

Barquist: A resource person.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:24:42

Barquist: They were very well educated.

Redman: Okay, so a high school diploma or a college degree at that time was very different in terms of—

1-00:24:51

Barquist: Oh, yeah.

Redman: Okay, okay, so then—

1-00:24:54

Barquist: One other thing that happened to me during my high school years is that I had two cousins. One was my father's great, I guess he was his great nephew or something. He was very kind to me and taught me a lot. He taught me to drive for one thing. I learned to drive both horses and wagons and an automobile.

As a matter of fact, I ran his car in the ditch, and he just said, “Okay, well drive it out,” so I drove it out.

Redman: Wow.

1-00:25:32

Barquist: He was very, very good to me for many other things, too. Then I had a woman cousin, my mother’s niece, who was very essential to me. She was a teacher. She was a role model. She taught in {Tella?}, Iowa, which was twenty miles away from Newton. We used to play them in basketball and football and whatnot, and she, for one thing, she gave me a ride to California.

Redman: Oh, is that right, okay. Well, I have a dog, too, so.

1-00:26:16

Barquist: Well, she smells it then.

Redman: Yeah, so let me go back just a moment. You had mentioned that you had some Cherokee ancestry?

1-00:26:26

Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: How did that every come up at the dinner table, or was that something that was ever discussed?

1-00:26:34

Barquist: Oh, it was always just accepted.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:26:35

Barquist: Nobody thought too much about it. It was always pointed out that she was pure blood Cherokee.

Redman: Is that right?

1-00:26:44

Barquist: Because the Cherokees, I don’t know how much you know about Indian history, but I keep just remembering to call them Native Americans, but anyway, she, the Cherokees were a tribe just West. As a matter of fact, they were sent from the East from I think Alabama to Oklahoma, they were called the Trail of Tears. Well, my grandmother married, she was the daughter of a Cherokee man and a woman. He did not go, she was a Cherokee woman.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:27:23

Barquist: Who married my great grandfather instead of going on the Trail of Tears, and my grandmother was their daughter.

Redman: I see.

1-00:27:30

Barquist: Now the reason that pure blood Cherokee was so important is because the Cherokees, who were in Alabama for a long time and then in Oklahoma, were very often the goal of runaway slaves, and the Cherokees welcomed them into their tribes, so that very frequently the Cherokees have a lot of black blood in them. So that was always a big deal.

Redman: Okay, okay, so having the pure Cherokee blood was maybe more acceptable than having—

1-00:28:04

Barquist: Oh, yes.

Redman: Yes, runaway slave ancestry.

1-00:28:09

Barquist: Oh, yes.

Redman: Okay, I see. So then tell me then about how it came to be that you and your cousins came to California. Can you situate me in time? Did that event happen prior to Pearl Harbor or following Pearl Harbor?

1-00:28:28

Barquist: I graduated from high school in June of 1941.

Redman: Is that right, okay. So between June when you graduated and December of 1941, were you looking for work, or what—?

1-00:28:43

Barquist: Well, I'll tell you that story if you like.

Redman: Yeah.

1-00:28:45

Barquist: On the day after my high school graduation I got in the car with my cousin Fern, who was coming to California because her parents, her mother and stepfather had come to California and were working in a park called Indian Springs in the Los Angeles area, and she was going to come out and work there, too, as a summer job. She was a school teacher, and she needed a summer job, so she stopped by Newton and picked me up, and we drove together to California, to Los Angeles to Indian Springs. I stayed with them for a little while, a couple three weeks, and then I got a job in a, well, my first job was in a hamburger stand right there on the grounds of Indian Springs. Then—

Redman: So this would have been in the late summer of 1941.

1-00:29:49

Barquist: Well, June of 1941.

Redman: Okay, so pretty fast after graduation.

1-00:29:59

Barquist: Yeah. I had an uncle who had run away from Iowa. That's another whole story I won't burden you with, and lived in Oceanside, California. He lived down there, and he had just decided to go to Oceanside because he and the girl that he ran away with took a map and closed their eyes and stuck a pin in California, and it landed in Oceanside. So they were living in Oceanside. So I said, "Well, maybe I'll go down and see George and Evelyn" because I don't like this working in this hamburger stand, and besides Indian Springs closed up in the winter and whenever, and so it was kind of, and Fern was going back to Iowa, so I went down to Oceanside and lo and behold I got a job in Mission Drug Store as a soda jerk.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:30:58

Barquist: That's when I worked in a soda fountain in Oceanside, California. That was a very, very helpful learning experience for me.

Redman: So let's step back to your uncle for a moment, who was in Oceanside.

1-00:31:12

Barquist: Yes.

Redman: So you had mentioned, you can't leave me hanging with this delightful phrase of he had run away with a girl.

1-00:31:22

Barquist: He had run away with his niece. My family had a little incest, as you might know. This is a family of eleven children, and these three guys, these three old bachelors, and we used to go there all of the time. This one bachelor, George, was the youngest one, and he and the daughter of their older brother who lived down the road whose name was Judson, had a young daughter who was not very anxious to become a farm wife, and ran away with George. She and George ran away together.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:32:02

Barquist: This was a terrible shock to the family.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:32:05

Barquist: And their names were not mentioned—

Redman: Okay, so they were disowned after the—

1-00:32:07

Barquist: But I liked them. I lived with them in Oceanside, and Evelyn and I went to the beach. She showed me how to lay in the sand and get sunburned and—

Redman: Okay, so you became friends then—

1-00:32:24

Barquist: Oh, yeah, but I always liked George anyway.

Redman: Okay, okay, so to you this was—

1-00:32:29

Barquist: They were family.

Redman: They were family, okay, and you could look past any of the other criticisms, or did you not see—?

1-00:32:36

Barquist: I'm not judgmental.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:32:37

Barquist: I think people's sex lives are their own business. I still think that.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:32:39

Barquist: I do not inquire into my fellow human beings' sex lives.

Redman: Right, yeah.

1-00:32:49

Barquist: Regardless of what it is.

Redman: Yeah, now let me ask about that because that's an interesting question because in many of these interviews where I talk to people about the Great Depression or the Second World War there's sort of this, sometimes people will have the notion of, there might have been this hush hush idea about what went on in the bedroom, but it was something that seems to have been gossiped about quite a bit in some of these unusual ways, so can you talk about how people in your family may have talked about what was going on with your uncle and his niece? They might have discussed it in some ways, but to you it was none of your business.

- 1-00:33:34  
Barquist: Well, their father, who has three other girls or four other girls, was furious, of course, and had he been capable I suppose he'd have gone after his brother with a shotgun, but he didn't. That's one reason they went to California.
- Redman: To get away.
- 1-00:33:53  
Barquist: Yeah, they wanted to get clear away from both of their families because it was more of a clan than a family.
- Redman: I see.
- 1-00:34:01  
Barquist: Because there were, my great grandmother who had come from Pennsylvania with my great grandfather in a covered wagon, as I said, and the Conestoga wagon was still out under the trees when I was a child.
- Redman: Is that right? Okay.
- 1-00:34:19  
Barquist: They used to butcher their hogs on it, use it for a butchering platform. Yeah, they came and had thirteen, I think, certainly eleven living children. Now with a family like that you know there's going to be a lot of forth and backing, and I can tell you stories about that family from here to breakfast.
- Redman: Right, okay, so let me ask one more question along this line, and this may apply to something that maybe you may not have seen or thought of in Iowa. My understanding, some of the accounts of people from the Midwest or the South said that they'd never heard of anything like homosexuality, while growing up, but then maybe coming to California or during the war, they might have heard even if it was a negative connotation of someone being attracted to a member of the same sex.
- 1-00:35:22  
Barquist: I never heard about, I never heard, I don't remember hearing anything about homosexuality, and there was some reference to somebody called a homo, but that's all I can remember, and I can't remember the facts of that.
- Redman: Okay, okay, in Iowa there might have been?
- 1-00:35:40  
Barquist: Yeah.
- Redman: So then tell me about what your life was like then. You told me a little bit about what it was like to live in Oceanside and learning how to lay on the beach and get a sunburn, it's kind of a seems like a pretty markedly different lifestyle than one you may have led on the farm.

1-00:35:59

Barquist: Yes, it was, thank God.

Redman: It also seems like there were a number of people that you knew from Iowa making this sort of exodus coming out to California.

1-00:36:11

Barquist: Well, there was at that time. I don't know if you know, but there was in California an Iowa Association.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

1-00:36:18

Barquist: Yes, of people who had gone to California from Iowa, partly because of the farm depression. I think mainly because of the farm depression. There were no jobs there. And at least in California they didn't have to heat their house in the winter.

Redman: Right.

1-00:36:35

Barquist: And they had visions of, fairly unrealistic, but still, California is a much more desirable place believe me in the winter than Iowa.

Redman: Right, right, so tell me about the Depression may not have affected you—

1-00:36:59

Barquist: Oh, it did.

Redman: But certainly you could see your family in the ways—

1-00:37:04

Barquist: Oh, it affected me.

Redman: Okay, okay, so tell me about how that, I'm curious about children who are looking up at their parents struggling running a farm—

1-00:37:14

Barquist: We were poor, poor. You know what it means to be poor? Oh, it's no fun believe me.

Redman: And cold, you mentioned how cold it was in the house and then heating the house.

1-00:37:28

Barquist: And I slept with my sister and we slept together so that as close as we could to keep each other warm believe me.

Redman: Right, and how about food growing up in the Great Depression?

1-00:37:37

Barquist: Oh, I ate an awful lot of cornmeal, cornmeal mush, and as a matter of fact there is a wonderful poem which I only learned after I grew up called, "The Hasty Pudding." It's called "Hasty Pudding." It's at the "Hasty Pudding" Club in Harvard or Yale or somebody it's named after, but it's an ode to cornmeal. In Philadelphia it is called cornmeal mush, and that's what we ate. I grew up on it.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:38:08

Barquist: Beans, also beans. At the time Roosevelt's administration had an agricultural programs where they had surplus food, and the government bought surplus food and distributed it to poor people. We used to get beans and cornmeal from the government, and a few other things, I can't remember what else, maybe apples, too. But we could get some fruit in the summertime from our relatives. They had apple trees and what not. But cornmeal and beans is what I grew up on.

Redman: Okay, okay, so that was, the food stands out as being very interesting.

1-00:38:57

Barquist: Yes, it is. As a matter of fact, I kind of like cornmeal now.

Redman: Oh, still to this day, okay.

1-00:38:59

Barquist: I didn't used to. I sort of was off of it for a while, but now I can eat it with a good deal of pleasure.

Redman: Okay, that's funny, all right.

1-00:39:09

Barquist: Especially polenta, if it's called polenta.

Redman: Yeah, then it's a little, yeah.

1-00:39:14

Barquist: In Italy it's polenta.

Redman: Okay, so then can you tell me a little bit more about the, you had mentioned that California was thought of as a very desirable place for people from Iowa. Can you tell me about your actual impressions of California when you first arrived, and how that may have differed or did that differ at all from the image you may have had in Iowa, or the image that you think other people may have had in Iowa, or did it live up to your expectations?

1-00:39:44

Barquist: Oh, it certainly lived up to mine. I'm still here.

Redman: That's right, that's right, so spending time in southern California on the sunny beaches—

1-00:39:55

Barquist: I'm not still here, I'm here again.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:40:00

Barquist: But, oh, California never disappointed me.

Redman: Okay, what were some of your other impressions of what you might find in California, or thoughts of what you were hoping to find?

1-00:40:09

Barquist: I didn't know, I was coming to see my relatives and to look for a better life, to look for any life because my future in Iowa would have been to go to work in someone's house for three dollars a week maybe, and be seduced by somebody and be a farmer's wife the rest of my life, if I was lucky. If not, it would have been much worse, so I had no, no regrets about leaving Iowa and coming to California believe me.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:40:50

Barquist: My stepmother was very annoyed with me because she wanted me to go to work and give them the money.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:40:55

Barquist: So no, California was my, I hesitate to use the word salvation, that's a little strong, but it was a wonderful place.

Redman: Okay, but it gave you all sorts of new opportunities.

1-00:41:10

Barquist: Oh, yes.

Redman: That you certainly wouldn't have had, so even something as simple as being a soda jerk—

1-00:41:17

Barquist: Oh, yeah, because in the first place the people I met at that soda fountain, oh, my goodness, first of all, the cook was really good. He later after the war was the cook for somebody really important. He was a super cook. I learned a lot about cooking from that guy, but one of the customers there used to sit, and they came in every day. They'd talk about the horse races at Del Mar, Del Mar Horses, you where it is, and so I said, "Horses, well, I lived on horses all my life, so of course I wanted to see the horse races." They said, "Well, you

should go to Del Mar, and here's the horse to bet on." Well, so I went down and put my \$2.00 on a horse and lost it, and I've never bet on a horse since.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:42:12

Barquist: But, I have been to lots of horse races, and I love them. I even watch them on television.

Redman: Yeah, yeah.

1-00:42:20

Barquist: I think that racing horses are treated not very well, and I knew some people who as a matter of fact had a retired horse that was, she was a very nice horse except as she'd get on the straightaway she'd break off with you.

Redman: Couldn't get over that.

1-00:42:44

Barquist: Yeah, she'd never got over being a race horse, but anyway, they used to come and eat lunch there, and so I learned what did they call them when you're trying to get people to bet on horses? There's a term, I can't think of it right now.

Redman: So you met a lot of different people who were—

1-00:43:09

Barquist: Oh, Lord, yes.

Redman: Quite different from some of the folks you would have known in Iowa.

1-00:43:11

Barquist: Yes, and one of the things that happened to me when I was there was that a lot of my co-workers were young kids my age who were working for the summer, and because I showed signs of being reasonably intelligent, they said, "Hey, Rose, why don't you come to junior college this year?"

Redman: Is that right, okay.

1-00:43:35

Barquist: "You can go out there and start junior college, and it won't cost you very much." So I went out and talked to the director there, and he gave me, I gave him \$5.00 entrance fee and \$4.00 for books, or maybe it was the other way around, and he found a place for me to live.

Redman: Is that right?

- 1-00:43:58  
Barquist: With a family, and again, two little kids, and I was what you call these days an au pair, and went to school in the day time and stayed with them in the evening, and so I got one year of college.
- Redman: Oh, wow, okay, okay, and what was that experience like then attending these classes?
- 1-00:44:19  
Barquist: It was eye-opening.
- Redman: Is that right?
- 1-00:44:18  
Barquist: Oh, absolutely. It opened the world for me. For one thing, the history professor was an interesting fellow. Well, for one thing, this is just summer, this is 1941, and when I started school it was in September, and the professors there were still very, very good. Now the following year they all went into the war industry.
- Redman: Is that right? Okay.
- 1-00:44:59  
Barquist: But at that time they were super.
- Redman: Okay.
- 1-00:45:06  
Barquist: So I had an absolutely superior history professor, and very good English, and I'll never forget him.
- Redman: Do you remember what some of the things you were learning about? What type of a history course it was, or what sorts of classes?
- 1-00:45:25  
Barquist: Let's see, no. His name is on the tip of my tongue, and I've got an autobiography over there.
- Redman: Oh, is that right? Okay, so I'm just sort of interested in this sort of eye-opening experience of reading new books and—
- 1-00:45:43  
Barquist: Well, and having the whole college scene open up to me and to realize that I really was college material. I had thought so when I was back in Newton because I graduated twelfth in a class of two hundred.
- Redman: Okay, so you were clearly been getting good grades, and yeah.
- 1-00:46:05  
Barquist: Oh, yeah, I was smart from the beginning.

Redman: Okay, okay, and then tell me about, it's interesting not having been encouraged it sounds like to go to college in Iowa.

1-00:46:18

Barquist: Not being able to go to college, and there were people who thought I should, but there was no hope for it because in the first place to enroll in the University of Iowa you had to have \$100 cash.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

1-00:46:29

Barquist: I didn't have it.

Redman: Versus the \$5.00 that you maybe paid or \$4.00 that you maybe paid for an entrance fee at—

1-00:46:36

Barquist: At the junior college.

Redman: At the junior college, okay.

1-00:46:40

Barquist: Now, one additional fact was that I had a dear beloved, DB, in high school, a boyfriend, and I was very fond of him, and he was very fond of me, but I said goodbye forever, I thought to him when I came to California because I couldn't stay in Iowa, and he knew that, and I knew that. His family had visions of him going to the University of Iowa, although his mother never made any provisions for that, but nevertheless, along about September, October, I think it was October sometime, he showed up.

Redman: Is that right? He just showed up.

1-00:47:26

Barquist: Out of the blue.

Redman: Okay, so he hadn't written.

1-00:47:31

Barquist: Oh, we'd been writing.

Redman: Okay, okay.

1-00:47:32

Barquist: Yeah, we'd been writing.

Redman: But you were still surprised.

1-00:47:37

Barquist: Yes, I was really quite surprised. From then on we saw a lot of each other.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

1-00:47:48

Barquist: He got a job with Western Union because he had been working with Western Union in Iowa in Newton, and he knew the Morse Code.

Redman: Oh, is that right? Okay.

1-00:47:56

Barquist: Yeah, and he was a very talented man.

Redman: What was his name?

1-00:48:02

Barquist: His name was Richard Barquist, Richard Ben Barquist.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:48:07

Barquist: He came from the Swedish family in Des Moines, Iowa, who own now half of Des Moines, Iowa, the Swedes being what they are, and I always say my father was a Texas Irishman, so I married a Swede.

Redman: Right.

1-00:48:26

Barquist: But my husband, aside from being very sensible with money, very good at managing money, he was the most intelligent human being I have ever met, and that's true to this day.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

1-00:48:41

Barquist: Absolutely. I know he scored in the genius level in the IQ test because he had a score of 149.

Redman: Wow.

1-00:48:52

Barquist: I think 150 is the top.

Redman: That's extremely impressive.

1-00:48:55

Barquist: I mean he was a brain, the like of which, I've never met anybody any smarter than him.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:49:01

Barquist: Now that isn't why I married him, although I knew he was smart.

Redman:

You married him because he was handsome.

1-00:49:09

Barquist: I married, no, I don't think he was. A picture of him is there is you want, a big old scar on his face where a dog had pulled his mouth off. But they used to call him Scarface.

Redman:

Is that right?

1-00:49:20

Barquist: But he was tall and strong, and above all, he loved me for some reason which I didn't quite understand at the time.

Redman:

It showed some amazing dedication to come out to California.

1-00:49:40

Barquist: Oh, that's what surprised me so. He loved me. It still, baffles me as to why, but I think I know because his mother was so damn mean, and he didn't know someone could be loving, a woman could be loving and kind because his mother used to beat him all the time he was growing up. She was not a very nice woman. But anyway, he came to California, and we kept company. I stayed in my job and went to finish with going to school, and he went to work for the Western Union Telegraph Company.

Redman:

Okay, using these skills that he had picked up in Iowa.

1-00:50:27

Barquist: In San Diego, and he commuted between San Diego and Oceanside, got an apartment in Oceanside, a room, and then we spent as much time as we could together. Then—

Redman:

December of 1942.

1-00:50:50

Barquist: Forty-one.

Redman:

Oh, sorry, '41, yeah.

1-00:50:52

Barquist: The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and it was as if the earth had shifted on its axis.

Redman:

Is that right?

1-00:50:58

Barquist: It was really astonishing, astonishing event.

Redman: Okay.

1-00:51:02

Barquist: Because nobody had thought too much about Japan. There had been Japanese, there was a Japanese community in California, a very tight knit community, nobody knew anything about them, they raised vegetables out in the valley, and kept very much to themselves. They were a closed little community which is why they got evacuated from the West Coast. Had they been more integrated into the community, nobody would have done it, but they were one little and at the time the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, nobody knew which way the Japanese were going to go, because we knew they were going somewhere, whether they were going to go, because they had invaded China before and had been extremely cruel in China.

Redman: Some of that word had already reached the West Coast.

1-00:52:00

Barquist: Oh, we knew all about it, and the question was were they coming to the West Coast to invade the United States. They very well could have, and if they had, the whole aspect of the war would have been different. This is what we were thinking in Oceanside in 1941.

Redman: Certainly.

1-00:52:30

Barquist: What if they land on the West Coast, and we had patrols on the beach looking to see if they were landing because there was no satellites, not even any aircraft?

Redman: Yeah.

1-00:52:47

Barquist: They were doing that, and so there were beach patrols. I was out patrolling the beach, looking for any possibility of anyone landing.

Redman: I can imagine that your sort of feeling about going to the beach would change between June when you were learning how to get sunburned versus December.

1-00:53:08

Barquist: Oh, indeed, indeed.

Redman: When it was seen as a—

1-00:53:15

Barquist: Oh yes. Oh, the whole thing changed, the whole dynamics shifted because no longer, we knew at the moment we heard about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor, not only were we going to have fight the Japanese, but we knew we were going to have to fight the Germans on the other end of the world.

Redman: So it certainly was not a surprise when you found out the following day that FDR was declaring war against both Japan and Germany.

1-00:53:42

Barquist: Heavens, no.

Redman: Right.

1-00:53:43

Barquist: It was assumed, and this is why I personally get very impatient with people who beat their breasts about the evacuation of the Japanese from the West Coast. I'm sorry that they had to go out into Idaho and wherever they went to live for a while, but had they stayed and had the Japanese invaded California, would they have joined the invading army? Of course they would have, how could they not? You know, where would I have been?

Redman: Right, right, well with that I'm going to change tapes I'm going to put in another—

## Begin Audiofile 2

Redman: All right, I'm back with Rose; this is our second tape on March 30, 2011. Rose, where we left off we were talking about Japanese internment in California and fears about a possible invasion from Japan in San Diego and in Oceanside. I wanted to ask, shifting back to Iowa for a moment, I know around World War I there had been a lot of sentiment in places like Iowa from German populations in particular, but European populations or people of European ancestry thought we should stay out of World War I.

2-00:00:42

Barquist: Isolationism.

Redman: Isolationism, and so then did you pick up on any of this growing up in Iowa, were there any Germans that may have had even after '33 when Hitler goes into power, do you recall any of that?

2-00:01:00

Barquist: Well, yes, I think there was a Senator Bora from Idaho who was very opposed to anything; he was opposed to lend lease, anything we did to support England because he wanted us to stay absolutely out of anything having to do with anything outside the United States. He was an isolationist.

Redman: Right, right, so then coming to California then seeing what happens on December 7<sup>th</sup>, you more or less disagree with that entirely but that point, that the US should stay out of the war, is that correct?

2-00:01:47

Barquist:

Well, it wasn't that I disagreed; it's that I could see, and everyone else could see that we had no choice. It wasn't possible for us to stay out of the war on both sides of the world. Once the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor the war came to us. We didn't go to the war.

Redman:

So that viewpoint that may have been sort of disappeared overnight.

2-00:02:18

Barquist:

We had to.

Redman:

Okay, okay, so tell me do you remember where you were when you learned of the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

2-00:02:24

Barquist:

Yes, I do.

Redman:

Okay, okay, and where was that?

2-00:02:31

Barquist:

The streets of Oceanside. My then boyfriend now long time husband and I had been in his apartment enjoying each other's company, and the man who was my, the person that I was at that time living with, I was the au pair in their house, came knocking on his door saying, "Western Union called, and you're to go to San Diego right away, they need you because the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and you've got to get down to Western Union right away." That was when I heard of it.

Redman:

Wow, okay, and so then he did as he was directed.

2-00:03:23

Barquist:

The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, he jumped up, put his clothes on and went to San Diego, and I didn't see him for three days.

Redman:

Is that right?

2-00:03:28

Barquist:

Yeah.

Redman:

Okay, do you know what he was doing?

2-00:03:32

Barquist:

Yes, he was running a teleprinter, teletype machine.

Redman:

Okay, and they were just getting—

2-00:03:36

Barquist:

It was teletype machine, I think; I don't think they had teleprinters yet.

Redman:

Okay, so they were getting telegraphs in San Diego from all over.

2-00:03:43

Barquist:

Oh, madly because that was the chief form of communication. Radios weren't as skilled yet, but the telegraph is how communications were sent and received, and he spent, well, as I said, at least three days down there receiving and sending telegrams.

Redman:

Okay, do you know if these were, so Western Union I think of it in some sense and this is probably a wrong impression, I think of it as just sort off the top of my head where people would send personal messages to and from one another.

2-00:04:27

Barquist:

Yes, they did that.

Redman:

But it also strikes me as that would be a way that professional or government communications would be moving around as well.

2-00:04:39

Barquist:

Well, even during the war that was how messages to families were sent that their son had been killed in action.

Redman:

Okay.

2-00:04:51

Barquist:

So there was always this fear when the Western Union knocked on somebody's door that they had a telegram, especially the families of soldiers.

Redman:

I see.

2-00:04:58

Barquist:

That was one of the big fears, oh, my God. What if it was the end, sometimes sadly it was.

Redman:

Right, right, so then what happened to you, I want to ask one more question about your impressions of arriving in California? We talked a little bit about the Japanese community in southern California and your impressions of the Japanese community. What about just in terms of race in general, did you think California was noticeably more racially diverse than Polk County?

2-00:05:37

Barquist:

I'm not sure it was in those days. Was it? Maybe there were some Spanish speakers around, yeah, I heard Spanish more than I had ever heard before, although we had some Spanish speakers in Iowa. But, not terribly diverse, it was, maybe it was, it's hard to remember, it's really hard. I've forgotten. But, no it was pretty Anglo Saxon.

Redman:

Okay, okay, so then your future husband, Richard, had found an apartment.

2-00:06:29

Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:06:31

Barquist: He'd found a room in a house.

Redman: Okay, okay, so in '41 it was, was it fairly easy to find this type of living arrangement, because I know in certain places once the war started housing became—

2-00:06:45

Barquist: Well, it did. Once the war started, he found this room. I don't know how he found it, but he did.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:06:53

Barquist: It was a woman who was just renting a room to anyone.

Redman: Okay, so after his three days of being at the Western Union office in San Diego—

2-00:07:05

Barquist: About, yeah.

Redman: About, and clamoring away at—

2-00:07:10

Barquist: He was down there a lot.

Redman: Okay, okay, so what then happened, following that initial wave of excitement and fear and—

2-00:07:23

Barquist: Well, it kept up until, well, I'm tempted to say that it kept up until 1945.

Redman: Okay, so what did you do then? You were still working at the—

2-00:07:39

Barquist: I was still in college. I was going to finish that semester come hell or high water.

Redman: Right.

2-00:07:46

Barquist: Which I did.

Redman: So did that, did Pearl Harbor happen, it would have happened right around your final exams, I would imagine. That must have changed what the college was like—

2-00:08:01

Barquist: Well, as I said, the professors all went off to war.

Redman: Okay, so they worked for government agencies or—

2-00:08:09

Barquist: The history professor, I was trying to remember his name, but my history professor was in the South Pacific on the same kind of a boat that Jack Kennedy ran.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

2-00:08:24

Barquist: What were those boats called?

Redman: A swift boat—?

2-00:08:29

Barquist: Something like that. No, it was, well, anyway, he had one of those.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:08:33

Barquist: I remember hearing about it from someone else afterwards, but anyway, he disappeared.

Redman: Okay, so many of the faculty were leaving, but what about the students? Had you made friends with some of the students there, or did you—?

2-00:08:52

Barquist: I have not been in touch with any of them.

Redman: Okay, okay.

2-00:08:56

Barquist: Although they were very pleasant people for the most part.

Redman: Okay, so you presume that many of the men then joined the service.

2-00:09:02

Barquist: Oh, I'm sure they all did.

Redman: Okay, and what about some of your high school classmates? Had you kept in touch with them enough, or did you have enough contact with people back home to know that many of them were signing up as well?

2-00:09:13  
Barquist: Oh, they were, yes. As a matter of fact, one of our very dearest high school friends, my husband's dear friend, was killed in the Battle of the Bulge.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

2-00:09:25  
Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: Okay, okay, so then tell me about what happened to your husband, I'm sorry, your boyfriend at the time?

2-00:09:35  
Barquist: Well, we were married in July 2, 1943. We carefully waited until after the first of July because the draft law had stated that anyone who was married before the first of July would be deferred, would be up on the list for deferment, and my husband was very anxious that he not be accused of getting married for the sake of a deferment because a lot of people rushed to get married before, and he was not going to do that.

Redman: So he was still working for Western Union.

2-00:10:17  
Barquist: He was working for Western Union, but he had been signed up for the draft, and the draft was looming and at that point we got married on the second of July in 1943.

Redman: So he knew he was going to join the service.

2-00:10:37  
Barquist: He knew he was going to be drafted. He didn't join, he was drafted.

Redman: He was drafted, okay.

2-00:10:43  
Barquist: Yeah, he made that a point.

Redman: So he would have preferred to live his life not in the service had world events not changed—

2-00:10:54  
Barquist: Well, I don't think there was anybody alive at the time who wouldn't have thought that.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:10:58  
Barquist: Would you?

Redman: Yeah, right, so, okay, so then—

- 2-00:11:04  
Barquist: You don't want to be drafted, do you?
- Redman: Well, yeah, definitely, certainly not drafted. So presumably by that point you were already experiencing things like rationing.
- 2-00:11:17  
Barquist: Oh, yes.
- Redman: In '42, '43, what was rationing like in your life?
- 2-00:11:23  
Barquist: Well, I had my ration books for a long time. You were limited to how much butter you could buy, how much—
- Redman: Let me ask, these ration books were, you'd get a tan booklet, and it would have your name and age on it, and where you were from, and then inside there were these blue stickers—
- 2-00:11:42  
Barquist: Stickers, yeah.
- Redman: So my question is, and this is a very simple question, but something I have not figured out is that on these blue stickers there are on the coupons there might be an American flag or an American plane or tank, so how would you know which ration sticker went for—
- 2-00:12:03  
Barquist: I have forgotten.
- Redman: Okay.
- 2-00:12:05  
Barquist: I really couldn't tell you.
- Redman: Some people have told me that maybe they would just hand over the booklet to the butcher, and then the butcher would—
- 2-00:12:11  
Barquist: Then he'd tear out what he wanted, yeah.
- Redman: Okay, okay, all right.
- 2-00:12:15  
Barquist: Or to the grocery, yeah, they knew better than most of us dumb consumers.
- Redman: Right, okay. So then tell me what, was there anything in terms of rationing that was challenging for you, or did you feel like you had what you needed?

2-00:12:26

Barquist: Not really. No, I had everything I needed.

Redman: Okay, okay, so did you continue on, when you signed up for college, did you leave your job as a soda jerk?

2-00:12:42

Barquist: Oh, yeah, and lived with a family.

Redman: Okay, and that's how you were making money to pay for college and—

2-00:12:47

Barquist: They didn't pay me anything, but I lived with them, and then I worked occasionally.

Redman: Okay, to pay for things here and there. So then what, is that how your life continued during the war?

2-00:12:59

Barquist: No.

Redman: Okay, what sort of changes happened?

2-00:13:04

Barquist: Well, all right. First of all, the war started and I was living in Oceanside still, and there was a lot of, oh, dear, let me, turn your thing off so I can think a little bit.

Redman: Sure.

Great, so when we paused you were explaining what had happened to you in between Pearl Harbor and your marriage on July 2, 1943.

2-00:13:56

Barquist: Yes, I went to Los Angeles to stay with my cousin Fern who by that time was living in Los Angeles, and she and I, I lived in her apartment for a while, and they came to visit me there, and she and Dick and I went to see the sights of Los Angeles wartime, and then we decided to get married, and Fern and I planned the wedding. She thought I was awfully young to get married, and I agreed, I certainly was, but I didn't see any alternative to it and neither did she, so she agreed to be my maid of honor, and a friend of Dick's from high school, Larry Simmons, was out in California learning how to fly an airplane, and he was Dick's best man. He was later shot down in Korea.

Redman: Okay, so can you tell me a bit about LA would have been like during the war?

2-00:15:05

Barquist: Oh, during the war LA was a big small town, or they used to refer to it was fifty villages in search of a city.

Redman: Okay, I see, okay.

2-00:15:17

Barquist: It was, I don't know, Dick had an apartment out on Vermont Avenue for a while, and I lived with my cousin Fern for a while, that's where we lived when we got married. We lived in his apartment on Vermont Avenue for a while after we were married, and then he was threatened with the draft, and let's see now, that would take us almost to—

Redman: To '43.

2-00:15:54

Barquist: To '43 when we got married, yeah, and then after our marriage he was still at Western Union until he got drafted.

Redman: Okay, and what branch of the service was he drafted in?

2-00:16:16

Barquist: Aha, the United States Army, and he was drafted, we got married in July, and he was drafted shortly thereafter and sent off to basic training in Washington state at, oh, what is that, it still exists, the military—

Redman: One of the forts up there?

2-00:16:44

Barquist: Forts?

Redman: One of the forts up there?

2-00:16:45

Barquist: Yeah, in western Washington, sloshing through the weeds during his basic training, and I was pregnant by that time, naturally, by a couple of days after we were married I'm sure I got pregnant, and so when he finished his basic training, he came back down to where I was. He had a few days' leave, and they, I don't know if you know, but all recruits in the Army now take an aptitude test. He had taken an aptitude test and scored so high that they decided that sending him to the infantry wasn't the case, so they sent him to UCLA to study engineering.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

2-00:17:49

Barquist: Because the nation was desperate for engineers.

Redman: Right.

2-00:17:59

Barquist: So we lived in LA for a while, and then the—

Redman: Then were you pretty excited about this decision that the Army had made in terms of instead of his being placed into the infantry, he was going to go to college?

2-00:18:17

Barquist: Well, yes, my God. What a gift! Not only that it was a gift that kept on giving because not only did they send him to engineering school, but when they closed out the engineering school, the only division that was left was Pre-med, so they sent him to Pre-med.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

2-00:18:39

Barquist: Then when he finished Pre-med, there was no medical school in Los Angeles, so they sent him to San Francisco to University of California in San Francisco to medical school.

Redman: Is that right? Wow, okay.

2-00:18:59

Barquist: Where he graduated from medical school.

Redman: So throughout the entire war he was attending—

2-00:19:06

Barquist: In the Army.

Redman: In the Army, attending classes.

2-00:19:10

Barquist: Yes.

Redman: What an incredible—

2-00:19:14

Barquist: Incredible piece of luck.

Redman: Yeah, his engineering program at UCLA, do you know if that was a group of, it was purely US Army folks at that point?

2-00:19:29

Barquist: It was called the Army Specialized Training Program, ASTP.

Redman: Okay, okay, did you—?

2-00:19:34

Barquist: Those were the initials.

Redman: Okay, okay, did you live near the campus, or did he commute to—?

2-00:19:45  
Barquist: Yeah, where did we live? Probably lived in some hovel, I can't remember, but I know that my little, we had a baby by that time, a little boy, who's now fifty-seven.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:19:58  
Barquist: Or fifty-six.

Redman: And what's his name?

2-00:19:59  
Barquist: His name is Walter Eric Barquist, and he was named after my husband's stepfather whom he adored.

Redman: I see, okay.

2-00:20:08  
Barquist: He learned to walk on the steps of UCLA student union.

Redman: All right, so you spent some time there as well with him.

2-00:20:22  
Barquist: Where did we live? I can't remember our living circumstances. They must have been awful. Yeah, we lived, oh yeah; we lived up on a street in Los Angeles called Michael Terrina Street.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:20:37  
Barquist: It was near Temple Street which was named for Amy Semple McPherson's Temple.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:20:44  
Barquist: The temple is gone now, but the Temple Street remains there, so I'm told, and Michael Terrina Street is a very fancy neighborhood these days, but we lived in a ratty old apartment which you wouldn't believe.

Redman: Okay, on a limited Army salary.

2-00:21:02  
Barquist: Oh, yes, and the landlady hated us because our baby cried.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:21:07  
Barquist: Oh, dear, yes.

Redman: Not much you can do about that.

2-00:21:10  
Barquist:

Well, I did what I could.

Redman: So tell me about then having a child, and we were talking about rationing a little bit earlier. My understanding is the government would give another ration book for a child, for each child? Do you happen to recall that?

2-00:21:30  
Barquist:

You know I've forgotten. I've forgotten this business of the ration book. I suppose they did.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:21:35  
Barquist:

But I don't remember.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:21:38  
Barquist:

I have a visual image of a ration book, and that's all.

Redman: Right, right. So how about, was I assume based on how you describe your apartment, it was not the type of apartment where you could have grown something like a Victory Garden, or did you have a Victory Garden?

2-00:21:55  
Barquist:

At that time, no.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:21:56  
Barquist:

Now when we moved to San Francisco, oh, what luck, when they sent him to the medical school at UCSF, they moved us into a government housing unit in the Visitacion Valley called Sunnydale.

Redman: Sunnydale, okay.

2-00:22:24  
Barquist:

Sunnydale, we lived in Sunnydale and indeed, we had a garden, we grew all kinds of things there.

Redman: Okay, okay.

2-00:22:30  
Barquist:

But Sunnydale, now, I guess it's not much of anything, but it was a blessing then believe me.

Redman: Okay, okay, so you felt as though you were getting an opportunity big time.

2-00:22:44

Barquist:

Oh, big time. Yes, because in the first place he had not gone to combat, he was there, he was a trained physician. He after medical school they sent him, and we all went, to Texas to do his internship and his residency at Brook Army Hospital in San Antonio. Oh, that's a lovely place, San Antonio, still is. We lived there for a while. By that time we had two children, but the Army, and after he had that kind of training, all of that in the Army, then what could he do? The law was that he had to pay back year by year every year of training that the Army had given him. So he stayed in the Army.

Redman:

Do you know, so that amounted to—

2-00:23:52

Barquist:

By the time he paid back what he owed them, he had something like twelve years left.

Redman:

Wow.

2-00:23:59

Barquist:

Well, shoot, twelve years in the Army doing something you know very well, and by that time he was involved at Fort Detrick. I don't know if you know about Fort Detrick or not. It was a biomedical lab, and that's where they developed germ warfare.

Redman:

Wow, okay.

2-00:24:19

Barquist:

But he was not in on that. He was given the command of that unit at the time that Nixon to his everlasting credit aborted the germ warfare development of this country.

Redman:

Okay.

2-00:24:35

Barquist:

The laboratory that had been used for that was devoted to inventing vaccines.

Redman:

Okay.

2-00:24:45

Barquist:

Of numerous kinds, so my husband was the commander of that laboratory for eight years, I guess.

Redman:

I see, okay, so it's interesting that he is drafted and ends up becoming a career serviceman. It's through this training and this opportunity, did he sort of, how did he reflect on that sort of a whirlwind moment or whirlwind series of opportunities?

2-00:25:20

Barquist:

Fate.

Redman: Fate, okay. You thought it was sort of meant to be—

2-00:25:24

Barquist: Well, what is it; time and chance happen as to all.

Redman: Yeah.

2-00:25:31

Barquist: There's no explaining it, excepting he was exceptionally intelligent, and his tests were out of sight.

Redman: So the aptitude tests proved to be a real boon.

2-00:25:48

Barquist: They offered him a chance to be a general.

Redman: Is that right? Okay.

2-00:25:51

Barquist: He turned it down.

Redman: Okay. He was not interested.

2-00:25:59

Barquist: Well, he wanted to continue on at the lab, and as a matter of fact, in his last two years in the Army after he left the laboratory, he was seconded, do you know what means? It means that the Army sends you a secondary assignment.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:26:21

Barquist: They call it seconded to the CIA, and worked in their biomedical program germ warfare.

Redman: Is that right? Okay, so in Langley Falls for something okay—

2-00:26:34

Barquist: We went to Langley.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:26:38

Barquist: I was there once. I just was in the courtyard, however.

Redman: Just to say hi and say you'd been there, okay.

2-00:26:45

Barquist: All I know is on the freeway they had a big sign, oh, they had something strange which was the turnoff for the CIA, but it didn't say CIA naturally.

Redman: Okay, yeah, yeah, so tell me about when he was in training and you're raising a young child, I assume two young children by that time, can you tell me about your second child.

2-00:27:07

Barquist: Yeah, she was just here.

Redman: Okay, oh, wow, okay.

2-00:27:11

Barquist: That was her.

Redman: That was your daughter, okay, great. So what was her name?

2-00:27:14

Barquist: Susan.

Redman: Susan.

2-00:27:17

Barquist: Still is.

Redman: Still is Susan, okay. So by this time you have two young children. I'm just curious if you had any time for fun or leisure activity.

2-00:27:33

Barquist: Well, not only that, I worked all the time.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:27:34

Barquist: I started out teaching preschool, and then I was the director of a program in Washington, D.C., a cooperative nursery school. A cooperative nursery school is a nursery school which is run by the parents, and each neighborhood, there were fifty of them in Washington, D.C., and it was a neighborhood center, and they would have a center where they had usually some church or something where they had a nursery school. They would have twenty children. It was limited usually to twenty children and twenty parents. The parents would work one day a week in the nursery school as teachers, and then there would be a director. The director's job was to help the parents learn about small children and teach them the techniques, so I taught a class of nursery directors called nursery, what was it called, early childhood development and nursery school techniques.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:29:11

Barquist: Yay, I got it.

Redman: That is a mouthful.

- 2-00:29:17  
Barquist: Early childhood, yes, development and nursery school techniques, and I taught that in Washington, D.C. for several years.
- Redman: Okay, okay, so when did you start teaching preschool, do you recall about what year that was?
- 2-00:29:29  
Barquist: Yeah, let's see, must have been when my son was enrolled in a preschool; her name was Miss Varney, and where was it we were living?
- Redman: So it must have been, would that have been right at the end of the war?
- 2-00:29:48  
Barquist: No, it was during the war, and Rick was at that time about eighteen months or two years old.
- Redman: I see, okay.
- 2-00:29:57  
Barquist: Let me see now, where was it, it was Washington, Washington? I forget my geography. But, Sugar, hey, she thinks she's supposed to get on the couch, hey, come on, yeah, you go lie down. Yeah, anyway, I was a mother in one of those cooperative nursery schools. Then I got really good at it.
- Redman: Okay.
- 2-00:30:27  
Barquist: So they hired me, and that's how I got into it, first I was a mother and took my children.
- Redman: Okay, so that would have been towards the end of the war if he was born in say late '43.
- 2-00:30:43  
Barquist: Forty-three, yeah, I would have been about '45 I guess.
- Redman: Okay, okay, so let's—
- 2-00:30:48  
Barquist: Sugar, go lie down.
- Redman: We talked about a little bit about attending church services, a variety of different church services that your family would drag you to.
- 2-00:30:57  
Barquist: My various grandmothers, yeah.
- Redman: So what about at this time in California or during the war. Did you attend church at all? You told me later in your life you would attend Unitarian—

- 2-00:31:11  
Barquist: Yeah, I went to the Unitarian Church. I went to the Unitarian Church in Washington, D.C. for years.
- Redman: Okay.
- 2-00:31:14  
Barquist: Who was the preacher there? Oh, God, he was so good. Davies, Harland, William, you might recognize his name because he's written a lot.
- Redman: Okay.
- 2-00:31:32  
Barquist: His last name was Davies, D A V I E S, but I've forgotten his first, I can't bring him right to mind, but anyway, I went there. My husband and I went there. His family were Lutheran, and we had a big conflict with his mother because she wanted me to baptize the children Lutheran, and I wouldn't do it because it was Martin Luther who said you should spare the rod and spoil the child, and I did not believe in that. I thought it was, I think hitting a child is a crime.
- Redman: Right, okay.
- 2-00:32:03  
Barquist: Because it teaches a child to hit.
- Redman: Right.
- 2-00:32:05  
Barquist: That's all it does.
- Redman: Okay, okay.
- 2-00:32:09  
Barquist: If you have children, I certainly hope you don't hit them.
- Redman: Right, so that did this have a little bit to do with your husband's—
- 2-00:32:18  
Barquist: Oh, everything to do with it.
- Redman: His experience?
- 2-00:32:19  
Barquist: Everything to do with it, absolutely.
- Redman: Okay, okay, so then wanting to sort of have a break from that tradition. So can you I'd like to know San Diego today I think of that as a place where there are a lot of active servicemen at any given time.

- 2-00:32:42  
Barquist: It was then, too.
- Redman: Okay, can you tell me about what it was like during the war, during the early war years.
- 2-00:32:46  
Barquist: I think Coronado Island, Coronado Hotel, was the grandest place I have ever seen.
- Redman: Right, yeah.
- 2-00:32:53  
Barquist: It was grand then, and I think it's grand now, I don't know.
- Redman: Gorgeous beach, and yeah, when you're out on that beach you can see tons of airplanes and ships and helicopters.
- 2-00:33:07  
Barquist: Ships, I know, I know, you can see the Navy yard.
- Redman: Okay, so was it like that then as well?
- 2-00:33:15  
Barquist: Sure, you had to. You had the feeling that people were very careful, and I suppose they caught spies once in a while. I am sure there were spies around.
- Redman: Right.
- 2-00:33:30  
Barquist: I don't know, I didn't know any personally, but at least, I don't think I did.
- Redman: Right, yeah. So now here's another question, we talked a little bit about how dissent had sort of disappeared. Did you know anyone who dissented or disagreed with the war at all?
- 2-00:33:48  
Barquist: Sure, all the Quakers.
- Redman: All the Quakers, okay, right.
- 2-00:33:52  
Barquist: Some of my relatives who were Quakers, some of my relatives who were Mennonites.
- Redman: What did they do during the war, because I've heard that some people became volunteer firefighters on the West Coast?
- 2-00:34:04  
Barquist: Oh, they did everything. They did volunteer work of all kinds.

Redman: I see.

2-00:34:08

Barquist: Took care of sick people, took care of refugees, took care of, they were good folks.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:34:13

Barquist: You know the Quakers are outstanding human beings in my opinion.

Redman: Right, so they may have dissented from the war but they found other ways to be active.

2-00:34:27

Barquist: They didn't want to go fight. They didn't want to kill anybody. They have a real prohibition against killing anything or anybody.

Redman: Right, okay. So can we just ask again if you can tell me a little more about what the servicemen may have been like? Was there an active presence of men in uniform walking around San Diego?

2-00:34:49

Barquist: On all the streets, yeah, sure, sure.

Redman: Okay, and so were people, did you get the impression that some of maybe people in different branches of the military or Merchant Marines would maybe have been on leave in San Diego?

2-00:34:59

Barquist: Oh, yeah, sure.

Redman: So then did they tend to cut loose and have a good time in San Diego?

2-00:35:07

Barquist: I'm sure they did. I never had any personal experience with brothels but I'm sure they had a lot of them. [laughter]

Redman: Okay, yeah, yeah.

2-00:35:20

Barquist: I really don't know.

Redman: Okay, okay.

2-00:35:22

Barquist: I do that there were problems with venereal disease.

Redman: Okay, well now the gas lamp district is safe and clean and nice, but I have heard that the gas lamp district then was an area where you could get into some trouble.

2-00:35:41

Barquist: I'm sure that you could get into all kinds of trouble then, yes.

Redman: Okay, so on that note—

2-00:35:50

Barquist: Anybody can get into any trouble any time.

Redman: Right, right.

2-00:35:53

Barquist: If they want to.

Redman: Right, yeah. So one of the things I ask people who worked in factories at the time is how men and women interacted during the war.

2-00:36:04

Barquist: You know my father-in-law was a long time employee of the Maytag Company in Newton, Iowa, and he during the war, he worked there all the time during the war, and for the first time during the war he had women employees, so I would have to, he would have been an ideal person to ask. He I think expressed to me a time or two, surprise at how good they were because some of my cohorts worked for him.

Redman: So some people you may have known from high school—

2-00:36:46

Barquist: In high school, yeah.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:36:49

Barquist: Yeah, so yes, there was a lot of new experiences for people.

Redman: Right.

2-00:36:55

Barquist: Regarding women's activities because you couldn't have just women lolling around when the war was so terrible and we needed every bit of human energy that was available. We were fighting two wars at the same time. It was an incredible undertaking. When I think of the invasion of France, I find it amazing still.

Redman: So one of the things that occurred in San Diego during the war, well, southern California, I'll say, is that not only were there a number of shipyards coming in, but there were also numerous airplane factories, munitions factories.

2-00:37:46

Barquist: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

Redman: And this brought in people from all around the country.

2-00:37:50

Barquist: And from Mexico.

Redman: And from Mexico, and now this migration to southern California as your story shows, didn't begin with the Second World War. People had been moving there for some time, but my guess is that the dynamics must have changed with all of these people getting jobs. Can you tell me about that?

2-00:38:10

Barquist: Only my own personal experience which was yeah, there were people of all kinds working, and they were on the streets and in the restaurants.

Redman: Now were there new businesses opening up to accommodate—?

2-00:38:31

Barquist: Let's see now, I think I had my first taste of Mexican food on Olvera Street. Do you know Olvera Street?

Redman: No, I don't, in San Diego.

2-00:38:45

Barquist: Is it in San Diego?

Redman: Or LA, sorry, Los Angeles?

2-00:38:46

Barquist: I'm trying to think, one of those.

Redman: Okay, in southern California.

2-00:38:54

Barquist: I think it was LA, but now that you mention it, Olvera Street, everybody knows where Olvera Street was, why don't I? But anyway, I had my first taste of Mexican food there, and that was pretty interesting. Yeah, there were a lot of new experiences for everybody during the war, for everybody.

Redman: Sure, right.

2-00:39:17

Barquist: All over the country. Even the state of Iowa had an immigration of people. Some of them were refugees, but some of them were people who came in to work, and they had farm workers who came in to help with the farming.

Redman: Yeah, there were some German P.O.W.'s that were in Iowa, is that correct?

- 2-00:39:42  
Barquist: I'm sure there were, yes, now that you mention it. The word {Kiyacook?} comes to mind. Why would I think of {Kiyacook?}? Down on the river, I don't know.
- Redman: I think that some of them may have been put in to, were laborers at farms?
- 2-00:40:03  
Barquist: Yeah, they were doing farm labor.
- Redman: Okay.
- 2-00:40:05  
Barquist: Yeah.
- Redman: So that strikes me as kind of an amazing concept to take these German prisoners of war and put them in Iowa, but for them—
- 2-00:40:16  
Barquist: I'm sure probably some of them elected to stay.
- Redman: Yeah, I'm sure some of them probably didn't mind being away from the front lines and pulling a plow instead.
- 2-00:40:27  
Barquist: Driving a plow.
- Redman: Driving a plow, yeah.
- 2-00:40:29  
Barquist: They didn't pull it.
- Redman: They didn't have to pull it, but, yeah. But so okay, so then—
- 2-00:40:35  
Barquist: But there were German speaking people in Iowa, Mennonites. They spoke German because they came from Germany. They are the people who drove horses and buggies and never joined the Army, but I expect that they probably interacted with German prisoners a bit.
- Redman: Interesting, interesting, okay.
- 2-00:41:01  
Barquist: The German prisoners would have been German soldiers who surrendered.
- Redman: Yeah, right, so let's see. Now I've been told that on the West Coast people had a little bit more of an eye towards the Pacific. Obviously with the war being right there geographically, and then maybe folks in Iowa more people might have been paying attention to what was going on in Europe, and as you had said that there was a German language connection there that may not have

been as strong in southern California, so there would have been German newspapers, things like that. Can you speak to some of the differences that each front may have gotten as far attention in different geographic areas?

2-00:41:50

Barquist: Well, I was trying to think of the South, of course, was transformed. Yeah, I suppose the East Coast paid more attention to the war in Europe, and the West Coast paid more attention to the war in Japan. I think that's a fair statement.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:42:19

Barquist: As far as Iowa and the Middle West was concerned, they had a lot of, I think they paid; they were headed in both directions.

Redman: Okay, yeah.

2-00:42:30

Barquist: Yeah, they knew what was going on in both places.

Redman: Okay, so how were you getting news during the war? Newspapers, or—?

2-00:42:38

Barquist: Radio.

Redman: Radio? Okay. What was listening to the radio like in those days?

2-00:42:44

Barquist: Well, I told you about my first experience listening to the Lindbergh crossing, but well, I think that, let me think, now. People did listen to the news regularly to hear what was going on, especially in the war. Let me think.

Redman: How about Roosevelt's fireside chat?

2-00:43:09

Barquist: Oh, yes, everybody listened to those.

Redman: Okay, and what were some of your recollections of those like?

2-00:43:17

Barquist: I listened more to Eleanor.

Redman: Oh, is that right? Okay. Why was that?

2-00:43:17

Barquist: I liked her very much. I think she had more brains in her little finger than FDR had in his whole head.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:43:30  
Barquist:

She—

Redman:

One of my next questions I was going to ask is about when FDR passed away, and so if you'd like to tell me your feelings on FDR and Eleanor Roosevelt, that would be wonderful.

2-00:43:44  
Barquist:

Well, I think FDR, he did what he should have done, and he led the country the best he could. I think a trip to the altar was an endeavor that my God, it was hard for him. And his visit out on some ship with the British Prime Minister, he did what he had to do particularly about the war in Europe, but he also talked a good deal about the war in Japan. He had his eye on both coasts.

Redman:

Okay, okay, so then how about Eleanor Roosevelt? What attracted you to her as a figure, you said you thought of her as an intelligent person?

2-00:44:30  
Barquist:

Very intelligent.

Redman:

What else?

2-00:44:36  
Barquist:

She was a very humane person. She, oh, what did Eleanor do? She did everything. She was everywhere. For one thing, she traveled in a way that her husband could not.

Redman:

Right.

2-00:44:51  
Barquist:

So she was his eyes and ears, and that was obvious to everyone. Every time anybody turned around anywhere in the country, they saw Eleanor Roosevelt. That was the joke. She was there. My grandmother saw her one time in Iowa. She came home all goggle-eyed, "I saw Eleanor, I was this close to, I could have reached out and touched her," she said, "Oh."

Redman:

Okay, okay, so there was a connection there.

2-00:45:25  
Barquist:

Oh, my, she connected, that lady.

Redman:

Yeah, so how about then when FDR passed away, what was the feeling like when—

2-00:45:30  
Barquist:

Who's Harry Truman?

Redman:

Okay, so people had no idea who this guy was, yeah, and some people were, let's see, in most of your adult life, all of your adult life and much of your conscious life, FDR had been President.

2-00:45:51

Barquist: Yeah.

Redman: So that must have an unusual experience.

2-00:45:53

Barquist: Who's Harry Truman, yeah? I heard that a lot, but Harry made himself very well liked. He did some very good things, and he was there when the war ended for one thing.

Redman: Right, certainly, so how about, let's talk about the decision to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. What did you think about that at the time when you heard about that?

2-00:46:29

Barquist: Well, I had studied science in high school, and I knew what it was. What did I think about it? First of all, they had been offered, they knew what it was. The government of Japan had been offered an opportunity to surrender. Now Roosevelt, I think, or Truman following Roosevelt had made what I thought was an error of requiring unconditional surrender. I think that was a mistake because the Japanese could not accept that unconditional stuff. Their minds were too set on their superiority. They were the supermen. They and the Germans were the supermen of the world, and they couldn't accept that. Well, so when they were offered an opportunity to surrender, they declined it, and declined it, and they declined it the third time, and they got the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Redman: So you felt like it was a necessary decision.

2-00:47:53

Barquist: I thought it was horrible, and I thought it was too bad, it was tragic, it was hideous, and then they still wouldn't stop. They wouldn't. They were again given the opportunity, and they still wouldn't, and so they dropped another one. Well, I'm sorry they did that. I'm sorry the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. For one thing, it's a beautiful city, and Hiroshima there was some excuse because there was a submarine base, there were roads, there was industrial, it was an industrial city. Nagasaki was something else. It was a port city and beautiful city, but apparently it was thought to be impossible to persuade them, and so they dropped it again, and then they surrendered.

Redman: Do you remember—?

2-00:49:05

Barquist: My reaction was sorrow.

Redman: Okay, so at once you were saddened to see the images or to learn about the dropping of the atomic bomb—

2-00:49:17

Barquist: And the terrible, terrible deaths.

Redman: Right, but on the other hand you were happy presumably to see the end of the war.

2-00:49:28

Barquist: Well, when the war ended, it had to have ended some way. Now the fact that it ended that way, I was sorry about, and, of course, there was dancing in the streets at the end of the war. I must confess I didn't do much dancing. I was home with my two children, but I was listening to it on the radio. I was in San Francisco at the time, and believe me, it was a wild and woolly town in the surrender.

Redman: Yeah, tell me about what San Francisco was like at the end of the war.

2-00:49:58

Barquist: Oh, my God, everything bloomed and boomed.

Redman: Yeah, yeah. So now at the end of the war a number of interesting things happened. It takes a few months, but there's a wave of soldiers coming back, and there's some pressure on women at the end of the war to leave these jobs, yup, and move back home.

2-00:50:22

Barquist: Go back and be a nice little housewife.

Redman: Okay, okay.

2-00:50:25

Barquist: No way, Jose.

Redman: So your career in some sense takes an opposite sort of trajectory. As your kids get older you become more—

2-00:50:35

Barquist: Oh, I had been teaching all along.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:50:39

Barquist: I worked wherever we went.

Redman: Okay, so you had started teaching as soon as your son was in preschool.

2-00:50:45

Barquist: Well, and as soon as we moved to a new place, I went to the school and hired myself as a substitute teacher.

Redman: Okay.

2-00:50:53  
Barquist: Then so I would teach every place I went. I have taught everything from preschool to graduate classes, excepting elementary school, and the kids from the first to the fifth grade are too smart for me.

Redman: Right, okay, yeah, yeah, I mean long division, that stuff is tough.

2-00:51:14  
Barquist: Oh, that long division.

Redman: Exactly, well I'm going to put in the new tape, and we'll—

2-00:51:23  
Barquist: Okay.

### Begin Audiofile 3

Redman: Great, so today is March 30, and this is our third and final tape with Rose. Rose, we were talking about at the end of the war what life was like in San Francisco.

3-00:00:15  
Barquist: Well, they had a big party, that's for sure.

Redman: Yeah, yeah. How long did you remain in San Francisco?

3-00:00:24  
Barquist: After the war?

Redman: Yeah.

3-00:00:26  
Barquist: Well, let's see. What were we doing in San Francisco?

Redman: Now in 1944 there had been a large disaster at Port Chicago.

3-00:00:43  
Barquist: Texas.

Redman: At Port Chicago in northern California.

3-00:00:45  
Barquist: Oh, right.

Redman: There had been a massive explosion.

3-00:00:47  
Barquist: I'd forgotten about that.

Redman: Did you recall hearing anything about that during the war?

3-00:00:53

Barquist: I must have.

Redman: Okay, because my understanding is that it shook windows in Berkeley and certainly Walnut Creek and, we can come back to that. But so you stayed in San Francisco until just a little after the end of the war?

3-00:01:16

Barquist: I'm trying to remember because Dick was, I've got Dick's biography.

Redman: Okay.

3-00:01:24

Barquist: Would you be interested in looking at that?

Redman: Yeah, certainly.

3-00:01:30

Barquist: Well, turn off your thing, and I'll go get it. I just saw it—

Redman: So let's see, we were in San Francisco when we left off.

3-00:01:36

Barquist: The war's end.

Redman: Yeah, but I did want to ask a question about Washington, D.C. Do you recall about when you arrived in Washington, D.C.?

3-00:01:45

Barquist: Well, that was one reason for looking at my houses I've lived in. It would refresh my memory if you want to turn that off and just let me look at it for a minute, to our apartment on Michael Terrina Street off of Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. The Western Union office where Dick worked was on Pershing Square in downtown LA. The apartment was upstairs in the back of a building that is no longer there. The view included a ridge with a row of palm trees that ran for a long way. The Amy Semple McPherson Temple memorialized only by the street being now by the street being named Temple Street. Echo Lake was just past it. We used to rent a boat and go out in the evening. Once we both went to sleep and the boat rental man had to row out and wake us up. That's the place where I first saw same sex couples. Now I've kind of lost my place here, or that's the end of East—

Redman: So that must have been an interesting experience in some sense. You've never seen that before.

3-00:02:59

Barquist: It was an interesting experience in every sense.

Redman: Right, yeah.

3-00:03:00

Barquist: But let me see if there's some place where I can get past Michael Terrina Street because, we'll see, I don't know if I can or not. [tape interruption] ...slaves who were in the market stayed in Washington?

Redman: So Washington had a much heavier African American population than the places that you had lived previously.

3-00:03:23

Barquist: Oh, yes, and this was partly because the slave market that was there at the end of slavery.

Redman: Certainly, certainly.

3-00:03:34

Barquist: The slaves just stayed there.

Redman: Yeah, now how about the Smithsonian? Did you spend any time at, you mentioned living near the zoo. Did you spend any time with your children at the Smithsonian?

3-00:03:46

Barquist: Oh, yes. Now let's see, Susan's teacher, Mr. Coffee, I'll read this. I don't know that you want to record it or not, but—

Redman: By way of concluding, I'd like to ask if you could reflect on the war, as far as the time in your life, as far as what it means in your life, looking back on it now. What would you say about World War II?

3-00:04:18

Barquist: World War II, well they refer to it these days as the good war, and it was a necessary war. There isn't any question about it. We had no choice. It had to be fought. The Japanese attacked us. Hitler was killing people by the millions. Of course, Stalin did it afterwards, too. It had to be fought, and we had to confront the Russians, which we did. But, that's what I thought, and I thought that, of course, everybody has to contribute because this situation cannot be allowed to endure, and I had been brought up one of poor and called in Flanders Field, did you ever hear it? In Flanders Field the poppies grow between the crosses row on row that mark our place. This is the World War II, World War I, the Flanders Field, and in mark our place, mark our place. In the skies larks still bravely singing flies unheard in this begun to be go. We are the dead, short days ago, we laughed, we saw, we, short days ago we saw the sunset glow, and now we lie in Flanders Field. Pick up our quarrel with the foe. To you from failing hands we throw the torch, be yours to hold it high if you break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Field.

Redman: I think that's a lovely way to conclude.

3-00:06:16

Barquist: And people died because, and they used to wear poppies, they called them buddy poppies. That is what brought World War II on.

Redman: Right, yeah.

3-00:06:30

Barquist: I remember that, I was just thinking about it the other day, I wonderful if I can when there still the poppies grow, between the crosses row on row, that mark our place, and in the sky the lark so bravely singing flies unheard amidst the guns be go, we are the dead, short days ago, we walked, we laughed, we saw the sunset glow, and now we lie in Flanders Field, yeah.

Redman: So—

3-00:07:06

Barquist: There's a few words in there that I can't think of.

Redman: Well, thinking back on it, is there anything else that you'd like to include, like to mention?

3-00:07:16

Barquist: About World War II?

Redman: Right.

3-00:07:25

Barquist: Well, Sherman was quoted a lot. You know Sherman's favorite comment, you know what he said. War is hell.

Redman: Right.

3-00:07:32

Barquist: It was that simple.

Redman: Yeah.

3-00:07:35

Barquist: And it was.

Redman: Yeah.

3-00:07:39

Barquist: And I don't think anybody got it. Now the fact that my husband and I were incredibly lucky had nothing to do with it. It was still a horrible war, and one of the reasons he stayed in the Army is because he felt that he owed it to them, he owed it to all the people who died in his place.

Redman: Well, I want to thank you, Rose for sitting down with me today. I really appreciate it, excellent. You remember the line?

3-00:08:05

Barquist: It was a pleasure. I remember some.

Redman: Wonderful. Thank you.

[End of Interview]